**‘Sedimented Histories’ and ‘Embodied Legacies’:**

**Creating an Evaluative Framework for Engaging the Public in the First World War**

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## Abstract

This working paper chronicles the development of the construction of a methodological framework for the evaluation of the impact of the Centre for Hidden Histories, one of the AHRC’s First World War Engagement Centres. It will show how through evaluative processes such as academic and community partner ‘Shared Experience Workshops’, and community focused ‘Reflection Workshops’, the historical, social, cultural and economic ‘impact’ of the centre has been highlighted. It will also demonstrate how engagement in these community history projects has resulted in the identification of ‘sedimented histories’ (Lloyd and Moore) and ‘embodied legacies’ (Facer and Enright).

**Keywords:** Centre for Hidden Histories, Impact, First World War, ‘Sedimented Histories’ ‘Embodied Legacies’

## Introduction

On 11 October 2012, Prime Minister David Cameron delivered a speech at the Imperial War Museum, London in which he announced the UK government and Heritage Lottery Fund’s multi-million pound commitment to marking the First World War (FWW) centenary. Cameron described the FWW as significant to the UK’s contemporary sense of shared national identity because of the, ‘…sheer scale of the sacrifice’, ‘the impact that the war had on the development of Britain and…the world as it is today’ and the ‘very strong emotional connection’ that many UK families have to those who served in the conflict (Cameron, 2012). He also delineated three main elements to the centenary commemorations. First, the re-design and re-launch of the Imperial War Museum’s (IWM) FWW galleries. Second, a

fully funded programme of national commemorative events and third, 'an educational programme to create an enduring legacy for generations to come.' (Cameron, 2012).

Cameron's announcement at the IWM also addressed the experiences of minorities. He spoke of figures such as Walter Tull, the Black British officer who courageously served at the Somme and in Italy before being killed in action in France (1918). He also mentioned events such as the accidental and tragic sinking of SS Mendi (1917), a steamship carrying South African troops. These instances were described by Cameron as exemplifying not just, 'tragic moments, but…as marking the beginnings of ethnic minorities getting the recognition, respect and equality they deserve.' (Cameron, 2012) However, in other respects, Cameron's speech presented a rose-tinted and unproblematised image of the engagement of British 'minorities' in the 1914-1918 war effort, that for all of its recognition of heroism and genuine democratic progress must also be qualified by experiences of inequality within Britain's imperial wartime and postwar military, political and commemorative frameworks. For as CHH project partners Hannah Ewence and Tim Grady have observed, the victims of the sinking of the SS Mendi were hardly mentioned in Britain until the Queen unveiled a new memorial in Soweto in the 1990s; while Tull was passed over for military decoration because of the racial biases of the 1914-1918 British army (Ewence and Grady, 2017: 4-5).

Ewence and Grady's observations point to the fact that during the war there was the differentiation in the treatment of colonial military personnel based on their so-called 'race'. While Anzac and Canadian troops who served on the Western Front were encouraged to fraternise with UK civilian society; Indian infantry men were drafted to fight on the Western Front, but their presence in England was accompanied by civilian restrictions and anxieties surrounding their sexual relationships with British women. Even more hierarchical was the treatment of Africans who were permitted to fight as soldiers in their native continent but were expected to serve in labour battalions on the Western Front (Morrow JR, 2014: 413-

414). Moreover, the recent scholarship of John Siblon on London has argued that in the aftermath of the FWW, 'in the landscape of the symbolic centre of the former imperial metropole, officials deliberately constructed a memory of the war as a "white man's war", fought with the assistance of loyal Asians, with the service of Africans and Caribbeans expressly excluded." (Siblon, 2016: 299). To evidence his claims Siblon points to examples such as Whitehall's official 'silence' over the 1919 race riots; the exclusion of Black colonial troops from the 1919 Peace celebrations and the omission of Britain's Caribbean colonies and African colonies from visual representation in the 'Million Dead of the British Empire' memorial tablet, which was unveiled in Westminister Abbey in 1926 (Siblon, 2016: 305-306).

It was against this backdrop of the profound challenges posed by the representation of minority groups within the post-1918 legacies of FWW commemorations, that the Centre for Hidden Histories (CHH) was founded at the University of Nottingham in 2014. This was one of the Arts and Humanities Research Council's (AHRC) five FWW Engagement Centres, which were established to bring university academics and community groups together. These centres were specifically supposed to support community projects that were being funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) six million pound 'First World War: Then and Now' scheme. However, in practice non-HLF funded groups also received assistance. Indeed, the heavy emphasis placed on academic/community partnerships in the AHRC FWW Engagement Centres complements Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan's theoretical and methodological analysis of the important role played by civil society activists in establishing frameworks and social channels of collective remembrance. These civil society activists are significant because they simultaneously negotiate the political, cultural and economic parameters set by official state remembrance and establish their own distinctive communitarian identities, historical interests and social agendas in shared processes of

engaging with collective learning and remembrance about war and conflict (Winter and Sivan, 1999: 38-39).

Thus, the AHRC Centre for Hidden Histories was established with four objectives: (1) to *engage* with communities previously alienated from British commemorations of the First World War and to stimulate their interest, promote collaborations, and provide training and access to appropriate research facilities. (2) To *encourage* academic research into the FWW period through new interdisciplinary collaborations between academics, communities, public history providers in museums, galleries, libraries and archives, and film makers and broadcasters, and to create an active research and knowledge exchange environment. (3) To *reflect* on processes of commemoration, on cross-cultural and contested perspectives on the past, and on the evolution and transmission of cultural memory and heritage. (4) To *support* academics to engage in public engagement and to aid the delivery of outcomes for community groups, external partners and researchers (Beckett et al, 2016).

