

# Community engagement in local history:

## a report on the Hemel at War project

This article, by Lynda Abbott and Richard Grayson, offers a fascinating example of collaboration between school and university, focused on the development of a community archive. The project – run as an extra-curricular activity – was originally inspired by a concern to preserve the personal stories of those whose lives were affected by the Second World War. As students have gained experience in researching local stories, developing interviewing skills and learning how to locate and interrogate different kinds of archival material, so their range has expanded, drawing in the experiences of combatants and non-combatants in conflicts ranging from the Boer War to recent missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. The article reveals the wide range of ways in which different participants have benefited from the construction, collection and dissemination of these personal narratives.

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### School history and the community

The value of local history in the curriculum is long established and much discussed. Its importance has been shown in a number of areas such as the development of the skills needed for critical enquiry and understanding historical significance through its impact on specific areas and individuals.<sup>1</sup> However, there has been little or no attention to the potential value of local history as a two-way process between school and community, and relatively little discussion of the ways in which local history can be used as an extra-curricular project. This article is a report on a sizeable local history project, *Hemel at War*, run by a comprehensive school with support from a university historian. As with other extra-curricular activities reported in *Teaching History*, the project has not been designed primarily for use as part of the history curriculum, but as an activity in which students can take part whether or not they are studying history.<sup>2</sup> It has, however, as this article sets out, had a number of positive side-effects for those who are taking history. Moreover, elements of the project have been used in formal classes and any such project has the potential to generate resources with a local flavour which could be widely used in the classroom. It can also play a valuable role in developing independent learning which has improved greatly in schools in recent years but must still be encouraged, not least as a preparation for higher education.<sup>3</sup>

### The project: preserving community memory

*Hemel at War* was launched by The Hemel Hempstead School, an 11-18 mixed comprehensive, in 2008. Its primary aim, as a contribution to the local community, is to create through recorded and transcribed interviews an internet archive of memories of war which would otherwise be lost. Its main focus has been experiences of the Second World War, constructed from interviews with veterans and others who lived through it. These interviews are conducted by students from Years 10 to 13 (aged 14-18, and more girls than boys, despite the military subject matter of many of the interviews). Along with staff, students then prepare interview reports for a website ([www.hemelatwar.org](http://www.hemelatwar.org)). Students have also interviewed veterans of more recent conflicts (including currently serving soldiers) and carried out primary archival research on both world wars.

The project emerged from a number of motives, in particular the school's desire to expand its extra-curricular history work and to engage more with the local community. These goals happened to coincide with the interests and expertise of a former pupil (now a professional historian and one of the authors of this article) who believed that many local stories of the Second World War were in danger of being lost unless they were captured soon.

The time we have spent on the project has been exceptionally rewarding, and we know that this has also been the case for students. We hope it has also been valuable for those

Figure 1: Interview checklist

## Arranging interviews

- ✓ Appeal for interviewees through local paper and through organisations such as the Royal British Legion, Royal Air Force Association and the University of the Third Age (U3A).
- ✓ Task one person with ensuring that anyone who offers an interview gets a response.
- ✓ Try to arrange for different interviews to take place consecutively in one location to minimise travel time. Asking interviewees to come to school is ideal.

## Preparation for the interview

- ✓ Ensure that students have suitable supervision in relation to child protection issues.
- ✓ Prepare a 'standard questionnaire' for all veterans containing questions such as dates of service and units served in.
- ✓ Write to interviewees in advance explaining the purpose of the interview and the procedure, including what will happen to their interview.
- ✓ Provide training for students in the basics of interviewing.
- ✓ Work with students to prepare a list of questions specific to the interviewee.
- ✓ Bring a spare set of batteries for recording equipment.

## During the interview

- ✓ Obtain on a signed form the necessary consent for the use of information from the interview.
- ✓ Fix a time for the interview to end if necessary.
- ✓ Test the recording equipment at the start.
- ✓ As far as possible, let the interview flow in the direction the interviewee wants to take, but do try to gather information from the 'standard questionnaire'.
- ✓ At the end, say thank you and explain what will happen to the interview.

