

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **“Travellers Remember” Launch of New Digital Stories**

A major new digital project featuring the reminiscences of Traveller families regarding their lives on the road in the 1960s and 1970s has just been completed. The stories will be launched at 11.00 am on Friday 31 March at The Courtyard in Hereford as part of the Borderlines Film Festival’s “Travellers’ Tales” strand. Jake Bowers, will be making a special opening address at the launch. Jake is one of Britain’s few Romani journalists, having worked for ***The Guardian, The Independent and BBC Radio & TV.***

Experienced outreach workers facilitated children and young people drawn from 25 different families in the West Midlands to record their parents’ and grandparents’ memories. The result is a series of beautiful and carefully crafted visual and oral stories which depict and celebrate Traveller family life and work.

The project, undertaken by **The Rural Media Company**, was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. It utilises fascinating images drawn from the families’ personal collections with each story lasting between two to three minutes. The stories depict:

- how travellers were perceived in the past;
- how this perception has changed;
- traditional Traveller trades and artefacts;
- the part the Travellers played in agriculture and their relationship to nature and the landscape.

After the launch, the stories will be accessible free of charge from the *Travellers’ Times* website: [www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk). A DVD of the stories will also be available to buy from The Rural Media Company.

Jane Jackson, Director of Production, says: “The project has grown out of the Company’s long track record of working with Gypsies and Travellers. Traveller culture is misunderstood and often ignored. Anti-Traveller hostility is on the rise and the Travellers’ life style is increasingly threatened by lack of sites and stopping places.

We hope that this project will address some of these misconceptions and encourage understanding of the Travellers' way of life."

Further information is available from **01432 344039** or by e-mailing:

[info@ruralmedia.co.uk](mailto:info@ruralmedia.co.uk).

**Release ends**

**Note to Editors**

- **The Rural Media Company** works throughout the UK. We combine community and informal education, training and advocacy with the professional skills of the media industry. The results are effective, high-impact, high-quality media projects and educational materials at the cutting edge of current policy and debate.
- **Jake Bowers** is one of Britain's few Romani journalists, having worked for *The Guardian*, *The Independent* and BBC Radio & TV. He was involved in the production of *Gypsy Wars*, the documentary series focussing on Gypsy and Traveller land conflicts, to be broadcast on BBC2 later this year. He is the author of *Private Past, Public Future* – a report into the representation of Gypsies and Travellers in museums, libraries and archives for Surrey County Council.

[www.ruralmedia.co.uk](http://www.ruralmedia.co.uk)