

## Media Release

25 January 2012

### HLF give school friends the skills to capture Colwyn Bay on camera

School friends Sarah Shaw and Shannon Stewart have always taken an interest in the past, but now thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) they've made their own piece of history capturing what life is like in Colwyn Bay for residents aged nine to ninety on film.

Sarah and Shannon are sharing their experience in HLF's new *Heritage Matters in Wales* magazine, with the aim of encouraging more young people to get involved in projects to develop new skills while exploring the heritage on their doorstep.

The fifteen year old Eirias High School pupils, who are both studying history at GCSE level, gave up their free time to take part in the Colwyn Bay Web and Walk project, funded by a £20,600 HLF grant. As part of the intergeneration project Sarah and Shannon were given training in oral history by the University of Bangor so they could collect and record the stories and memories from older members of the community.

Sarah was the first to get involved in the project through her family and suggested to Shannon that she join in. Sarah said: "I know how much Shannon likes making things so I asked her to come along as I knew she would enjoy the creative side of the project. I'm so glad she did. Together we came up with the idea of creating a time capsule. We were just talking about how Colwyn Bay will change again in the future so we thought it would be cool to create something that represented our town in 2011."

Shannon and Sarah were keen to put their new interviewing skills into practice and set about creating a film for the time capsule, which is now installed at the historic Theatr Colwyn. They worked with a local media company, and were given additional training in all aspects of film production from storyboarding, choosing locations, script writing, lighting and sound.

Shannon said: "I loved learning how to operate the camera and edit the film. Seeing it online was really cool. My favourite part though was finding out the stories; it was really interesting to hear about the older people's experiences during the war and how different their school life was compared to ours. It was a real eye opener.

"We are doing oral history as part of our GCSE work so this has helped put me ahead in class and confirmed my decision to study history at A Level.

"Sarah and I have now offered to help run the social media for the Colwyn Bay History Group as it's something that the older members of the group aren't familiar with. There are so many

stories to tell and so much going on that we want to make sure it reaches as many people as possible. It's a great way to have our voice heard in the community."

Sarah added: "I'm so proud of what we've created. It's mad to think that in years to come people will be opening up our time capsule to find out more about Colwyn Bay and whether our predictions for what life would be like in 50 years time come true. I'd definitely recommend others to get involved in similar projects - you learn new things and meet new people. For someone who is really shy, like me, it will help grow your confidence. I used to be so nervous speaking to new people."

Jennifer Stewart, Head of HLF in Wales, said: "People are at the heart of HLF projects and it is fantastic to see young people like Sarah and Shannon so passionate about passing on the story of their town for future generations to explore. The *Heritage Matters* magazine was created to celebrate these fantastic people behind the projects and will hopefully encourage others to volunteer and make a real difference in their communities."

The Bay Web and Walk project with the support of HLF and Communities First has developed a heritage trail for the town, including a digital audio guide, bilingual booklet and education leaflet. To find out more and to view the film Shannon and Sarah created visit [www.colwynbayheritage.org.uk](http://www.colwynbayheritage.org.uk)

To find out more about heritage projects funded by the HLF or to request copies of *Heritage Matters*, visit [www.hlf.org.uk/wales](http://www.hlf.org.uk/wales)

You can also keep up to date with Heritage Lottery Fund Wales on Facebook.

- ENDS -

**For further information please contact Helen Newton and Kate Sullivan at Equinox Communications on 02920 764100 or [hlf@equinoxcommunications.co.uk](mailto:hlf@equinoxcommunications.co.uk)**

#### **Note to editors**

Captions: Sarah and Shannon prepare to install the time capsule.

#### **Volunteering/skills/training facts**

- More than £86.3m has been awarded to over 1,484 projects in Wales that involve volunteers. More than 98% of grants awarded in the last year have created volunteering opportunities
- Volunteering is a cornerstone of HLF projects. Our research indicates that, on average, 13 volunteers are involved in every project, providing nearly 450 hours of volunteering time per project <sup>1</sup> – that's a total of 667,800 volunteering hours across Wales!
- HLF has awarded £49.3m to 179 projects in Wales that have included sessions for learners of all ages.

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<sup>1</sup> Ipsos MORI, 2009, *ibid.*

- Over 60 projects in Wales have offered participants the chance to learn new skills such as blacksmithing, textile and paper conservation, traditional building skills and dry stone walling
- 64 new work-based training opportunities have been created in Wales through our Training Bursary programme which aims to address specific skills shortages in the heritage sector