



## From Great War To Race Riots Project Evaluation

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# Introduction

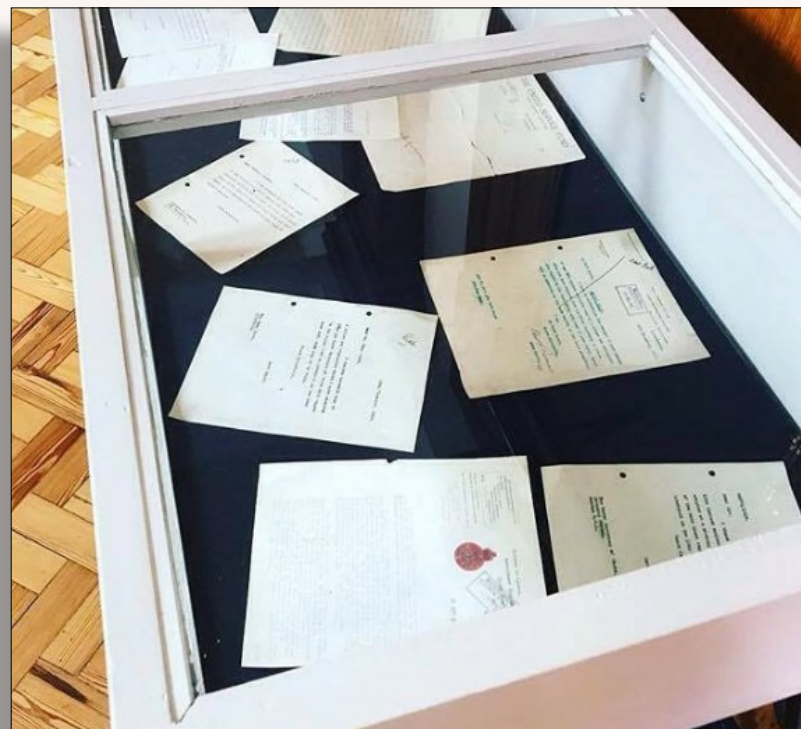
**THE FROM GREAT WAR TO RACE RIOTS PROJECT** centred around a collection of original documents loaned to Writing on the Wall by Joe Farrag in 2014. The documents cover the period 1919-1921 and relate to the position of black ex-servicemen and factory workers stranded in Liverpool following World War I.

The previously unseen documents offered a first-hand account of these men's experiences in their own words. The archive also contains several documents reflecting the response of authorities to the dire situation the men found themselves in during the 1919 race riots in Liverpool.

A strength of this project has been the framing of this work as a collaborative educational opportunity offering skills development and long term engagement opportunities to local residents. Community participants (majority residents of Liverpool 8) professional archivists, writers, poets and artists worked together on tasks as varied as researching local black history and making black

poppies for an art installation as well as the core archiving and research work.

This report has been informed by Heritage Lottery Fund's guidance on evaluating projects.



# Delivery against aims

## Approved purposes

**Recruitment of 16 Course participants drawn predominantly, though not exclusively, from Liverpool's Black Communities**

**Increase awareness of race relations and black history in Liverpool**

**Workshop participants to develop skills in creative writing.**

**16 course participants develop skills in historical research methods through learning and activity.**

**16 Course participants develop skills in cataloguing, digitisation, preservation and curation in relation to historic documentary archives.**

## Delivery against approved purposes

16 Course participants were finally recruited with 8 of these remaining regularly engaged through to the end. Of the final 8, there were 5 members of BAME communities – all black or mixed heritage, a mixture of African and Caribbean descent, 8 Women and 2 people aged over 70.

16 participants were recruited to take part in a 16 week course on History of Black Settlement in Liverpool and the race riots of 1919, with particular emphasis on material from the archive.

Four creative writing workshops led by Levi Tafari in November 2015; poems were blogged on the project website and performed at celebration event.

16 course participants undertook learning programme and research work based at Liverpool Central Library including tracing descendents of the men from the archive and a field trip to Birmingham NEC for Who Do You Think You Are? Conference <http://www.whodoyouthinkyouarelive.com/>

Workshops took place with main/regular participants during weekly, two hour sessions, members of the public were also invited to participate on particular activities. By 2017 the sessions reduced to once a month for progress meetings. Archives were digitised and uploaded to website, catalogued in order and preserved ready for handover to Public Records office.

### **Showcase and Exhibition events \*additional output**

Public launch and Exhibition event May 2015: Toxteth Library and Kuumba Imaani Centre.

Archive material toured and exhibited to four venues based in Toxteth which raised awareness of both archive and also this period in black British history. (June - September 2015)

Celebration event during WoW festival 2016 featuring poems from creative writing workshops.

Plaque to Charles Wotten unveiled May 2017 - one of the seamen murdered during the race riots.

### **Broadcast \*additional output**

The project and archive was the subject of a TV film focussed on 1919 on Bay TV, What's on in Cardiff and What's on in Liverpool in September 2015. The project and the archive was also featured in the BBC documentary *Black and British* in November 2016 in which a plaque to Charles Wotten was placed at the site of his murder and unveiled on camera.