## After the interview

- ✓ Task somebody with writing up a transcript.
- ✓ Check the transcript with the interviewee, which can be especially helpful for spellings of places and names.
- ✓ Task somebody with producing a summary for the website (with final approval always resting with a member of staff). Sometimes a long summary and a short summary are useful, so that the site can be used for different Key Stages.
- ✓ Contact the interviewee telling them when their material is on the website. Often, they will want friends and family to see it.

## Key roles

- External liaison: a staff contact for those wishing to be interviewed.
- Transcript manager: to ensure that interviews are written up.
- Web editor: staff member who approves material for publication.

Figure 2: Ken Blake



Ken Blake served in the 4th Battalion of the Royal East Kent Regiment at Dunkirk. He told us how only one quarter of his battalion of 800 managed to get away. Later, he served in Malta, and was part of 234 Commando Brigade in North Africa. At one point, a ship he was on hit a mine. He said, 'Hundreds of the lads were drowned but I had had a tip that there were lots of mines in the sea and it was safest to stay at the stern of the boat so I survived.' Later in the war, he was a prisoner of war in Germany and was very ill with tuberculosis.

in our local community who have been interviewed and whose wartime memories might otherwise have been lost. Although the project has taken a significant amount of time, we want to emphasise that nobody should be daunted by its scale. Some of the things we have done can be achieved very quickly, easily and cheaply. Even a very basic version of what we have undertaken would bring immense satisfaction and fantastic experiences for both students and staff. We believe that the methods we have used could be easily adopted in many other schools and we have produced a guide which can be downloaded from the homepage of our website by anybody who might wish to do so.<sup>4</sup>

## Methods, sources and outputs

Before any work can begin on gathering information, a number of practical matters must be dealt with. These include, for example, arranging a website, recruiting student volunteers, training students in how to carry out interviews, obtaining consent for use of interviews and ensuring that adequate child protection measures are in place. These practicalities are all discussed at length in our online guide but are also summarised in Figure 1. However, the focus of this article is the potential benefits both for the students involved (in areas such as independent learning and historical knowledge) and the wider community. In order to demonstrate these benefits, the article highlights some of the project's findings.

The core of the project has been interviews carried out with veterans of the Second World War and those who experienced the Home Front. We had a specific and very local interest in that our school had been in existence during

the war (as Hemel Hempstead Grammar School) so students were able to explore how school life in 1939-45 was different from both the present day and the pre-war years. Arranging such interviews was relatively easy. We did so through the local branch of the Royal British Legion, and by publicising our plans through the local paper (see Figure 1).

Veterans gave accounts which covered a wide range of theatres of war. Just the few examples outlined in Figures 2-5 give an idea of the range of issues with which students could engage by carrying out interviews: first-hand accounts of battle, day-to-day living conditions, women at war and relationships between various allied forces. Moreover, by covering a wide range of different theatres of war, students can start to appreciate the global nature of the war and different reasons for conflict taking place across the continents.

In relation to the Home Front, students carried out a number of fascinating interviews. Many conducted several, and discussed the content of others with fellow students so as to be able to make comparisons across interviews. As we describe later, student responses to conducting interviews were very positive, but most of all interviewing helped students to realise the hugely disruptive impact of the war in their own community, and how the entire population became engaged in the war effort. David Stevens started at Hemel Hempstead Grammar School in September 1940 and explained how pupils did their best to support the war effort. He said:

*The school adopted a mine sweeper called the Lord Keith and there was a model of the ship in a glass case at the*

Figure 3: Hylida Maslen



Hylida Maslen's WAAF Flight. Hylida is in the centre row, second from the left.

