

# Evaluation of Heritage Lottery Fund's First World War Centenary Activity: *Year 2 Case Studies*

July 2016

# SHEFFIELD 1916: STEEL, STEAM AND POWER

## Summary

The project centres on the conservation of the River Don Engine – one of the world's most powerful working steam engines – and its role in shipbuilding in the First World War.

## Introduction

The diverse strands of the project are brought together by a focus on: (1) the Battle of Jutland, May 1916; (2) a Zeppelin bombing raid on Sheffield in September 1916; and (3) the centrality of different forms of power to Sheffield's industrial history. These strands include:

- installing a **new boiler** to power the River Don Engine, securing its future as a *working* steam engine;
- opening up the **Power House**, where the new boiler is housed, made accessible to the public via a mezzanine viewing gallery and enabling visitors to experience the boiler in action for the first time;
- producing a **Steel, Steam and Power exhibition**, with new displays detailing the Engine's role in producing armour plate for battleships in the First World War;
- an **extension** to the existing Engine Room, to house the old decommissioned boiler, cross-sectioned so that visitors can see inside and better understand how a boiler works;
- a comprehensive **community participation programme**, led by a newly appointed Community Participation Officer, a post created and funded through the project;
- reconstructing a **1916 House** within the museum, with two rooms and a 'courtyard' space, also to be used as a setting for educational sessions;
- upgrading the existing learning centre space to create a **PowerLab**, focusing especially on education in STEM subjects;
- two large **public events** in May and September 2016, commemorating the centenaries of the Battle of Jutland and the Zeppelin raid on Sheffield, respectively.

## Making a difference

Note: many of the following outcomes are in the process of being delivered. More progress has been made with the heritage outcomes than with people and community outcomes, due to the phasing of the ongoing project.

### *How the project achieved outcomes for heritage:*

- It is anticipated that the new boiler will run much more efficiently and be easier to control, operate and manage, ensuring the financial viability of keeping the Engine working and allowing the Trust to make better use of its human and financial resources.
- Having now acquired the new boiler, the future running of the Engine and hence its continued maintenance have been secured.
- There will be numerous new displays and interactive exhibits, including on the history of the River Don Engine and the largely untold story of Sheffield's role in military shipbuilding, and the social history of the First World War, especially life on the Home Front. These are currently in the process of being designed and produced.

- The community engagement programme will collect first-hand accounts of the River Don Engine from people who worked alongside it while it was still operational until the late 1970s. Significant progress has been made with completing research for the new displays, including more detailed investigation of the museum's existing collection.

#### ***How the project achieved outcomes for people:***

- The project incorporates a comprehensive programme of training for staff and volunteers. Volunteers will be given a full induction. As well as staff and volunteers gaining new skills, an important outcome of keeping the Engine working for another generation will be to pass on the heritage skills required in its upkeep.
- The new displays and interactive exhibits will provide resources for museum visitors to learn about aspects of industrial and social history that have not previously been emphasised, including the role of the River Don Engine and experiences of everyday life during the First World War.
- The participation of asylum seekers and refugees in the project will draw attention to another little told story, of Sheffield's history in welcoming refugees, as well as raising awareness of their present day experiences.
- An important part of the educational work will be to celebrate women working in science, technology, engineering and maths.
- The new boiler is intended to ensure the continued working of the Engine so that visitors can continue to enjoy it. In addition, it is anticipated that the new displays and spaces, along with the direct interaction between volunteers and visitors, will enhance the experience.
- A key part of the Community Participation Officer's remit will be to develop a volunteer programme for the museum. At the time of the fieldwork, the process of volunteer recruitment had just begun, but more than 40 people had expressed an interest.

#### ***How the project achieved outcomes for communities:***

- The new boiler is expected to be much more efficient to run, improving the museum's ecological footprint.
- Part of the Community Participation Officer role is to broaden the range of people that work with and visit the museum. The two large events are key opportunities to bring more visitors in to the museum. The project aims to build on the successes of a recent project improving accessibility to those with additional needs.
- The Sheffield 1916 project is expected to contribute to the resilience of the organisation by ensuring that the Engine is able to continue working for the foreseeable future; the working Engine is important for attracting visitors and securing commercial income.
- The museum is seen as part of – and in a mutually beneficial relationship with – the wider social and economic regeneration of the Kelham Island area of Sheffield.

