Camden youngsters tell the Roundhouse story

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Camden's Roundhouse has had a varied impact on the local community over the past 163 years and its history is now being explored in a youth project given an £11,900 grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Working with the Camden Local Studies & Archives Centre and award-winning theatre company, Look Left Look Right, young people have devised a multi-media performance – The Roundhouse Story.

The group of 14 to 25 year olds asked locals and others connected to the venue for their memories of the Roundhouse. Then they filmed and edited interviews, and brought the story to life in promenade performances throughout the building on Sunday 23 August. The hour-long performance will be repeated over the Open House weekend on Sunday 20 September at 12pm and 3pm.

The history of the building has provided plenty of inspiration. Built as a steam engine repair shed in 1846, it later became a gin warehouse and then a cutting edge arts centre, created in 1964 by playwright Arnold Wesker. Some of the most memorable artistic performances of the 60s and 70s took place there, but it was forced to close in 1983 through lack of funds.

Rescued in 1996 by local businessman, Torquil Norman, it was restored and brought back to life as a creative arts centre and performance space, supported by the HLF among other organisations.

The current project is supported by the Camden History Society and the Camden Railway Trust.

Sue Bowers, Head of HLF London, said: "This imaginative project, funded through our Young Roots programme, will blend a fascinating local history with multi-media and performance skills to produce an enduring educational resource.

Marcus Davey, Roundhouse Chief Executive Officer and Artistic Director, said: "We are delighted to have the Heritage Lottery Fund's support to give this fantastic opportunity to young people to delve into the Roundhouse's 163 year history and animate tales from past and present locals."

Notes to editors

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 28,800 projects, allocating over £4.3billion across the UK, with over £850 million granted in London alone.

The current project is supported by the Camden History Society and the Camden Railway Trust. The project will also be sent to local, regional and national archives.

Further information

HLF Press Office, Vicky Wilford on 020 7591 6046 / 07973 401937 or vickyw@hlf.org.uk or Phil Cooper on 07889 949

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Renata McDonnell, Development Manager, Roundhouse on 020 7424 6770.