Northumberland Fusiliers to revitalise their museum

07/12/2012

The museum, which is located within Alnwick Castle, has been awarded initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to carry out development work, ready for a second submission next March. After planning is complete, the action will be ramped up in the summer of 2013. Plans include recruiting a new part-time officer to make the museum more interactive and to roll out a programme of activities inside and outside of the castle.

If successful at the second round, the new recruit will be in place for three years and will begin by working with volunteers on developing a temporary exhibition to mark the centenary of the First World War. The exhibition will run for two years on the ground floor of the Abbot's Tower and will be seen by all of the castle's many visitors. There will be living history, handling and trying on of costumes to participate in and to give meaning for the events of 100 years ago to young people today.

The Northumberland Fusiliers raised 52 battalions in the First World War, including the Pals Battalions of the Tyneside Irish and the Tyneside Scottish. 846 officers and 16,159 men from other ranks died and countless more were injured in the 'War to End All Wars'.

The project also aims to carry out outreach work and run projects with young people and families who may not normally be Castle visitors. It will run for three years and, when complete, will see the existing museum completely refurbished and brought up to date with interactive exhibits. There will also be a wide team of volunteers in place offering community based projects and giving demonstrations and talks long into the future, ensuring a lasting legacy for the HLF investment.

John Armstrong, the Chair of the Museum Trustees, said: "We are delighted to have received a first-round pass from HLF for Call to Action. The committee thought our project was well planned but have also given us some good advice on how to proceed. The museum team now face a busy period, but we are very excited and looking forward to getting on with it. Next summer we hope to be welcoming many new volunteers as well as a new staff member."

Ivor Crowther, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund North East, said: "In the run-up to the centenary of the First World War, we are remembering the sacrifices made by men and women across the country more than ever. The Call to Action project will provide a great opportunity for everyone to explore the stories of the people involved in the conflict and learn about what life was like during the war. We at the Heritage Lottery Fund are proud to be giving our initial support to this important project and look forward to seeing plans progress."

Further information

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