### **Artist Installation \*additional output**

The Black Poppy installation arose out of a collaboration with artist Faith Bebbington and other members of the public. More than 50 people attended an open day at Kuumba Imani Millennium Centre during which 100 poppies were made; it was displayed at Liverpool Central Library during December 2015 running concurrently with The Weeping Window Sculpture at St Georges Hall.

<https://asenseofplace.com/2015/12/19/unveiling-the-black-poppies/>

### **Preservation of Archive**

Archive presented (on loan) to Liverpool Central Library Record Office in November 2016; it is available to any member of the public on an appointment basis (48 hours notice is required and made on an appointment basis via archive reception).

Link to Records Office: <http://liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/archives-family-history/the-search-room/>

Link to Liverpool Libraries listing:

<http://archive.liverpool.gov.uk/calmview/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=352+MAY%2f1&pos=1>

## Website

Website launched in October 2015 and updated regularly throughout the delivery period. Site includes historical context, digitised versions of documents from archive, summary of project, news and blog.

<http://www.greatwar-to-raceriots.co.uk>

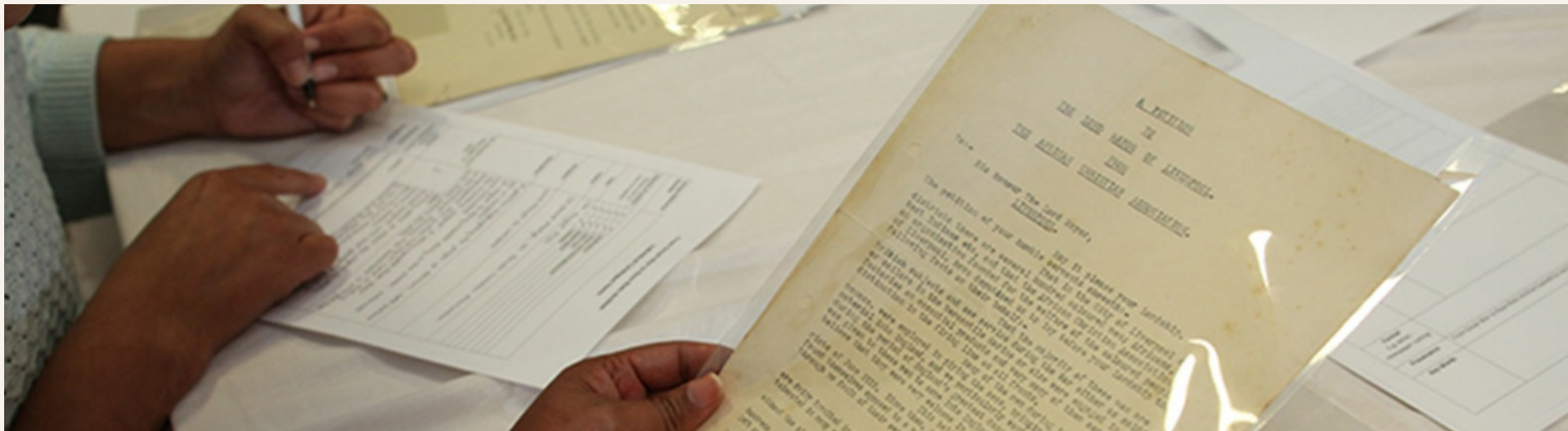
## Book

Book published in October 2017 and showcased at a launch event with members of the public, participants and descendents of the men traced during the delivery of the heritage project. The book is available to buy and borrow from Liverpool Public Libraries.

## Historical walking tour \*additional output

As part of the October 2017 Black History Month mini festival, members of the archiving volunteer group led a walking tour around the streets featured in the archives.

<http://www.greatwar-to-raceriots.co.uk/news.html>



# Details of delivery

## Recruitment of volunteers

The project began in 2015 with a series of activities to promote the existence of the archive including press coverage and a display of the documents at the Kuumba Imani Millennium Centre within the L8 postcode, traditionally the area of black settlement post second world war. The display was used to encourage local community interest in the archive and as a recruitment tool for attracting participants for later elements of the project.

A call out was also posted on the Writing on the Wall website and pushed out through other organisations based in or serving people living within the L8 postcode and targeted social media adverts to generate interest in joining the project. The intention was to recruit volunteers mainly though not exclusively from the area of Liverpool relevant to the archive.



Festival | Projects | Competitions | Events | WoW Books | Archive | Support | Contact

## From Great War to Race Riots

[www.greatwar-to-raceriots.co.uk](http://www.greatwar-to-raceriots.co.uk)

Writing on the Wall have launched an exciting new project which will look at an archive of original documents from 1919 to 1921 relating to Black ex-servicemen, seamen and factory workers who found themselves amongst race riots after the First World War in Liverpool. We are currently recruiting people who may be interested in getting involved in this project. Do you want to find out more about your heritage? Do you have a passion for history and local history? If so, please read more about the project and how you can get involved. If you would like to book a place on this project or find out more information, please contact Madeline Heneghan on 0151 703 0020 or email [madeline@writingonthewall.org.uk](mailto:madeline@writingonthewall.org.uk)

A section of the archive is available to view in the reception area of the Kuumba Imani Millennium Centre, 4 Princes Road, Toxteth, L8 1TH and will then be available to view in Toxteth Library, Windsor Street, Liverpool, L8 1XF from the 9th June 2015.

