Lest We Forget – Keep Their Stories Alive

First World War Digital Archive Project 2018

2018 will mark the centenary of the end of the First World War. Few families in Britain were unaffected by the conflict and in thousands of attics across the country there are photographs, diaries, letters and mementos that tell the story of a generation at war. In 2018, we want to preserve any story about the people whose lives were in any way affected by the Great War and events surrounding it.

In collaboration with Oxford University, we aim to launch a national programme to digitally capture, safeguard and share these important personal items and reminiscences from the men and women of 1914-1918. On a daily basis these stories and objects are being lost to the nation, and the memory of the sacrifice of that generation consigned to oblivion. The men, women and children of 1914-1918 deserve better and their stories must be preserved for future generations – lest we forget.

‘Lest We Forget – Keep Their Stories Alive’ is about supporting local communities to run their own digitization days, in order to capture objects and memories held locally. We would like to offer FWWCBTP participants the unique opportunity to engage their local community, to run their own Digital Community Archive events, recording and saving objects and stories of the generation who lived through First World War as part of your Legacy110 project.

This would take the form of training FWWCBTP participants to become a ‘Digital Champion’. The ‘Digital Champion’ would then facilitate a ‘First World War Digital Community Archive Event’ in their community supported by a team of volunteers drawn from their network.

Training will consist of a one day workshop, with locations across the UK. Trained Digital Champions will receive a resource kit which would include all the information and marketing materials required to facilitate a ‘First World War Digital Community Archive Event’. In November 2018, every item collected will then be published through a free-to-use online database for schools, scholars and the wider public.
Role of the Lest We Forget Digital Champion

The training that all Digital Champions will undertake will provide you with a detail overview of how to run a successful Digital Community Archive Event. However, at this stage in the process so that you can make an informed decision as to wherever you wish to become a Digital Champion and thus be trained we have noted below the key tasks that you will need to undertake.

1. Attend a whole day training session – venue etc tbc in due course (travel expenses of up to £50 will be reimbursed with valid receipts)
2. Read through the Resource Pack – this will be provided to you at your training session
3. Recruit a team of volunteers to support you in delivering a successful Digital Community Archive Event. We recommend that you have between 8 and 12 helpers plus yourself. Roles include welcoming visitors, interviewing and noting details regarding the artefacts, taking photos of said artefacts, editing the text and images before they are published online and managing the stream of visitors
4. Train your volunteers. This is not an onerous task and full details will be provided to you during your training. We anticipate that you will spend approximately 1 hour in advance of your Digital Community Archive Event to train your team of volunteers
5. Source and book a suitable venue (local school hall, library, community hall or similar). Ideally the venue should be provided to you for free but in exceptional circumstances an allowance of up to £100 will be made available. We appreciate that at this stage in the process you may not be in a position to know what venue you will source and wherever it will be pro-bono so don’t let this deter you from becoming a Digital Champion!
6. Market your event to your local media (local newspaper, radio and TV). We will provide you with a press release template which you can adapt to suit your particulars
7. Turn up on the day of your Digital Community Archive Event, support your team of volunteers and marvel at the wonderful assortment of artefacts that are brought in. Take pleasure and satisfaction in knowing that you have played an important and unique part in enabling local communities to share their First World War heritage whilst ensuring the stories are retained for future generations
8. Submit your work as evidence of your Legacy110 project
Should you wish to express an interest in becoming a Digital Champion and running your own Digital Community Archive Event please contact:

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Background Information:

The Commonwealth War Graves Foundation (CWGF)
The CWGF is a charitable foundation highlighting the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Our aim is to engage young people and the wider community around the UK in the story of our common sacrifice and shared history. To find out more: www.cwgc.org

Oxford University
Dr Stuart Lee, Faculty of English Language and Literature at Oxford University supported the Europeana project in 2016, which digitally recorded First World War Archive material across Europe.