



War and its Aftermath

SERIES: Beyond Commemoration: Community,
Collaboration and Legacies of the First World War



Series: *Beyond Commemoration: Community, Collaboration and Legacies of the First World War*

General Editor: Ian Grosvenor

War and Its Aftermath

Editor: Nicola Gauld

Project Team: Nicola Gauld, Anna Hammerin, Julie Moore, David Savill
with support from Ian Grosvenor, Sarah Lloyd, and Natasha Macnab.

This document is copyright: Nicola Gauld, Anna Hammerin, Julie Moore, David Savill.

It is published under the CC BY-NC Licence. This licence lets others remix, tweak and build upon the text in this work for non-commercial purposes. Any new works must also acknowledge the authors. This licence excludes all photographs, figures and images which are rights reserved to the original artist.

Cover image: The World War I and II Memorial in Vácrátót, Pest County, Hungary, which was unveiled on 5th October 2015, to the victims of the two world wars. *Image courtesy of: kozterkep.hu*

Inside cover image: House belonging to Private Clements Cluff, Cleenish island. *Image by Mark Rhead on behalf of the Bellanaleck Local History Group.*

About the Vácrátót War Memorial: The War Memorial creator, **Mr István Bőjte Horváth**, provides an insight into the inspiration behind his sculpture: *'The carved image of the monument depicts the "lack" and the "suffering"; the fallen hero and the family suffering from the absence. The presence of the soldier who has become "airy" among his family, depicted in the local Hungarian costume, reflects on the difficult years and decades of our [the Hungarian] history. In the picture, the soldier and father is present with the shoots of the tree of life, showing the resilient vitality of the villagers who survived the hardships of horrors.'*

Back Cover Image: The original photograph which inspired the War Memorial of Vácrátót, from 1938. **Hungarian soldier János Horváth (1908–1984) and his wife Erzsébet Baksza (1913–1941) with their children: Erzsébet (1933–1949) and Gábor (1938–2004).** Photo resides with the Hungarian Open-Air Museum Skanzen in Szentendre, and has been reproduced with the kind permission of the family's descendants, *Family Horváth in Vácrátót (Hungary).*

Disclaimer: The arguments and views expressed are those of the individual authors. Every effort has been made to trace copyright holders, but if any have been inadvertently overlooked, the authors will be pleased to make the necessary arrangements at the first opportunity.

Design by: Kate Douglas, studio@thebusiness-design.co.uk



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council

age
exchange



Contents

► Beyond Commemoration: Community, Collaboration and Legacies of the First World War Ian Grosvenor and Sarah Lloyd	4
► About the authors	8
► War and Its Aftermath Nicola Gauld, Julie Moore, Anna Hammerin and David Savill	10
► Reminiscence interviews: things to consider when working with older people and wartime personal or family history David Savill	14
► Case studies	17
Psychological and Physical	17
'One Last Push' and "'Justice Not Charity' Was Their Cry', Disability History Scotland (Edinburgh)	18
'Combat Stress 100', Combat Stress and Age Exchange (A national project)	20
'Shot At Dawn: Lest We Forget' and 'Goodnight My Boys', Central Youth Theatre (Wolverhampton)	23
'100 Years and Still Serving', Derbyshire Association for the Blind (Derby)	26
'Untold Stories', People's Heritage Co-operative (Birmingham)	27
"'Now Walks Like Others": Health, Disability and Medicine during the FWW', University of Northampton, Northampton General Hospital Historical Archive (Northampton)	30
Reimagining Home	32
'The Women of Westfield: Picking Up the Pieces After the First World War', Westfield War Memorial Village (Lancaster)	33
'Cleenish Island. The Story of 11 soldiers', Bellanaleck History Group (County Fermanagh)	35
'Coming Home. The Impact of WW1 Across Highland Communities', Highlife Highland (Inverness)	37
'Pioneering Courage: The Women's Pioneer Housing Story', Women's Pioneer Housing (London)	38
'Refugee Tales: Viewing the Belgian Refugee Crisis of WW1 through the Lens of Contemporary Experience', Manchester Metropolitan University and The Clay Foundation (Manchester & Stoke-on-Trent)	41
'In Flux', Excavate (Nottingham)	42
Peacemaking and Humanitarianism	45
'Documenting Dissent' and 'Learning from the Past', Global Link (Lancaster)	46
'The White Wood', Deveron Projects (Huntly, Aberdeenshire)	50
'Words of Peace', Sampad (Birmingham)	51
'Quakers and the First World War: Lives & Legacies', Central England Quakers and School of Education, University of Birmingham (Birmingham)	52
'British Ex-Service Students and the Rebuilding of Europe, 1919-26', National Union of Students, Workers' Educational Association, University of Northumbria & University College London (various locations)	54
'Meeting in No Man's Land', Age Exchange (London and Bavaria)	56
► Conclusion	60
► Useful reading/Further resources	62
► Further projects	64
► Acknowledgements	65
► Aftermath - seen from a different landscape	66

Ian Grosvenor and Sarah Lloyd

SERIES:

Beyond Commemoration: Community, Collaboration and Legacies of the First World War

Conflict, Commemoration and Context

In 2014, five First World War Engagement Centres were established by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). At the core of the objectives set by the AHRC was a desire to benefit communities across the UK by enhancing public understanding of the First World War and its role in shaping the world we live in today, and to challenge traditional narratives of the conflict.

This was to be achieved through: supporting community research and promoting research skills among a wide range of people, making them more confident in accessing and interpreting different types of sources and information; working collaboratively to reach new communities and make the commemoration relevant to, and inclusive of, a culturally diverse population; and furthering universities' commitment to public engagement with research.

The Engagement Centres can best be understood as a unique experiment. Unique in that they involved multi-institutional partnerships and a commitment to funding in excess of the normal research project funding period. These factors enabled academics, citizen historians, community volunteers, heritage practitioners and community enterprises to come together in meaningful and productive relationships. There is extensive evidence that the work of the Engagement Centres has enriched public understanding of the First World War (FWW) and its legacies, and has enhanced the research capacity of diverse communities across the UK. In turn, this has generated confidence in engaging with the complexities associated with the critical study of the past and, in particular, building understanding of the contemporary resonances and issues relating to the conflict in personal, local and global contexts. Over six years, the Centres supported the establishment of new research relationships across higher education institutions and new models of working with civic society mediators. They delivered and enhanced opportunities for early career researchers to experience participatory research and public engagement, and effected institutional change through the promotion of public engagement and the sharing of good practice.¹

In 2019, the *Voices of War and Peace* and *Everyday Lives in War* Engagement Centres organised the *Four Nations Festival of Research and Ideas* to mark the end of the commemoration period. This initiative, involving all five Centres, presented research produced during the centenary. It reflected a wide range of the arts and humanities and celebrated the expertise,

¹ For an account of the activities of the *Voices of War and Peace* Engagement Centre, see Nicola Gauld and Ian Grosvenor, 'The Role of Commemoration in History and Heritage: The Legacy of the World War 1 Engagement Centres' in Matilda Keynes, Henrik Åström Elmersjö, Daniel Lindmark and Björn Norlin (eds.), *Historical Justice and History Education* (Cham, 2021), pp. 153-176 and <https://www.voicesofwarandpeace.org/> accessed 8 October 2021.

experience and insights located within communities. The *Festival* engaged diverse publics in exploring the legacy of the FWW and its relevance for today. It provided opportunities to critically reflect on FWW research collaborations between the academy, community groups, creative practitioners, and the heritage sector; and to explore how existing and new research collaborations between the academy and the cultural, creative and third sectors could be sustained and evolve. In addition, the *Festival* included a series of Policy Breakfasts which focused on areas relating to effective community engagement: *Diversity*; *Shared Heritage*; *Heritage, Community and Opportunity*; and *Gender*. These events were attended by major funders, heritage organisations, community enterprises, academics, and politicians. The data generated from these events were translated into a policy statement by the two Centres, in consultation with the other Centre PIs, AHRC officers, and the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF): *Communities, Commemoration, Collaboration: Shaping Our Futures Through Sharing Our Pasts*.

However, the question still remained as to how research legacy can be identified and made accessible and durable beyond the span of a national anniversary or major public investment in community engagement. It was a question that was not foreseen when the FWW Engagement Centres were established in 2014, nor one that was identified by the Centenary Partnership. It only became a pressing question in the aftermath of the FWW centenary as Parliament and other national bodies assessed what has been achieved.

As the House of Commons DCMS Select Committee enquiry into the centenary concluded in 2019:

The centenary commemorations reached new audiences, and enabled the public to be more exposed to hidden or less well-known histories. But this approach could have been more systematic and better embedded in all strands of activity... We are concerned that little attention seems to have been given at the outset to what the legacy of the commemorations would be.²

Beyond Commemoration: Community, Collaboration and Legacies of the First World War emerges from a follow-on funding AHRC project which addressed this concern and aimed to make visible the work of citizen historians involved in commemorative activity between 2014 and 2019.³

Rather than memorialise community research, this project has aimed to keep it in circulation by working with communities to produce a series of four downloadable legacy-themed e-books: *Remaking Histories of the Nation*; *Children and Conflict*; *Women and War*; and *War and its Aftermath*. The themes represent gaps in historical understanding or poorly represented topics. They were identified through the Centres' close working relationship with the NLHF across the centenary period, and through the 2019 Festival where they became visible. Each of the books has been delivered by a project team consisting of community activists, academics and independent scholars. The books are uniform in design but different in terms of approach, as each one reflects different experiences within the project team. In producing the books we have drawn on an earlier cross-Centre initiative, the book *Beyond the Battlefields: Käthe Buchler's Photographs of Germany in the Great War* (2018). In combining research, new material and community responses, it offered a template for the current publications. This project also drew on the insights and approach offered by the AHRC-funded *Connected Communities Foundations Series* (2018), edited by Keri Facer and Kathleen Dunleavy, and by *Making Histories, Sharing Histories* (2020) in which members of this project team translated a commitment to collaboration into practical guidance.⁴

Working through community networks built up over the period of the centenary, the project aimed to reach out to new user communities and audiences. It began and ended during the Covid-19 pandemic. Every conversation and meeting happened online; every image was negotiated in the context of reduced archive services. As a collaborative project addressing some 'difficult' histories, it depended wholly on dialogue, conscious participation and transparency, on sustained relationships of trust and on an ethics of care and empathetic listening.

Reflections, Learning and Challenges

This project has documented what was so evident throughout the centenary; that communities have a deep commitment to history and that their own concerns are a powerful tool for shaping research. New questions emerge when different communities engage with the past. Contemporary contexts can give an added urgency to calls for stories to be told, heard, and absorbed into the national narrative. However, emphasis on the military, the dead and memorialisation through anniversary events during the centenary period had the effect of reinforcing traditional narratives to the detriment of public engagement with what were sometimes perceived as uncomfortable histories. Nevertheless, if one looks, there are other stories, hidden within bigger themes, which enrich understandings of the conflict.

² House of Commons, Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 'Lessons from the First World War Centenary', 2019: Recommendation 6 <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcmds/2001/200102.htm> accessed 8 October 2021.

³ The First World War and its Legacy, 2020 and Beyond: Community, Collaboration and Conflict, Arts & Humanities Research Council Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement, Reference: AH/V001329/1

⁴ See <https://connected-communities.org/index.php/connected-communities-foundation-series/> accessed 8 October 2021; *Making Histories, Sharing Histories: putting university-community collaboration into practice* (2020), <https://www.voicesofwarandpeace.org/2020/11/23/resource-making-histories-sharing-histories/> accessed 8 October 2021.

While the team pooled its knowledge of community research during the centenary, trawling the internet for its traces, even three years on, it proved difficult to discover what many projects had done once they were launched. The fragility of community outputs, and particularly of digital materials, makes it difficult to document legacies. Lost projects constitute enduring gaps in knowledge. Identifying those voices and themes that surfaced during the centenary, but which have subsequently disappeared from widely accessible historical narratives, challenges everyone to consider how to create an inclusive, diverse and tangible historical legacy, which can be acknowledged by a broad public.

The unfinished business of the past creates generational burdens, which are historical, such as the violence of Empire and the inequalities of historical neglect. Nevertheless, the process of researching the past can be as important as what is found. It can be an agent of collective redress; it can aid in the repair of personal trauma. The impact of projects – for example, those that explored the enduring legacies of the conflict – can be profound for individuals and organisations. Centenaries and anniversaries create opportunities to understand the complexity of the past and the exclusionary nature of received notions, but then close the window when attention moves on to other events.

Finally, what has emerged in the conversations surrounding the production of the project books is, first, the extent to which place-based narratives and photographic evidence can complicate familiar narratives of the First World War. Visualisation of experience is a powerful trigger of historical imagination, but also requires strategies to recognise and deal with gaps in knowledge: who is named in images, who is not; absent information about context and provenance. Second, where communities and collaborative partners experience successful projects, these energise organisations and stimulate distinctive new research. Of course, there still remain unanswered questions which the project does not address explicitly; for example of the moment, who, in today's world of 'wokeness' and 'cancel culture', are the custodians of historical legacies?



Remaking Histories of the Nation A significant achievement of the UK centenary has been the inclusion of men of colour within established narratives of the First World War, alongside the role of Europe's global empires. Much of this work has been driven by a desire to reflect ethnic diversity in the UK in the 21st century, yet the centenary has itself often reinforced narratives about the nation state, which have in turn prioritised certain forms of knowledge over others. *Remaking Histories of the Nation* builds on community project work to reveal the limits of this approach, the distortions it entails and what an honest history requires in its place.



Children and Conflict Considerable emphasis was placed on young people as a key audience during the centenary – the desire to inspire a new generation in order that the conflict's legacies could be carried forward was central to the commemorative vision. Numerous projects engaged with young people, yet the stories told were in the main those of adults, in projects defined and managed by other adults. Research led by young people about young people was rare, and the community projects captured here give a voice to not only the unheard of the past, but also to those of the present whose power to shape history has traditionally been limited.



Women and War During the centenary of the First World War, community historians expanded knowledge of women's lives, at times departing from familiar, streamlined narratives about women who nursed, worked in munitions, or volunteered for the Land Army. *Women and War* describes some of that research, with the aim of creating a richer and more nuanced account of women's experiences during the conflict. In the process of compiling the booklet, the reasons why women's history matters became increasingly prominent: it connects people with their ancestors; it provides a testing ground for present-day experience; it makes visible what is often hidden, unspoken or unnamed.



War and Its Aftermath Now that the official UK First World War centenary has concluded, the aftermath of the war, and its international dimensions, are receding from public view. This book draws together community research that addressed the impact of the FWW on survivors and on the generations that followed. It considers how the legacy of the war affected communities, families, and individuals, both in the years immediately after and up to the present day. It also reflects on how the seemingly straightforward act of engaging in community research offers its own legacy for those involved, going beyond just the accumulation of information but setting in motion new questions and debates, inspiring new areas of interest, while also challenging old assumptions.

Key Policy Statement for Makers

Heritage is a major resource for empowering communities. In a rapidly changing, globalised world, heritage can foster a sense of identity, security and belonging. Innovative research and community partnerships can address contested heritage and strengthen human connections across time and place. A collaborative model of heritage has potential to shape new policies and practice, creating more resilient communities for the future.

Universities have a key role to play in bringing people together to commemorate events of national significance. They are uniquely placed to connect academic and public knowledge of the past, enabling diverse communities to tell their own stories of belonging and contribution. Universities can facilitate processes that develop and share new understandings, that sustain an inclusive, rigorous, rich heritage, and that respond to the challenge of divisive and uncomfortable histories.



First World War Engagement Centres: Broader Lessons Learnt

- ▶ Collaborative work around history and heritage encourages people to explore new stories relevant to their own lives and experiences.
It opens spaces for alternative voices to be heard, creating multi-layered stories.
- ▶ Operating across the UK can bring different stories into focus and enable discussion of contested and uncomfortable pasts.
In aiming at a more inclusive heritage, including new shared histories, collaborative research has the potential to challenge received narratives. It can incorporate broader global perspectives.
- ▶ A sense of place and the local are critical to many community participatory projects.
Place-based institutions can contribute significant expertise. If universities are to fulfil their civic responsibilities and meet the needs of local communities, relationships must be sustained.



- ▶ Partnerships between universities, cultural organisations and community groups initiate challenging conversations and dialogue.
Productive research collaboration requires clear agreed agendas, open exchange and a sense of everyone being an equal stakeholder.
- ▶ By devolving research funding to a series of multi-institution hubs, it has proved possible to create a structure which facilitates innovation and responsive community engagement.
This model promotes wider understanding and appreciation of what can best be characterised as 'hidden histories'.

Images on page 7 courtesy of the CAER Heritage project: <https://caerheritageproject.com>.



About the authors

Nicola Gauld

Nicola Gauld is a Project Manager at the University of Birmingham. As the Coordinator of the *Voices of War and Peace* WW1 Engagement Centre (2014-2020), Nicola was responsible for coordinating and delivering outreach activities, including a series of national festivals, liaising with academics and partner organisations, supporting community organisations on collaborative projects and carrying out evaluation into collaborative projects.

Julie Moore

Julie Moore is a Visiting Research Fellow with the University of Hertfordshire. She was a member of the University of Hertfordshire's Heritage Hub (2010-2020) and the *Everyday Lives in War* WW1 Engagement Centre (2014-2020). In both roles, she has worked to encourage, support and connect those interested in finding more of the story of their communities, and bringing those stories to a wider audience.

David Savill

David Savill is the Artistic Director of the British charity Age Exchange, specialising in reminiscence arts practice with older people in care and community settings. David joined Age Exchange in 1998 and has over 20 years' experience of creating and directing reminiscence arts programmes that enable individuals and communities to share life experience through visual and performing arts. He has worked regionally, nationally, and internationally, alongside many arts professionals and partner organisations in arts, heritage and education. His work with older people and with intergenerational groups has resulted in theatre productions, exhibitions, and documentary film. David has lectured and presented on the work of Age Exchange at universities and drama schools in the UK. He has also worked on various projects, productions, and conferences with partners in Germany, Poland, Ireland, Australia and Canada.

Anna Hammerin

Anna Hammerin is an independent researcher, focusing on bringing to life previously untold stories and historical accounts of her native Sweden in the late 19th century/early 20th century. As the Coordinator of the AHRC-funded *Everyday Lives in War* WW1 Engagement Centre (2014-2020), hosted by the University of Hertfordshire, Anna was responsible for coordinating and delivering the project-team's work through a series of community-engaging events, exhibitions, and outreach activities. The overall aim of the project was to challenge the traditional WW1 narrative by providing advice and financial support to academic and community collaborative projects for the purpose of unearthing hidden home-front stories and identifying diversity and gender gaps in the historical accounts.



Nicola Gauld, Anna Hammerin, Julie Moore, David Savill

Introduction:

War and Its Aftermath

2014-2019 saw an enormous amount of new research produced by communities exploring their First World War story, resulting in a deluge of outputs in a variety of media: publications, films, performances, songs, exhibitions, installations, and talks.

The aim of this book is to highlight some of the work of those community historians and to reflect on what they discovered, as well as providing a stand-alone model as an example to help foster and nurture community-research networks and relationships. We also hope to provide a useful resource for future projects that may be dealing with difficult histories.

This book is the result of a collaboration between former members of two WW1 Engagement Centres, *Everyday Lives in War* and *Voices of War and Peace*, working with community partners who formed relationships with the two Centres during that period. The Engagement Centres were established in 2014, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, to support a wide range of community engagement activities, connecting academic and public histories of the First World War as part of the commemoration of the war's centenary.

War and Its Aftermath explores a selection of diverse models of community working and highlights projects by arts organisations, local history groups, grassroots community organisations, activists, independent historians, researchers, and schools, in the form of case studies, texts, transcripts of interviews and visual essays.

Image: House belonging to Private Clements Cluff, Cleenish Island. Image by Mark Rhead on behalf of the Bellanaleck Local History Group.



The aim of this book is to highlight some of the work of those community historians and to reflect on what they discovered, as well as providing a stand-alone model as an example to help foster and nurture community research networks and relationships.



