

The First World War: Then and Now

Clements Hall Local History Group

The impact and legacy of the First World War on our neighbourhood in York

An evaluation of the project

Anne Houson

Project volunteer, Clements Hall Local History Group

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www.clementshallhistorygroup.org.uk



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1 Summary

Clements Hall is a community building to the south of the centre of York. The Hall is used for a wide range of activities, with participants of all ages from the local community. It aims to be a sustainable and thriving facility that reflects its local, social purposes in its programmes and services.

Clements Hall Local History Group was set up in 2013 by a group of people living locally, to explore the history of their neighbourhood – the Scarcroft, Clementhorpe, Nunnery Lane and South Bank areas of York.

In 2015 the Group made a successful application for an HLF grant of £10,000 for a two year project from Jan 2016 - Dec 2017 under *The First World War: Then and Now* programme. The aim was to explore the impact and legacy of WW1 on our neighbourhood. We used a variety of methods to share and publicise researches: talks, displays and exhibitions, website and social media, publications, videos, performances and other events.

2 What we wanted to achieve

2.1 Background

Clements Hall in York was originally built by public subscription and opened in 1933 as the parish hall for nearby St Clement's Church in York, to the south of the city walls. Now a listed building, it has had a wide range of uses following its detachment from the church. The St Clements Hall Preservation Trust was set up by a number of local people to try to save it for the local community when it fell into disuse. It later came into the possession of City of York Council and became vandalised and nearly derelict. Eventually in late 2008 the Trust began to rebuild it with a government grant and the refurbished building finally re-opened to the public with the Trust as leaseholders in 2010. The Trust changed its name to Clements Hall Trust in 2011. It aims to be a sustainable and thriving facility that reflects its local, social purposes in its programmes and services.

The Hall is used for a wide range of activities, with participants of all ages from the local community. It is dependent on the hire of the rooms and offices for its principal income, as it receives no revenue funding.

Clements Hall Local History Group started in 2013 when, following a series of local history events at Clements Hall, a small group of people who wanted to share their love of history decided to set up a special interest group. The aim was to investigate the local history of the Scarcroft, Clementhorpe, Nunnery Lane and South Bank areas of York (see map), welcoming all to participate. The group started out by meeting regularly, researching aspects of local history such as the local shops, and staging events. In 2016 an annual talks programme was established, with around 55 members initially, who paid a small annual subscription.

The group knew from their researches that there was much information to be gleaned from the local community. With the approaching WW1 centennial they were anxious to do work on what WW1 had meant to their local area, being aware of a ticking clock in terms of getting personal histories and recollections. Family memories of WW1 had been handed down, but



Our area of York

as time passed and generations died, those memories were being lost, or their legacy was not being understood. A successful application to the *HLF First World War: Then and Now* programme offered the chance to work on a focused project, to help people in the area to develop a better understanding of what WW1 meant to everyone who lived in the area, not just fighting men.

The group were surprised to meet people at events who did not know the difference between WW1 and WW2. People also tended to talk about WW1 in terms of the war dead, but not much else. Many were unaware that there had been WW1 damage to the area only a few hundred yards away from where meetings were held.

Many men from this densely populated area enlisted in the First World War and most returned, but some died. Others were wounded or disabled. All, with their families, were influenced by the experience, some profoundly. The War was also felt in other ways locally, for example by aerial bombing, resulting in death and injury, with damage to housing.

2.2 Project management

Clements Hall Trust is managed by a group of Trustees. Clements Hall Local History Group is managed by a committee of members elected at each History Group AGM. This management committee meets regularly during the year, and in October 2015 a WW1 project team was established, to manage the HLF project for 2016 and 2017, led by volunteer Dick Hunter. There was a small number of volunteer participants/researchers initially, which rose to around 10 eventually. We were able to share and discuss our findings with a much larger number of people. The project group met formally around 12 times to steer and evaluate the project, with many extra meetings and email discussions about particular activities.

The time period covered was from 1914 until the present day. The plan was as follows:

Year 1: Recruiting and training volunteers, gathering archival evidence, engaging with schools, groups of older persons and people with disabilities, and collecting oral testimony from descendants of those from the WW1 period.

Year 2: Focus on transcribing testimonies, learn how to produce displays, guides and digital material.

In terms of resources, the project management group benefited from a contribution in-kind from Clements Hall Trust, with the use of meeting rooms including AV for planning purposes free of charge, storage space for equipment and materials, and financial services support – processing and paying invoices, ordering stationery items, operating a purchase ledger and processing of volunteer expenses. The project paid for the use of rooms for its events and for training sessions.

Although group members were mainly volunteers learning about their local history, the project benefited from a range of specialist and professional expertise given freely, either by individual project participants, or on an ad hoc basis by outsiders. These included a documentary film-maker with special effects expertise, a professional actor, a marketing professional and experienced web manager, and experienced historical researchers (see Appendix E.) We also discovered hidden talents amongst our group members, for example performance skills and professional proof-reading expertise.

The project planned to explore local records to reveal a range of WW1 experiences and contexts. These include school log books, York Citizens' Committee records, York Cemetery records, newspapers, correspondence and diaries, maps, 1911 census, and voluntary

organisation archives. The aim was to focus on issues that impacted on the locality, in particular on children and families.

We recognised the valuable support offered by representatives from First World War Engagement Centres such as <http://arts.leeds.ac.uk/legaciesofwar>, <https://everydaylivesinwar.herts.ac.uk> and www.gatewaysfww.org.uk, and aimed to work with these and other centres to assist in activity.

We planned to train six local people with no previous experience to participate in our oral history element. These would record interviews with those whose lives have been influenced by the War, and compile edited transcriptions for an archive. They would explore family memories of War veterans and the nature of the legacy, for example in relation to perceptions of those who sought exemption from military service, and those who experienced long-term injury and disablement. The aim was a minimum total of six one hour interviews in each of the two years, exploring how the effects of the war were transmitted through generations. The project also planned to record items of 'material culture' in the possession of descendants of those who lived through WW1.

There would be four themed evening talks during the project at the Hall, which has excellent disabled access and is also used by older residents. There would be a half day exhibition at Clements Hall in each of the two years, drawing particular attention to the work of local schools, and highlighting findings. These would be staged in collaboration with other organisations eg Explore York Archives and Local History, York Museums Trust, National Railway Museum, St Clements Church, and youth and family history organisations. There would also be touring displays, for local groups for talks, events and displays, such as churches, community centres etc.