Hylida Maslen served as a telephonist in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF). If there had been an invasion, it would have been

important to make it as difficult as possible for the Germans to maintain communications across the country and that would mean destroying the telephone systems. Hylida remembered:

*We were threatened once that there would*

*be an invasion. I was at the switchboard. We had to break all the machinery up and destroy everything. I thought, 'What if I do that and it's a false alarm?' So I didn't. It was a bit scary.*

*back of the assembly hall .... A 'farthing fund' was set up to buy comforts for the crew and there was competition between the forms as to how much was contributed.*

Some interviewees told us of the arrival of students from across Europe at the school. Mary Horton remembered,

*These European children were mostly Jewish. One or two came with their parents but some came by themselves. Their parents went to great lengths to help them escape. They didn't want to talk about their experiences at first but opened up later and had earth-shattering stories to tell.*

Peter Mullard remembered being at Corner Hall school during an air raid:

*It was dark down there, but we were not really scared because we were all in it together. I seem to recall that*

*there was some form of artificial lighting, probably paraffin lamps. We sat on benches facing each other. There was no heating. We spent many hours in the shelters.*

There was one particular group of veterans of special interest to students at the school: ten former pupils who were killed in the Second World War and whose names are recorded on a memorial within the school (see Figure 6). Some basic information about the war dead was available very easily from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)). However, to go deeper we used the local newspapers which students were able to access at the local library. There was also a staff-student visit to the National Archives to use records such as infantry battalion war diaries and Royal Air Force squadron log books. The latter are especially useful for obtaining details about the circumstances of a death. For example, 'war diaries' of army battalions usually contain very detailed accounts of the

Figure 4: Eric Downing

Eric Downing was just 20 years old when he took part in D-Day. As part of the 22nd Dragoons Tank Corps he landed at Juno beach with the Canadian forces. His Sherman tank was specially adapted to explode mines as it drove along and its task was to clear a route for the Winnipeg Rifles who would follow behind. He said, 'We were only gone a few yards when there was a blinding flash and the turret filled with smoke. I thought that was the end of us.'

day-to-day activities of each battalion. 'Operations Record Books' for squadrons of the Royal Air Force regularly contain extremely detailed combat reports and references to specific aeroplanes and individual aircrew.

In some cases we were fortunate to be able to track down relatives of those who had died and build up a detailed picture of the deceased.<sup>5</sup> For Robert Duke, who was killed in Normandy in June 1944, we not only found his battalion records, but also managed to interview his widow. She provided photographs and told us, 'Instead of having that lovely boy, I have a medal. It was an absolute waste of a life. We had been married less than 6 months. It was also a very sad thing for his parents. Bob was an only child.' We were able to construct similarly detailed accounts of the lives of others who are recorded on the school memorial. In one case, that of Brian Slade, a school group which happened to be visiting Berlin, was able to visit his grave. We have found that school visits to war cemeteries always evoke emotion, but there was an added poignancy for students when it was known that one grave belonged to somebody who had sat in the same classrooms as they now did.

Although the main focus of the project has been the Second World War, we have been keen to draw in any experiences of conflict which local people have brought to our attention. The earliest war we have covered on the site is the Boer War, and we have material relating to conflicts as recent as that currently being waged in Afghanistan. That material came from interviewing two current serving soldiers, both captains in the army and brothers who had recently attended Hemel Hempstead School. Between the Boer War and Afghanistan, we have also covered the Korean War, the Malayan Emergency, Berlin during the Cold War and the Iraq War.

Of course, there has also been attention to the First World War, not least because the academic involved has developed (in a book on West Belfast) methods for researching local histories in ways that have not been done before, and has been keen to spread the public impact of those methods.<sup>6</sup> Researching that war cannot now offer the same personal experience as interviewing a living veteran of the Second World War. However, it can be rewarding in other ways. Sources for the First World War include, for example, battalion war diaries available at the National Archives in Kew, local newspapers and service records. The latter are newly available online, with their target audience being genealogists, but their potential for use in history education is immense. We have not yet used the First World War sources in great detail for the *Hemel at War* project but our guide explains the potential of them. In particular, we would commend battalion war diaries. These contain very detailed accounts of the whereabouts and tasks of army units on a daily basis. They often include vivid accounts of battle and in some cases even references to individual soldiers (though usually only officers). While few individual service records ever contain information of the circumstances of a death, war diaries can remedy that by providing, for example, detailed descriptions of the nature of fighting on specific days.

