



NOTTINGHAM ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL TRAVELLING SCHOLARSHIP NEWSLETTER January 2017

8 The Corner, Lowdham, Notts NG14 7AE
rooseveltscholarship@googlemail.com tel 07767-797-335

Twitter: @NottsRoosevelt
www.rooseveltscholarship.org



Welcome to the first newsletter 2017

There are a number of exciting developments this year as we continue to develop and modernise the scholarship. The newsletter will be a key part of a more regular dialogue with the Alumni, along with our use of social media to engage with the more recent scholars. Our records may be a bit dated so could you please confirm your preferred contact details and which form of communications you would prefer. We're also building our Twitter and Facebook presence so let me know your email, Facebook name, Twitter handle etc.

Trustee Changes. Further to the changes at the April AGM there were two further changes at the November meeting held at the Nottingham Mechanics. Elisia Denton (2015 scholar) stepped down temporarily and Gabriel Strauss (Director at Capatex based in Nottingham) joined from 1st January.

Management Group. The two returning scholar Rachel Armitage and Sarah Taylor have joined Gareth Bartsch, Sheridan Chilvers, Ed Attenborough, Sarah Wright and myself as the key organising group. Gareth and Ed remain in charge of fund raising and key contacts with the Nottinghamshire business community. Sheridan continues to be in charge of Events and will be supported in closer engagement with the Alumni by Rachel Armitage and Sarah W. Sarah Taylor will be head of communications including updating our social media presence.

2017 scholars. The application window for the 2017 scholars is now open. Leaflet is on the website home page. We've already had three enquiries and one application form. Sheridan will be overseeing the process with John Town leading as in previous years. John, myself, Rachel and Sarah Taylor will be the initial interview panel. If any alumni want to play a part in the process or have ideas as to new places to advertise then please let me know as soon as possible. This year's process will be on-line only. The new website includes a specially made form and streamlines the process.

Returning scholar talks. Gareth is arranging a series of venues where Sarah and Rachel will give talks. This

will include specific groups related to the scholars as well as local Business organisations. If you know of any Nottinghamshire societies that would like an uplifting talk then please contact me or Gareth. We're aiming for two talks per week per scholar.

BBC Radio Nottingham. Sarah will be on the Breakfast review of the papers with John Holmes at 10am on Sunday 22nd January.

Returning scholar news. Sarah is back in Nottingham and looking to implement some of the incredible ideas she picked up on in the States to help her horticulture in schools business as well as start to explore how to create an urban farm in Nottinghamshire. The City and County Councils have been very supportive as has Nottingham City Housing Association. It is a testament to these organisations and to Sarah that they can see the benefits in working together to create a better environment for the people of Nottinghamshire. Sarah has continued the blog she maintained on her trip and this is available at <https://greenscenesite.wordpress.com/>

Rachel too is back in Nottingham working at the City Council and will be putting into practice some of the excellent ideas she saw on her trip. As well as appearing on Central News, Rachel kept a daily log of her travels which were 'broadcast' on our social media during her travels. An edited serialised version will be available on our website starting on 1st February. Please let me know if you'd like to access this.

Scholarship changes. The original Trust deed was first drafted in 1945 and a lot has happened since. At the November meeting, the Trustees reviewed the deed and, subject to proper process being followed, intend to update the deed. The first change will be to amend the age range of scholarship from the current 20-30 year old to 21-35 year old which recognises the tendency for people to remain longer in education and move between jobs more frequently before finding one they feel they can settle on.

The second is to allow for a shorter scholarship (up to 6 weeks) and to develop some targeted scholarship aimed at specific business sectors. This recognises that employers and employees are finding it

increasingly difficult to allocate the full 12 weeks unless the scholarship is an integral part of a longer term development program.

The third is to re-affirm that the scholars must be in employment at the time they apply for / are awarded the scholarship.

Consideration was given to the destination of the scholarship, the fact that many people have already travelled to the States and the opportunities in many of the developing countries but it was felt that the scholarship was set up to honour F D Roosevelt and the contribution that he and the US made to end the war. The discussion made us even more determined to ensure the scholars fully experience the richness and diversity of the American culture by visiting as many diverse families as possible.

