



Nottingham Photographers' Hub

Community Capsule: A Living Heritage of Black WWII Servicemen and their Families

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1. Executive Summary



Above ; Oswald
George Powe, RAF,
Radar Operator

1.1 The Community Capsule: A Living Heritage of Black Ex-Servicemen and their families was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2012-2014. Its purpose was to bridge a noticeable gap in Nottingham's history – the role of Black Ex-Servicemen and their families during the Second World War and their subsequent role in rebuilding the area after the war ended.

In this regard a number of Ex-Servicemen and their families were interviewed and their stories represented in a number of resource materials including a book, DVD, website (virtual museum), resource box and a free-standing three-panel exhibition board. Two roadshows and an official Launch also took place to raise awareness of the project and to disseminate learning.

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the project i.e. its management and delivery process, its achievements and the lessons we learned along the way.

Using feedback forms, focus groups and anecdotal evidence the evaluation found:

- An overwhelming support for the project and the need to develop future projects that put the “Black” into Nottingham's history
- The resources produced were to professional standard
- The different resources made the information accessible to a wide range of people
- Critical to its success was the relationship between the three partner groups; the Council of Elders, Nottingham Black Archive (NBA) and Nottingham Photographers' Hub
- The process bridged generation gaps as it involved primary school children through to and including elders
- It was challenging to bring the project in on time given the level of work that was involved in producing the different resources and
- It would have been helpful to have more staff and financial resources to reduce the burden on a stretched project team particularly as NBA staff are all in full-time employment and so had to develop and produce the materials in their spare time.

2. Introduction and Background



**Top :Gladstone Lemonias,
RAF Radar Operator**

**Bottom :Vincent Thomas,
RAF First Glass Driver**

2.1 When Winston Churchill once claimed that the ‘British’ stood alone against the might of Hitler’s Germany what was not readily understood was that when he said ‘British’ what he was actually talking of was the whole of the British Empire – British subjects of the queen in Africa, the Caribbean, the Indian sub-continent, Burma as well as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.

In fact of the 8,586,000 people that Britain sent to fight in the Second World War nearly 4,000,000 men and women came from Britain’s colonies. The population of the Caribbean colonies of the British Commonwealth at that time was circa 14,000,000 of which around 16,000 West Indians volunteered for service and yet it was very difficult to find out anything about their contribution nationally much less on a local scale.

This was concerning as Black Servicemen’s contribution to the Second World War effort and to the subsequent rebuilding of the country remained woefully unrecognised and unappreciated. It also meant that local knowledge was incomplete making any analysis flawed.

Critically the Ex-Servicemen still with us were now in the mid-late 80s and 90s making it imperative, if we were to obtain first-hand accounts of their experiences, that their stories be documented immediately.

Nottingham Black Archive (NBA) had been working for several years with Nottingham’s Black community and in particular with Mr Oswald George Powe a WWII Serviceman. George as he was affectionately known and who sadly passed away before the end of the project often talked of his war experiences. NBA felt that his story and those of others who had served needed to be heard to ensure that their pasts were kept in the present. And so the Community Capsule: A Living Heritage of Black Ex-Servicemen and their Families project was borne.

The project was developed in partnership with Nottingham Photographers’ Hub and delivered with the invaluable advice, guidance and support of its Council of Elders.

2.2 Nottingham Black Archive (NBA)

Nottingham Black Archive (NBA) is a local community organisation dedicated to researching, collecting and preserving black history, heritage and culture in Nottingham and to celebrate the histories of people of African descent from the earliest time to the present day.

It has in its collection some of the earliest documents relating to the formation of black community organisations in Nottingham, 14 full transcripts from the first generation of Caribbean elders to reside in Nottingham, photographs, articles, newsletters and political letters dating back to the 1960s and as a result of this Community Capsule Project a host of resources – book, DVD, Exhibition, Community Loans Box and website – which document the experience of WWII Black Servicemen and their families.

The organisation was founded in 2010 by two heritage professionals, Panya Banjoko and Laura Summers who between them have over thirty years museum experience. Honey Smallhorne a Documentary Filmmaker joined the team in early 2011.

