



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
11th November 2016

StrongBack Productions is pleased to announce that we have been awarded a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to research the history behind the play **Chigger Foot Boys** written by our co-Artistic Director Patricia Cumper.

Thanks to support from National Lottery players this project will be an opportunity for 20 young people aged between 15-22 from Wandsworth to undertake research based on themes from the play and produce the content for an exhibition and an accompanying website. The exhibition will be on display at Tara Theatre in Earlsfield for members of the public to visit from Monday 13th February 2017 to Saturday 11th March 2017.

Participants will attend six 2-hour workshops at Caius House Youth Centre in Battersea from late November 2016 to January 2017 where they will undertake the research under the guidance of Dr. Richard Smith from Goldsmith's, University of London. Dr. Smith has written widely on the experience of West Indian troops in both World Wars and the race and gender implications of military service in the British Empire. His current research focuses on representations of black and Asian troops in popular history documentary and the role these images serve within the national memory of multicultural society.

Patricia Cumper says: *“this is unique and exciting opportunity for young people from Wandsworth to learn about heritage using the themes and characters from Chigger Foot Boys as inspiration to reflect on the contribution made by Caribbean soldiers to the war.*

By researching and creating the exhibition panels, the participants will learn firstly about the many Caribbean soldiers that served in World War One. This will allow them to explore little known aspects of Britain's multicultural heritage, the long standing presence of African and Caribbean people in the UK, and encourage them to use this knowledge to explore their own life experiences and how they might react if they had lived in such times. They will also learn about how attitudes and loyalties changed as the war went on.”

The workshops are free and the first workshop will take place on Wednesday 30th November from 6-8pm at Caius House Youth Centre in Battersea.

Notes:

Playwright Patricia Cumper is available for interview.

Further information on StrongBack Productions is available at www.strongbackproductions.com

Heritage Lottery Fund - Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. www.hlf.org.uk @heritagelottery @HLFLondon

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The six themes are:

1. 1914 to 1918 in the Caribbean. What did the soldiers leave behind: Why did they volunteer?
2. Routes to the Great War: As professional soldiers of the First and Second Jamaica Regiments of the British West India Army as volunteer soldiers as members of the West Indian regiments as private citizens who made their way to England by sea and then signed up.
3. Caribbean Soldiers in Africa: How Caribbean soldiers fought in West and East Africa and were finally mustered in Egypt.
4. Caribbean Soldiers in Europe: Where and how they served. The rebellion.
5. After the war was over: Caribbean soldiers demobbed, fear of rebellion, returning to England, returning to the Caribbean.
6. Changing Attitudes: From 'fighting for King and Country' to 'this is not the Black Man's fight'. As more men were needed, how colonial attitudes changed.

The workshops will be held at Caius House Youth Centre, 2 Holman Road, Battersea, London, SW11 3RL.

The dates/times of the workshops are:

Workshop 1	Wednesday, 30th November 2016	Workshop 4	Wednesday, 4th January 2017
Workshop 2	Wednesday, 7th December 2016	Workshop 5	Wednesday, 11th January 2017
Workshop 3	Wednesday, 14th December 2016	Workshop 6	Wednesday, 18th January 2017