England Project Newsletter

Hello and welcome to the anniversary edition of the England Project Newsletter! Who would have thought when we began work on the revamped project a year ago that we would go from 60 active members to 194 active members in 12 months. Not only this, our fantastic Orphan Trail has generated 41 graduates, many of whom have gone on to do great things in the rest of the England Project and beyond.

In this bumper issue, we will be taking a look at some of the amazing things we have been working on over the past twelve months, as well as what we have planned coming up. I personally want to say a huge thank you, to all of you, no matter what your role in the project is. It has been an absolute joy and delight to work with you all. This project is a very special group of people and you all mean the world to me. Thank you for your contributions.

An interview with: Chris Weston-987, Sussex Team Leader

1. When did you join the England Project?
Ah, I guess that was only in April of this year, having been a little spooked by the tangerine coloured warning messages when saving pre-1700 profiles. But, I'd been thinking about joining up ever since receiving a prompt from Gillian Thomas the previous November, especially since my research into my patrilineal line of descent, as source material for a family history book, was pretty much done and I was feeling more open to doing work for the WikiTree community in general.

What is your current role, and what does that entail?
I'm the team leader for Sussex: I revise our team pages and try to keep us up to date with implementing new features agreed within the England project (like changes to categorisation structures), whilst providing support for anyone interested in working on Sussex related profiles and coordinating improvements to existing profiles. I have a brilliant team, though, who frequently pick up our tasks before I have time to do anything about them, and I just try to keep us communicating and focused on the various topics that we're targeting. Just now, we're looking at an helpful new list of Sussex profiles in need to better sourcing, provided by the wonderful Aleš Trtnik.

2. What do you enjoy most about the project?
I'm hugely impressed by the dynamism of the England Project at the moment: there is so much going on and I'm always fascinated to catch up on the latest topic of debate. I'm very excited by the prospect of not just one, but two project meet-ups being organised for next year! I think I'm a bit quiet myself, preferring to beaver away on relatively easy improvements to 19th century profiles in the county, but even then it's great to feel that the work I'm doing has direction and is appreciated.

3. Is there a particular area of the project that you've worked on that you're proud of?

I'm proud of *all* the things the Sussex Team has done. I think everyone really does try very hard "to make all Sussex profiles the best that they can be". Of course, that's not a personal accomplishment and I think that's just the way it needs to be, because the overall goal of WikiTree as a single, universal family tree, may be aided by heroic single contributions, but will only be achieved through the magic of teamwork.

4. What are your hopes for the future of the England Project?

I would like to see the enormous skills of our (and other) project members inspiring and guiding the entire membership towards higher quality profiles. I hope that the sadly, relatively small amount of profile improvement that we are able to do is having some impact through leading by example. I have much greater hopes, though, of initiatives such as the excellent Orphans Trail. Perhaps we should consider extending the goals of all our projects to recognise a duty towards education as well as the pursuit of more tangible objectives.

5. Do you have any words of advice for other members?

Yeah, "Don't be dismayed by the scale of our ambitious and wonderful project!" I let myself get quit disheartened by a G2G question the other week that was headed "The Tree is not getting enough input.". It took me a while to realise that the important question for this project is not "Are we nearly there yet?", but "Is what we're achieving worthwhile?" and, reviewing my own personal experience of the project, the answer for me has to be a resounding "Yes!"

Spotlight on: The Arborists Team

We have two new Arborists, Peter Cameron and Joan Whitaker. The Arborist team page has had a makeover, and we have added an 'Arborists Prep' page, for England project members who would like to work towards their Arborists badge, or just build their confidence in merging. We've added some ways to find merges that are not too challenging when you first start out and we will support you along the way with any questions you have. We need more Arborists in England, so if you are interested send a message to Joan or Gillian.

Flagship Profile: Charles Darwin

Each newsletter we will be showing you one of the profiles we have been collaborating on as a project. This edition is [Charles Darwin](). Darwin's profile is a particularly good example of collaboration amongst a group of project members and is definitely a profile we can be proud of. If you'd like to be a part of the Profile Management Team please see Vivienne Caldwell.

Team Changes

There have been lots of changes to the English Project Team since the last newsletter. We are excited to announce that Amy Utting has become the fourth Leader of the England Project to complete our Leadership team. As such, we are currently on the lookout for a replacement Project Coordinator for Counties, but in the meantime, please see Amy for anything to do with counties.

Ros Haywood has stepped down as Project Coordinator for the Orphan Trail in order to focus on other areas of WikiTree. We are indebted to Ros for her enormous contribution in setting up the trail and she has left a lasting legacy of work and graduates. Please take every opportunity to thank Ros for her dedication and work for the England Project and WikiTree as a whole.

Fran Weidman has kindly agreed to take up the reigns for the Orphan Trail moving forwards. A former trailer herself, Fran is passionate about helping others learn the ropes and enjoy their time on WikiTree. Beginning under Ros, and continuing with Fran, the Trail is developing into a team to enable more and more trailers to participate as they join the project. These team leaders are known as Trailblazers, who has taken the Trail themselves and are now helping others do the same. Our two latest Trailblazers are Lizzie Griffiths and Raewyn Vincent.

We are so excited to see how the project will grow as we move into a new year. Thank you everyone for making this such a lovely place to work. We really are leaving a lasting legacy for future generations.

Onwards and upwards,

Susie