No.1 Royal Crescent reopens to the public

21/06/2013

Food writer and broadcaster Mary Berry officially opened the museum, in front of an assembly of people who have contributed to the restoration project. VIP guests included include Tom Wills-Sandford and his daughter Caroline Sandford-Anderson, who are direct descendants of the original resident of the house (retired Irish MP Mr Henry Sandford); Bath philanthropist and businessman Andrew Brownsword who has so generously bought and paid for the restoration of No.1A, and Simon Timms, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund South West Committee which provided a significant grant of £1.4million towards the £5million project.

Also present as a guest of honour was The Hon Elizabeth Cayzer, niece of Bernard Cayzer who acquired No.1 and gave it to the Trust in 1968, providing funds for its restoration by the Trust. No.1A, the original domestic wing, was 'separated' from the main house at this time. She has continued her uncle's legacy with very generous donations having been made from her charitable trust.

The Rt Hon Don Foster MP aslo attended the ceremony, alongside the new Mayor of Bath and new Chairman of B&NES Council, plus fellow dignitaries and supporters.

Edward Bayntun-Coward, Chairman of the Trustees of Bath Preservation Trust, says: "Residents and visitors to Bath have witnessed an eight month period of closure and some intense renovation works taking place to both buildings, but reopening to the public is actually the culmination of a six-year project of vision and determination. We are very proud of how the original house has been authentically restored to reflect exactly how it would have been during its first 20 years of occupancy - 1776–1796 - based on the exciting discovery of original descriptions and evidence."

Simon Timms, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund South West Committee, says: "The Royal Crescent is one of the greatest examples of Georgian architecture to be found in the United Kingdom and we at the Heritage Lottery Fund are delighted see it fully restored and open to the public once again. Through reuniting the buildings at No 1 and No 1a the Royal Crescent, and creating new learning and visitor spaces, people from near and far can now fully explore and appreciate all aspects of the social history of the house, reflecting the wider history of Bath."

Notes to editors

- Bernard Cayzer took a keen interest in the restoration of the house and also encouraged the important contribution made by the voluntary guides who work at No.1. After his death in 1981, a plaque was placed in the entrance porch to commemorate his imaginative gift. The house was officially opened as a museum to the public on 20 June 1970 (exactly 43 years to the date of our re-opening in 2013) and is furnished with some of Bernard Cayzer's original acquisitions
- Mary Berry is a keen supporter of No.1 and has previously judged Georgian baking competitions in the museum

Further information

Janey Abbott, Bath Preservation Trust, 01225 338 727 / jabbott@bptrust.org.uk

Laura Bates, Heritage Lottery Fund, 020 7591 6027 / lbates@hlf.org.uk