Its successes to date include:

- **Intergenerational Project:** In collaboration with the African Caribbean National Artistic Centre (ACNA) the project brought together a group of elders and young people to look at bridging the generation gap. 14 oral histories of elders recorded by the young people were produced and two Community Dialogue events (May 2011 and May 2012) were held where panels consisting of elders and 'youngers' brought the discussions to a wider audience.
- **Journeys to Nottingham:** a collection of seven stories by Caribbean people who came and settled in Nottingham during the 1950s and 1960s. The project also developed a short film and a mobile exhibition which toured community venues in Nottingham including the Nottingham Playhouse, New Art Exchange and St Ann's Valley Centre
- **Aint Nothing but a Heartache:** organised jointly with the Nottingham Playhouse this event provided a rare opportunity to hear from Viola Billups (aka Pearly Gates from Alabama) one of the first Black stars to appear on British TV and Louise Garvey a local community activist about their experiences of emigrating to the UK
- **Common Land:** a project which produced 19 oral history testimonies of the formation of St Ann's estate and the 1958 race riots. The recordings were dramatized by Mufaro Makubika, a local playwright and performed at Nottingham Playhouse in October 2012.

For more information about Nottingham Black Archive please go to: <http://nottinghamblackarchive.org/>

2.3 Nottingham Photographers' Hub (NPH)

2.3.1 Founded in 2011 by Jagdish Patel, Mervyn Mitchell and Clare Rhule Nottingham Photographers' Hub (NPH) is a social enterprise that supports and empowers vulnerable communities to develop their confidence, well-being, creativity, photography and documentary skills. It aims to give a voice to those not traditionally heard enabling them to memorialise and share their thoughts, feelings, emotions and experiences through the medium of photography.

Its successes to date include:

- Delivering photography and personal development courses to over 50 young people from a range of challenging backgrounds including those in care, unaccompanied minors seeking asylum, those with substance misuse and addictions, those living in abusive and/or neglectful households, those with mental ill health, have experienced the criminal justice system, have learning and/or behavioural issues, are disabled and/or have serious medical conditions



Above ;

Dorothy McLaughin, Passport photo on arrival to England circa 1960

Olphonso Onn, RAF, trade unknown

- 24 young people taking part in the 2012 World Event for Young Artists at Nottingham University which showcased artistic work by young people from over 100 countries
- Its work with young people showcased in East Midlands Today Children in Need 2013 Appeal Night
- 3 young people winning a Young Creatives Award 2012
- Delivered photography and personal development courses to over 90 adults with mental ill health
- An exhibition at the New Art Exchange to commemorate National Mental Health Awareness Week in 2012 which showcased the work of 5 adults with mental ill health
- An exhibition at the New Art Exchange showcasing the work of 5 adults with mental ill health that complemented Max Khandola's 'Aura of Boxing' exhibition held in 2013
- An exhibition at Nottingham University showcasing the work of 8 adults with mental ill health as part of Nottinghamshire NHS Foundation Trust 2014 AGM

For more information about Nottingham Photographers' Hub go to: <http://nphub.org.uk/>

2.3.2 There was a natural synergy to the two organisations working together - both worked to give a voice to those traditionally unheard; NBA was firmly embedded in the Black community and NPH had the infrastructure in place to apply for grants and monitor and manage funds. Thus NBA led on the community development side of the project and NPH on grant administration and accountability.

2.4 The Council of Elders

The Council of Elders was a key component in the successful delivery of the project. In addition to telling their own stories now enshrined in the Community Capsule resources, they provided knowledge, advice and guidance to the Project Team and took an active role in the roadshows and Community Capsule Launch thereby enabling their histories and learning to be disseminated to wider audiences. A very special thank you from the team goes to the Council of Elders for their unwavering support.



Left ; Speaking at an roadshow
Nottingham Central Library, April 2013

3. What we Wanted to Happen

3.1 The overarching aim of the project was to leave a lasting legacy of the experiences of Black people's contribution to the Second World War through first-hand accounts of Black Ex-Servicemen and their families.