An initial group of 16 participants joined the first black history course class, the majority of whom have BAME heritage and some of whom are resident in the L8 area.

## Black history course

This core group of volunteers were offered the opportunity to develop their knowledge of the archive and its context through

“My role was an important one in ensuring that the archive was placed within an overall historical context. This greatly enhanced the significance of the archive. In addition, the way in which the course was delivered and how my role developed provided me with sufficient flexibility to respond to the needs of both students and the overall project..”

**Emy Onoura**

attendance at a sixteen week course on black British history. The course was led by WoW Director Madeline Heneghan and Emy Onoura - a lecturer in black history and author of the book *Pitch Black: The Story of Black British Footballers*.

## Creative writing workshops

To coincide with the Weeping Window exhibition at St Georges Hall, commemorating Britain's WW1 dead. WoW Scheduled six creative writing workshops for project volunteers with poet Levi Tafari. These workshops were held in Liverpool Central Library opposite the Weeping Window exhibit. Participants wrote poetry to support the common themes of the archive and the exhibition. These were performed at subsequent events in the project and were included on the project website.

develop their knowledge of the archive and its context through

## Black poppies exhibition

Another outcome of this period was the addition of several workshops involving the creative writing group in the creation of a new partner exhibit at the Library. The group made black poppies to commemorate the contribution of black servicemen to Britain's war efforts. The workshop was open to other members of the public during an open day at Kuumba Imani Millennium Centre in Toxteth during which 50 people attended and 100 poppies were made. The exhibit was created with artist Faith Bebbington and provided another opportunity to promote the existence of the archive.



Image: Liverpool Echo

## Remember Life

*By Linda*

Life in general is not about me  
It's the people on this earth  
And the way we should be

The air that we breathe  
The water we taste  
Making time for all people  
No opinions projecting hate

Remember days past  
When world war was at its height  
Our Ancestors, our Grandparents  
Stood shoulder to shoulder to fight  
No life in general is not about me

Praise the Afro-Caribbean's  
Who fought to keep us free  
So we all should remember when days are hard to bear  
Their sacrifice, strength and their bravery entitles us all  
to be here.

Published <http://www.greatwar-to-raceriots.co.uk/blog/14-my-wwar.html>



## Family research and family history sessions

Before beginning to work with volunteers on the archive WoW introduced the group to the skills and techniques involved by offering two sessions during which participants researched their own family history. These were led in conjunction with Karen O'Rourke of Museums Liverpool and Helena Smart, Liverpool's City Archivist. These sessions were an introduction to the resources that are available within the city and beyond for historical research purposes and included a tour of the Liverpool Records office.

This work continued with support from Kathy Donaldson a volunteer historian with expertise in WW1 history and library staff. Kathy runs a regular Family History advice desk in the Library and offered assistance to the volunteers in their research.

The group were encouraged to find their own family in the archive and in other records accessed during the project.

The group's research uncovered four families who are descendants of the men discovered in the archive.

## Exhibitions and celebrations

WoW have generated as many opportunities to display the archive publicly as possible. This has included an exhibition at Kuumba Imani Millenium Centre as part of the project launch - this event was accompanied by a celebration event with poetry performed by Levi Tafari and a festive barbeque. The documents were then on continuous display across several venues in the city - Toxteth Library, Steve Biko Housing Association Offices, and to Liverpool Central Library. This has encouraged members of the public to engage with the archive and has presented the project with several unforeseen opportunities such as being featured in three local and national television broadcasts - (Black and British a Forgotten History on BBC

with David Olusoga; Routes documentary looking at the 1919 race riots, broadcast on Made in Cardiff; and a feature on Forces News as part of a broader feature on the Weeping Window WW1 exhibition).

The project has included celebration events as a way of encouraging volunteer participants and offering them opportunities to recognise and celebrate their work as well as being a way to promote the project to the wider community. These have included a celebration event to coincide with the Black Poppies exhibition work, a launch event for the project book and feature events during WoW's annual festival in May 2015 and 2016.

Photo: unveiling of plaque for Charles Wotten



## Archive and website

The community participants were involved in the preservation and dissemination of the archive documents. This included a painstaking period of cataloguing and preserving the documents to the standards required for professionally archived material and the digitisation of all documents in the collection. These digital copies were then uploaded to a dedicated website at:

[www.greatwar-to-raceriots.co.uk](http://www.greatwar-to-raceriots.co.uk).

The website also features a contextualising introduction explaining the whole project; a section articulating the historical context in which these documents were created, ongoing news about the project and a blog to which volunteers were regularly encouraged to contribute.



## Book

As a summative outcome for the project WoW Co-Director Madeline Heneghan and Emy Onoura co-authored a partner book detailing the information the project has uncovered including sections covering the discovery of descendants of some of the men in the archive. The final celebration event was a book launch at which the book was sold and members those involved in the project were celebrated.



