Walking in their Shoes Scoops National Youth



Wheelchair user joining walking group

For the past year, a group of over twenty volunteers has been working with Dorset Youth Association to create ‘Walking in their Shoes’ an innovative and exciting project to encourage a whole new generation in Dorset to become interested and curious about the heritage of their community. Focusing on two distinctive areas in Anglo-Saxon England and following a First World War soldier’s footsteps who trained in Dorset in preparation for war, the volunteers have led on research, press coverage and graphic design, amongst other areas, to make the project a success.

The team have recently launched their treasure trail of Geocache boxes around key locations in the Dorset area to capture the stories of a community affected by war. The event, hosted at Dorchester Corn Exchange’s commemoration of 100 years since war was declared, was highly praised by the Mayor of Dorchester, Councillor Peter Mann, who had the privilege of finding the first box.

The Youth on Board award scheme is a youth-led initiative that recognises innovative and exciting youth participation, both from young people and the projects and organisations that support them. The awards are given to individuals and groups on a quarterly basis each year as a way to recognise the achievements of young people who are making a difference in their communities. Each successful nominee receives a certificate and publicity on the BYC online platforms.

Lorna Johnson, Project Officer of Walking in their Shoes, commented “I am incredibly proud of the Walking in Their Shoes volunteers for their creativity, energy, enthusiasm and commitment. The dynamic of the group is that they bring their interests and passions together to plan a project themselves that will benefit other people and then work together to achieve it. They have created a unique community that has led to a lot of healing and progression within the group and to an enormous amount of good times & good work in the community.”

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Nerys Watts, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South West, said “We were delighted to learn about the Walking in Their Shoes team’s success in the Youth on Board awards scheme. Young people are bursting with creative ideas about how to explore and care for their heritage and our Young Roots scheme aims to support them to make a real difference to the places where they live, to grow in confidence and to learn valuable heritage and employability skills. This is just what the Walking in Their Shoes team has been able to achieve and we are proud to have been able to help them.”

Further information

Lorna Johnson at lornajohnson@dorsetyouth.com or visit the Walking in Their Shoes website.