Sir Joseph Banks exhibition to blossom

24/05/2013

Led by Lincolnshire County Council, the exhibition is part of a wider project; ‘A Great Endeavour – Joseph Banks, a Lincolnshire Gentleman and his Legacy.’ The exhibition will centre on Benjamin West's portrait of the explorer surrounded by many of the artefacts he brought back to England when he accompanied Captain James Cook on his first Pacific Ocean voyage aboard the Endeavour between 1768 and 1771.

The project will see the painting appropriately conserved prior to going on show alongside other exhibits. It will implement a stand-alone education programme, which will continue once the main exhibition has finished. A series of talks, tours and family events are planned throughout the life of the exhibition, including a smaller exhibition, which will tour a range of venues within the region.

Vanessa Harbar, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund East Midlands, said: “Sir Joseph Banks legacy and breadth of collections is not widely known, and much of the material will rarely have been seen in Lincolnshire. We are delighted to see this project come to fruition. This exhibition, among the wider preservation and educational aspects of the project, will bring together unique and previously unseen material, reuniting for the first time items from Captain Cook’s first voyage.”

Echoing her support, Dr Cheryle Berry MBE, Chair of Trustees of The Sir Joseph Banks Society, said: "We are delighted that the HLF Award will help us to significantly raise awareness of the life and work of Sir Joseph Banks and inspire learning opportunities for people of all ages in Lincolnshire and across the UK. The exhibition at The Collection, the Touring Exhibition and Curriculum materials will also forge worldwide links, particularly with Australia and New Zealand. It is a dream come true for our Society. We would like to sincerely thank our colleagues from The Collection who have worked tirelessly with us over the past three years to achieve this success."

Notes to editors

Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820)
Joseph Banks was born in London, son of William Banks, a wealthy Lincolnshire county squire and member of the House of Commons. He grew up at Revesby outside Horncastle and inherited his father’s estates in Lincolnshire and considerable wealth in 1761. He is most famous for his expedition on Board HMS Endeavour with Captain James Cook which left England in 1768. Banks became a friend of George III, with whom he shared an interest in agriculture and rural affairs. From 1773 he acted as the unofficial director of the Royal Gardens at Kew which became one of the foremost botanical gardens in the world.

Banks is credited with the introduction of Acacia, Eucalyptus, Mimosa and the Genus named after him, Banksia. Approximately 80 species of plant bear his name. He was involved in most British voyages of discovery of his day. He was elected President of the Royal Society in 1778, a position he held for the remainder of his life, and High Sheriff of Lincolnshire in 1794.

The exhibition will run from the end of January 2014 to the beginning of May 2014.

Further information

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