'Meeting in No-Man's Land': participants Hilary Payne (UK) and Dieter Filsinger (Germany) exchange their moving family histories from The First World War. *Read more about this unique and ambitious, reconciliatory Age Exchange project on page 56.*

The process of aftermath itself is not finite but is ongoing and often continuous. This book considers the legacy of the First World War that affected communities, families, and individuals, both in the years immediately after and up to the present day.

It also reflects on how the seemingly straightforward act of engaging in community research offers its own legacy for those involved, going beyond just the accumulation of information but setting in motion new questions and debates, inspiring new areas of interest, while also challenging old assumptions.

Now that the official UK First World War centenary has concluded (and we inhabit a post-Brexit, pandemic world), the aftermath of the war and its international dimensions are receding from public view. This book aims to draw together community research that addressed the impact of the First World War on survivors and on the generations that followed.

Themes

In this book, we take human experience and ways of living after the trauma of war as our focal point. This history is now beyond living memory, but remembering the Great War is still clearly emotive, arousing passionate feelings of loss, pride, and dismay. With that in mind, the importance of taking a person-centred approach when dealing with potentially painful memories reaffirms why history matters, why we and others are motivated to do this work. Despite the pressures to adhere to an official single-focused narrative of the war, many of the projects that we highlight explored different

aspects of the conflict and different ways of remembering and commemorating. While there are many things that unite people through the shared experience of war, ways of commemorating are typically linked to nationhood. The UK 'story' of the First World War is not one shared by other European countries or indeed the wider international community. This is particularly so in Germany, as David Savill discusses in his essay 'Reminiscence interviews: things to consider when working with older people and wartime personal or family history'. These national stories can often create challenges for descendants.

This book does not provide an exhaustive list of all projects that explored aftermath or the legacy of war, but highlights those projects that challenged accepted narratives or uncovered the less familiar or untold stories, bringing new knowledge into the public domain and reminding people that beyond the official narrative there are other stories to be discovered. We also include projects that offered new ways of working collaboratively alongside examples of those that made a difference to their communities, or had a marked impact that is still being felt today, for example 'Cleenish Island. The Story of 11 soldiers' by Bellanaleck Local History Group and 'Pioneering Courage' by Women's Pioneer Housing. Finally, we also wanted to highlight projects that explored the impact of war on people living in the UK today, for example 'Refugee Tales', a collaboration between The Clay Foundation and Manchester Metropolitan University, and 'In Flux' by Excavate and the University of Nottingham.

Three key areas emerged during our consideration of the broader theme of aftermath:

- ▶ **Psychological and Physical:** The psychological and physical trauma that war brings to individuals, families, and relationships.
- ▶ **Reimagining Home:** Post-war reconstruction and repair, housing, and charity.
- ▶ **Peacemaking and Humanitarianism:** Interwar pacifism, idealism, aid, and population displacement.

Once we had identified a list of potential projects, we sent them a questionnaire, asking the following questions:

1. Please could you briefly outline your project. Was this your first WW1-related project? If so, what made you decide to take it on?
2. Where did your project start from? Why did it start from that point?
3. Did you focus on new narratives/stories/angles?
4. Were there any surprises about the direction that the project took? Did the project end up where you thought it would?
5. To what extent were partnerships with other organisations/agencies important to your project - could you tell us a little about this?
6. When the project finished, did you consider doing another? Was it on a similar or completely different topic?
7. What has been the legacy of the project for your organisation?
8. How did you feel at the end of the project? What was the impact on you and your colleagues?
9. Do you have any high-resolution images that you could share and would be happy for us to use in the booklet? If so, please mark the box here. ☐
10. We would really like to discuss the learnings from your project on Zoom. If happy to do so, please mark the box here. ☐

Some of the community organisations that we contacted were happy to be interviewed further, and we have included transcripts of those interviews. While every effort was made to contact organisations, in some cases this was not successful, and so we have relied on the information freely available online. Many of the projects were completed by 2018, and some key members of project staff will have inevitably moved onto other work, making it difficult to capture reflections in the years following.

This is typically the nature of community working that is so often reliant on external funding streams. And the pandemic that began in early 2020 will have also had a serious impact on many community organisations.



The importance of highlighting and creating public awareness of PTSD as a result of conflict, by sharing first-hand accounts and creating online resources for schools. *Read more about the important and mind-opening Combat Stress 100 project on page 20.*



This book does not provide an exhaustive list of all projects that explored aftermath or the legacy of war, but highlights those projects that challenged accepted narratives or uncovered the less familiar or untold stories, bringing new knowledge into the public domain and reminding people that beyond the official narrative there are other stories to be discovered.



What was the attitude towards and help available to children with physical disabilities during the First World War years? *Read more about the Now Walks Like Others project on page 30.*
Image: Child's ankle splint, 1821-1920, A603084, Science Museum Group Collection Online. CC0 Credit: Science Museum, London.

David Savill

Reminiscence interviews:

things to consider when working with older people and wartime personal or family history



Image: Veteran volunteers Toby and Davina begin filming interviews with veterans supported by Combat Stress at Tyrwhitt House, June 2019. © Combat Stress.

Over 20 years of working with older people in residential care, day care and in the community, the subject and memory of war has been woven into just about every service or project.

Sometimes it has been the theme of an activity, but often an older person shares an experience that has either simply been triggered by a conversation, or it is something that they have to tell you, that they have to pass on. I am not a psychologist or a therapist but, like my colleagues, I am an arts professional working to support older people through the therapeutic use of reminiscence arts. Of the several hundred older people over the years who have shared a war story with me, only one had received professional counselling for the trauma he had experienced – in his case when his ship was torpedoed.

For many, the opportunity to share their experience with peers in their care home is enough, and having others listen to their reminiscence with empathy and respect is all the recognition, affirmation and support they need. But we, as heritage or history professionals, academics, community artists or volunteers, who come to work with older people on a war-related project, cannot assume that they will be ok to talk about it. With our First World War projects (excepting 'Combat Stress 100'), we worked with descendants – many of whom were deeply moved when sharing the story of their father or mother, for example. While it was not their own memory that they shared, but an 'inherited one', the emotion came from knowing and having seen how the wartime experience had directly impacted on a parent or grandparent, and by association, and through a family bond, on themselves.

Age Exchange has developed over many years its own principles of best practice for reminiscence work with older people. These principles apply to thematic-based group reminiscence in care or community settings, and to heritage-focused projects, where we invite an older person to take part in a filmed/recorded interview, and for that interview to then be used to support a creative output like a book, exhibition, film, or a piece of theatre. Our First World War projects 'Children of the Great War' and 'Meeting in No Man's Land' invited the public to share their family history of the war, to engage in a one-to-one interview, in some cases in group reminiscence and discussion, and to work with us to help create project outputs. In this short essay, I am going to focus on what we would regard as best practice in carrying out a reminiscence interview, and the things we should consider when working with people who come forward to share their personal or family history with us.



For many, the opportunity to share their experience with peers in their care home is enough, and having others listen to their reminiscence with empathy and respect is all the recognition, affirmation and support they need.



Image: Intergenerational cast of 'Children of The Great War', Age Exchange, 2014. Image by Ivan Riches.

One-to-one interviews

The questions will be prepared in advance based on the research. The interviewer will call the interviewee the day before for a pre-interview – this helps add background to the individual's reminiscence and the person/people they are coming to talk about. From this, we – as interviewers – may adapt our questions and be prepared for follow up questions. We invite the interviewee to bring family memorabilia to show us – allowing time after the interview to digitise this. We also talk to the participant about giving our team permission for the interview and digitised material to be used for an exhibition, publication, or film, and for this material to be archived with a partner museum or relevant named online host.

On the day of the interview, we will support the interviewee by making transport arrangements, enabling them to arrive at least 15 minutes before their interview, where they will be welcomed by our team. Where possible, we will create a display of historical artefacts relevant to the project theme. This is something interviewees can talk to our team about, which of course encourages them to open up about their own story. When it is time, the interviewer will greet the interviewee – he/she will then lead them into the quiet space which has been set up especially for the interview. They sit. The interviewer or camera operator introduces the equipment to the interviewee and explains the technical side of things. At the same time, the interviewee is given a microphone and a glass of water, and we ensure that the lighting is not too bright or off-putting. The interviewer talks about how the recording can be paused by the interviewee at any time. When the interviewee is ready, we inform them that we will begin recording.

The skill of the interviewer is to appear to have all the time in the world, to be warm and trustworthy, to use humour where it is appropriate, to actively find a follow-up question if needed, and not rush on to a pre-prepared question if the interviewee has more detail to share. Open questions are essential. If the interviewee appears in anyway uncomfortable with a memory or question, then be prepared to ask them if they'd like to pause, have a drink of water. Do not pry, it is not an interrogation.



Image: From 'Cruel Sea', Age Exchange's national project with the Wartime Merchant Navy, 2005.

You may need to say, 'Would you rather not answer that... that's not a problem'. Move onto the next question. If the interviewee becomes upset or tearful, then take time to slow down, to sit quietly and ask if they are happy to continue, and whether they are willing to share that part of their reminiscence. Again, no pressure.

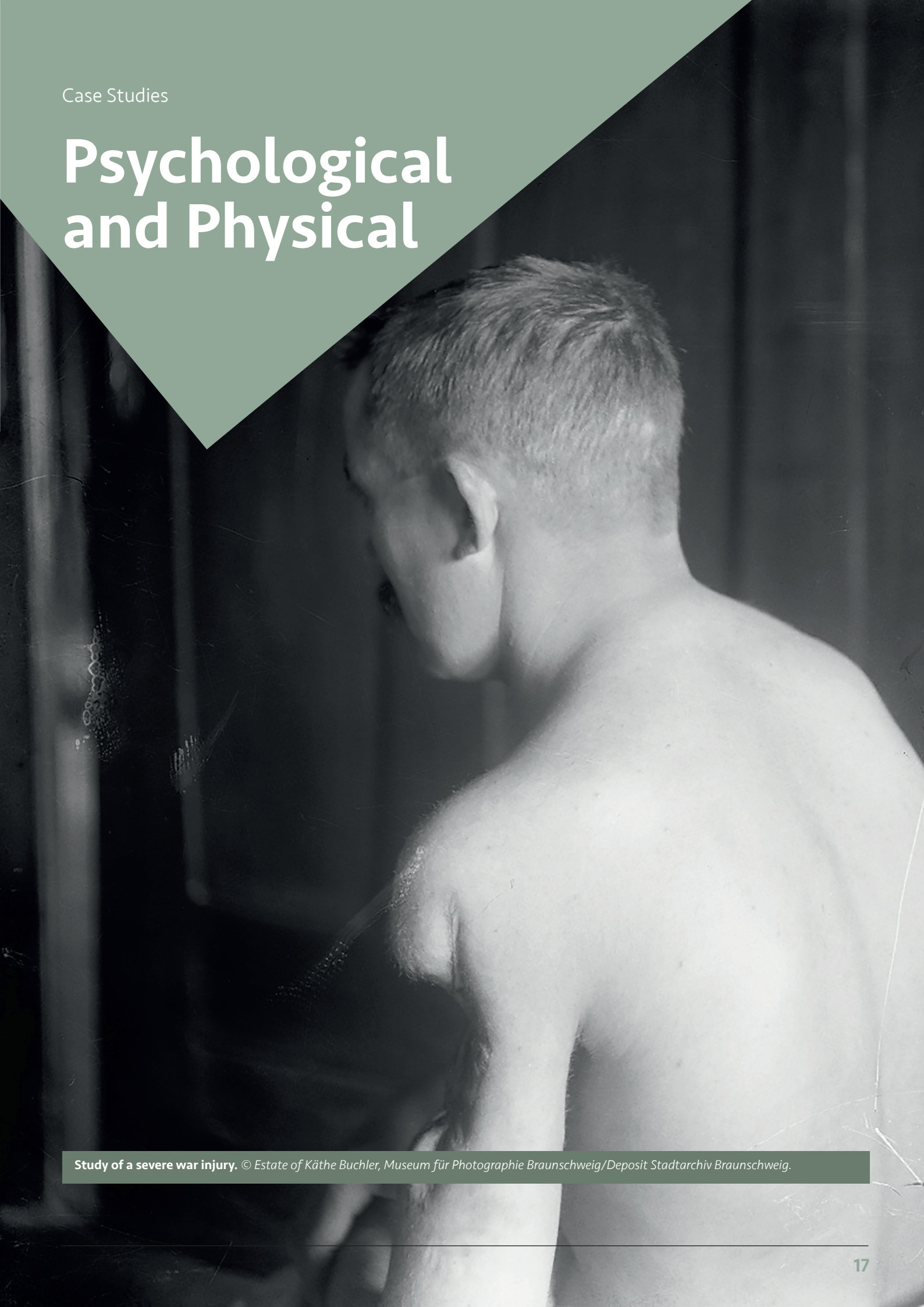
One comment on physical contact as a means of showing empathy; in the early 2000s, I interviewed many veterans from the wartime Merchant Navy. Many of their reminiscences were traumatic. In one unforgettable interview, a veteran called Frank shared a memory of his ship being torpedoed, but because it was carrying prisoners of war, almost 500 men drowned. He talked about how one of the sailors in the lifeboat saw his brother unable to leave the sinking ship – so he jumped into the water and swam back to the ship to die with him. Frank wept at this memory, and I remember a very strong inclination to reach out and hold his hand. But I didn't. He needed time to sit for a few minutes to let the memory run its course; he was tearful but wanted to continue to describe what happened next. I realise this is a very thin line and some interviewers may say that you should have held his hand and stopped the interview for a while. But he didn't want that. He wanted the camera/the viewer to know the story, and for him to memorialise the brothers as a way of honouring them. But more than that, I, the interviewer, was not on-board that

ship in 1941; I was not beside Frank in the lifeboat. I was not there to comfort him then – so by reaching forward to take his hand, I would have invaded his memory and made it about me instead of about him and his comrades. Of course, you as an interviewer can always ask whether someone wants to stop, but don't be frightened of tears – unless someone is clearly traumatised (in which case you need to stop the camera and seek specialist help for them). Be still, listen, be gentle and let the person talk through the memory. Sometimes, this is a part of their own healing and of learning to live with something unforgettable. A reminiscence interview should be defined not by your ambition to record a great war story (for example), but by the care you take in supporting the interviewee throughout the process of remembering and recording.

At the end of the interview, leave around 15 minutes afterwards for a post-interview chat and cup of tea. After the interview, we would also invite the interviewee to give signed permission for the interview to be used for: e.g. exhibition, publication, archive (whatever the outputs of the project). Then ensure that their transport home is in place. Let them know when you will be in touch next, and when their interview will be transcribed and edited. When the outputs of the project are ready, then always invite the interviewees to come and celebrate what they have helped create.

Case Studies

Psychological and Physical



Study of a severe war injury. © Estate of Käthe Buchler, Museum für Photographie Braunschweig/Deposit Stadtarchiv Braunschweig.

DISABILITY HISTORY SCOTLAND (Edinburgh)

'One Last Push'

"'Justice Not Charity", Was Their Cry'



The only surviving image from the National League of the Blind March, Sunday April 25th, 1920.

From the Working Class Movement Library, image donated by Tony Baldwinson: <https://www.wcml.org.uk/our-collections/object-of-the-month/objects-of-the-month-2015/photograph-of-a-1920-national-league-of-the-blind-march/>

Disability History Scotland (DHS) was established in Edinburgh in 2012 with the aim of advocating the advancement of equality and diversity through the promotion of disability history, education, and campaigning. The organisation's first project, 'One Last Push - All Together Now?' (2014), funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (now the National Lottery Heritage Fund) under the 'Then and Now' scheme, sought to investigate the impact of the First World War on the lives of disabled people.

Produced by DHS and Muckle Hen Productions, 'One Last Push' provided a short history of disability in Scotland and questioned how social attitudes towards disability changed, developed, and often stalled, from the First World War to the present day. 'One Last Push' featured Disability History Scotland's Memory Chest, created for the film's premiere in December 2014. Physical artefacts such as war medals, prosthetic limbs, and audio and written transcripts of Edinburgh locals' First World War memories were brought to life through story and discussion.

Link to the film:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lier7TzGJdo&t=8s>

Working on this project led to three members of DHS being invited to Birmingham in 2016 to participate in a discussion event held with the specific aim of encouraging collaborative projects. The result was "'Justice Not Charity", Was Their Cry', a partnership project between DHS, the University of Birmingham, and Jennifer Novotny, an Early Career Researcher based in Glasgow. The project produced a substantial piece of research published in book form.

"'Justice not Charity'" examined the experiences of disabled people in the shadow of the Great War. The aim of the project was to raise awareness of the events of 1920, when over 200 protest marchers, organised by the National League of the Blind, converged on London's Trafalgar Square, as politicians met in the House of Commons to discuss legislation to help secure the economic and social rights of blind persons. It also aimed to disseminate as widely as possible the results of the project findings, and to bring to attention a neglected part of disability history.

While the subject of the many thousands of returning soldiers who had suffered life-changing injuries, both physical and emotional, was featured in a small number of projects delivered by community groups during the centenary, "'Justice Not Charity'" differed from these in its focus on civilian blind persons, a group of people almost doubly overlooked as they



Interview with Sasha Callaghan, Stuart Pyper, and Jennifer Novotny with Nicola Gault, Edinburgh, 2018. Image by Sam Lockyer.

campaigned for equality and justice against a background of public appeals for charitable contributions for disabled servicemen. The aid being offered to wounded soldiers and sailors, immediate and with no strings attached, was exactly the type of support the National League of the Blind had been advocating for decades, arguing that the acceptance of charity infringed on an individual's independence and dignity.

In an interview with Sasha Callaghan, former Chair of DHS, carried out in the summer of 2018, the motivations for doing the project were discussed. The subject area had been briefly explored in the first project, but the group expressed an interest in wanting to find out more, and specifically the local Scottish aspect, about which very little research had been done: 'I wanted to learn more about researching, I wanted to know more...I've learnt an awful lot from it.' Sasha described how the project had benefitted from academic support offered by the *Voices of War and Peace* WW1 Engagement Centre and Jennifer Novotny, and that the group would have struggled to deliver the project on their own as they lacked the knowledge and skills that Novotny brought to the group, something they cited as a major factor in the success of the project.

Sasha discussed challenges that the project faced: 'There were obstacles to finding an academic partner...as a group of disabled people we didn't take it personally... but we were frustrated because the deadlines kept being missed, the starting dates kept being missed...the other big challenge is the paucity of information and evidence about individuals involved in the march...we had a lot of help from people working in museums and community groups along the route of the march.' Sasha went on to say that the project 'emphasises the way that we've always tried to work, which is collaboratively, with partners...the legacy is that the people involved gained an awful lot in terms of new skills and new knowledge'. Reflecting on the project, Sasha commented that it has 'given us some new insights into the aftermath of the war...we were interested in social changes, in fact, we have found out more about that. The Home Office made it clear that those marching weren't former soldiers, they hadn't been wounded in the war, as if that invalidated what they were doing and had they been soldiers I wonder whether the Home Office would have been so dismissive'.

Stuart Pyper, DHS project administrator, was also interviewed. Stuart described a troubling part of the process: 'when you're looking at this kind of history...you realise that these people sacrificed a lot, and they did do a lot for us but, in a way, it still feels like we're having to fight the same fights today. It really shows how history can repeat itself'.



A blind man assisted by another man (Fritz Wrampe). Drawing by Fritz Wrampe, 193-. Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC BY.



A veteran holds his 'grounding tool' during his interview. Image by Simon Purins.

COMBAT STRESS 100 (A national project)

Marking the centenary of the UK's oldest military mental health charity: a Combat Stress-Age Exchange collaboration by David Savill.