Between 2014 and 2016, the Centre for Hidden Histories supported seventeen academic/community Research Development Fund projects and funded six from 2017. FWW research projects commissioned between 2014 and 2016 included: The University of Derby and community visual arts company, Spiral Arts; Oxford Brookes University and the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum; Nottingham Trent University and Pomegranate Youth Theatre; Middlesex University and Eastside Community Heritage; Leicester De Montfort University and the Knockaloe and Patrick Visitor Centre, Isle of Man; UCL and community film-making company ReelMcR. In addition, during the same time period, the Centre's Community Challenge Fund supported over twenty small scale community led initiatives such as symposia and workshops, day trips to archives and schools projects.

The central and self-conscious focus on the significance of 'co-productive' methodology between academics and their community partners in the FWW Engagement

Centres, can be seen as a highly distinctive aspect of the centenary which marks it out as a product of its times. 'Co-productive' investigation is research which is collectively produced in a spirit of egalitarianism by academics, practitioners and the public for shared mutual benefit. In terms of the centenary, it can be seen as complementing the community focus of Conservative 'big society' thinking as well as UK Higher Education's current 'impact' agenda. This is what Research Councils UK have defined as research which stimulates social and economic benefits to society, through 'fostering global economic performance, and specifically the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom'; 'increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy' and 'enhancing quality of life, health and creative output' (RCUK, 2017).

The question of how to understand the 'impact' of CHH was embedded in the Centre's planning of its outputs and evaluation from the outset. This need to understand 'impact' was both within the framework of the necessities of institutional reporting to funders such as the AHRC and HLF to justify investment in the Centre, as well as within the more long-term institutional framework of impact case studies for REF 2021. For the model of generating impact presented by the FWW engagement centres is quirky within the context of the competition for research funding that is a central to the REF. Each FWW Engagement Centre, a potential impact case study in itself, is also responsible for commissioning and funding smaller university/community research projects at other higher education institutions, thus potentially producing or at least, strengthening the evidence base for a multitude of impact case studies across the UK. It is this reproductive and generative quality of the impact of the FWW Engagement Centres, combined with their often-interdisciplinary composition at the organizational level, which makes them a potentially interesting example of 'institutional impact', a concept that is only being piloted in REF 2021 (REF, 2017: 10-11).

However, whilst the needs of the REF were a significant consideration, the Centre for Hidden Histories was also interested in deeper, more long-range questions of the significance of CHH to UK society and the historical moment of the centenary. For example, what marginalised histories of the FWW had the Centre's partners uncovered and how could this contribute to new developments in the discipline of History? What had academic and community partners learnt from each other about the process of the co-production of knowledge in settings beyond but still touched by the university? How had individuals and communities been affected by the process? What knowledge/power inequalities had been challenged by collaborations, and which remained stubbornly ingrained? Are there specific issues raised by the evaluation of FWW projects within the context of minority communities? A widely debated term, the understanding of 'minority' used here is less about size of a collective, and more about a community group's access to rights, representation and power.

This working paper will introduce the methodologies developed by the CHH team to evaluate the impact of the Centre's work. It will then discuss the findings of this evaluative framework. This will be in relation to the historical, social and cultural impact of the CHH and what Facer and Enright would call the 'embodied legacies' represented by some of CHH's participants (Facer and Enright, 2016: 5). These 'embodied legacies' are significant because as Laura King and Gary Rivett have noted in their critique of a purely output orientated view of REF 'impact', the value of community history projects, '…cannot be divorced from the engagement itself, whose value often lies in…[the] process, the relationships and the collaboration rather than the end change.' (King and Rivett, 2015: 227) It is hoped that the evaluative methodology presented here can provide a model or at least contribute to the discussion as to how the 'impact' of the five FWW Engagement Centres can be assessed. This is particularly significant against the backdrop of the commissioning of the

AHRC's 'Legacies' project (2017), a major survey of the UK's engagement with the history and memory of the FWW between 2014 and 2019.

**Methodology**

Whilst CHH used conventional modes of data gathering such as questionnaires and feedback forms to collate opinions on the success and limitations of its outreach work, it also developed two bespoke mechanisms to evaluate the impact of the Centre's work: the academic/community partner focused 'Shared Experience Workshop' and the more community based, 'Reflection Workshop'. Templates and questions for these sessions were developed by the Impact Fellow (Allwork), in discussion with and under the peer review of CHH Principal Investigator (Professor John Beckett) and Community Liaison Officer (Michael Noble) in the summer of 2016.

Both 'Shared Experience Workshops' and 'Reflection Workshops' were designed with ethical considerations in mind and a self-reflexive awareness of the risks involved, specifically in relation to university engagement with minority group community participants. One of the first key risks for the CHH team was the potential biases and conflicts of interest arising from the fact that the Impact Fellow, was an 'embedded researcher' and therefore both a participant in and evaluator of the CHH. To mitigate against bias, questions for CHH participants were designed to be as open as possible and 'Shared Experience Workshop' and 'Reflection Workshop' participants were actively encouraged to give honest, and if so desired, critical feedback of the CHH. Also, while strongly encouraged, attendance at 'Shared Experience Workshops' and 'Reflection Workshops' was not mandatory. As a result, it should be noted that our findings are often based on the views of those individuals who saw value in the reflection process because of the success of their project or because it satisfied

other institutional needs (eg. collation of data for REF 2021, HLF evaluation requirements). Sometimes more resistance was met in collecting verbal and numeric feedback from less successful projects or initiatives where the project leaders had delivered but were constrained from giving feedback by other time commitments in academia, business or the cultural industries.