Findings would be publicised and disseminated using the group website, which would be developed to conform to HLF requirements.

We planned to produce three walking trail leaflets on local war memorials, on the impact of the first aerial attack on York in 1916, mapping casualties, homes damaged; and local responses, and mapping local responses to food shortages for example.

We wanted to encourage interest from local schools: Scarcroft School (primary), Millthorpe School (mixed; comprehensive), and The Mount School (independent; girls), in support of project objectives. We planned to use the Scarcroft School archive to generate interest by children in the experiences of the War years, and their legacy. The aim was to produce a school information resource, with two booklets and the website.

At the end of the project there would be a two hour local event at the Hall, celebrating achievements and findings.

Using the activities outlined above we planned to ensure that the results of our project were shared with groups of local residents, schools, young people's organisations such as scouts and guides, youth clubs, groups for older people and those with disabilities, and other community groups.

We aimed to train people in the use of digital outputs such as websites, social media and the use of presentation software, as well as in giving talks, with extra informal mentoring. In total we aimed to train 15 volunteers and recruit support in-kind from 10 volunteer specialists.

We hoped that effective use of local press publicity and community noticeboards, highlighting the effect of the war on local families, would attract interest in our work from the wider community, but recognised that for some groups a proactive approach was necessary. We planned to extend our already effective use of social media such as Twitter and Facebook to attract interest from younger groups.

We hoped to achieve five outcomes to this project, as follows:

1. Heritage would have been identified and recorded
2. People would have learned about the impact and legacy of the WW1 in our area, supported by the use of web and social media
3. A wider range of people would have engaged with heritage, especially young people and schools
4. People would have developed skills and confidence
5. People would have volunteered time to support the project with their specialist skills

3 What actually happened

When our bid for HLF funding was assessed, we were informed that the oral history element would not be allowed, as it was held to be 'historically inaccurate' to talk to third parties after a long period of time. We regretted this ruling, as we were planning to interview families about the *legacy* of WW1, the effect on their lives, such as grandfathers with long-term disablement, or the knowledge of a conscientious objector ancestor in the family. But the project was approved with full funding, albeit without this element. We are very grateful to Katharine Boardman and her colleagues at the HLF Yorks and Humber for their support and advice with our project.

We publicised the project extensively throughout the two years, partly to recruit local people interested in exploring the impact of the war on our neighbourhood, offering training and support and partly to share our findings (see Appendix A for publicity examples). We used local radio, local press, around 40 community noticeboards in our neighbourhood, Clements Hall newsletter, our website and social media, and posters and flyers placed in shops and churches etc. We also took advantage of TimeLinePlus, a grouping of around 30 local history and archaeology groups around York and district, to share our activity. Other publicity pieces featured in *Who Do You Think You Are* magazine and the British Association for Local History *Local History News*.

Initially training was informal, with mentoring by experienced researchers, but eventually we organised a one day workshop on 'Responses to Conscription' and then a series of half day training sessions on 'Tips and tricks for using your PC for history research', 'Preparing publicity material on your PC', 'Using Twitter to explore resources and to share the results of activity', 'Creating a Powerpoint presentation'.

We drew upon a number of sources for our research activities, including:

- School log books (Borthwick Institute, University of York)
- Scarcroft School archive (Scarcroft School)
- York Citizens Committee records (York Explore)
- York Cemetery records (York Cemetery)
- Local newspapers (York Explore)
- Correspondence and diaries (private collections)
- Maps (Online and at York Explore)
- 1911 census (www.ancestry.co.uk and www.findmypast.co.uk)
- Liddle Collection (University of Leeds)
- Tommy Brown letters (University of Newcastle Library Special Collections)



Researching in the Liddle collection at Leeds

- William Varley scrapbooks (York Explore)
- Southlands Church

We also talked to the descendants of conscientious objector Edmund Cooper, and families of householders killed in the Zeppelin raid.

In order to focus our efforts we decided to explore research themes as follows:

- The role of the churches in influencing attitudes to the War in our area
- The impact of the May 1916 Zeppelin attack
- The experiences of WW1 soldiers, sailors and airmen
- The impact of the War on Scarcroft School
- Food shortages in the First World War
- The role of uniformed youth organisations on the Home Front in our area
- The contribution of women in the First World War
- Conscience and the call to arms in WW1
- Rowntree Park: our legacy from the First World War
- Mental nursing and the Great War

Some of these themes were more successful than others within the time-scale.

Project members took trips to the following to learn from other peoples' projects and exhibitions. Members visited:

- Leeds Museum *In their Footsteps* - WW1 exhibition
- *Voices of the Home Front* conference at Kew, London - a joint venture run by The National Archives and *Everyday Lives in War First World War Engagement Centre*
- Newcastle University Archives
- The Liddle collection at the University of Leeds
- North Yorkshire County Record Office *Grounds for Appeal* project
- Doncaster 1914-18 (www.doncaster1914-18.org.uk)
- *Barnbow Canaries* production at West Yorkshire Playhouse
- IWM North Commemoration and Memory event
- Gateways to the First World War: End of Phase 1 event at Canterbury
- Discovering the First World War in Yorkshire and the Humber event at Leeds
- York Army Museum
- Castle Museum York WW1 exhibition

These trips were invaluable in making contact with other people involved in WW1 projects and receiving help and guidance, and for getting inspiration from other groups' activities. The trip to the Gateways to the First World War: End of Phase 1 event at Canterbury was particularly helpful in planning our end of year event.

Our planned activity was rolled out over the two year project period, with a variety of methods to share and publicise our researches: talks, displays and exhibitions, website and social media, publications, videos, performances and other events. Finally we staged a celebration of achievement in November 2017.

3.1 Talks

We delivered a total of 12 talks to a wide variety of people (see Appendix B). In some instances people came to hear these at Clements Hall, and in other instances, we travelled to other venues. They ranged from general talks about the project to quite specific talks about parts of the project. We took the opportunity at all the talks to signpost and promote the project's research and activities.



Zeppelin event in May 2016

3.2 Exhibitions

At an early stage we commissioned three banner stands to highlight the project. These were a mobile publicity display which we were able to use in a variety of venues, together with specific extra display panels at our events to highlight different aspects of our researches. The display panels featured a variety of subjects and many told a story about a particular local place or person (see Appendix C).

