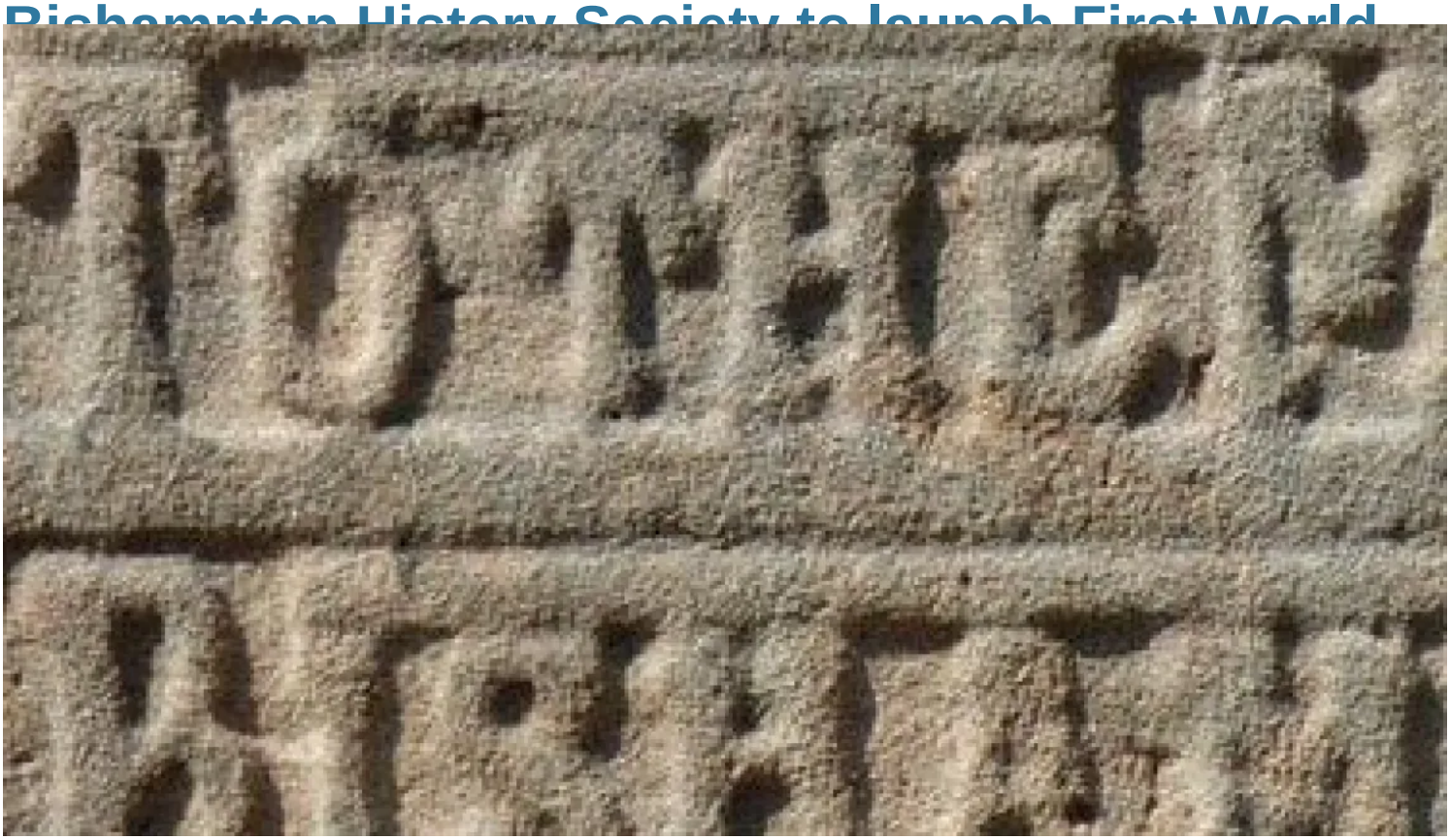
Bishampton History Society to launch First World



The exhibition will include research on Bishampton's war memorial

Awarded through HLF's First World War: then and now programme, the project will focus on those who served from the village and the impact of the war on their rural community.