By 2017, Age Exchange had completed two First World War centenary projects, the London-wide 'Children of The Great War' and the Anglo-German 'Meeting in No Man's Land' (discussed later in this book). During October 2017 I went to present at two conferences in Australia, and it was in Sydney that I was introduced by Professor Michael Balfour of Griffith University in Queensland to Professor Marvin (Marv) Westwood from the University of British Columbia. Michael had previously collaborated with Marv on a veterans' programme, using theatre and visual arts to explore memory and traumatic military experience. Marv is a senior psychologist who runs the Canadian Veterans Transition Programme, working with veterans with serious mental health conditions to provide groundbreaking therapy and counselling. Marv and Michael were particularly interested in Age Exchange's work over many years with older people who had experienced war, and Marv wanted to know about 'Meeting in No Man's Land' and the structure and outcomes from the project. They asked whether Age Exchange had heard about Combat Stress, Britain's oldest military mental health charity, and felt that we would have much to offer each other in terms of experience and our approach to working with vulnerable participants. An introduction from Michael followed, firstly to Robert Bieber, the Vice President of Combat Stress, and then Sue Freeth, the then CEO. And so, our discussions began in early 2018, looking at how we might collaborate on a project that would benefit the wellbeing of veterans supported by Combat Stress, and to bring their story to the public in ways that would highlight the important work of the Charity and the experience of the veterans it supports.

Background to Combat Stress

For over a century, Combat Stress has been helping former servicemen and women deal with issues like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety and depression. Today it provides specialist treatment and support for veterans from every service and conflict, focusing on those with complex mental health issues related to their military service. In the one hundred years since the charity was founded, treatment for PTSD has changed enormously. But the mental health problems that former servicemen and women can face are as relevant as ever.

Defining PTSD

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can develop after someone experiences a stressful, frightening or distressing event.

When someone has PTSD, they experience unwanted memories of their distressing experience and it feels like past events are happening again.

Some of the common symptoms of PTSD include:

- ▶ Unwanted memories of past events popping into your head
- ▶ Upsetting dreams about difficult situations that have happened
- ▶ Staying away from things that remind you of past events
- ▶ Feeling on edge and as if you can't relax
- ▶ Difficulties with emotions such as anger

The Centenary Project

2019 was the centenary of Combat Stress, and it became clear to us that we should use this important landmark as a focus for our heritage project. 'Combat Stress 100' was designed by a steering group comprised of Combat Stress directors, clinicians, senior staff, three veterans who had been supported by the Charity, and Age Exchange project leaders.

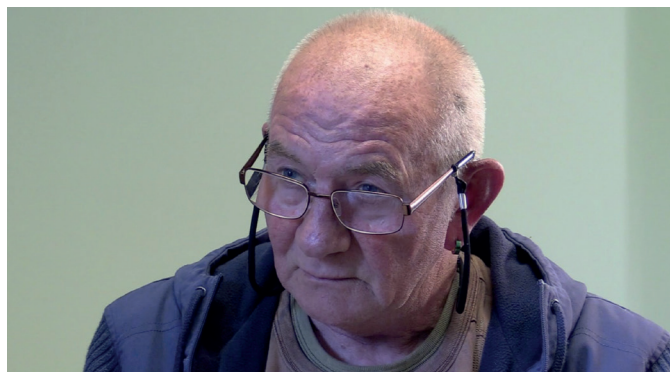
The project was intended to be led by veterans, to guarantee that it would be their voice that was heard, and that the focus and themes would come from them. Combat Stress clinicians and directors ensured that any veterans coming forward to take part in the project, either as volunteers to help deliver it or to be interviewed and share their story, had been through a vetting process, so that they were in control of their condition and would be able to participate without the experience causing them any harm. All those who came forward to participate did so because they wanted the public to understand how PTSD impacts on those who serve on the front line and on those closest to them.

Age Exchange then trained eight veteran volunteers in oral history interview techniques, in using film cameras and sound equipment, as well as digitising archive materials. This brilliant team then worked with us in partner venues across the UK, carrying out 73 interviews with veterans, family members and Combat Stress staff; 61 of the interviews were with veterans who have been supported by Combat Stress. The focus of the interviews was their reasons for enlisting and background family history, basic training and their initial experiences of military service, combat experience, triggers for their mental health trauma and impact, treatment, and the impact on family life.

The Documentary

Filmed interviews with veterans took place at Combat Stress treatment centres at Tyrwhitt House and Audley Court in England; at Hollybush House in Scotland; at National Museums Liverpool; Tyne & Wear Museums; St Helens RFC; Leeds Rhinos RFC; Queens University Belfast; and the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

Over 60 hours of interviews with veterans, Combat Stress staff, and veterans' families were filmed, resulting in the one-hour film documentary 'Combat Stress 100'. The film was produced by Simon Purins and David Savill, and began touring the UK in November 2019 as part of Armistice Commemorations at National Museums Liverpool. Screenings followed at Bentley Priory Museum and Merton Heritage Centre, as well as all three Combat Stress treatment centres where it was seen by all members of Combat Stress staff and many others in the veterans' community. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, we have worked with partners to stream the film online, in partnership with the Imperial War Museum, the National Army Museum and the National Museum of the Royal Navy, the George Marshal Medical Museum, National Museums Wales, and Bodmin Keep Museum Cornwall. There was an overwhelmingly positive response to the film by the veterans' community, who feel it faithfully reflects their experiences of service and of PTSD. Families of veterans have described how pleased they are that veterans have made a film about their PTSD and spoken so openly and honestly about the impact on themselves and on their families.



Pete, one of the veteran project volunteers who trained with Age Exchange and helped interview his fellow veterans across the UK. Image by Simon Purins.

Creating an online resource for schools exploring mental well-being

In Autumn 2020, we began work on a series of three projects with secondary schools, exploring the veterans' experiences and treatment as part of the Recovery Curriculum studied in UK schools. A small group of volunteer veterans were trained to work in the schools alongside the Age Exchange team, where they would share their stories with students, supported by interview edits from other veterans from the project. Students from the three schools began the project with a visit to the National Army Museum to take part in a series of workshops about shell shock and trench medicine before meeting the veterans. In response to workshops with veterans, the students then created a series of artworks, poetry, and films. This resulted in the creation of an online resource for UK secondary schools on the theme of exploring mental well-being through the experience of military veterans and their families. A special sharing day at the National Army Museum was planned, where the students would present their creative work to a public audience and to Combat Stress veterans. Sadly, the pandemic meant that the project had to change. All the schools' workshops had to be held online using recorded interviews with veterans, preventing the students from meeting with veterans (with one exception). For many veterans, the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have had a serious impact on their mental health.

Despite the many challenges and months of school closures, two of the three schools insisted on continuing with the project, in no small part because they felt its learning and focus had a positive effect on the students' own mental health during such a challenging time. The resulting online learning resource is hosted by the National Army Museum: <https://www.nam.ac.uk/schools/learning-resources/combat-stress-100>

Combat Stress Podcasts

Armistice Day in November 2020 also saw the launch of a series of six 25-minute podcasts created by one of our project veterans working with Combat Stress staff, clinicians and Age Exchange. The podcasts share more of the interviews with veterans that we met across the UK along with in-depth interviews with clinicians and therapists from Combat Stress, and with families who support a veteran family member with PTSD. The podcasts can be found by visiting the Combat Stress website: <https://combatstress.org.uk/combat-stress-100-podcast>



Mother and son, Lesley and Daniel, recall the impact on the family of living with a husband/dad who is a veteran with PTSD.
Image by Simon Purins.

'100 Years of Veterans' Mental Health - A History of Combat Stress'

Charting the 100-year history of Combat Stress, a book was written which honours past and present veterans' service to the nation and their hope and resilience to overcome the trauma of war. Through written word and photographic archives, it gives a fascinating insight into how the development of mental health treatment and our fundraising campaigns over the decades helped to improve society's attitude towards military mental health.

Historian Dr Rachel Duffett from the University of Essex authored the book to commemorate Combat Stress' centenary. It was published by Age Exchange and part-funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The book is available to buy through the shop on the Combat Stress website and the shop on the Age Exchange website.

Living archive – creating a legacy for the project

'Combat Stress 100' also gave us a hugely important opportunity to create an archive based on the recorded interviews with veterans. The Living Archive, which was launched as part of Combat Stress's 2020 Armistice campaign in November 2020, is designed to continue to grow as an ongoing part of the work of Combat Stress. The testimonies of veterans will be there in years to come to support public learning about combat experience, and, importantly, for veterans of the future undergoing treatment for PTSD, to be able to relate their own experiences to those who served before them and who, through treatment, were able to find resilience and strength to rebuild their lives.

This archive is openly available to the public, although it is suitable for over 18s only. You can find the archive on the Combat Stress website: <https://combatstress.org.uk/combat-stress-100-living-archive>.

Conclusion

The veterans and their families who took part in 'Combat Stress 100' were very proud of what they created and to see their experiences made into films, educational resources, and

podcasts, as well as being included in the new Living Archive. Knowing that the public would learn about the Charity and about mental health was, and is, all important to them, as is knowing that the film and archive will be used to support veterans coming forward in the future for treatment.

'Combat Stress 100' was a hugely challenging project for all who took part. Its success lay in it being veteran-centred and in the courage and compassion of the veterans who shared their stories and of those who interviewed them. Furthermore, the partnership and commitment of Age Exchange and Combat Stress staff and volunteers ensured a successful outcome. We were also indebted to the partner museums, rugby clubs, galleries, and schools who worked with us, all with such energy and enthusiasm.

On a personal note, and speaking on behalf of Age Exchange, we were honoured to work with the veterans and their families. Their dedication to the project, despite the huge challenges and trauma they had experienced in their lives, was humbling and inspiring. The veterans we worked with served in different conflicts, including: The Falklands, Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Some of them were as young as 28, some in their 70s. Meeting and working with them, we could not help but be reminded of those who came before them, those who fought in the First World War, those who came home broken and without care or treatment. Combat Stress was created in 1919 because it wanted to give veterans of the Great War hope, to help them rebuild their lives. Combat Stress today has pioneered new treatments and therapy. It changes lives and gives veterans with PTSD and other mental health conditions the support they need to live with their condition and to make positive contributions to society, as well as helping them to experience a happy and caring family life.

Finally, two things made working alongside the veterans unforgettable: firstly, the way they were with each other – the bond between them and the immense care they had for each other – and secondly, though mostly unrepeatable, the veterans' humour, which kept us all going.



Davina, a veteran from the Bosnian War, shares her story with students from St. Claudine's Catholic School for Girls, working to create the mental health online resource for Combat Stress 100 with Age Exchange, Combat Stress and the National Army Museum.
Image by Simon Purins.

CENTRAL YOUTH THEATRE (Wolverhampton)

'Shot At Dawn: Lest We Forget' and accompanying film 'After Dawn'

'Goodnight My Boys'

Laura Sambrooks, who led both projects, was interviewed by David Savill.

David - How did the decision come about to focus on what is a very difficult and painful story in many ways?

Laura - Well, Jane Ward, who is the director of the theatre group, approached me and said, 'we'd like to do a project about the First World War, would you be interested in working on it and what subject would you like to cover?' I think, straightaway, I said I would like to do a project about soldiers shot at dawn and the impact this had on their families back at home. I'd read *Private Peaceful* by Michael Morpurgo and it was something I'd always been aware of. This was something I wanted to research more.

David - With 'After Dawn', you focus very much on the local area. Can you tell us a bit about that, and how that came about and how the project grew?

Laura - It didn't take long to find the names of soldiers from the local area. I think there was an article about a soldier in Wolverhampton who was executed, something that appeared in the newspaper at the time - the wife of a soldier wanted

everyone to know that he had been executed, but that she believed that he was brave, and that she didn't agree with the decision. It then expanded to the Midlands rather than just Wolverhampton, and it didn't take long to find the names of soldiers executed from the West Midlands. Then it became a case of trying to find their descendants. I had to be careful with this. There was one soldier from Walsall; I contacted a family member to say, 'I'm doing this research about First World War soldiers, had you heard of their story?' and didn't elaborate, I just left it there. One person got back to me and said: 'I don't really know anything about him'. I left it there because I wasn't sure how to approach it. Then other people got back to me straightaway.

David - Can you tell us a bit about them and how they responded to the thought of you doing a production; what was their feeling about it?

Laura - One of the people who contacted me was related to Arthur Earp of the Warwickshire Regiment, and I think he was a little bit of a scapegoat really. They were very supportive; they were very interested in our project and put me in touch with other relatives. They were talking about it amongst their families. Somebody else put me in touch with a relative in America who sent me a photograph. A couple of them said that they still go to the cathedral every year and place a candle for this soldier. You could see how it was still in the forefront of these descendants' minds really.



William, played by Robert Millward, writes home from the trenches. Image by John Sambrooks.



A prisoner is killed at the POW camp where John Hipkin was held as a teenager. His experiences there were to influence his decision to campaign for a pardon for soldiers executed during the First World War. Image by John Sambrooks.

David - One hundred years on.

Laura - Exactly, one hundred years on, it really, really matters to people. In September 2018, I went to France with my dad and my uncle to find the grave of my granddad's uncle. He died in France. His grave is over there, he was 24. It's amazing how emotional it was because no one had ever been to visit his grave before. We own the telegram that was sent to his family to say he was dying of his wounds. We've still got that telegram, so to see his grave I didn't want to leave him, I didn't want to leave the grave afterwards. When that's someone who died in the normal way compared to being executed and it being a miscarriage of justice, I reckon those feelings would be even stronger. I think if I remembered correctly, one relative said she remembers her grandmother or mother holding a photograph of him and saying, 'poor Albert, poor Albert'. It really does matter to people all these years later.

David - Can you tell me something about the material and perhaps contact with the descendants, and how that affected the young actors in the company?

Laura - With 'After Dawn', I chose to do a fictional story, influenced by the stories, rather than use a real family, because I was conscious of that. Also, I wanted to tell a story about a ten-year-old son finding out about it – there was no sort of match with any of the stories I'd heard. But, fortunately, the young people we were working with, Robert, who was playing the main character in 'After Dawn' - William who is executed - he had a big interest in the First World War himself and history in general. I mean he was only around 17 or 18 at the time, but he was a member of a heritage society. He's very levelheaded and sensitive, as well, so it really meant something to him, telling this story. And the same with all of them, they're all very mature and sensitive, and I really think they learnt something.

David - So there's a real immersion going on here. Also, you mentioned school workshops you put on, was this going on in tandem with the production?

Laura - This was done after the film was made. We'd take the DVD into the schools, show it to Year 10, Year 11 pupils and discuss the subject. Obviously, because we're a youth theatre, there'd be a mixture of drama and history involved. Again, they were very sort of mature about the whole thing. That's why I was surprised they hadn't heard. For some of them, it was a big shock, a big shock that people had been executed, who were shell shocked, mentally ill, suffering from PTSD.

David - So you have this wonderful, positive reception for 'After Dawn', and then you applied for more funding from the HLF. For a broader project and this time real stories. You made the decision to go onto 'Goodnight My Boys' and John Hipkin. Can you tell me how you worked on this difficult project?

Laura - John Hipkin was alive at that time, but he couldn't speak to us because he had dementia. Maybe that meant, for his family, that it was more poignant to tell his story. They were very supportive of the whole thing and quite excited, I think, and rightly so, for his story to be told. There were all the other elements as well. We also had in 'Goodnight My Boys' flashbacks to Harry Farr's story, as well, which meant we got in contact with the Farr family. Then there were other people involved in the Shot At Dawn campaign. The historian Julian Putkowski, and the MP that was involved, as well, with that campaign, McKinley [former MP Andrew McKinley]. Again, everyone was so kind in taking the time to speak to us really, because we're just a youth theatre group. For people to be prepared to have a phone conversation, to tell me their side of the story and their involvement in the Shot At Dawn campaign, you know, it really means a lot. I was more aware that this time I was telling a factual story, and I wanted to get those facts right.

David - I think that's so interesting what you're saying Laura. And you know, relating it to John, who founded the Shot At Dawn campaign based very much on his own experiences as a soldier. You obviously felt that very strongly, that sense of responsibility.

Laura - There was that weight of responsibility to get it right. And that's why I was so fussy about the historical accuracy because it's not my story to tell, it's somebody else's. You want to make sure you get it right.



Members of Central Youth Theatre portray trench life during the filming of 'After Dawn', at the Staffordshire Regiment Museum. Image by John Sambrooks.



Filming for 'After Dawn' takes place at the Willenhall Lock Museum. Image by John Sambrooks.

David - How did the Youth Theatre react to this next stage of working about the campaign, the story of the pardon? How did they react?

Laura - I think everybody was excited to be honest because they'd seen what we had done with the first project. More people wanted to be involved in this second project. There was a lot of excitement amongst members of the group, especially the ones who had been involved in 'After Dawn', they wanted to be involved again and carry the story onwards. It's like wrapping up the story in a way because you've got the past and how it all happened, and now you have the pardon, so it's sort of the natural progression of the story. I think there was a wider consciousness of it in the group. It just added a bigger connection, being part of that connection and the story. It's not a distant subject anymore; we were meeting the people who were affected.

David - There's a lot of realism in the film, a lot of authenticity and everybody looks the part. Did these two productions take the direction you hoped they would? Did they go in the places you hoped, did they exceed expectations?

Laura - I think they probably did exceed expectations, to be honest. I think the emotional response of people, as well, in the audiences, that was very, very strong.

David - What do you feel the impact was on you as the person who had so much responsibility for these pieces of work, with your research and contact with families?

Laura - Well actually, because I've been thinking about this over the last couple of weeks, it scares me a little bit. I know it sounds silly. I was just going through some of the emails between me and the family members and I was thinking, I hope I got it right. I hope I showed them respect. I was really telling these true stories, contacting these people whose families had been through so much and it meant so much to them. I feel a connection to these people, I really do.

David - Could you summarise how you feel about the aftermath of the war on the families you worked with and came into contact with?

Laura - I think it's a ripple effect down the generations really. It's not just that the war's over and then it's over. There are all the consequences afterwards, whether it was people who had to hide the fact that their families were executed. And then, that builds up resentment, as well, as the years pass by. Then more people in society realise this was an injustice. What surprised me is the anger about it that still exists now, how angry people can get that these soldiers were pardoned. That's when I realised how carefully I needed to tread.

David - And how do you personally feel about the pardoning, and the people you encountered, and the lives of these people?

Laura - I believe, absolutely, they should be pardoned. As I've said before, it doesn't change history. It won't...you know, obviously it doesn't bring those people back, it's just acknowledging a wrong that was done. Especially when we understand so much more about mental health these days, as well. I mean, as humans, as any animal, you're not designed to face this every day. No one is wired to face death every day. To walk into machine gun fire. To see horrendous sights. To see people blown to bits. To see people shot. To sit in a shell hole next to a corpse. No one is designed to experience those sorts of things. How can we judge somebody who has just decided, I cannot deal with this anymore? How can we, from our position of safety, possibly judge those people? I went to the National Archives, and I read the court martial documents, and to see the word death just written across, you know? On one of them, I think I saw written, 'this man is no good'. So, he's no use to you amongst the millions and millions and millions amongst all the other people, the other soldiers he's no good, we'll just execute him. Doesn't matter about his family at home. It's just 'he is no good' because he can't stand walking into gunfire every day and the horrendous sights, it's just shocking really, it's very, very sad.

DERBYSHIRE ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND (Derby)

'100 Years and Still Serving'

<https://sightsupportderbyshire.org.uk/about-us/history/100-years/>

In late 2014, Sight Support Derbyshire was awarded funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund to embark on a project, titled '100 Years and Still Serving', to commemorate both the centenary of the First World War and one hundred years since the start of the charity.

It involved 30 of the charity's blind and visually impaired members, young and old, meeting regularly to research the history of the war through talks, visits to museums and to the Staffordshire Regiment. In response to this, they then worked with community arts organisation Spiral Arts to create a piece of tactile artwork. This was a decorated banner made from three army blankets joined together with military brass buttons, inspired by embroidered postcards sent home by soldiers to their families.

With the help of members, the organisation compiled a booklet of top tips for working with blind and visually impaired people on community heritage projects. This is available for download on their website:

<https://sightsupportderbyshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Top-Tips-HLF-leaflet.pdf>



'The Child He Will Never See', LoB: MS 4067 WW1 Postcards. Reproduced with the permission of the Library of Birmingham.

