

Archive launched to promote Edinburgh's theatre heritage

King's Theatre Heritage Project, dedicated to celebrating the rich history of Edinburgh's theatre community, has been launched.

At the heart of the project is The People's Archive, a digital platform offering access to programmes, photographs, playbills, press articles and oral histories, shared by members of the community and those who have enjoyed performing and working at the King's.

There are over 2,700 items ranging from genealogy articles to model boxes and costume design.

The complete archive will launch in spring 2025, but Capital Theatres has released a taster of what people can expect inspired by a newspaper article from 1937 which tells the story of Bethia Cassie a cleaner at the King's Theatre in 1917 who eventually became a lighting technician – an unusual job for a woman at that time.

The archive and Heritage Talks are part of Capital Theatres' on-going commitment to preserve and promote Edinburgh's theatre heritage for future generations.

Three talks per season will be held on select Wednesdays at 5:30pm in the Event Rooms at Festival Theatre, ahead of evening performances.

On 11 December, Abby Pendlebury and Capital Theatres archive contributors delve into the history of Cinderella at the

King's Theatre, offering exclusive insights into pantomime traditions past and present.

On 5 February, Dr Sian Barber from Queen's University Belfast discusses the transition from film to theatre, censorship, and British film history behind Mary Poppins.

On 12 March, Ruth McKay, Chair of Capital Theatres Youth Advisory Board, highlights the archives of the King's Theatre with a talk on community theatre, focusing on a discussion of Show Boat through the ages.

On 9 April, King's Theatre staff lead a special Q&A on the conservation of the King's Theatre, giving a behind-the-scenes look at this historic project.