Doncaster 1914-18 project secures Heritage Lottery



Men of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry

Doncaster Council has received almost £1million (£926,700) from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to uncover the local history of the First World War as well as the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (KOYLI).

Doncaster 1914-18 is being launched on Remembrance weekend on 9 and 10 November 2014.

The five-year project will see a range of activities and events taking place across the borough aimed at inspiring residents to research their own family history and contribute to a new interactive Doncaster heritage website.

The new website will make information about the First World War and the KOYLI currently held in council archives more accessible. As well as being searchable, members of the public will also be able to upload their own information. A variety of apps, podcasts and games will eventually be accessible from the website.

Fiona Spiers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund, Yorkshire and the Humber, said: “We’re delighted to announce our support for this project as the centenary of the First World War approaches. Doncaster Museum holds some fascinating archives exploring the history of the conflict on the Home and Western Fronts – from rationing and zeppelin raids, to family memories and life in a battalion. This project will enable the community to access them, bring stories to life and contribute to a digital legacy that will preserve a unique insight into the Doncastrian memory of the First World War for

generations to come.”

Throughout the project, The Great War on Tour will travel around Doncaster holding events within the community where residents can bring their family history information and photographs, and learn how to use the online resource.

To support this work there will be a series of travelling exhibitions in libraries and at the Mansion House, with more long-term displays at Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery, the KOYLI Museum, Cusworth Hall and the South Yorkshire Aircraft Museum.

A community archaeology dig is also planned at the old Scarborough Barracks (home of the 5th Battalion KOYLI), now under land belonging to St Peter’s in Chains Catholic Church.

Volunteers will be extremely important to the development and delivery of this whole project. They will be involved in everything from research to evaluation of the project.&

Ros Jones, Mayor of Doncaster, said: "This is fantastic news for people in Doncaster and we are extremely grateful to the HLF for this generous investment. Doncaster has a rich heritage and it will be interesting to see what we can add to the understanding of it over the course of the five years.

"Supporting our armed forces is a top priority for me and it is important that we remember the sacrifices servicemen and women have made for our freedom. I would encourage everyone in Doncaster to contribute to the Doncaster 1914-18 project.

"Students from local schools and Doncaster College will be getting involved as part of their studies and there will be opportunities for other residents to volunteer with our heritage service, researching stories, digitising collections and posting information online."

Councillor Bob Johnson, Cabinet Member for Culture and Veterans Champion, said: "This is an exciting opportunity for people in Doncaster to help deepen the understanding of this part of our town’s rich heritage.”

Notes to editors

About Heritage Services
Heritage Services was recently formed from Doncaster Museums, Archives and Local Studies Services. The Service is responsible for Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery, Cusworth Hall Museum and Park, the Local Studies Library and Doncaster Archives (King Edward Road, Balby). The collections range in date from the Stone Age to the present day, and represent the corporate and personal memory of the town of Doncaster and its surrounding area that is held in public ownership.

About project associates
Doncaster 1914-18 is a community-focussed project which includes a number of associate organisations who are involved in, and will help deliver, aspects of this exciting and diverse project.

The main associate organisations are:

- Trustees of the KOYLI
- Doncaster College with High Melton University Campus
- Hall Cross Academy

- South Yorkshire Aircraft Museum
- The Rifles Regimekingnt with Care for Casualties
- Doncaster and District Heritage Association

Further information

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