Larry Lamb makes surprise announcement of grant to former Brixham sailing trawler

07/10/2011

The surprise announcement, made by EastEnders actor Larry Lamb, will be shown as part of The National Lottery: Secret Fortune on Saturday evening on BBC 1.

Larry Lamb visited Brixham as part of a series of films appearing on the Lottery draw show over the coming weeks. The films feature the great variety of good causes that Lottery players are helping to support by raising over £30million a week for good causes.

Built in 1892 in the parish of Brixham, Leader is the oldest and largest of the nine Brixham trawlers to survive in the UK.

Having been brought back to Devon in 1996, Leader is now used by the Trinity Sailing Foundation to provide life skills training and hands-on experience of sailing for young people.

The Heritage Lottery Fund grant will help restore Leader's main weatherdeck, preventing further deterioration of the vessel's historic features. The crew, apprentices and volunteers will learn traditional skills, and will work alongside expert shipwrights to complete the restoration.

At the same time, a free exhibition will be created on Brixham Harbour, so that visitors will be able to learn about the work that is taking place and some of the traditional skills involved, including rope and net making.

The Trinity Sailing Foundation is also planning to work with young people from across the local community to research the history of Leader and create a new DVD telling its story, as well as detailing the restoration process and the role Leader played in Brixham's fishing industry.

Nerys Watts, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South West, said, "We at HLF are delighted to be able to support the restoration of Leader. The development of the fishing industry is at the heart of the story of Brixham, and the preservation of Leader is vital for ensuring future generations have the chance to learn about and enjoy this fascinating history. As this project shows, by playing The National Lottery, you can be proud that you're making a difference to people and places in your area."

Struan Coupar, Chairman of Trinity Sailing Foundation, said: "This is fantastic news for Brixham and for all those that share our ambition to keep the remaining fleet of Brixham trawlers as living, working, examples of our maritime heritage.

He went on to say "Leader performs an extremely valuable role with many hundreds of young people having benefitted from sail training on her. We are able to use the unique environment onboard Leader to challenge, motivate and inspire young people many of whom are from disadvantaged backgrounds. Leader is an iconic vessel, and now so many people will be able to benefit from her for many years to come. We are extremely grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund and our other partners for this chance to invest in her future".

Dr Sarah Wollaston, MP for Totnes, said: "This is fantastic news for Brixham. Congratulations to all those who have worked so hard to keep the Leader in Brixham helping to transform the lives of young people and keep our fishing

heritage alive”.

Leader, at 105 feet and 110 tonnes is the largest, and oldest, of the four traditional sailing boats operated by Trinity. Built in 1892 at W. A.Gibbs' yard at Galmpton, Leader fished in UK waters until 1907, when she was sold to Swedish owners. Leader then operated on Sweden's west coast until 1970, when she became a sail training vessel for the Swedish Cruising Club.

In 1985, Leader moved to the west coast of Scotland, where as Lorne Leader she was used for sailing holidays and charter for ten years. In 1996 she was brought home to South Devon, and operated from Dartmouth until 1999, when she became part of the Trinity fleet, and returned to Brixham.

Notes to editors

National Lottery
Since The National Lottery began in 1994, over £26billion has been raised for Good Causes. This has funded over 370,000 projects in the arts, sports, heritage, charities and voluntary, health, education and environment sectors.

Heritage Lottery Fund
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 30,000 projects, allocating £4.7billion across the UK,

Trinity Sailing Foundation
The foundation uses sail training on traditional vessels as the catalyst for positive and permanent changes to the lives of around 600 young people each year. Based in Brixham, its fleet of four sailing vessels, including Leader, also provide opportunities for sailing holidays around the UK and Europe.

Further information

HLF Press Office: Roland Smith, 020 7591 6047, email rolands@hlf.org.uk