Births. I was so pleased to hear that Becky Williamson gave birth to her lovely daughter Ava on 24th November. If Ava goes on to be a scholar that will be the third generation of scholars – joining her mum Becky and grandma Pat. I first met Pat when applying for the scholarship and in the process met my wife Liz!! There are very many links between the Alumni so please let me know of some items that you'd like shared.

Alumni events. We had two events at the end of 2016, both focused on Nottingham, at Goose Fair and the Nottingham Panthers. Let me or Sheridan know if you have any other ideas for a meeting. Ideally we'd like to have one every few months to continue to build the Alumni.



Website. This continues to be the main place where we will be storing readily accessible information, you can see Rachel's appearance in front of the Capital (under the news section). We will start populating more of the previous scholars. While we have some archive photos, if you'd like us to use a more recent

one then please let me know. Also if you'd like to give an updated bio then we can put that on the site too.

New logo. As part of the review of the Trust deed we have reverted to the proper name of the Scholarship. The logo has been slightly amended and appears on the website and will appear on the stationary. Gareth is also designing a full size logo which will incorporate some of the key themes of the scholarship. As it takes shape a draft will be on the website, please feel free to comment – good and bad. In a world where there is so much information and people have such a short attention span we need a logo that can encapsulate the essence of the scholarship.

Pictures from your trip. We're thinking of building a library of scholar photos. Please send in your best five with labels of the place and date. We are thinking of a collage of (a) where scholars were on a given date on the year or (b) for a given place who was there on what dates.

Mentors. Following on from the success of having mentors for newly appointed scholars we are considering introducing mentors for when scholars return. Mentoring can be very rewarding for those doing the mentoring as well as those being mentored. If you have experiences, both personal and professional that you feel may help the recent scholars then please let me know. One idea given in the right way at the right time can dramatically change a person's life.

Thanking those people who helped ourselves and recent scholars. Sarah and Rachel's experiences show how generous their hosts were. During my travels I met countless people who were so kind in sharing their homes, time and family which made a long lasting difference. It is never possible to repay those individuals but by doing the same to others I find I can make some contribution. Along these lines we are thinking of offering anyone who hosted recent scholars a base from which to explore Nottinghamshire this summer – ie they get themselves to Nottinghamshire and we look after them for a week. If you're up for this then again please contact me.

Scholar reports. Below is a very short report from Rachel and Sarah, their reports will be ready for the April Trustee meeting.

Rachel's report



When I was introduced as a new Roosevelt Scholar at last year's annual celebration event, I couldn't have anticipated how many alumni would greet me warmly and recall, with a twinkle in their eye and a smile on their face, the highlights of their own travels through the scholarship. The phrase 'life changing' was used more times than I can count, but I wouldn't truly comprehend what this meant until I was sitting on the plane home at the end of three incredible months travelling one of the most welcoming and diverse countries on earth.

Starting in September 2016, my journey across the USA took me from DC to Florida, Ohio to California and many places in between, where I explored the different approaches to voter registration and political engagement, especially amongst young and marginalised groups. My aim was to immerse myself in activity surrounding the Presidential Election and to take away any best practice and pieces of advice to help inform my work as the Electoral Services Engagement Officer at Nottingham City Council. In following the election, I saw the best and worst of America, but came away all the richer for my experiences interviewing, volunteering with and listening to people who mobilise their communities for change through politics. I am now undoubtedly better prepared to tackle the challenges of engagement within my own community and will aim to channel the positivity and determination of my colleagues over the pond when working to encourage registration and voting amongst our citizens.

However, it wasn't just the excitement of seeing US politics up close that made the scholarship special for me. I also experienced the kindness, generosity and openness of American culture that ensured I was

never without a pillow for my head, a meal in my stomach and a friend to call on, no matter where I was. Americans taught me how to eat gefilte fish at Shabbat dinner, when to wear my 'rush cap' at a baseball game, how to contra dance with two left feet, and to look for the adventure in every day. I was welcomed into the homes of young families, retired couples, single mothers and struggling students, at each place experiencing the grand tour of the area or taking friendly advice on what to see and do. I toured the Capitol Building in DC, saw the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, cheered at a college football game in Tennessee and followed a Gay Pride parade through Gainesville, Florida. I loved every minute of the crazy diversity of life on the road - although I'm not sorry to see the back of those Greyhound busses!