A second risk which has been outlined by Facer and Enright was the hierarchies of power ascribed to the stereotypical image of a Russell Group University such as Nottingham, and how this might impact on the inclination of community representatives to participate in the evaluation process (Facer and Enright, 2016: 159). To combat this potential for perceived cultural power asymmetries, 'Shared Experience Workshops' and 'Reflection Workshops' were held at community venues in spaces not traditionally associated with the university. These included the Riverside Centre, Derby ('Shared Experience Workshop', 19 September 2016); Edin's Café Nottingham ('Reflection Workshop', 25 August 2016) and Birmingham Library ('Reflection Workshop, 24 April 2017). In addition, some of the projects commissioned by CHH took additional measures to mitigate against these potential cultural power assymetries. For example, the COREL project (Curating Online Resources for Engagement and Learning), led by Dr Nick Baron worked with heritage and arts consultancy company Culture Syndicates in the organisation of community partner focus groups. For Baron, agencies like Culture Syndicates are important in helping find that 'common language' and mutual ground of shared interest which is essential to effective university and community collaboration. In short, companies like Culture Syndicates can advise academics as to how best to communicate with community partners, while they can also help community partners to be confident in articulating their views to academics (Baron in Allwork 2016-2017d).

A third risk was that CHH convenors would not empathise enough with specific diasporic cultures of collective memory, in which participants might have their own reasons for alienation from the UK narrative of the FWW promoted by politicians and national institutions, or may have social traditions of remembrance, mourning, trauma or grief, which are profoundly different from dominant UK norms and narratives. Sensitizing the CHH team to contemporary controversies in FWW remembrance politics, particularly in relation to the Commonwealth and minority communities, thus became a key part of undertaking these evaluative projects. For example, on starting her role at CHH, the Impact Fellow, who had dealt with some of these theoretical issues as part of her involvement in an academic symposium entitled, 'Decolonizing Trauma Studies' (Craps et al, 2015), was given an overview of CHH community partners by the CLO. This overview included verbal briefings on the specific challenges posed by engagement with different UK diaspora communities in relation to the history of the FWW.

Topics addressed in the CLO's briefings included the fact that CHH found particular success with engaging with long established and well networked Sikh and South Asian Muslim communities (chiefly through the work of Nottingham's Professor Mike Heffernan) and also developed good relationships with African and African diaspora communities (supported by CHH consultant researcher, Emeritus Professor David Killingray). However, recognising that the impact of the war on the modern Middle East is a topic of particular contemporary importance, the CLO had also made it a long-term goal to cultivate links with less well established and networked community groups in the UK such as Kurds from Turkey, Syria and Iraq. CHH used several methods at building trust in these communities and at breaking down barriers to engagement. This included the investment of time and patience in the building of these relationships as well as the use of third party mediators, such as the Red Cross. The primary result of these efforts was Excavate theatre's play, *In Flux*

(2017), a performative engagement with the FWW, the Middle East and its echoes for the contemporary refugee crisis.

Both 'Shared Experience Workshops' and 'Reflection Workshops' were recorded in order to build up a CHH 'Reflections Archive'. All the recordings were made with the knowledge of participants and were underpinned by the ethics of informed consent (Yow, 1994). Thus, in line with the 'participatory turn' in knowledge highlighted by Facer and Enright (2016: 11), discussions in Shared Experience Workshops and Reflection Workshops were facilitated and recorded in order to capture dialogues which allow best practice guidelines in academic/community collaborations to arise from the grassroots (Allwork, 2016b). They were also recorded in order to provide 'impact' evidence for REF 2021, and in addition have demonstrated the significance of these projects for generating historical knowledge about the First World War. These recordings have also ended up demonstrating the 'embodied legacies' of CHH projects. It is to these areas that this working paper will now turn. The first section will focus on the presentations delivered by academic and community partners at a Centre for Hidden Histories 'Shared Experience Workshop'. The analysis here will suggest how these presentations engaged members of the public in uncovering what Sarah Lloyd and Julie Moore have called 'sedimented histories' of the FWW. The second section will explore the role of 'Reflection Workshops' in providing a mechanism for identifying typologies of engagement whilst simultaneously stimulating discussion of what Facer and Enright might call the 'embodied legacies' of FWW engagement.

**The Shared Experience Workshop: Engaging the Public in 'Sedimented Histories'**

The Shared Experience Workshop at Derby Riverside Centre (19 September 2016) was divided into a morning and an afternoon session.[1] The morning session required

academics and their community partners to present for fifteen minutes on the impact of their project. They were all given the option of using a specially designed PowerPoint template modelled on the needs of the REF 2014 impact template, as the REF 2021 version had not been published. The afternoon session comprised a set of recorded, small group discussions on HLF and FWW Engagement Centre themes of 'collaborations and partnerships'; 'communities, education and skills', 'World War I history and heritage', and 'World War I and public engagement'. The presentations delivered in the morning session confirmed that an important cumulative public engagement impact of these projects was to uncover and reconnect what in Lloyd and Moore's words can be described as collectively and co-produced "sedimented histories" of the FWW. These 'sedimented histories' are:

> Where voices and memories are contested or perspectives fragmented, where elements of the past are differently weighted or valued…[creating] a 'sediment' of connected, but not necessarily uniform histories: rather like Raphael Samuel's view of the built environment as 'a sediment of geological strata, a multi-layered reality', sedimented histories are available over time, adjacent to one another, but not thrust into a competition for survival of the historically fittest. (Lloyd and Moore, 2015: 242).

