HLF celebrates 15 years of funding heritage in the capital

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Heritage and community groups in boroughs across the capital are celebrating today with news that the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded them over £200,000 in funding to tell their own stories as part of the Mayor Boris Johnson's Story of London of London festival, which takes place throughout the month of June.

Twenty four organisations are to benefit, enabling them to create a range of projects that help chronicle the city and its people, from East End's Pearly Queens, the West End's theatre land, 19th century life around Fleet Street, the history of London Town in song, to tales from members of communities throughout the capital, including those who grew up in poverty and others who were shut away for most of their lives in mental institutions.

The awards celebrate the 15th Anniversary of the National Lottery and the Heritage Lottery Fund. They form part of HLF's support for the Story of London, which is organised by the Greater London Authority, in partnership with a host of other organisations. The month-long festival will celebrate the capital's past, present and future, with a wide ranging programme of activities across the city that illustrate as well as celebrate London life from its ancient origins to the present day.

To mark fifteen years of celebrating and investing in the diversity of London's heritage, HLF offered groups the chance of a grant of up to £10,000 each to enable them to run projects this summer to tell their own stories of London.

Wesley Kerr, Chairman of the London Committee for HLF, said: "Londoners have come up trumps again with this inspiring mix of 24 projects in 15 boroughs, all put forward by groups seeking to access and share their Story of London. Since it started 15 years ago, the Heritage Lottery Fund has invested £850 million in our great old city, opening the gates of memory, and conserving historic buildings, parks, museums, collections, archives and a myriad of diverse cultures.

But we've never announced so many small but perfectly formed projects in one day, celebrating tea dances, singalongs, theatre, fashion, food, dance and recollections. Pearly Queens to black comedy, canal barges to black cabs are also included. These projects will involve Londoners of all ages and backgrounds in fascinating research and learning from history. They will also be great fun, and together they demonstrate what Dr Johnson called "the wonderful immensity of London."

Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, said: "I'm delighted the Heritage Lottery Fund has come on board with the Story of London. Their generous funding will really help organisations of all sizes across London participate in this unique celebration. So much of what we know about London's past is preserved and looked after by our heritage organisations - often supported by volunteers. This festival is a chance to let Londoners know about the treasures in their neighbourhoods, and inspire them about the city they live in."

The 24 successful special projects cover most of London's boroughs from Haringey in the North, to Croydon in the South, Hammersmith and Fulham in the West, to Greenwich in the East, with Londoners young and old involved in an exciting variety of projects which include drama performances, fairs, documentary films, books and interactive

workshops, many of which are available for the public to visit.

LB ISLINGTON

The Story of London Theatre
The West End is the largest theatre district in the world and the epicentre of British commercial theatre. The National Youth Theatre of Great Britain has been awarded £10,000 for a project to enable young people from across the capital to research London's theatrical heritage and tell the story of London's theatres. They will produce podcasts of ten theatre walks around the West End to enthuse other young NYT members, young Londoners and the wider public about the wealth of history, creativity and excitement London's theatres have to offer. The volunteers will work with the Society of London Theatre, the Victoria & Albert Museum's Theatre Collections and the Museum of London, all of whom have endorsed the project. The podcasts will be available to download free from iTunes and the NYT's website.

Vagabonds' Voyage
The Little Wonder theatre company has received a £7,000 grant for a project that will take audiences on a trip through the history of a short stretch of the Regent's Canal in Camden and Islington. The area is undergoing extensive regeneration and the project will tell the stories of the history of the area and its people from St Pancras Lock to the Angel via the mile-long Islington Tunnel. Performances will take place both on the canal side and on a boat travelling along the canal, and will feature live music (some especially commissioned), and a self-contained performance on the terrace of King's Place.

CITY OF LONDON

The Breathing Broadsheet
A grant of £9,200 has gone to the St Bride Foundation which aims to serve the educational, social and cultural needs of Fleet Street and the surrounding areas. The project focuses on the St Bride Library's collection of 19th Century Broadsheets. Some 30 young people will research the broadsheet collection, record their thoughts, write contemporary broadsheets and dramatise their findings. The results will feed into a piece of promenade theatre Broadsheet Ballads created by Occam's Razor Theatre Company. An educational pack will be created in conjunction with the project to promote the use of St Bride Library's collections and heritage materials to inspire learning in history, literacy and the arts. A small exhibition which will feature broadsheets, historical pictures of the local area, and information on the history of Fleet Street will also be produced. Histories of local inhabitants, Fleet Street and St Bride Church during the late 19th century will all be explored through this project.

A Singing History of London
Sing London was been awarded £9,804 for a series of 20 workshops to create the Singing History of London. From 'Maybe It's Because I'm a Londoner' to 'Waterloo Sunset' the project will tell the story of London through traditional songs and the stories behind those songs. In addition to the workshops will be 20 participatory singing history events in parks, shopping centres, housing estates and public squares where street pianos will be set up to encourage public involvement. The public singalongs will be held throughout the capital including Leicester Square, the British Library, and across the City. Singing History of London launches at The British Library on June 8th.

