Welcome to the Bulletin of the WW1 Reference Group

This bulletin is aimed at those with an interest in the WW1 research and Centenary activities of Leicestershire and Rutland and is a product of the WW1 Reference Group hosted by Leicestershire County Council (contact: Tim.Webster@leics.gov.uk).

The WW1 Reference Group is chaired by Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Leicestershire, Colonel R M L Colville, and its members include Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, the University of Leicester, and representatives of the Royal British Legion, the East Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadets Association and more.

The Groups’ aims are to promote activities marking the Centenary of World War One.

The bulletin is free and can be subscribed to by emailing the editor, Elizabeth Blood, at warmemorials@leics.gov.uk

You are invited to send us information on local events and projects for inclusion in future Bulletins.

Thank you for reading.
New WW1 Website for Leicester and Leicestershire

From today a new website is available where you will find details of events across the city and county, more information about the work of the Reference Group and its membership, and more about our initiatives and projects currently underway.

You can also add your own WW1 events and subscribe to this (free) newsletter.

Please visit  www.thegreatwar-leicestershire.co.uk
The First World War in Leicestershire: A Century of Stories

In February 2014, the County Council accepted a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support a four year First World War commemoration project called A Century of Stories, which explores the social history surrounding the individual and shared legacy of the First World War, focusing on the impact of Leicestershire at the time of the conflict, as well as in the immediate aftermath and how the deep-rooted social, cultural, community and personal consequences are felt today.

A funding award £318,000 was granted by the HLF with the remainder of the £427,000 for a programme of events and activities coming from existing revenue budgets and contributions from the British Legion and the Friends of Leicester and Leicestershire Museums.

A Century of Stories is made up of two main areas of delivery:

The first is the encouragement, support, skills development and training of individuals and community groups to use local, national and e-accessible resources to research their own connectivity with the events of 1914-1918.

Through a variety of workshops called History Cafés and Taster Sessions, participants can learn how to build research skills and choose from hundreds of topics to create their own Century of Stories; from family genealogy to exploring how a village was involved in the conflict; discovering what someone in a modern job would be doing to how a hobby or sport was maintained during wartime.

A total of 50 of these stories will be printed on banners and placed in pop-up exhibitions and displays in community venues across the county.

The second area of delivery involves a series of commissioned research projects selected by a panel of local and national experts who will identify areas of lack in existing published research into Leicestershire’s contribution to, and experience of, the conflict and its immediate aftermath.

The outcomes of these two research and engagement strands will be the basis of a final exhibition- a commemorative centenary conference and learning weekend in November 2018, which will bring together all of the participants and the findings of their research throughout the four years of the project.

A Century of Stories will go live after an official media launch in early August 2014.
War Memorials Project - Conservation update

The War Memorials Project provides conservation advice and grants to custodians wishing to restore their war memorials.

Recent projects that have been grant aided by Leicestershire County Council have been completed at Thrussington, Muston and Ravenstone.

Muston war memorial, before and after conservation. The head was damaged below the carving and had to be completely re-fixed. An overall gentle clean was required to improve the appearance and to make the inscriptions legible again.

Thrussington war memorial, before and after conservation. The stonework was gently cleaned overall, the joints were repointed with lime mortar, the posts were replicated and all replaced, and the inscription was re-gilded as it originally had been.

The project can be contacted at warmemorials@leics.gov.uk
The War Memorials Project website is currently down for exciting redevelopment in time for the Centenary period.

CyberMedia, a web company working with the County Council on the site, have been engaged to revamp the online database of over 3,000 war memorials and over 20,000 casualties.

**Improvements will include:**

- A new look
- Better search functions
- Easier navigation
- New soldier photo galleries
- Video and audio features
- New tools for public to upload information
Heritage Lottery Fund awards £8,700 to Hoby for First World War commemorations

The village of Hoby situated between Leicester and Melton Mowbray has been awarded a grant of £8,700 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War. Together with grants from Hoby with Rotherby Parish Council, Hoby Recreation Trust, Hoby Sunday School Trust and Hoby Church, this brings the total for the project to £10,200. This small Leicestershire village, which had 175 residents in 1914, sent 67 men off to war, eleven of whom lost their lives in the conflict.

Hoby will be producing a commemorative book, available in digital form as a website and an app and will be promoted on social media. Villagers will mount an exhibition in the Church including a 1914 kitchen and there will be a drama production enacting scenes from the time in the village hall. In addition, there will be a village trail.

There will be a muffled peal of bells sounded from All Saints Church Hoby on the 100th anniversary of the death of each person who died in action, beginning on 15th May 2015.

Vic Allsop, Chairman of the Hoby and District Local History Society who are staging the events and researching the background said: “As a small rural community, we can appreciate the impact losing eleven residents to war would have made to Hoby. We felt it was fitting to create a lasting memorial to those brave soldiers and to bring to life some of the circumstances for today’s younger generations.”