It is worth noting that there is much more work which could easily be done on the First World War, going beyond the tasks which have been part of our project. First World War

Figure 5: Douglas Goulborn

Douglas Goulborn's naval service initially took him from Portsmouth to Sierra Leone where he found the living conditions terrible, not least because of the heat. From there, he was posted to a ship of the Free French Navy, the *Commandant Drogou*, which needed a British signaller so it could work with the Royal Navy more easily. He recalled that initially 'Discipline was nil and the French didn't really like us. The first day I was on board there was a knife fight.' He later came to realise how his experiences show how the Allies could work together and he convoyed on the ship for about 15 months before returning to England. Later postings saw him in India and Burma, where he took part in the re-capture of Rangoon in May 1944.

Figure 6: The School Memorial



sources could be used in formal class work in a staged manner depending on the level, the amount of time and the ability range. For example, a class could visit a local memorial and each student could note down the name of one soldier.<sup>7</sup> They could then use the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website to establish a date of death and (almost always) the regiment and battalion in which the soldier served. They might then use a website such as [www.1914-1918.net](http://www.1914-1918.net) (see Figure 7) to research the regiment/battalion to find out where that battalion was at the time the soldier died. That might be the end of the research and that in itself would have revealed much. However, further detail could be added, and whether or not that is carried out will largely depend on available time and the motivation of students. In such cases, a local archive or library might be visited and, armed with a date of death, a student would often be able to find out more about a soldier (such as where he lived or worked) from a local newspaper. The National Archives could also be visited to use a battalion war diary. (Although these are increasingly available online, the vast majority are not yet, so a visit is still necessary.) Any of this type of research offers considerable potential for developing a capacity for independent learning. It can also provide an excellent opportunity for students to enhance their historical knowledge through direct engagement with personal stories which they then understand by placing in a broader context.

### The value of the project

Unlike many other history projects which take place in schools, we have conceived of *Hemel at War* as an extra-

curricular activity and believe that it has a significant value simply as that. Material from the project has been used in formal Year 9 lessons (with students aged 13-14) as preparation for a visit to First World War battlefields and on the subject of Second World War evacuees, but it is not currently used for GCSE classes because the options currently chosen by the school do not include relevant subjects. Rather, our archive has been constructed primarily for local people to deposit their memories in, and also for them to engage with the memories of others. We did not expect that it would have much wider use but we already have some evidence of it being employed in academic research. We know that people as far afield as France, Australia, South Africa, Canada and the USA have used our material.<sup>8</sup>

Creating the archive has been part of the school's efforts to contribute to local community cohesion. While Ofsted no longer inspects this area of schools' work, schools do not have to be under the threat of external sanction to take the community around them seriously.<sup>9</sup> The Hemel Hempstead School, as the oldest state secondary school in the town, has a long tradition of seeking to play a full role in wider society. We believe that our project has contributed to that by creating situations in which younger and older generations meet and talk in ways they would not otherwise do, which can help to challenge generational stereotypes. Furthermore, older people, who might feel that their experiences are no longer of interest to society as a whole, are able to see their lives recorded and given recognition. This was reflected in some of the comments from students who provided us with material

to use in our online guide about how they had engaged with the project. These showed signs of real connections between young and old. One student said, 'The personal accounts of the men and women I interviewed were both informative and incredibly moving'. Another told us, '*Hemel at War* closes the gap between the ages'. The potential for such projects to create extremely positive responses has also been seen in the 'Up the Manor!' project which carried out interviews and created an archive, albeit with very different subject matter.<sup>10</sup>

The project has also had benefits for history as a discipline in school. Our own critical reflection on the way the project has operated so far has led to the following conclusions. First, the most successful aspects by far have been the interviews for reasons mentioned already. Second, visiting the National Archives at Kew was also very popular and engendered a real sense of historical research and 'detective' activity that was both exciting and rewarding. Information gained from feedback questionnaires and chatting to students has revealed that several have been encouraged to study history at A-level and in higher education as a direct result of taking part in the project. Several have mentioned how pleased they were to have the opportunity to learn some local history.

