Local heritage explored thanks to Heritage Lottery funding

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Denny and Dunipace Mills Oral History project has been awarded a grant of £8,900 to research the 200 years history of the industrial mills in the area while the **Votes for Women Project**, awarded a grant of £3,300, will encourage local women to learn about the history of the suffragettes and how that changed lives.

Commenting, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, Colin McLean, said: “As part of our new strategic plan, Falkirk is a development priority area for the Heritage Lottery Fund. We are working hard with lots of local groups to make sure that they make the most of the lottery grants available to them. This area has an amazing history – its industries, markets, parks and traditions. By getting involved in the heritage, people are not only preserving it for future generations but learning new skills, making new friends and having fun along the way. We are delighted that projects such as these are now beginning to happen.”

The mills of Denny and Dunipace are the focus of the first project. By 1841, there were 11 mills within a mile and a half of the town. This resulted in the population trebling from 1400 in 1790 to over 4200. However, the last mill closed in 2005 leaving the important part of the community’s heritage in danger of being lost.

This intergenerational project which is being administered by the Denny and Dunipace Heritage Society and Community Green Initiative, will involve 10-14 year olds interviewing older people about their memories of working in and living around the mills. Local libraries and archives will also be researched with the findings documented in the production of a community calendar, website, DVD and exhibition.

Women from around the Falkirk area, particularly those on low incomes or from one-parent families are being encouraged to take part in the Votes for Women project, which is being run by Falkirk Council. As well as exploring the lives of local suffragettes and how women’s rights have changed over the last century, workshops will be held to create jewellery, songs and banners linked to the suffragette movement. These will be used in a procession in Edinburgh to commemorate the suffrage movement’s original procession along Princess Street in 1909.

Colin McLean, continues: “Investing in your heritage really can make a difference, whether it’s a large project that stimulates regeneration, such as the Bo’ness Townscape Heritage Project, a conservation project, such as Falkirk Parish Church, which keeps a precious part of history safe for future generations, or a community project which gets people involved in the history on their doorstep. The Heritage Lottery Fund has invested in all of these and is enthusiastic to hear from groups with other heritage project ideas.”

If you would like to take part in the Denny and Dunipace Mills Oral History project, either as a 10-14 year old with an interest in your local history or as an adult with memories of the mills, then contact, Stewart Johnston on 01324 822827 or Michelle McCallum, Community Green Initiative Secretary on 01324 824843.

Further information

Stewart Johnston, Denny & Dunipace Heritage Society on 01324 822827.

Michelle McCallum, Community Green Initiative on 01324 824 843.

Anne Campbell, Votes for Women on 01324 504 260.