The project also aimed to:

1. Bridge a significant gap in Nottingham's history – the inclusion of the black experience
2. Make this history accessible to all through the development of a number of resources - book, DVD, exhibition boards, resource box – and to reach young people and those more comfortable with IT technology through the development of a virtual museum and using social media
3. Share learning with a wider audience through a programme of targeted activities and events
4. Through an interactive, empowering approach, develop the documentary making skills of participants through oral history, photography and website development training
5. Ensure longevity of the programme through the development of social media and websites where new stories/artefacts could be added and updated post funding

3.2 To make the project manageable its focus centred on the first large-scale African Caribbean migration to Nottingham and those who came to the UK by request from Britain's post-war government who sought help from the colonies to rebuild the country after the devastation of the war.



Left ; Speaking at an roadshow
Nottingham Central Library, April 2013

4. What Actually Happened

4.1 The Process

4.1.1 The three collaborating groups had distinct roles:

- Nottingham Black Archive with its background of working in the Black community took the lead on the community development side of the project which included engaging and nurturing the storytellers and young poets; designing, developing and delivering the Community Capsule book, DVD, exhibition and resource box; and providing information for the website.
- Nottingham Photographers' Hub with its organisational infrastructure took responsibility for managing the overall project including its budget and reporting to the Heritage Lottery Fund. It also coordinated the oral history training for the Council of Elders; trained the elders in camera use so that they could take their own photographs for inclusion in the resources; and designed and developed the virtual museum (the website).
- The Council of Elders with its abundance of historical knowledge relating to WWII period provided their stories, advice, and guidance and took an active part in the project's roadshows and launch.

4.1.2 Prior to applying for funding, NBA and NPH met regularly to develop the project. Responsibilities for each activity were allocated to each organisation with a timeline for delivery. Both parties were therefore clear from the outset what they were expected to do and by when. NPH as the applying organisation would be responsible for the grant and so a partnership agreement was drawn up between the two organisations outlining the specific activities NBA was expected to carry out and the remuneration for the work. This was duly signed by both parties and formed a contract.

4.1.3 The funding decision was announced by HLF in July 2012. Progress Review meetings were subsequently scheduled each month for the lifetime of the project – these were cancelled if there was nothing to report but the time was allocated to ensure that the project remained on track and any issues arising could be dealt with immediately. The schedule of activities outlined in the successful grant application was used to monitor progress.

4.1.4 Meetings were also held regularly with the Council of Elders to feedback progress, seek their ideas and to ensure they felt fully involved, listened to, heard and respected.

4.2 Producing the Resource Materials and Disseminating the Learning

4.2.1 A range of resources were produced as part of the project to make the stories accessible to as many audiences as possible i.e. those who preferred reading, watching, touching and/or using computers.

4.2.2 A number of activities were undertaken to produce the materials. These included:

- **Bringing together a group of Black Elders to form the Council of Elders to provide knowledge, guidance, encourage other Black Elders to participate and generally act as a sounding board to ensure that the resources produced were accurate and relevant**
- **Desk-based research to unearth information about historical Black presence in Nottingham**
- **Training the Council of Elders in developing oral history projects**
- **Training the Council of Elders in interviewing and photography skills to enable them proactively contribute to the development of the resources**
- **Interviewing Black Elders, transcribing the interviews and producing their stories in a range of formats (book, DVD, exhibition board, website)**
- **Photographing a wealth of material for the resources**
- **Working with pupils from Kimberley Primary School who wrote poetry for the book**
- **Collecting, collating and re-producing the material in book, DVD, Exhibition Board, Resource Box and website formats**
- **Sharing the learning and encouraging new participants to become involved in the project and tell their stories through two roadshows held 10 April 2013 and 16 October 2013 at Central Nottingham Library; each roadshow was attended by over 40 people (Project Aim 3: Sharing learning with a wider audience).**
- **Formally launching the Community Capsule World War II Project on 7 February 2014 where the materials were showcased to over 75 people**
- **Disseminating the book and DVD to a range of stakeholders including libraries, museums, community projects and educational establishments- further community development work will be undertaken by NBA with local schools and community organisations**

