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Organisation Profile/Overview (100 words maximum)

Flintshire Record Office is a local authority archive service which was established in 1951. It seeks to preserve the county's unique archival heritage by collecting, listing, storing and making available to the public historic records of all kinds. Flintshire Record Office's priority is to ensure the proper management of Flintshire's heritage for current and future generations. Its overarching aim is to provide an archive service for Flintshire based on current national standards, guidelines and best practice, providing professional advice to owners and custodians of archive material and raising awareness of the Record Office both within and beyond the county boundary.

Category 1 – Demonstrating Marketing Excellence

Archives

Project title

Flintshire Remembers 1914 -1918

Context

At the beginning of 2013 Flintshire Record Office began to plan the massive task of commemorating the First World War which will continue to occupy us for five years as centenaries of various battles and milestones in the war come up. Having assessed our holdings of World War 1 documents and discovering a shortfall in the number of items within our existing collection we decided to enhance the collection by making an early start by appealing to the people of Flintshire for photographs, letters, diaries etc. relating to Flintshire people and places during the period 1914 -1918. Wishing to appeal to a wider more diverse audience Flintshire Record Office staff attended the North Wales Armed Forces Day at Coleg Cambria at Connah's Quay to chat to locals about the type of records required and to distribute appeal flyers to a new audience. Items from that day and further appeals throughout 2014 have

produced a crop of items either on deposit or on temporary loan with the option to scan.

The appeal has been a great success and many exciting items from this time have been brought to us. It was the intention from the outset to collect these previously unseen items and then make them accessible to a wider audience by highlighting this new collection in exhibitions, open days and publications.

It was decided to commemorate the outbreak of the First World War on the nearest Saturday by holding a First World War Open Day on 2nd August 2014 to include exhibitions, a talk by Flintshire War memorial and a trace your First World War Ancestor Workshop to commemorate the beginning of the First World War.

A very successful 2014 Commemorative WWI Calendar produced by Flintshire Record Office using the items collected and documents from existing collections sold well and continued to sell throughout January and into February 2014 with 50p from the sale of each copy going to the Royal British Legion. It was decided the Royal British Legion would be invited to be presented with a cheque for £84 by Flintshire County Council leader Cllr Aaron Shotton at the Open Day.

The challenge has been to put on extra events without the need for any additional in-house funding or additional staffing. Flintshire Record Office has been fortunate in this respect to have received funding via a grant from the Wales wide Audience Development Team. We designed posters in-house and had these converted into flyers having 1000 printed along with two pop up banners advertising the appeal. One of these has been on display in our foyer and the other is used off site whenever possible.

Aims and Objectives

The Flintshire Remembers 1914 -1918 project for 2014 involved two main events following the appeal for documents; a First World War Open Day and a week long Explore Your Archive activity.

Firstly, we decided to make a continued general appeal for First World War documents to be deposited in Flintshire Record Office. The appeal first began in June 2013 and is to continue throughout the 2014 to 2018 period. Although, we will of course continue to accept donations/deposits of this nature in the future.

Flintshire Record Office planned to use the newly deposited items in a First World War Open Day to commemorate the outbreak of the War, to raise awareness of the collection and to highlight the importance of archive services in providing access to the records. We wanted to document what life was like for people who lived through the conflict, both at home and serving overseas, so that they are never forgotten by future generations.

The items were to be used for exhibitions, a talk and First World War ancestor workshop and open day on 2nd August 2014. We hoped to achieve an overall

attendance of 50 to 60 people with a maximum of eight spaces available on the workshop.

The participants would be given the opportunity to receive training from an Archivist. It was necessary to limit the number of participants to eight due to the space required for sharing the four searchroom computers and the group and individual instruction essential to complete such an involved assignment.

The intended audience was to include people:

- interested in family history
- interested in history/First World War
- who had not visited before

To link in with the national Explore Your Archive campaign we decided to run the exhibitions and workshop again but this time to also highlight our unique D/DM/181 County of Flint War Memorial index which by this time had been photographed by Clwyd Family History Society and made available to view on the computers in the searchroom. We hoped for a 10% increase in visitors.

Overall objectives

- To raise awareness of the value of archives to society
- To highlight the importance of archives
- To bring to life the rich variety of content held, preserved and made available by archive services by concentrating on one theme (First World War)
- To encourage a new audience

Strategy & Planning

Having encouraged new deposits from people we selected a small number of these to focus on a particular soldier and by working with new depositors we showcased these at the Open Day event.

To begin with, examples of types of item for deposit such as photographs, letters, diaries etc. needed to be selected and copied for display in the exhibition.

We advertised the Open Day and workshop on 2nd August 2014 in the press, on our website, in Flintshire libraries, local shops, and in the Hawarden Connection magazine and on Facebook.

Flintshire Record Office enlisted the help of the founder members of the Flintshire War Memorials website to talk about their work and the success of the site and how it could be used to assist in research into Flintshire men who served during the First World War.

We also provided refreshments and activities for children making the event family friendly.

Following the success of the day, we arranged a repeat of the workshop and exhibition for the national Explore Your Archive campaign in November 2014.

It was hoped that holding an event during Explore Your Archive week would encourage a new audience to attend the Record Office. This event was an opportunity for Flintshire Record Office to promote the service and the “Explore Your Archive” campaign to members of the public who have not visited us before.

Holding a How to Trace Your First World War Ancestor Workshop will bring new information to people and encourage them to explore what we have available in relation to the First World War.

The events would hopefully encourage people with an interest in First World War history to appreciate what Flintshire soldiers and residents experienced 100 years ago.