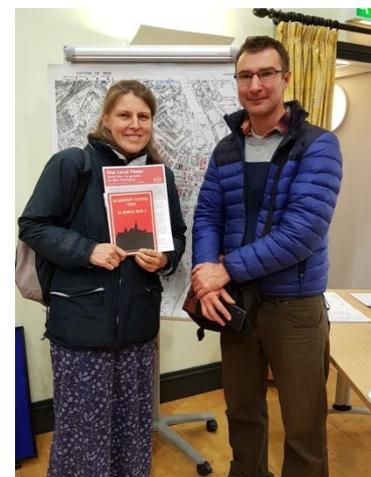


New banner stands



One of our displays at York Explore Library

At our final full day celebration of achievement event in November 2017 at Clements Hall we launched our publications and featured displays, talks, films and performances.



Rachael Maskell MP at our celebration of achievement event, with filmmaker Chris Maudsley

3.3 Website and social media

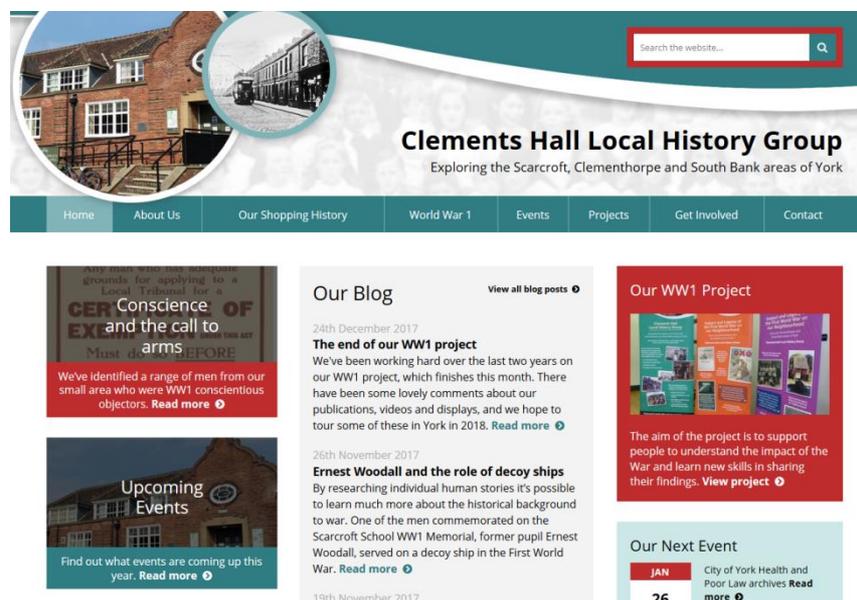
From the start of the project we recognised that the web would be a key tool for us. Although we had originally hoped to be able to make use of space at the Hall for an archive open to the public, as well as for storing display material, this proved impossible and we were only able to do the latter. Therefore we knew that our findings – human stories and discussion about the impact of war - would need to be accessible on the web.

We planned to develop our existing website, which we had created and used extensively before the project started, as the group has an experienced web manager as a volunteer. Our website had been based on the free version of WordPress.com, using one of their standard themes, and we already had a lot of experience in linking material to and from social media.

We used part of our HLF funding to develop the website, to ensure that the project featured prominently on it and make it accessible, as WordPress did not meet this requirement. We also wanted to ensure that it functioned across different user platforms, recognising that many people, especially older people, tend to use tablets and smartphones rather than PCs. This initiative proved to be problematic initially. We had only allocated £1,250 to it in the budget and after approaching eight firms we discovered that the cost of what we needed to achieve would normally be at least £3,000-£4,000. Eventually we found a local firm, SeeGreen, who agreed to create a new accessible website for us within our budget, viewing it as a business community initiative in support of a local community organisation. We were delighted at the result (see www.clementshallhistorygroup.org.uk), which is based on an open source content management system.

As well as regular blog posts, the website (see image below) includes static pages for each of our WW1 research themes. Following a visit by two group members to an event at the IWM North, when Professor Jay Winter talked about representations of war and the impact of imagery, we decided to use visual images to represent each of our research themes.

Over the two year project period we have published thirty blog posts (see Appendix D for further details of the range and reach of some of these). We have also published a selection of articles in various styles and depths on a range of subjects. Wherever possible we provide relevant links on the site, and a reference list, so that readers could choose how far to delve into a subject that interested them. One of our web pages records 'resources for WW1 research' that identifies primary and secondary sources material to help people do their own research. We work hard to include as many illustrations as possible, so as not to be too text heavy and more attractive to read.



Our new website only went live in November 2017, but it has:

- enabled us to highlight the work of the project in a more attractive way
- ensured we meet accessibility requirements (WCAG A level compliance)
- increased the storage capacity from 3GB to 4 GB
- made searching and navigating the site easier for users
- improved accessibility across varied platforms such as PC's, tablets and smartphones
- enabled us to analyse site traffic more rigorously

It is too early for comparisons about website traffic in comparison to the old site, as it has only been live for one month, but early signs indicate that it is proving popular.

We also used social media to engage, publicise and inform. The group has two Twitter accounts (*@clemhallhistory* and *@zeppelinWW1live*) and a Facebook account (*www.facebook.com/clementshallhistorygroup*). These can also be accessed through our website. We use these extensively to promote events and in the case of Twitter, to network with other organisations and to discover new resources.

In May 2016 the group worked with The Mount and Millthorpe secondary schools to produce a live twitter feed, at *@zeppelinWW1live*, exactly 100 years from the date of the Zeppelin raid on our area. This was a moment-by-moment account of the raid, comprising over 80 tweets.

The group has used Historypin to curate a collection of text and images about WW1 conscientious objectors (*www.historypin.org/en/first-world-war-centenary/ww1-conscientious-objectors-in-york*). The schools and ourselves have also used Historypin to curate a collection entitled *Zeppelin Raid on York 2 May 1916*. This commemorates the people who died, with a collection of pictures of the area from then and now, copies of letters, the story of the raid and photos of our commemorative events. Students from both schools walked the route of the raid and laid crosses in memory of the dead. (see <https://www.historypin.org/en/zeppelin-raid-on-york-2-may-2016>)



Zeppelin walk

3.4 Publications

The original aim of the project was to produce three walking trail leaflets on topics such as local war memorials, the impact of the first aerial attack on York in 1916, mapping casualties, homes damaged, and on local responses. We had seen a walking trail leaflet as having value in helping people see the important WW1 locations in the area, some familiar, some not. However mid way through the project we felt we could use publications to

- reach more directly into our locality and engage with young people
- reach people who so far had had no contact with the project
- reach people who were unable to engage with our website and social media.

