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Tragic Eyemouth fishing disaster commemorated

Performing Arts academics from Northumbria are working with the community in Eyemouth, Northumberland, to commemorate a tragic fishing disaster. **Get up and Tie your Fingers Eyemouth** is a stunning community performed production, which tells the story of how the people of Eyemouth recovered following the 1881 fishing disaster, which claimed the lives of 189 fishermen as their families watched from land.

Around 50 members of the Eyemouth community have been working together to create, produce and perform this unique production which uses song,

storytelling, and dance to illustrate the courage and resilience of communities in the face of unimaginable tragedy. Although the production is about Eyemouth's tragic past, Northumbria academics [Fiona MacPherson](#) and [Liz Pavey](#) believe the performance can have positive benefits for the town today. Post-industrial communities in the North East and fishing villages such as Eyemouth have had to adapt to changes in work and identity in the last century. Fiona and Liz believe that performances such as *Get Up and Tie Your Fingers* offers the town an opportunity to remember its industrial heritage with pride and can have a very positive impact on community cohesion and wellbeing.

Performance director Fiona MacPherson, a senior lecturer in Performing Arts at Northumbria, said: "I have been delighted and astonished by the enthusiasm with which participants have approached this work. This story of the past has real meaning for the people of Eyemouth as they feel a connection with community and with the industry of fishing.

"Participants have brought stories of their past, their families and their industry to share during rehearsals. This opportunity to be creative has opened up a dialogue about the town, its past and its future – it is just what community performance should be doing."

Choreographer Liz Pavey, also a senior lecturer on Northumbria's Performing Arts courses, said: "This was an amazing opportunity to work closely with a large cross-generational cast of people from the Eyemouth community utilising singing, story and physicality to explore such a significant event within their heritage.

"It has been a privilege to hear about the participants' personal connections to and feelings about the events in Eyemouth of 1881. Ann Coburn's narrative and Karen Wimhurst's music offer such a rich tapestry of light and shade; it is a joy to work with them again. I have been creating dance and movement elements with a group of girl guides. We are utilising long lengths of silk fabric, discovering both the softness and the great strength of the cloth and how it can help use construct images of tenderness and resilience."

Northumbria offers a range of courses in Performing Arts. For more information about studying at Northumbria sign up for one of our upcoming Open Days on 1 July and 2 July by clicking [here](#).

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