This was timed to occur during the WoW mini festival celebrating Black History Month in October 2017 and was followed by several other events relating to the project including a walking tour around sites significant to the archive and led by some of the project participants.

**Photo: members of the public attending the walking tour**



# Meeting HLF outcomes

## **OUTCOMES FOR HERITAGE:**

### ***Better managed, recorded and in better condition***

WoW worked with a professionally qualified archivist to work with the documents and volunteer participants. Helena Smart has specific training and experience recognised by the Society of Archivists; She is an archivist currently working for Liverpool City Council, previously employed as the same by Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow and The Bluecoat, Liverpool. She holds a diploma in Archives and Records Management from University of Liverpool and a Master's degree in History from University of Glasgow.

WoW has achieved a permanent establishment for the care and public inspection of the records with Liverpool Records Office; the governing body of whom is local government. All appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the documents are kept secure, well maintained and accessible.

Before being presented to the Records Office the documents were cleaned, collated, scanned for digitisation and stored in archival polyester clear pockets - these will not crack or yellow with age like other plastic pockets. They are collected in 96 separate acid free archival folders; All the materials used for the packaging or repackaging of archival collections are in line with the recommendations of PD5454:2012 including acid-free paper, box board, polyester pockets and high purity papers, for photographs, and unbleached linen tape.

Folders are available to view by appointment only giving 48-hours notice, once you've signed in at the search room a member of staff will show you to your seat where the boxes you have requested will be laid out for you.

Conservation: No cleaning agents are used in archive reception, conservation rooms or repository areas and no open vessels of water are taken into the repository areas to avoid damp. The cleaning routine and environmental controls in place greatly decrease the risk of pest infestation.

The project was an excellent example of the importance of community activity in restoring heritage. The archiving group achieved something that the records office did not have the capacity to do, researching and amplifying the archive promoting its existence and importance to the wider Liverpool population and beyond.

### ***Better interpreted and explained***

Consultation prior to the start of this project had demonstrated a lack of awareness of this significant element of Liverpool's black history. The documents themselves were simply a pile of dusty old letters and documents from a bygone era with unknown relevance to a significant historical story.

This project has breathed new life into this neglected collection, triggering and contributing to comprehension and learning of a city's and community's history that had long lay forgotten. The project volunteer participants have researched the stories behind the letters, finding descendants who knew nothing of this particular part of their heritage. The production of such a well resourced,

accessible and clearly written book is a vital contribution to discovering more about this time and it appears is still stimulating further research.

## **OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE:**

### ***Developed skills and learnt about heritage:***

Along with learning about race relations and Liverpool's post WW1 black history, the project has enabled local people to develop heritage, research and archiving skills. Working with a professional archivist, established writers and historians volunteer participants learned and developed archive research and handling, digitisation, website development and management skills. Alongside this they also developed creative writing skills, working with a published poet, Levi Tafari, composing their own poems in response to the archive.

Through the archive learning sessions, during the life of the project, the volunteer participants have learned about their local history. The Great War and Race Riots website, book and exhibition at Toxteth Library also allow the local and wider community to independently learn about this particular element of history.

Volunteer participants strongly agreed that they had developed an increased interest in this element of their local history and it stirred an emotional connection.

### ***Change in attitudes***

By revealing the personal stories, journeys, politics and tragedy behind this archive, individuals have begun to think differently about heritage and about the black community in Liverpool and across the country.

Work with the local community as volunteers, participants and attendees have engaged in training, workshops and research which in turn have stimulated further background for project outputs.

Many volunteers, participants and attendees of exhibitions and events strongly agreed that they had learned things that made them change their mind about aspects heritage and race relations in Liverpool.

### ***Had an enjoyable experience***

Through interviews and questionnaires with volunteer participants and attendees we had a very affirmative response to engagement in the project. The variety of activity they have been able to get involved in has been discussed as well as a very definite positive view towards lessons learned and an increased awareness in black history and race relations in early 20thC Liverpool.

### ***Volunteered time***

The project was developed and delivered with and by volunteer participants from the local community; these largely remain active in the work and many have mentioned in our communication with them the desire to continue with the work and research as well as raising awareness to others.

## **OUTCOMES FOR COMMUNITIES:**

### ***More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage***

The project targeted local residents to volunteer and participate, largely but not solely BAME. For the events and creative writing, artist workshops WoW targeted the wider community of Liverpool with attendees representing the diversity of the city. The exhibition's accompanying much of the project, and touring to several different venues provided a significant opportunity for raising awareness of the project, getting involved and learning opportunities. The archive is still presented in a public display at Toxteth library.

