

Heritage Lottery Fund backs the Milford Street Bridge Project

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The award will allow the project to tell the story of an area of Salisbury changed forever by the building of the ring road. It will combine oral history, visual arts, dance, and poetry with guided walks and many other learning opportunities

When the Salisbury ring road was built in the early 1970s that part of our city was irrevocably changed. Hundreds of buildings disappeared – some of architectural interest, some industrial and some family homes.

Using local peoples' stories and memories, an oral history of the area will be created. What was life in the area like before the ring road was built? Who lived and worked there?

The stories and memories collected as part of the project will be used as an inspiration for dance and movement, historical walks, visual arts and poetry. The project will be completed in spectacular fashion with the painting of a large mural on one side wall of the Milford Street Bridge depicting some of the lost buildings, and characters from the area. This will be followed by a week of events at which the whole community can celebrate its heritage.

A pilot for the project took place at St Martins Primary School in March 2009. This was really successful, and the school are eager to take part again. The children will be interviewing local members of their community, and using the stories for dance, visual arts and creative writing work.

Project Co-ordinator, Clare Christopher, said: "We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has chosen to support our project. It is going to be wonderful to get the whole community involved in learning more about, preserving and celebrating the heritage of this part of Salisbury and its people. We are also very grateful to Wiltshire Council, Salisbury City Council, O2 It's Your Community and B&Q who have also granted money to the project."

Explaining the importance of the award, the Heritage Lottery Fund's Head of Region for the South West, Nerys Watts, said: "Heritage is the story of who we are and can be found not only in our museums and ancient buildings but also in the memories and traditions of our local communities. This project will ensure that an important part of the history of this area of Salisbury is preserved and recorded for the future in a very accessible way."

The Community Association are now actively seeking people to take part in the project. If you have memories or stories about the area of Salisbury around the Milford Street Bridge (including The Greencroft, the roads towards the city centre as far as Brown Street, up to the top of Milford Hill and as far as the college roundabout) then you can help create the oral history.

Volunteers are also needed for a variety of roles including interviewing and transcribing for the oral history (training will be provided), researching the area and helping at events.

Notes to editors

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) enables communities to celebrate, look after and learn more about our diverse heritage. From our great museums and historic buildings to local parks and beauty spots or recording and celebrating traditions, customs and history, HLF grants open up our nation's heritage for everyone to enjoy. Since 1994 it has supported more than 26,000 projects, allocating over £4 billion across the UK.

Further information

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