

# Event case study: Museum of Cannock Chase “Engineering Remembrance”



Our event programme was closely linked to our WW1 ceramic exhibition 'Resonance', and consisted of a series of workshops, talks and walks centred around topics explored in the exhibition. We also ran a specialist drama workshop for a pre-booked group of children and teens. Activities were targeted at a variety of age groups and abilities, allowing everyone the opportunity to learn and explore the importance of science and engineering in the building of WW1 trenches.

## *People involved in planning and running*

- Three staff to plan and run the event.
- Two WW1 reenactment organisations - Company K and the Western Front Association
- The Young Archaeologists Club (YAC)
- Front of House staff on the day

## *Main steps of the organisation process*

- Getting the idea

We participated in British Science Week last year, and this year we wanted to broaden the appeal. The inspiration for this year's activities was a current exhibition; the trenches of WW1 were an engineering feat on a huge scale and many miners were involved, so the activities linked to the mining heritage of Cannock Chase. We realised that many of our collections link to science; although we are not a science museum, we decided to give it a go!

- Organising and creating

In November, we had our first ideas meeting about possible themes and activities for BSW. We then started contacting interested parties and getting people on board. In December, we finalised our plans and started preparing marketing materials for the event. We marketed the event through social media and to specialist interest groups and other local groups. In February, we sent out a press release to seek coverage in the local press and continued with online publicity in the run-up to the event in March.

- Delivering

Our speaker provided a lecture in the conference room with a power point presentation. A volunteer from the YAC organised a walk to the war memorial to look at the construction of memorials. Two museum staff also delivered a drop-in clay workshop to build a section of a trench, and Company K led a drama workshop on trench building with a pre-booked group, who also chose to do the clay workshop.



- Results and feedback

We had a total of 60 attendees, which was more than last year. The clay workshop was particularly popular with families, and a few adults attended the talk. The pre-booked group was extremely pleased to have their own activity and engaged well with their two workshops.

Whichever activity they chose, people stayed a long time and commented on how much they had enjoyed themselves. Even very young children started to discuss life in the trenches and the difficulties faced in building them.



- Next steps

We will take part BSW again next year but will advertise it a lot earlier. We are well known for school holiday drop-ins and activities at certain times of year, but BSW falls on a weekend in the spring when we are usually shut. We also plan to build new partnerships with local schools, so we can promote the event effectively.

### **Successes and challenges**

Despite working with various partner groups, only one could guarantee a group of young people to attend and do the drama workshop. Had we been able to secure more groups of young people to participate we would have been able to run more drama workshops on the day.

Although getting teenagers and young adults to view museums as a positive experience still remains a challenge, we think the people who came along to the event really enjoyed themselves.

They were able to spend one-on-one time with staff, re-enactors and a military expert, so were able to learn a great deal.