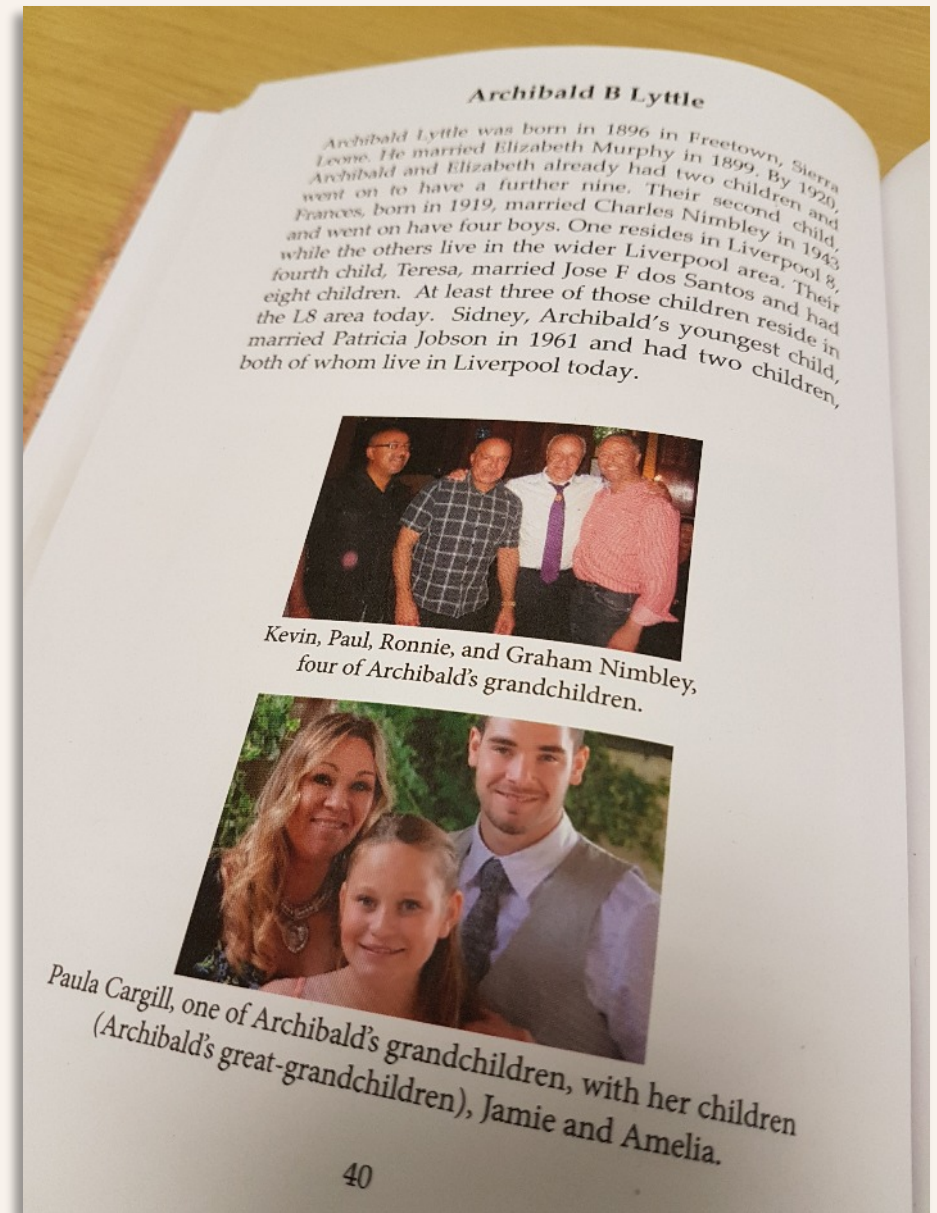
### ***Will have inspired communities to record and celebrate their stories***

The volunteer participant archive group spent time tracing family members from the list of 82 names and addresses found in the documents. Descendants of four of these men were found to be still residing in Liverpool. For these people and their wider families it is an inspirational and provocative sense of place and belonging that has developed from their involvement in the project. For these descendants there is a new ownership and recognition of their shared history and heritage.

***Local area/community will be a better place to live, work or visit***

Through community engagement this project provided opportunities for investigating one's local heritage and to facilitate this, an active use of libraries - both central and within community. It placed residents within a larger historic and social narrative, provoking a greater sense of pride and belonging in the local area thus making it a better place to live, work and visit.

Great War to Race Riots nurtured community solidarity through specific heritage based activities resulting in a change in people's attitudes and greater understanding of the community they live in.



# An external perspective

**ONE SEPTEMBER** is an arts production partnership between Deborah Wintle Escott and Aleasha Chaunté offering artist support services to individuals and organisations in the Merseyside area. We were invited to assess Writing on the Wall's Great War to Race Riots project to provide the organisation and its funders with an additional professional perspective on its activities and outcomes, beginning with its final event, the celebratory book launch on 20th October 2017.

The inclusion of our perspective is over and above the requirements of the project's main funder, Heritage Lottery Fund and we view this commission as a reflection of WoW's high standards and desire to grow and improve. We have consulted HLF guidance on evaluating work and with that in mind we have focused particularly on the participation and engagement elements of the work. In consultation with WoW director Madeline Heneghan we have also included perspectives on improving the project and areas where we saw missed opportunities.

Our approach has been to access the project as if we were members of the public discovering it for the first time. In addition we have gathered further perspectives from project participants using questionnaires and a limited number of informal interviews. Our perspective necessarily focuses on the project legacy though we have sought perspectives from those involved throughout to better understand how the work unfolded.