#### **Quote/fact**

*"The River Don Engine is one of the most powerful working steam engines in the world and it is the reason this museum was founded... It's our unique selling point; it's what people come back to see again and again." (Project Lead)*

# LEST WE FORGET - 100 YEARS THEN & NOW

## Summary

'Lest we Forget – 100 Years: Refugees Then & Now' is a Scottish Refugee Council project which is engaging refugees and asylum seekers in Glasgow and supporting them to explore the experiences of Belgian refugees during the First World War. As well as exploring the experience of refugees, the project aims to consider public perceptions of refugees, both in the past and the present.

## Introduction

'Lest we Forget - 100 Years Then & Now' is funded through the 'Our Heritage' grant scheme. The project involves working with a group of refugees and local Scots, supporting them to become volunteer researchers, alongside public events and information encouraging wider participation and learning.

The project aims to increase knowledge and understanding of the experiences of Belgian refugees in Scotland during WW1, exploring the experiences of people from around the world, and public perceptions of refugees in Scotland during WW1 and the present day. The project is successfully achieving a wide range of outcomes, but is a particularly good example a project which meets an extremely broad range of outcomes for people.

## Making a difference

### *How the project achieved outcomes for heritage:*

- *Heritage is being identified and recorded* through a group of refugees and local Scots volunteer researchers identifying the largely unknown heritage of Belgian refugees who came to Scotland during the First World War.
- *Heritage is being better interpreted and explained* through the creation of a heritage exhibition offering alternative perspectives on experiences in the First World War; through the production of a film which will document the progress of the volunteer researchers involved in the project.

### *How the project achieved outcomes for people:*

- *People will have learnt about heritage:* This project is offering people the opportunity to learn about a hidden aspect of Scotland's First World War heritage, and enabling them to get involved in producing an exhibition of this learning.
- *People will have developed skills:* project activities have included training sessions to support the volunteer researchers in research/archive skills
- *People will have changed their attitudes and/or behaviour:* an important longer-term outcome of the project is to enable learning to challenge and change attitudes towards refugees.
- *People will have an enjoyable experience:* A number of volunteer researchers reflected on the opportunity the project has afforded them to meet other people, develop friendships, and feel welcome in a new country.
- *People will have volunteered time:* As well as the refugee and asylum seekers who are engaged in the 'Lest we Forget' project, 4 volunteers have also become involved, helping at events and supporting the project.

### **How the project achieved outcomes for communities:**

- *More people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage:* As the project progresses, participants will be producing a permanent heritage exhibition in the form of a film which will gather together all their learning from the project. The project is also producing an exhibition for the project launch, which will include photography, art and written materials. The project has engaged photographers, and participants have started producing materials for the film and display.

### **Lessons learnt**

The main success of the project has been the engagement of the volunteer researchers. Their sustained involvement in the project has enabled a richness of research, but it has also enabled a large degree of personal development. This success has relied on the group being of a size which isn't too large, which has been a key learning point for the project. The project has also been a source of surprising lessons surrounding the degree of personal development afforded volunteer researchers.

### **Quote/fact**

*"The whole thing has been surprising, in the sense that you don't know who the group is going to be made up of when you begin a project like this. So you can devise outcomes that are for the project generally, and for the group as a whole, but what is surprising is those outcomes that you find for the individuals that are involved in the project... It's really looking at what could be their legacy, what could be the thing that they're getting out of the project" (Project Lead, Lest We Forget, Glasgow)*

# HEATON AVENUES IN WARTIME

## Summary

Heaton Avenues in Wartime was a project led by Heaton History Group in Newcastle Upon Tyne. Through archival research, the project researched 10 hitherto 'buried' stories of local residents.

## Background

The project was being delivered by Heaton History Group, which started as a Friends Group of a local park, Iris Brick Field. The HLF First World War: Then and Now grant was the first grant funding they had received to deliver a project.

