

HMT Rohilla as a troop carrier before conversion to a hospital ship

Led by Festival on the Moor volunteers, and supported by the Rohilla Centenary Team and local schools, the project focuses on the First World War and in particular The Rohilla Disaster, Whitby Bombardment and the stories of soldiers and civilians from the surrounding moorland and coastal communities between 1914 and 1918.

The project will enable around 100 young people to research these topics and present the stories in various creative ways including Drama, Music, Creative Writing and by building a website as a permanent reference to future researchers.

Festival On The Moor is a community arts and heritage organisation that organises festivals and educational activities based on folk music, local heritage and culture. It works with young people through its Shoots & Roots programme and students from Whitby's Caedmon College and Eskdale School will take part and benefit by helping them develop their research, media and communication skills and enjoy the creative aspects while learning more about their local heritage. They'll work alongside professional musicians and actors and gain insight from local heritage professionals.

Commenting on the award, Festival Director, Jeanette Grainger said: "We are thrilled to have received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund, which will enable us to increase our work with young people from Whitby, the coastal communities and the Esk Valley to help them discover more about their heritage and have fun with their discoveries."

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber, said: “Every area has its own stories of their involvement and experiences of the First World War at home and abroad. By focusing on the Rohilla Disaster and the bombardment of Whitby by German Warships young people will learn about the impact of the war on their local area, and further afield.”

Notes to editors

Festival on the Moor began in 2002, initially to help the North York Moors National Park celebrate their 50th anniversary. Since then it has become a community organisation whose volunteers have worked tirelessly to promote, research and celebrate local folk music and culture in and around the area. The Festival has organised hundreds of events, including an annual Festival in May each year, Wassail shows at Christmas and numerous other activities such as educational projects with children and young people.

Further information

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