Battle of Bannockburn character search – the chance to become a part of medieval history… in 3D!

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The National Trust for Scotland and Historic Scotland are looking for up to six people to get involved in the ground-breaking Battle of Bannockburn project to transform the visitor experience at the historic site, in time for the 700th anniversary of the battle in 2014.

The project's interpretative designers Bright White Ltd are working with an academic advisory panel featuring some of the UK's top historians to develop the profiles of all of the 'characters' to be represented within the new visitor experience including Edward II and Robert the Bruce. Realism and authentic characters are key to the concept, so Bright White Ltd decided the use of real people from the regions that formed the armies would be the finest option for the 'Character Stations'.

These real-life folk will be transformed from flesh into 3D 'characters' who help visitors learn more about the weaponry, tactics and techniques involved in the battle, as well as the people taking part, their skills, motivations, allegiances and personal stories. The characters will be gritty and real, conveying psychological effects of war, and the full gamut of human emotions.

They will be amongst 10 characters from both Robert the Bruce's and Edward II's armies who will feature in 3D, in real-life dimensions in the new visitor centre at its 'Character Stations', where gesture recognition technology will enable these characters to react to movements and interact with visitors. This is the first phase of the new visitor centre to be revealed to the public.

The selected volunteers will have their faces scanned by the Centre for Digital Documentation and Visualisation (CDDV), the partnership between Glasgow School of Art's Digital Design Studio (DDS) and Historic Scotland, and developed using state-of-the-art 3D technology to become a character in the centre.

The six characters have been chosen for the search to show the diversity of the people who were swept up in the historic events of the battle and to challenge the perception that Bannockburn was simply Scotland versus England. In reality, a range of nationalities were involved - Scots fought on the English side, while Welsh archers and Irish footsoldiers were important to the English.

Accordingly, the project team are looking to recruit real people to represent a mixture of real and fictional people connected with the battle:

- James Douglas (male, age range: 25-35), a Scottish Knight with a personal vendetta against Edward I for killing his father, and one of Robert the Bruce's trusted lieutenants
- Juliana de Goldingham (female, age range: 20-35), a spy sent to gather information from Stirling to inform the Edward II's army. Spies were essential to the wars and usually male which indicates a strong female character
- John de Coupland (male, age range: 12-16), a Page from Berwick Castle garrison who has no real experience of the horrors of medieval war and hopes in due course to become a knight himself

- A local woman from Stirling (female, age range: 45-55) connected to Robert the Bruce's camp who supplied ale to the armies on both sides
- A Scottish spearman (male, age range: 35-55) drawn from the better-off peasantry, with a general obligation to serve and determination to protect his land. Morale was high amongst this group who felt confident in their battle tactics; the use of schiltroms or circular formations of spearmen at Bannockburn is famous
- A Welsh archer (male, age range: 35-55), a professional soldier, with almost a mercenary attitude. The English lords ruling in Wales had a duty to provide archers, however the Welsh were bitter against Edward I who had conquered their country in 1282-3.

To help people identify which of the six characters best represents their personality and the situation they may have found themselves in had they been present during the events of 1314, the 'Which Bannockburn Character are You?' quiz has been developed with the aid of the academic advisory panel and can be accessed on the Bannockburn website. The profiles of the six characters can be found here for more detailed background information.

Applicants are asked to email a photograph of themselves and a short explanation (no more than 250 words) of why they fit the part and would be a suitable ambassador for the Battle of Bannockburn project to mybannockburn@nts.org.uk. In terms of physical requirements, it is only necessary that applicants meet the gender and age range specified for the character. Subtle details can be added later as part of the 3D modelling process, to authenticate your appearance.

Successful applicants will get a behind-the-scenes look at the Battle of Bannockburn project and all travel expenses will be covered.

David McAllister, Project Director, National Trust for Scotland, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity to get involved in a truly ground-breaking project and to be preserved as one of the characters in this unique interpretation, which brings medieval battle to life for 21st century audiences. We want people all over the UK to come forward and play a part in the battle of Bannockburn, just as they did in 1314.

"Many people know the myths about the battle, but through this project and the story we tell at the new centre, we want to challenge those perceptions and make sure people leave with the facts. Using this amazing new technology, we'll be able to give visitors an unrivalled opportunity to interact with and understand the variety of people who found themselves swept up in those historic events of 1314."

The Battle of Bannockburn project is funded by generous support from the Scottish Government and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Notes for editors

1. The Battle of Bannockburn Project is a joint venture by the National Trust for Scotland and Historic Scotland, on behalf of the Scottish Government, to provide a new visitor centre and experience for one of the most significant battles in Scotland's history for the 700th anniversary in the 2014.

2. The new Battle of Bannockburn Visitor Centre will use state of the art installations to interpret and explain the circumstances that led up to this pivotal event in our history and its consequences. The Scottish Government has committed £5 million, through Historic Scotland, and £4.1 million has been awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

3. The design team include:

- Architectural Team – Reiach and Hall with Sinclair Knight Merz (Engineer), Turner and Townsend (QS) and KJ Tait (M&E Engineers)
- Interpretation: Concept and Design – Bright White Ltd
- Landscape Architects – Ian White Associates
- 3D Media Research, Development and Realisation - Centre for Digital Documentation and Visualisation (CDDV)
- Contractors – Mansell Construction Services Ltd

4. Historic Scotland is an executive agency of the Scottish Government charged with safeguarding the nation's historic environment. The agency is fully accountable to Scottish Ministers and through them to the Scottish Parliament. For more information visit Historic Scotland's website.

5. The National Trust for Scotland is one of Scotland's leading conservation charities, which relies on the financial support of its members to fund its important work of caring for the natural and cultural heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy.

Further information

Register for media release email alerts from Historic Scotland website. If you wish to unsubscribe at any time, please email hs.website@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

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