



CHELSEA DISTRICT LIBRARY
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April 5, 2016 | Chelsea, MI | Chelsea District Library (CDL) is pleased to announce the receipt of an additional grant for the World War I Commemorative Centennial Project *Strong Foundations New Possibilities*. This project, which commemorates the WWI centennial through Chelsea residents' photographs, letters, stories, and artifacts, will culminate with an installation of banners on buildings throughout downtown Chelsea. These banners will display historic World War I era photos; chosen from those currently being collected from Chelsea-area residents.

Deborah Greer, co-Director of Chelsea River Gallery, originally conceptualized this project. "I was moved by an exhibit by artist Marian Marzynski titled 'Before I Was Anybody, I Was a Child Survivor of the Holocaust'. It displayed large-scale outdoor banners with images of child Holocaust survivors from Warsaw. The inspiration to do something similar in Chelsea for our WWI veterans took hold and would not let go," says Deborah. She and her co-Director, Patti Schwarz then approached the Chelsea District Library to help make it a reality. This partnership continues a long-term relationship between the two organizations; one that has created and produced several community events focused on art and culture. Both organizations will be instrumental in the planning and implementation of this commemorative display, which will kick-off on Saturday, July 30th.

CDL received an initial grant from Michigan Humanities Council (MHC) in November that allowed this commemorative project to get off the ground. In March, the World War I project was incorporated into the Chelsea Chamber of Commerce's grant application for the Community Tourism Action Plan Program (CTAP) through Washtenaw County Convention and Visitors Bureau. "This project is one of the most intriguing collaborations yet for our community. It speaks to the heritage of our community, our country, and the world in ways that are very distant to most of our citizens," says Bob Pierce, Executive Director of the Chelsea Chamber of Commerce. On March 24th the CTAP grant application was approved, allowing the World War I project to expand from the downtown area into the south end of Chelsea.

CDL has launched the World War I Commemorative Centennial Project on the *Stories of Chelsea* website, available at www.storiesofchelsea.chelseadistrictlibrary.org where you can browse the first photographs and stories collected. CDL continues to look for World War I era photographs, stories, and artifacts from the community. While photographs will continue to be accepted, in order for them to be considered for the banners they must be received by April 25th. Community members with items to contribute can contact Keegan Sulecki, Head of Adult Services at 734.475.8732 x218 or at ksulecki@chelseadistrictlibrary.org.

About Us: Chelsea District Library is nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide equal access to quality resources that serve the lifelong cultural, educational and informational needs and interests of all people. The Library currently serves 14,000 residents in the Chelsea district – City of Chelsea plus Dexter, Lima, Lyndon and Sylvan townships and more than 20,000 individuals visit the Library each month. For more information visit chelsea.lib.mi.us

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