Leek landmark ‘The Monument’ wins support

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To be run by Leek Town Council and the Friends of the Nicholson War Memorial, the 20 month project will restore and conserve the structure to ensure safe public access in addition to running a programme of exciting activities for people of all ages to learn about the importance of the memorial.

The 85-year-old iconic landmark, which also serves as the town’s main public clock and features four large illuminated clock-faces, is well-loved by Leekensians. Seen as an important gateway to the town, the memorial was constructed in 1925 by Sir Arthur and Lady Nicholson in memory of their son Lieut. Basil Lee Nicholson after he was killed at Ypres in 1915. It also bears the names of some 535 Leek and District men and women who fell during WWI and WWII.

Restoration works will include improvements to the surrounding paved areas, masonry repairs to the Portland stone walls and refurbishment of the decorative wrought iron and bronze gates and lamp standards. The clock mechanisms will be made fully automatic and the original clock restored and displayed in the local museum.

Alongside the capital works education packs for schools will be linked to the National Curriculum on WWII and Remembrance, and schoolchildren will also be designing artwork relating to the Fallen for display at the site during the works. There will also be guided tours, new interpretation panels, and an exhibition at the Nicholson Institute as part of the project.

Anne Jenkins, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for the West Midlands, said: “Lots of opportunities for adult volunteers will be mirrored with activities designed for young people to get involved. This is a fantastic project that will restore a well-loved important local landmark and ensure the continued legacy of remembrance for future generations in Leek.”

Cllr. Brian Johnson, Town Councillor and Friend of the Nicholson War Memorial, said: "For me this is a mixture of private and public pride. The Nicholson War Memorial is an intrinsic part of Leek, and as such the people of Leek are rightly proud of it and what it represents. From a more personal perspective my uncle Charlie, after whom I was named, is one of those commemorated on the Memorial. That we are now able to bring this iconic monument back to its former glory and at the same time raise substantially young people's awareness of and interest in it, is quite exciting. I look forward to taking this project forward and to seeing even more pride, interest and involvement by Leekensians in the future of ‘The Monument’."

Alan Brundrett, Keeper of the Clock and Friend of the Nicholson War Memorial, said: “I was delighted to hear the news that we had been successful in obtaining the Heritage Lottery Fund grant for the Nicholson War Memorial or 'The Monument' as it is affectionately known to all in Leek. We will now be able to carry out not only the essential work that is necessary to make the interior of the building safe but all the other work that will enhance the Monument and its surroundings and make it more accessible to the general public. This will be by far the biggest improvement to the Monument that I have seen in my forty years of association with the building.”

Have your say: HLF’s three-month consultation Shaping the future – for heritage, for everyone is now live on our website and all views will help shape HLF’s strategy from 2013 to 2019. This is people’s chance to tell us what they think we should continue to do and what we should do differently. For further information, to view our consultation video and to respond to the consultation, please visit the consultation page until 26 April 2011.

Notes to editors

*The HLF grant to the project Restoration of the Nicholson War Memorial is for £178,000 (80% of project costs) and is a confirmed award.

To date, HLF have made 87 awards in Staffordshire Moorlands amounting to just under £3.75million.

Further information

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