Wigan Warriors project to mark First World War



A historical collage of Wigan Warriors Rugby Club

Delivered in primary schools across Wigan and awarded through HLF's First World War: then and now programme, the project will focus on the historical background of Wigan Warriors Rugby Club and its players during the period of the First World War.

The season of 1914/15 ranked as one of the most memorable in the annals of Wigan Rugby Club with 11 players from the club enlisting for the defence of the Empire. The Warriors at War project will dig deep into the local museum's collections and archives in tracing what happened to the Wigan Rugby players who signed up and fought during the First World War, looking at their individual war records, their sporting achievements and what this meant in relation to local pride and identity. Children will also be educated on the rugby club at the time of the First World War, its attempts to continue within the Northern Union league, the lifestyles, training and the types of work players endured compared to now. Learning will be showcased through the children designing newspaper articles and the programme celebrated through a First World War-themed tag rugby festival at Central Park.

The information gathered will be digitally recorded and an online archive will be created where a wide selection of newspaper articles, photos, and information surrounding the project and its findings will be showcased. The archive will allow the public to discuss, contribute, share and research information around the club's history.

Commenting on the award, Mike Wearden, WWCF Project Manager, said: “We are thrilled to have received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and can’t wait for the project to be delivered. The information and facts we’ve gathered are fascinating and the children that receive the sessions are sure to be blown away by the lifestyles and events that surrounded Wigan Rugby Club during the 1914-15 season.”

Sara Hilton, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund, North West, said: “Warriors at War offers a unique perspective on the impact of the First World War on Wigan through the eyes of its rugby club. The creation of an online database and a creative programme of events will ensure old stories are documented, new ones are created and the memory of Wigan Rugby Club during the conflict is preserved for generations to come.”

Notes to editors

About WWCF

WWCF is Wigan Warriors’ official charity and uses the power of sport and education to make a difference to people's lives.

They work across many areas in Wigan and the North West delivering a wide range of educational and sport programmes from Rugby League coaching through to programmes that improve health and wellbeing and improving the career prospects of young people and adults.

WWCF are proud to support health, education, social inclusion and well being and equality of opportunity at the heart of our objectives.
They currently deliver programmes to thousands of people in the community each year ranging in age from two to over 80 years, through schools, further education, higher education, adult health and activity programmes, sports, activity and fitness clubs, holiday camps and so on. Their partners, friends and supporters are vital in supporting the work of the foundation to ensure sustainability.

Further information

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