Doncaster and the Great War project given Heritage Lottery Fund support

22/11/2013

Development funding of £37,900 has been awarded to help Doncaster Council's Museums and Libraries services progress their plans to apply for a full grant in March 2014. A major objective of the project is to create a single and unique resource that commemorates the First World War as experienced by Doncastrians and the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (KOYLI), making the borough's heritage available to all. It is hoped that this will encourage people to record and share their own local and family history.

The project aims to work closely with communities and special interest groups to research, record, conserve and make more publicly accessible the First World War heritage of the borough and of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. Along the way volunteer opportunities will be created, which will offer people the chance to learn new skills whilst engaging with First World War heritage.

The project aims to work in partnership with Doncaster College, Hall Cross Academy, the Trustees of KOYLI, the Rifles Regiment, Care for Casualties and the South Yorkshire Aircraft Museum, amongst others to also deliver a series of educational events (including a programme of exhibitions) and activities every year from 2014 to 2019. These events will aim to show the different ways in which the First World War affected the lives of the borough's residents, whether on the home front or on active service.

Doncaster's First World War heritage is unique and diverse and was influenced by its strategic position and its industry. Rail, coal and munitions work were all key to the town's wartime contribution, alongside an airfield which was the launch pad for a defence against the zeppelin raids on Sheffield. Recent discoveries have included practice trenches in the town centre, dug by an attachment of the Royal Engineers based at Scarbrough Barracks.

Doncaster Museum & Art Gallery houses the museum of the KOYLI, which holds treasures such as the 2nd Battalion War Diaries and personal papers and trench art relating to individual KOYLI soldiers and Prisoners of War. Doncaster Archives and Local Studies care for key historical resources such as the original copies of local newspapers from the war years and other documents which help tell the gripping personal stories of the people of the borough, which include anti-German riots and conscientious objectors.

This project is very much about people and family history and the Museums and Libraries Services aim to work in partnership with borough residents and people who have a link with Doncaster or the KOYLI. It will uncover and share the fascinating and emotional stories of our relatives and ancestors who fought in, died or lived through the First World War.

Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, said: "We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given us this support to develop our project. We are proud of the role that Doncastrians played in the First World War and 'Doncaster and the Great War' aims to tell that story."

Fiona Spiers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund Yorkshire and the Humber said: "The impact of the First World War was far

reaching, touching and shaping every corner of the UK and beyond. Through our grants programmes we are enabling even more communities like those involved in Doncaster and the Great War to explore the many local facets and continuing legacy of this conflict and help local young people in particular to broaden their understanding of how it has shaped our modern world."

Notes to editors

Follow us on twitter @heritagelottery #understandingWW1

A first-round pass means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award. On occasion, an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

On 4 August 2014 it will be 100 years since Britain entered the First World War. Within government the Department for Culture, Media and Sport is leading plans to build a commemoration fitting of this significant milestone in world history. As the Prime Minister made clear when he launched the programme in October 2012, the main theme will be remembrance with a particular focus on bringing the centenary alive for young people. There will be a number of national events across the four years, as well as cross-Government programmes to help deliver this. Further details can be found at the Government's First World War Centenary page; #WW1.

Doncaster Museum Service
The Museum Service primarily serves those living in the Doncaster area and those connected to the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and believes that its purpose can by summed up in four words :

Engage, Preserve, Inspire, Communicate

Our core business is:

To run Doncaster Museum & Art Gallery, Cusworth Hall Museum, Cusworth Park and the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (KOYLI) Museum.

To care for the 600,000 objects and specimens in the Museum and KOYLI collections and the Grade I listed Cusworth Hall and Grade II listed Site of Scientific Interest (SSI) Cusworth Park.

To run a Museum Education Service

To provide public access to the collections, largely through exhibitions and other displays, events, enquiries, digital access, talks and other appropriate methods; such as facilitating research.

The definition of a museum accepted by the Museums Association is that 'Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society.'

The key aims of the Service are:

To enthuse people about the heritage of Doncaster, the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and the world around them through our museums.

To engage people in the preservation and appreciation of the wonderful collections that we care for, Cusworth Hall and its Park.

To give people a great day out.

To make Doncaster proud of its Museum Service.

Doncaster Museums preserve physical collections and associated archives, encourage and facilitate research on and access to those collections and interpret the collections through exhibitions, an education service and through events and activities.

Doncaster Library Service (including Local Studies and Archives)
Doncaster has a central library, 11 branch libraries, 12 libraries managed by community organisations, a mobile library and a travelling library.

The four key statements from our Library Strategy
• Helping everyone to read
• Supporting children, young people and families
• Supporting learning and skills, including digital inclusion
• Supporting communities and vulnerable people

Doncaster Libraries provide a lending service for books including e-books, DVDs and music in addition we also offer:
• Access to public services and the internet at every library and a growing programme of online training courses such as UK online;
• Services for hard to reach communities such as taking books etc to those people who are too infirm to leave their homes, plus books available in large print and spoken word with Braille translation service available on request
• A programme of activities for families, children and young people;
• Services to business such as access to the MINT database, affordable printing, copying and fax facilities (also available for individuals
• Specialist services from Doncaster Archives and Local Studies Library to collect, preserve and provide access to local and family history resources in many formats

Further information

Carolyn Dalton at Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery on 01302 734 285, email: Carolyn.Dalton@doncaster.gov.uk.