With an eye to debates on the role of narrative in history, the types of individual stories which can be found through interviewing veterans offer some genuinely new stories which can excite and engage students beyond the broad sweep of meta-narratives.<sup>11</sup> As other work has found, the approaches we have used offer personal stories, which can be linked to grander narratives.<sup>12</sup> In feedback on the project, one student told us, 'Interviewing past veterans and prisoners of war allowed me to recreate their experiences, and, rather than read about the majority of soldiers' lives and feel almost distanced from their suffering, I was able to fully connect with how life was'. Another reflected that 'The experiences and memories we were able to assemble allow the sense of the personal to be attached to the dates and numbers that everyone is familiar with'. A third commented that, 'The project has given me a real sense of what the town used to be like and how people used to live'. Another commonly expressed view has been that students feel they have been given 'an amazing opportunity' to meet people who took part in events that they had previously only experienced through textbooks and television. There has also been a sense of real excitement during the research process, particularly when finding out about the ex-pupils who died during the Second World War. This has been enhanced by letters of appreciation received from relatives and friends of these men, grateful that their loved ones have not been forgotten.

A further aspect of the project, which we had not initially thought through, has been to provide some connection between school students and higher education through the engagement of a university historian. One unintended benefit has been to help strengthen the UCAS applications of those involved, especially if they are applying for a history degree. It is still relatively rare for any A-Level student to have handled original primary sources such as battalion war diaries. Having done so, even if only on one visit to the National Archives, gives students a strong flavour of what academic research can involve, including even the smell and feel of documents. That provides something quite unusual to mention on a UCAS form and, if applying to one of the few

universities which still interviews candidates, a significant topic of conversation at interview.

Not only can such a project confer considerable advantages for UCAS applications, but more widely it can offer the range of opportunities which schools are encouraged to provide within 'gifted and talented' programmes. In particular, it can deliver some of the approaches outlined by the 'History Think Tank' which operated as part of the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth.<sup>13</sup> This think tank argued that 'High achievement in history involves thinking like a historian'. That is precisely the approach encouraged by *Hemel at War* with students both using their existing historical knowledge to construct interview questions, and then placing the findings of interviews in broader contexts when they write reports. The think tank also recommended 'linking budding historians to academic historians'. Again, *Hemel at War* did that and other projects could do likewise. Forging links will always rely to some extent on finding academics who are interested in being involved in their community and believe that such projects have an inherent value. In the case of *Hemel at War*, the academic involved was in the second generation of his family to attend the school and still lives close to it, and therefore has an emotional connection to the institution. However, with academics under increasing pressure to demonstrate the public impact of their research, it should be possible to appeal to those who do not have such personal connections to a school or community. Whatever the motives for becoming involved, academics can offer important expertise in locating and using sources, training in research methods, and constructing narratives.

None of this is to say that our project is the finished article. There are several areas which need development, and which we would flag up for others considering such a project. First, availability of time is a huge factor, as is always the case with oral history projects.<sup>14</sup> One of the main challenges for teachers has been finding the time to interview all those who offer their stories, and to ensure that student enthusiasm for the project is met with practical activity. It was also found to be necessary to spend more time with pupils prior to interviews providing background information and suggesting possible lines of questioning. This was particularly true as we moved away from the familiar territory of the world wars and into the large number of conflicts that have taken place since the late 1940s. Further, transcribing from the voice recorder has proved to be a difficult and time-consuming process for most students and we have reached the conclusion that this is best done by teachers or the oldest and most experienced students. Issues such as 'Do we have to write down everything they said exactly how they said it?' need to be discussed and a policy agreed. That is especially important if the integrity of the material gathered is to be maintained in the way necessary for it to be considered an oral history archive which researchers might use, rather than it simply being interviewers' interpretations of what they were told. If the material held is not a precise record of what was said, then that must be made clear to future researchers. Any such project therefore, must manage student expectations about what is possible (and also what is required), and ensure that there is adequate time for work both before and after interviews.