Thus, within the context of CHH, 'sedimented histories' can be viewed as local and regional co-produced histories of the FWW which co-exist with but also profoundly challenge mainstream media representations of 'Tommies in trenches'. This is through presenting alternative or less well-known narratives such as the role of troops from the British Empire, the experiences of refugees from Europe and British policies of internment of 'enemy aliens'. However, what also emerged as significant from many of these delegate presentations was that these historical analyses of the experience of minorities during the FWW also often provoked profound reflections on contemporary politics in the present – whether in terms of the consideration of diversity in UK schools, the current Syrian refugee crisis or reflections on UK immigration debates within the context of Brexit. Three of the eight projects presented

at the ‘Shared Experience Workshop’ will be focused on here, as they are particularly relevant in showing how the process of uncovering and confronting ‘sedimented histories’ of the FWW, became profoundly intertwined in the eyes of their project leaders and community partners with contemporary politics.

The first ‘sedimented history’ uncovered concerned the contribution made by Britain’s domestic diaspora populations to the conflict as well as that by the British Empire’s colonies and dominions. Kurt Barling (Middlesex University) and Judith Garfield’s (Eastside Community Heritage) project, ‘Hidden Heroes of Empire – Black Soldiers in the Middlesex Regiment’ used holdings at The National Archives in Kew and the National Army Museum to reveal the contribution of black British soldiers to the Middlesex regiment. Building on the research of scholars such as Killingray (1986), David Olusoga (2014), Stephen Bourne (2014) and Siblon (2016) who have highlighted the Black British contribution to the FWW, the results of Barling and Garfield’s project included a pop-up exhibition which toured secondary schools in the Greater London area (2016).

Illustrating the reach of the project over 400 teachers and students were surveyed by Barling and Garfield in relation to their responses to the exhibition, while MP for Tottenham, David Lammy and MP for Enfield, Joan Ryan visited the exhibition in schools. Following the opening of the ‘The Soldiers of Empire’ exhibition at Bruce Castle Museum and a London comprehensive school, David Lammy MP invited Barling to a meeting with the Minister of Culture and Media to talk about integrating issues of diversity into culture and media outputs. Of the significance of this experience for CHH, Barling noted:

> We can play at the top table if we get the right connections. And I suspect that the Minister was actually quite open to the idea that if you want to deal with social cohesion, if you want to deal with diversity, if you want to make our cultural outputs inclusive, you can’t ignore these stories. (Barling in Allwork, 2016b)

The second ‘sedimented history’ with particularly strong resonances for contemporary politics explored by Shared Experience Workshop participants was the experiences of refugees during the 1914-1918 conflict. For example, fleeing the brutalities of German occupation (Horne, 2014: 569), approximately, 250,000 Belgians came to the UK, and an estimated 250 of these refugees resided in Cheshire (Lowe, 2016). The history of these refugees has often been overlooked, in part because most of these refugees returned to Belgium following a rapid post-war repatriation process instigated by the UK government (Ewence, 2017: 89-113). The Belgium refugees in Cheshire project, led by Dr Hannah Ewence (University of Chester), in collaboration with the St. Werburgh’s Parish Great War Study Group has increased public consciousness of the historical experiences of this group through a combination of local heritage initiatives and alliances with associated community projects. While investigating the history of their local war memorial, parishioners uncovered the history of Belgian refugees who had lived in the area and prayed at St. Werburgh’s during the war. In response to this history, the St. Werburgh’s Parish Great War Study Group created a community exhibition in their church in November 2015, which explored the history of these refugees (Ewence and Grady, 2017: 6-7).

Belgian refugee histories uncovered by Ewence’s project were also integrated into a University of Chester led and HLF funded 'Diverse Narratives' touring exhibition (June 2016), which was also discussed as part of the project’s Shared Experience Workshop presentation. This exhibition appeared in various Cheshire public spaces, including market squares and shopping centres. Over 600 people have seen the exhibition. Demonstrating the contemporary relevance of this project, one visitor commented, ‘Why is this type of history generally not taught at school? It seems really important to help us and our children understand all the diversity in Britain today. The exhibition has changed the way I think about the First World War’ (Visitor quoted in Allwork, 2016a). Indeed, at the Shared

Experience Workshop, Ann Marie Curtis, a representative of St Werburgh's Great War Study Group, commented on the relevance of the Belgian refugee project for debates about the recent European refugee crisis:

> How many people would have envisaged the number of refugees that we have coming into this country. My particular group was concentrating on Belgium refugees, and the similarities between them coming in at Folkestone and the people coming in from Calais is just absolutely amazing. There are certainly echoes there. And also our own particular heritage. We need to know that although we are an island nation, we are not a nation completely set apart, we function within the rest of the world. There have been waves of immigration from the Norman conquest onwards, at least. (Curtis in Allwork, 2016b)

The third theme with strong resonances for the present explored by participants in the Shared Experience Workshop related to the experiences of German, Austro-Hungarian, Bulgarian and Turkish immigrants living in the UK and the British government's internment of so-called 'enemy aliens' during the FWW as a result of the Aliens Restrictions Act (5 August 1914). The purpose of this Act was to control the entry, residence, movement and departure of 'enemy' groups who had to register their identity at police stations during the conflict. The Aliens Restriction Act resulted in further legislation authorizing the arrest, internment and deportation of members of these groups suspected of posing a threat (Panayi, 1993: 56-57). Following the Lusitania riots in May 1915, the UK government hit a peak of internment in November 1915. By this time, 32,440 men were interned in British camps such as Stratford and Alexandra Palace in London; Handforth in Cheshire, Lofthouse Park near Wakefield, Stobs in Scotland and Knockaloe on the Isle of Man (Panayi, 2011 - 2013:732; Panayi, 2014: 100). As late as 1993, David Cesarani and Tony Kushner described Britain's twentieth-century history of internment as 'a hidden feature of British history' at the level of popular consciousness (Kushner and Cesarani, 1993: 1).

