The Folly in Settle helps to launch Craven's First



Visitors can look forward to learning about the recruitment of volunteers and the commandeering of local horses following the outbreak of war, as well some of the lesser-known stories, such as the Belgian refugees who were brought to Settle and the efforts of local people to raise money and support the troops.

With contributions made by local school children and a series of events and talks planned, the exhibition is sure to give local people and visitors a greater understanding of the sacrifices that were made by the people of North Craven throughout the war.

Anne Read, Honorary Curator at The Folly, says of the exhibition: "We are immensely grateful for the support we have received from so many people and for the wealth of material and stories which have come to light. We shall be adding to the exhibition all through the year and we hope it will inspire more people to explore their own stories of World War I and bring in additional items."

The exhibition will help to launch the Craven and the First World War project, which is planning a series of events, exhibitions and performances to mark the centenary. The project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and involves a collection of community-focused organisations including Craven Museum and Gallery, Skipton Town Council, Ermysted's Grammar School, Aireville School, The Museum of North Craven Life (Settle), North Yorkshire County Council Library and Community Services, and Craven's Part in the Great War.

The HLF funding has allowed the group to employ a project officer to support the events planned to mark the centenary. Speaking of his appointment, the new Project Officer, Rob Freeman, says “I am looking forward to working with the many different groups involved in the project to help local people connect with events of the First World War and to help build a greater understanding of life in Craven during the war, as well as making a significant contribution to the national commemorations.”

Amongst the events planned to mark the centenary are a series of performances of the play *Tunstill’s Men*, about the recruitment drives that took place throughout the area. Written and performed by staff and students from Aireville School, Skipton, the play returns to the Grassington Festival for a second year; with performances on 24 and 26 June. In September, further performances will be staged across the district, each of them 100 years ago to the day from when the original meetings were held.

The project will also support individuals who are interested in tracing their First World War family history with sessions at Libraries across the district from September. On 11 November there will be a heritage fair at Skipton Library where there will be exhibits from family and local history societies as well as information about the First World War resources available at Skipton Library and North Yorkshire County Record Office. Family History experts will be on hand to help people.

Councillor Simon Myers, Lead Member, says of the project: “This is a fantastic opportunity for the people of Craven to get involved with the commemoration of this important event in our history. The Great War touched the lives of almost all families in Craven. The various commemorative events will undoubtedly leave a deep impression.”

Further information

For more information about the project or how to get involved, you can email RFreeman@cravendc.gov.uk.

For information about The Folly and its opening times, you can visit The Folly website or 01524 251 388.