4.2.3 At the launch the Council of Elders, NBA and NPH were proud to showcase the Community Capsule's resources:

- **The Book – “No Tears for Me My Mother” was written by Panya Banjoko from NBA – (ISBN 978-0-9576794-1-6) and covers the war period 1939-1945 and up to 10 years after. It includes Ex-Servicemen's war stories, their contribution to the war effort and the impact of taking up residency in Nottingham after the devastation of the war. A particular achievement is the inclusion of poetry by number of children from Kimberley Primary School.**
- **The DVD accompanying the book and entitled the same name “No Tears for Me My Mother” was written and produced by Ioney Smallhorne from NBA and comprises stories from nine Black Elders in five chapters: “Life in the Caribbean During WWII”; “War Stories”;**

“Racism in the Forces”; “Black Impact on British Society”; and “Post War”



- The Resource/Community Loans Box contains a copy of the book and DVD and a range of artefacts including the ‘kitty lamp’; a child’s evacuee war uniform; an English Tommy helmet; a replica of a junior evacuee war ration; child’s gas mask bag; and a ration book. Resources will be added as they become available.
- The Exhibition comprises three panels and provides a synopsis of the book and DVD with a range of illustrative photographs
- The Virtual Archive (website) – Nottingham Black Archive: Keeping the past in the present contains a collection of material including personal papers, organisational records, books, ephemera, film, photographs and oral histories. The website is in its infancy and will continually evolve as more material is gathered and uploaded.

4.3 The Difference the Project has made

4.3.1 To determine the difference the Community Capsule made we used the following mechanisms:

- Feedback questionnaires handed out at the Launch
- Council of Elders Evaluation Focus Group held 31 July 2014
- Staff Evaluation Focus Group held 31 July 2014
- Anecdotal evidence
- Requests for the resources



4.3.2 Over 75 people attended the launch. We were keen to reach a mix of people so Equalities Monitoring Forms were handed out and 36 completed by attendees. The audience was fairly mixed:

- 61% were female and 36% male – 3% did not respond to the question
- 11% were Disabled, 42% did not identify themselves as disabled and 47% did not respond to the question
- 58% identified themselves as heterosexual, 8% as Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual and 33% did not respond to the question



Above ; Images from the Launch of the Community Capsule, Feb 2014

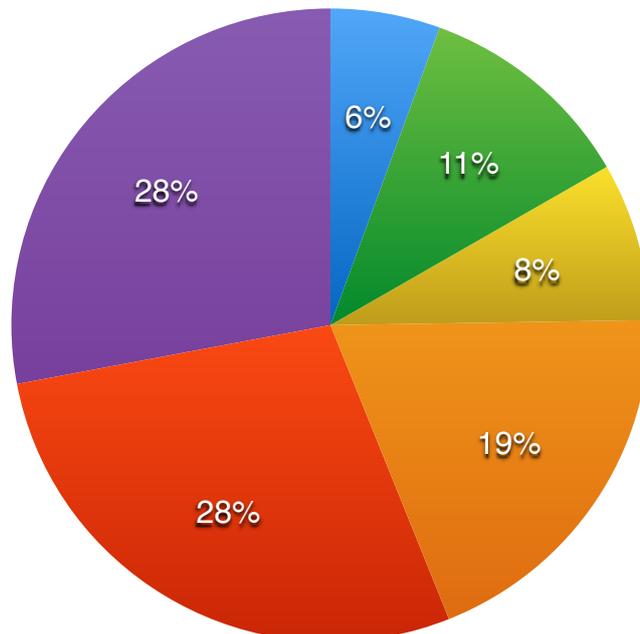


4.3.3 Unsurprisingly a sizeable proportion of the audience were of Caribbean origin given that relatives and friends of contributors attended the launch. Whilst there was representation from White people there was no representation from people of Asian backgrounds as the table below demonstrates.

White	English/Scottish/Welsh/Northern Irish/UK	28%
	Irish	
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	
	Any other White background	2.8%
Mixed ethnic background	Mixed ethnic background	
Asian/Asian UK	Indian	
	Pakistani	
	Bangladeshi	
	Chinese	
	Any other Asian background	
Black/African/Caribbean/Black UK	African	
	Caribbean	53%
	Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	8%
Other ethnic group	Arab	2.8%
	Any other ethnic group	
Not answered		5.5%

4.3.3 A mix of ages ranging from 20 upwards attended the launch.

● 20-24 ● 25-34 ● 35-44 ● 45-54 ● 55-64 ● 65+



Above ; Images from the Launch of the Community Capsule, Feb 2014

4.4 Performance against intended outcomes

4.4.1 To determine the qualitative outcomes of the project we devised a feedback questionnaire which was distributed at the launch and completed by 34 people and is used alongside the focus groups held with the Council of Elders and Project Team and anecdotal evidence to evaluate performance against targets.