The 'Shared Experience' workshop featured five projects exploring the history of 'enemy aliens' and internment. These included projects which chronicled the experience of

Germans in the East Midlands (N. Braber and Page, 2016; B. Braber, 2017; Amos, 2017); a project about Handforth Internment Camp (Dr Tim Grady and Handforth Parish Council) as well as Professor Panikos Panayi and community partner, Alison Jones's major project constructing a memorial centre and internee database at the former Knockaloe internment camp in Patrick village, Isle of Man. This is due to open in spring 2019. Reflecting on the recent paucity of institutional memorialisation of Knockaloe's history as an internment site, Panayi perceptively though given the extremity of the violence in the Nazi camps, not uncontentiously commented: 'This lack of a memorial is the best indication of the amnesia towards internment in FWW Britain. While the Federal Republic maintains memorials on the sites of countless Nazi concentration camps, Britain can only spare a small plaque.' (Panayi, 2011 - 2013: 738).

However, it was Dr Claudia Sternberg (University of Leeds) and community historian David Stowe's research into the cross-cultural histories of internment with the 'In the Wrong Place at the Wrong Time' project that most coalesced with the politics of the present, in particular British attitudes towards Europe and minorities brought into public focus by the UK EU referendum (June 2016). 'In the Wrong Place, At the Wrong Time' encompassed a comparative study of German and Austrian civilians interned at Lofthouse Park camp, UK and British internees at Ruhleben camp, Germany. At the Shared Experience Workshop, Sternberg and Stowe discussed their Lofthouse Park Heritage Open Day 2016. This featured on BBC Radio Leeds and attracted eighty to one hundred visitors, including local community members (community activists, school students, local clergy), descendants and representatives of the project based in Berlin, Leicester, Kent, Sheffield and Leeds. The success of this event led to a second Heritage Open Day in 2017. This included a guided tour of the former internment site led by Stowe; a talk by Corinna Meiss, a descendant of Lofthouse Park internee, Gustav Wiesener; a performance of a short fictional monologue

based on factual accounts of those interned at Lofthouse Park, 'The Wife's Tale' and the public launch of an illustrated map of the internment site of Lofthouse Park to encourage members of the public to engage with the history and legacy of the camp (Allwork, 2016-2017d).

The production of this map is particularly important as the site of Lofthouse Park has all but vanished into a landscape of housing estates, car parks and convenience stores and there is currently no commemorative plaque to mark its role during the FWW. In October 1918, internees in Lofthouse Park were evacuated to the Isle of Man and Lofthouse Park functioned as a military prisoners-of-war camp until 1920 (Stowe, 2018a: 28-29). After this time, the camp was dismantled, its fixtures and fittings auctioned, while its iconic Pavillion building was razed by fire on 22 April 1922 (Stowe, 2018b: 208). The importance of the 2017 heritage open day in revealing this hidden history of the topography of the camp was noted by a number of participants. One person noted, 'A complete revelation. I have lived within 6 miles for 60 years and knew nothing!', while another added a 'Fascinating insight to a part of local history that I never knew about.' (Event participants quoted in Allwork, 2016-2017d). The amnesia about internment demonstrated at Lofthouse Park provides a microcosm of broader issues within the UK public sphere in relation to knowledge, understanding and informed public debate around Britain's modern history of immigration, emigration and the treatment of minority communities. For example, John Beckett's research is uncovering the fact that not much is known about the FWW prisoner of war camp at Sutton Bonnington, even though the University of Nottingham owns the building and is also the institutional lead for CHH. As Dr Eva Göbbel, Sternberg and Stowe's research partner based at Humboldt University summarised it:

> There are many stories that can be told about World War I. The most frequent story told here in Britain and also in Germany is that of battles, trenches and soldiers and

> women who supported the war as nurses and workers. But there are other stories, too. Knowing that migration is not only a phenomenon of our time the question arises what happened to the Germans in Britain and the British in Germany during World War One? And then it is only a small step to ask how do we treat 'aliens'? Is there a general suspicion of certain communities and where is it all leading? That's why events like the Lofthouse Heritage Open Day are so important. (Göbbel quoted in Allwork, 2016-2017d)

Indeed, Sternberg and Stowe noted the contemporary relevance of their project in the 'introduction' to their 2018 edited collection on the history of Lofthouse Park:

> The dangers of presentism and sweeping comparisons notwithstanding, it is pertinent to take the long view on British German relations and European mobility at the present time. The official commemorations of the Battle of the Somme on 1 July 2016 and the EU Referendum on 23 June 2016 lay only seven days apart…The new European other, or 'EU migrant', has not only been framed in Britain within the language of mass immigration, but also triggered the reappearance of terms like 'registration' and 'deportation' in the press. When Prime Minister Theresa May singled out the 'citizen of nowhere' at the Conservative Party Conference in October 2016, she added the 'cosmopolitan (elite)' to the newly formed group of non-belongers. (Sternberg and Stowe, 2018: xxx – xxxi)

Thus, the diverse constellation of local histories of the FWW uncovered by CHH, has given local communities safe, shared spaces to not only understand the relationship of history to collective community identities, but also platforms for project leaders to raise awareness of and encourage public discussion of contemporary issues, particularly those surrounding national identity, immigration and education policy. It is nothing new to say that acts of collective remembrance of historical events often serve shared communal or political needs in the present. However, what is significant about these examples from CHH is the way in which highly regional, localized forms of shared reflection on communal pasts are not only uncovering 'hidden histories' of the FWW, but are in some cases actively invoking politics which question or challenge the dominant Conservative Party government line on immigration and European affairs which held sway at the time of their production. These

CHH FWW Engagement Centre projects thus demonstrate the more radical potentials of contemporary forms of local and community historical practice to encourage civic debate and geographically decentralized and diverse representations of war and conflict.

