Take Two - North East projects receive lottery funding for wartime stories

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Led by volunteers, these projects will explore both World Wars researching and capturing the memories and experiences of the local community who were involved. The projects will allow for the first time both collections to be accessible and preserved for and by the community.

Head of Heritage Lottery Fund, North East, Ivor Crowther, said: “These projects will explore and celebrate the significant roles that Bishop Auckland and Haltwhistle played in the First and Second World Wars. They will offer a wealth of education and training opportunities for the local community and encourage people to learn about this remarkable part of our heritage”.

Time Slides, The Wartime Memories Project (an exhibition and Exploration of Great War photos) HLF grant of £15,000

Time Slides, led by a small group of volunteers from The Wartime Memories Project, is a 12 month project that will unveil a private collection of Edwardian photographic glass slides.

The photographs dating from 1989 – 1920 include family photographs taken by the award winning photographer William Dixon Dent from Bishop Auckland and aerial shots of the Western Front and Great War training grounds belonging to his son Capt Eric Dixon Dent who served with the Durham Light Infantry and the Royal Flying Corps. The current owner has kindly loaned the collection to the Project so that the images may be made available for public exhibition.

The Project will digitise the collection and hold an exhibition at Bishop Auckland Town Hall, making these fascinating photographs available for the first time. The subjects of the photographs will be researched and a short film will also be created explaining process of aerial photography, including analysis of the aerial reconnaissance photos by Peter Chasseaud, a leading expert on Great War trench maps. Discussions and illustrated talks will be held, aiming to encourage local people and visitors to learn about their heritage and encourage them to investigate their own family backgrounds.

Two Family History Days will give local people the chance to take part in family history research activities, focusing on their own family photographs from this period, local community groups and high school students will be invited to explore their families’ involvement in the First World War. Existing members of The Wartime Memories Project, along with new volunteers, will be trained in how to digitise and curate the collections and gain an in depth understanding of early photography.

Angela Jobson from the Wartime Memories Project, said: “We are very excited to have been given the opportunity to borrow this amazing collection and are grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for their support. Our members are very much looking forward to researching the fascinating images and revealing the stories behind them at our exhibition in November. We hope that it will attract a good number of visitors and that people will bring along their own family photographs so that our members can help them to discover more about the huge social changes brought about by the Great War.”

www.wartimememoriesproject.com/events.

War on the Banks of the Tyne, Haltwhistle Partnership, HLF grant of £49,900

Haltwhistle Partnership, a small local charity run by 5 staff and with around 50 active volunteers will be enlisting the help of local young people in a project to save an important piece of our wartime history - a private collection of documents and images relating to the Featherstone POW camp that has been made available for the first time and will now be made available for everyone.

Young people and volunteers involved with the project will learn the new skills needed to conduct interviews, create an interactive website and help run a series of imaginative workshops based on wartime experiences. Aimed at young people, these workshops will include cooking on rations, an air raid simulation, evacuees experience and a wartime high street trail which will enable a deeper understanding of what it was like to live in Haltwhistle and its environs at the time.

The young people will interact with older members of their community to unfold the story and experiences of the Second World War in rural Haltwhistle. The two year project will look into the background of the camp, known as the Freedom Camp. The camp was one of the rehabilitation camps used to re-educate rather than punish its occupants. During its time over 25,000 German officers passed through the camp in its lifetime.

With help from the Woodhorn Museum and the Northumberland Archives the project hopes to create a digital archive from oral histories, artefacts, photographs and documents. These will then be locally accessible as part of a learning programme available through workshops and local schools. This previously unseen collection will also be developed into a children's book by the young people and will include the voices of local characters.

Tom Teasdale, Haltwhistle Partnership chairman, said: "This grant will enable us to involve people of all generations from the town and surrounding parishes to connect with their recent history and bring it to life. The project will make sure that documents and memories from WWII are preserved and made accessible for local people in the future."

Notes to editors

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 30,000 projects, allocating £4.5billion across the UK including £214million in the North East.

Further information

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