

Ruby Slippers

MEDIA RELEASE

11 March 2008 - IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kelham Island Museum remembers the Great Sheffield Flood... of 1864

Kelham Island Museum will open its doors to the general public, albeit only briefly, during the Easter Holidays for a 3-day event that remembers the Great Sheffield Floods of 1864.

From Tuesday 25th to Thursday 27th March, Kelham Island Museum will hold a one-off Easter event which will include a series of free activities to entertain adults and families alike. Although the actual Museum remains closed, from 11 am - 4 pm, each day, visitors can experience what it was like to live through the Flood of 1864 when the Dale Dyke Dam burst and also view images of the devastation caused by the floods that almost destroyed the Museum, in June 2007.

Senior Learning and Interpretation Officer, Kirsten Timms working at Kelham Island Museum to deliver the events said,

“The Great Floods have always been an attraction that our visitors are fascinated by and obviously since the floods last year, the subject is something that is at the front of all of our minds. The Easter activities will be great fun but also show people the serious side of flooding and how the area was affected back in 1864. Families can come and take part in all the activities for free and see more about Victorian life and get involved in craft sessions, play with Victorian toys and take part in drama workshops as well as seeing pictures of the devastation caused by the Victorian and more recent floods”.

During the three days that the event will run, families can get involved in educational and drama workshops. There is a drop-in craft session where children can take part in some of the activities carried out by a Victorian Working Class Child. The drama workshop will reinact true stories of the terrible night of the Flood from the point-of-view of Kelham Island resident Keziah Eaton whose husband made a desperate attempt to rescue their pig. There will also be a workshop detailing the events leading up to the fateful night presented by the character of John Gunson, Chief Engineer of Sheffield Waterworks Company, who supervised the building of the Dale Dyke Dam which cracked and burst its banks.

Talking about where the Museum is in its redevelopment, Executive Director of Kelham Island Museum, John Hamshere commented,

“We’ve had a busy time since last Summer cleaning up and carrying out the necessary work to start the refurbishment of the Museum. The progress we have made so far is phenomenal but there is still some way to go before we can re-open properly. The work to date has brought the Museum to a position where we can allow people to visit the site and have refreshments, however, the Museum itself remains closed. We’re keen to provide the local community with opportunities to come to Kelham Island during this period of closure and what better theme for an event than The Great Flood of 1864”.

With the work progressing as it is, Kelham Island Museum is hoping to re-open parts of the Museum later this year when, once again, visitors will be able to see some of the original and great exhibits such as the River Don Engine and the Bramah Press as well as some new displays.

The Easter opening of Kelham Island is free to the public and will take place from 11 am – 4 pm each day. The Museum café will be open throughout serving refreshments.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- The Great Flood Easter Event will take place on 25th, 26th and 27th March 2008 from 11 am – 4 pm
- The event is for the general public and is free
- The timed sessions will run as follows each day:
 - 11.00 am Mr Gunson
 - 11.30 am Keziah Eaton
 - 12.30 pm Mr Gunson
 - 1.00 pm Keziah Eaton
 - 1.30 pm Mr Gunson
 - 2.00 pm Keziah Eaton
 - 2.30 pm Mr Gunson
 - 3.00 pm Keziah Eaton

- Kelham Island Museum website - <http://www.simt.co.uk/>
- Ruby Slippers www.rubyslippers.co.uk - (working with Kelham Island to promote the event)

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