Middlesbrough's footballing heritage celebrated

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'Middlesbrough 86', awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant of £42,900, brings together the whole of the Teesside community and enables people to collect and share their memories of the football club and the town itself.

The club was saved from liquidation in 1986, exactly 25 years ago, by a consortium of business owners. The project will hold activities at major cultural institutions including MIMA*, Captain Cook and Dorman Museums, Teesside University and through the library service in schools across the borough.

Ivor Crowther, Head of HLF in the North East, said: “Middlesbrough has a long and proud footballing heritage and this project is an exciting opportunity for local people to share their memories and experiences, creating a permanent record for future generations. In the run-up to the Olympics, it is important to remember our sporting history and how it has shaped communities across the country. HLF is delighted to be involved with this project and we are looking forward to seeing it progress over the coming months.”

Theatre Is Real Life will perform ‘The BORO’s 37 Minutes', a play written by project director, Alan Spence. Originally performed at last year’s Literary Festival, it drew this response from Rob Nichols, Editor of Fly Me To The Moon (MFC fanzine).“A gritty drama that is intertwined with the football in a most unexpected and dramatic way.”

Some of the other events include an education and outreach programme, author and artist events and talks, family activity days and exhibitions. The project will develop over a full year from its launch in August 2011.

Debbie Thompson, oral history volunteer, said: “An amazing opportunity, for us BORO fans to explore the history of MFC and share our stories.”

The first public project kicked off on 3 August 2011 at the We Are Open Gallery which is open from 10am – to 5pm Monday to Saturday until 14 September.

Notes to editors

*Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art

Further information

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