Kington Remembers awarded £9,500 to mark First World War Centenary

29/09/2014

To mark the Centenary of the First World War, the project will enable local people in Kington to come together to increase understanding of the lives of members of the local community who lived through, and served in, the First World War.

The launch of the programme will take place on Friday 17 October at 6.45pm at the Burton Hotel. This event will precede a 'Kington Conversation' – a talk by Professor Jack Spence, OBE, of the Department of War Studies, King's College, London, entitled War versus Diplomacy. He will be considering when diplomacy can prevent war, with particular reference to the run-up to the First World War but a theme very relevant to today's global situation.

The Kington Remembers project will include a wide range of events and activities: Kington Conversations – talks that will cover themes connected to the First World War, with reflections on how these issues are still relevant today; community events, which will help local people explore the lives of their family members who served in the forces, or in the community, during the war; and research into the backgrounds of the 86 names on the war memorial, to understand not only their sacrifice but also the world they came from.

A key innovative aspect of the project is a rolling display – a timeline – which will be used in Kington's Market Hall, to project key issues, events, stories and photographs throughout the period to 2018. This will be linked to the Kington Remembers website, which will contain details on these themes, stories contributed by the community and a gallery of photographs of local people and events during the 1914-1918 period.

The Kington Remembers group has been formed by a wide range of local organisations and individuals, including the Kington Branch of the Royal British Legion, Kington Museum, Kington History Society, and Kington Town Council. Both Lady Hawkins' School and Kington Primary School are actively involved in the group. Pupils from Year 7 at Lady Hawkins' School were involved in a competition to design a logo for the project.

Bob Widdowson, Chair of the Kington Remembers group, said: "This award is very exciting for Kington and its neighbouring community of Huntington. There are many families still living in the town and its surrounding area who are direct descendents of those whose names are on the war memorial. The project will provide a living link between today's community and its past during the First World War. Many of the issues that have been identified from this period resonate today. For instance Kington played host to Belgian refugees in 1914, and the plight of refugees worldwide fills our media today. We also have many members of families in the town who are currently serving in our armed forces. We hope this project will be a special way to both remember service and sacrifice during the First World War, and reflect on our community today."

Reyahn King, Head of HLF, West Midlands, said: "The impact of the First World War was far reaching, touching and shaping every corner of the UK and beyond. Through our First World War: then and now programme we've already invested more than £58million in projects – large and small – which are marking this Centenary, enabling even more communities, like those involved in Kington Remembers, to explore the continuing legacy of the conflict and preserve the memory of how their relatives and community lived at the time."

Notes to editors

About Kington Remembers

Kington Remembers has been formed by a number of organisations in Kington and Huntington in Herefordshire. These include: Kington Town Council, Nature Trust, Kington Tourist Group, Kington Festival Committee, St Mary's Church, Hergest Estate, Kington Branch of the Royal British Legion, Kington History Society, Kington Museum, Lady Hawkins' School, Kington Primary School, together with a number of individuals. Everyone involved in the group is volunteering their time to the project.

Kington is a small market town on the borders of England and Wales, with a population of around 3,000 and a long agricultural heritage.

Further information

Kington Remembers: Bob Widdowson, Chair, on tel: 01544 230 050 or email: rw@gumpol.demon.co.uk.