PEOPLE'S HERITAGE CO-OPERATIVE (Birmingham)

'Untold Stories'

Questionnaire answered by Nikki Thorpe and Rachel Gillies, People's Heritage Co-operative members:

Please could you briefly outline your project. Was this your first WW1-related project? If so, what made you decide to take it on?

Rachel: The project took place in 2016 and focused on the untold stories of soldiers returning to Birmingham from the Great War with serious physical and psychological injuries. It mapped the sites of hospital treatment and convalescence that were set up in the city, and explored what happened to the soldiers after their treatment ended.

The project enlisted the help of pupils at Swanshurst School in exploring key sites of auxiliary hospitals around South Birmingham, including Highbury Hall. Pupils were also trained in conducting filmed oral history interviews with Korean and Suez Veterans about their own experiences and their received memories of WW1 from parents and grandparents.

Nikki: Many of our members had looked at archives relating to WW1 in Birmingham through our previous work at the Library of Birmingham and were keen to explore further and share the

knowledge of the impact of the war on the local community, and how that extended beyond the war dead to those injured and the people who cared for them. It had struck us that at any given time during the war, and especially after 1916, there would be many places across the city where seeing disabled soldiers would have been commonplace and everyone would have been aware of the war wounded in their communities. This is not something that is immediately obvious to subsequent generations in a way that the war dead is through memorials.

Where did your project start from? Why did it start from that point?

Rachel: We were aware of several key sites across Birmingham which were used to treat wounded soldiers. We were also aware that this angle had not been explored in depth, but that through accessing archive material and collecting information through experts (including a Medical Historian and practicing Military Surgeon), we could tell stories that many people were unaware of.

Nikki: Our project started with archive material that we were familiar with by exploring the stories of wounded soldiers and their places of care, and we did this with community/school groups who were interested in looking at this area of research.



Highbury Gymnasium, LoB: MS 4616/17. Reproduced with the permission of the Library of Birmingham.

We knew that the archive material was rich in content and merited a more in-depth look to explore the local impact of returning wounded soldiers.

We wanted the groups we worked with to connect with the material, and to be able to imagine through their personal experience of a locality what it may have felt like to live there during and after the war. A personal connection through a local, familiar site with an unknown story seemed a tangible and interesting point of engagement.

Did you focus on new narratives/stories/angles?

Nikki: We focused on stories that related to the Birmingham area, and much of this was little known about publicly or not put together in a way to build up a picture across the city. We focused on the impact of returning wounded soldiers and how many sites were involved in their treatment and care, including local schools, large private family homes and university buildings.

We looked at a large variety of archive material from two archives and received additional talks from researchers. We also visited sites of treatment like Highbury Hall, and were able to 'recreate' photographs taken from its time as a rehabilitation hospital which we had seen at Birmingham Archives. It was a powerful and engaging experience as we were able to physically stand in the same rooms that we had seen in photographs. These images often included staff and patients.

We also tried to consider contemporary parallels through an interview with a surgeon who treats soldiers returning home after injury in contemporary wars, and who was able to comment on the pioneering treatment given to WW1 soldiers by Birmingham-trained surgeon, William Billington, following machine-gun, gas and mortar attacks. We also did this through interviews by young people with WW2 veterans about their experiences and the impact of this on them. The young people found this powerful and moving.

Were there any surprises about the direction that the project took? Did the project end up where you thought it would?

Nikki: The project gave us greater insight into local archive collections and their engaging and powerful impact on people when seen together in a particular context. The pulling together of material across different record offices on the topic made it more meaningful as the full extent of the impact on the city could be seen. The extent and weight of archive material was a surprise, as were the levels of engagement, especially at site-specific locations.

Rachel: Our partnership with Swanshurst School was crucial to delivery of the project. Staff were very enthusiastic about giving students opportunities to learn about local sites of interest and facilitated a visit to Highbury Hall. They also welcomed a film crew into school to film staff and veterans as part of their Veterans' Day event.

The Cadbury Research Library (University of Birmingham) helped with research and held an event for project staff and volunteers to allow for exploration of archive material.



Postcard featuring artwork by Walter Hayward Young (1866-1920), LoB: MS 4067 WW1 Postcards. Reproduced with the permission of the Library of Birmingham.

The project was also supported by Dr Jonathan Reinartz at the University of Birmingham and Lt Colonel Steve Jeffery at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, who provided important contextual information.

To what extent were partnerships with other organisations/agencies important to your project - could you tell us a little about this?

Nikki: Our partnerships with archive departments, a local school, historians, and creative practitioners were key to the success of the project. The accessibility of the archive material, and the instructive and inclusive way it was presented, gave participants the confidence to engage constructively and meaningfully with the archives.

Working with a local school, who visited a local site and explored it using archive images, was a powerful part of the project. It demonstrated the value of exploring local, familiar sites in the context of national history and how that can bring such narratives to life through a local connection. The use of archive images in this context was also very engaging, as were the oral testimonies of WW2 veterans.



Pupils from Swanshurst School. Image by Rachel Gillies.

When the project finished, did you consider doing another? Was it on a similar or completely different topic?

Nikki: We disseminated the project in many ways, particularly through our ongoing work with the Paganel School archive club, and took pupils from that school to the Commonwealth War Graves site at Lodge Hill Cemetery and to the University of Birmingham, which had been the site of the 1st Southern General Hospital. This was an important place to visit for the school from a historical perspective and from an aspirational perspective, as it is the local university to the school.

We also developed a wreath-making project as part of another untold story, that of the labourers from Britain, China, and Commonwealth countries.

Over the course of years 2014 to 2018, we organised many school visits with six local secondary and primary schools to Lodge Hill Cemetery, where many soldiers who had been treated at the 1st Southern General Hospital were buried. With these groups and University of Birmingham interns, we researched over 50 life stories of soldiers buried there.

What has been the legacy of the project for your organisation?

Nikki: We have continued to cite the work we did on this project as good practice on engagement and use of archives

with school and community groups, and we have developed further ways of working with other community partners. We have continued good relationships with partnerships established on this project and as a heritage cooperative.

Rachel: We have a learning resource which is available to anyone wishing to explore the topic in more depth, and we have also made materials, including filmed interviews and a project film, available online. The project was also useful in that it enabled our members to develop new working relationships which have continued into more recent work.

How did you feel at the end of the project? What was the impact on you and your colleagues?

Nikki: We felt very pleased with the outcomes of the project, that a relatively unknown aspect of the First World War had been explored, and that the level of community engagement and development was strong due to our focus on local stories and sites. We all gained knowledge and confidence to further develop aspects of the project, and it strengthened relationships with our partners.

'Untold Stories': <http://peoplesheritagecoop.uk/untold-stories/> http://www.voicesofwarandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/untold-stories_learning-guide.pdf

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON, NORTHAMPTON GENERAL HOSPITAL
HISTORICAL ARCHIVE (Northampton)

Child's ankle splint, 1821-1920. A603084, Science Museum Group Collection Online. CC0 Credit: Science Museum, London.
<https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/objects/co127235/childs-ankle-splint-1821-1920-splints>.

Girl's leather orthopaedic boot, 1900-1925. 1969.28.46. Image courtesy of Northampton Museum and Art Gallery.

Women's leather orthopaedic boot, 1920-1925. 1969.28.43.B. Image courtesy of Northampton Museum and Art Gallery.

“Now Walks Like Others”: Health, Disability and Medicine during the FWW

The project explored civilian health in the Northampton area, with a particular focus on child health and attitudes towards physical disability. Due to the topic and the medical context, the project started in the period prior to the war to ascertain what (if much) changed during the war.

Questionnaire answered by Dr Caroline Nielsen, Senior Lecturer in History & Heritage, University of Northampton:

Please could you briefly outline your project. Was this your first WW1-related project? If so, what made you decide to take it on? Where did your project start from? Why did it start from that point? Did you focus on new narratives/stories/angles?

The main focus was the Northampton Crippled Children's Fund (NCCF), a large manuscript archive held in Northampton General Hospital Historical Archive. This unique archive was the product of a large charitable and philanthropic enterprise in Northampton from the 1880s until the mid-20th century. It was widely patronised by civic leaders in the area through events and fund-raising. The charity provided a range of medical supports and services for its users. It specialised in subsidising the children's mobility aids, usually in the form of specialist orthopaedic shoes and leg braces, but sometimes chairs and clothing. Padding and ointment were frequently given to the families (the supports would have been heavy and uncomfortable) along with prescriptions for health tonics and milk. Rickets and TB were significant problems in the area and the cause of many of the children's disabilities. Sometimes payments for clothes or apprenticeship were noted.

The aim of the archival research was to gauge the scale of the charity's involvement in the lives of the working-class poor of Northampton town, judging the charity's wider impact and whether the war changed its methods of working. To what extent the childrens' experiences of the charity changed during the war? Unusually for medical disability and orthopaedic charities of this time, the NCCF remained almost entirely focused on its young clients, both during and after the war. It does not appear that it diverted its (at times considerable) funds and expertise in limb support to war work only, or to working solely with those disabled through military service.

There was an emphasis on getting the children into employment and school, both before and during the war. The aim appears to have been limiting the impact of the children's physical impairments on their adult lives through medical support to go to school or work. There was not an emphasis on the children becoming future soldiers, rather workers.

Were there any surprises about the direction that the project took? Did the project end up where you thought it would?

The project ended up being more about the role of the visitors. Very little was known about the scale of their involvement prior to this project. It was also not known how the charity worked with other civic endeavours in the town, such as the local 'Fresh Air Fund'. These were private regional charities which encouraged day trips or holidays for urban working-class



Group of four women boot workers at the Co-operative Wholesale Society Boot factory, Rectory Road, Rushden, Northamptonshire. These four women took over men's jobs in the rough stuff room in 1917.

Image courtesy of Northampton Museum and Art Gallery.

children to get them into the fresh air of the countryside. The NCCF initially ran these events, too, but later stopped them to focus on medical orthopaedic support.

What was noticeable about the project was the almost complete absence of the war in some of the charity's records. The families involved in the charity almost certainly suffered bereavement and hardship during the war, and nearly all of the committee members were involved in voluntary war work. Yet it was rarely mentioned. In fact, it appears that some medical care and payments for the children increased during the war. It is possible that the slight rise in payments reflected inflation and food shortages, but it is difficult to tell at this stage.

The research also highlighted some of the trends in the charity's documentation and record-keeping processes. The main register appeared to be slightly later than initially expected. The charity also kept more records on some of its former applicants than expected. It was known that some 'success' stories were circulated in NCCF publications. The extent to which other information was kept was not known. Records could be updated years after the children left the charity's books. The research also highlighted a possible earlier origin for the charity than previously thought.

What has been the legacy of the project for your organisation and for the people you worked with?

A provisional list of some of the health visitors (with very limited biographies) was possible. This is still under revision and research due to the difficulties of identifying some of the individual visitors. The eventual aim is to place a finding aid in the Hospital Archive along with a list of the children.

Case Studies

Reimagining Home



House belonging to Private Clements Cluff, Cleenish island. Image by Mark Rhead on behalf of the Bellanaleck Local History Group.



A modern view of the Westfield War Memorial Village. Image courtesy of Martin Purdy.

WESTFIELD MEMORIAL VILLAGE (Lancaster)

'The Women of Westfield'

Westfield War Memorial Village was established in 1919 to provide homes for disabled ex-servicemen and continues today with 113 properties available to members of the armed forces and their dependants to rent or buy.

Questionnaire answered by Dr Martin Purdy, project historian:

Please could you briefly outline your project. Was this your first WW1-related project? If so, what made you decide to take it on?

The project was to work with residents and tenants of the Westfield War Memorial Village, Lancaster, and other interested parties (children of tenants, relatives of past tenants, etc.) to research, plan and narrate an hour-long documentary on the various roles that women have played in the community built after the First World War for injured veterans and their families. The finished film was called: 'The Women of Westfield: Picking Up The Pieces After The First World War'. This was not our first community or First World War project on the village, but we felt it was an unexplored aspect of both the historic and present story of the settlement.

Where did your project start from? Why did it start from that point?

The project started with meetings with residents and tenants to see how they would feel about it. Although the settlement is of great historic interest, it is a lived-in community, and it was important that the people who reside there were supportive – not least as we would be asking a lot of them to share their own stories about living with a war disability or living with someone who has a war disability.

Did you focus on new narratives/stories/angles?

Most studies of war disability focus on the veterans, but we felt that there was an important and overlooked aspect of the story – the one told from the perspective of their carers and dependants. How did their wives and children cope? A healthy man had come back from the war injured physically and psychologically, and in most cases needed nursing - in others they were incapable of working and parenting, etc. All this placed incredible strain on all members of the household.

Were there any surprises about the direction that the project took? Did the project end up where you thought it would?

We realised that the story of The Women of Westfield went back beyond the people directly impacted by a war injury, as many of the leading fundraisers, on a settlement bankrolled by charity, were women of a philanthropic inclination.

In addition, some of the most important members of the committee that ran, and continue to run, the community are female. We also unearthed a really interesting story about a London-based fundraiser, Hilda Level, who had a vital role to play at Westfield and in the reshaping of the whole fundraising landscape in Britain as a result of her efforts to support disabled veterans of the war.

To what extent were partnerships with other organisations/agencies important to your project - could you tell us a little about this?

The Heritage Lottery Fund paid for the project, and it would simply not have happened without their support. The grant that was received paid for professional support (a storyteller, project manager, and filmmaker), workshops with experts, trips to local archives and other settlements for disabled service personnel.

When the project finished, did you consider doing another? Was it on a similar or completely different topic?

There are plans for another project but the pandemic has meant that it has been put on hold. The idea is to do a pictured history of the one hundred years of the community with the volunteers once again leading from the front.

What has been the legacy of the project for your organisation?

The film has been very well received and helped to highlight an aspect of war disability (historical but also relevant to the present tenants) that has previously been little discussed. Making the residents appreciate the incredible historical stories that are intertwined with their own surroundings helps foster a greater sense of pride and commitment in the community, which also helps the Charity that runs the site.



Jennifer Delahunt's figurative monument unveiled in 1926.
Image courtesy of Mandy Stretch.

How did you feel at the end of the project? What was the impact on you and your colleagues?

There was a genuine sense of pride and achievement from all who took part. One of the most wonderful things was seeing one of Westfield's eldest residents, a veteran of the Second World War, gain a greater understanding of how his own condition and situation had impacted on his wife. He was able to tell her for the first time, and on camera for the documentary, how he would not have been able to get through without her.

Link to the film, 'The Women of Westfield: Picking up the Pieces after the First World War': <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWguPayhny4&t=21s>

Website: <https://westfieldmemorialvillage.co.uk/>



The official unveiling of the village by Earl Haig in 1924. Image courtesy of Martin Purdy.

'Cleenish Island. The Story of 11 soldiers'

Bellanaleck Local History Group (BLHG) was established in 2013. With the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund, they set out to explore the story behind eleven abandoned WW1 ex-servicemen's houses on nearby Cleenish Island in Lough Erne, Co. Fermanagh, a piece of history on their doorstep. What was the background to the resettlement scheme? Who were the eleven ex-servicemen who were allocated small farms on the island? What was life on the island like for them? Why, after less than ten years, had more than half of them left and only one had lived out his days on the island?

Natasha Macnab carried out a telephone interview with Marion Maxwell from the Bellanaleck Local History Group.

The research

BLHG is situated within a small rural community in Northern Ireland. The local history group was aware of a number of abandoned stone-built houses on a nearby island in Lough Erne that had a First World War connection, and so they set about trying to flesh out the story of how the houses came to be built there and why they had been abandoned. Using public records, they were able to identify the names of the settlers and find out more about the circumstances that had brought them there. A highlight of the process was making contact with the descendants of the veterans who had come to the island in the early 1920s to set about farming the land they had been allocated.

Following on the promise of Prime Minister Lloyd George to provide 'homes fit for heroes' for soldiers who came back from the Great War, many houses were built on mainland Britain. However, the Cleenish Island resettlement had been part of a separate scheme that was rolled out in Ireland and was the result of a separate piece of legislation, namely the Irish (Sailors and Soldiers) Land Act 1919.

As there had been resistance to conscription in Ireland, the then Lord Lieutenant Lord French, a retired general, sought to boost enlistment at a time when the allies were desperate for recruits to take part in the 'final push', by promising men who came forward that they would be provided with a home and a plot of land on their return.

The group's research involved interviewing local people, searching in newspaper archives and, importantly, examining a wealth of unseen archive material in the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland. These included the original plans for the houses, the application forms showing the criteria the soldiers had to fulfil to qualify for the scheme and subsequent correspondence between the residents and various government departments.

The houses were far above the standard of the average farmhouse at the time and the land on the island was of good quality, yet it soon became evident that the families were facing hardships. The farms ranging between twenty nine and forty two acres were signed over to the veterans, but, as the legal documents showed, they had to pay an annuity which



amounted to a mortgage repayment and left them with the perennial problem of finding cash for their repayments.

The group successfully identified the veterans who had been given homes as: James McNally, John Balfour, Thomas McAloon, Alex Boyd, Thomas Dickson, Francis Suttle, Francis Brennan, Henry Carrothers, Clements Cluff, Thomas Bannon and Humphrey Boyd. The application process to receive a house or holding did not require applicants to state their religion on the form, though the allocation of the housing actually reflected the Unionist/Nationalist population make up of 60/40 at the time.

Because of its cross-community ethos, the group had to be mindful of local sensitivities and chose to avoid anything that related to military ceremony in the present. They were pleased that they were able to bring on board relatives from all backgrounds, focussing as they did on the experiences the veterans had shared both in the war and afterwards on the island. Particularly poignant was the realisation that without exception, all of the men had been affected by their wartime experiences, suffering to a greater or lesser extent permanent physical and/or mental damage, factors which will not have helped them to cope on the island.

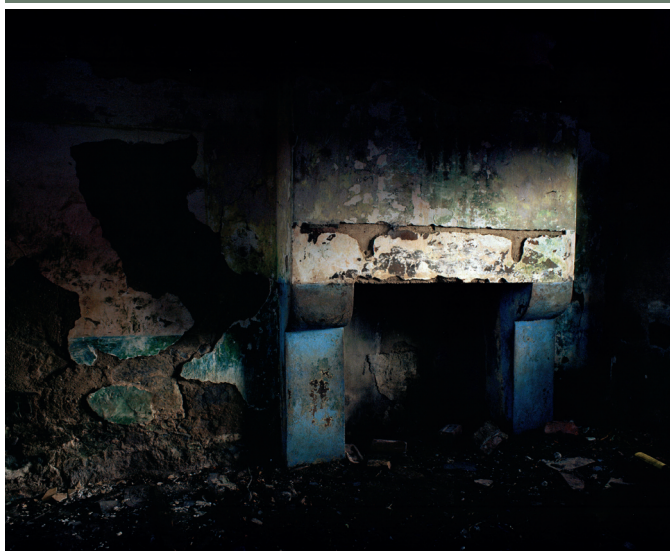
All but one of the men had come from a farming background, so there was some knowledge of farming, but they had no experience of island life and boats. There was no bridge to



End view of house belonging to Private Alexander Boyd. Image by Mark Rhead on behalf of the Bellanaleck Local History Group.



Private Francis Suttle's house. Image by Mark Rhead on behalf of the Bellanaleck Local History Group.



Corporal Henry Carrother's house. Image by Mark Rhead on behalf of the Bellanaleck Local History Group.

connect the island to the mainland; the only transport was a primitive winch ferry which proved a real challenge to operate, especially when cattle had to be transported. Although the distance was not far, the water was deep, making for a treacherous crossing especially in bad weather. In their first years, there were several bad harvests and an outbreak of liver fluke, which destroyed most of their cattle. BLHG found a paper trail showing how the veterans tried to contact those in authority for help, signed letters of petition and one telegram detailing how the families felt marooned on the island in particularly bad weather. However, the response from the civil servants was often hostile, implying that that the men should have shown more gratitude, been aware of what they were getting themselves into and should have shown more initiative in becoming self-sufficient.