Apply for a grant for pop up banners to highlight our unique D/DM/181 County of Flint War Memorial index which contains information about over 10,000 Flintshire servicemen including the man's address, regimental number, unit, period of service and rank upon demobilisation in July 1919. This has been photographed by Clwyd Family History Society and has now been made available to view on the computers in the Flintshire Record Office searchroom.

Explore your archive open all week for people to wander into the foyer to view.

Use all Explore Your Archive branding and promotional material

- The logo was used in all promotion of the events.
- An Explore Your Archive pop up banner was displayed at both events.
- Explore Your Archive Posters displayed in Searchroom
- Explore Your Archive Badges were issued to each participant on arrival and they were told more about the campaign
- Advertised through Flintshire County Council and Archives Wales websites

Tactics and Implementation

Having discovered a shortfall in the number of items within our existing collection relating to the First World War we decided to enhance the collection by making an early start by appealing to the people of Flintshire for photographs, letters, diaries etc. relating to Flintshire people and places during the period 1914 -1918. This would enable us to plan exhibitions, talks and open days. We set out a timetable of events. The first task was to apply for a grant to be able to produce flyers to be widely distributed to Flintshire residents. This would compliment our usual free advertising through our website, on Facebook in our newsletter The Hourglass and through press releases and in local libraries.

Once our events were planned we advertised our Open Day and involvement in the Explore Your Archive campaign on our web and Facebook pages, in our Searchroom, local libraries, in local newspapers and via social media on the Archives Wales website. We also obtained a grant to purchase a half page

advert in the Hawarden Connection magazine distributed to 5,000 homes and businesses in the area.

The Explore Your Archive branding was to be used in all forms of advertising and the free badges and pencils would further promote the campaign.

Realising early on that no extra budget or staffing would be available for extra events, a grant was applied for from the Audience Development Team. Pop up banners advertising both the First World War appeal and the D/DM/181 collection at external events have proved vital in promoting these important collections.

Please see attached newspaper article Exploring County's role in Great War (*The Leader*, 20th August, 2014).

Results/Measurements/

We intended to collect new items and to make these available to the public. To date we have received a total deposit of 23 new collections relating to the First World War.

First World War Open Day on 2nd August 2014. We hoped to achieve an overall attendance of 50 to 60 people. We estimated that by the end of the day we had 95 people visiting the office to attend the talk, look at the exhibition or attend the workshop or a combination of all of these. Providing refreshments and activities for children making this a family friendly event worked and encouraged all ages.

The Workshop had a maximum of eight spaces available. These were filled and it was suggested that due to its success we rerun the workshop. As the event proved so popular and to link in with the national the Explore Your Archive campaign we decided to run the exhibitions and workshops again in November 2014. This again was fully booked for all eight spaces.

Explore Your Archive week beginning 10th November saw an increase +36% of visitors on the previous week and an increase of +10% on the previous November.

More researchers have been attending Flintshire Record Office looking at First World War history and relating to the past through use of Flintshire archive collections especially the unique D/DM/181 available on the computers.

The interest in the First World War will continue over the four years but with increased interest in certain dates which can be targeted again.

Following the events the exhibition stands were loaned out to two local churches for display. At the end of January a significant proportion of these are still on display at a local church. In hindsight if we had been approached sooner by local organisations we could have targeted the exhibition more to

their particular area. However, the problem we found was that they all wanted to display it at the same time (November 2014).

Flintshire Record Office staff have recently been asked to write an article for a local community magazine based on one of the soldiers highlighted in the exhibition. This will again emphasize the collection and raise the awareness of Flintshire Record Office.

Date of Project

Officially began June 2013. Main events August and November 2014, continuing until 2018.

Summary (Approximately 150 words)

Over the last 18 months Flintshire Record Office has run an appeal for First World War documents (diaries, letters, photographs etc.) relating to Flintshire and Flintshire people. A series of events have taken place to highlight these important deposits. A calendar, a First World War Open Day, exhibitions, a talk and How to Trace Your First World War Ancestor Workshops have all been organised to draw attention to these significant documents. In addition to this an existing collection of a unique set of First World War Memorial index cards for over 10,000 Flintshire men has been photographed and is now available to view on the Flintshire Record Office Searchroom computers. Along with new deposits this was also showcased as part of the Explore Your Archive, Archi've Remembered campaign in November 2014.

Exploring county's role in Great War

AN exhibition attended by more than 80 people in just one day sparked great interest in the First World War.

The special Great War event at Flintshire Record Office in Hawarden was part of a series of projects organised there.

The record office had already issued an invitation to people in Flintshire to take in photos, documents and other historical artefacts relating to family members and ancestors who served in the First World War, with many of these on display on the day.

The exhibition featured photos and letters home from the county's soldiers and sailors.

A presentation was given by Eifion and Viv Williams of flintshirewarmemorials.com, an online memorial for those who died in the 1914 to 1918 conflict and remembered on war memorials of Flintshire.

Flintshire Council leader Cllr Aaron Shotton presented a cheque on behalf of the record office to the British Legion.

The donation came from part of the proceeds of a calendar the record office has been selling featuring Flintshire First World War photographs from its archives.

Archive assistant Sue Copp said: "We had about 80 visitors on the day and people were still coming in throughout the following week to see the exhibition.

"The day generated a lot of interest and sparked a lot of discussion as people recognised places in the photograph and talked about their own ancestors."



■ Archive assistant Sue Copp with Jenna Morris (left) and Jake Williams (right). (SWT020814)



■ Jake Williams, 10, with mum Laura. (SWT020814)