4.4.2 Project Aim 1 – to bridge a significant gap in Nottingham’s History; the Inclusion of the Black Experience:

Although the original output target was to include 30 stories across the project resources we completed 20 interviews, which after discussion was acceptable to HLF but nevertheless fell somewhat short of the target due to reasons outlined in paragraph 5. That said the material obtained from the interviews had not been recorded anywhere else and on this basis alone the project met its first project aim.

What it also did was spiked people’s interest in finding out more about Black people’s contribution to local history - 88% of questionnaire respondents said the project made them very keen to find out more about the project’s subject matter and 97% felt it important that Black people’s contribution to Nottingham in general should be documented. Other suggested topics for exploration included pre-WW11 black history, post-war experiences and Windrush experiences. A full list is provided at paragraph 6.

“It is important that people know that Black people were in Nottingham before Windrush which is all you ever hear about – this project does that.”

Council of Black Elders’ Member

4.4.3 Project Aim 2 – Make the stories accessible to all through a range of resources:

Per the grant proposal and agreement all the resource materials were produced: website, book, DVD, a Community Loans/Resource Box and a three-panel free-standing exhibition. Of the respondents who completed the qualitative questionnaire:

- 100% of respondents felt that the Virtual Museum (website) was a very useful resource;
- 94% felt that the Community Capsule Book was a very useful resource;
- 94% felt the same about the DVD;
- 91% about the resource box; and
- 88% about the exhibition



Above ; Images from the Launch of the Community Capsule, Feb 2014

Respondents also made the following observations:

“The book and DVD are very accessible; it is an achievement to produce something that can be read by young and old; professional and non-professional.”

“Excellent quality video and articulate interviewees. Enjoyed visual of that era as this is so often a 'blank' for many of us.”

“The book is so attractive. It makes you want to pick up and flick through it.”

“This will really capture young children's minds. It has mine.”

“This is much needed. The panels (only thing looked at in detail on the night) are very informative”

“I believe that the resources will be an invaluable resource to contributors' families and grandchildren and the extended family”.

“The resources are wonderful. They are insightful and have a depth one could only be proud to be a part of.”

“Thank you to all the team for providing differing resources that appeal”

The statistics and comments indicate strongly that the multiplicity of resources in different formats increase accessibility to the project and the learning therein.

4.4.4 Project Aim 3 – Share learning with a wider audience through a programme of targeted activities

To achieve this aim we:

- Held two roadshows; one on 10 April 2013 and the other on 16 October 2013. Both were held at Central Nottingham Library who provided the space gratis and to whom we are extremely thankful. Both roadshows were attended by over 40 people and anecdotal evidence indicated that the sessions were very informative and generated further interest.
- Worked with a group pupils from Kimberley Primary School to further their learning with tangible results – a number of poems by the pupils are contained within the book
- Formally launched the project on 7 February 2014 where the materials were showcased to over 75 people. The Sheriff of Nottingham, Councillor Ian Malcom kindly presented a copy of the book and DVD to the contributing elders. The event received rave reviews with 97% of questionnaire respondents stating that the information provided at the launch about the project and its subject matter were “excellent”.
- Following the launch the book and DVD were disseminated to a range of stakeholders including libraries, museums, community projects and educational establishments. Further community development work will be undertaken by NBA with local schools and community organisations and a Publicity and Dissemination Strategy will be developed

“A project of this kind should be taken into schools and be part of the national curriculum. Children and their teachers are not aware of the contribution black people have made during the last war and the present economy”

Comment from
Launch Feedback
Questionnaire

to ensure a more coordinated strategic approach is applied so that optimum benefits are achieved.

