Historic Southampton mural back in public view

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Southampton City Council has chosen a site in Hamtun Street, in the Old Town close to the Tudor House museum, where it will be seen by the largest number of visitors and tourists. A programme of special events and activities have been organised to co-incide with the installation of the mural in its new setting.

Commenting on the mural project Stuart McLeod, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South East England, said: “Restoring the mural to public view is a catalyst for the community to discover aspects of local history and try their hand at craftwork and other skills.”

The mosaic, which depicts scenes from Southampton’s history from Roman times to the 20th century, will be repaired, cleaned and installed on a wall at Castle House, facing Hamtun Street.

Among the special activities planned to celebrate the return of the mural to public view will be workshops in ceramic plaque-making involving schools and families. Working with conservator and mosaic artist Oliver Budd the workshops will discuss What panel would come next? with suggestions as to which events in the city’s history should be depicted since the original mural was completed 40 years ago. Participants will also consider what historic happenings the mural might have missed out.

It is planned to involve all age-groups in the various activities with young people interviewing members of the older generation about their memories of living in the area.

The mural, measuring 19 metres long by almost 3 metres in height, was originally commissioned by supermarket giant Sainsbury’s in 1970. Created by influential ceramic artists Henry and Joyce Collins, the mural with its mix of concrete and glass mosaic, originally adorned Sainsbury’s Lordshill superstore. Some 20 years later it was removed to make way for the redevelopment of the store and donated by Sainsbury’s to the City Council, who placed it in storage.

Councillor John Hannides, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Heritage at Southampton City Council, said: “I’m thrilled that this historic mosaic is being restored to its former glory, and will once again be on public display for everyone to see and enjoy.

“The mural depicts key historical scenes from Southampton, and is a real celebration of our maritime and aeronautical achievements, which we are extremely proud of.”

A showcase event featuring the mural will take place as part of next September’s National Heritage Open Days and the re-opening of the refurbished Tudor House and Garden. The Tudor House has been renovated with the aid of a £5 million grant from HLF and £2 million from the City Council.

Notes to editors

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 more than 33,900 projects, allocating over £4.4billion across the UK, with over £428 million granted in the South East alone.

Further information

HLF Press Office: Vicky Wilford on 020 7591 6046 / 07968 129241 / vickyw@hlf.org.uk or Phil Cooper on 020 7591 6033 / 07889 949173 / phillipc@hlf.org.uk

Ruth Harrington, Southampton City Council Communications Team on 023 8083 3910.