

Busheller and booker pickers at Claston Farm, Dormington Derek Evans Studio

A new film documenting the history of hop making in Herefordshire premieres this weekend.

Home to drinks giants Westons and Bulmers, Herefordshire is renowned for producing cider. Now however, it's the turn of the hop to take centre stage.

‘Stories from the Hop Yards’ combines archive photos, film footage and new video interviews to record life in the fields from the past to the present day.

Stories from the Hop Yards

Former workers fondly recall long days handpicking in the hop fields and the special companionship between pickers, who spent time together cooking over open fires, telling stories and, of course, sampling the final product.

Over time, the introduction of agricultural machinery put an end to the traditional migration of workers for the autumn harvest.

Working with Herefordshire Library Service, Catcher Media Social involved schoolchildren, migrant workers and older people in capturing these memories for future generations.

The film is just one part of the National Lottery funded ‘Herefordshire Life through a Lens’ project.

Herefordshire Life Through a Lens

The project was inspired by the extraordinary photographic archive of the late Derek Evans. A well-known local figure, Evans's photography is a remarkable record of Herefordshire's social history, from hop picking and farming, to football and the May Fair.

Over 150 volunteers and three interns will contribute to the project over three years and have helped to digitise and catalogue these images, making them available to all on the Herefordshire History website.

Where to watch

Stories from the Hop Yards, and the accompanying exhibition of Evans photos, will premiere on Saturday (3 March) at the Borderlines Film Festival in Hereford.

Find more other screening dates on the Herefordshire Life through a Lens website.



Suckley apples from a traditional orchard in the Three Counties



Heritage Minister Tracey Crouch pulling pints at The Fellowship Inn, Bellingham, South London

Minister pulls pints rather than punches at Boxer Henry Cooper’s South London training pub