

Legasee wins Heritage Lottery support to record and exhibit the stories of Second World War Convoy Veterans.

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Today, the Legasee Educational Trust has received £62,900 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the "Keeping Britain Afloat" project. Working with Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust and local young people the project sets out to film the personal stories of 50 Veterans who served as Chatham Ratings in the Convoys of the Second World War. The project will culminate in 2015 with a permanent exhibition at Chatham Historic Dockyard celebrating the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

The youngest Convoy Veterans are now in their late eighties. This vital project will enable the young people of Kent to discover the hidden stories behind the Convoys as they aid Legasee in interviewing these amazing Veterans, recording their remarkable stories and according the Veterans the recognition they deserve.

Working with Legasee, volunteers and young people will learn about the techniques of interviewing, filming, editing and transcribing as they capture and archive filmed oral history. They will gain a deeper insight into the importance of the Convoys in keeping Britain and its Allies supplied with essential items, including food, during the war and they will also learn how important sea trade still is to Britain's survival as a nation.

Commenting on the Award, Legasee Trustee Martin Bisiker, said: "We are thrilled to have received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and confident that finally this incredible story can be captured, that the key role Convoy Veterans from Kent played will be recognised and that young people will be part of the process."

Alex Patterson, Collections and Galleries Manager for Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, commented: "This award from the Heritage Lottery Fund will help capture and tell the stories of those men who were part of a vital front of the Second World War and which are in danger of being lost forever. As The Historic Dockyard is home to HMS Cavalier, the last surviving Second World War Destroyer that served in the Arctic Convoys and now the National Destroyer Memorial, this project will preserve these stories for future generations."

Stuart Mcleod, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund South East said: "The events of the Second World War shook the world and shaped the lives of millions of people in the UK and further afield. Sadly, as most veterans are well into their eighties, their important stories and memories of the conflict are in danger of disappearing without being recorded. The young people involved in this project will not only help capture the Veteran's memories and experiences for the future but they'll also have a chance to learn new skills throughout the process."

Legasee are looking to interview anybody who served as a Chatham Rating in any of the Convoys of the Second World War and have a story to tell. Please call Martin on 02070339773 or email martin@legasee.org.uk if you would like to be part of the project or know some-one who should be.

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Further information

About Legasee Education Trust

Legasee Educational Trust is a charity set up to record the experiences and observations of all veterans of conflict from WWII until present day. 'To create the largest online film archive of this aspect of our social history that can be used for education, learning and better understanding for today's generation and many generations to come'. Legasee's film archive is well regarded and used to support articles written by respected publications like the Guardian newspaper educational supplements. See website <http://www.legasee.org.uk> for more information.

About Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust

The Historic Dockyard Chatham is the most complete Dockyard of the Age of Sail to survive anywhere in the world. For over 370 years the Royal Dockyard at Chatham played a crucial role in supporting the

Royal Navy, building over 400 ships - including HMS Victory, Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar. Since 1984, Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust has created a unique world-class maritime heritage destination providing homes, work places and unrivalled visitor experiences through its strategy of 'preservation through re-use' with stunning iconic buildings, historic ships, museum galleries and attractions, where visitors discover the unique part The Historic Dockyard played in Britain's maritime history.

Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust is a Registered Charity (No. 292101) and The Historic Dockyard Chatham is a Fully Accredited Museum.

<http://www.thedockyard.co.uk>

<http://www.facebook.com/historic.chatham>

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About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Using money raised through the National lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) aims to make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities across the UK and help build a resilient heritage economy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported over 35,000 projects with more than £5.5bn across the UK. <http://www.hlf.org.uk>

Further information, images and interviews please contact Martin Bisiker on 020 7033 9773
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