

Headway Arts and Blyth Tall Ship Fly the Flag for Great Northumberland

Thursday 26 July, 2018

Blue Flag, an installation of 600 handmade sailcloth flags created by local people, will appear on Blyth Beach in front of the iconic beach huts this August.

The installation by Great Northumberland, is part of Headway Arts' arts partnership with The Blyth Tall Ship, entitled Inspiration Exploration.

Celebrating the voyages of Captain William Smith, the first captain to discover Antarctica, the Williams Expedition aims to restore a working tall ship as the Williams II in Blyth, then to recreate the original expedition with a local crew sailing her south to Cape Horn and Antarctica 200 years after the original discovery.

To mark the occasion, local people, community groups and school children have joined Headway Arts to create 600 handmade blue sailcloth flags offer varying interpretations of Captain William Smith's voyage to Antarctica.

Local school children have made over 400 flags, the rest have been made by local people, residents, Headway artists, community groups and anyone who went along to the free workshops that took place in Blyth throughout May, June and July.

The flags, created using cyanotype photoreactive and printmaking techniques, will appear along the tideline near to Blyth's iconic beach huts on Sunday 19 August from dawn until dusk, responding to the turn of the tides.

Allie Walton-Robson, Creative Director, Headway Arts, says: "This is a very elemental artwork made from natural materials reflecting and responding to wind and wave and the turn of the tide. Blue Flag is an award given to wonderful beaches, the title is a play on this. The flags are made applying heritage skills and traditional sail making materials. I'm delighted that Headway Arts is artistically 'flying the flag' for our fantastic county and celebrating a wonderful local hero who I think deserves his rightful place in history for his discovery of Antarctica. Northumberland has a lot of talented folk and The Blyth Tall Ship and Headway Arts are working together to inspire and offer new skills and support to local people. Thanks Northumberland County Council we are able to bring this beautiful free event to Blyth."

Part of the Great Exhibition of the North 'Inspired By' programme and designed specifically to get visitors to the region to explore the country's most northerly county, Great Northumberland offers a range of unique, family-friendly, events, activities and adventures many of which are free of charge. Sign up to the newsletter on the website to find out about all Great Northumberland events across the Summer. Find out more at greatnorthumberland.co.uk.

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