Since the launch requests for the book and DVD materials have snowballed; over 100 of the 200 books printed have been distributed to the contributors, local schools and colleges, local libraries and museums necessitating the need for a re-print of a further 300 books by agreement with HLF. There has also been a steady increase in Facebook and Twitter dialogue.

Interest in the project has spread far and wide from museums as far afield as Chicago, Florida and Los Angeles in the United States of America as well as in other parts of the United Kingdom – the book will be incorporated into an exhibition about the two world wars in Glasgow and will be included in the Black Archive in London; Warwickshire University will use the book and DVD as a resource for its African Caribbean course; the materials will be archived in MACE (Media Archive for Central England); and Renaissance One in Leicester have expressed an interest in working strategically with NBA to further its aims.

Locally, potential projects are being discussed with Mellors Primary School, Djanogly City College and with Merlita Bryan the Lord Mayor of Nottingham who intends to host a joint event in October to mark the contribution of Nottingham’s Black Servicemen during 2014 Black History Month.

4.4.5 Project Aim 4 – Develop the documentary making skills of participants through oral history, photography and website development training

Oral history training to 5 Council of Elders members and 6 of the project team took place on 23 October 2012 and was delivered by Colin Hyde from East Midlands Oral History Archive. This was invaluable in ensuring that the collection of stories met approved standards and eventually was reflected in the quality of the resources produced.

Basic photography skills training took place on the same day in the afternoon to encourage and support Elders to take photographs of their objects/artefacts to be added to the virtual archive. Website development training was less attractive to the Elders with only one member supported in this activity.

4.4.6 Project Aim 5 – Ensure longevity of the programme through the development of social media and websites where new stories/artefacts can be added post funding

Although in its infancy the website has been developed with links to Facebook and Twitter pages and can be found at <http://nottinghamblackarchive.org/>. It is a living medium and will be continually updated by Nottingham Black Archive as part of its core work.

4.4.7 Unintended Outcomes

Project staff were pleased to have met all its intended outcomes but were also delighted to find some pleasant unintended outcomes. It would appear that the project development process has reignited, at least in the case of the Council of Elders, a belief that generations of people in the black community – and this includes White people and people of other minority ethnic groups who have relationships/strong friendships with people in the Black community – can work together positively to achieve common aims.



Above ; Images from the Launch of the Community Capsule, Feb 2014

“I’ve used the recording skills I’ve learnt but I’m not too good at it but when I do go on the computer things come back to me. It’s good that I’ve had the opportunity to learn new skills and I really appreciate it.”

The Council of Elders Member

This was particularly highlighted by the comments made at the Council of Elders Evaluation Forum held on 31 July 2014 which included:

“I’ve been asked to be interviewed for so many things; BBC, Channel 4 etc. but they never went anywhere so I was reluctant to get involved this time. But I was treated with respect by this project and I am thankful for it.”

“In the past people had ambitions to run projects for the Black community but not the skills; there was in-fighting and quarrels which made you lose motivation. I was impressed by the connection with NBA and NPH which brought different skills together. Now I know there can be organisation”

“I was so impressed with the organisation - it was not heavy handed; it brought you along with it. And it was great that generations of young, middle-aged and older generations came together to deliver the project”

A wonderful outcome of the project is that it has inspired two members of the Council of Elders to write their own autobiographical books to grow the legacy of the Black experience in Nottingham.



Above ; Images from the Launch of the Community Capsule, Feb

5. Project Review

5.1 What worked well and why

5.1.1 The evaluation of the difference the project has made indicates that it has been a resounding success. This can be attributed to a number of reasons:



