

Thanet Cycling Club awarded Heritage Lottery Fund grant

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Thanet Road Club members and veterans

Founded in 1947, the club is using the funding to prepare historic material for its 70th anniversary year in 2017. This will include a film, exhibitions of photos and jerseys and a Young Biographers project which trains young riders to tell the stories of veteran riders.

David Robert, the club's heritage project manager, said: "Some of the club's founding members are now in their mid-eighties and still riding, so it is essential to get their stories documented. The funding has made this project possible. It has given our riders and volunteers the resources to produce some interesting and entertaining materials that will be of interest to all cyclists and local historians, not just our club members."

The film will focus on the club's formation as well as a couple of memorial trophies that have very moving origins, where it is important that the memorial is never forgotten. The project is also collating archive photos, press cuttings and jerseys with a view to sharing some of these with the public through exhibitions and web access. A key element of the project is uniting all the generations of the club, with members ranging from three to eighty-six. One aspect addressing this is the Young Biographers project which provides a workshop to young riders, giving them the skills to work with veteran riders to produce a biographical piece that will be shared with club members

and the wider community.

Stuart McLeod, Head of HLF South East, said: "Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, we're pleased to support one of Kent's oldest cycling clubs to tell their story spanning nearly seven decades. Not only will young people in particular gain heritage skills but will also discover the people and memories behind the names on the trophies and create a lasting legacy for future members."

The project started in June with filming already commencing. "Unexpected, positive things are already happening," says David Robert, "whilst visiting and researching veteran riders we discovered that some were no longer able to drive and couldn't make social events. So we have started a buddy system to provide lifts for them."

The club is requesting help in its research. If anyone has any historic material relating to Thanet Road Club or cycling in Thanet (especially old film footage) get in touch with David Robert at davelexrob@yahoo.com.

Notes to editors

With a membership of over 200 riders, Thanet Road Club is involved in all aspects of the sport including time trials, road and circuit racing, audax, mountain biking, cycloX, and social rides. Membership spans the age spectrum and the club prides itself on being able to offer something for everyone, no matter how far or fast they can ride. Founded in 1947, the club is proud of its history and contribution to the heritage of cycling in Thanet and beyond. The Youth Section Go Ride has been awarded Club Mark, the universally acknowledged cross sport accreditation scheme for community sports clubs.

Further information

For further information contact David Robert on 07824 399 126 or at davealexrob@yahoo.com.