Dodworth Miners memorial unveiled

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In September 2012, Dodworth Miners' Memorial Fund, based in the South Yorkshire village of Dodworth, Barnsley, received a £9,700 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for an exciting project. The group have wanted to provide a memorial for local miners, as well as raising awareness of the village's rich industrial past. The application was a joint venture with the landowner, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's Parks Services.

Education has been a key part of the project with volunteers, including local historian and author Steve Wyatt - himself an ex-miner, visiting several schools to give presentations about coal mining. Through these sessions pupils have produced art work to feature on an interpretation panel complementing the memorial. During the presentations, as part of the schools' history lessons, the pupils were told that, many years ago children of a similar age would have been set to work underground! The group also provided their own exhibits for the lessons.

The focal point of the feature is a section of a restored actual pit-head winding wheel, which has been mounted on a specially-designed stone plinth. The memorial area has a flagged area, new wall, and two stainless steel plaques featuring pit locations and a poem.

The interpretation panel features a specially-designed map featuring locations of several local collieries, plus several examples of art work from the local pupils.

Much of the landscape surrounding Dodworth has been shaped by coal mining, but following the demise of this industry there remains very little physical link to the past. It is believed that both local people and visitors, both young and old, will find interest here. The busy high street has been visually improved too, with a small, under-used piece of open space identified as the ideal location.

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber, said: 'Our industrial heritage is something we can all take pride in, and makes us who we are today. It is important that we remember the significance of industrial heritage in our local identities. The Dodworth Miners Memorial Fund has worked hard to ensure that local people appreciate the impact that coal mining had on the area."

Commenting on the award, Local Councillor Philip Birkinshaw, said: "I'm delighted that the group have received this grant from the Heritage lottery Fund. This means the group can go ahead with the work considerably sooner than was anticipated. The group is extremely grateful and they are looking forward hugely to delivering this project in their village."

Further information

Steve Wyatt, Chairman of The Dodworth Miners' Memorial Fund on 01226 292 184.