Local primary schools will be invited to create artwork to commemorate the anniversary and a roll of honour will be produced naming those who fought. The village will remember them particularly on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th August 2014 when there will be a flower festival and on the 4th a service in Hoby church.

Should anyone have any information regarding anything pertinent to Hoby or its people during the First World War, please email Diane Horsfield hdlhs@horsfste.plus.com Links to the special commemoration website will be found at http://www.leicestershirevillages.com/hoby/

For further information please contact:

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Tel: 01664 434188
Email: nicky@nickystephenmarketing.co.uk
THE CHARNWOOD GREAT WAR CENTENARY PROJECT

IT’S OFFICIAL: OUR HERITAGE LOTTERY BID IS ON!

A big thank-you to all of those who have waited so long for this news. Now we can commence our two year project exploring the local heritage of World War I.

Project bid partners (L-R): Bill Brookman of Bill Brookman Productions Ltd., Rebecca Abrahams of Charnwood Arts (Lead Partner), Madeleine Coburn of Participation in Action, Maureen Kent of All Saints Church and Janet Grant, researcher.

Look out for more newsletters on specific subjects and how anyone who wishes to can get involved.

Reply to Bill@BillBrookman.co.uk or kevr@charnwoodarts.com with ideas.
The Royal Leicestershire Regiment Association, Leicester City Council and partners across the city are working together on a programme of events and exhibitions entitled Leicester Remembers the Great War.

The programme will profile the lives, times and individual stories of local soldiers during World War I (1914–1918) as well as life on the home front. This will be a commemoration of ordinary people and their extraordinary stories during a momentous period in history.

As part of this activity a series of three exhibitions are planned for New Walk Museum & Art Gallery and Newarke Houses Museum between 2014–2018, along with travelling exhibitions and community events at New Parks, Highfields and St Barnabas libraries.

Leicester at War 1914–1915
26 July 2014–12 April 2015
New Walk Museum & Art Gallery

This exhibition will take original artefacts, art works, photographs, documents, diaries and newspapers to tell the story of life in the early years of the war, on the home front as well as the battle front.

The Royal Leicestershire Regiment Museum
Newarke Houses Museum

The exhibition looks at Regimental life through the eyes of ordinary soldiers and of the people at home and explores how they were affected by war. Includes a reconstructed trench and displays on World War I.

Library exhibitions and workshops
Did your relatives serve during World War I? Do you still have letters, photos, medals or memorabilia from the War period? Have you got stories which have been passed down through the family?

If so we would love to see you at one of our World War I workshop sessions. We will listen to your family memories, look at your objects and record your stories for our exhibitions taking place in New Parks, Highfields and St. Barnabas libraries.

For more information on the workshops, please contact 0116 454 3533/ Linda.harding@leicester.gov.uk

Events
For full details on the events and commemorative activities taking place across Leicester, please visit our website.
Memories from the First World War

New exhibitions planned to commemorate WW1

Did your relatives serve during the First World War? Do you still have letters, photos, medals or memorabilia from the war? Have you got stories which have been passed down through the family?

We would love to see you, listen to your family memories and look at your objects, and record your stories for our exhibitions. Museum staff will be on hand to help.

We have secure, state of the art museum exhibition cases in three local libraries, New Parks, Highfields and St. Barnabas which we hope to fill with objects loaned by members of the public to tell stories of how the war affected the people of Leicester.

At these events we have a collection of handling objects available, museum and regimental colleagues to help offer information about objects, and volunteers to help with recording the stories that people wish to share.

Wednesday 9th April 2014, 1pm - 3.30pm
St. Barnabas Library

Wednesday 30th April 2014, 1pm - 3pm
Highfields Library

Wednesday 17th September 2014, 1pm - 3pm
St. Barnabas Library

Thursday 18th September 2014, 2pm - 4pm
Leicester Central Library

For more information, contact: linda.harding@Leicester.gov.uk 0116 252 7381
Hinckley and District Museum

April 21st to 31st October 2014 - "Somewhere in No Man's Land" - a major new exhibition chronicling the impact of the Great War on the people and institutions of Hinckley and District. Visitors enter the exhibition by "going over the top" into No Man's Land to the sound of gunfire. Dubbed the "People's Exhibition", most of the artefacts have been loaned to the Museum from local families. Rare recordings of Hinckley veterans recalling their wartime experiences augment the other exhibits.

