HLF's new First World War Programme opens in Yorkshire and Humber

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Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is launching First World War: then and now, a £6million small grants programme to help communities mark the Centenary of the First World War.

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 from across Yorkshire including those from Leeds, Bradford, Ripon and Grimsby 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 revealing Headingley treacher training college's former incarnation as a military hospital during the conflict, to exploring what everyday life was like for civilians across the Yorkshire Home Front, restoring the much loved local war memorial in Spa Gardens, Ripon, to young people exploring the tale of the Grimsby Chums and the terrible fate that met them at the Battle of the Somme, there are so many stories to be told the legacy of which continue to impact and shape the lives of our communities today.

Welcoming the launch of the programme at the House of Commons today, Culture Secretary of State Maria Miller, said: "It is completely right that we mark the centenary of the First World War with a national programme capturing our national spirit and saying something about who we are as a people. But what we do also needs to help create an enduring cultural and educational legacy for communities. The HLF grant programme announced today will play a big part in this, and builds on the substantial investment they have already made towards the Centenary."

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."

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber, said: "The impact of the First World War was far reaching, touching and shaping every corner of the UK and beyond. The Heritage Lottery Fund's new programme will enable communities in Yorkshire and the Humber to explore the continuing legacy of this war and help young people in particular to broaden their understanding of how it has influenced 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; and
- 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 open programmes. HLF has already invested £12million in projects – 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 on the programme page or contact the HLF Yorkshire and the Humber Team at y&hdevelopment@hlf.org.uk or 0113 388 8030.

Notes to editors

Examples of HLF funded First World War projects in Yorkshire and the Humber:

The Wartime Hospital at Beckett's Park: Headingly, Leeds
The teacher training college at Beckett's Park in Headingley was built in 1913 and during the First World War was converted for use as a military hospital. It was officially called the 2nd Northern General Hospital but was more commonly known as Beckett's Park. It contained more than 3,000 beds and treated 57,200 soldiers between 1914 and 1918.

The college was gradually returned to educational use and is now part of Leeds Metropolitan University. Using interviews with descendants of those who were there, and letters, documents and images found in local archives and libraries, Headingley LitFest, with the aid of a £7,600 grant, will produce an illustrated publication detailing the human stories of those involved with the hospital. This will be timed to appear during the seventh Headingley LitFest, in March 2014. At the same time a dramatic production will be staged, based on the project's findings.

Unheard Voices - the Civilian Experience of the First World War in Yorkshire: Bradford
This project brings together local writers and the members of historical societies in the Yorkshire region to commemorate the centenary of the First World War. Snowgoose Writers Community, supported by a grant of £6,800, will explore and give creative expression to the untold or lesser known stories of the civilians on the Home Front. Using archival material from the era participants will uncover the experiences of the men, women and children; their day to day realities and privations.

Research findings will form the basis for performed and filmed versions of their stories. The performances will be delivered at a range of venues by local actors in the form of dramatic monologues. A website will also be created to host the short films.

Restoration of memorials in Spa Gardens, Ripon
The war memorial in Spa Gardens, Ripon, was restored along with a statue of the First Marquess of Ripon. Both structures are Grade II listed. The project was undertaken by the Friends of Spa Gardens, assisted by Harrogate Borough Council and supported by a grant of £9,200. The work included cleaning, re-pointing, re-patination and the application of protective wax coatings to both structures. The Friends Group also produced a special leaflet about the war memorial so that everyone in the local community has a better understanding of this historic structure and its significance. After the restoration was completed a service to re-dedicate the memorial was carried out by The Very Rev Keith Michael Jukes, Dean of Ripon.

Your Country Needs You(th): Grimsby
While thousands of young men joined up to fight in the First World War in Pals battalions the youth of Grimsby formed themselves into the Grimsby Chums. Their first major engagement was the Battle of the Somme and many were killed. Synergy CIC, assisted by a £49,500 grant, is working with local young people to uncover the stories of their

contemporaries who joined the Chums. Having identified as many as they can they will raise awareness of the battalion across North East Lincs.

The project will feature a war memorial hunt and the creation of a memorial map. The young people will also produce a short documentary film, explain their findings to five local schools, and curate a week-long exhibition to coincide with the centenary of the War's outbreak.

UK Government Centenary plans

In October 2012, the Prime Minister set out the Government's plans to mark the centenaries of the First World War commencing in 2014. These plans include a £35m refurbishment of the First World War galleries at the Imperial War Museum (IWM); The Government's principal partners in the commemorations will be the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the IWM, but will encompass support for a multitude of other initiatives, large and small, as they come together in the months and years to come.

Speaking at the Imperial War Museum in October, Prime Minister David Cameron, said: "A truly national commemoration cannot just be about national initiatives and government action. It needs to be local too...Let's get out there and make this centenary a truly national moment in every community in our land."

Further information

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