Boys club will chart Coventry’s musical memories

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Now, a project tracing this part of its social history will be supported by a grant of almost £40,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Well-known local youth organisation Coventry Boys’ Club will be delving into the city’s musical memories. Young volunteers will interview elderly residents, past musicians, bands, record producers, venue owners and present day artists. The result will not only be a website and DVD but also two artworks; a permanent mural and a portable one that will be seen at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum and a variety of other locations towards the end of the project in March next year.

Up to 50 volunteers of all ages will be recruited for the project, gathering information through local museums and libraries, as well as recording face to face interviews. As well as the music that became a feature of people’s lives from 1939 to 1945, the project will recall the 1970’s local groups such as The Specials and Lieutenant Pigeon. A thriving acoustic scene has gathered pace since 2000 with singer/songwriters like Kristy Gallagher and Al Britten and the present day musicians include indie band The Enemy.

The information gathered will create a website and an archive to be kept at the Boys’ Club and the history centre at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum. One of the two murals being planned will be installed permanently in the Boys’ Club’s city centre headquarters while a portable version will tour locations such as local schools and festivals while also putting in an appearance at the Herbert’s Glasshouse gallery.

Reyahn King, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund West Midlands, said: “Music often plays a prominent role in people’s memories and this project will tap into this rich source of reminiscences helping to relate the city’s history, social life and leisure to the songs and tunes of each era.”

For Coventry Boys Club Shaun Donnelly the Centre Manager said: “We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has been able to fund this project as we are passionate about music at the club. We feel that we will be able to leave the residents of Coventry with a real legacy. The members of the club cannot wait to get started on this exciting heritage project”

Further information

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