

It's 25 years since The National Lottery began. In celebration, staff from The National Lottery Heritage Fund take a look back at some of our favourite memories.

Natasha Ley, Media & Public Relations Manager

One of my most memorable moments over the last 25 years of The National Lottery was visiting 10 Downing Street, where the-then prime minster, David Cameron launched The National Lottery-funded Centenary Poppy Campaign. The project saw schoolchildren across the UK sow poppy seeds in time for the start of the First World War Centenary.


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Natasha Ley at 10 Downing Street



Former prime minister David Cameron helping children sow poppy seeds

Hanna Sarekanno, Communications Intern

Interning at The National Lottery Heritage Fund for the past four months has completely changed the way that I look at the world around me, and this is the memory I will keep with me. I now seek out the funders' logos at every place I visit, and get to be constantly amazed by the immense impact The National Lottery has had on the UK. I particularly loved attending the opening of the Kresen Kernow archive in Cornwall.



A big thank you from Kresen Kernow in Cornwall

Helen Wheatley, Senior Investment Manager, London & South

Over my years working at The National Lottery Heritage Fund, I have been lucky enough to piggyback many people's heritage dreams, and play a small part in helping them turn them into a reality.

One of my favourites has been Dawe's Twineworks in West Coker, Somerset. Since 2007 an amazing, tenacious group of like-minded volunteers have acquired and transformed this derelict site to a fully working Victorian factory open to the public, with an already well used community and exhibition space.

To me, this is what it's all about. Without the volunteers' hard work, open minds and dedication, the building, machinery and all that it represents as part of the story of the village would have gone. I'm proud to have been a part of it.

Louise Sutherland, Senior Engagement Manager, North

When I first joined The National Lottery Heritage Fund, my mum and family were so excited they kept sending me pics of our logo in places they'd visited, it went on for a long time, but it made them realise how important our funding was to places that make their family memories.

Bobbi Campbell, Investment Manager, Scotland

In 2008 I went on my first site visit to Inchnadamph in the North West Highlands. It was the furthest north I had ever been on mainland Scotland, and I was blown away by the incredible landscape and fascinating history of the area – the projects I have the privilege to work on often have this effect even after 11 years.



The beautiful landscape of Inchnadamph

I remember my first Heritage Grant application for the acquisition of *Stirling Station* by one of the Glasgow Boys, William Kennedy, which is now in Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum. I'm still proud of my involvement in ensuring the painting remained in Scotland.

I also fondly remember when the team visited the brand new Scottish Parliament in 2004, and the excitement in July of 2011 when the National Museum of Scotland reopened after extensive refurbishment.



The main hall of the National Museum of Scotland

David Renwick, Director of England, North

When I was little, growing up in Hull my mum used to work down Beverley Road, one of the main high streets leading into the city. Across the road was my grandad's shop, a newsagents called Steve's News. After school on a Wednesday my mum worked later so I used to go to shop and 'help' out.

> "In 1994 I was 13 and I recall my uncles, who were running the shop then, were keen to become one of the first shops in Hull to get a National Lottery terminal."

The shop was generally busy and my family had many friends in the local area. When The National Lottery started in 1994 I was 13 and I recall my uncles, who were running the shop then, were keen to become one of the first shops in Hull to get a National Lottery terminal and sell tickets. They thought it would be popular and people would pop in to buy a ticket and buy a pint of milk, a newspaper or a few other bits and bobs while they were there. It was exciting to see so many people buying their tickets and hoping they'd win big.

Strangely enough the shop is now within the Beverley Road Townscape Heritage area where National Lottery money is now helping to restore historic shopfronts and other important buildings in the Conservation Area. Beverley Road is one of the most diverse areas of Hull now and the funding from all those tickets is helping to regenerate the area. Just off Beverley Road is Pearson Park, another place where National Lottery funding is transforming heritage, engaging people and restoring amazing features like the Victorian Conservatory and amazing cast iron entrance arch and gates. I used to walk through that park with my mum on our way home on those Wednesday evenings.

Audrey Dunn, Investment Manager, Scotland

Getting to fly over the Cairngorms in a helicopter as being pretty much the best day at work ever! It was part of the Cairngorms path access project run by Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust. The helicopter was required to move large equipment up to the upland paths as there was no other route in. The workers (included funded apprentices) stayed in cabins up there to work on the paths as it was too time consuming to travel up and down every day. Amazing day!



The snowy Cairngorm mountains

Rosie Gibson, Social Media Manager

When I was a kid my dad helped run a National Lottery heritage project to restore the Huddersfield Canal. I have memories of visiting canal lock openings in my pink wellies, riding a canal boat with Compo from *Last of the Summer Wine*, who also shared his pork pie with us, and being pleased to get a Heritage Lottery Fund badge. When the project was finished we went to go and watch The National Lottery draw live on a Saturday night, and my Dad's friend picked the bonus ball!



The opening of V&A Dundee

Now I love that my job is sharing heritage stories, and some of my favourite memories of working at The National Lottery Heritage Fund have been made while visiting fabulous projects to create films. Like having a ride on a fire truck in Rochdale, discovering inspiring stories at the International Bomber Command Centre in Lincolnshire, visiting Dundee for the first time for the opening of the V&A Dundee, and learning about the skill of gardening when interviewing a trainee at the opening of the Temperate House, Kew.

Rhianon Davies, Communications Manager, North

Before I joined The National Lottery Heritage Fund, I worked at Royal Museums Greenwich, and a big campaign during my time was to acquire the Armada Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I and save it for the nation. During the campaign we had heard about a young girl called Christina who was obsessed with the Tudors and had baked Elizabeth I cupcakes with her mum to raise money to save the painting. The campaign was successful, thanks in part to a National Lottery grant, and it was unveiled at the reopening of The Queen's House after its major restoration.

Christina was invited to be one of the first to see the painting and when she saw it, she screamed with delight – literally! Seeing her reaction made me realise how important our funding is to inspiring young people and children to connect with their heritage.

25 years of funding for heritage

Over the past 25 years, The National Lottery Heritage Fund has been the largest dedicated grant funder of the UK's heritage. We've awarded £8bn to more than 44,000 projects across the UK.

Share your favourite memories

What has been your favourite National Lottery memory over the past 25 years? The opening of a fantastic project, volunteering at your local park, learning a new heritage skill, a stunning image you took? Share these on social media and celebrate with us by using #NationalLottery25.



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25 years of funding for UK heritage: our film