

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> University of Worcester		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 28 History		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Home Fronts: Expanding the focus of the First World War Centenary		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2014-2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Maggie Andrews	Professor of Cultural History (Emeritus since 2019)	2010-present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014-19		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>Andrews has proactively engaged public and communities, both nationally and regionally, with her research in the context of the centenary of the First World War, directing public conceptualisation of the war away from the battlefield and towards various aspects of the 'home front', reaching millions of people over the period 2014-2019. In so doing, she has contributed to wider debates about gender equality. She has engaged public and communities through various media (national TV and radio, popular magazines, podcasts, videos, Blogs), festivals, exhibitions and other events. Further, she has advised major heritage funders, museums, and community groups, including the Women's Institute, on their approaches to commemoration.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<p>Andrews' research engages with the histories of domestic women in the First World War and how that history has been remembered and positioned in national narratives of the conflict (Reference 1). Her reputation in this area is reflected in her role as co-investigator on an AHRC-funded World War I Engagement Centre with the lead for Gender and the Home Front (Grant 1).</p> <p>Whilst munitions workers and land girls are familiar images of the First World War Home Front, and we know that the number of women in paid employment temporarily increased during the conflict, most women remained in the home or maintained their domestic roles alongside paid work. Andrews' work shows that the home was a place of emotional belonging - an ideal that was dreamed of and fought for - but it was also a building in which domestic and commercial labour was undertaken, and which was inhabited by multiple different groups of individuals who were regarded as 'families' (References 3 and 4).</p> <p>Andrews' research has focussed on local studies of rural areas, often within Worcestershire, with a commitment to placing the home firmly back into the study of the Home Front. The importance of this lies in reminding historians – but also the public - that a national narrative is not necessarily <i>the</i> national narrative, and that global wars have very local and everyday personal consequences at the time and in subsequent years (Reference 5).</p> <p>Whilst much research on gender politics has addressed women's public campaigns to obtain the right to vote in parliamentary elections in 1918, Andrews' research demonstrates that gender politics often play out in the mundane and the everyday, in the multiple, sometimes unnoticeable interactions reliant upon the exercise and internalisation of power in intimate and very personal spaces. It is in the politics of the home, the street, the workplace or leisure spaces that power relations were worked through, challenged, stretched and re-interpreted. Andrews revisited, expanded and developed her previous research on the history of the Women's Institute Movement (Reference 2) to explore how domestic rural women were empowered and/or politicised during</p>		

the conflict and its aftermath e.g. through “Voters and Volunteers: organising women for home and country” a project funded by the AHRC engagement centre.

Andrews’ work on rural domestic women during the conflict in Worcestershire (especially in co-produced research undertaken with community groups) has also led her to reappraise the significance of children and their paid or unpaid labour within the home and family (e.g. “Patriotism or Pragmatism: Children and Young People on the Rural Home Front in Worcestershire and Surrounding Areas”, also funded by the AHRC engagement centre). This is the focus of some of her recent publications (Reference 6).

Andrews’ research in these areas relates directly to her impact on popular conceptualising of the war, including her consultancy on media dramas and documentaries, by refocusing attention on domestic experiences. In her publications, and when speaking on panels and at conferences, she has also drawn on her work to interrogate how academic history can be used, or at times fails, to move the general public and media away from some of the familiar iconography, tropes and narratives of war.

### 3. References to the research

1. M. Andrews and J. Lomas, *The Home Front: Images, Myths and Forgotten Experiences* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
2. M. Andrews, *The Acceptable Face of Feminism: The Women’s Institute Movement 1915-1960* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 2015).
3. M. Andrews and J. Lomas (eds.), *Gender War and Conflict*, Special edition of *Women’s History Review*, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2016.1148501>
4. M. Andrews, A. Fell, L. Noakes and J. Purvis (eds.), *Representing, Remembering and Rewriting Women’s Histories of the First World War*, Special edition of *Women’s History Review*, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2017.1292618>
5. M. Andrews, ‘Entitlement and the Shaping of First World War Commemorative Histories.’ *Cultural Trends*, 27 (2), 2018. pp. 63-67. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2018.1453446>
6. M. Andrews, ‘Worcestershire’s Women: Local Studies and the Gender Politics of the First World War and its Legacy’, *History: Journal of the Historical Society*, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-229X.12917>

#### Grants

1. M. Andrews (Co-I) Voices of War and Peace, AHRC-funded World War I Engagement Centre, 2013-2019.

Outputs 1 and 2 are available on request.

### 4. Details of the impact

The impact of Andrews’ research flows from engaging the public and communities with her research on the “home front”, reconceptualising public understanding of the First World War. Her pathways to engagement have included:

- National radio - Between October 2013 and 2018 Andrews was Historical Consultant to the BBC Radio 4 drama series, *Home Front*. In this capacity she was integral to the programme’s character and success: its editor, Jessica Dromgoole, described her as the “single authoritative voice” who was the “touchstone” for the series’ representation of historical events (Source A). In total 592 episodes were broadcast, with a weekly reach of 2.8 million listeners. There have been approximately 25 million downloads of the series’ podcast worldwide. She was also one of four panellists on BBC Radio 4’s *Woman’s Hour* special dedicated to Women and World War One in 2014.

