Young people in Northumberland commemorate the First World War

05/09/2013

Awarded through HLF's First World War: then and now programme, both organisations will get projects underway that will help local young people commemorate the centenary of the First World War.

Explaining the importance of the HLF support, Head of HLF North East, Ivor Crowther, said: "The impact of the First World War was far reaching, touching and shaping every corner of the UK and beyond. Heritage Lottery Fund has already invested more than £15million in projects – large and small – that are marking this global Centenary; with our new small grants programme, we are enabling even more communities like those involved in both of these important projects to explore the continuing legacy of this conflict and help local young people in particular to broaden their understanding of how it has shaped our modern world."

The first project, **Wor War**, was awarded £9,600 and will be led by local young people. They will explore the stories and experiences of young people like themselves who grew up during the war.

Working with the YMCA, the Tynemouth World War Commemoration Project and North Tyneside Age UK, the young people will look into the heritage of the YMCA and its role during the conflict. Using a vast collection of records and artefacts from the Discovery Museum, Beamish Museum and South Shields Museum, they will explore and record people's memories by speaking to local senior residents.

The project will culminate with a touring exhibition and a celebration event to showcase the recorded interviews, art work and photographs, and their commemorative website will be unveiled just in time for the centenary of the First World War in 2014.

Don Irving, Youth and Play Manager at YMCA North Tyneside, said: "We are grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for supporting the Wor War Project. This is a particularly exciting initiative and staff and young people are looking forward to exploring to the effects the First World War had on the lives of children and young people. As part of the project, we will be working with different groups of children and young people across the Borough, including youth settings, schools and through outreach work. We are really pleased that organisations such as North Tyneside Age UK and the Tynemouth World War One Commemoration Project are working along us and we hope that throughout the research phase of the project, there will be many other people who will contribute".

Alan Fidler, Project Co-ordinator of the Tynemouth World War One Commemoration project, said: "We were delighted to learn that the YMCA has been awarded a grant for their new project. We were pleased to be asked to support the application and look forward to helping the project by giving access to the database of biographical information we are compiling about the nearly 2,000 men of Tynemouth and North Shields who were killed or died as result of their service in the Great War. The war also made several thousand children orphans at a time when provision for widowed women was limited and large families were common. We hope that some of the work the project produces may be suitable to be exhibited at a large commemorative event in Northumberland Square in the heart of North Shields, in August, 2014; only yards from the YMCA building, which was funded by the Sir James Knott Trust in memory of his two sons lost in the war, who were born in North Shields."

The second project, **Our History** – A shared belonging and a community united' was awarded £9,400.

This year-long project centres on the community in Chester le Street and the impact the First World War had on local people. The young people involved will explore the backgrounds of the people that fought, lived and survived the war by talking to the older generation about their experiences. They will take an overseas educational trip including visiting the Ypres Salient, the Menine Gate, and Flanders Field Museum where they will be able to better understand and find out about those who lost their lives on the battlefields in France and Belgium. On their return they will put together an exhibition that will tour the local schools, libraries and community churches telling the stories they collected.

Paul Welch, Leader and Manager of History at the Hermitage Academy, said: 'I am certain that this project will inspire young people to gain a greater sense of local identity; researching and uncovering stories about inspiring individuals who make the ultimate sacrifice. Visiting the World War I battlefields in France and Belgium is a profound educational experience; even more so if you have researched the individual stories of men from the towns and villages of the North of England who rest in peace there. By engaging less privileged young people with local history we hope to enable them to gain a sense of understanding of World War I and its local impact"

Further information

Heritage Lottery Fund press office: Lucinda Tyrrell on 020 7591 6031, email: lucindat@hlf.org.uk.

YMCA North Tyneside: Paul Naylor, Funding Officer, on 0191 257 543, email: paul@ymcanorthtyneside.org.

Hermitage Academy: Paul Welch, Leader and Manager of History, email: pwelch@livethehermitage-ic.net.