Opening times: Saturdays and Bank Holidays 10am to 4pm  Sundays 2.00pm to 5pm

Admission: Adults 50p  Children and concessions 25p

Hinckley and District Museum, Framework Knitters Cottages, 18 Lower Bond Street, Hinckley, Leics. LE10 1QU Tel: 01455 251218

Hinckley, Earl Shilton, Burbage - Nobody Told Us

One of Hinckley's leading local historians, Greg Drozdz MA, examines the impact of the Great War on Hinckley and District. Beginning with his Uncles on the Hinckley War Memorial, Greg takes the audience through a journey of discovery and realisation of how every aspect of life was affected by the war. Greg uses his 25 years of research material to paint a vivid picture of life in Hinckley and District during the war.

June 11th - at Earl Shilton History group - Earl Shilton Methodist Church, The Hollow, Earl Shilton

June 20th - 2.30pm - Earl Shilton United Reformed Church

7.00pm - Hinckley Great Meeting Chapel

September 4th - Burbage Local History Group - Burbage Congregational Church - 7.30pm

November 20th - 7.30pm - Cafe Impressions, Atkins Building, Lower Bond Street, Hinckley, Leics.

Admission: £3

"Where is Uncle Jack sleeping tonight?"....Greg Drozdz reveals his personal search in Flanders fields for his Uncle Jack and comes up with a twist in the tale.

August 3rd - Sunday - 2.30pm - Drumhead Service - Hinckley Cemetery

Organised by the Hinckley and Burbage branch of the Royal British Legion, this service of commemoration and gratitude, will take place by the graveside of the only Hinckley soldier to be buried in pauper's ground. The highlight of the service will be a simultaneous laying of wreaths on the 27 war graves in the cemetery as well as the 34 family gravestones that mention First World War casualties. The ceremony will be attended by numerous standard bearers and a contingent of Gurkhas from Gamecock Barracks.
Lutterworth update

During the First World War, patchwork quilts were made, embroidered with the names of soldiers, and then sold to raise money for The Red Cross.

A family history community project intends to commemorate those who served with the Commonwealth forces during the First World War 1914-1918 and did not return home, in the same way, using fabric and thread. The aim is to produce a quilt made up of squares embroidered with the names of our ancestors or those in our local community who gave their lives.

I will be embroidering the name of my great-uncle, John Capper, born in Sheffield in 1896, who served in the Coldstream Guards and died in the Battle of the Somme on the 15th September 1916 onto the quilt. Would you like to contribute to the project by stitching a square or squares with the name/s of the person/s you wish to commemorate? Information on how to get involved in this project can be found on http://www.spanglefish.com/firstworldwarcentenaryquilt/. You will be supplied with a pack containing the pre cut square of fabric and thread and detailed instructions for a minimum donation of £3.50 (Includes P & P). Packs can be obtained by sending your cheque made payable to First World War Centenary Quilt to: Philippa McCray, 27 Coventry Road, Lutterworth, Leics. LE17 4RE.

If you would like more information on the project or would like to request multiple packs for your society or group please email Philippa at ww1centenaryquilt@btinternet.com.

All profits will be divided equally between HelpforHeroes, www.helpforheroes.org.uk and Q4IS (Quilts for injured soldiers) www.q4is.co.uk

The project will run throughout 2014 and as it gets underway you can keep up to date with the progress via the News tab on the website.
Husbands Bosworth

Husbands Bosworth Historical Society and All Saints Parish Church, Husbands Bosworth are hosting a display relating to those men of the parish who gave their lives for their country and are mentioned on the village War Memorial. The event will take place over the weekend of May 31/June 1, 2014, in church, as part of the village’s Summer Festival and Open Gardens Event. The display will feature photographs and details of those mentioned on the memorial, their lives in the village and their families. Artefacts from The Great War, medals, documents relating to the unveiling of the War Memorial in 1921 (including the original architect’s drawings) and wartime letters and postcards will be on display. Much of the information and many of the artefacts featured will be sourced from the Historical Society’s extensive Archive Collection. The event will be open from 11.00am to 5.00pm each day and light refreshments will be available in church throughout the weekend.

The church will be resplendent with floral displays, the Life of Bosworth photographic competition and more than a dozen gardens around the village will be open to the public. Combined entry to the exhibition, displays and Open Gardens is £3 per person (accompanied children under 16 free)

For more information contact: Di Jones on 01858 880741 or Lorrie Forman on 01858 880281
Ibstock

The Ibstock Historical Society and Ibstock Community College are joining forces to stage two history days on the 23rd and 24th May 2014. The 23rd will be in the Old Hall at the Community College on Central Avenue and the 24th will be at the Palace Theatre on High Street.

We have a number of neighbouring Historical Societies attending, a range of Model clubs providing WW1 era Battleships, Airplanes and Vehicles, this is in addition to WW1 medal and badge collectors and a display on the ‘claykicking’ miners from our corner Leicestershire who tunnelled under the German trenches. There will also be a display of the students course work for visitors to have a look at. Entry is free although we will be collecting for the British Legion.