



Living our History - 400 Legacy Oaks to commemorate Nottinghamshire's Pilgrims

Hodsock Priory, 24th November 2020

400 years ago, the Mayflower Pilgrims left England and set out for America.

A number of the most influential and important Pilgrims came from North Nottinghamshire and to mark its seminal place in the Mayflower story, the Sherwood Forest Trust will be planting 400 oaks at Hodsock Priory - one for each year since that historic sea voyage. With the kind permission of landowner, Sir Andrew Buchanan, the Trust will establish the 'Pilgrim Plantation'.

Dr Patrick Candler of the Sherwood Forest Trust explains: "We wanted to commemorate the role of Nottinghamshire in the Mayflower story and what better way than to use the most noted of our county's natural resources. The oak is the most emblematic English tree, famed for its beauty, strength and longevity. And the Pilgrim story shows how from 'little acorns' as they say, great things can grow.

We are hugely grateful to Sir Andrew who is allowing us to plant Pilgrim Oaks here in North Nottinghamshire and are delighted that this planting can be seen not only as a reminder of the past – but also as an eye to the future when, in 100 year's time, our successors can celebrate what we have done today.

The Trust also appreciates the financial support given by Bassetlaw District Council and Nottinghamshire County Council to enable us to organise this project'.

Ends

Notes for Editors:

Oaks are a special tree in Nottinghamshire. Sherwood Forest and its mighty landmark, the 1200 year old 'Major Oak', have fascinated tourists since American writer Washington Irving hymned its glories in the 1830s.

400 years after the Mayflower Pilgrims set sail from England for America, the Trust is planting 400 English oak trees to commemorate the voyage of the mighty group from whom some 25 million Americans today claim descent, and whose code for co-existence with the local indigenous people is considered one of the foundations of modern American democracy.

It is well known that Plymouth, in south west England, was the embarkation point for The Mayflower - the merchant ship that in September 1620 set off with its 102 passengers to sail halfway across the known world.

Less well known is that the story of the Mayflower Pilgrims actually began some 300 miles north in the counties of Lincolnshire, South Yorkshire and, especially Nottinghamshire. This is why we call this '*Pilgrim Roots*' country.

A community history project in North Notts today, '*Pilgrim Roots*' explores the Midlands origins of the Mayflower story, and the places and communities affected by it – from the attractive market town of Retford, which today hosts the Pilgrims Gallery museum, to the 'People of the First Light' – the native American Wampanoag people encountered by the Pilgrims, some 5000 of whom still reside in New England.

www.pilgrimroots.co.uk

Patrick urges anyone who thinks they may be descended from the Mayflower Pilgrims, or who comes from one of the North Midland places associated with them, to consider donating to help plant more Pilgrim Oaks

<http://sherwoodforest.org.uk/sherwood-forest-supporter/>

Covid 19

The planting arrangements will be carried out in compliance with the guidance and regulations that are put in place to control the coronavirus in work settings.

The original plan was to invite local schoolchildren and VIPs to share in the planting. The National Lockdown has put paid to that, but the Sherwood Forest Trust was determined that not even Covid would prevent the commemoration of this important anniversary.

More Information

For further details on the Mayflower 400 Legacy Oaks Planting project, please contact Patrick Candler at the Sherwood Forest Trust on 01623 821490 or 07876 806646 or e-mail: patrick.candler@sherwoodforesttrust.org.uk



The Mayflower (Creative Commons)