

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Relive the leisure and labour of our rural past on screen at Broadhembury Memorial Hall 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 3.00 p.m. and at 7.30 p.m.



It can sometimes seem hard to imagine the UK before smartphones and our era of hyperconnectivity and remember the simple pleasures that could be found in the diverse and beautiful landscapes of all our home nations.

**Broadhembury Memorial Hall** is offering you the chance to go back to these halcyon days with *Britain on Film: Rural Life* on **19<sup>th</sup> September 2018** at 3:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Admission is free but there will be donation request on leaving. Light refreshments will be available.

**T**his new film features archive footage of the whole of the UK's countryside. The film is also a chance to see Laurie Lee's hymn to the beauty of the West of England, a country pub landlord charged with raising the alarm against the Russians and one of the UK's first sound documentary films, with a shepherd protecting his flock in documentary shot in the Cheviot Hills.

The **Independent Cinema Office** has partnered with the BFI to give cinema audiences unprecedented access to the lives and work of the UK's rural populations. This new feature-length curated programme of films is touring the UK, featuring work never-before-seen since first release. Drawing on the BFI National Archive, MACE and Northern Ireland Screen: Digital Film Archive, this programme was officially launched at **Ulster Folk and Transport Museum** on 26 January 2017.

*Britain on Film: Rural Life* gives audiences the chance to be led down the country lanes of the past, to meander through the dwindling customs of another era. Visit the ancient capital of Wales, Machynlleth, in a glorious 1929 Pathécolor film, play in the hay with children from 1904 and allow Laurie Lee's words to accompany you through the green landscapes of the West of England. As well as celebrating the old ways of work and play, *Britain on Film: Rural Life* uncovers the peculiarities of rural life; discover Bessbrook, perhaps the only Northern Irish village with no pub or the Norfolk village that became home to a stray seal.

Britain on Film is one of the largest archive film digitisation projects ever undertaken, with thousands of film titles being newly digitised and made available to view online via BFI Player. *Britain on Film on Tour* reveals new and unseen stories from as early as 1898. This wide and diverse range of material opens up local and regional histories from across the UK. This is the first time many of these films will have been seen by audiences since they were first shown.

**Jemma Buckley, Project Manager of Britain on Film on Tour** said, 'This programme is a reminder of what has changed in the UK's rural spaces, as well as what remains the same. This is not just a nostalgic view, it also raises deep questions about how we view the countryside today and allows us to examine our contemporary relationship with it.'

### **More about the films in the programme**



**Machynlleth (In the Heart of Cambria) | Dir: unknown | UK | 1929 | 2 mins**

This glorious Pathécolor film of the ancient capital of Wales pops with the beauty of rural life. The vibrancy of the hand stencilled images of this charming town's streams, shady woodlands and quaint livestock make this a genuine bucolic treat.



**O'er Hill and Dale | Dir: Basil Charles Wright | UK | 1932 | 18 mins**

The first sound documentary produced in the UK, this is an affectionate and at points humorous account of a Scottish shepherd's daily life in the Cheviot Hills



**Great Hucklow Jubilee | Dir: L. du Garde Peach | UK | 1935 | 9 mins**

These gorgeous scenes of Great Hucklow capture the Derbyshire village's preparations for the celebration of King George V's Silver Jubilee, presenting a charming portrait of life and laughter in the Pennine village



**The 'Dry Village' | Dir: Unknown | UK | 1964 | 5 mins**

A cautionary tale of the 'dry village' of Bessbrook, Co. Armagh, whose founder believed that the absence of a pub would remove the need for both the police and pawn brokers. But are the beautiful surroundings compensation enough for the lack of drink? And would the residents of neighbouring village Camlough be willing to give up their six pubs to find out?



**The Village Pet | Dir: Unknown | UK | 1931 | 1 min**

After Billy the seal was caught in the Wash and rehoused in the village pond, this heart-warming newsreel item shows him tentatively accepting a fish supper from his adoptive family - the good folks of Warham in Norfolk.



**West of England | Dir: Humphrey Swingler | UK | 1951 | 10 min**

Glorious Technicolor casts a dreamlike spell over Gloucestershire's Stroud valleys in this gorgeous short film. Author Laurie Lee contributes to the script for a narration which accompanies painterly images of evergreen scenery, people and industry.



**Cold War Villages | Dir: Unknown | UK | 1981 | 3 min**

In 1981, with no end to the Cold War in sight, plans are afoot in the Midlands to prepare for nuclear attack. These include a bunker for 400 people in a Rutland village with a population of 300, while in Derbyshire a local landlord takes responsibility for the somewhat simplistic advance warning system.



**Any Man's Kingdom | Dir: Tony Thompson | UK | 1956 | 5 mins (extract)**

A standout from the British Transport Films collection of travelogues – this one highlighting the attractions of Northumberland, the northernmost part of England. In this extract people travel from far and wide to enjoy the delights of Bellingham Fair, which includes traditional Cumberland wrestling.



**The Blacksmith | Dir: Peter Baylis | UK | 1941 | 5 mins**

'Things aren't what they used to be': Mr Bosley, village blacksmith at Corfe, near Taunton, is the subject of this nostalgic study of ancient craftsmanship. As his commentary talks us through the process of shoeing a horse, the patiently composed images gracefully evoke an ageless sunlit Somerset day.



**Eardisland Village | Dir: Unknown | UK | 1978 | 5 mins**

The residents of Eardisland, a picture postcard Herefordshire village, are unhappy about their impending conservation status which would curtail new development. How can a village continue to thrive with an ever ageing population and no new blood?



**Day in the Hayfields | Dir: Cecil M. Hepworth | UK | 1904 | 3mins**

Enchantingly beautiful, Cecil Hepworth's modest interest film captures the essence of an English midsummer and the hay harvest in a time before tractors with men cutting hay using a horse-powered reaper. Less productive but certainly charming are the local babies and toddlers playing in the cut grass.



**Skating on Lough Neagh | Dir: Unknown | UK | 1963 | 2 mins**

As the Big Freeze plays havoc with the working life of Northern Ireland, there is plenty of time for play. The frozen lough is a call to the adventurous and the ridiculous as dogs, dancers and even drivers take to the ice.

About the Independent Cinema Office

The **Independent Cinema Office** is the national support organisation for independent exhibitors of all kinds including cinemas, film festivals and film societies and provides training to support the sector. The ICO's exist to develop an open, thriving and challenging film culture.

About Britain On Film and Unlocking Film Heritage

Britain on Film is one of the largest and most complex archival projects ever undertaken and is part of the BFI's Unlocking Film Heritage programme (2013-17). Unlocking film heritage for everyone in the UK to enjoy is a key strategic priority for the BFI, and Britain on Film is the public launch of a vast programme of work, which has been ongoing for over three years. Bringing together a partnership with Regional and National Film Archives and rights holder collections across the UK, this work has included a sophisticated programme of data capture, cataloguing, copying to archival standards, meticulous preservation of original materials, thorough searching of archives across the country, new state-of-the-art equipment and digital storage facilities and the transfer of films to the BFI's online video platform, BFI Player.

Unlocking Film Heritage and Britain on Film are thanks to £15 million funding from the National Lottery and the additional support of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.