

Norfolk's American Connections Project

The brand-new Norfolk's American Connections project, being run by Norfolk County Council Cultural Services and partners, celebrates Norfolk's many shared links with North America over 400 hundred years. The project provides an excellent opportunity to discover more about fascinating people and places, such as the 17th century Pilgrim Fathers, many of whom emigrated from Norfolk to America, to the 70th anniversary of the 'Friendly Invasion' which saw, at any one time, around 50,000 United States 8th Army Air Force (USAAF) personnel stationed in the county.

The project's superb events programme commences on the 4th of July and runs until Thanksgiving Day in November. Highlights include:

- An exhibition in the Long Gallery at NRO (6 July - 29 September) with an accompanying series of lunch time talks and children's activities.
- A "Connecting People" touring exhibition, produced with young people who are researching famous and not so famous American people and their links with Norfolk.
- A series of American-themed community led events, some of which will be funded via the project's small grants scheme.
- The Garage film project, which will see young people creating a film to tour community venues and a heritage inspired public performance.
- South Norfolk American Film Festival – September 2012
- 2nd Air Division Memorial Library Autumn Lecture Series 2012 – 4 public lectures exploring cultural links between Norfolk and North America.

The project, which has received just under £50,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, is being delivered by Norfolk Libraries, Record Office and Museums Service, South Norfolk Council, The Garage in Norwich, as well as community organisations across Norfolk.

We would love for Norfolk schools to get involved in the project. An online resource for schools will be available from the summer from the Norfolk's American Connections website (www.norfolksamericanconnections.com). In addition, we should like to invite schools to apply for a Small Grant of up to £250 to deliver an event or activity which celebrates Norfolk's rich historical links with North America.

Please find attached [details of the scheme](#), plus an [application form](#). The criteria for the grants are as follows. Your school's project only has to meet one of the criteria:

- To provide residents of and visitors to Norfolk with the opportunity to experience, understand and learn more about the long-standing cultural and historical links between Norfolk and North America, and how these have shaped communities on both sides of the Atlantic.
- To engage with local schools in projects to learn about historical connections with North America
- To involve groups who do not normally engage with heritage (especially 16-24 year olds) to take an active part and learn more about their cultural heritage through a programme of participatory and learning events.
- To celebrate historical connections including the 70th anniversary of the 'Friendly Invasion', when the United States 8th Air Force arrived in Norfolk, and the enormous impact this had on the local community and landscape

The funding can pay for almost anything except core staff costs e.g. materials and equipment, travel and expenses, freelancer costs, venue hire and marketing.

Funding applications are assessed on a monthly basis.

If you have any questions about the project or the Small Grants scheme, please do not hesitate to contact Laura on laura.crossley@norfolk.gov.uk or 07789 282236.