LB NEWHAM

London's History of Comedy
Stratford-based CEMVO (Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations) has been given a £9,900 grant to chart the work of black comedians who have drawn on their experience of settling in London from the 1960s to 2000.

There is no official recognition of Black comedy heritage and this project will help to fill that gap by telling the story of three people who have made their own contribution to the London comedy scene. A DVD will be produced and a special comedy event staged in early June.

Kamal Chunchie and the founding of the Coloured Men's Institute
Eastside Community Heritage is being given a £9,400 grant to tell the story of Kamel Chunchie, who founded the Coloured Men's Institute in Canning Town and devoted his life and learning to the Black and Asian communities of east London during the 1920s and 1930s. The project will interview Chunchie's daughter, social historians and community elders to tell the story of the Ceylon-born British Army volunteer from WWI who went on to become a Methodist preacher, anti-racist campaigner and one of Britain's most grounding-breaking, controversial and engaging community leaders of the 20th century. An exhibition and documentary film will be created, the film being screened at Stratford Old Town Hall on June 26th.

LB SOUTHWARK

From Madhouse to Modern Psychiatric Hospital
Cool Tan Arts in Southwark has been awarded £10,000 to uncover the hidden history and treatment of people experiencing mental distress with research tracing stories from the original madhouse, and Victorian asylums to present-day psychiatric hospitals. The project connects the physical heritage of these institutions by creating a heritage walk that begins at midnight on June 20th at Tate Modern and ends at dawn at the Mauldsley Hospital. The project will include two open days – one before and one after the walk - to study the historic buildings and characters associated with the route. A short documentary film will also be made featuring the information gathered for the project.

Stories of Latin American Southwark
World Beaters Arts and Culture have been granted £10,000 for a project celebrating the Latin American community living in Southwark and the journeys which have brought the two communities together. Through a series of outreach workshops, families will develop a resource enabling the local community to understand more fully and share in their vibrant heritage. The project will produce information packs to give ideas for activities to include in community programmes run by schools and children's centres.

LB LEWISHAM

Lewisham photographic heritage
Awarded a £10,000 grant, Deptford-based Centre for Multi Cultural Development Integration will work with 12 young volunteers to photograph three dozen heritage sites throughout the borough and produce a photographic exhibition and booklet. The project, which is supported by the London Borough of Lewisham Archivist and Lewisham Library will publish 500 copies of the booklet sending copies to local schools, libraries, and GP surgeries. All documentation will be deposited with the borough archives and the exhibition will be held for two weeks in June.

Home Ground
Entelechy Arts has received a grant of £10,000 to make a short documentary film entitled Home Ground that tells the story of four older Londoners with learning disabilities. Their stories reflect the thousands of other hidden histories of people now in the seventies and eighties who in the early 20th century were removed from their homes and families as children and forced to spend the greater part of their lives in long-stay hospitals and asylums. In the mid 1980s people were helped to move back to their home communities spending their remaining lives in ordinary houses in ordinary streets but their stories often remained untold.

70 years in North Downham
Goldsmiths Community Association in Lewisham has been given a £5,900 grant which will fund a 70th anniversary project telling the story of the community centre on the North Downham estate in Catford. Memories of local residents will be recorded looking back to how it was used in the1940s and its history to the present day. More than two dozen local organisations who make use of the centre will be invited to get involved. A number of events and activities will take place in June and a website created.

LB REDBRIDGE

London African Story
Traditional African storytelling methods will be used to introduce young schoolchildren in Redbridge and Waltham Forest to the heritage behind a range of artefacts held at the British Museum. Many of the artefacts date from the 19th century but some go back as far as the 1500s. IROKO Theatre Company has been given a £9,900 grant to run a series of workshops and a mini exhibition in local schools, libraries and community centres showing the links between African and London heritage.

Silvertown Community Play
Eastside Community Heritage has been awarded £5,800 for a project that focuses on the oral history of Silvertown looking at an area that is undergoing great change. Drawing on material preserved in the East London People's Archive through a series of drama workshops, this project will engage children from Silvertown in the history of their local area and provide opportunities to develop creative talents in drama. The children will hear the stories and memories of the older people in their community. They will then work with a professional script writer to devise a community play inspired by the unique heritage of their area and the stories. The project will culminate in a performance of the play in early June at a local care group.

LB HARINGEY

From Migration to Contribution
The Haringey-based African Women's Enterprise Group has received a grant of £8,000 to help young people to interact and learn more about the older generation from the BME community. Some 25 young people will interview 25 elders about their memories of cultural traditions, food, fashion and experiences of settling in London.

The stories will be published in a booklet and an event will be staged in June bringing together photography, music dance and a fashion show drawn from the information gathered.

