



Immediate Release

Mixing It: The Changing Faces of Wartime Britain

WaterWay Gallery, IWM North

Opens 12 September 2015 – 2016

Free Entry, Donations Welcome

@IWMNorth

The Second World War saw the most remarkable movements of people into Britain in its history.

With large-scale movements of people into the country- chiefly from the British Empire, Europe and America - the national and ethnic diversity of the population during the Second World War was unprecedented.

On display for the first time, [*Mixing It: The Changing Faces of Wartime Britain*](#) will reveal forgotten histories of those who came to Britain.

This small, powerful display is based on new research by the University of Huddersfield, as part of a curatorial partnership with IWM, revealing specially recorded oral histories presented alongside archive material.

Compelling stories reveal the real people behind the extraordinary statistics, from the Jewish teenager who fled from Nazi Germany to the UK before the Second World War had even begun and became an interpreter with the British Army; to the child who was evacuated on one of the last Kindertransport trains from Prague by the late Nicholas Winton MBE and would never see her parents again, only to fall in love with a Marine and go on to start her own family in England.

Soldiers, sailors, airmen and airwomen, refugees and war-workers came to Britain from the Empire and Commonwealth, the United States, occupied Europe, and neutral countries like Southern Ireland. German and Italian prisoners-of-war also arrived – by the end of the war over half a million were held in Britain.

Stories told in the new display include the first black female to make programmes on BBC Radio; the first Nigerian pilot to serve with the RAF; a Norwegian seaman who served Britain in the Merchant Navy; and the Czech airmen who vowed to avenge their British flying instructor in battle.

Wendy Webster, Professor of Modern Culture, University of Huddersfield, said: ‘The diversity of the population in Britain during the Second World War was unprecedented. This new research looks at the extraordinarily rich history of the national and ethnic mix in wartime Britain which has played little part in public memories of war. Some groups who contributed to the Allied war effort in Britain have been doubly forgotten, falling outside any national memory.’

Diane Lees, IWM Director-General, said: ‘British society today has been shaped by the Second World War, including the ethnic and national diversity of the nation. Unveiling new research by the University of Huddersfield as part of a special curatorial partnership with IWM, this new display sheds light on some of the little remembered stories from the Second World War.’

Visit www.iwm.org.uk or connect with @IWMNorth on Twitter.

Visit exhibition page

<http://www.iwm.org.uk/exhibitions/iwm-north/mixing-it-the-changing-faces-of-wartime-britain>

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Related Events at IWM North

What a Performance: *Mixing It*

Saturday 12, Sunday 13 and Sunday 20 September, 11.15am, 12.15pm, 1.15pm, 2.15pm

Free event

Special performances dramatising real experiences of wartime life. Exploring themes from our new WaterWay Exhibition, *Mixing It: The Changing Faces of Wartime Britain*, discover how life changed for a child brought to Britain on the Kindertransport, just before the outbreak of the Second World War.

Meet the Researcher: Diversity in Wartime Britain

Sunday 4 October, 2pm

Free event

The Second World War saw the largest and most remarkable movements of people into Britain in its history. Meet Professor Wendy Webster and the researchers behind the powerful new display, *Mixing It: The Changing Faces of Wartime Britain*. Hear the remarkable story of Jack Stang, a German Prisoner of War in Yorkshire who defied non fraternization regulations to fall in love and marry his British wife Doreen; revealed alongside many more forgotten histories of those who came to Britain during the Second World War.

Notes to Editors

IWM North

The multi award winning IWM North is designed by world-renowned architect Daniel Libeskind to represent a globe shattered by conflict. The iconic building, innovative and dynamic exhibitions, use of digital media through hourly Big Picture Shows and public events explore how war shapes lives and inspire and encourage debate.

Open daily from 10am - 5pm with free admission at The Quays, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester M17 1TZ (close to MediaCityUK Metrolink and Junction 9 of the M60) T: 0161 836 4000
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IWM

IWM (Imperial War Museums) tells the story of people who have lived, fought and died in conflicts involving Britain and the Commonwealth since the First World War.

Our unique collections, made up of the everyday and the exceptional, reveal stories of people, places, ideas and events. Using these, we tell vivid personal stories and create powerful physical experiences across our five museums that reflect the realities of war as both a destructive and creative force. We challenge people to look at conflict from different perspectives, enriching their understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and its impact on people's lives.

IWM's five branches are **IWM London**, IWM's flagship branch with six floors of exhibitions and displays; **IWM North**, housed in an iconic award-winning building designed by Daniel Libeskind; **IWM Duxford**, a world renowned aviation museum and Britain's best preserved wartime airfield; **Churchill War Rooms**, housed in Churchill's secret headquarters below Whitehall; and the Second World War cruiser **HMS Belfast**.