

The Ken Hawley Collection Trust has received £83,300 from HLF for an exciting project, Sheffield Craft That Built The World – Capturing and Sustaining Knowledge For Future Generations centred on the Hawley Collection housed at Kelham Island Museum. Over a period of three years, the Project Officer will work with the founding collector, Ken Hawley, to gather knowledge on the processes of manufacture of six areas of cutlery and tool making. Current and new volunteer curators will be trained to improve and sustain access to this knowledge into the future.

The project will enable local, national and international audiences to discover and explore the unique skills used in the making of tools and cutlery. Many of these skills have totally died out, whilst others are only practised by a small handful of craftsmen. Volunteer curators will in turn develop their skills and knowledge and be able to share this with the local community through temporary exhibitions, family learning days, handling sessions, talks, tours, in the gallery and through the collection's website.

The internationally acclaimed Hawley Collection comprises over 100,000 objects that tell the story of tool making, cutlery manufacture and silversmithing through objects, archives, photographs and audio-visual material. This collection is recognised as being of national importance and is unique in that it combines finished artefacts and work in progress to illustrate how things were made, and records the development of Sheffield's manufacturing processes, products and companies, as well as demonstrating the skills of the workpeople involved.

Keith Crawshaw, Chair of the Ken Hawley Collection Trust was delighted that the grant had been awarded saying:

“Some of the knowledge held by Ken is vital in understanding Sheffield’s tool making past. This project will allow us to record that knowledge and make sense of the artefacts we have in the collection. The project will also help ensure that this knowledge is made more accessible for future generations through trained, dedicated volunteer curators.”

Fiona Spiers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund Yorkshire and the Humber, said: “This internationally significant collection forms an important part of our industrial heritage. I am delighted that this award will document the lost skills of the tool and cutlery industry and ensure this unique collection is fully understood for future generations to appreciate and learn about.”

Notes to editors

Ken Hawley began collecting tools from Sheffield and around the world in the 1950s and the Hawley Tool Collection is known internationally and recognised as being of national importance having Accredited Museum status.

The Hawley Collection is managed by the Ken Hawley Collection Trust (a Charitable Trust) which was set up in 1995 to preserve the collection for future generations. It was originally housed in the Hawley Building at the University of Sheffield and is now in a renovated building providing a gallery with permanent exhibition space and storage areas. This opened in March 2010 at Kelham Island Museum, part of Sheffield Industrial Museums Trust. This move was made possible by an HLF grant which also funded an Audience Development Officer for three years.

An extension to the Hawley Gallery has recently been completed to house parts of the collection stored in other parts of the Museum, as well as provide an open store with public handling area and workshops and research spaces for use by volunteer curators. This was generously funded by the River Don Millowners Association.

Current volunteers, and the founding collector, Ken Hawley, are very active continuously adding to, investigating and researching the collection and mounting temporary exhibitions in the Hawley Gallery – the most recent focusing on stainless steel.

Further information

Judith Smith, Project Officer, Hawley Collection, Kelham Island Museum on 0114 2010 770, email: projectofficer@hawleytoolcollection.com.

Visit Hawley Tool Collection for more information.