£4,600 to help commemorate the First World War in Amersham

19/09/2013

The project, Amersham WW1 Memorial Record – bringing our heritage to life, will create a lasting record of all those named on the Amersham War Memorial. It will bring together both official and personal information providing the individual's service record, place of death and also include information on their family background, education and employment prior to enlistment. The award was made through HLF's 'First World War: then and now' programme.

The project will be led by Chiltern University of the Third Age (U3A) which facilitates continued learning in later life. In offering this project as part of the local commemorative events, Chiltern U3A Chairman, Vic Faulkner, believes: "The project will provide a local tribute suitable for the 21st century and act as a reminder to younger generations in the community of the debt that continues to be owed to those who gave their lives during the First World War (FWW).

"These will be seen not just as names inscribed in stone but as men who were educated, lived and worked here as active and integral members of the community prior to the war"

With five copies of the record placed in publically available locations, including Amersham Museum, together with display panels and a digital copy accessible through a local website, the record will not only provide a focus for commemoration but will be a useful adjunct to teachers in schools and colleges in the area for student project work in specific subjects.

Whilst attending a Chiltern U3A General meeting yesterday, Rt Hon John Bercow MP, the Member of Parliament for Buckingham and Commons Speaker, joined the Chairman and other members as they received the official HLF award letter. He explained, "This is the formal piece of paper your colleagues have been waiting for; it means that they can now get the project underway with all speed.

"The sacrifices endured in local communities during FWW are a significant part of our heritage" he added. "This most worthwhile project will help reinforce to successive generations the contribution made by people in Amersham, indeed by local communities throughout the whole country".

Stuart McLeod, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South East, said: "In the run up to the centenary of the First World War, more than ever we are remembering the men and women across the country who lost their lives during this conflict. Amersham's War Memorial stands as a moving reminder of how the war directly affected the local community almost 100 years ago. This project will enable today's Amersham community to explore and understand what people went through and will ensure it is remembered by the town's future generations."

Notes to editors

About Chiltern U3A
Chiltern University of the Third Age (U3A) is a constituent member of the 'Third Age Trust' and a registered charity in its

own right. Based on a membership of senior citizens not in full-time employment and who want to keep an active mind and body, the organisation provides over 90 activity groups for its 1400+ members.

The over-riding concept of this self-help body is to fulfil the theme that 'learning is for life; life is for learning'. As such, committee members and group convenors all give of their time voluntarily. Accommodation, equipment and associated administrative costs, including a capitation fee to the parent body, are met from an annual membership subscription, currently set at £22. For this project, the members' financial support is through voluntary donations.
The primary activity group for the project is 'Family History' although other groups studying photography, local history and 'new technology' will become involved.

Heritage Lottery Fund
Through its First World War: then and now programme, HLF is making at least £1million available per year for six years until 2019. It will provide grants between £3,000 and £10,000 enabling communities and groups right across the UK to explore, conserve and share their First World War heritage and deepen their understanding of the impact of the conflict.

HLF-funded First World War projects include:

First World War Centenary Project, IWM London
An HLF grant of £4.5m is transforming IWM London (part of Imperial War Museums) by creating new ground-breaking First World War Galleries.

Flintham Society – Keeping the Home Fires Burning?
Keep the Homes Fires Burning? is a community history project looking at the impact of the First World War on life in the Nottinghamshire village of Flintham.

Tank Museum – Access all Areas, Dorset
Holding the world's finest tank and armoured vehicle collection, The Tank Museum is a popular visitor attraction in the heart of Dorset. HLF's grant is being used to house 130 'at risk' vehicles, putting the entire collection indoors for the first time.

UK Government Centenary plans
In June 2013, the government set out its plans to mark the centenaries of the First World War commencing in 2014. These plans include a £35m refurbishment of the First World War galleries at the Imperial War Museum (IWM); The government's principal partners in the commemorations will be the Heritage Lottery Fund and the IWM, but will encompass support for a multitude of other initiatives, large and small, as they come together in the months and years to come.

Further information

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