After considerable discussion we decided to use three publications in different ways to achieve these aims. We obtained four quotes for these and eventually commissioned Design and Print Solutions (University of York) to carry out the work. We produced:

- 1) 5000 copies of a newspaper, *Our Local Times*, about how WW1 affected specific people and places in WW1. This was aimed at local residents of all ages and local businesses, with very short articles, illustrated with photographs of the area.
- 2) 1500 copies of a booklet, *Scarcroft School York in World War 1*, about how WW1 affected a local primary school, its staff and pupils. This was aimed at schoolchildren, teachers and former pupils of Scarcroft School, with a chronological illustrated account of what happened to the school in WW1 interspersed with stories about individuals, organisations and families.
- 3) 1500 copies of a walking trail leaflet, *World War One in Clementhorpe, Scarcroft and South Bank York*, about the impact of WW1 on the buildings and landscape of the area, aimed at current local residents, former residents and newcomers to the area. This was a booklet with a fold-out map which highlighted places, which were significant in local WW1 history. Each place was illustrated by line drawings.



3.5 Videos

We had valued previous contact with a local documentary filmmaker who had worked with us on a short video about the history of our local shops. After discussing our WW1 project with him we decided to use his welcome expertise to film our project activity, to enable us to share some of our researches in a memorable way, using some special effects. From our budget we provided a contribution to his costs, welcoming his support for our activity, giving much of his time freely.

We considered various options for hosting videos online, such as Vimeo and Picasa, but eventually agreed that YouTube would suit our purposes, because of the ability to link to it from our website and social media, its potential to attract attention from people who would not normally see our output, and its detailed analytics system. Our videos are now available on our new YouTube channel and via our website at www.clementshallhistorygroup.org.uk.



Filming in the North Yorkshire County Record Office

They are

- *York Zeppelin Raids 1916* (premiered at our talk on 19 May 2016)
- *Conscience and conscription in WW1: responses from a York neighbourhood* (premiered at our end of year event on 18 November 2017).
- *'Soldier, Brother, Friend': A Calendar of the War-Dead, South Bank, York, 1914-18* (online soon)

3.6 Dramatic performances and other events

We carried out or hosted a total of five performances featuring the following:

- a *Munition Dirge* (Members of the group researched an archival document to discover the female writer and her background as a local munitions worker, setting the text to music and devising a performance)
- a dramatic presentation of the letters of a local teacher, Edward Hope Hawthorne, who wrote home to our local area from active service - read by an actor.
- a reading of some of the WW1 letters written home by a local resident and former pupil of a local school from active service - read by his great-nephew

We also worked with local secondary schools (The Mount and Millthorpe) who used our research about the 1916 local Zeppelin raid to create a walk of its route and erect a plaque to the victims of the raid. Members of the project also walked the route.



Performance in York Explore Library

In November 2016 the project leader co-judged an Historical Association Yorks heat of an inter-schools debate on a WW1 family/community subject at The Mount School. This was at the invitation of Helen Snelson (Mount School).

4 EVALUATION

4.1 How we went about evaluating our project against our project planned outcomes

This was quite a small project so we did not think it worthwhile to pay for an external evaluation. We recognise that carrying out an internal evaluation risks bias, as people may hesitate to be critical when responding to a project volunteer. However we were aware that the HLF had commissioned Sheffield Hallam University to carry out an external evaluation of projects such as ours, and we have supplied their researchers with contact details.

We carried out a very useful mid-project assessment, to appraise how far we were meeting our aims, and throughout the project held regular de-briefings after each activity/event. We also contacted people involved with the project, asking for feedback about their involvement. We carried out interviews with selected participants.

At each event we did head counts and supplied forms for people to provide feedback. At our celebration of achievement event we supplied a visitors book for comments and Post-it notes for comments to be placed on a board. We also tried to observe peoples' behaviour at exhibitions.

4.2 Results of evaluation and what we learned

None of these activities would have worked without volunteered time and skills/expertise. Volunteers on the project told us they had an amazing time learning how to research about WW1. Many of them did things they would never have attempted before this project started, for example shrinking violets became video presenters. The project reached deep into our local area to all ages, generating a huge amount of interest and an archive of material about the impact of WW1, much of which was previously difficult for people to find.

We have grouped our evaluation discussion against each of our planned outcomes.

4.2.1 Heritage would have been identified and recorded

Working to a tight focus had meant that we could use the skills of our small group of around eight research volunteers to research a subject in depth. Researchers on the project are unanimous in saying that they learned a huge amount about WW1 heritage in the local area as a result. It enabled all of them to look at WW1 with fresh eyes in the light of newfound knowledge. It has also made some of them look differently at their own family histories.

The overall project management fell on one person and although we tried to subdivide the work into themes each led by a volunteer, it was difficult to keep this up, thus general leadership was a heavy workload.

The results of our research have been used in our publications, our videos, our displays and our website. Much of the material in the Scarcroft School booklet was from an archive held at the school which had previously had been unknown to most of the general public until we made excerpts available through our publications and other activities.

Wherever possible in our talks we have signposted people towards the sources for our research, which appear on our website. Most people, before the talks, were not aware of, for example:

- the extent of the Zeppelin raid in our area
- the extent of the impact of WW1 on Scarcroft School
- the work of women at a local factory in WW1

These new discoveries from our research are now recorded on our website and in (in part) in our publications. As these publications were only launched in November 2017, evaluation is still a work in progress, but the resounding number of positive comments about our launch event, from e-mail, Twitter and word-of-mouth is indicative of their great success.

The videos will be a lasting record on YouTube of our research. In particular *Conscience and conscription in WW1: responses from a York neighbourhood* highlights the value of the appeal tribunal records at North Yorkshire County Records Office (NYCRO), and points viewers towards the NYCRO archive.

The Hawthorne letters were passed on by his family, following our researches in the archive at our local (Scarcroft) school. This archive had been little known to the general public until we shared some of the details through the reading, our website and our publications. The

Munitions Dirge was a result of a serendipitous discovery of a piece of verse written by a woman who had worked in munitions at a local factory.

The group still has a great many research notes to be shaped into articles for the website. We did endeavour to tighten up our referencing practice, using British Association for Local History guidelines, and considered creating a larger database of relevant sources, but unfortunately ran out of time.

Comments:

I read Scarcroft School York in World War 1 on the train home on Saturday and was most impressed. It could stand as a model of what can be achieved by local history groups, and I do hope it will be exhibited on one of the stalls at the Friends' Meeting House next June.

