

The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 259, Refugee Week extra, 21 June 2018

Introduction

There has been considerable interest in Refugee Week this year, so this extra Ebulletin pulls together some news and information about some of the activities.

It's also a timely reminder that this Ebulletin grew from the "Welcome To Your Library" project, a national project, funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, connecting public libraries with new arrivals, which ran from 2003-2007.

Although the project has ceased, some of the resources developed as part of it are still available on The Network website (see:

<http://www.seapn.org.uk/topics/migration/welcome-to-your-library>), and we also decided to leave the WTYL website available as a historical record (it's no longer updated), see: <http://www.welcometoyourlibrary.org.uk/default.asp>.

We also provide a regularly-updated round-up of initiatives, "How can the cultural sector support refugees?", see: <http://www.seapn.org.uk/post/how-can-the-cultural-sector-support-refugees>.

Refugee Week 2018

<http://refugeeweek.org.uk/>

"In June 2018, Refugee Week will reach an important milestone: 20 years of celebrating the contributions, creativity and resilience of refugees." [Taken from: <http://refugeeweek.org.uk/refugee-week-2018-celebrating-20-years/>]

The website lists hundreds of organisations and their events, including, for example:

- The British Library, <http://refugeeweek.org.uk/about-us/our-community/the-british-library/>
- Bibliotherapy Hub Leeds, <http://refugeeweek.org.uk/about-us/our-community/bibliotherapy-hub-leeds/> - "At Bibliotherapy Hub Leeds, we run four reading groups for refugees and asylum seekers across the city — groups which meet for shared reading and discussion as 'an active way to improve wellbeing, build stronger communities and extend reading pleasure.' We read stories and poems out loud together and then discuss them. The groups are completely FREE and run by volunteers from Leeds University [at public libraries and community centres]"

The following examples of library & museum activities have also been taking place:

- Bedford Library, http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_news/archive_d_news/may_2018/refugee_week.aspx

- Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery: “[...] host performances for Refugee Week 's 20th Birthday Celebration and showcase organisations that provide support services.” See: <http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/bmag/whats-on/refugee-week-20th-birthday-celebration>
- Brighton & Hove: “The city's flagship Refugee Week event is ‘Together’ – a free day of art, music, theatre and dance workshops, exhibitions and performances [...] The event runs from 11am – 4pm at Brighton Dome and Brighton Art Gallery & Museum on Sunday 24 June.” See: <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/leisure-and-libraries/events-and-filming/refugee-week-brighton-hove>
- Leeds City Museum: “Shared Art for Refugee Week”, see: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/shared-art-for-refugee-week-tickets-45714413040#>
- Libraries NI: “For Refugee Week, Libraries NI will be running a number of events to focus on the experiences and lives of refugees. The library events will vary in content from photographic exhibitions and an exhibition showing people’s kindness to refugees through to storytelling workshops and a bridge building workshop.” See: <https://www.librariesni.org.uk/News/Pages/Library-events-to-celebrate-20-years-of-Refugee-Week-2018.aspx>
- Migration Museum: as well as their regular exhibitions and activities, the Museum organised “[...] a special Refugee Week 2018 late opening on Thursday 21 June, featuring food from refugee chefs, performances, presentations, a chance to see our current exhibitions and more.” See: <http://www.migrationmuseum.org/event/migration-museum-late-refugee-week-2018/2018-06-21/>
- Suffolk Libraries: “Mark Refugee Week 2018 with our top children's titles”. See: <https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/parents-carers-and-children/childrens-ya-books/refugee-week-2018/>
- York Museums Trust: “Award winning film, talk and exhibition on the refugee crisis”, see: <https://www.yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk/news-media/latest-news/award-winning-film-talk-and-exhibition-on-the-refugee-crisis/>

World Refugee Day (20 June)

The Guardian produced a supplement to the print edition for 20 June.

This has been based on investigative work by the Dutch NGO, UNITED for Intercultural Action (see: <http://www.unitedagainstracism.org/>), who produced *The List* – this has also just been published in full as: *List of 34,361 documented*

deaths of refugees and migrants due to the restrictive policies of "Fortress Europe"

<https://uploads.guim.co.uk/2018/06/19/TheList.pdf>

There is a brief summary (with some case studies) at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/20/drowned-restrained-shot-life-stories-migrants-case-studies>.