Above ; Council of Elders Evaluation Focus Group, July 2014

- **Careful pre-project planning:** NBA and NPH met regularly prior to making applications for funding to determine the project's focus, aims and objectives and to identify the tasks needed to implement the project, allocating leads and timelines to each. The first application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) was unsuccessful and feedback was sought about how the application could be improved. Amanda Turner from HLF was very supportive and her observations/suggestions were taken on board with the subsequent re-application which was successful.
- **Formal, contractual arrangements between NPH and NBA;** NPH as the company responsible for the grant drew up a partnership agreement with NBA which outlined NBA's tasks and fee scale previously agreed by both parties. The specification contained therein was used to track performance against aims and objectives during the life of the project.
- **Regular progress meetings held between NPH and NBA –** a meeting was scheduled the last Wednesday of each month during the lifetime of the project to monitor its progress. If there was nothing to report the meeting was cancelled but it was important to have the meetings scheduled in to deal with any issues as they arose and to prevent crises occurring. We also kept in regular contact between meetings through emails and telephone calls.
- **The skills, knowledge and expertise of the three contributing groups;** the Council of Elders brought their knowledge of the subject matter, was used as a sounding board to ensure project content remained relevant and accurate and to reach potential contributors; Nottingham Black Archive bringing their experience of heritage, developing and producing DVDs and the fact that they were embedded in Nottingham's Black community were critical in developing the resources; and NPH with its background in successfully applying for and managing contracts and grants brought its infrastructure to ensure funding was properly accounted for as well as its expertise in developing websites and photography to replicate images and artefacts for use in the materials. A mutual respect between the groups ensured that good relationships endured throughout the project.
- **Cross-generational working:** as well as collaborating with the Council of Elders Panya Banjoko undertook some work with children from Kimberley Primary School and a selection of their poetry is contained within the book. Not only has this raised their awareness of issues relating to the Second World War and Black people's contribution to it, they have tangible evidence of the work they have done.

“I am very proud of what we’ve pulled off given that we are small community organisations. The resources are of a very high standard.”

Project Team Evaluation
Focus Group



Above ; Images from the Roadshow, Central Library, Oct 2013

- The interim roadshows were invaluable in updating the wider public on the progress of the project and getting their support, finding future potential contributors and generally disseminating the learning about Black Servicemen’s contribution to World War II.
- The Launch went incredibly well; the New Art Exchange kindly provided free of charge, a room that was appropriately dressed for a reception and with all the necessary media equipment to ensure that the audience could hear what was happening and view the DVD - there was standing room only.
- The quality of the materials produced which has attracted interest locally, nationally and internationally – a number of people on their feedback questionnaires and anecdotally have commented on how “professional” the resources look.
- The timescale: although fairly tight (and this is referred to in 5.2) it was useful to have a clear end date for monitoring purposes and to ensure that the project did not drag on to a point where momentum was lost.
- All the materials were produced on time and within budget.
- Clear activities for evaluation which enabled us gather the required information to assess performance but also to report back to HLF.

5.2 What did not work well and why

5.2.1 Whilst in the main things worked well some issues did arise during the project process:

- **Timeline:** Project development and implementation ran from September 2012 to April 2014 with evaluation to be completed by 1 September 2014. The timeline proved somewhat challenging as it did not take account of any unforeseen mishaps such as computer crashes which lost work that had to be re-done and/or significant illness which was also the case with a key member of staff. Additionally some of the timetabling could have been improved e.g. the Launch took place on 7 February 2014. The last two weeks of December and first two weeks of January are typically down periods when it is difficult to get hold of people so the book had to be completed a few weeks sooner than projected - by early December - so that it could be proofread and printed in time for the launch.
- **Staffing levels –** NBA staff all work in full-time paid employment and so had to deliver their elements of the project in their spare time. This became challenging for two main reasons: a) given the opportunity to tell their stories the storytellers took this on with gusto and quite often the sessions ran out of time and another meeting had to be scheduled to complete the process which doubled the anticipated interviewing time for many interviewees. This had a knock-on effect and we were unable to reach our target of 30 interviews in time for the book deadline. HLF understood the issues and were happy for us have completed 20 interviews by the launch date. That said the website is an evolving medium whereby stories will be continually added over time and this target will eventually be met; b) there was apprehension by some ex-servicemen and/or their families to get involved for reasons such as involvement in previous unsuccessful projects that utilised their time but produced little; the telling of war stories inevitably brought up tragic memories that they

would rather forget; and some did not feel that their story was interesting enough to tell (the latter patently untrue).