The group decided to focus their project on 10 streets: First to Tenth Avenue in the suburb of Heaton. This was quite a neat geographic area, but also had the added distinction of being the childhood home of Jack Common, a local author who had written about his childhood in the book *Kiddar's Luck*. From here the idea developed to produce a 'story' for each of the 10 avenues, based on research into the lives of residents.

Beyond the direct research, the project was conducting a range of other activities, including the following:

- production of stories about 10 households living in the Avenues for a range of media, including print and online.
- commissioning artworks to illustrate stories
- working with students at the local primary school, including producing artefacts for the school's HLF-funded museum
- curating exhibitions in a local pub, libraries and theatre
- engaging in events with other FWW-related projects across Newcastle to share findings and learning
- undertaking bespoke training on the use of MS Excel for local history groups
- a visit to the Northumberland Fusiliers museum

## Making a difference

The project was able to demonstrate outcomes across heritage, people and community domains, but with particular emphasis on people outcomes relating to developing new skills and learning about heritage.

### ***How the project achieved outcomes for heritage***

- Heritage will be in better condition: although this was not an outcome of this project, the project lead did say that the project had led to greater awareness of different artefacts in the area: *"it's starting conversations about what we might do in future"*.
- Heritage will be better interpreted and explained: this outcome was achieved through the different project outputs, including exhibitions and website materials. The production of newspaper-style articles/stories was used as a way to bring heritage to 'life' in an engaging way, with the artworks used to further enhance this.

- Heritage will be identified/recorded: the project had been very successful in identifying and recording the lives of people living in the Heaton Avenues around the time of the First World War, something that had not been previously done.

### ***How the project achieved outcomes for people***

- People will have developed skills: there was strong evidence of people developing skills in a number of different ways, but in particular in relation to research. The project had also used some of the grant money to commission some bespoke training on the use of Excel for local historians. Participants also reported having developed other allied skills, such as writing for different audiences and for different media.
- People will have changed their attitudes/behaviour: volunteers felt that attitudes towards the FWW or the lessons that might be gleaned from it had not changed but they had changed their behaviour in more practical ways: getting more involved in volunteering or their local community.
- People will have learnt about heritage: the project had been important in helping to better understand the lives of individuals 'left behind' during the war, and the socio-economic context in the UK at the time.
- People will have an enjoyable experience: respondents were unanimous in their enjoyment of the project, with the engagement with the local school an important element of this, which volunteers found very rewarding.
- People will have volunteered time: 12 people had volunteered significant amounts of time to the project through a variety of different activities, including researching the stories, visiting schools, curating exhibitions, organising talks and presenting at events.

### ***How the project achieved outcomes for communities***

- more people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage: the project had engaged both more and a wider range of people with heritage, particularly through their work with the local school, and the exhibition in the local pub.
- your local area/community will be a better place to live, work or visit: there was a sense that the project had made some improvement to the lives of those living in the area, and in particular participants felt more part of their local community.
- your organisation will be more resilient: the project had made the organisation more resilient in two ways: it had led to an increase in the number of History Group members, and the funding had directly helped the organisations' finances.

### **Quote/fact**

*"We've concentrated on developing new perspectives on the war. Even when people did have sons and husbands and relatives fighting, we've looked at what they were doing in their everyday lives, so people who were doing voluntary work knitting for the troops or sometimes sad stories of what people were doing to try to cope without their husbands or whatever. The whole range of things highlighted by our stories, like the antipathy towards foreigners shown through the story of two Dutch men accused of spying because they were seen taking a photograph." (Project lead)*

# BLACK ON BOTH SIDES

## Summary

Black on Both Sides was working with a group of young people in Haringey from Black British, African and Caribbean backgrounds to deliver a project focusing on the role of Black people in the FWW, in Britain, Africa and Europe.

## Background

The organisation delivering the project, Community Builders, works with young people, mostly from Black British or African-Caribbean backgrounds, with a particular focus on cultural identity and employment issues. An important part of the heritage focus was to help improve inclusion and community cohesion, within a wider goal of integrating Black people's history into the narrative of UK heritage. The project emerged from a feeling that Black people's experiences were not well reflected in existing activities commemorating the FWW.