Our general impression is of an impactful project that engaged well with its target audience and delivered well above its initial aims. This part of the evaluation will detail a little more of what we have found

and offer some thoughts on how Writing on the Wall might enhance the project legacy and learn from it to improve future project delivery.

*Deborah Wintle-Escott and Aleasha Chaunté*



# Archive

**WE VISITED LIVERPOOL CENTRAL LIBRARY** to view the archive twice over a period of one week. First to investigate how to get access to the documents and a second time to view the actual documents. The process was relatively simple though we noted that the process of accessing wasn't as straightforward as we had expected, requiring an appointment with forty-eight hours notice and knowledge of the particular title of the archive. Our concern is that those to whom the documents may be relevant, but who are new to using archives (as we were) might be put off by being sent away to make another appointment.

We would recommend that the Great War to Race Riots website include instructions for how to access the archive including procedures, phone numbers for the archive desk and the appropriate code/title. We do appreciate that the documents have been made generally available in digital form on the website however continuing the great skills and education work the project engaged in it would be helpful to make this knowledge freely available so that those who may wish to investigate their own local history could do this independently. This was relevant to one of our interviewees, Paul Nimbley, descendant of Archie Lyttle one of the men in the archive, who articulated the difficulty his family had had during independent attempts to research their history.

*“One of my brothers tried to get...our father’s side and his grandfather and because he was a seaman he was coming up with a lot of the records... The ordinary seamen they didn’t keep very good records and what they did. He said they’ve had fires and files have been lost and things and he couldn’t get much more than that he was in Portugal - the Algarve, but he couldn’t find out much more. ...Even Archie we weren’t too sure where he was. We knew Ghana. [that] He was from Ghana. But that’s all. That’s as much as we found.”*

**From recorded interview with Paul Nimbley,  
great grandson of Archie Lyttle**



**Photograph of Paul Nimbley  
October 2017**

# Black history course

**EARLY ON IN THE PROJECT** Writing on the Wall developed a sixteen week course on the history of black settlement in Liverpool during the early 20th Century. This was offered to a group of sixteen volunteers recruited from the L8 area. Recruitment for this was centred around displaying parts of the archive in locations in the L8 locality including exhibitions at the Kumba Imaani Centre and Toxteth Library, promotion from local community groups, a call out on the Writing on the Wall website and targeted social media advertising. This seems to have been an effective strategy as all sixteen places were initially taken up. We also noted a success in recruiting across generations with participants aged in their thirties to seventies.

As an introduction to the work that was to come, our perspective, is that this course was an effective way of encouraging commitment to the necessities of the archiving work. The course took participants through an explication of a previously under reported history and successfully communicated the the

need to develop additional primary sources that would illuminate this area of history further.

This was confirmed by two of the participants, Jenaya Pickett and Vicky Caren:

**Jenaya Pickett:** *“It was a hard topic because it’s a history that isn’t known... we were researching something that needed to be researched because nobody else had sort of done it justice.”*

**Vicky Caren:** *“And I liked telling people what we were doing because they didn’t know anything about this part of the history of Liverpool and I just liked sharing. ‘Well, did you know...?’ - Spreading the word!”*

**From recorded interview**

Both participants had clearly bought in to the necessity of the project in a way that motivated them to ‘spread the word’ because they themselves felt it was important.



# Creative writing workshops

**ANOTHER STRENGTH OF THE PROJECT** has been the team's ability to capitalise on the timing of other events in the city. The creative writing workshops were timed to coincide with the Weeping Window exhibition at St George's Hall. The partnership with Liverpool Libraries enhanced this placing the workshops close to the exhibit and allowing for cross promotion of both the archive and workshop outcomes.

The celebratory event featuring the group's work was another great addition to the project, celebrating the contribution of volunteers and creating another promotional showcase for the project. We did however struggle to access creative outcomes after the event. We did eventually find examples of the

poetry in the website blog, but without a search feature it was difficult to locate. We would suggest including some of the works on the website as a page under the Heritage Project page rather than in the blog.



# Family history research workshops

**SIMILAR TO OUR NOTES** on the creative writing workshop, this element demonstrates how strong Writing on the Wall's partnerships are. The research sessions offered a way to make the skills gained personally useful to participants in learning about their own history. A further opportunity might be to make some of the advice and tips for researching family history available on the website so that others can do the same. Ongoing sessions at the library by Kathy Donaldson have been highlighted to us, but it would enhance the project if information about how to access this was made explicit.

It is clear from events and documentation that positive links have been established with descendants identified during these sessions; they have been kept involved in the ongoing project through invitations to exhibitions and celebration events. We have observed this having a very positive impact on the lives of the family members, giving them access to previously unknown parts of their heritage. Their inclusion also provides a provocative element for the project's legacy in encouraging others to engage in researching their own family history. As noted above a short explanation of key skills and signposting on the website would support this in the future.



