Support for the Mill Road History Project

07/05/2013

The project has been developed by members of the local community to enable volunteers to record memories and stories of people who have lived and worked in the area, document the significant buildings and sites along the road, and develop an informative and interactive website.

Money will be spent training people to use the archives, undertake oral histories, take photographs and create a record for future generations. Lucy Walker, acting chair of the project steering group, said: "We are thrilled to have been awarded this funding and will be asking everyone to come forward with their memories and photographs. This is a great opportunity to get involved, learn a new skill and help the project come alive. It's going to be fun, with a valuable outcome."

The first bit of research will focus on the former Playhouse Cinema, the earliest cinema in Cambridge, currently the Sally Anne's charity shop. Local resident, Ian Bent, will lead a group of volunteers to explore the history of the site since 1850, examine the building, and create a historical, documentary and photographic record. He would like people who can remember what it was like to attend the Playhouse in its heyday to get in touch.

Local historian Allan Brigham, Trustee and Chair of the Friends of the Museum of Cambridge (formerly the Folk Museum), is a key member of the history group. "It's wonderful that the Heritage Lottery Fund has recognised the importance of Mill Road as part of the story of Cambridge. We will be working closely with the museum to ensure that our project has longevity and could be used as a model for other areas of the city."

Catherine Morris, Director of the Museum of Cambridge, said: "We as a community museum are utterly delighted to be involved in supporting the Mill Road project and in sustaining its digital legacy. Everyone involved in receiving this award is to be congratulated not least because they are helping to save and regenerate a unique cultural heritage for our city. This visionary initiative will create a blueprint that will encourage other groups across the region to capture and record their historical memories as an enriching foundation for local community development."

Caro Wilson, also on the steering group, said: 'This project has really fired people's imagination. We have close links with local residents, traders, community groups and schools. Many people want to get involved, and key contacts in our local universities are keen to help with research. We also hope that arts and drama projects will develop out of this.'

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund East of England, said: "HLF are delighted to support the Mill Road Bridges group, Mill Road housed Cambridge's first supermarket, workhouse and cinema and has an ethnically diverse character which has become a part of its heritage and this project will offer the chance for people to learn about this often overlooked aspect of Cambridge's history.'

The project will officially be launched later in the year but if you would like to get involved or have any stories and photos relating to the area then please email the Mill Road History Project on millroadhistoryproject@gmail.com.

Notes to editors

The Mill Road History Project has been set up by local residents under the umbrella of the local community group Mill Road Bridges whose purpose is to share information amongst all who live and work on and around the road, and to

encourage community activities.

Further information

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