Beyond the 'Shared Experience' workshop, the Centre for Hidden Histories continued to support more challenging histories through the funding of academic and community co-production projects which have looked at the role of British troops in the violent suppression of the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916, the post-war race riots in Liverpool (1919) and the representation of the Armenian genocide in the Gertrude Bell Archive (Allwork, 2016-2017d). Most recently, the CHH has launched a new project exploring the extent to which the psychological condition of trauma has been integrated into community engagement with the First World War centenary. However, while these projects have deeply engaged the local communities directly involved in their production, creating a varied constellation in the UK regional memorial landscape of plaques, maps, exhibitions, plays, school workshops, local history projects and community art-works, nonetheless the media platform for wider national discussions of marginal or more troubling FWW histories is not always there. Thus, the gaze of the UK government, BBC and the national UK media has often remained focused on commemorating key battles such as the Somme (1 July 2016) and Passchendaele (30 and 31 July 2017). By contrast, as Ewence and Grady have observed local projects often show, '…far more willingness to engage with the minority experience in the conflict than grander national schemes.' (Ewence and Grady, 2017: 6) Indeed, what is interesting about CHH is that it bifurcates these binaries; it is both governmental in origin and non-governmental in its collaborations; it is national in its scope but fundamentally local and community driven in its engagement with diverse and sometimes provocative, 'sedimented histories' of the 1914-18 conflict.

**Reflection Workshops and 'Embodied Legacies'**

'Reflection Workshops' were more informal in tone and much smaller in scale than 'Shared Experience Workshops'. If 'Shared Experience Workshops' tended to focus on the recipients of larger CHH Research Development Fund grants for University/Community Partnership projects, 'Reflection Workshops' were more likely although did not exclusively involve CHH partners who had been awarded smaller scale Community Challenge Fund grants.[2] At 'Reflection Workshops', the Impact Fellow and Community Liaison Officer were normally present as convenors as well as one other member of CHH academic staff. Professor Paul Elliott (The University of Derby) was the academic present at the first 'Reflection Workshop' (Edin's Café, Nottingham, 25 August 2016), while Professor John Becket attended the second 'Reflection Workshop' at Birmingham Library (24 April 2017). They were usually joined by five to eight CHH community project participants.[2]

Reflection Workshop participants often revealed not only the 'hidden histories' of the FWW that their projects had uncovered but also what Keri Facer and Bryony Enright would call the 'embodied legacies' of their projects. For Facer and Enright these, 'embodied legacies' represent for individuals and communities, 'The most significant and sustainable legacies...Participants in projects are developing new skills, knowledge and understanding.' (Facer & Enright, 2016: 6). Although each participant's engagement with the centenary had been a highly individual experience, some broad trends emerged which means that a loose typology of FWW participation can be ventured. This typology includes: *Transformers; Retired Professionals; Gatekeepers* and *Grassroots Participants*.

Most exceptional were *transformers* that is people whose professional lives or social position within their community has been profoundly changed or altered by their participation in the centenary. For example, Kiran Sahota, a businesswoman from

Birmingham, led a HLF/ CHH community challenge fund project which resulted in an exhibition on FWW era Victoria Cross recipients from India at Birmingham's Museum and Art Gallery (12 November 2016 – 28 January 2017). Sahota said of her experience working on the exhibition that, 'I've never felt more empowered, I've never felt more inspired.' The exhibition contributed to intra-community dialogue between local Indian and Pakistani groups, cutting through tensions which still sometimes continue to exist owing to the legacy of Partition (1947). As a result, of her project, Sahota's status within her community has been raised. She continues to be a FWW commemoration activist (Sahota's new project on FWW South Asian soldiers received funding from the HLF in 2018); while her community interest company Believe in Me now actively integrates educational issues into its remit (Sahota quoted in Allwork, 2016-2017d).

Irfan Malik, a GP from the East Midlands, could also be categorised as a 'transformer'. Receiving part of his funding from a CHH community challenge fund grant he has been researching the impact of the FWW on the South Asian village of Dulmial. For Malik, this research into his ancestral home 'changed [his] life significantly' (Malik quoted in Allwork, 2016c). As a result of his project, Malik has given talks and presentations across the UK. Some of his audience members have included representatives of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Malik's research on Dulmial has resulted in inter-faith activities and diversity awareness in the UK armed forces. He is currently collaborating with fellow activists to create a Great War Muslim Memorial in Great Britain (Malik quoted in in Allwork, 2016c).

A second group of important participants in FWW centenary projects are *retired professionals.* Often these individuals bring a lifetime's worth of professional skills, experience and expertise to the leadership and administration of community projects and in return they often benefit from the training and social opportunities offered by projects. With

this type of participation there is often an important family history dimension. For example, the website editor for CHH community challenge fund supported project 'Radcliffe-on-Trent and the FWW, is Rosie Collins, a retired sociologist. As well as documenting the impact of the FWW on the lives of men and women from the Nottinghamshire village of Radcliffe-on-Trent, it has allowed Collins to explore facets of her own personal identity, particularly in relation to the role that her grandfather played in the 1914-1918 conflict (Allwork, 2017e). A second example of this type of participation is the role played by Lyn Edmonds as Trustee of the *Away from the Western Front* charity and Project Manager of the Heritage Lottery Funded Gallipoli Centenary Education Project (2014-16). Edmonds used to work as a manager in the NHS and has a long-term interest in family history, particularly her grandfather's involvement in the Gallipoli campaign. Edmonds has commented of her participation in the FWW centenary that, 'The Gallipolli project was a great pleasure for me, I have met lots of lovely people…and it has given me structure to my retirement.' (Edmonds quoted in Allwork, 2017e). Initially supported by a small amount from the CHH community challenge fund, Edmonds and *Away from the Western Front* won £99,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2017. This money will be put towards supporting British community projects which raise awareness of FWW era campaigns in Egypt, Salonika, Syria, Palestine, Africa and Mesopotamia.