# Website

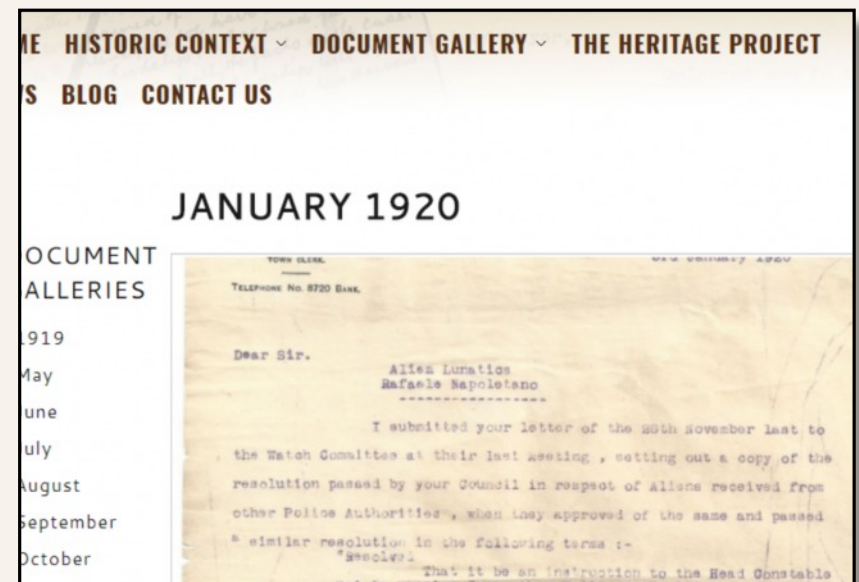
**THE WEBSITE WAS LAUNCHED** at a public event taking place at Liverpool Central Library on 28th October 2015. The Archive volunteer/participant group welcomed the public in to view the documents and meet with them. Poet Levi Tafari also performed at this event.

The website provides excellent access to the archive documents and presents the archive and historical value in an accessible and exciting context.

In general, this type of digitised archive is often hidden behind online pay-walls, within professional journals or accessible only via university libraries. That they are available in high quality images on an open website is significant as they are now part of the commons and may encourage further study of the black history of the United Kingdom. This is further enhanced with the historic context

section which offers access to some of the content of the book and the black history course.

We did encounter a few easily fixable site structure issues which made it difficult to find key project outputs like poems from the creative writing workshops which were hidden away in the blog. These are, however, easily resolvable issues.



# Participant feedback

Working on this project has made me....

## **...FEEL**

*...cheated and bitter towards the establishments that changed my life completely, if I had known then how it impacted on my development, I would be more assertive.*

*...it makes me angry*

*...engaged, part of something important*

*...more self-confident*

*...part of a group of individuals doing something important in promoting this history*

## **...THINK**

*...this project should be open to everyone. OK lots of us know we have been kept down but when you understand what happened to us in Liverpool it will make us strong and fight for our rights. Not with our fists but our brains.*

*...about issues facing the black community in the past and now*

*...about how to get people interested in the archive*

*...about my own heritage and little is recorded about the black British experience.*

## **...DO**

*...I want to shout out loud wake up black people of Liverpool, educate yourselves and you will be able to educate your children.*

*...more to learn about black issues in society and to look at further education options*

*...more reading on Liverpool's history*

*...more than I ever thought I would in terms of public speaking, creative writing and being featured on a BBC documentary as part of the project group.*

# Participant feedback cont

**Is there anything about the project you would have liked WOW to have done differently?**

*Get out and involve the wider community*

*I feel it was a well conceived, constructed and delivered project that emphasised giving everyone involved opportunities to develop and have a voice.*

*No - right balance of different content.*

*Not at all.*

**Any other thoughts?**

*I want to know more about what black people went through after the 2nd world war. What really went on in the education system and communities. I want to see all the hidden reports, all the hidden memos and all what was said about black people in Liverpool in particular.*

*The commitment of everyone involved in the project was inspiring*

*I am very sad to be filling in a survey about the end of our project :( It has been an absolute joy getting to know Madeline, Eme and the rest of the group.*

*WoW is an exemplary organisation and I hope to work on many projects with them in the future.*

**How has the project impacted on your thoughts/feelings about Race Relations?**

*I am so sorry I am no longer able to become involved in unions or Race Relations. My feeling is there is a lot more to come out about those organisations. We should not let them hide behind laws that are only there to fool us. We have believed this crap for too long, now is the time to delve deeper. Go back into the offices where the truth lies. Before it is jazzed up and we fall for it.*

*The project has highlighted that institutional racism has been around for a long long time and as a society we haven't learnt nothing, but volunteers working on the project come from different backgrounds, all working together for the same goal, so there is some hope.*

*Personally I have learnt a lot - not just about the history, but about myself, gaining more self confidence after feeling challenged and a little outside my comfort zone.*

*It has confirmed what I have known already but has made me realise the importance of recording and preserving history for future generations.*

# Facilitator perspectives

"I assisted the volunteers with sorting the collection and provided training and supervision to a volunteer who catalogued the collection onto CALM. I also assisted with and supervised the re-packaging and numbering of the collection to enable access to future users. Liverpool Record Office also provided search-room accommodation which allowed the group to meet on a regular basis and to view original documents which supported the project.

