PRESS RELEASE

Olympic Torch on Display at Museum
Thursday 2 August, 2012

Generous Olympic torchbearers Juanita Williams and Dennis Sanders have loaned an official Olympic torch and torchbearer’s uniform to Black Country Living Museum to put on public display.

Juanita from Oldbury, nominated for her charity work, carried the flame through Smethwick. Juanita took part in her first Macmillan cycling challenge after her father died of cancer. During his illness, Macmillan had provided the family with fantastic support. Her father had been an extremely keen cyclist while he was alive but it was not until after he died that Juanita discovered the joy of cycling. Now seven Macmillan rides on, Juanita has raised tens of thousands of pounds for the charity, tirelessly fundraising in a whole variety of different inventive ways.

Juanita said: “The torch is for everyone and I really wanted as many people to have the opportunity to see it as possible. Running with it was an amazing experience and a wonderful opportunity for me. It is something I will always treasure.”

Dennis Sanders, from Birmingham, carried the flame through Black Country Living Museum on day 43 of its 8000 mile journey across the United Kingdom. Dennis, an army veteran, has been liberating white pigeons at commemorations and memorial services for the troops for many years. He has represented the National Memorial Arboretum on many occasions, works closely with a local school, scout group, and has worked with local prison inmates establishing a working pigeon loft and breeding programme. An active member of the Royal British Legion, Dennis is extremely proud of his country and its military forces.
Dennis said: “The Olympics is not just about sport but about bringing people together. I shall never forget the day the Olympic flame came to Dudley. I carried the torch aboard the Museum’s 100 year old steam narrow boat, President and along the 1900s high street with its historic shops and houses. On both sides of the street visitors, who had dressed up in old fashioned costumes, were cheering loudly. It is something that will stay with me forever.”

The Olympic torch will be displayed in a glass cabinet in the Museum’s Rolfe Street Cafe from Monday 6 August, 2012 for 12 months. It will be joined by the torchbearer’s uniform in October, 2012.

Andrew Lovett, Director and Chief Executive of Black Country Living Museum said: “This is a fantastic gesture from both Juanita and Dennis and we are very grateful. The Olympic Torch Relay was a genuine once-in-a-lifetime experience and it was wonderful to see staff and visitors enter into the spirit of the day. I hope the Museum’s visitors will enjoy a little bit of Olympic magic whenever they look at the Museum’s Olympic Torch display.

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Note to Editors:
About the Museum
The Black Country Living Museum is one of the UK’s leading open air museums. Attracting over 300,000 visitors each year to an astonishing 26 acre site just two miles from the town centre of Dudley, it captures and admires the achievements and culture of the region’s past and the extraordinary impact this had on the wider world. With its thriving village spanning 170 years of history from c1770 to the 1940s, canal, tram way, school, public park and fairground, alongside the energy of an industrial landscape of mining, steam power, heavy metalwork and lime kilns, the Museum offers a visitor experience that few others can match. We also have one of the best fish and chips shops for miles around!

Photographic Opportunity:
Olympic Torchbearers Juanita Williams and Dennis Sanders will be at Black Country Living Museum at 11am on Thursday 2 August for a photo opportunity with the Museum’s Director and Chief Executive Andrew Lovett.
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