(Email comment from a former chair of the British Association for Local History)

Brilliant exhibition and documentary

(Comment about video from end of year event visitors book)

Excellent! A marvellous outcome from a wonderful ambitious project. What's next?!

(Comment from our end of year event visitors book)

4.2.2 People would have learned about the impact and legacy of the WW1 in our area, supported by the use of web and social media

Observing peoples' behaviour at events we noticed that most people spent several minutes studying the text, and were very interested in pictures that featured local places, for example, the Zeppelin raid or the local VAD hospital (now demolished). One of the stands that drew most interest was the local war dead map. We have been able to discover details about at least two of the local WW1 war dead because people saw the names of their relatives on the displayed war dead list. This gave the group the opportunity to share information with descendants. The exhibition panels will be kept and used again, at other events, and our new findings will be recorded on our website.

The table below demonstrates how the WW1 project increased the numbers of visitors to our existing website. As the project started in 2016, we feel it is significant that views on the website increased more than doubled between 2015 and 2016, and increased again in 2017. Even allowing for the fact that some of the views would have been to do with non-project topics, we think the increase is to a large extent as a result of the project and its activity, and count this as a success.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Views</i>	<i>Visitors</i>
2013 (seven months)	6,275	740
2014	11,106	1,605
2015	7,438	1,219
2016	15,276	3,499
2017 (Jan to Oct)	17,786	n/a

Our new website was launched on 19 November 2017 and so far we have achieved the following:

	<i>Visitors</i>	<i>Unique visitors</i>
November 2017 (12 days)	371	179
December 2017	159	39

Google Analytics reveals that these are now spread between users on desktops (53.7%), tablets (25%) and smartphones (21.3%).

Popular posts and pages have included

	<i>Views since November 2017</i>
Home page	1387
Presenting our researches	312
WW1 project	249
First World War dead from our area	104
Ernest Woodall and the role of decoy ships in World War	95
The Impact of the War on Scarcroft School	88
Conscience and the call to arms in WW1	78

We now have 231 Twitter followers for our @clemhallhistory account and 70 for our @zeppelinWW1live account. We have tried to keep up a regular stream of tweets about our project, linking to new blog posts about the project, and many of those tweets have been re-tweeted by people and organisations with an interest in the subject, and have therefore cascaded to a much wider audience. Publicity on social media has attracted new members, and visitors to our events. We know this because people have told us so. The live twitter feed about the Zeppelin raid was a huge success in engaging a younger age group with the project, who took part in creating this. Our twitterfeed also generated a link to *Everyday Lives in War First World War*, who reproduced our web article about how churches influenced attitudes to WW1 in our area.

We regularly use our Facebook account to highlight blog posts and attract comments about our activities. It currently has 150 likes/follows. The reach of our Facebook posts varies, on average around 300, although a post highlighting *York Press* coverage of our WW1 project attracted 2,484 views.

The group has used *Historypin* to curate a collection of text and images about WW1 conscientious objectors, and this has generated 329 views to date. The Zeppelin collection has had 259 views to date.

Our online presence has allowed us to establish links with

- a family whose ancestors suffered fatalities at Upper Price St in the 1916 Zeppelin raid.
- the relative of a nurse who worked at a local VAD hospital

These valuable links have and will contribute to our WW1 research.

There have been difficulties, for example in encouraging volunteers to help with web work. At the moment we only have two people doing this, but a further two have now agreed to be trained up. At the same time there has to be an element of editorial control, even when using a content management system, to ensure we use a consistent voice to talk about our activities.

The new website does not allow for direct comments from the public, as was the case with our old WordPress site, albeit moderated, and does not allow followers who would be alerted by a new blog post. While this might be seen as a disadvantage, we always use Facebook and Twitter for comments and alerts, and also have an Yahoo Group email system which anyone can join, and so we feel that the advantages of the new site outweigh these reservations.

Comments:

What an amazing amount of work has been put into these displays. Well done!
(Comment from visitors book at end of year event)

The way the group communicates through e mail, as well as meetings, and our use of the website to give out information is very helpful
(Comment from one of our volunteers, who has mobility problems)

This has been amazing to come to - quite fascinating - makes me understand even more that we can't separate the past from the present. Thank you
(Comment from end of year event visitors book)

Made me realise what a great deal was demanded of those who conscientiously objected to conscription
(Comment from end of year event visitors book)

I feel that we know these ladies so well. Great research.
(Comment on Facebook about the munitions workers)

Great performance by (you) today of A Munitions Dirge. Well done to all involved!
(Comment on Twitter)

Extremely informative – congratulations on the huge effort you've take to deliver all this
(Comment about end of year event from visitors book)

Excellent exhibition and films - a great deal of work behind them
(end of year project visitors book)

I could never do what you lot have done but I am glad you did it
(Comment from local pub)

4.2.3 A wider range of people would have engaged with heritage, especially young people and schools

From talking with people who visited our exhibitions, it became obvious that many of those people would not have been comfortable researching, attending history talks or reading about history, yet they were fascinated by and happy to engage in conversation around the photos they saw on the displays/exhibits. In this way the visuals reached out to people who otherwise would not have engaged with the project.

All the WW1 scheduled talks attracted new members to the history group. It is evident from our membership



School student stand at Zeppelin event

records that most individuals attended more than one of the project's talks at Clements Hall, which indicates that talks stimulated their curiosity. It was heartening to see that the Zeppelin talk in May 2016 at Clements Hall attracted the best attendance figures of any talk the history group had given (78) and attracted 34 non-members to the group.

The turnout at the display/performance event in Archives Week at York Explore (York Central library) in November 2016 was disappointing, as it clashed with Black Friday shopping frenzy and St Nicholas's Fair. But it drew a small audience of library visitors who would not have approached us locally.

All our publications have been made available digitally on our website, in pdf format at www.clementshallhistorygroup.org.uk. This means of course that if necessary they can be enlarged on screen for people with sight difficulties. They have been distributed to both our local primary schools and our three local secondary schools. At the time of writing, 3,700 copies of *Our Local Times* have been delivered to households in our area. This accounts for nearly all the households in our history group's area. Over 600 walking trail leaflets have been dispersed across the neighbourhood, and to the central and local libraries. Over 900 copies of the *Scarcroft School York in World War 1* have been issued. Recipients of publications also include:

- York Explore (York Central Library) and branch libraries
- GEM – an over 50's lunch club held at Clements Hall
- the local church (St Clements)
- visitors to Clements Hall

Copies of the walking trail leaflet and *Our Local Times* have also been left for customers at two local hairdressers and two public houses in the area. We have sought verbal feedback from these establishments and so far this indicates that readers were inspired to chat about and discuss the WW1 history of the area among themselves. This is exactly what we had hoped for.

