Heritage Lottery Fund announces new £10million for anniversaries

01/10/2013

The money will be invested to ensure that those moments which form a central part of our national history are commemorated and understood.

Events such as the Diamond Jubilee, and the Olympic and Paralympics Games showed how events can bring the people of the UK together. This new funding reflects the fact there is enormous enthusiasm to provide more opportunities to foster the sense of community spirit and national pride that such events can inspire. It will help to highlight important historical dates that will resonate with people and communities right across the UK.

The funding will be provided to ensure that projects of all sizes can apply for support from smaller grants of a few thousand pounds up to grants over £2m.

Dame Jenny Abramsky, Chair of HLF, said: "Few will forget the most magical events of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, including an opening ceremony that celebrated UK culture and its achievements and highlighted major moments in our history. We also had the opportunity as a nation to unite people and celebrate excellence.There are many other key times of celebration or sadness from our past and from the diverse stories of these islands that have left a similar impression. This Lottery investment will ensure that these pivotal moments, places or people will not be forgotten by future generations."

Culture Secretary, Maria Miller, said: "Our island story is unique. It is inspiring and educative in equal measure and there is so much to learn from our rich history. This new Anniversaries Fund will give us the opportunity to commemorate, to celebrate or simply to remember. But, more than that, it will allow us to come together as a country, to share moments of national importance, and to continue to be reminded of Britain’s place in the world."

Some of the moments on the horizon that could be supported by this initiative include: the centenary of Dylan Thomas’ birth; the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta; the 600th anniversary of Agincourt; the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo; the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death; the 700th anniversary of Bannockburn; the 150th anniversary of Beatrix Potter’s birth, as well as a range of significant dates relating to the Second World War and a decade of anniversaries in Northern Ireland.

Previously HLF-funded anniversary projects

HLF has previous experience in funding projects linked to anniversaries, including currently investing in projects to help mark the centenary of the First World War. Other HLF-funded projects include:

Bicentenary of the Abolition of the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Act – 2007
2007 was the 200th anniversary of the passing of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, which made it illegal for British ships to take part in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. HLF funded over 290 projects related to the slave trade in general. Projects included the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool which opened in August 2007, providing a permanent focus for the understanding of slave trade in Britain. In 2010 the second part of the museum, a research institute and resource centre was added to the display galleries. HLF granted £1.5m to help with the museum’s construction.

Bicentenary of Charles Dickens's birth – 2012
The Charles Dickens Museum, the author's former Bloomsbury home, re-opened in December 2012 following a major investment that saw the building transformed and doubled in size in Dickens's bicentenary year. The £3.1m Great Expectations project, supported with a £2.4m HLF grant, was considered the most significant legacy of Dickens's bicentenary, securing the future of the building for generations to come and offering a new visitor experience for the 21st century. The re-opening of the museum was a fitting finale to a year of worldwide Dickens celebrations.

Bicentenary of Jane Austen's book 'Pride and Prejudice' – 2013
In November 2012, HLF awarded a £30,800 grant to the Jane Austen Memorial Trust for their 'Pride and Prejudice 200th Anniversary Travelling Exhibition' project. The project focused on the 200th anniversary of the publication of *Pride and Prejudice*. The project looked at the impact of the novel on literary heritage and traditions as well as its portrayal of Georgian society in England. The project was initially based in the Jane Austen House Museum in Hampshire and then moved around sites in the UK as a travelling exhibition.

Lincoln Castle - 800th anniversary of Magna Carta – 2015
In 1215, England's King John was close to witnessing a rebellion by his influential barons. After much debate, he agreed to Magna Carta which is one of the most important documents in English history as it placed English sovereigns within the rule of law. It is also the basis of the United States Constitution and relevant to many modern day democracies.

Lincoln Castle is undergoing a £20m transformation with £12m worth of investment from HLF due to be completed in 2015, the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta. Unlike most renovations in which buildings are closed to the public, Lincoln Castle will remain open for visitors to see the on-going refurbishment. The castle holds one of only four copies of Magna Carta in existence and a new underground vault is being constructed to show it safely.

St Albans Cathedral – 800th anniversary of Magna Carta – 2015
A grant of £3,000 from HLF enabled St Albans Cathedral to hold events to celebrate the involvement of the cathedral in the establishment of Magna Carta including interactive events, workshops, family trails, educational resources and opportunities to volunteer. As well as being able to see the Lincoln copy of Magna Carta at the cathedral, youngsters were be able to take part in illuminated lettering workshops, see live demonstrations from bowmen and calligraphers, explore family trails and re-enact life in a medieval scriptorium. The Magna Carta celebrations will create 30 new volunteering opportunities including family stewards and arts and crafts assistants.

Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum – 2013
The Battle of Flodden was fought on 9 September 1513 on the border between England and Scotland. In 2012, HLF awarded almost £900,000 for the Flodden 500 Project. Lasting over four years the project will bring together communities of the Scottish and Northumbrian border areas in commemoration of the 500th anniversary. With the help of the HLF grant, the site will be opened up much more widely to encourage dialogue about this historic battle and how it has impacted communities from both sides of the Borders. The project focuses not just on the tens of thousands of lives lost during the campaign but also the impact the battle had on the culture of today's border communities.

700th anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn – 2014
The Battle of Bannockburn took place on the 23-24 June 1314 between the armies of Robert the Bruce and Edward II and is one of the most significant battles fought on British soil. HLF awarded a grant in 2011 to support the Battle of Bannockburn project – a state-of-the-art visitor attraction to commemorate its 700th anniversary and its place in shaping the history of Scotland. The grant of £3.9m was awarded to the National Trust for Scotland for the project which will see

a new centre at Bannockburn creating an unrivalled experience for the thousands of people who visit the battle ground every year while affording dignity to this important historic site.

For further information please visit our Anniversaries feature.

Notes to editors

First World War – HLF has already awarded over £28m to projects commemorating the First World War. HLF launched an additional £6m new small grants programme in 2012 entitled First World War: then and now, which aims to help communities explore, conserve and share their First World War heritage.

Further information

For funding enquires please call Clare Henderson on 020 7591 6044.

HLF press office: Alison Scott or Natasha Hughes on 020 7591 6032 / 6143, out of hours mobile: 07973 613 820 / 07989 535 527.