500 years of history saved for Cornwall

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Cornwall Council has been awarded £327,980 by the Heritage Lottery Fund so that a fascinating and unique collection of historical manuscripts can remain in Cornwall.

Including the only two early works on the Cornish language in Cornwall, the archive of the Enys family of Penryn contains hundreds of documents, letters, photographs, volumes and maps dating from the 16th to the 20th century.

Joan Symons, Cornwall Council Cabinet Member for Culture and Museums, said: “I am delighted that this important collection, which covers over 500 years of Cornish history, has been saved for future generations to learn from and enjoy. The wonderful news that the Heritage Lottery Fund has approved the grant means that the Cornwall Record Office can organise a whole raft of community based activities to promote the collection. Local museums have already been involved in developing projects and we will work with volunteers, schools and groups to research and celebrate the stories in the collection.”

Simon Timms, Chair of Heritage Lottery Fund South West Committee, said: “The Enys collection is a treasure-trove of information on 500 years of Cornish life. Alongside funding the acquisition of the collection, this grant will create new opportunities for local people to access the archive, and learn about their heritage. We at HLF are proud to play a part in ensuring that the Enys Collection stays in Cornwall, remains in the public domain and can be preserved for, and explored by, many generations to come.”

Deborah Tritton, Cornwall Council’s Historic Collections Manager, said: "This is a hugely important collection. The records of the Enys family have been in the care of Cornwall Record Office for over 30 years and are popular sources for a wide range of research interests – from family and local history to mining and Cornish language studies. We are looking forward to getting out there and involving local communities initially in the Penryn and St Agnes areas - places which feature strongly in the collection.”

Sarah Newton, Member of Parliament for Truro and Falmouth, said: "I am delighted that people of all ages from across Cornwall will have the opportunity of learning from this extensive collection of interesting maps, letters and books that make up this collection. It will be a rich resource for anyone interested in Cornwall's history and the Cornish language."

The Enys family were prominent landowners, industrialists and collectors and the archive includes a wealth of information on the people living and working on the family’s extensive land holdings across Cornwall.

The collection also contains documents detailing the family’s involvement in the mining and international trade, as well as the records of other Cornish families and notables which have national and international appeal.

A full programme of events will be announced in October 2010.

Further information

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