The participation of *retired professionals* such as Collins and Edmonds affirms the findings of a British Future Report 'A Centenary Shared', that 61% of 50-64 year olds and 65% of people over 65 felt that the FWW was relevant to them. This was the highest proportion of any age group surveyed. For example, only 43% of 18-24 year olds felt the same way (Hough et al, 2016: 27). These FWW projects are also beneficial for retired participants because of the opportunities offered for community engagement and social interaction. For example, retiree, Hazel Thompson, participated in creating a collectively

produced tapestry banner as part of the University of Derby and Spiral Arts 'Parks in Wartime' CHH Research Development Fund project. Thompson enjoys sewing and commented at the 'Reflection Workshop' in Nottingham in August 2016 that:

> This sort of activity can be so therapeutic, as I have experienced, but there isn't enough recognition given to this sort of activity in regards to mental health and people's well-being...The coming together of community...and people recognising the past…(Thompson in Allwork, 2016c)

Moreover, a recent CHH project has shown how retirees from specific industries can really impact on the scope, working practices and research findings of university/community partnership projects. For example, University of Northampton academic Jim Beach's Everyday Lives in War and CHH Research Development Fund project on the Intelligence Corps during the FWW has been profoundly shaped by its volunteer base from the Military Intelligence Museum. Most of these volunteers are former workers from the intelligence services, although some are current employees.

In an interview in September 2017, Beach noted that intelligence service workers who participate in his project sometimes think through problems associated with the Military History Museum's collection in a very specific way. For example, if the information cannot be found in one record set, the volunteers are often able to suggest another section of the archive where the information might be discovered. This is based on their administrative knowledge of how the Intelligence Corps works. In relation to their contribution to this process, Beach commented, 'What they have shown…is that the information available is of an order that I didn't think was possible…the depth and quality of the material is way beyond what I would have thought possible at the beginning.' (Allwork, 2017f) In return, Bill Steadman, the curator at the Museum thinks that one of the probable pleasures for retired volunteers participating in this project is the feeling of 'getting back involved in the old

game.' (Allwork, 2017f) These volunteers also benefit from the 'embodied legacy' of learning a new skill-set. For while the volunteers are often undaunted by the amount and complexity of the data that they are confronted with, they are often used to concealing sources for military intelligence work. By contrast, archival history is all about retrieving and referencing all primary sources as part of the process of researching and narrating the past.

The third group of key participants are *gatekeepers*. These are individuals who work for independent businesses and third-sector organisations who are engaged in culture, heritage and education work and who form a key bridge between the university and the community groups who they seek to engage in co-productive research. Examples of these individuals in Centre for Hidden Histories projects include Gertie Whitfield, whose social enterprise, Whitworks Adventures in Theatre has been funded by a University of Nottingham widening participation grant to engage Grassmoor Primary School in Derbyshire in a drama project based on the village's relationship to the 1914-18 conflict. Also associated with CHH through a Higher Education Innovation Funding grant is Andy Barratt of Excavate Theatre, Nottingham. Barratt has worked with individuals from Iran and Syria who are linked to the Nottingham Red Cross group to produce the play, *In Flux* (2017). Finally, funded by a CHH Research Development Fund award, Jenny Anthony and Maureen Elliott from community arts company, Spiral Arts, worked with Professor Paul Elliott and volunteers from the Derbyshire community to create a patchwork tapestry depicting First World War parks in wartime.

These independent businesses and third sector organisations or *gatekeepers* have benefitted from FWW Engagement Centre projects in a number of ways. Whitfield has commented on the importance of the CHH's institutional recognition and financial support for small start-ups (Allwork, 2016c), while Barratt commented on the 'embodied legacy' of being able to experience his home city of Nottingham in a new way: 'I've been able to

engage with a whole community or a number of different communities that I live in and amongst. I knew that they were there, but I didn't know their stories, so it has expanded my sense of my city and the people that live in it.' (Allwork, 2016e) Meanwhile, Anthony and M. Elliott from Spiral Arts noted how their project enhanced their research skills in local archives, adding a new dimension to their professional artistic practice. Their CHH project also raised awareness of their company as the mayor and other local government representatives came to the public exhibition of the tapestry (Allwork, 2016c).

Finally, the fourth group of participants in the FWW Engagement Centres are *grassroots participants*. These are the people who are at the heart of these community co-production projects and who have made local community events across the UK happen. As is to be expected, this group is as diverse as the projects that have been commissioned by the FWW Engagement Centres. Among many other groups, the CHH has worked with are primary school children, secondary school young adults and a diverse range of adult community groups dedicated to learning about the FWW. These have included village history groups in Belper and Radcliffe-on-Trent, former military intelligence officers in the Midlands, a Sikh women's group in Leicester, a Black British community group in Liverpool, Syrian and Iranian diasporic groups in the Nottingham area, Iraqi, Christian Assyrian communities in Northern England, a community group with learning disabilities in Oxfordshire as well as the descendants of German internees across the UK and Europe (Allwork, 2016 - 2017d).

The impact on these community groups is caught less by in-depth conversation in 'Reflection Workshops' and rather in the snippets of enthusiasm and viewpoints expressed on social media and in the return of participant questionnaires distributed at the end of projects. Recording and capturing these fragments which often bear witness to the 'embodied legacy' of projects has thus often relied on the tenacity of commissioned CHH project leads who

have built up the relationship of trust with their *grassroots participants*. Unfortunately, project evaluation often takes second place to the delivery of outputs, particularly if project time-lines, labor resources and funding are tight. However, when it is carried out effectively it can show the real community and individual benefits of FWW Engagement Centre projects. For example, an evaluation of Grassmoor Primary School's visit to the Digital Humanities Centre at the University of Nottingham for a FWW education day (13 June 2016) was revealing of the 'embodied legacies' of this activity. Of twenty-four respondents, at least thirteen Year Six students said that they had learnt new text and image scanning skills as a result of their visit to Nottingham's Digital Humanities Centre.