- The level of resources – the partners were thankful for the HLF grant of £48,700 which at that time was close to the ceiling of grants awarded. The consumables' budgets were well forecasted but the staff time including the time staff agreed to provide voluntarily was under-projected for the reasons described above. Consequently staff volunteered in excess a further 120 hours on top of the 38 hours originally predicted to ensure the project was completed to a high quality standard.
- We had not developed a comprehensive Publicity and Dissemination Strategy as part of the project development process and subsequently underestimated how popular the book would be and so included a print-run of 200 in the HLF bid. Over half of that amount was distributed within weeks of the Launch and we found it necessary to ask HLF (who kindly agreed), to use some of our contingency budget for a further 300 print-run to meet projected demands of 2014 Black History Month events and beyond. At the Council of Elders Evaluation Focus Group we were reminded that many of them speak at various events throughout the year and a coherent publicity strategy would have automatically taken this into consideration ensuring that the materials would be prominently on display at any such events.



Above ; Images from the Roadshow, Central Library, Oct 2013

“We were very pushed for time. We could have done with a few extra hands. We definitely needed more resources and in particular more support with the administrative tasks.”

NBA Staff – Project Team Focus Group

5.3 What we would do differently next time

Whilst the project overall went relatively smoothly there were some issues to think about for future projects. We would:

- Break-down each activity into specific tasks to provide a more accurate determination of how long each resource would take to produce e.g. there were a number of activities that needed to be undertaken to produce the DVD outside of filming the interviewees including researching the licencing arrangements of the different materials used, designing the look of the DVD; writing the script, editing etc. This would also enable the provision of a more accurate budget – most of DVD was produced by Loney Smallhorne volunteering her time.
- Take more time to consider what realistically can be produced with the levels of funding; whilst it is important that funders receive value for money we need to ensure that we do not ‘chase the funding’ if it has a detrimental impact on ourselves – many staff members felt at times getting the work done was ‘intense’.
- Build in contingency time to allow for unforeseen instances
- For future oral history projects, factor in more time to recruit and support contributors recognising that they may not stick to a prescribed format and may wander off the subject – it is important to allow them to do this as it builds trust and respect and they are more likely to feel you have time for them and are not just using them as a means to an end
- When scheduling activities, factor in down-time during holidays i.e. Christmas, Easter and summer

- **As far as possible and within the constraints of funding criteria, apply for sufficient resources that adequately reflect the work future projects entail**
- **As far as possible and within the constraints of funding criteria and the availability of relevant personnel, hire more project staff including administrative staff**
- **Recruit and support volunteers to undertake specific roles at events e.g. registration, catering, coordinating feedback forms etc.**
- **Consider the possibility of using ‘booths’ where people could go in and tell their own stories at a time that suits them – additional time would need to be factored in to manage this process to ensure the required information is obtained**
- **For similar projects, devise a Publicity and Dissemination Strategy at the outset**



**Above ; Images from
the Roadshow, Central
Library, Oct 2013**

6. Where do we go from Here

The Community Capsule World War II Project is the largest project run by Nottingham Black Archive to date. The website forms a virtual archive that will continually evolve as more material, events and projects are developed. The focus groups and questionnaires were used to consult the community about what issues should be addressed and what new projects should be developed. The responses are as follows:

- **NBA need to find suitable premises to store the resources and be a venue where people can meet – in particular the Council of Elders who it was felt should continue to meet irrespective of funding available, to ensure Black issues remain on the agenda**
- **Suggested future projects included:**
 - o **Pre-WW11 black history**
 - o **Post-war experiences**
 - o **Windrush experiences**
 - o **Riots and Revolts – stories of uprisings in Nottingham**
 - o **A Chronology of the Generations e.g. this project time period was 1945-56; the next project could be for the following 10-11 years and/or periods where there were critical activities such as the riots/uprisings**
 - o **How immigration laws have changed over the years and their impact**
 - o **A tribute to Len Garrison, Educationalist and Historian who ran a number of activities locally that raised Black awareness**
 - o **Food, Housing, Education, Employment**
 - o **African communities in Nottingham**
 - o **Black women during WWI and WWII**
 - o **British Black Panther party members**
 - o **Inter-racial relationships**
 - o **Young Afro-Caribbean diaspora**
 - o **Mapping migration patterns and settlements from Africa and the Caribbean across the UK. What were the drivers for the patterns that emerge from the research work?**

*Nottingham Photographers
Hub*

Nottingham Black Archive

...ve ; Images from
the Roadshow
Central Library, Oct
2013