The group will be reviewing distribution in 2018 with a view to meeting gaps in distribution and holding back a small hard copy surplus for future events and requests from individuals.

We have had a response from a descendent of one of the women who worked at a local factory in WW1, uncovering a new resource. We will be following up this woman's story and sharing it on our website.

Following each of our talks we allowed time for questions and answers to promote discussion, and to enable us to evaluate the success of each talk. We considered that a lively debate allowed people to develop and debate a deeper understanding of the impact of WW1.

We were originally keen to create object boxes to help in talking to older persons' groups, but failed to secure assistance from Castle Museum. We decided eventually not to proceed with this, especially as our oral history element was no longer included in the project.

The Zeppelin video brought home to most viewers the sheer size of the airships, and this was the main comment about the video as people left the talk. The video was able to demonstrate this in a powerful way compared to written accounts. The video about conscientious (and other) objectors was an effective vehicle for sharing our researches on COs, especially for those who had not attended the conscription workshop and who had not engaged with our website articles. At the time of writing views on YouTube for each video are:

York Zeppelin Raids - 505 views

Conscience and conscription in WW1: responses from a York neighbourhood. - 74 views

The *Munition Dirge* performance has now been seen by at least 200 people, and over 100 people saw the two letter reading performances. All the performances were very moving in their own ways and offered an accessible introduction to those who were unfamiliar with the project, or with history at all. They provided an intimate look at WW1 in a way the written word could not. Edward Hope Hawthorne's great grandson and family came especially to our event to hear his relative's letters. The munitions worker's family came to one of the performances of her song.

The plaque placed outside Millthorpe School is a constant visual reminder of the impact of WW1 on our area.

We were hoping to do more with older persons' groups but ran out of time.

Comments:

Great exhibition – so much information
(Comment of end of year exhibition)

Very inspiring. Will watch for future events
(Comment of end of year exhibition)

A great exhibition, especially interesting having family living here at the time
(Comment of end of year exhibition)

Fascinating article showing another side to support to the War.
(Comment made on blog post about sphagnum moss article)

We will use these publications as classroom resources for years to come
(Comment from teacher at local secondary school)

Just to say thank you to the Local History Group for Our Local Times. It is a fascinating read and is clearly the result of very hard work
(Email response from local resident)

Just to say thanks for the booklet, pamphlet and map relating to Southbank in WW1. I thought they were all very professionally put together and contained lots of interesting articles and photos - with items to engage all ages of readers. I loved the map and the photos of the school orchestra and football team, and of course, the acetone story - but lots more besides
(Email response from guest at local lunch club)

We received a copy of Our Local Times through our door (Nunthorpe Avenue) yesterday. I just wanted to say how fantastic it is - really interesting and informative and so well written and presented. Have you got another project? I hope so!
(Email from local resident)

They've never stopped talking about it
(Comment from local hairdresser about response from her customers)

Congratulations and huge thanks to Clements Hall Local History Group for the fascinating Our Local Times which recently appeared through my door. I saw this area through new eyes.
(Comment on Twitter)



War dead map at Celebration of Achievement event November 2017

I just want to thank you for dropping Our Local Times through the door tonight. It was really interesting. I will be sharing this local history with my children.
(Email response from local resident)

Thank you very much @clemhallhistory for the fabulous (not to mention fascinating) gift in the children's book bags today!
(Twitter response)

It was really interesting and I especially liked seeing our road in the old times. I loved it well done
(Comment from 7 year old girl at end of year exhibition)

I loved the reading of letters and the actor who was performing. I was literally forced out at the end but so much wanted to stay. It was wonderful and really worth the effort.
(Comment from 9 year old boy at end of year exhibition)

4.2.4 People would have developed skills and confidence

We had lots of enthusiasm for the project, but many of our volunteers lacked confidence in research skills, presentation skills and especially IT skills. We wanted to share and grow our knowledge and expertise to enable a wider group of people to actively participate in our group.

Initially training was informal, with mentoring by experienced researchers, but eventually we organised a one day workshop and then a series of half day training sessions, focusing on IT skills in small group sessions. As we needed to use individual computers for these sessions we had to limit attendance, usually to 5-8 per session. The majority of attendees were members of the history group and project volunteers. Response from feedback questionnaires was that everyone learned from the IT sessions and specifically:

- felt more confident to use digital technology for research
- felt more confident at giving presentations
- felt able to produce more attractive written text.
- felt able to present research in a much more effective way.

A further training session was also held at the offices of SeeGreen, our web developers, when two members learned how to maintain the new site.

Our workshop, *Responses to WW1 conscription*, was a day long event held at a local meeting centre in York in December 2016. It was aimed at people who had a particular interest in responses to conscription in WW1 in our local area and further afield. The aim was to:

- provide an introduction to research methods for people new to local history
- provide an opportunity for the group to network with speakers and attendees to promote and further our research
- showcase our own research
- act as a mid-project test of how much interest there was in our activities.

There were five guest speakers and two speakers from our project group at the event. It attracted 36 attendees, with 15 completed feedback questionnaires. All were positive about the event itself, and all 15 respondents indicated that the workshop had increased both their knowledge and understanding of WW1. Many respondents commented on how they would learn not just from the workshop itself, but go on to explore the further sources about WW1 we had recommended. We were later able to publish presentation slides used at the workshop on our website, to support training needs.

Of the 36 attendees, there were four people who said they would not normally have attended an event of this sort, but for their involvement with the project. The workshop met our intended aim to provide an opportunity for us to engage with other researchers and them to engage with us.

Volunteers on the project agree that nearly every activity they undertook equipped them with the confidence and experience to be able to tackle a similar heritage project in the future.

It has however proved difficult to extend our range of volunteers beyond a group of mostly retired females, with only a couple of male participants and two younger females. The oldest volunteer is over 80. The group is not racially diverse but that reflects the neighbourhood we serve. It includes two people with disabilities.

Comments:

I found as we continued the project I could make better connections with what my Scottish grandfather would have done and considered, even though he was not from our local area.

(Comment from one of the project volunteers)

As a result of my online research I now view my local area in a different way and find I can relate historical events to local places and people

(Comment from one of the project volunteers)

Before this project started, I would have been reluctant to go and do research in an archive, now I want to do more!