Reflecting on my trip some six weeks on, I now realise that I will be reaping its benefits for many years to come. Whether it's due to my increased confidence and sense of independence, the connections I made in both business and personal circles, or the incredible and unique experiences that I was able to witness and learn from, the scholarship will inevitably play a big part in shaping my future. I think it will be a quote from Eleanor Roosevelt - learned whilst visiting the Roosevelt Museum in Hyde Park, NY - that rings most true for me in the years to come: "Nothing has ever been achieved by the person who says, 'It can't be done.'" It is lessons like these, and many others, that make the Roosevelt Scholarship unparalleled in helping to advantage and equip me for the future as a young professional in an interconnected world.

Sarah's report.



On the 02nd October 2016, I set off on my Roosevelt Journey from Birmingham International airport; destination Boston, MA. As I said goodbye to my family and friends for the 8 weeks, I boarded the flight with a stomach full of butterflies, apprehensive of what America had in store! With a precise itinerary and amazing farm visits lined up, my solo flight across the pond was filled with a combination of nerves and excitement. Arriving in Boston around 6pm ETA, after a 7 hour flight, I was tired and nervous to be in a new place alone. Everything is different yet so familiar; everything is exciting yet scary all at the same time. I felt a huge sense of accomplishment for getting myself on to that plane and landed miles away from home; I'd done it and it felt great!

The 9 days I spent in Boston were filled with lots of research visits to urban farms, school gardens, community gardens and projects. I was busy meeting new like minded people in hostels and through SERVAS; an international hosting organisation and seeing a brand new world. I would say the first week was the hardest and spent with emotional highs and lows. However, the whole time my feelings went from being excited, proud, passionate, inspired, and happy to exhausted, homesick, lost and overwhelmed. But that's the magic of it, no two seconds are the same, emotions come and go like waves against the shore but one thing that's remained is a huge sense of achievement. No longer do I fear the unknown, no longer do I take the easy option or stay within my comfort zone and I certainly feel a new 'can do' attitude.

From Boston, I travelled down the East Coast arriving in New York and Philadelphia. The same research into urban farm and all things urban green grew and grew as people suggested places I should visit. I then made an internal flight from Philadelphia arriving in L.A and then an overnight bus journey to San Francisco before my departure home. Leaving home for an extended period of time was one of the bravest things I have done in my adult life. The people closest to me know me as a home bird and for myself I felt overwhelmed with leaving my loved ones and business, something I had never done before. The Roosevelt Scholarship offers the opportunity to research as well as an amazing travel experience which was something

worth putting my home comforts to the side for. The warmth of the American people fills that gap of missing home as everyone you meet is friendly and helpful; living in the moment and really embracing life... something I will be eternally thankful for! Being awarded the Nottingham Roosevelt Travelling Scholarship has changed my life in more ways than I could have ever imagined. No matter what situation I was faced with in The States, I got through it. The daily planning of where will I go next, where will I stay and who will I meet has given me so much faith in myself to know that I can do it and no matter what happens it will always work out okay. I feel a new sense of independence, bravery, accomplishment and self belief in a way that I had never imagined. Despite having to cut my trip short due to unforeseen family circumstances, I left America on a high! Full of new knowledge, inspiration, mindset and attitude, I boarded the flight home knowing it would only be a matter of months before I will return. I am so very grateful and thankful to NRTS for giving me this opportunity for the amazing things I learnt, memories I will never forget and friends I have made along the way. As a direct result of the scholarship and to give back to Nottingham, I have decided to convert my organisation Green Scene Education to a Community Interest Company (C.I.C.), expand it across the city and establish Nottingham's first Urban Farm... Watch this space!

Key upcoming goals in early 2017

1. Interview and appoint at least one 2017 scholar
2. Start to re-engage with Alumni in a meaningful way so that Alumni feel a continuing benefit from the scholarship and the Alumni can become a key asset of the scholarship.
3. Re-engage with Nottinghamshire businesses (private, public and third sector) to provide scholars and scholarships they value

Key dates for your calendar

3rd March – closing date for application for 2017 scholar

27th April – AGM and selection of 2017 scholars

**Our Celebration Event is to be held on
Friday 30th June 2017, at Manners Arms, Knipton
An invitation will be sent with all the details under separate cover.**

If you have any information that you wish to share with others, this newsletter is the ideal opportunity to reach an audience. Please email or write to me with anything you feel will be of interest for the next issue.