One highlight of the project was the mounting of an exhibition which brought together for the first time many of the descendants' families. Another was the making of an hour-long film called *Making It Home* which was shown to full houses in the local theatre and the parish hall. (Available to view online via Vimeo - see link below.) The summation of the project was the putting together of a fully illustrated book, also called *Making It Home*, which went to three editions and was given as a study pack with the video to all secondary schools in the area. The book includes a collection of atmospheric photographs taken on the island in 2014 by photographer Mark Rhead.

Perhaps the most poignant and memorable event organised by the group was the commemorative planting of an oak tree on the island by representatives of all the families of the veterans, using soil brought from Flanders for the occasion by Nic van der Marliere, London representative of the Flanders Government. The soil had come from the battlefield at Messines Ridge, which has gained symbolic significance as the place where men of the 36th Ulster Division and the 10th Irish Division fought side by side.

The group members derived a great deal of pride that the research they carried out was brought to light, that a unique piece of local history had been recorded and that the project had brought together so many diverse people. Members also learned new skills in the process. They felt they had done something very meaningful.

Explore more of Mark Rhead's wonderful photography at: <https://markrhead.net/>

Link to the film, 'Making it Home', filmed and edited by Michael Brown: <https://vimeo.com/182268664>



The names, the faces fade, what they did does not, not if we keep their story alive. This we can do by knowing their history, by knowing the stories of these men.

Michael Morpurgo, author of War Horse.

HIGHLIFE HIGHLAND (Inverness)

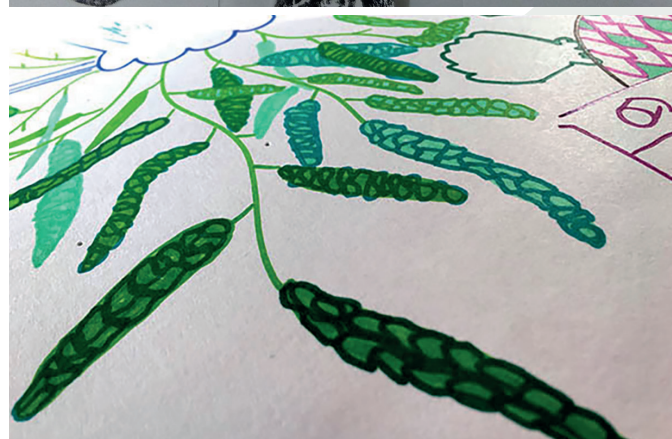
'Coming Home. The Impact of WW1 Across Highland Communities'

'Coming Home' is a travelling exhibition and events programme developed by High Life Highland in collaboration with the Highland Museums Forum to commemorate the end of the First World War in the Highlands. It was the culmination of a four year programme of World War One events and activities delivered by High Life Highland museums, libraries and archives, including the Am Baile Great War Newspaper Digitisation project, WW1 Heritage Collection drop-in days at the Highland Archive Centre, and the 'Next of Kin' exhibition at Inverness Museum and Art Gallery.

At the heart of the 'Coming Home' exhibition are poignant individual experiences explored through documents, objects and photographs held in Highland museums, libraries, and archives. From Highland women who broke the mould as doctors, nurses, and dispatch riders to the international legacy of Norwegian loggers, prisoners of war, and the American Navy, the exhibition reflects the wider social and economic changes taking place at the time.

About - Coming Home (highlifehighland.com/cominghome)

Images courtesy of highlifehighland.com.



WOMEN'S PIONEER HOUSING (London)

'Pioneering Courage: Housing and the Working Woman, 1919-1939'

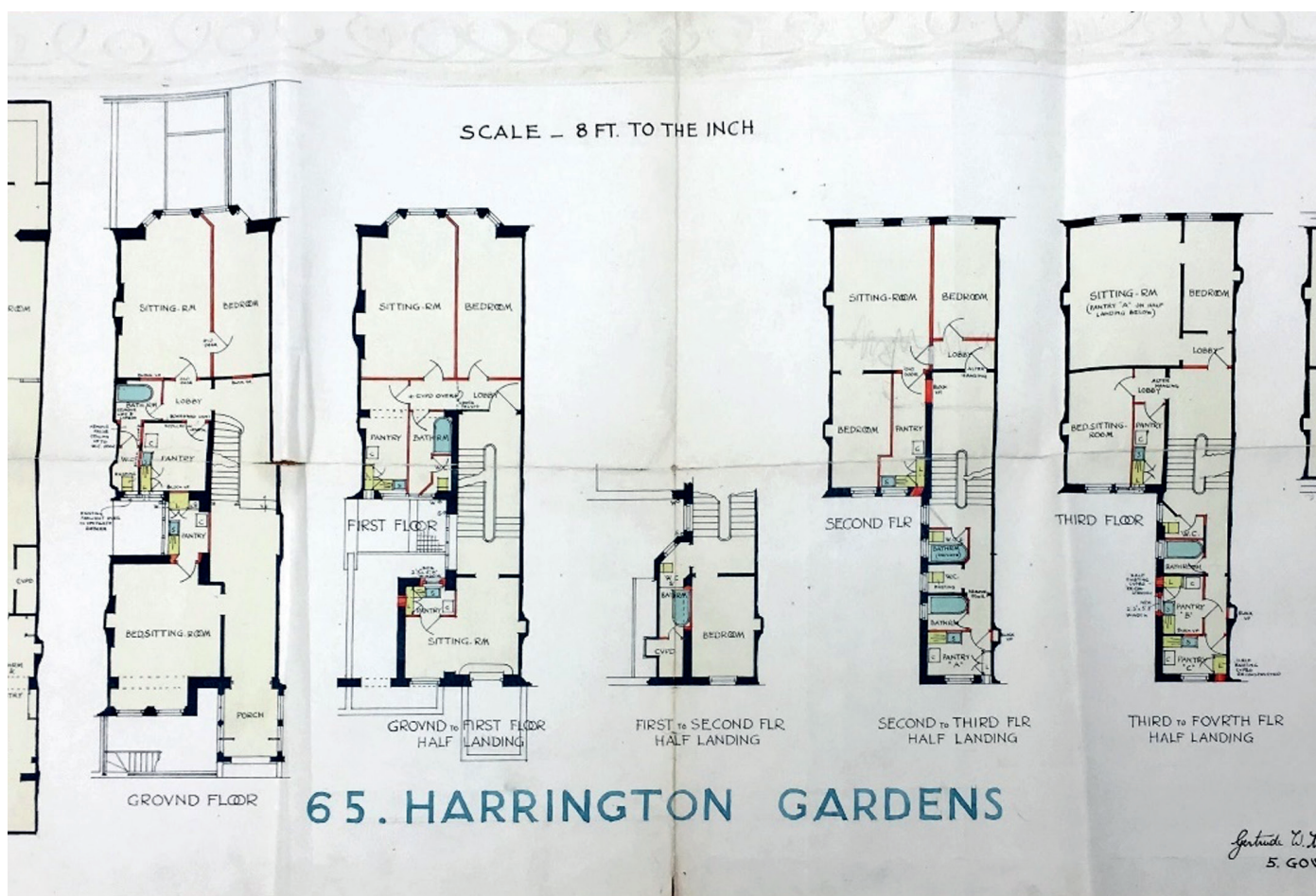
In 1920, a group of suffrage campaigners set up Women's Pioneer Housing (WPH). It aimed to provide individual homes at moderate rates for professional and other women who wanted to live independently or to earn their own living. In 2017, as the centenary of the housing association approached, staff were thrilled to discover several minute books and other records from the organisation's earliest years, and in late 2018, a further discovery was made of a folder of original plans and drawings, some dating from the 1920s to the 1940s.

In 2017, WPH set up a pilot research scheme to prepare an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a project to explore the WPH history in greater depth. A dedicated band of volunteer researchers was recruited through the University of the Third Age. They looked at various subjects using websites, as well as the WPH records. Topics included the lives of the founders, many of them involved in the campaign for women's suffrage, and women able to gain professional qualifications for the first time, including the association's first architect, Gertrude Leverkus. The research team also started to

look at the questions of who lived in Women's Pioneer Homes, what work they did, and what jobs women were doing for the first time. They also investigated the tricky question of the initial funding of the fledgling body.

The award of funding at the end of 2017 allowed WPH to recruit a project coordinator to oversee a project to fully explore and interpret the early history of the WPH, 'Pioneering Courage: Housing and the Working Woman 1919-1939'. Some of the original volunteers stayed on to help. They were joined by a PhD student working on the design of housing for women in this period. Other volunteers, some of them residents, joined the team. All made a valuable contribution to the first major public achievement of the project, a short film on the history of WPH (available online) by variously providing historical background, writing scripts, and taking the roles of early residents and staff. This was launched in March 2019 and formed part of the Royal Holloway College's Citizens' online lifelong learning course.

Link to film 'Women's Pioneer Housing: Pioneering Courage': <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDQiEWqPjGY>



Gertrude Leverkus, Plans for Conversion of 65 Harrington Gardens, c. 1931.

© Women's Pioneer Housing, WPH Archive, London Metropolitan Archives.

Questionnaire answered by Lottie Whalen, project coordinator:

Please could you briefly outline your project. Was this your first WW1-related project? If so, what made you decide to take it on?

'Pioneering Courage: the Women's Pioneer Housing' story celebrated the centenary of Women's Pioneering Housing. WPH was founded in 1920 by a group of former suffragettes and suffragists, to address the lack of housing for single working women in London. This project explored WPH's recently discovered archive of documents dating back from the 1920s, and uncovered details about the lives of its founders and early residents. It also looked at the broader context of feminist history in the period: why was there a need for WPH? What issues did women face after (partially) winning the right to vote in 1918?

This was WPH's first WW1-related project; it was undertaken to mark WPH's centenary.

Where did your project start from? Why did it start from that point?

In 2017, a WPH staff member discovered archival materials locked away in an old trunk in a cupboard. Its current CEO, Denise Fowler, recognised the importance of these documents (including original plans by WPH architect Gertrude Leverkus) and, with the organisation's centenary year approaching, set plans in motion for a heritage project. A pilot project was set up with the University of the Third Age, which brought on board a small team of volunteer researchers. After receiving a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant, the project commenced.

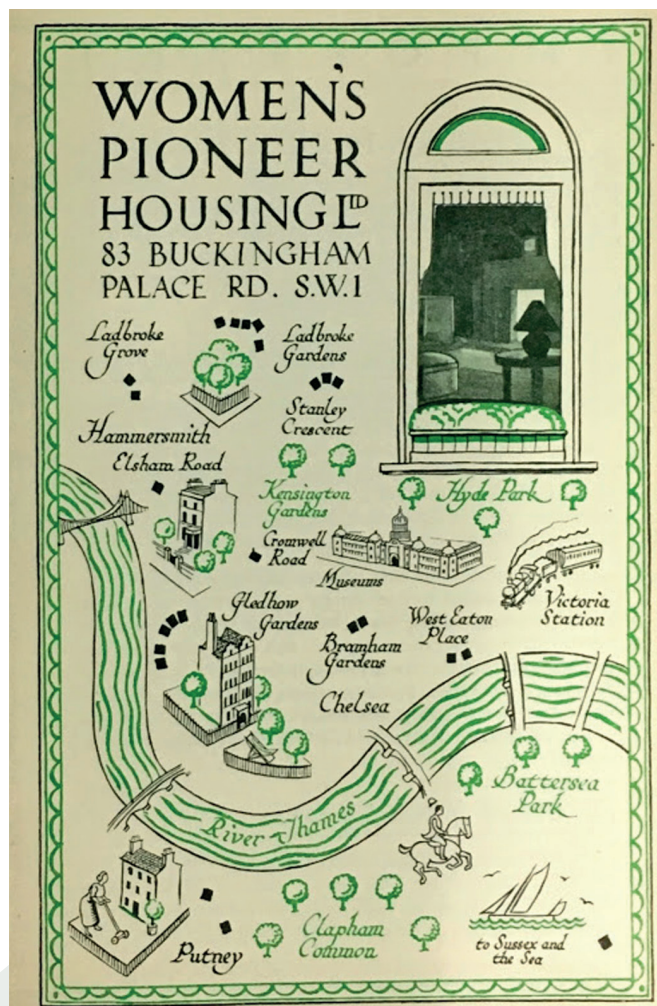
It was clear that WPH's archive represented a significant piece of post-WW1 feminist history, with an important story to tell (beyond simply marking the organisation's founding).

Did you focus on new narratives/stories/angles?

The entire story is an overlooked and little-known piece of feminist history. We focused on telling the story of the founders – including groundbreaking women like Helen Archdale and Eleanor Shelley-Rolls – in the broader context of the history of the time.

Were there any surprises about the direction that the project took? Did the project end up where you thought it would?

Researching the early tenants was a leap into the unknown and turned up countless fascinating stories. This expanded the scope of the project, leading to broader considerations of the kinds of work women did at the time, and alternative ways of living pursued by women who didn't fit into the patriarchal family structures typical of the era.



Women's Pioneer Housing brochure, 1936.

© Women's Pioneer Housing, WPH Archive, London Metropolitan Archives.

To what extent were partnerships with other organisations/agencies important to your project - could you tell us a little about this?

These were very important. The London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) kindly agreed to take the WPH archive and to digitise key documents, so these can now be used by future researchers. Working with the University of the Third Age also brought a dedicated, hard-working team of volunteer researchers on board, whose efforts have been invaluable. The National Lottery Heritage Fund made it possible via financial support.

When the project finished did you consider doing another? Was it on a similar or completely different topic?

There are still aspects of WPH's history that could be further explored and celebrated, but, as WPH is an active housing association (not a heritage organisation), it lacks the resources and time to dedicate to ongoing history projects.



Interior of a Women's Pioneer Housing Flat, c. 1930s.

© Women's Pioneer Housing, WPH Archive, London Metropolitan Archives.

What has been the legacy of the project for your organisation?

The project has illuminated WPH's remarkable history, serving as an important reminder of why it started and how WPH's current staff continue the legacy of its founders. This has given staff a renewed sense of purpose in WPH's mission.

Uncovering WPH's story and placing its archive with the LMA, also means that future researchers on the feminist history of social housing can access these details and begin to understand the crucial, unique role WPH has played. As work goes on to understand the feminist movement in the interwar years, WPH can now take its place in that history.

How did you feel at the end of the project? What was the impact on you and your colleagues?

A sense of achievement and pride in our truly pioneering organisation. Many staff members didn't know the history of Women's Pioneer Housing, so it's been a wonderful surprise for them to find out about its story and the remarkable women who founded it.

<https://womenspioneer.co.uk/our-story/>

'Refugee Tales: Viewing the Belgian Refugee crisis of WW1 through the Lens of Contemporary Experience'

Questionnaire answered by Professor Steve Dixon, project academic lead:

Please could you briefly outline your project. Was this your first WW1-related project? If so, what made you decide to take it on?

'Refugee Tales' looked at the story of Belgian refugees in WW1 through the lens of contemporary experience, working with contemporary refugees and asylum seekers in Stoke-on-Trent. It was one of five WW1-related projects undertaken between 2014 and 2018.

Where did your project start from? Why did it start from that point?

The project was inspired by material culture – the objects related to the Belgian refugees – fundraising badges and postcards, and the peace medals minted at the end of the war.

Did you focus on new narratives/stories/angles?

Yes, the narratives of forced migration explored through making with the contemporary asylum seekers.

Were there any surprises about the direction that the project took? Did the project end up where you thought it would?

The project grew from a series of making workshops and ended up as a film, 'Breakable'. <https://player.vimeo.com/video/325096129>

To what extent were partnerships with other organisations/agencies important to your project - could you tell us a little about this?

This was crucial; the partnership with the British Ceramics Biennial helped with workshops and connecting to the Burslem Jubilee refugee group.

When the project finished, did you consider doing another? Was it on a similar or completely different topic?

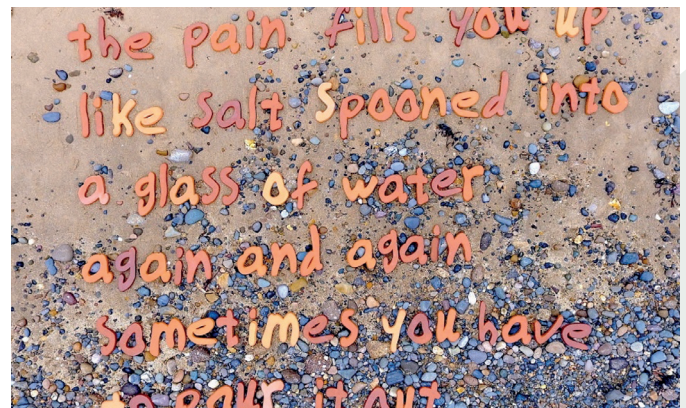
I am continuing to work with the group on refugee-related projects, though not with the WW1 connection.

What has been the legacy of the project for your organisation?

The project contributed to two Impact Case Studies for REF (Research Excellence Framework) 2021 for MMU.

How did you feel at the end of the project? What was the impact on you and your colleagues?

Working with the asylum seekers was an eye-opening and rewarding experience, for me particularly.



Refugee Tales. Image by Johnny Magee.



Refugee Tales. Image by Johnny Magee.



Medals for Peace. Image by Johnny Magee.

EXCAVATE (Nottingham)

'In Flux'

<http://excavate.org.uk/projects/in-flux/>

During 2016 and 2017, Excavate worked with the University of Nottingham's *Hidden Histories* WW1 Engagement Centre and the Red Cross to create a small-scale touring show that examined the history of borders in the Middle East and the impact of their recent dissolution.

The show was performed by a cast of those who found themselves moving to Nottingham from countries in that part of the world – from Iran, Bakur (Turkish Kurdistan) and from Syria. Using large scale projections and live music throughout, it interweaved three monologues – the history of the secretive Sykes-Picot agreement, which led to the creation of Iraq and Transjordan (and which is still hotly contested in Kurdistan); the story of a Kurdish woman, whose sisters all live in one nation and yet are separated by three borders; and the story of a young man (Adel, telling his own story), who travelled from the Golan Heights to Nottingham via the Sahara Desert, the Mediterranean, and the Jungle at Calais.

Proceeds from the performances of the show were used to buy guitars, so that the Red Cross could offer music lessons or lend the instruments to those who have come to Nottingham seeking refuge.

Andy Barrett, the Artistic Director of Excavate, was interviewed by Anna Hammerin:

Anna - Could you briefly outline your project? What made you decide to take it on?

Andy - I'd done some work setting up a project for Nottingham City Council, that was working with different national communities in the city to explore their stories around the First World War. This had aroused my interest in exploring the impact of that event from different contexts. And then around that time, there was a lot happening in terms of the debate around immigration from the Middle East. The war in Syria was really bad. And we were getting daily footage of people arriving and people being in Greece. It was also the centenary of the Sykes-Picot Agreement. We started thinking about that. The Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916 was this moment when, as an act of military expediency and political opportunism, the French and the British Empires decided to carve up and redraw the boundaries of the Middle East, to create new countries and to reshape other countries based on what they thought would be beneficial to them. And so, we decided it would be really interesting to explore contemporary issues around

borders in the Middle East in connection to that moment of the Sykes-Picot agreement. For instance, in 1916 Kurdistan was not identified as a unified territory, and one of the big issues with the Kurdish community is that it's a nation that doesn't exist; it crosses Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. So that's been a long running sore with the Kurdish community. We thought it would be interesting to explore that, and what people's legal rights are when they become a refugee because, again, all of that stuff came out of the First World War. Nottingham has quite a large Turkish community, a developing Turkish community at that time. And people from Syria were arriving, and there was a conversation around resettlement schemes and how many people from Syria the British Government would take. Families were being settled in Nottingham from Syria. There's also a Kurdish community in Nottingham, that, like most Kurdish communities, is politically engaged.

Anna - I liked the idea when you decided, if I read it correctly, to link today's refugee with a refugee one hundred years ago, and make them feel connected generationally.

Andy - It was more in a way a philosophical conversation around the idea of borders. What do borders mean? What happens if you cross borders? And a border is something that is chosen; it's not a natural thing. It's a political decision. Where did that border arise from? And why would it be there and not somewhere else? It was, I would say, based on human stories, but I was also really interested in exploring on a philosophical level, this question of borderlines.