(Comment from one of our project volunteers)

(I learned about) the role of businesses in applying for and pursuing applications for exemption

(Response on questionnaire about workshop)

I learned that) there were many different reasons for objection to recruitment especially appeals from employers and that conscientious objectors were only a small proportion of applicants

(Response on questionnaire about workshop)

It helped tell the stories of ordinary people during the war and the moral conflicts many of them faced. I have a greater understanding of the complexities surrounding the issue of conscientious objection

(Response on questionnaire about workshop)

I learnt a great deal (and) saw things from a different perspective.

(Response on questionnaire about workshop)

I have learnt much more about the whole process of military service enrolment, conscription etc. I had no idea so many men appealed.

(Response on questionnaire about workshop)

It has made me...more aware of how lives at home were affected in wider ways. In the past I've mainly thought about serving soldiers.

(Response on questionnaire about workshop)

It opened up an area not known to me before.

(Response on questionnaire about workshop)

It gave an insight and understanding of an area of WW1 study unknown to me

(Response on questionnaire about workshop)

Thank you for inviting us. Great day sharing research/sources & ideas to explore.

Look forward to seeing where it takes us

(Comment on Twitter)

I did not learn new skills, but very importantly, I have used skills I already have such as online research skills, accounting and computer literacy. These skills would otherwise have been wasted. The project has given me renewed confidence

(Comment from project volunteer)

I learned a huge amount about social media and websites. I now feel confident to take on much more of this type of work and want to do more in the future.

(Comment from project volunteer)

I feel I have become much more confident at delivering a relaxed talk and a session

(Comment from project member)

When I hear people talking about the project, especially the publications, which have been read by so many people; I feel I have made a difference to how people feel about his area.

(Comment from project volunteer)

4.2.5 People would have volunteered time to support the project with their specialist skills

We were very lucky to be supported by a range of people with professional and specialist expertise (see Appendix E). These either provided assistance freely or in some cases at a very low charge.

The FWW Engagement Centres provided invaluable support and discussion opportunities, and we gained enormously from attending some of their inspiring events.

Comments:

I just wanted to add my congratulations to others on the success of your project. I think it was a model of local history research, covering a lot of ground but always with that eye to the significant detail. I have pointed many groups in the direction of your website as an example of what can be done to those perhaps lacking confidence. Well done on bringing it to a successful conclusion, and good luck with whatever follows

(Julie Moore, Everyday Lives at War public engagement centre)

5 Conclusion

This turned out to be a very big project and at times it could be said that our enthusiasm carried us away to the extent that we put more hours into the project than our families would have liked. However this project uncovered new evidence and it has curated and shared existing evidence, which would not have been possible without the project.

We feel our early decision to extend our researches beyond lists of war dead was justified. Although we found out much, especially about the role of women, there were some failures. For example we had hoped to explore more about family use of WW1 allotments, by contacting members of the local Allotment Society and publishing a letter in the local newspaper, but had no response.

We were lucky to have varied talent in our group and to get specialist help, for example from FWW Engagement Centres, and good support from Clements Hall itself. We benefited from excellent publicity support from the *York Press* and local radio, less so from our new local TV station.

There is also a large amount of research still to be documented. The lesson to learn from this may be that future projects could be managed in such a way as to watch out for this and 'rein in' where necessary.

In terms of legacy there are some activities being planned for the future. In March 2018 a speaker from the English Heritage Richmond Cell Block Project will be giving a talk to our history group here. We also hope to stage some walks in 2018 based on our map leaflet about WW1. There is much material which hope to display in venues around York such as other churches and libraries, and we are in discussion with York Explore about lodging documentary project records with them as an example of a WW1 project..

Our website of course is a lasting memorial to our hard work and activities. While new technology is invaluable in reaching varied audiences, at the same time however the large number of community noticeboards help us to reach people for whom the internet is not important, especially older people.

In retrospect, it would have been better to have delivered the publications earlier in the project, perhaps at the beginning of 2017, as they have undoubtedly drawn new interest to the project which would have been better garnered earlier rather than later. However, given the time and resources available to us, it is difficult to see how this could have been done. Downsides to the project included a lack of opportunities for reflection and learning. They are far outweighed by its many successes. We feel that we have achieved much more than we set out to do and produced a lasting result for heritage.