"#AllWomenCount: art and culture at the forefront of World Refugee Day"

https://theconversation.com/allwomenscount-art-and-culture-at-the-forefront-of-world-refugee-day-98326?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%202019%202018%20-%20104449220&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%202019%202018%20-%20104449220+CID_1fb910e44186db2ee5e5d832a1366331&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=AllWomenCount%20art%20and%20culture%20at%20the%20forefront%20of%20World%20Refugee%20Day

(Source: *The Conversation*, 19 Jun 2018)

"There has been an outpouring of woman-powered creativity in 2018, through which refugee women have sought to shift the authorship and ownership of their narratives back into their own hands. Refugee Week 2018 – the national festival that accompanies World Refugee Day – is showcasing many woman-led projects by groups, such as WAST Manchester [Women Asylum-Seekers Together, see: <https://twitter.com/wastcampaigning?lang=en>] and Mafwa Theatre at Leeds Refugee Forum, which have instigated participant-led drama projects that enable women to tell their own stories on their own terms [see, for example, <https://allevents.in/leeds/women-of-power-by-mafwa-theatre/1000046695452355>].

The PAMOJA Women Together Group [see: <http://www.nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk/projects/womens-group/>], based in Nottingham meanwhile, has collaborated on an exhibition of photography and poetry inspired by the work of Maya Angelou: 'And Still I Rise', that testifies to the positive qualities possessed by women in their group [see: <https://nottinghamrefugeeweek.org/speaker/and-still-i-rise/>].

At individual levels, too, women from refugee backgrounds, including Rana Abdulfattah, a Syrian poet exiled in Turkey and film directors such as Najia Khan, whose family fled Afghanistan for Pakistan and on to the UK when she was an infant – are using Refugee Week as a public platform for gender-conscious advocacy [...]"

Migration issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

UNHCR *Global trends: forced displacement in 2017*

Press release: <http://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2018/6/5b222c494.html>

Report: <http://www.unhcr.org/5b27be547.pdf>

Key data include:

- Globally, the forcibly displaced population increased in 2017 by 2.9 million.
- By the end of the year, 68.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, or generalized violence. As a result, the world's forcibly displaced population remained yet again at a record high.
- An estimated 16.2 million people were newly displaced in 2017. This included 11.8 million individuals displaced² within the borders of their own countries and 4.4 million newly displaced refugees and new asylum-seekers.
- The number of new displacements was equivalent to an average of 44,400 people being forced to flee their homes every day in 2017.
- Developing regions hosted 85 per cent of the world's refugees under UNHCR's mandate, about 16.9 million people. The least developed countries provided asylum to a growing proportion, amounting to one-third of the global total (6.7 million refugees).
- Lebanon continued to host the largest number of refugees relative to its national population, where 1 in 6 people was a refugee under the responsibility of UNHCR. Jordan (1 in 14) and Turkey (1 in 23) ranked second and third, respectively. When Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate are included, the figures rise to 1 in 4 for Lebanon and 1 in 3 for Jordan. [These are Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)] [Taken from report]

Migration issues – Other Agencies

A country to call home: an anthology on the experiences of young refugees and asylum seekers

<https://unbound.com/books/a-country-to-call-home/>

(Source: email from Anne Harding, 19 Jun 2018)

Anthology, edited by Lucy Popescu, of new writing focusing on refugee children and young adults.

NB Charged-for publication.

“Five myths about the refugee crisis”

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/jun/05/five-myths-about-the-refugee-crisis>

The Guardian published an important article in their “The long read” series, which looks at the five common ‘myths’:

- The crisis is over
- We can neatly separate ‘refugees’ from ‘economic migrants’
- Telling ‘human stories’ is enough to change people’s minds
- The crisis is a threat to European values
- History is repeating and there’s nothing we can do about it.

“Refugees can actually create jobs for locals in growing cities – if given the chance”

https://theconversation.com/refugees-can-actually-create-jobs-for-locals-in-growing-cities-if-given-the-chance-96289?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20May%2014%202018%20-%20101618924&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20May%2014%202018%20-%20101618924+CID_ee4614d77c826b5235dc885bd881011f&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Refugees%20can%20actually%20create%20jobs%20for%20locals%20in%20growing%20cities%20%20if%20given%20the%20chance

(Source: *The Conversation*, 14 May 2018)

Interesting, positive article:

“The reality for cities and their residents is this: as long as instability reigns both in the political sphere and the natural world, large groups of people will continue to be displaced. Refugee camps have provided necessary sanctuary, but for people looking to rebuild their lives, they appear less and less inviting. The bright lights of the city hold the promise of opportunity for refugees; and with the right leadership, their success can benefit locals, too.

There are some obvious and practical steps which cities can take to help refugees become a positive part of urban life. Easy access to language classes, housing, education and the opportunity to work are key. In practise, city authorities must be more open minded about adopting creative solutions to housing shortages. They must reduce the bureaucracy, which often hampers efforts to get refugees into work: a wide variety of projects have been developed, from craft companies in Germany to a Swedish fast-track system.”