- Regional radio - Between September 2013 and November 2014, Andrews was the AHRC-funded advisor to BBC West Midlands on its World War One at Home project. A BBC journalist articulates the impact Andrews had on their coverage of the centenary but also the impact on listeners and on community groups in understanding their local heritage (Source B).
- Television - She has featured in a number of national and international productions focused on the First World War centenary such as ABC's *Monash and Me*, and the BBC1 documentary on the Women's Institute, *Cake Bakers and Trouble Makers*, first shown in 2015.
- Videos and podcasts - She wrote and presented a series of videos produced for [History West Midlands](#). The series, entitled The Hidden Home Front, which explores little-known and poorly understood stories of life in towns and villages in the Midlands during the First World War, has been viewed 30,000 times and downloaded 6,000 times (Source C).
- Popular magazines, blogs and websites - Andrews has written for, among others, BBC History Magazine (circulation 90,00); Women's History Magazine; The History Press blog; the Home Front Radio 4 Drama Series blog; and HLF's National Website for International Women's Day 2015.

Andrews represented the University on the steering group for *Worcestershire World War One 100 (WWW100)*, a 6-year programme of exhibitions, performances, and community activities to commemorate the First World War, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (£333,000). She was a vital figure in the development and delivery of WWW100, supporting the initial bid, working closely with key partners to pull together the programme and extending its reach by proactively working with schools, libraries and community organisations (Source D). Examples of events in which Andrews played a key role include:

- Two major exhibitions that kicked off the programme in 2014 at the Avoncroft Museum (5,000 visitors), and at Worcestershire Museum and Gallery (21,000).
- [Childhood Interrupted](#), a *Voices of War and Peace* exhibition, co-created with local schools and children (2,000 visitors per day from 2-29 November 2017).
- [World War One in the Vale](#): a research project, festival (30,000 visitors) and heritage trail developed in collaboration with Pershore Heritage and History Society and Pershore Women's Institute to explore and commemorate the role people in the Vale of Evesham played in feeding the nation during the First World War. This resulted in a book, co-edited by Andrews, *How the Pershore Plum Won the Great War*.

100,000s of people engaged with *WWW100* and its overall impact is clearly articulated in the independent evaluation of the project (Source E). This report specifically highlights: "one of the strengths of the project was that it facilitated the generation of knowledge in different formats which was made available in the form of engaging and unique heritage outputs, some of which were temporary in nature while others carry on beyond the project period".

Beyond *WWW100*, Andrews has been involved in a range of other public engagement activities focused on the Home Front including: '[More than Jam and Jerusalem](#)' at the Hay Festival, May 2016; '1916 Christmas', Avoncroft Museum, November 2016, funded by the Being Human Festival of Humanities; and 'Plumfest', Croome House in November 2016, also funded by the Festival of Humanities.

Andrews has also acted in an advisory capacity to funders, heritage organisations and community groups. Examples of this are:

- She has advised the HLF on how to expand its areas of focus on the First World War to include the Home Front. This has included contributions to their web presence and their publicity material and providing training to its staff (Source F).
- She has worked with the Women's Institute nationally and regionally to expand understanding of the movement's role in the Great War. She gave the keynote address at the National Federation of Women's Institutes Centenary Event in the House of Commons in September 2015 (Source G). She also delivered the keynote address at the Staffordshire Federation of Women's Institutes Centenary Council Meeting at Staffordshire County Showground in October 2019, attended by 800 guests.
- She is a historical advisor to the Black Country Living Museum and has played a significant role in shaping the museum's presentation of "home fronts" (Source H). The research helped the museum to "understand the importance of the stories we had to tell through our domestic settings, and in particular the impact the war had on the lives of women and children".

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- A. Testimony from Jessica Dromgoole, Executive Producer, Home Front, BBC Radio 4
- B. Testimony from Nick Goodwin, BBC Hereford and Worcester, World War One at Home
- C. Testimony from Mike Gibbs, History West Midlands
- D. Testimony from Adrian Gregson, Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service, Lead for WWW100
- E. Evaluation of Worcestershire World War 100:  
<https://www.iwm.org.uk/sites/default/files/fwwc/2020-07/Worcs%20WW100%20Evaluation%20Report%20Final.pdf>
- F. Karen Brookfield, Deputy Director (Strategy), Heritage Lottery Fund, 2002-2019
- G. UK Parliament - 100 years of The WI: women as agents of social change lecture:  
<https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/2015-parliament-in-the-making/get-involved1/2015-parliament-in-the-making-events/100-years-of-the-wi-women-as-agents-of-social-change-/>
- H. Testimony from Mel Weatherley, Head of Programme Development, Black Country Living Museum