There was a story that was presented by the person whose story it was, a Syrian man from the Gaza Strip, who had done the journey of crossing the desert and then crossing the Mediterranean, on a tiny little boat. Then crossing over to Britain on the back of a lorry. It was his story about how he made that journey. And then the third performance was performed by a Kurdish woman looking at the contemporary situation in Kurdistan as it was, as it is, and her and her three sisters all living in different parts of Turkish, Iranian Iraqi and Syrian Kurdistan. Although it was about this heavy situation, she was this sparky woman. I really wanted to make sure that the piece showed the resilience of these people; that at no time did we want to slip into that kind of representation which plays to the heart strings and simply portrays these people as victims. It was a provocative piece, and humour is always a helpful tool if you're trying to destabilise the way people read things.



'They have the Daf festival in Sanandaj, and they love poetry. But you have to be careful. You cannot write about The Situation.' Sara Altan tells of life in Iran / Eastern Kurdistan. *Photo by Graham Elstone.*



'We had lost hope. We prayed for our souls.' Adel Hamad telling of his journey across the Mediterranean on a dinghy. *Photo by Graham Elstone.*

Anna - Did you focus on new narratives and angles?

Andy - Yes, I think so. We'd gathered a lot of personal stories, which were quite harrowing at times. We were invited to people's houses, and they would have just arrived a few weeks or months ago, and we would be told about the situation that they were in. And very often it was the children that could speak English, and the parents couldn't, and it was kind of awful. People were escaping, being told they'd be killed if they didn't pay money to ISIS. That's what made it a really interesting piece of work for me, in the way we drew connections between historical stories around the Sykes-Picot Agreement and this contemporary experience. And then that was interwoven by somebody who's traversing all those borders now, one hundred years later, and telling his own story. It's a terrible situation they're in, but they're incredibly resilient, strong people.

Anna - Were you surprised along the way? And did the project end up where you thought it would?

Andy - We weren't quite sure where it was going to go to start with, but it became more philosophical than I thought it would be, in terms of what it was exploring. Partly, because we spoke to such a wide range of people - academics, on one hand, and then people who experienced the terrible challenges of seeking refuge, on the other hand. I engaged quite heavily with the Red Cross; they ran an English language group for people who've just arrived, and I met quite a lot of people through them. They helped to identify people that they thought might be interested in getting involved. I was surprised at how caught up we were with the real political situation; the real impact of the global situation on people's lives, and what was happening on a day-to-day basis, really impacted on the shape and the running of the project.



During 2016 and 2017, Excavate worked with the University of Nottingham's *Hidden Histories* WW1 Engagement Centre and the Red Cross to create a small-scale touring show that examined the history of borders in the Middle East and the impact of their recent dissolution.



'If your moral health can be undermined by Polyester – and all the leggings are made from Polyester– then you are not as holy as you think.' Sara Altan tells of life in Iran / Eastern Kurdistan.
Photo by Graham Elstone.

Anna - So when the project finished, did you consider doing another? And was it a similar project or a completely different topic?

Andy - No, that was it. We were done. We were exhausted. It had taken much longer than we thought, because of the challenges that those who were performing the piece had to deal with. We didn't tour it nearly enough as we wanted to.

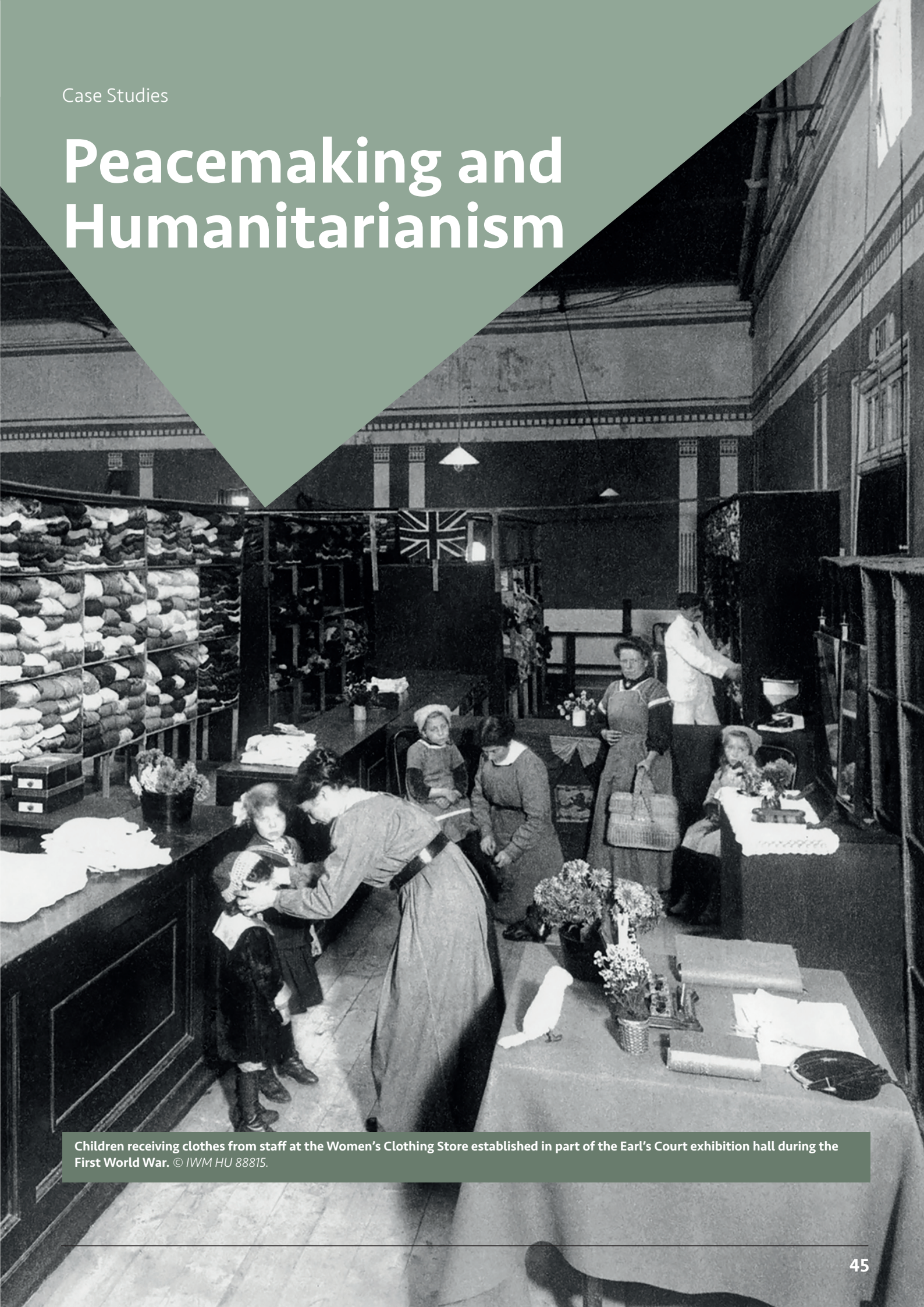
Anna - How did you feel at the end of the project? And what was the impact on you and your colleagues?

Andy - I think it would be good to perform it a few more times. I felt slightly disappointed that after all that work, we couldn't perform it more, because I think it deserved it. We had one really good show, at the Nottingham Playhouse. And that was great. In a way, it would be good to have ended with that. This was a very different project for us in that there was a small cast; normally our shows might have up to one hundred people involved. It was a very different type of thing.

Anna - If you make a recommendation for someone else wanting to do a similar project, what advice would you give them?

Andy - It's a difficult question. I mean, obviously, one of the big issues is translation. I'd say two things: first, engage with the Red Cross, or other agencies that are involved with people from that community, from the refugee community. Secondly, make sure you pay people; however, you can't just give people money because it causes all sorts of problems, so you have to find a way around that. You should never take from these people with time, you know. It's helpful to have somebody that is willing to travel with you, to introduce you to people and sit down and translate in their house. Be prepared for it all to be interrupted by the realities of people's lives and the chaotic nature of their day-to-day experience. The main thing I would say is, that this kind of work has to be an exchange, and you must be prepared to return something to those who have been generous in sharing their experiences and their time with you.

Peacemaking and Humanitarianism



Children receiving clothes from staff at the Women's Clothing Store established in part of the Earl's Court exhibition hall during the First World War. © IWM HU 88815.



'Learning from the Past' community event, Romania, March 2020.

GLOBAL LINK (Lancaster)

'Documenting Dissent', <http://www.documentingdissent.org.uk>

'Learning from the Past', <http://learningfromthepast.net>

Global Link was first funded in 2013 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to work with historians, schools and community groups to research and document the history of religious and political dissent in Lancaster, particularly in relation to Lancaster Castle. As a global education centre, they link these distant struggles for social justice and human rights with more recent activism, or with issues that resonate around the world today. The stories the volunteers discovered were posted on the 'Documenting Dissent' website.

Following the success of this project, Global Link received further funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund that allowed them to run a series of further community heritage projects,

researching and documenting more 'hidden histories' of dissent and activism in the North West and adding these stories to the Documenting Dissent platform. Many of these projects looked at heritage related to the First World War, including: stories of North West conscientious objectors; the work of women and girls on the home front and in efforts for peace during the War; and the mapping of movements for peace, internationalism and education for world citizenship during the interwar years.

In 2018, Global Link received Erasmus+ funding to run a European peace heritage project called 'Learning from the Past', that documented histories of peace and internationalism across the continent in the years following the First World War, and reflecting on that learning for us, as Europeans, today.

David Savill interviewed Alison Lloyd Williams, the project coordinator:



Youth dance group performs a dance inspired by one of the 'Learning from the Past' heritage stories, Romania, March 2020.

David - Could you please outline your project 'Documenting Dissent'?

Alison - We got Heritage Lottery funding in 2013 for our first 'Documenting Dissent' community heritage project that explored histories of dissent and activism in and around Lancaster. The starting point was Lancaster Castle, which was the assize court for Lancashire, as well as a prison and a site of execution. That project did not initially have a First World War focus – we were looking at all kinds of dissent and activism from Quakers to Chartists to LGBT activists – but we also began to explore stories of conscientious objectors from Lancaster, and that initiated an exploration of the First World War. Through the project, we developed a website where we uploaded the stories our volunteers had found and documented, and we developed a methodology of community-heritage work with local volunteers who were keen to keep going.

We then undertook a series of several small HLF-funded projects that added to the 'Documenting Dissent' online platform, looking at lesser-known aspects of the First World War and its legacy. These included a project researching stories of conscientious objectors from Lancashire, and another exploring the role of local women in peace activism during the war. We then ran a project called 'World War One: Sowing the Seeds of Global Citizenship', as we were interested to learn what these peace activists we'd researched were doing after the war. In addition, as a global learning provider, we were keen to find out more about the growth of peace education in the years following the First World War, or what we might today call global citizenship education. We wanted to do some

research on this topic, because we were aware it wasn't very widely known.

'Sowing the Seeds of Global Citizenship' mapped activity in the years following the war that showed how people engaged in peace activism, building international connections, reaching out across cultures and countries, because, we sensed, the war altered people's perspective on the world and their connection with it. Many people travelled because of that war in a way that they never had before, and encountered different people and places. Another context was the increase in the franchise after the war, which meant that many more people felt invested in decision-making, including foreign policy. Related to this was the birth of the Workers' Education Association, and the adult learning movement. In this project, we created an interactive map with pop-up examples of peace and global citizenship activity happening in the North West during the 1920s and 1930s. The map also started to look at how some of the work going on in our region connected with the rest of the country and other parts of the world. The research led us to begin broadening our study more and more beyond our own locality.

We then did a follow-up project called 'World War One: Growing the Seeds of Global Citizenship' which was specifically for young people. We worked with a group of Girl Guides and students from a local school, to use their own archives to look at what schools and the Scouting and Guiding movements were doing during the interwar years to promote peace and internationalism.

'Growing the Seeds' sat beside and co-funded our European Erasmus+ 'Learning from the Past' project, which built on the success of 'Sowing the Seeds'. 'Learning from the Past' came about because, having undertaken this mapping project, we wanted to know what was happening in other parts of Europe after the First World War. We were aware that life in Britain would have been very different in the 1920s and 1930s, than life in, for example, Germany, Hungary, or Italy. 'Learning from the Past' extended the work of 'Sowing the Seeds' by creating a European map that charted histories of peace and internationalism across the continent in the interwar period. In 'Learning from the Past', we built a second stage into the community-engagement work that went beyond just creating the map and documenting those stories, by running creative workshops with young people, where we shared the map and used it as a stimulus for discussion and arts work about the relevance of this heritage for us today. As a development education centre, we were really interested to explore the importance of this heritage for us in terms of global learning. What can we learn from these stories? How can they act as a starting point for thinking about issues of peace, human rights and social justice and exploring possible actions for change?

David - What were the key themes? And how were they agreed by the different participants?

Alison - We had a training week at the very beginning of the 'Learning from the Past' project, where all the partners came over to Lancaster. We started off with a range of activities that explored what we mean by 'peace' and 'internationalism'. For some of our partners from Eastern Europe, the term internationalism carries a very different meaning because it's associated with State socialism. It didn't suggest for them, as it might do for us, things like a global outlook and building positive international connections. We had quite a lot of discussions about how to 'translate' some of these concepts. The partners included a mix of different types of organisation. The Italian partner was from an archive of 20th century history with a focus on the history of fascism. They are experienced historians but had never worked with community groups. The other organisations were mainly youth ones, so used to running participatory activity exploring, in some cases, global learning themes, but they had never turned that lens on heritage. Between us we had a lot of different expertise and were very creative. We also involved a consultant historian from Lancaster University, Corinna Peniston-Bird, who we've worked with regularly on our heritage projects. It became apparent that for many of our European partners, where the history of this period in their country included living under extremist governments, the stories they researched would be different from the ones we had explored in 'Sowing the Seeds'; it could be about speaking out against fascism or hiding a Jewish family in a place where that is dangerous. We took a very flexible approach to the themes under exploration during the project, and realised it was about standing up for issues of social justice.

David - How did you find the partners? Were they already working with Global Link in different ways - or?

Alison - Some were partners we'd worked with before and others were referred to us through organisations we know. It was fascinating to work with the Romanian partner, for example, as the organisation is based in the Hungarian-speaking part of Romania in Transylvania. Questions about internationalism, peace and identity are really fascinating in a place that, at different points during the 20th century, has been part of both Hungary and Romania. The partners and their volunteers identify as Hungarian and speak Hungarian, while living in present-day Romania, and many of their stories touched on these themes.

I was very conscious of the fact that the 1920s in Britain was so different from the 1920s in Eastern Europe. Across Europe, borders were being redrawn, people were displaced, and there was a rise in political extremism. Fascism had some impact in Britain, of course, but it didn't take over our political systems. I think it was important to acknowledge how differently people experienced this period in other parts of Europe. Our 'Sowing the Seeds' map identified this vast network of League of Nations Union activity in Britain, ranging from tea parties to marches and demonstrations. That just wouldn't have been able to take place in so many of the countries we worked with on this project. And I think it was important to juxtapose those experiences, because by only looking at Britain, that doesn't tell the whole story... yet, at the same time, so many of those activities happening here in the North West did intersect with what was happening with other European countries. It's interesting to see the context in which those connections were happening.

We were conscious that the interwar years are generally seen, particularly in this country, through the lens of the rise of extremism in Europe; the failure of the League of Nations; and the move towards another war. We tend to see the interwar years as the move from the First World War to the Second World War - that's the dominant narrative. But what that misses is the vast effort that ordinary people were making to not reach the point of another war; to challenge the rise of extremism; to build connections across nations. I think by pinpointing specific individual stories from across the continent, our project has provided a counter-narrative to that dominant view. There were movements across the whole of Europe, organisations being founded, that still exist today with growing numbers of members who were committed to a peaceful world and to international cooperation. We felt it was important for people to know about these stories, because I don't think we know enough about it today.

David - Could you perhaps begin by saying a little bit about what is Aftermath and how you see that?

Alison - We were always keen to look at the First World War through a different lens; exploring the lesser-known stories and the people who were trying to resist war. That's why we did projects on conscientious objectors and women in peace activism, for example. I think we were also conscious of issues of legacy that, today, when we commemorate the First World War, it tends to still be about remembering soldiers in the trenches, and their sacrifice and the huge loss of life, but this



In 2018, Global Link received Erasmus+ funding to run a European peace heritage project called 'Learning from the Past', that documented histories of peace and internationalism across the continent in the years following the First World War, and reflecting on that learning for us, as Europeans, today.

can be somewhat one-dimensional. What's interesting, of course, when you look at the history of that period, is that the British Legion was very active in promoting peace in the years following the First World War. Many of those soldiers who had experienced that conflict became ardent proponents of peace. The League of Nations Union was very active in army barracks, doing talks and giving out literature. The British Legion awarded medals to schools for doing activities that promoted peace. There were also, I think, attempts by veteran organisations to reach out to soldiers from other countries and build international organisations. When we held our very first meeting during 'Learning from the Past', we asked people to bring an object connected to the First World War and to talk about it. One of the British partners took a red poppy and was talking about how we commemorate the end of the First World War in Britain. What's really striking is how it is not commemorated to anywhere near the same extent in most of our European partner countries. I think the European partners found it fascinating how much we go on about the First World War in this country, because they don't in most of those places. And I think it's interesting for British people to think about that. And at least to question, what are we doing through this sort of commemoration? What are we wanting to commemorate? And why is that important? What can we learn from that experience, then? And what are the other voices we might want to bring to that conversation? I think there's been more work recently to talk about the international dimension of that conflict, for example - to acknowledge the many colonial soldiers, the forced labour and the other fronts involved in that conflict, not just in Western Europe. There is more going on around that now in this country than there used to be. But I think we've still got some way to go.



'What is Peace?' Photographic piece by project volunteer, Sofia Westholt, inspired by 'Learning by the Past' heritage stories.

David - I wondered what the impact has been on you.

Alison - I knew nothing about heritage really before I started doing this work at Global Link, though I've always been interested in history in an informal way. I came to these projects from a global learning perspective and a background in running participatory work with communities. I've always been interested in how people can use creative work to express their voice, to speak to power, to explore social change. I think I've become an evangelist for community-heritage projects, the more I've done them, and I find archival research fascinating. I think I have seen more and more the potential for this work as a stimulus for exploring contemporary social issues. I think it's too easy for people to think it's dusty, old or boring, and I really don't believe that's the case. I think more and more we're seeing how inspiring those stories can be.

DEVERON PROJECTS (Huntly, Aberdeenshire)

'The White Wood'

The White Wood is a living monument to peace, which will develop over three hundred years. As a site of reflection, it was created by the community of Huntly and artist Caroline Wendling, with oaks from Germany, stones from France and Scottish soil. Along with forty-nine oaks, grown from acorns from Joseph Beuys' 7000 Oaks in Kassel, the wood is made up of one thousand seven hundred native trees, shrubs and wildflowers, all of which display an element of white, the colour of peace.

While it was conceived in response to the centenary of the start of WW1 and symbolically represents peace between nations, the ideas surrounding the wood will continue to grow with the trees. As the oaks take three hundred years to grow, three hundred years to mature and three hundred years to die, the legacy of the wood greatly surpasses us individuals and any future we can imagine.