I worked with WoW on the George Garrett Project. As the collection was to be deposited at the Record Office for long-term preservation and access it was essential that I had input regarding the way the collection was catalogued to ensure archival and in-house standards were met.

I was brought in at the right stages of the project to advise on the cataloguing of the collection. I was also involved in the planning stage of the application and advised on how to catalogue the collection to ensure best possible access for future generations.

Fantastic outcomes based around a small number of archival documents. Thorough research by partners, project leaders and participants allowed the time-period and race riots to be explored to provide context on the people involved.

**Helena Smart**

"My role was an important one in ensuring that the archive was placed within an overall historical context. This greatly enhanced the significance of the archive. In addition, the way in which the course was delivered and how my role developed provided me with sufficient flexibility to respond to the needs of both students and the overall project. On a personal note the course enabled me to develop expertise in an important period of history.

The project was extremely important in bringing the archive into the public domain and in so doing highlighting the contribution of Liverpool's slave trading history, the development of the city's and the country's black communities, the contribution of African and Caribbean soldiers, seafarers and workers and the response of the authorities to racial violence and discrimination. The project gained publicity and was featured in a BBC series on the history of black Britain. It also facilitated additional collaborative work with libraries, poets, writers and other artists as well as the national archive and other historical organisations.

The project developed in an organic fashion which enabled the project to respond to a number of emerging themes and developments that greatly enhanced the project and allowed the archive and its associated themes to be placed within the work of a range of other events and activities e.g. family trees, black poppies. The flexibility of this approach proved to be invaluable in ultimately furthering the projects aims and objectives. It is important that methods of funding support this approach."

**Emy Onoura**

"I really and truly enjoyed the role I played in delivering the creative side to the project. I made some new friends and watch some of the participants grow in stature creatively and personally oozing with confidence.

My thoughts about the project are, that this project was very important in terms that it was like finding some of the missing pieces of the jigsaw in British history. It was great that the project was more creative than academic as it opened the project up to members of the public so that they had knowledge of the events that took place at that time and had a direct link to Liverpool's Black community. Some families in Liverpool 8 and it's surrounding areas are directly linked to the events and that makes it real.

The project was well run and managed to the highest standard, leading to TV exposure, an exhibition at Liverpool Central Library and a public performance of the work created."

**Levi Tafari**

# Conclusion

**WRITING ON THE WALL** have succeeded in building a reputation for integrity based projects that have a far greater reach than many organisations. They succeed in building trust and commitment in their volunteers and local community. This trusted status resulted in the donation of the documents that this project is based on and we see the results of this project having a similar trust building effect for the future. Volunteers spoke in glowing terms about the project and about the possibility of working again with Writing on the Wall in the future. There was a sense that all involved felt that even though the project had covered so much that it had just scratched the surface in terms of articulating black history and there was significant enthusiasm for continuing into the future.

It is worth highlighting the fact that the project achieved something above and beyond what might have been achieved had the documents been simply handed to the records office. The group's research, archiving and promotion gave the project a reach that the records office did not have the capacity to achieve adding to the archive significantly, recording the current

position of some of the families mentioned in the archive offering significant new information to those people and to the archive itself. This is a history not fully told and all involved seemed aware of the importance of the work undertaken.

We want to reiterate that the existence of this evaluation is over and above the requirements of the project's main funder, Heritage Lottery Fund and we view this commission as a reflection of WoW's high standards and desire to grow and improve.

*"The commitment of everyone involved was inspiring."*

#### **Archiving volunteer survey**

*"I want to know more about what black people went through after the second world war. What really went on in the education system and communities. I want to see all the hidden reports, all the hidden memos and all what was said about black people in particular."*

#### **Archiving volunteer survey**

*"After keeping the docs for 30 years, I decided to deliver them to WOW after looking at the way they delivered the wonderful G. Garrett project." **Joe Farrag***

# Evaluators

**DEBORAH WINTLE-ESCOTT** has been working in the arts and creative sector for over 25 years; beginning as Administrator at Liverpool Everyman Theatre she went on to manage theatre company Kaboodle Productions before leaving to join Mersey Producers overseeing the development of 'additional work' for Handstand Productions, Rejects Revenge, Spike Theatre and Urban Strawberry Lunch. She went on to join Rejects Revenge as freelance tour booker before joining Fittings Multimedia Arts as Admin Director. She is an experienced arts manager with skills in strategic development, administration and finance, tour booking, artist development and project management. As Executive Director for One September Deborah brings her experience and skills to work with artists, developing their work and ambitions alongside friend and colleague Aleasha Chaunté.

**ALEASHA CHAUNTÉ** has been working in the arts for over 20 years. Starting as a design intern at the Nuffield theatre in North London. She is a professional actor and musician trained in Poland with Song of the Goat Theatre Company. Her career covers all sides of artistic practice from management, production and design, to working as an actor. She spent several years managing campaigns for the National Association of Student Employment Services. She has written articles for the Guardian Newspaper. Now, as Creative Director for One September, she works to develop performance practitioners and organisations to realise their potential. She also has her own artistic practice bringing communities together around myth, ritual and music.







One september



on the wall

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