Grand old Duke of York’s celebrates a cinema centenary

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Unlike other cinemas from the same era, the Duke of York’s has operated continually as a cinema throughout its lifetime and in order to capture memories and memorabilia the HLF-funded project will target the local community and schools to help fill in the fascinating story. The project is being run by the University of Brighton.

Volunteers from throughout the city will gather artefacts such as old programmes, advertisements, newspaper articles and photographs held in a mix of public and private collections and bring them together in a single dedicated archive.

Interviewers will also be trained up to record reminiscences from older cinema patrons about their memories of visiting the town’s most renowned silver screen. A programme of events for communities and schools is also being held at the Grade II listed cinema itself to bring alive its history to groups of all ages.

The information gathered will be kept at Hove Museum and will also feature on a newly created website. A teaching pack will be sent to local schools as a case study of how the cinema business has changed over the years. A centenary souvenir programme will also be produced to mark the building’s 100th birthday on 22 September 2010.

Commenting for the Heritage Lottery Fund, Stuart McLeod, Head of HLF South East England, said: “This venerable picture palace has in part survived because of the ongoing support of a loyal community and now volunteers from that community will help create an enduring legacy as a permanent historical record.