Three Tales from the Tottenham Triangle (Young Roots app)
Haringey Shed theatre company has been awarded a £9,900 grant to work with local young people to choose and research the heritage of three streets in the Tottenham area. They will work with Bruce Castle Museum to collect information about the history of the streets, as well as interviewing members of the local community about their memories and experiences of living on those streets. This will help them to develop a series of mini-performances which will be taken into local schools and will be shown to the community at the end of the project in Bruce Castle at the Tottenham Festival on 20th June

LB CAMDEN

Camden Green Fair
The Camden Green Fair organisers have been given a grant of £8,600 to tell the story of 18 years of the fair which is

now recognised as the UK's largest free green event created and delivered by grass-roots voluntary organisations. The story will be told at Bikefest in Regent's Park in June through means of photographs, children drawings, posters and artworks as well interviews with participants in a multi-media presentation that will take place inside a converted London black cab – Cinecabagogo.

LB HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Hammersmith Riverside Heritage
Hammersmith and Fulham Urban Studies Centre has received £8,500 for a project involving local schoolchildren who will research and tell the story of a historical quarter mile stretch of local riverbank. The riverside path close to Hammersmith Bridge includes the oldest houses in Hammersmith, the home of social reformer William Morris, the site of an ancient Thames ferry and a pub damaged by a WWI bomb. The stories uncovered will be presented at a display at the Greenfest West London held in nearby Furnival Gardens on June 14th where some of the children will also act as tour guides.

LB LAMBETH

The Big Event Tea Dance
Homeliveart has been granted £6,600 for a project re-creating a traditional Victorian tea dance. The event, due to take place around the bandstand in Myatt's Field Park, Camberwell, will be held on June 20th. Myatts Fields Park, is a unique Grade II listed Victorian park designed in 1889 by Fanny Wilkinson, one of the first female landscape gardeners, the park has undergone an extensive renovation and the Big Event Tea Dance will focus widely on the traditions of communal dances and entertainments in South London during the Victorian era.

LB GREENWICH

Tudor Workshops – What Ho Henry
The Greenwich Foundation for the Old Royal Naval College has been awarded £3,000 for a series of Tudor workshops, led by costumed performers that will explore the cultural heritage of a site that used to be occupied by Greenwich Palace, birthplace of Henry VIII and his daughters Elizabeth and Mary. Henry's reign began 500 years ago this year and the workshops will encourage children to take roles in a performance based on the story of his six marriages, and to get involved in dances and games that explore the life of rich and poor people during the period. Seven workshops will be held during mid June.

LB TOWER HAMLETS

The Pearly Queen
Kinetika will spread awareness of the East End of London's tradition of Pearly Queens with the help of two current Pearly Queens as well as a ten-metre high puppet to be created by artists working with members of the local community. The Pearly Queens and the puppet will first appear at the Paradise Gardens Festival on June 20 and 21 in Victoria Park, Tower Hamlets, where visitors will have the chance to learn all about this unique example of East London culture. The interaction between the visitors and the puppet and her entourage will be captured on film and posted on the Kinetika website. The project has received a grant of £9,900.

Our Story
The Bromley by Bow Centre has been granted £10,000 to work with five socially excluded groups from their community to put together an account of the rich and varied, but little known, history of their local area. The groups involved will

include elders, Bangladeshi women, teenage parents, young people and adults with learning difficulties. Creative learning workshops will help them explore and celebrate their local heritage, share their personal histories and build self-esteem and local pride. The five groups will come together for a sharing and celebration event and a commemorative book will be produced and distributed throughout the borough during June.

LB HACKNEY

Story 140
Family Action has been given £9,700 for a project looking at the role the organisation has played in local London communities over the last 140 years, and in particular at the lives and experiences of disadvantaged families in the capital. Family Action will run a storytelling project involving children, young people, parents and grandparents, who will work with a professional storyteller. using case studies of families from the organisation's archives as a basis from which to create their own stories about their lives in London in 2009. They will also have the chance to illustrate the stories they construct. These will be collated into a booklet which will be printed and distributed and an event will be held in late June at Red Cross Garden in Bankside.

LB CROYDON

Cool London Hot Fashion
Asian arts and heritage organisation Aspara Arts has been granted £10,000 to enable local young people to explore the stories of Asians who first settled in London in the 1960s and 1970s, looking at how their lifestyles have blended or integrated and what being a Londoner means to them. They will examine their sense of identity through their clothing, fashion and food and will also organise a celebration in June by putting together a 'fashion' show of traditional and modern Asian clothing that is worn in London.

Notes to editors

The Story of London is a month-long celebration of the city's past, present and future organised by the Greater London Authority in partnership with a host of organisations across the capital. Aimed at tourists and Londoners alike, it takes place throughout the whole of June 2009, with events and activities planned in every borough.

Public information about the Story of London can be found at www.london.gov.uk/storyoflondon.

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.