

When Haslemere went to war

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With the help of a £17,900 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) Young Roots programme their investigations coincide with the approaching centenary of the outbreak of the First World War.

Working with Haslemere Educational Museum the young researchers will create a vivid picture of how towns, families and individuals were affected by what was called 'The Great War'.

A major focus of the project will be the influx of Canadian troops who were stationed on nearby Bramshott Common from 1915 until the end of the war. The young people will be visiting the former site of the soldiers' camp and also Bramshott church to see Canadian war graves. With the help of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and Canadian veterans' groups they will aim to piece together details of some of the Canadians who were posted to the area.

They will also have access to information on the Haslemere war memorial that lists the name of more than 60 local men who were killed on active service during the war. The memorial is unusual in that it includes the place of death of each casualty.

This and other information will mean that personal stories of local people can be drawn up to help the young people understand the connection between global events and the local community. They will also visit the refurbished World War One Galleries at the Imperial War Museum.

Once material has been collected, the young historians will assemble an exhibition to be shown at Haslemere Educational Museum and Liphook Guide Hall as part of the town's First World War commemoration. This will also include photographs and artefacts from the museum's collection and a film taken by the young people themselves.

Stuart McLeod, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South East England, said: "As we approach the centenary many people want to learn more about the individual stories that will make this world-shattering event relevant on a personal level. This project will not only help young people and their community to do this, it will also provide those taking part with a range of new skills."

For Haslemere Educational Museum, Kay Topping, Education Officer, said: "The team have worked on a lot of different projects but nothing that links to a major commemoration like this. We can't wait to start exploring how the First World War affected our community."

Notes to editors

- 2014 sees the beginning of a series of centenaries marking the First World War. Key events and developments relating to the conflict will be commemorated, including the Battle of the Somme, the Gallipoli campaign, the changing role of women, the Armistice and the dedication of the first war memorials. The Heritage Lottery Fund can provide funds to help organisations mark these important anniversaries by exploring the history and legacy of the war and helping

people understand how it impacted on communities across the UK, especially their own.

- HLF is working with Imperial War Museums (IWM), who are leading the UK's cultural commemorative programme for the centenaries. HLF applicants can access IWM expertise and resources by joining the centenary partnership. There has recently been increased interest in the condition of war memorials across the UK. There are a number of sources of funding available to help people look after and learn from their local war memorials and to commemorate the heritage of sacrifice and conflict.

Further information

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