



'Fleetwood's fishing heritage to receive a boost from Heritage Lottery Fund'

Images and information on Fleetwood's deep sea fishing industry are to be preserved and made available for future generations through the Internet. Over 900 trawlers sailed out of Fleetwood during the heyday of deep sea fishing and thanks to an award of £44,990 (85% of the total costs) from the Heritage Lottery Fund, an archive and online database are to be created.

At present collections of photographs, press articles, artefacts and documents are housed at Fleetwood Library, Fleetwood Museum and the Lancashire Record Office. This grant will enable the photographs to be conserved and digitised and a searchable online database created under the acronym F.L.O.A.T. (Fleetwood Online Archive of Trawlers). The project will create two temporary posts based in Fleetwood.

FLOAT will allow people to access images and information on trawlers and crew from the website whenever they like. There will also be the opportunity for local people to contribute information for inclusion in the database and see the images through exhibitions, reminiscence sessions and other events at the Library, Museum, community centres and other local venues. Volunteers will have the chance to get involved and learn new IT skills.

The project will be launched in mid-September and run until April 2007.

Tom Watson (Fleetwood Fish Producers Organisation Ltd.) feels "the gathering together and preserving of the archives into one collection will offer new opportunities for learning, understanding and celebrating the fishing heritage of Fleetwood. This we feel will be of particular value to the younger people in helping them relate to and identify their own, and the town's heritage."

Simon Hayhow (Fleetwood Museum) commented that "fishing has been integral to the life of the community in Fleetwood since at least the 1870's. Sadly, it is now in decline and the deep sea fishing has gone. There was a time when most of Fleetwood was involved in fishing or ancillary industries in the port and the whole community depended on fishing. Although times have moved on, this project aims to help restore pride back into the lives of those who put themselves in peril to bring back a harvest from the sea. Hopefully, the archive will form a fitting legacy to a once great industry in Fleetwood".

For further details please contact:
Simon Hayhow at Fleetwood Museum
Tel: 01253 876621