Link to film, 'White Wood': A Conversation with Richard Demarco and Claudia Zeiske: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1okK1Y7o8iU&t=2s>

Images courtesy of
<https://www.deveron-projects.com/white-wood/>



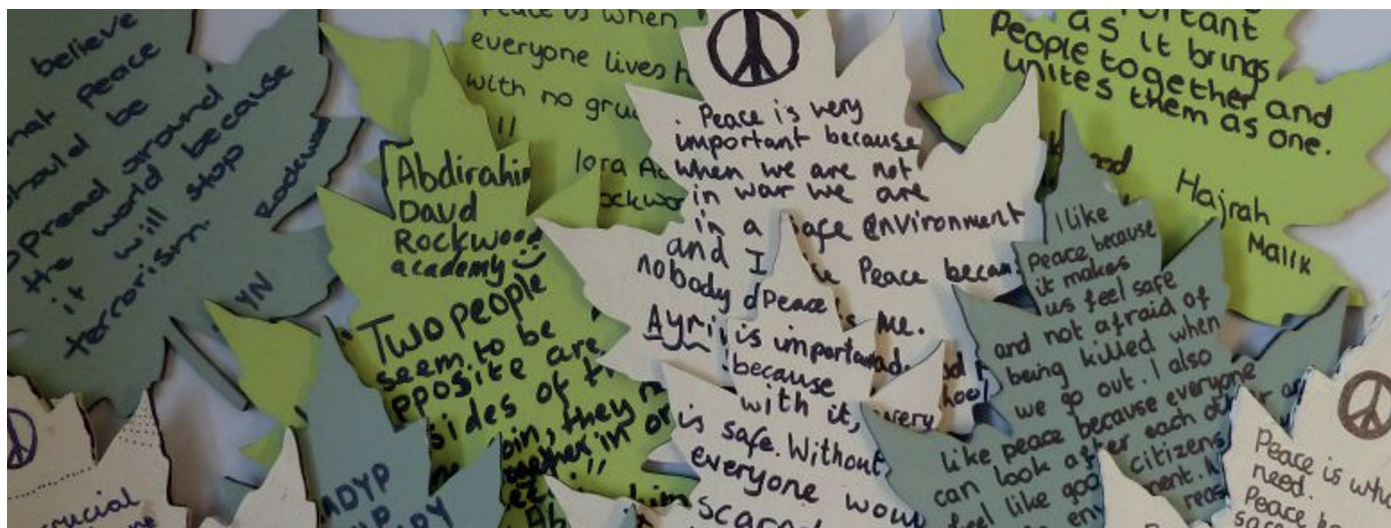
White Wood - Peace dove.



White Wood - Planting a tree.



White Wood - Telling of the White Wood Story.



Sampad Words of Peace Celebration Event by Janette Bushell.

SAMPAD (Birmingham)

'Words of Peace'

Inspired by a 1919 international peace manifesto called 'Declaration of the Independence of the Spirit', 'Words of Peace' aimed to explore the peaceful ways in which local Brummies contributed to the war effort during WW1, exploring some of the peace campaigns, motivations and contributions made from the pacifist movement.

Sampad worked with local schools in Birmingham, encouraging students to take inspiration from globally renowned Indian writer Rabindranath Tagore, who produced his personal response to the peace manifesto, so that they could create their own responses and pledges towards the concept of peace.

Sampad also recruited and trained community volunteers who gained special access to First World War archive materials at the Library of Birmingham. Working with curator Dr Siân Roberts to explore their significance, the volunteers gathered information that was used as the basis for creative workshops in the participating schools, with the aim of inspiring the young people to produce their own modern-day Pledges for Peace. They were encouraged to express their own thoughts and feelings about war through creative writing and physical movement.

Towards the end of the project, all of the students came together to share their learning and experiences at a special Words of Peace celebration event, which took place on Tuesday 12 July 2016 at St Thomas' Peace Garden in Birmingham city centre.

The celebration event culminated with one of the key highlights of the project – the unveiling of 150 Peace Pledges, created by the participants. The pledges were mounted on wooden leaves and installed onto a specially sculpted Peace Tree, which subsequently toured to schools in the city.

Project information and images courtesy of:
<https://www.sampad.org.uk/projects/2016-words-of-peace/>



CENTRAL ENGLAND QUAKERS AND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM (Birmingham)

'Quakers and the First World War: Lives & Legacies'

The booklets are part of a series by the 'Quakers & the First World War: Lives & Legacies' collaborative project, run by Central England Quakers and the University of Birmingham, and supported and shaped by volunteers.

In many cases, different volunteers have written different pages, and brief overviews of complex national and international events are included alongside detailed local stories from the central England area.

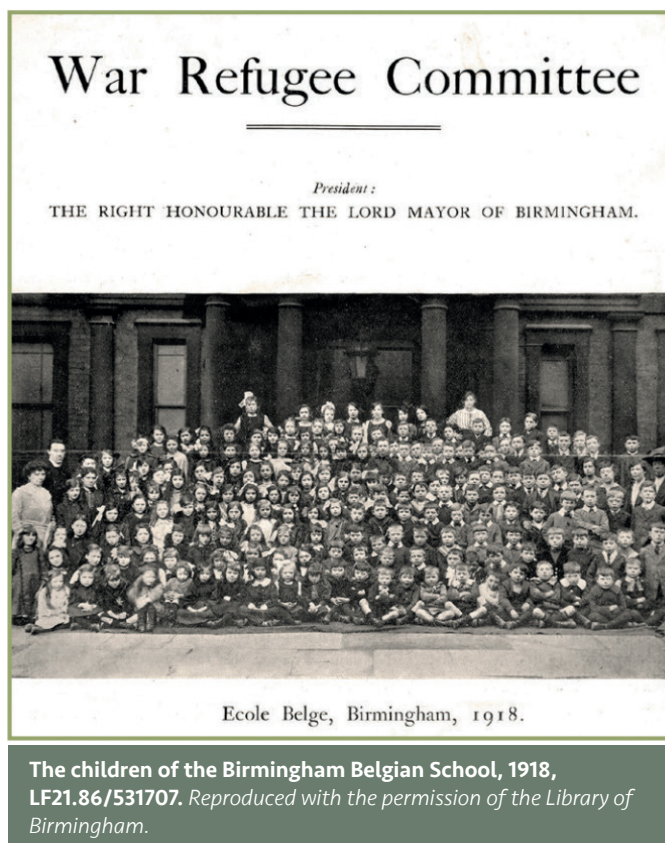
Funded by the *Voices of War and Peace* WW1 Engagement Centre, the project built on the exhibition 'Faith & Action: Quakers & the First World War' that was held in 2015 at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

Quakers on the Home Front: <http://www.voicesofwarandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/livesandlegacies-homefront.pdf>

Conscientious Objection and Conscription: <http://www.voicesofwarandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/livesandlegacies-conscription.pdf>

The Friends Ambulance Unit: <http://www.voicesofwarandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/livesandlegacies-fau.pdf>

The Friends' War Victims' Relief Committee: <http://www.voicesofwarandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/livesandlegacies-reliefcommittee.pdf>



The children of the Birmingham Belgian School, 1918, LF21.86/531707. Reproduced with the permission of the Library of Birmingham.



School children and depot staff weighing food in Vienna, LSF FEWVRC Pics 1/1/1. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.



Florence Barrow distributing seeds in Poland, LSF Temp MSS 590/1. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.

NUS, WEA, NORTHUMBRIA, UCL (various locations)

'British Ex-Service Students and the Rebuilding of Europe, 1919-26'

<https://everydaylivesinwar.herts.ac.uk/british-ex-service-students-and-the-rebuilding-of-europe-1919-1926>

This project, supported by the *Everyday Lives in War* WW1 Engagement Centre, investigated the war generation's entry into higher education. It did so by focusing on two aspects. On the one hand, it considered how universities were transformed by the arrival of a large number of ex-servicemen. On the other hand, it considered how, in the aftermath of war, students forged links with their peers abroad, including students from former enemy countries.

The immediate post-war years saw a plethora of international student initiatives – from the humanitarian efforts of European Student Relief to an international federation for national student unions. British university students were actively involved in these ventures; indeed, the very foundation of the National Union of Students (NUS) in 1922 was partly aimed at strengthening international links. Even when not active in such organisations, many British students engaged in internationalism, for example by participating in study exchanges and travel schemes. This project examined how young adults with direct experience of war experienced and fostered international dialogue and understanding.

The project was based on archival research in Newcastle, Durham, Edinburgh, London, and Coventry. It was co-designed with the National Union of Students (NUS) and the North East branch of the Workers' Educational Association (WEA). The project team consisted of Daniel Laqua (University of Northumbria; principal investigator), Georgina Brewis (University College London; co-investigator), Sarah Hellawell (research associate), Mike Day (NUS) and Jude Murphy (WEA).

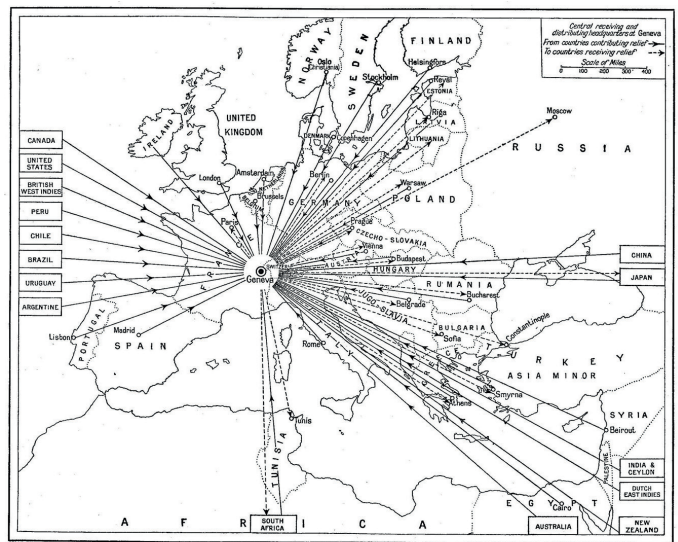
The following links also provide a summary of the project:

<https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/nus-uk/who-we-are/our-story/wwi-and-the-foundation-of-nus>

<https://www.wea.org.uk/north-east>

The project team subsequently developed their findings into the following journal article, which can be downloaded/read in open access: Brewis, G., Hellawell, S., & Laqua, D. (2020), 'Rebuilding the Universities after the Great War: Ex-Service Students, Scholarships and the Reconstruction of Student Life in England', *History*, 105 (364), 82-106 - via the following link:

<https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-229x.12926>



Map showing Countries from which Students have contributed Relief and those in which it has been Administered.

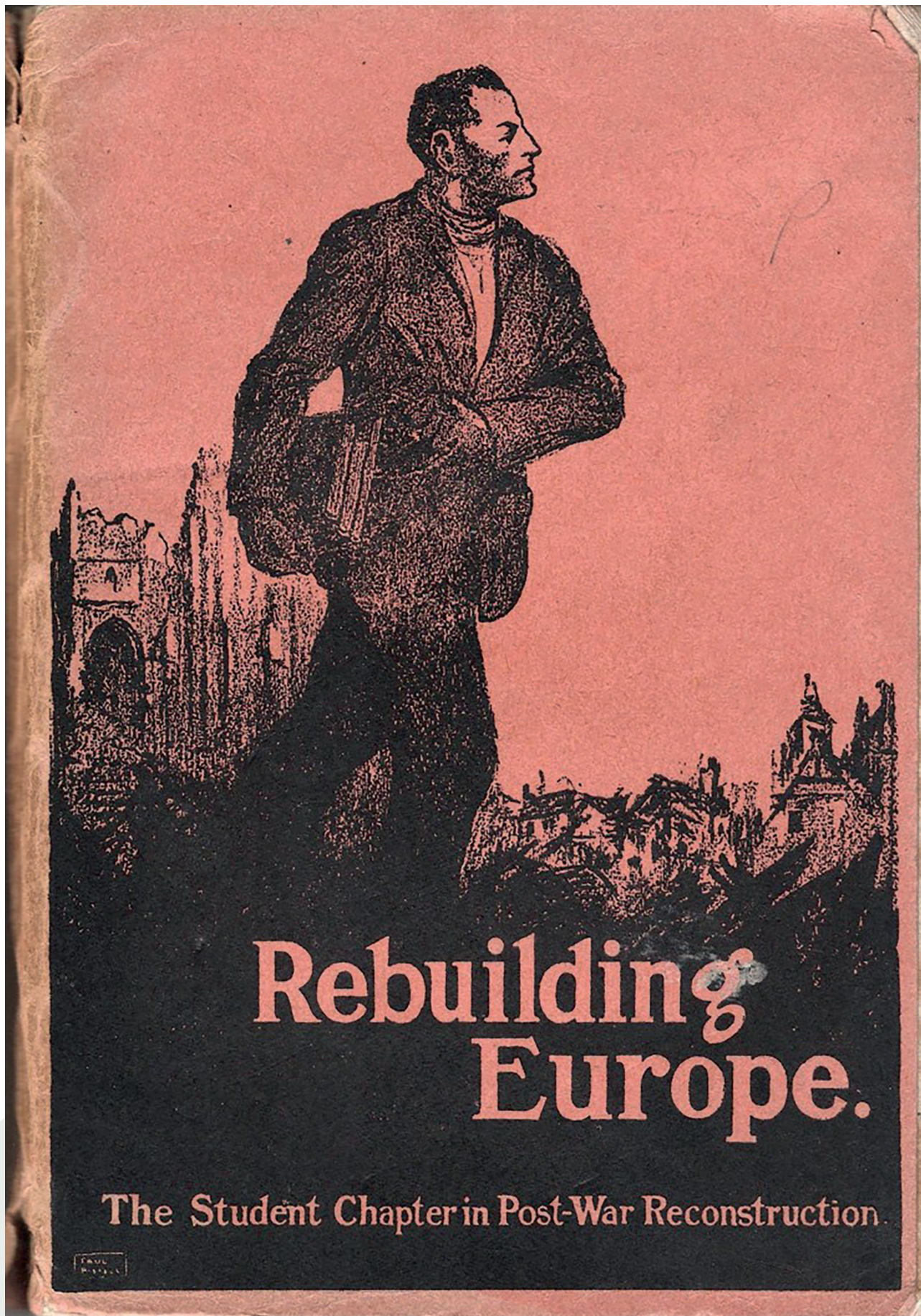
Map showing patterns of European Student Relief. From Ruth Rouse, *Rebuilding Europe: The Student Chapter in Post-War Reconstruction* (London: SCM Press, 1925).



Students Representative Council of Armstrong College, Newcastle, 1920-1921.



The immediate post-war years saw a plethora of international student initiatives – from the humanitarian efforts of European Student Relief to an international federation for national student unions.



Front cover of Ruth Rouse's history of European Student Relief (ESR), *Rebuilding Europe: The Student Chapter in Post-War Reconstruction* (London: SCM Press, 1925).



AGE EXCHANGE (London and Bavaria)

'Meeting in No Man's Land': German and British descendants of those who fought share a journey of reflection and reconciliation by David Savill

'Meeting in No Man's Land' had a simple premise: to bring together 12 British descendants and 12 German descendants of fathers or grandfathers who served in the military in the First World War, or whose mothers or grandmothers served as nurses or experienced the war as children. We aimed to explore the impact that the war had on families then and across the generations. We did not seek to explore national narratives of the war. This approach was our starting point. The reasons behind it were developed over months, as British and German partner organisations worked hard to create a project that would enable all those who took part to do so as equals, supported, cared for and able to share with the children of former enemies deeply personal and challenging family histories.

Age Exchange is a UK charity that specialises in reminiscence arts, used to measurably improve the well-being and quality of life of older people who participate in either its many heritage programmes or in its caring services for those living with mental health conditions. Since its founding in 1983, Age Exchange has worked with many elders whose lives have been affected by war. Indeed, the Charity's very first reminiscence project was with First World War munitionettes who had worked at the Woolwich Arsenal. The Charity aims to empower people through supporting them in sharing their reminiscences, their untold stories, through different

art forms, as well as through participating in exhibitions and documentary film.

In 2014, I met Elfriede Pauli who came to visit us at the Age Exchange centre in Blackheath. Elfriede was a director at Caritas in Bavaria, Germany, the Catholic charity supporting vulnerable people. She had worked with Age Exchange several years before on projects supporting older people living with dementia. The conversation we had was whether it would be possible to run a similar project to 'Children of The Great War', our London-based First World War project, back in Germany. At this stage, we even talked about whether older British and German people might be prepared to listen to each other's family history. The two years that followed this meeting in London were challenging and frequently disappointing, as Elfriede tried repeatedly to drum up interest and support in Germany for a project with Age Exchange, and was turned down by universities, museums, and multiple funders. And then she had a breakthrough. Elfriede's neighbour had shown her a diary that his mother had kept between 1914 and 1917. It included her observations as a child of the impact of the war on her hometown near Hannover. Through a friend at a Bavarian radio station, Elfriede managed to set up a series of performed readings on air from the diary. Soon someone else came forward with hundreds of postcards her father had sent from the front during the war or received from home. Gradually, a small group of interested descendants formed, and I then visited Rosenheim in 2015 with my colleague, Suzanne Lockett, to hold our first meeting to explore with the elders whether an Anglo-German project might work. At this time, we also met another group from Munich, Münchner Bildungswerk, which is an NGO providing support, projects, and learning programmes for older people. At that

time, one of their projects, 'The Long Shadows of War', was providing a space for older people to come forward and share their experience of the impact that carpet bombing had had on them during the Second World War. The facilitators of this group: Karin Wimmer-Billeter, Melanie Sommer, and psychologist and counsellor Dr Jürgen Mueller Hohagen, met with us. They talked about how frequently the First World War was spoken of in German families, but was so often overshadowed by the devastation of the Nazi period.

By summer 2015, it was clear that Age Exchange had dedicated partner organisations in Bavaria, ready to commit to a collaborative First World War project. This was when we approached the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for funding. It was not an easy process, as it had to be clear that any work in Germany would directly benefit the UK public through the project outcomes, the learning experience, and the heritage that was recorded and exhibited. I would like to record my thanks for the support and guidance of Karen Brookfield, former Deputy Director (Strategy & Business Development) at the NLHF, without whose advice the project would have stumbled at the first hurdle. The process of 'Meeting in No Man's Land' and the creative outputs were clear from the outset. At the heart of the project, we chose to create a documentary film. This, we all felt, would ensure that as wide an audience as possible would experience 'Meeting in No Man's Land' in the UK, Germany and further afield. Working with the Institute of Education and Battlefield Tours, we also decided to work with schools to create a learning app which could be used by students visiting First World War battlefields. The app would ensure that the remarkable family histories from Germany and Britain would be used to educate the younger generation about the impact of war on families. This element was very important to all the descendants who took part.

As we prepared to submit our funding application, Age Exchange was very fortunate in forming a relationship with the *Everyday Lives in War* WW1 Engagement Centre, and thanks to Professor Sarah Lloyd, additional funding was secured to enable Professor Mike Roper and Dr Rachel Duffett to join the project as our academic partners. This brought with it an entirely new reflective element to the process. Mike and Rachel helped the participating charities and descendants to consider their approach, to talk and question throughout, and to better understand the achievements that came about. It was Mike's academic knowledge around the nature of national narrative, empire, and militaristic commemoration in the UK that helped us structure the activities we planned for the descendants who would meet in 'No Man's Land'.

With funding now secured, we prepared for our first meeting in Rosenheim in January 2016. This brought together Age Exchange, Caritas, Münchner Bildungswerk, Dr Mueller Hohagen, Professor Mike Roper, Dr Rachel Duffett, artist Hanne Kircher and film maker Ivan Riches, supported by two excellent interpreters. This meeting was hugely important. Each of the project leaders brought ideas to the table that helped form our methodology and the activities we would use when our 24 descendants met over four days in April 2016. Each project leader was asked to bring a First World War family object, photograph, or letters, and to be prepared to talk about it and explore where that might take us in planning activities for April. The exercise was deeply moving and surprising. We

could see the connections the artefacts created between our ancestors but also ourselves. It was also very therapeutic, and clearly the sharing of the story behind the object brought it to life in the present and created a powerful feeling of empathy between us. We therefore decided that this activity should be explored with our British and German descendants, and that the discussion of their respective family histories of the war might reflect the exchange of gifts between British and German troops when they met in No Man's Land in 1914. Our first activity, we decided, would be to prepare our descendants to meet in couples (one after another), one German and one Brit, and for each to show the other a family artefact and explain its history. In all aspects of the project we turned away from national commemoration to focus on the impact the war had on our families at the time, and across the generations.

We all felt that British and German descendants should each take part in a filmed interview focusing on their family heritage of the war, but crucially before they met descendants from the other country. These individual interviews would then be followed up by us pairing together one British and one German descendant for them to be interviewed together, sharing their family history with one another. Hedwig, a director from Caritas and colleague of Elfriede, talked about the importance of 'breaking bread' together, of eating together, taking coffee together and spending time in communal activity. This became a very important 'space' for time out, laughter, and conversations between the descendants in our time together in April.

