

PRESS RELEASE

14th October 2019

Immediate use

Mayflower 400 - Pilgrims Festival in Retford

Thanks to funding from Arts Council England, Retford will see this year's Pilgrims Festival Illuminate Lantern Parade travel from outside Wilko's, along Carolgate, to the Market Square, starting at 5.30pm on Friday 22nd November. The parade will arrive at St Swithun's Parish Church at around 6.00pm where there will be a light projection on the outside of the church and an event starting at 6.15pm, including performances by the acclaimed Rhubarb Theatre and the Songbirds choir, followed by the ever-popular '400' photograph in the churchyard and light refreshments afterwards. Everyone is welcome and advised to wear warm clothes – it is November after all!

Local uniformed groups, schools and voluntary organisations are helping to make lanterns and are invited to take part in the parade. There will be public lantern-making workshops (all at 10am-4pm) on Monday 21st October at the Crossing in Worksop, Tuesday 22nd October at Retford Library, Monday 28th October at Bassetlaw Museum in Retford, and at Worksop Library on Wednesday 30th October. All information about the events is available on the Bassetlaw Christian Heritage (BCH) website (bassetlawchristianheritage.com).

This will be the fifth year that BCH will deliver events in Bassetlaw to commemorate the sailing of the Mayflower Pilgrim Families' journey to the New World, as part of the countdown to 2020, the 400th anniversary. There are also events planned at Gainsborough on Saturday 16th November, at Austerfield and Bawtry on Sunday 17th November, and at Worksop on Wednesday 27th November.

The ever popular Arts Exhibition at Babworth Church returns on Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th November featuring works inspired by the Mayflower Pilgrims Story and this year there will be additional talks on Saturday 23rd at 11am, when Diane Hemsley will give a talk on buttons and on Sunday 24th at 3pm, Adrian Gray will give a talk on some perspectives from his new book arriving in 2020 – all are welcome – for further information contact@bassetlawchristianheritage.com. The Pilgrim Embroiderers will also be there. Refreshments will be available, and there will be some exciting new exhibits, and **entry is free!**

There will be a Thanksgiving Dinner, with entertainment, at Spencer's on the Square, in Retford, at 7pm on Thursday 28th November (Thanksgiving Day). If you are looking for an excuse for a good night out or a location for a work Christmas 'Do', contact 01777 800230, or call in to book (£29.95).

BCH, part of the Pilgrim Roots group, is organising this year's activities, supported by Arts Council England, the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham and individual Bassetlaw District Councillors.

Visitor numbers to the area are already increasing, and are forecast to increase further, as 2020 grows closer. The story of the Mayflower Pilgrim families and their roots in the area in and around Bassetlaw, North Nottinghamshire, is becoming better known. It is hoped that more events and activities relating to this story will be developed, throughout next year.

To find out more about the story, please see bassetlawchristianheritage.com, the Pilgrims Gallery in Bassetlaw Museum, Retford, the Pilgrims Museum at The Hub in Churchgate, Retford, and the Pilgrims Room at the United Reformed Church in Gainsborough.

Notes to editors

Bassetlaw Christian Heritage (BCH)

BCH is a volunteer-run organisation which relies entirely on grants and donations. BCH focuses on the people and their stories, based on faith heritage, in the region centred on Retford, with a radius of around 30 miles, including Bassetlaw, North Nottinghamshire, and parts of Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire.

BCH works in partnership with groups and individuals, and if anyone would like to help in any way, please contact them at contact@bassetlawchristianheritage.com.

Website : www.bassetlawchristianheritage.com.

BCH is grateful to Arts Council England, the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham, Bassetlaw District Councillors, St Swithun's Parish Church, Worksop Priory, the United Reformed Church, the Methodist Church, Scouts, Guides and schools in Bassetlaw for their continuing support.

For further information please contact Rick Brand at rickbrand@hotmail.com or 01427 891376.

Mayflower 400 Editors Notes:

1. Mayflower 400 is the four hundred year commemoration of the voyage of this historic ship, passengers and crew, to America in 1620.
2. Over 30 million people are able to trace their ancestry to the people on the ship. Mayflower 400 year is a four-nation commemoration, Netherlands, UK, USA and the Wampanoag nation that invites Mayflower descendants, local communities and visitors to explore, learn and be involved with the commemoration.
3. Prior to the Mayflower's departure from Plymouth, England, Mayflower history was written in many towns and cities - each of them detailed in the Mayflower trail. The trail includes Austerfield, Scrooby & Babworth, Gainsborough, Boston, Immingham, Worcestershire, Chorley, Dorking, Leiden in the Netherlands, Harwich, Rotherhithe, City of London, Southampton, Dartmouth, Plymouth England and Provincetown and Plymouth, USA. All of these locations play a part in the story of the Mayflower and the people involved.
4. Starting with the Illuminate Festivals in November 2019, a year of Mayflower 400 activities will include community events, major exhibitions, performances and plays with the majority being free for people to attend and enjoy- culminating with Illuminate in November 2020.
5. A major public four-nation commemoration event will be staged in Plymouth on September 16, 2020 marking the official departure date of the ship as part of Mayflower Week.
6. Go to www.mayflower400uk.org for the latest information on events and stories around this landmark year for England.

For further information about Mayflower 400 please contact -:

Mark Howell, Director Communications & Marketing, T +441752305694,
mark.howell@plymouth.gov.uk