Second, students have been less keen to undertake research on their own or in lunchtime sessions than they were to be

Figure 7: Key sources for local history projects



**Ancestry.co.uk: [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)**  
A key source for First World War service records and medals rolls, and a range of other WWI materials. There is a charge for online use, but it can be used freely at the National Archives in Kew.



**Commonwealth War Graves Commission: [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)**  
The database of those who died in service in 1914-21 and 1939-47. Free to use.



**Hemel at War: [www.hemelatwar.org](http://www.hemelatwar.org)**  
Our own project, which contains a downloadable guide.



**The Long, Long Trail: [www.1914-1918.net](http://www.1914-1918.net)**  
An invaluable introduction to the British Army in WWI, especially useful for working out which battalions served where and when. It is a personal site run by a freelance military historian, Chris Baker, but is widely recognised as an authoritative source of detailed information on the army.

**The National Archives, Kew: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)**  
One of the world's great archives, and one of the easiest for the general public to use. Key collections include army battalion war diaries from both world wars. For the First World War, a growing number are available online for a small charge: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/war-diaries.asp](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/war-diaries.asp)



**UK National Inventory of War Memorials: [www.ukniwm.org.uk/](http://www.ukniwm.org.uk/)**  
A growing project which aims to list the names on all UK war memorials. Free to use.

**Your local library**  
Many local libraries carry back issues of local newspapers, at least for the twentieth century, and these contain a wealth of individual stories which have been forgotten.

involved in interviews (even where interviews were out of school hours). We feel this due partly to the fact that those who have taken part in the project have been studying for public exams and, in a school that offers a vast range of extra-curricular activities, demands on their time are great. Interviews are the most exciting part of the project for many. They also needed more support than we at first realised. Perhaps as teachers we pay lip service to the concept of independent study but rarely provide the opportunities for pupils to engage in this in a fully meaningful way. Despite this, some pupils have conducted their own research successfully and many have made visits to sites of historical interest as a direct result of their engagement in the project. A highly structured approach to teacher guidance and support seems to produce the best results. Pupils need direction before embarking on their own research, for example, guidance as to which websites they might look at and other sources they could try. They also value introductions to people who could help them, such as local archivists. Meanwhile, the National Archives at Kew can seem very intimidating without some initial guidance. Teachers need to be available to give support and encouragement, at least on a first visit. However, students were then able to visit archives and libraries on their own initiative, drawing on earlier guidance.

Third, even though we have tried to place the project outside the formal study of history, most of the students who have taken part in the project have already chosen to study history at either GCSE or A-Level. Encouraging wider participation from those studying other subjects needs further work because it could offer some of the benefits of studying history to those whose GCSE or A-Level choices have not included the subject.

## Conclusion: purpose and audience

For all that our project has appealed to the most able and more generally to those studying history, it has not been directed only at them, nor should other projects be. In providing real purpose (the preservation of memory on a website) for a real audience (the local community) such a project can offer an incentive for involvement to those who might find some school history dull. That might especially be the case with disaffected boys who would not usually pick up a history book voluntarily, but will happily go to talk to an ex-commando about battle experiences. The project can offer diverse opportunities to students of a wide range of abilities and talents. Being involved can range from sitting listening to an interview and asking the occasional question, to



writing up the interview at length and assessing its historical significance through drafting reports for the website or discussing interviews with other students. That is why we are so enthusiastic about *Hemel at War* and why we hope that other schools will be able to adapt our methods for their own local benefit. We feel it has been of value to the school, the history department, the students, the interviewees, the community in general and to us. As the schoolteacher author of this article puts it:

