Helping to share stories of St Dogmaels evacuees

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This project will also enable local residents to reflect on both wars through a calendar of key events and exhibitions, ensuring a greater understanding of the effect of both Wars on the area.

This funding, provided through HLF's Our Heritage grant programme, will help local people learn about both conflicts and enable them to gain better understanding of this significant part of our history. Activities will include residents and volunteers surviving a week on rations, as well as hosting a number of exhibitions.

Head of Heritage Lottery Fund Wales, Jennifer Stewart, said, "At a time when our attention is drawn to the centenary of the First World War, it's great to see local community groups such as Hanes Llandoch taking the initiative and developing their own exciting projects to commemorate past conflicts. I am thrilled that HLF funding will help the community find out about this key period, and have the opportunity to learn firsthand from evacuees about their life in this area.

Returning evacuees

A range of bi-lingual activities will be held in the area, including inviting fifty evacuees, American GIs and former Italian prisoners of war back to the village for a "Welcome Home" exhibition and event where their personal stories and those of local residents will be shared. The hope is that listening to different perspectives on the war will change attitudes towards different groups of people affected by the conflict.

Plans are already underway for the "Welcome Home" event which will include some members of the 111th Ordnance American Airmen who were stationed at Albro Castle in St. Dogmaels to prepare for the D-Day landings. A week of activities will include heritage walks and events aimed at encouraging local people and visitors to take part in activities related to life during the Second World War. As a result of research conducted through this project, the hope is that local war heritage is better explained and interpreted, with information collated, then made available in the local coach house as well as being uploaded onto the People's Collection Wales website.

Local Assembly Member, Paul Davies, who recently sponsored an event in the National Assembly showing how local communities can apply to HLF for funding to commemorate the First World War, said, "I'm delighted that Hanes Llandoch has received this valuable funding. This project will be of great interest to the people of North Pembrokeshire as it will not only mark a century since the start of the First World War, but will bring local people closer together to learn about these meaningful events in local history."

Commemorating war experiences

A fundamental part of this project is to research both the First World War and the Second World War and it presents a unique opportunity to understand how both wars affected this rural community. Project leaders are eager to find out about stories from the Second World War and will be looking to hear from those who lived in the area during that time in the hope of collating information to help place fifty missing names on a new memorial.

Welcoming the funding, project organiser, Nia Siggins said, "This funding is of great significance to our project plans to highlight the heritage of our area and will allow us to identify and record living memories from the Second World War whilst we still have the opportunity to do so. We're hopeful that through our calendar of activities, St Dogmaels war

experiences will be documented and remembered for future generations.”

Notes to editors

Plans for the project include:

- A photographic exhibition demonstrating what happened in the war, using materials provided by affected individuals
- Former evacuees and prisoners to come back to the village sharing their personal experience through walk talks and a celebration party
- Research from these evacuees will be converted into a learning pack for local schools to host a dramatic production. Learning packs will be given to schools to further enhance knowledge
- A Second World War experience, involving volunteers surviving on rations for a week whilst focusing on the nearby American GI’s and the Italian prisoners of war
- Exhibitions will all be bi-lingual
- Missing names of past soldiers will be added on to a new memorial