HLF's new First World War:Then and Now programme opens

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HLF is making at least £1million available per year for six years until 2019. It will provide grants between £3,000 and £10,000 enabling communities and groups right across the UK to explore, conserve and share their First World War heritage and deepen their understanding of the impact of the conflict.

Community groups including those from Denbighshire and Swansea are helping to launch the scheme across the UK, by exploring what the legacy of the First World War means to them and sharing their stories and projects with others hoping to mark the Centenaries.

From the patriotic cartoons of J M Staniforth that cheered readers of the Western Mail in Wales throughout the First World War, to the experiences of north Wales soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice, there are so many stories to be told and their legacy continues to impact and shape the lives of our communities today.

Sebastian Faulks CBE, broadcaster, novelist, author of Birdsong and member of the Government's First World War Centenary advisory group, said: "HLF's First World War small grants programme is an opportunity for every street, town or village to make sure they remember the cataclysmic events of a hundred years ago. It is a chance to learn and to commemorate in whatever way they choose."< p/>

Jennifer Stewart, Head of HLF Wales, said: "The impact of the First World War was incredibly far reaching, touching and shaping every corner of the UK and beyond. Heritage Lottery Fund's new programme will enable communities in Wales to explore the continuing legacy of this war and help young people in particular to broaden their understanding of how it has shaped our modern world."

Successful projects will include:

- researching, identifying and recording local heritage
- creating a community archive or collection
- developing new interpretation of heritage through exhibitions, trails, smartphone apps etc
- researching, writing and performing creative material based on heritage sources

The new programme can also provide funding for the conservation of war memorials.

If a grant of more than £10,000 is needed for a First World War project, applicants can apply to HLF through its other, open programmes. HLF has already invested £12million in projects throughout the UK – large and small – that will mark the Centenary of First World War.

If you have a project idea to mark the Centenary, an online application pack is available from the First World War: Then and Now page or for telephone enquiries please call the HLF Wales office on 029 2034 3413.

HLF funded First World War projects in Wales

Cartooning the First World War in Wales - Swansea
The patriotic cartoons of J M Staniforth cheered readers of the Western Mail in Wales throughout the First World War. Now a project to digitise his wartime work aims to explore public responses in Wales towards the First World War at the time. The project has received £69,400 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to reproduce 1,350 of Staniforth's images on an interactive website.

Volunteers, including school students, cadet groups and undergraduates from Swansea University, which is running the project, will be trained in digitisation, image cleaning techniques and website data entry. The website will allow users to view, comment, share the cartoons and upload other First World War cartoons. Talks will also take place around Wales about the cartoons, and the project will culminate in a public conference at the National Waterfront Museum.

Chris Williams, Project Leader, said: "These cartoons offered a unique insight into the way the war was understood by the British public; they were serious in their intent yet vivid enough to evoke an immediate reaction. And in some ways they were ahead of their time, a visual diary that was accessible to everyone, like a blog of today.

"Through the project, the series of cartoons will be brought together for the first time, and it will be fascinating to see readers' reactions to give us an indication of how people would have reacted to them during the war.

"We're also involving young people, who will learn new skills and gain a better understanding of their local history through the project. They'll play an important part in showcasing modern thoughts and feelings about the war by creating their own cartoons."

Remembering the Local People who made the Sacrifice in the Wars - Denbighshire
Families in Denbighshire have been learning about their relatives whose names appear on three local war memorials in Llangollen, Froncysyllte and Garth for the Boer War, First World War and Second World War.

The project, run by Llangollen Museum, was awarded £20,500 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to collate material for an exhibition and educational activities. The museum received many enquiries about the names on the memorials which led to the project, which focused on those killed during two world wars and the impact on their families and communities.

A range of community organisations were involved in the inspiring intergenerational project, where volunteers gained skills in research methods and worked together to produce material for the exhibition. Research findings feature on Llangollen Museum's website, creating a lasting legacy.

David Crane, Project Manager, said: "The First and Second World War had a major impact on the political and social structure of the country and it's important for people today to be able to learn about and understand what their ancestors went through.

"This project went beyond the names and numbers and helped to bring the stories of these heroic men and women to life. In many cases, we were even able to put a face to the name, which helped people to further relate to the exhibition and their local history."

Park Place Remembers the Great War - Tredegar
Eleven names on a plaque fascinated the young people at Kidz R Us, a performing arts centre in Tredegar that was once a chapel. They researched the lives of the eleven young men, who had died during the First World War, and created an art project based on their findings with the help of a £23,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Forty-five young people were involved in the project, producing a documentary film and exhibition about life in Tredegar during the First World War, and younger children created a horse sculpture inspired by a trip to London to see the play 'Warhorse'. The wider local community was reassured that the plaque was valued and would remain accessible to them despite the building’s change of use.