**Conclusion**

By 2018, there was broad public appetite for community-engaged research into the contribution of the Commonwealth. A British Future poll published in 2016 revealed that 77% of people agreed with the statement: 'The British War Effort included Empire and Commonwealth soldiers from countries including India and the West Indies, Australia and Canada. It is important for integration today that all of our children are taught about this shared multi ethnic history.' (Hough et al, 2016: 13). CHH is just one of the many centenary initiatives that has helped contribute to this growing public interest in what were once marginalised histories of the FWW. However, whilst the growing public knowledge of the Commonwealth contribution is an achievement, other histories which CHH has engaged with, such as stories of displacement, internment and atrocity still remain relatively 'under the radar'.

The impact of CHH had been UK wide, and has encompassed broader international networks. From the Berlin connections of the 'In the Wrong Place at the Wrong Time' project

to Irfan Malik's research on Dulmial village's contribution to the FWW, which has caught the attention of the Pakistani diaspora. CHH has also not shied from tackling difficult topics that still have contemporary resonance today. These include the challenges and exclusions of British memorial culture, the experiences of refugees, the UK's need to acknowledge its imperial past and confront its own histories of prejudice, racism and xenophobia, discourses of anti-alienism which reasserted themselves during the Brexit debate and beyond.

Moreover, the types of impact produced from CHH projects strongly coalesces with the HLF's aims for FWW commemoration. Namely, the Centre has diversified the range of community perspectives offered on the history of the FWW; it has reached out to young people; it has contributed to the recognition and/or preservation of heritage sites such as Lofthouse Park; it has encouraged the development of skill-sets that have brought benefits to both community partners and academics. For example, university undergraduates have been taught media skills; secondary school students have honed their performance practice; community members have connected with the history of their home region; volunteers have benefitted from research skills workshops. Mediating a range of 'sedimented histories' these skills and experiences nonetheless comprise what Facer and Enright would call the lasting 'embodied legacies' of CHH.

**Notes**

Preliminary research findings which have contributed to the conclusions of this working paper were disseminated through the AHRC CHH website and AHRC Connected Communities websites in 2016 and 2017. A very early Powerpoint presentation on this topic was discussed with delegates at the University of Bristol's 'Creative Histories' conference (July 2017).

1. The ‘Shared Experience Workshop’ at the Derby Riverside Centre was structured as follows. The first half of the day required academics and their community partners to give a fifteen-minute presentation on their research project. Participants were encouraged but did not have to use specifically designed PowerPoint slides that were modelled on the structure and information required for the REF 2014 impact case study template. This allowed CHH staff to see evidence of the impact of projects and it also acted as a self-assessment tool for academics and community partners to see how an impact narrative is structured. It identified the existing evidence for the impact claimed but also clearly showed existing gaps, weaknesses and areas for improvement in the narrative being created. For as the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement has suggested, key to the success of any impact case study is the ability to create a well evidenced and persuasive narrative which shows the impact of university engagement in encouraging enlightenment and empathy, social innovation or social action in relation to issues of public interest (Manners and Duncan, 2016).

By contrast, the afternoon session was far more focused on semi-structured discussion and the exchange of experience and best practice in university/community partnership working based on the key Heritage Lottery Fund themes of heritage, people and communities. Participants were split into four groups of between three and four. All groups contained both representatives of universities and communities. Each group was then allocated a theme to discuss for twenty minutes, which was then further structured by a series of questions in relation to that theme. Themes for discussion included: ‘Collaborations and Partnerships’; ‘Communities, Education and Skills’, ‘World War I History and Heritage’, and ‘World War I and Public Engagement’ At the end of the twenty-minutes, each group was asked to present to the Shared Experience Workshop on their theme, which was then opened-up to the floor for wider discussion. The ‘Shared Experience Workshop’ ended with a short

plenary discussion on the 'Legacies' of academic/university partnership projects. Full details of the exact questions used in the afternoon session of the Shared Experience Workshop can be found in a CHH report published on the AHRC Connected Communities website (Allwork, 2016b). This paper also includes a summary of CHH Shared Experience Workshop recommendations for best practice in university and community collaborations in relation to Arts and Humanities research.

2. In line with the Social Sciences tradition of focus groups, the 'Reflection Workshop' was semi-structured in design and approach and normally lasted around two hours. Based on a list of ten questions, participants were each asked questions directly by the moderator, but more casual and spontaneous discussion between participants was also facilitated and actively encouraged (Liamputtong, 2011: 2-3). Questions were developed for 'Reflection Workshops' by Allwork in consultation with Beckett and Noble. Questions included: (1) Why did you want to study the FWW? (2) How was your project formed? (3) What has your project achieved in terms of outputs? (4) What challenges has your project encountered? (5) If you had the opportunity to start the project again what would you do differently? (6) What benefits has your project brought to: (a) You as an individual? (b) Your team or organization? (c) The communities that you work with? (7) What are the benefits of working with: (a) The Heritage Lottery Fund? (b) The CHH? (8) What are the challenges of working with: (a) The Heritage Lottery Fund? (b) The CHH? (9) Having completed your project, do you have a follow-up project in mind? (10) If you have a follow-up project, would you be looking to work with: (a) The Heritage Lottery Fund? (b) The CHH? These questions were designed to get a balanced overview of the impact of CHH FWW projects on the individuals, organisations and communities that they serve, as well as an understanding of their perception of the CHH and the HLF.

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