



National Memorial Arboretum Role Description: Oral History Volunteer Role

What is the National Memorial Arboretum?

The National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire is the UK's year-round Centre for Remembrance; it is a place which helps people to reflect and to be inspired, a place where they can celebrate lives lived and commemorate lives lost in service. Located in the heart of the country, in the National Forest, with approximately 30,000 maturing trees and over 380 memorials across a 150-acre site, the Arboretum is a beautiful and lasting tribute to those who have served, suffered, and sacrificed on behalf of the Nation.

What is *The Arboretum at 25: Archiving Remembrance* project?

The National Memorial Arboretum is 25 years old in 2026. To mark this event the project will bring together dispersed, at-risk materials, held by staff, volunteers, memorial holders and partners to create and establish its first formal archive. The project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, will safeguard, organise and share the Arboretum's unique 25-year history as the nation's centre for Remembrance.

What does an Oral History volunteer Do?

An Oral History volunteer, with support from the Heritage Project Manager and the Project Archivist, will arrange, prepare for and carry out in-person oral history interviews with stakeholders and community members to capture the person's memories via an oral history recorder.

They will be responsible for ensuring the interview is transcribed and all copyright paperwork is signed. They will then submit the recorded interview, transcription and copyright paper to the Project Archivist for archiving.

As part of the project, some volunteers might choose to research potential interviewees themselves.

This is a great opportunity to help ensure a range of voices from the last 25 years of the Arboretum are represented in the archive and to help with research into the early years of the Arboretum's establishment.

A day of refresher training and a day of training for people who haven't done oral history before will be provided at the Arboretum.

Sample activities: What will you be doing as an Oral History Volunteer?

- Agree interviewee and date and place of interview with Heritage Project Manager and interviewee.
- Carry out research into the interviewee ahead of the interview via the internet and in the Arboretum archive. Use this research to prepare interview questions.
- Collect the oral history recorder and copyright paperwork from the Heritage and Learning Office.

- Attend the interview (where the interview is offsite a member of staff will drive you and attend for support and safety). Set up the recording equipment, put the interviewee at ease and carry out the interview. At the end of the interview, ensure the copyright form is completed.
- Return equipment to the Heritage and Learning Office at the Arboretum and get the interview downloaded.
- Attend the Arboretum to use a volunteer laptop to transcribe the interview using AI. Edit the transcription in Microsoft Word to ensure it is accurate to the audio recording.
- Once completed, submit the transcription, audio file and copyright paperwork to the Project Archivist to be added to the Archive and potentially used in the upcoming 25th anniversary exhibition.
- Move onto next interviewee.

This may suit people who are:

- Strong verbal communicators
- Enjoy hearing other people's life stories
- Interested in 20th and 21st century history
- Able to carry out research online
- Take a methodical approach to tasks
- Can follow a workflow and verbal instructions or a written guide, particularly when using computers
- Interested in learning about or have knowledge of the National Memorial Arboretum, the history of the site, and the organisations and memorials
- Committed to acting in line with Royal British Legion policies and procedures, including those relating to data protection; confidentiality; safeguarding; health and safety and equality and diversity
- Are unable to give a regular commitment of time
- Sympathetic to the values of the National Memorial Arboretum and The Royal British Legion
- An excellent Ambassador for the Arboretum.

What Support will be available to you?

- A day of refresher training or a day of training for people who haven't done oral history before will be provided at the Arboretum. Tentative dates for training are: Wednesday 24th June – Refresher training. Monday 6th July – Oral History for Beginners Training.
- One-to-ones as needed with the Heritage team
- Training and opportunities for to explore other volunteering opportunities at the Arboretum
- A handbook to support your volunteering
- A volunteer agreement that outlines both our expectations of you as well as what you can expect from us.



What do you need to know?

Time commitment

1-4 times per month in half days or full days. Dates of interviews will be dictated by the interviewee and will be matched with the volunteer who is available on that day. Research and transcription can be planned around your availability.

Training/Resources

Training from an external oral history trainer and ongoing support from the Heritage team for transcription and research.

Expenses

Mileage at 0.45p mile between home and the Arboretum will be reimbursed up to a maximum of 60 miles, per return journey, for each volunteering duty day.

Extra Information

The minimum age for Volunteer applicants is 16 years old.

What is in it for you?

- Interesting and rewarding duties
- An opportunity to meet new people
- A chance to build on existing skills and develop new ones
- Training relevant to role
- 50% discount in our Restaurant when on duty (special terms apply) and free tea & coffee
- 10% discount in our Gift Shop
- Long Service Appreciation Awards
- Weekly e-newsletter 'Newsleaf' to help keep you up to date, and Quarterly staff & volunteer presentations
- Volunteer & staff social events
- Volunteer uniform
- Travel expenses
- Free car parking (whether on or off duty)



Our values and behaviours

Does the following describe you?

- Passionate about helping all visitors, eager to share your knowledge and experience to help others
- Enjoy being in teams and with others
- Have a desire to provide great support in all that you do
- Committed to being the best you can and to learn and develop new and existing skills.

This role is purely voluntary, and this arrangement is not meant to be a legally binding one or an employment contract