Anne Houson, Project volunteer, December 2017

Clements Hall Local History Group

www.clementshallhistorygroup.org.uk

APPENDIX A

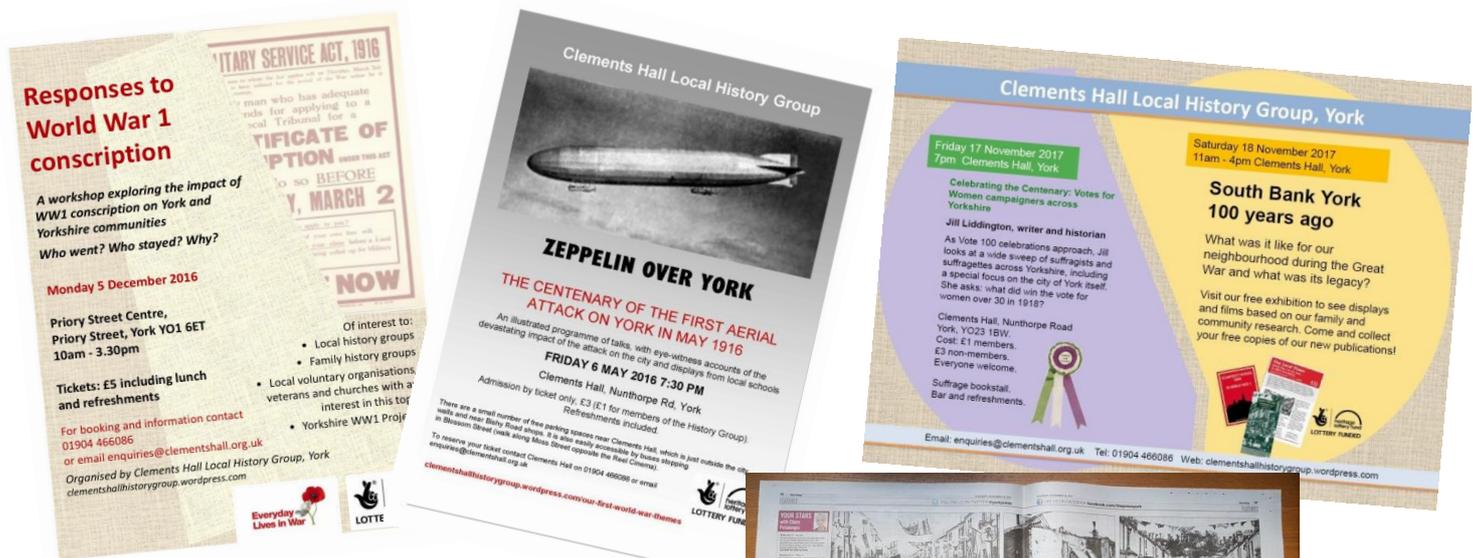
Examples of publicity

Radio

May 2016	Interview on Radio York to publicise and inform about the local 21016 Zeppelin raid
May 2016	Interview on Radio York about Zeppelin raid
November 2017 (1)	Interview on Radio York to publicise and inform about our project, website, publications and end of year event
November 2017 (2)	Interview on Radio York to publicise and inform about our project, website, publications and end of year event
November 2017 (3)	Interview on Minster FM to publicise results of our project, website, publications and end of year event

York Press

May 2016	Double page spread in <i>York Press</i> about Zeppelin raid and event
November 2017	Double page spread in <i>York Press</i> on project, highlighting celebration of achievement event



Examples of publicity



Appendix B

Talks

Date	Description	Attendance figures
March 2016	Informal talk by two members to local residents' association about the project	Approximately 10
May 2016	Illustrated talk at Clements Hall about local Zeppelin raid, with Q and A session	78
July 2016	Illustrated talk at local church group about local Zeppelin raid, with Q and A session	30
July 2016	Two members spoke to pupils at a local primary school about the impact and responses to the Zepp attack in an Informal classroom setting, with illustrations and Q and A.	90 pupils
September 2016	Illustrated talk by outside speaker about ambulance trains at Clements Hall, with Q and A session	35
September 2016	Informal talk to local allotment society about the project	10
November 2016	Talk about local munitions workers at York Explore (York central library), part of York Explore <i>Big Read</i> event. Also included performance.	Visiting library customers
January 2017	Illustrated talk at Clements Hall by three project researchers about their findings, with Q and A session	27
May 2017	Illustrated talk by local teacher about engaging teenagers in local history, at Clements Hall, with Q and A session	27
May 2017 (1)	Illustrated talk at a local church group about local war dead, with Q and A session	32
May 2017 (2)	Illustrated talk at a local church group about local war dead, with Q and A session	35
December 2017	Informal talk to Clements Hall lunch club (over 55's) about the project.	35

Appendix C

Exhibitions

Timeline	Exhibition at (event)	Subjects of exhibition	Attendance
May 2016	Talk about local Zeppelin raid at Clements Hall	War dead map; Display about Zeppelins	78
July 2016	Exhibition at Bishopthorpe Road street party (held at a local pub)	General information about WW1 in the area	Over 150
November 2016	Talk about local munitionettes at York Explore (York central library), part of York Explore <i>Big Read</i> event	Local women munitions workers; <i>Munitions Dirge</i>	Visiting library customers
December 2016	WW1 workshop	Local conscientious objectors	36
November 2017	End of year event	Scarcroft School; Women and munitions; Zeppelin attack Conscience and the call to arms; War dead lists and map; other stories about local places and people	Over 100

Performances

Timeline	Subject	Location	Audience
April 2016	A walk of the 1916 Zeppelin route	Local streets	Young people from the Mount School (aged 11 – 18)
November 2016	<i>Munitions Dirge</i>	Explore (York central library)	visiting library customers
January 2017	<i>Munitions Dirge</i>	Scheduled talk at Clements Hall	27 plus volunteers
November 2017	<i>Munitions Dirge</i>	End of year event at Clements Hall	over 100
November 2017	Hawthorne letters	End of year event at Clements Hall	over 100
November 2017	Aked letters	End of Year event at Clements Hall	over 100

Appendix D

Sample of blog posts, showing total views to October 2017

<i>Title</i>	<i>First published</i>	<i>Number of views to October 2017</i>
Successful bid	November 2015	19
New programme of talks	December 2015	166
Bringing the great war home	March 2016	83
Winning the Children	April 2016	55
Zepp over York – our next talk	April 2016	65
Walking the Zeppelin route	April 2016	101
Exploring the impact of the May 1916 attack	May 2016	137
Conscience and conscription	May 2016	67
Local WW1 women and Sphagnum moss	June 2016	205
That Vile Train	September 2016	44
A new resource for exploring the impact of WW1 conscription	September 2016	284
Women at War - a munitions dirge	November 2016	55
Performing our stories	December 2016	69
Talks programme for 2017	December 2016	92
Arguing against militarism	January 2017	12
WW1 Home Front stories	January 2017	62
Stella Grieves a WAAC from York	February 2017	51
Nunthorpe Hall, the story of an Auxiliary hospital	February 2017	104
Mother shall we have to kill Fraulein?	March 2017	78
A brave bright devotion to duty	March 2017	15
The Dodsworth sisters	April 2017	13
The contribution of women on WW1 home front	April 2017	34
Getting out of the trenches	May 2017	14
Zeppelin film	May 2017	23
Mental Nursing and the great war	July 2017	35

Appendix E

Volunteers – professionals and specialists

Tom Davidson, actor, who delivered a performance of extracts from the Hawthorne letters

Sandra Garside-Neville, for help with research about our local VAD hospital

Tom Kiernan, web developer from SeeGreen for help with our new website

Susan Major, for marketing and web support and IT training

Chris Maudsley, documentary video producer

Alison Fell, University of Leeds, and *Gateways to the First World War Engagement Centre*.

Sam Carroll, University of Kent, and *Gateways to the First World War Engagement Centre*

Julie Moore, University of Hertfordshire, and *Everyday Lives in War Engagement Centre*

David Poole and York Cemetery genealogists

Dick Raines, who gave free time to design some publicity and promotional material

Ruth Rising, from North Yorkshire County Records Office for help with research and much more

Hannah Rogers, York Army Museum

Bob Laurence, Southlands Church

Karen Burnham, for training support

Ken and Linda Haywood (Bishopthorpe) for support on researching war dead

Laura Yeoman and Catriona Cannon, from York Explore for help with research and much more

Teachers and staff from our three local secondary and two local primary schools

Linda Speidel, Alison Rentoul and staff at Clements Hall

Volunteers - others

Dick Hunter, for managing the project and all the hours that has entailed

Our core team of 10 volunteers

All other volunteers who helped with delivering publications, facilitating events and much more.