



PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FUNDING WIN FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE IN LEDBURY

The National Lottery Heritage Fund awards £220,000 to rescue the life and works of John Masefield from obscurity.

2028 marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of John Masefield in Ledbury. In the early twentieth-century Masefield was a best-selling author and he was appointed Poet Laureate in 1930. His inspirational life and work have now faded from view and a Ledbury-based project, Masefield Matters, will rectify this.

Through a programme of activities the local community will have the opportunity to reconnect with Masefield by exploring the things that mattered to him, including the countryside and the sea. These activities will help to determine the form of the ultimate memorialisation.

The two-year project has been awarded £220,000 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, thanks to National Lottery players. It will be launched on Wednesday 15 January, 3 – 5pm at The Master's House in Ledbury. Anyone interested is invited to attend to find out more about plans, and how they can be involved.

Many writers recognised Masefield's gifts: Yeats said he would be "a popular poet", Eliot identified his "importance", Larkin "admired" him, and Betjeman wrote that Masefield's poems 'Sea-Fever' and 'Cargoes' would be "remembered as long as the language lasts". Once proposed as the twentieth-century's "greatest man" (over Churchill, Roosevelt and Gandhi), Masefield is now largely forgotten.

PRESS RELEASE ENDS

NOTES FOR EDITOR'S

Masefield Matters is organised by Masefield Matters Project Board, led by Ledbury Town Council which includes members of The John Masefield Society, Ledbury Poetry, John Masefield School, Ledbury Civic Society, and other Ledbury organisations and individuals.

John Masefield (1878-1967) was a hugely successful author of poetry, novels and plays. He was appointed Poet Laureate in 1930 and awarded the O.M. in 1935. His personal story is one of an orphan's determined struggle against adversity. His relentless pursuit of his dream to succeed in the literary world took him to the pinnacle of the profession despite a lack of formal education. His works contain much that is inspirational and have contemporary relevance. He was the last writer to be interred in Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey.

For more information visit www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/en-gb/john-masefield-memorial-project

For media enquiries please contact: Cllr Nick Morris, Chair of Masefield Matters Project Board
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About The National Lottery Heritage Fund

As the largest dedicated funder of the UK's heritage, The National Lottery Heritage Fund's vision is for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future as set out in the strategic plan, [Heritage 2033](#).

Over the next ten years, the Heritage Fund aims to invest £3.6billion raised for good causes by National Lottery players to bring about benefits for people, places and the natural environment.

The Heritage Fund helps protect, transform and share the things from the past that people care about, from popular museums and historic places, our natural environment and fragile species, to the languages and cultural traditions that celebrate who we are.

The Heritage Fund is passionate about heritage and committed to driving innovation and collaboration to make a positive difference to people's lives today, while leaving a lasting legacy for future generations to enjoy.

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www.heritagefund.org.uk

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