*Running the project has, without doubt, been the most satisfying thing I have done in 40 years of teaching history. Like the students, I have felt privileged to have had the opportunity to meet and share the experiences of people who have helped to shape our recent history.*

#### REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> On skills, see Clemitshaw, G. (2002) 'Have we got the question right? Engaging future citizens in local historical enquiry' in *Teaching History*, 106, *Citizens and Communities Edition*, pp. 20-27; Edwards, C. (2006) 'Putting life into history: how pupils can use oral history to become critical historians' in *Teaching History*, 123, *Constructing History Edition*, pp. 21-25. On significance, see Brown, G. and Woodcock, J. (2009) 'Relevant, rigorous and revisited: using local history to make meaning of historical significance' in *Teaching History*, 134, *Local Voices Edition*, pp. 4-11; and Evans, S., Grier, C., Phillips, J. and Colton, S. (2004) "'Please send socks.'" How much can Reg Wilkes tell us about the Great War?' in *Teaching History*, 114, *Making History Personal Edition*, pp.7-16.
- <sup>2</sup> For an example of a similar extra-curricular history project, see Johansen, M. and Spafford, M. (2009), "'How our area used to be back then": an oral history project in an East London school' in *Teaching History*, 134, *Local Voices Edition* pp. 37-46. Although it was targeted at boys who were taking history, the George Mitchell School project described was voluntary and not formally part of the curriculum. The Triumphs Show 'Who would true valour see' by Jonathan Davies in *Teaching History*, 140, *Creative Thinking Edition* gives another, contrasting, account of an extra-curricular project with important gains within the history classroom alongside benefits for those who had not opted to continue with the subject.
- <sup>3</sup> Ofsted (2011), *History for All: History in English Schools 2007/10*, p. 40.
- <sup>4</sup> The address for the guide is: [www.hemelatwar.org/documents/GuideforSchoolsJuly2011.pdf](http://www.hemelatwar.org/documents/GuideforSchoolsJuly2011.pdf)
- <sup>5</sup> See, for example, [www.hemelatwar.org/DukeRShort.asp](http://www.hemelatwar.org/DukeRShort.asp)
- <sup>6</sup> Grayson, R.S. (2009) *Belfast Boys: how Unionists and Nationalists fought and died together in the First World War*, London: Continuum, especially 2010 revised edition, pp. 189-201.
- <sup>7</sup> On memorials and personal connections see Banham, D. with Culpin, C. (2002), 'Ensuring progression continues into GCSE: let's not do for our pupils with our plan of attack' in *Teaching History*, 109, *Examining History Edition*, pp. 16-22; Brown and Woodcock (2009) *op. cit.* and Philpott, J. and Guiney, D. (2011) 'Exploring diversity at GCSE: making a First World War battlefields visit meaningful to all students' in *Teaching History*, 144, *History for All Edition*, pp.26-33.
- <sup>8</sup> See, for example, Jones, M. (forthcoming, 2012) 'Not Just Along for the Ride: the role of Royal Navy liaison personnel in multinational naval operations during World War II', in *Journal of Military History*, 76, no. 1, which draws on material from Douglas Goulborn provided for the website. Having made contact with Douglas through our project, the author subsequently obtained further information from him.
- <sup>9</sup> The Education and Inspections Act 2006 enshrined in law the requirement for Ofsted to review schools' performance of their duty to promote community cohesion. The Education Bill introduced by the Coalition government in 2011 proposes to abolish this duty and an amendment to re-instate it was defeated in the House of Lords on 26 October 2011. See [www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/111026-0002.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/111026-0002.htm)
- <sup>10</sup> Johansen and Spafford (2009), *op. cit.*
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- <sup>12</sup> Evans *et al.* (2004) *op. cit.*
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