

Jewish community's First World War stories shared at Barkingside school

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Norman Lewis with his father Harry Schmulovitch's WW1 medals. Harry was a Private in the Royal Fusiliers. Picture: Janette Hechel

The borough's Jewish community was invited to share its stories from the First World War at a school.



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We Were There Too – a heritage lottery funded project by the London Jewish Cultural Centre (LJCC) – made its way to King Solomon High School, Forest Road, Barkingside, last week, in a bid to preserve the stories of Redbridge's Jewish community during the war.

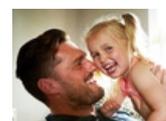
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The project aims to create a digital history of the period and Jewish life between 1914 and 1918 in London as part of a website.

The Golders Green charity hopes to create an archive of those who served in the army or lived in London at the time.

Project director Alan Fell said: "London Jewry's massive involvement in the First World War has been overshadowed by the tragic events of the Second World War.

"This is the right time, with all the focus that nationally is being given to the centenary of the great war, to ensure for future generations that our Jewish stories are told and our contributions recorded in what will be a state of the art digital history website."

The project will cost about £450,000 – most of which is being covered by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

He added: "We are delighted that the Jewish community is receiving such significant support from the Heritage Lottery Fund to do this."

A charity statement said: "The Heritage Lottery Fund's faith in the project is a testament to the important role London Jewry played in the First World War."

Working on the project, Mandy King said: "There's a small window for anyone to have direct recollection of their experience or to hand down stories of people and still remember the people in those stories.

"This is the moment these stories can be captured and there's an obligation to remember and commemorate these people."

Among those who attended was Norman Lewis, from Barkingside, who brought along his father's war medals.

Norman's dad Harry Schmulovitch was a private in the Royal Fusiliers during the First World War.

"Our history will be lost if people don't get involved," said Mandy.

Email info@jewsw1.london for more information.

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