We began our very first meeting with one question for all who wished to answer: 'Why are you here?' As Jürgen Mueller Hohagen told me later when he recorded the German narration for the film: 'This question created a space for us all – it was the thing we were all asking ourselves.' The answers descendants gave set the scene:

'I am here to reclaim my grandfather from oblivion. He would want me to be here.'

'If my father could see me now with the descendants of his enemies, what would he think?'

'I am curious.'

'I believe there is more that unites us than divides us.'

'I'm here because I don't ever want what happened to our fathers and mothers to happen ever again to future generations.'

Our first activity was to create one line of German descendants and one line of British, facing each other and in pairs from opposite sides, for them to meet in the middle of the room and show the other a photo or letter with the story behind it. Descendants had given a huge amount of thought to which one artefact they would show to a British or German descendant; the selection process they had each made was fascinating. So many of these sharings are so vivid in the memory. Christel Berger, a German descendant, had brought with her a postcard that her grandfather had made from the bark of a silver birch tree on the Russian front; she read the words he had sent home for his wife and child. Ruth, a British descendant, was four years old when her father died of TB; having been gassed in the war, he had never recovered and died in his 30s. Her father and mother had written hundreds of love letters to each other during the war, and Ruth brought two to share which were both beautiful and haunting. Bill, a

proud Scot, brought his name to share. His father was saved by his commanding officer, Captain Stuart, who insisted on going forward before him; he was immediately hit by machine gun fire but saved Bill's dad's life. Bill's second name is Stuart, given to him in memory of a heroic officer, and Bill has kept the tradition alive and called his son Stuart.

The four days were memorable, not only for the extraordinary reminiscence that was shared, but by the bond that grew between the German and British descendants; the empathy, generosity of spirit and the great interest they had in each other's family history; and the impact that the First World War had had on their families. What had been designed as a heritage project developed into something else. The discussion groups and the paired meetings created the space for each descendant to bring their ancestor to life. That sounds odd, I know, but there was such an emphasis put on how a father or mother had spoken of the war, of an experience they had been passed down, and so much detail about the nature of that person. And, of course, there was the remarkable juxtaposition of a very old person talking about their mother or father as a very young person, and trying to describe and make sense of the person they were then, and had later become, because of all that they had experienced. Two things were clear. Firstly, it was the physical presence of the British descendants in Rosenheim and Munich that was pivotal in unlocking the German descendants' willingness to talk – many for the very first time about difficult memories. Secondly, everyone who took part commented on the very raw emotional side of participation. Several descendants from both countries expressed a feeling that they were doing work, coming to terms with feelings, relationships, understanding why someone was the way they were. And much of this occurred through listening to others with similar experiences.

The outputs for 'Meeting in No Man's Land' were so valued and important for the descendants who took part. Ivan Riches's extraordinary film premiered in July 2016 at the British Film Institute and was shown as a double bill with the 1916 film 'The Somme'. It has been screened in cinemas and museums here in the UK and across Southern Germany and in Austria. The film has been used to encourage the audience to share its own family histories.

Since 'Meeting in No Man's Land', Brexit has come – and, since 2020, the pandemic. But it is no exaggeration to say that the friendships formed between the two groups of descendants continue to this day. Some have chosen to learn the others' language; some continue to visit each other when they can, to call, email, send chocolate through the post. Elfriede came to the Armistice centenary service at Westminster Abbey. And Elfriede and I were honoured to attend a special occasion for ground-breaking community projects hosted by the President of Germany in Berlin.

'Meeting in No Man's Land' recorded the remarkable family histories of those who took part; histories shared with thousands of others of all ages. Perhaps the most surprising thing for the descendants is that, at its heart, the project was about reconciliation and that the descendants took that deliberate step for their deceased ancestor.



The photos are from a collection of postcards made by Christel Berger's grandfather when he was serving on the Russian front. The cards were made from the bark of silver birch trees, moss, and reeds, and were sent to his beloved family in Germany. Images by Roswitha Chesher.



'Meeting in No Man's Land' recorded the remarkable family histories of those who took part; histories shared with thousands of others of all ages.

Perhaps the most surprising thing for the descendants is that, at its heart, the project was about reconciliation and that the descendants took that deliberate step for their deceased ancestor.



Martin Spafford's grandmother, a V.A.D nurse, was given this damaged crucifix by Sergeant Strickland, a wounded soldier that she nursed. He told her he had found it when trying to rescue a French family from their house that had been hit by German artillery. He said it represented everything he had seen in the war.



Ruth Gayfer's mother, who served as a nurse throughout the war.



Ruth Gayfer's father, an officer in the East Yorkshire regiment, who died in his 30s (when Ruth was 4), having never recovered from being gassed in 1918.



Dieter Filsinger's grandfather, a teacher who was made an officer early in the war. Almost killed at Verdun, he lay for 3 days seriously wounded in a trench before being rescued. He spent the next 6 months in hospital before returning to the front.



Lieutenant Armando Console, who served briefly as an official photographer on the Western Front in 1918 until he lost a leg in a shell explosion. The photograph shows him on crutches looking at an exhibition of naval photographs in the Princes' Hall, Piccadilly, London, accompanied by a small girl. © IWM Q 19801.

Conclusion

While the idea of **aftermath** holds different meanings for different people, through looking at community projects that explored this topic, the overarching sense is that there are still ripples emanating long after the First World War ended - be it unresolved emotions, the development of organisations and charities that were founded in reaction to the conflict, the enduring need for reconciliation, or lessons learned. It is a type of umbilical cord, between then and now – and possibly the future.

When considering work that has dealt with such a vast and potentially overwhelming subject, breaking this down into key areas such as the physical and psychological impact, the effects on the home nation, and the desire for peace, helped us process the many interesting projects that were delivered by community organisations during the centenary of the war.

Lessons learned from the projects included:

- ▶ There are still many untold stories about the war, and these offer fascinating and illuminating insights into the experience of war and its aftermath
- ▶ Collaboration with other organisations such as universities, museums, libraries, and other community groups can often be key to the successful outcome of a project
- ▶ Reminiscence interviews should be defined not by the ambition to record a story, but by the care that should be taken in supporting the interviewee throughout the process of remembering and recording: 'Be still, listen, be gentle and let the person talk through the memory. Sometimes this is a part of their own healing and of learning to live with something unforgettable' (David Savill, Age Exchange)
- ▶ Sensitivity and care are essential when dealing with difficult histories, be prepared for uncomfortable conversations
- ▶ History can unlock powerful emotional responses: 'One of the most wonderful things was seeing one of Westfield's eldest residents, a veteran of the Second World War, gain a greater understanding of how his own condition and situation had impacted on his wife. He was able to tell her for the first time, and on camera for the documentary, how he would not have been able to get through without her' (Martin Purdy, Westfield War Memorial Village project)
- ▶ Ensure that the story you are telling is historically accurate – consult others, fact check
- ▶ The importance of researching archives: 'I find archival research fascinating. I think I have seen more and more the potential for that work, too, as a stimulus to think about things that resonate today. I think it's too easy for people to think it's dusty, old, or boring, and I really don't believe that's the case. I think more and more we're seeing how inspiring those stories can be' (Alison Lloyd Williams, Global Link)

Each of these projects listed in the book have one thing in common: they all confronted the past in order to learn lessons and to contribute to ensuring a better future. And while many positive steps have been taken, there is still work to be done, and still room for future generations to research and explore those years of aftermath.

Useful Reading/ Further Resources



AGE EXCHANGE RESOURCES

As part of the **'Combat Stress 100'** programme, Age Exchange created an online resource for schools hosted by The National Army Museum. The resource, which can be found using the link below, is designed to enable secondary school students to learn about their own mental health through experiencing the lives of military veterans supported by Combat Stress, and who have been treated for PTSD or other mental health conditions. The resource was made by Simon Purins, David Savill and Malcolm Jones working with Combat Stress veterans, three London secondary schools, and The National Army Museum:

<https://www.eyesociation.org/combatstress100/index.html>

'Meeting in No Man's Land', which brought together 24 British and German descendants of ancestors who fought in the First World War, resulted in a documentary film about the meetings that took place between the descendants over a four-day period in Southern Germany. The film, which premiered at The British Film Institute in July 2016, and then in Munich in November 2016, can be found by using the link information below. The film was made by Ivan Riches and David Savill.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtOvjVihEfA>

Age Exchange's first of three centenary projects on the First World War (in 2014) was **'Children of The Great War'**. This London-wide project invited Londoners to visit venues across the capital and share their family heritage from the war. It resulted in theatre, multimedia installation, and the archiving of interviews and digitised memorabilia on the Europeana 1914-1918 website (enter 'Age Exchange' in the search box to find material specific to 'Children of The Great War'). Here are links to the project outputs:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjIJ-Cqj6wE>
Theatre production

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2VLEZE4bx8&t=871s>
Multimedia exhibition

<http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu/en>
Europeana 1914-1918 archive

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES/LINKS

<http://www.age-exchange.org.uk>
<http://www.combatstress.org.uk>
<http://www.nam.ac.uk>



Naval personnel and a member of the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) relaxing and reading, ca. 1918. © IWM Q 108069.

Age Exchange tips on the **Guided Reminiscence Interview:**

- Prepare in advance / conduct a pre-interview / do your research
- Ask clear questions
- Ask single questions
- Ask open-ended questions
- Ask experience / behaviour questions before opinion / feeling questions
- Sequence and funnel the questions
- Ask probe and follow-up questions
- Confirm interpretations of questions
- Do not probe deep and sensitive issues
- Encourage a free rein within the broad interview structure
- Establish rapport through attentive listening, genuine interest, understanding and respect

Principles of **Best Practice in Reminiscence Work:**

- The Person-Centered Approach
- Good communication – active listening
- Genuine interest
- Respect for personal choice
- Fidelity and confidentiality
- Establishing trust and rapport
- Support for painful emotions
- Non-judgmental attitude
- Warmth
- Good facilitation skills, respecting equal opportunities
- Use of memory triggers that stimulate the five senses
- Use of inclusive and relevant themes
- Monitoring and evaluation at every stage
- Support, advice, and guidance for fellow workers

Further Projects

POST-WAR HOUSING AND SETTLEMENTS

Eastside Community Heritage, 'Becoming Becontree'
<https://andrea0928.wixsite.com/my-site>

Ravenscliffe Community Association, 'Seeds of the Past'
<https://seedsofthepast.weebly.com/>

Green Corridor, Southall 'WW1 - The Southall Allotment Link'
<https://www.greencorridor.org.uk/>

POST-WAR COMMUNITY HISTORY

Brindley Village Legacy Group 'Brindley Village'
<https://circleobsessed.wordpress.com/the-brindley-village-project/>

North Primary School, Colchester 'We Will Remember Them: Homecoming'
<http://www.lauradavison.co.uk/wewillrememberthem/homecoming/>

Gairloch and District Heritage Society 'Land Fit for Heroes'
<https://www.gairlochmuseum.org/>

WEA, 'The WEA in World War One in the North East':
<https://weainworldwar1.wordpress.com/>

The Flintham Society 'Flintham Looks Forward'
www.flinthammuseum.org

Perth and Kinross Council working with MECOPP Gypsy/ Travellers Care and Shamus McPhee:
<http://www.rajpote.org.uk/ww1-exhibition>

WEA North East 'Turbulent Times. Educational and social campaigning in the NE 1918-28'
<https://weaturbulenttimes.wordpress.com>

Writing on the Wall 'Great War to Race Riots'
<https://www.greatwar-to-raceriots.co.uk>

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Anna Hammerin, 'Swedish hunger uprisings 1917'
For further information, see the *Women and War* edition of this book series, or email Anna Hammerin, project manager, at: swedishuprisings1917@yahoo.com

City of Worcester Twinning Association, 'Worcester and Gouzeaucourt':
<https://www.worcesterandgouzeaucourt.org/home/>

Yemeni Archives and Birmingham Centre for Media and Cultural Research, Birmingham City University, 'Aden: Then and Now':
<https://www.thegapartsproject.co.uk/adenthenandnow>

Skanzen Open-Air Museum, Szentendre, Hungary: 'When Everything Has Changed: Everyday Life on the Hungarian home front during and after the Great War' - see pages 66-67.
<https://skanzen.hu/en/skanzen/>

DISABILITY

The Royal Star and Garter Homes Centenary project:
<https://starandgarter.org/about/our-history/#the-first-world-war>

Queen Alexandra Hospital Home 'Our legacy to our country'
<https://www.careforveterans.org.uk/about-us/photo-archive/>

PEACE

Trust for Research and Education on the Arms Trade 'Arming All Sides'
<https://armingallsides.org.uk/>

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom 'Versailles 1919. Return of the Dangerous Women'
www.wilpf.org and <https://www.claphamfilmunit.com/projects/peace-and-womens-rights/>

Wales Centre for International Action, 'Wales for Peace':
<https://www.wcia.org.uk/walesforpeace/>

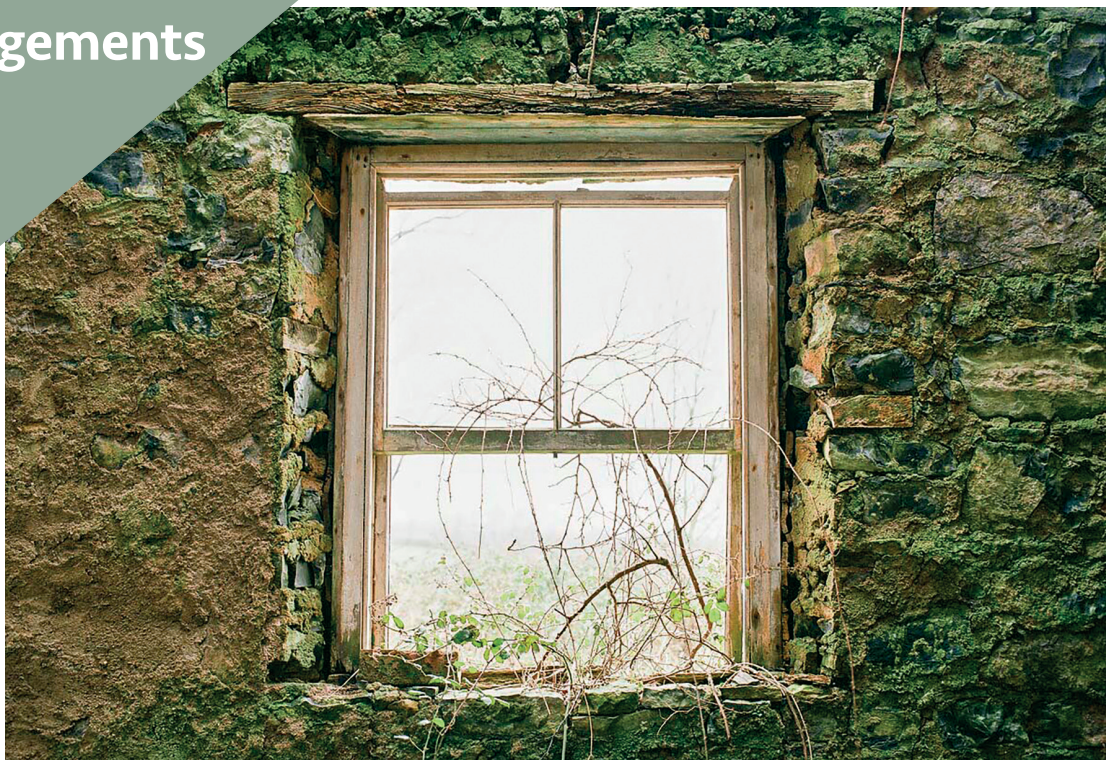
Leicester CND, 'Memories in Conflict':
<https://memoriesinconflict.wordpress.com/>

Religious Society of Friends, 'Reimagining a True Social Order: how the aftermath of war shaped Quaker social witness':
<https://quakerssocialorder.org.uk/>

Acknowledgements

Looking back through
time, interior view
from a soldier's home
on Cleenish Island.

Photo by Mark Rhead,
<https://markrhead.net/>



Tony Baldwinson

Andy Barrett

Karen Brookfield

Sasha Callaghan

Roswitha Chesher

Steve Dixon

Kate Douglas

Graham Elstone

Rachel Gillies

Family Horváth in Vácátót (Hungary)

István Bőjte Horváth

Attila Jeney

Tamás Kloska

Daniel Laqua

Sam Lockyer

Natasha Macnab

Johnny Magee

Marion Maxwell

Museum für Photographie Braunschweig, Germany

Caroline Nielsen

Jennifer Novotny

Martin Purdy

Simon Purins

Stuart Pyper

Mark Rhead

Ivan Riches

Sian Roberts

Laura Sambrooks

Zsolt Sári

Rebecca Shawcross

Mandy Stretch

Nikki Thorpe

Szilvia Tömöri

Andrew Webb

Lottie Whalen

Alison Lloyd Williams

David Wyatt

Aftermath – seen from a different landscape

As set out in the Introduction and the Conclusion of this book, and further emphasised by the range and number of community projects featured, the concept of 'aftermath' holds many meanings for different people.

However, what is a striking, common denominator for the projects and stories we have featured, is the far-reaching impact that still emanates from the First World War today, and which crosses generations and even international borders.

On our book cover, we illustrate aftermath through absence: a quiet but unmistakable silhouette of a missing family member. The space represents something that once was, the permanence of its loss, and of unavoidable change.

The inspiration for our book cover came from a powerful and gripping community project – this time as far away as in Hungary, where community stories, photos and memories were collected, recorded, and gently sifted through by a team of museum curators to feature in not only a physical, open-air museum interactive event, but also as an online exhibition.

According to the curators, the exhibition depicted a point in time when everything changed forever, when life could never return to the way it once was; where the aftermath of war, the loss and the absence, still resonates today...:

We are privileged to be featuring a representative web page from the Skanzen Hungarian Open Air Museum website, with the kind permission of the Museum Curators, featuring the temporary WW1 exhibition 'When Everything Has Changed'.



When Everything Has Changed

Everyday Life on the Hungarian home front during and after the Great War



The First World War taking place between 1914 and 1918 was a sharp dividing line between the 'long' 19th century and the 'short' 20th century.

On the one hand it meant the end of the 'old' world, and on the other hand it also brought about radical changes, the impact of which can still be experienced in today's life. The war completely disrupted the population's everyday life on the home front.

The society of the village also transformed, traditional gender roles, the usual division of labour overturned. The supply of goods, consumption, the traditional order of festivities all changed, the forms of communication modified, and social assistance became important. In this era, the peasantry, the foundation of society was far from being uniform. The world opened up for the soldiers coming from their stratum; they reached unimaginably remote areas during the fights. Women and children had to face the struggle of everyday life on the home front. In addition to the negative effects of the war, deprivation and losses, innovations also appeared which made everyday life easier. The exhibition showcases the changes caused by the war through personal and community stories, which led to the transformation of the way of life of the peasantry all over the Carpathian Basin.

To learn more, please see the following online exhibitions and resources:

<https://skanzen.hu/en/plan-your-visit/exhibitions/when-everything-has-changed-everyday-life-during-and-after-the-great-war>

<https://magyarmuzeumok.hu/cikk/amikor-minden-mas-lett-a-skanzen-uj-kiallitasa>

<https://amml.skanzen.hu/>

<https://emlekmuvek.skanzen.hu/>

<https://nagyhaboru.skanzen.hu/>

*For Further Projects within International Context,
see page 64.*

*With Special Thanks to
Skanzen Hungarian Open Air Museum Curators*

Tamás Kloska
Szilvia Tömöri
Zsolt Sári PhD



Inspired by a photograph.

The original photograph which inspired the War Memorial of Vácrátót, from 1938.

Hungarian soldier János Horváth (1908–1984) and his **wife Erzsébet Baksza (1913–1941)** with their **children: Erzsébet (1933–1949)** and **Gábor (1938–2004)**. Photo resides with the Hungarian Open-Air Museum Skanzen in Szentendre, and has been reproduced with the kind permission of the family's descendants, Family Horváth in Vácrátót (Hungary).