The two-year project, going through to November 2016, will involve an intensive programme of research, community events, displays, school projects, and interviews for oral history records.

It will be launched at St James Church on Saturday, 13 September as part of Bishampton's contribution to the National Heritage Open Days celebrations and will feature displays, photographs and activities from the First World War to appeal to local families, historians and visitors alike.

The launch will include further displays and a workshop outside in the First World War bell tent, and an opportunity for children to recreate love tokens made by soldiers in the war, as well as guided tours explaining the village's heritage.

It will be preceded by an exhibition at No. 8 Community Centre, Pershore of the original research which went into the war memorial restoration, – The Great War and Village Life - from 28 August to 17 September. For more information visit the Number 8 Community Arts Centre website.

As part of the project, the society is planning to produce two booklets, first about the men enlisted and their families, and ending with another on their findings about the wider impact for the Bishampton community.

Chairman Mike Rickard said the society had been waiting anxiously for the last few months, knowing that there is a lot of competition for funding, but he was optimistic that the hard work put in by the bid team, following workshops and invaluable advice from HLF regional team in Birmingham, would pay off.

Mike said: “Members of the society were all involved and had worked hard on putting an extremely detailed bid together with costs and timings. We are naturally delighted and excited that we’ve been approved for £10,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.”

Announcing the news to his committee, Mike recalled the line in Churchill’s VE day speech - “We may allow ourselves a brief period of rejoicing: but let us not forget for a moment the toil and effort that lie ahead".

”The difference now”, Mike added, “was that the effort should all be, pleasurable, with the village community, he hoped, coming together in the quest for information about the village and its people a hundred years ago.We are really keen to find out if the cataclysmic effect of the war elsewhere was reflected in the village and its daily life, and to record those findings for the village and future generations.”

Over the two year project period the society plans include:

- a project mascot, Bishampton Bertie
- going out to interview members of the community about their family’s histories
- working with schools on how to research ancestry and to produce commemorative art work
- open days, and events to involve the local community and share memories, photographs and artefacts
- planting a line of trees in memory of the village’s fallen heroes.

Mike, who recently attended Worcester’s HLF First World War launch event with items from his grandfather’s First World War army service, is appealing to people to get in touch if they have any memories, or artefacts from relatives or friends from the conflict to make the project as meaningful as possible.

Reyahn King, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund West Midlands, said: “The impact of the First World War was far reaching, touching and shaping every corner of the UK and beyond. As the Centenary of the First World War arrives we’re pleased to support Bishampton History Society and the local community as they explore and preserve the wartime story of Bishamton residents – on both the Western and Home Fronts – and the lasting legacy for their descendants for generations to come.”

Notes to editors

About the project
Bishampton History Society is embarking on a two year project to discover the impact the First World War had on its local community. ‘Bishampton and the impact of WW1 a rural village’ has been fortunate in attracting Heritage Lottery Fund funding to provide resources to complete the project by November 2016.

Extending the research on the soldiers who served in the First World War as part of the village’s war memorial restoration completed last year, the society will be involving the local community in discovering memories, documents and artefacts which give an insight into how Bishampton’s residents were affected and coped while their menfolk were

away.

A programme of community events, local and out-of-area research, interviews, display, publications, training and commemorative initiatives are planned which will enrich the whole community and provide a valuable resource for both the village, the region and the country for years to come.

If you have any artefacts of memories to share for the project contact Mike Rickard at mike.rickard@sky.com or 01386 462037 or Chas Rigg at chas.rigg@gmail.com.

Visit the Bishampton History Society website for more information.

Further information

For more information please contact Lesley Miller, email: lesleymiller3451@gmail.com or call 0785 436 2318.