The project was working with a group of 8-15 young people aged 11-16 from the Tottenham area over the course of an academic year to produce a number of outputs using different media. The project delivered a range of workshops, visits and other educational activities with the young people. These included 20 heritage workshops with young people delivered through a variety of means, leading to a range of outputs, including:

- a documentary of the project, including interviews with historians
- interactive website
- mobile phone app to enable wider access (collaboratively designed by the young people)
- oral history training and interviews recorded and documented
- schools resource pack created
- public screening of documentary
- exhibition at local venues including the youth enterprise centre that hosts the project and local arts centres/museums

## Making a difference

### *How the project achieved outcomes for heritage*

- **Heritage will be better interpreted and explained:** the wide range of project outputs each contributed to better explaining and interpreting heritage, to a range of different audiences.
- **Heritage will be identified/recorded:** the project was not identifying or recording 'new' artefacts or stories from the FWW. However, it was working to make available archives and information to a wider audience than previously.

### *How the project achieved outcomes for people*

- **people will have developed skills:** participants and volunteers were developing a wide range of new skills. This included practical skills such as research and archival skills, as well as new skills working with digital media

- **people will have changed their attitudes/behaviour:** young people were developing new attitudes towards studying history and engaging with heritage. This was partly achieved by showing the young people how it linked to their own heritage, but also by using different means to engage the young people
- **development of self-identity (additional outcome):** the young people participating in the project were from a Black British, Black African or Caribbean family backgrounds and learning about the role of Black people in the FWW was helping them to develop their sense of self.
- **people will have learnt about heritage:** all those involved in the project had learnt about heritage, specifically about the role and experiences of Black people in the FWW.
- **people will have an enjoyable experience:** all those involved talked about how much they had enjoyed taking part in the project. This was clear also from observing the young people taking part in activities, in particular during a group visit to Bruce Castle museum in Tottenham.
- **people will have volunteered time:** three part-time volunteers gave time to the project, which involved activities such as supporting workshops and group sessions as well as supporting pupils with special needs. Volunteers gave in total around 90 hours of support time to the project.

#### ***How the project achieved outcomes for communities***

- **more people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage:** the project very clearly met this outcome by engaging with a group of young people who were otherwise less likely to engage with heritage. The young people were at risk of social exclusion, including some that had already fallen out of mainstream education.
- **your local area/community will be a better place to live, work or visit:** although this project was small in the context of effecting change on a whole geographic area, there was a sense that the project was making a positive difference to the local community
- **your organisation will be more resilient:** HLF funding was important in contributing to overheads which allowed increased capacity to develop new projects and funding bids.

#### **Quote/fact**

*“Sometimes these subjects like World War One can seem quite dry when covered in school, but their attitudes have shifted quite significantly because they are given not just interesting facts but things that are relevant to them, about people from Africa, they might be able say ‘well that’s where my parents are from’ – so history becomes less of an abstract thing just for referencing in school but actually it’s something that is or can be part of the day-to-day narrative and to understand what’s happening today.”*  
(project lead)

## APPENDIX 2: CASE STUDY INTERVIEW PROFILE

Four case studies and one follow-up study were undertaken in the second year of the evaluation. The purpose of case studies was to capture in-depth qualitative data, set within the context of particular projects. While quantitative surveys give a sense of ‘what’ happened, case studies allow for a better understanding of questions relating to ‘how’ things happened.

Case studies involved interviews with the project lead, mix of participants, volunteers, visitors and other stakeholders. This varied across projects depending on who was deemed most appropriate to interview in the context of each activity. A total of 27 interviews were completed. The profile of interviews is shown in Table A2.1, below

**Table A2.1: Interviews completed by case study**

Case study	Interview profile
Black on Both Sides (London)	1 x project leads 4 x participants 2 x volunteer
On the Brink (Ballymena, follow-up)	1 x project lead
Heaton Avenues (Newcastle Upon Tyne)	2 x project lead 4 x participants 1 x stakeholder
Lest We Forget (Glasgow)	1 x project lead 1 x project worker 1 x volunteer 3 x participants
Sheffield 1916 (Sheffield)	1 x project leads 5 x project workers