

Walkley Community Centre memorial window

Walkley Community Centre in Sheffield has won the Association for Heritage Interpretation (AHI) 2015 Discover Heritage Award for best community project.

Nine Men, Nine Lives, One Great War (part of the Walkley Ways, Walkley War project) took the award against stiff competition in the Peak District and west Wales. Melanie FitzGerald, one of the Walkley historians, accepted the award from AHI patron Loyd Grossman CBE at a gala ceremony in Newbury.

The project received an Our Heritage grant to commemorate nine members of Walkley Reform Club who fought and died fighting during the First World War, and who are remembered in memorial windows at the community centre.

The AHI Discover Heritage Awards are the only UK and Irish awards to recognise excellence in all types and sizes of heritage interpretation. The AHI judges commended the project for giving the First World War relevance, meaning and immediacy to the residents of Walkley through storytelling events, talks, local shop displays, a website and a simple permanent display next to the restored windows.

Loyd Grossman, AHI partron, said: “This year's award winners showed a wide range of exciting and innovative interpretation all aimed at helping the public to get more enjoyment, more education and more benefit from our outstanding natural and cultural heritage.”

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2016 marks the Centenary of the Battle of the Somme, one of the First World War’s most notorious and destructive battles, which touched the lives of nearly every community across the UK and beyond. At this time of remembrance it is important to remember and understand the impact of this and other aspects of the First World War. HLF is encouraging groups across the country to apply for funding so they can explore some of the many ways in which it impacted their communities.