

Reminiscence Project Catalogue



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The Value of Reminiscence Activities

Reminiscing is a normal, healthy and enjoyable mental activity. In most people, there is a strong desire and need to have one's memories, wisdom and knowledge valued and passed on.

Reminiscence can be a rich experience involving reliving the past, not just recalling facts. When reminiscing, individuals remember life stages, family events and relationships, hopes and dreams, losses and achievements, social and historical experiences. The memories brought back may be happy or sad.

Reminiscence sessions aren't just about remembering. The sessions provide a creative communication tool, using stories from the past to build relationships in the present. Reminiscence can be of particular importance to older people because it:

- can give meaning and value to their past and present lives;
- highlights their assets rather than their disabilities;
- helps reinforce a sense of personal identity, self worth and self esteem;
- can build a bridge between the older person and those who care for them;
- can give a sense of increased wellbeing and enjoyment as a result of socializing with other members of a group.

Research indicates that reminiscence work on a one-to-one basis and in small groups can contribute to the quality of life of older people.

- The interaction between older people, their peers and carers can enrich the social and emotional 'health' of participants.
- Feeling their memories are valued helps promote older people's sense of individuality when confronted with de-personalizing group-living situations, while at the same time lessening feelings of isolation and strangeness through the sharing of common experiences.
- The reminiscence experience provides an enriching way to access personal past history, which in turn offers insight into individuals' present actions and attitudes.
- Reminiscence work with people with dementia capitalizes on remaining areas of memory. Information gained can be returned to the individual, thus helping to prolong a sense of identity.
- Information gained or highlighted can be used constructively to enliven and improve the current lives of older people, for example, by encouraging resumption of past interests or developing social activities based on increased knowledge of residents' past skills and interests.

How To Run a Reminiscence Session

Reminiscence work should be **person-led** and not object-led. The objects are only important in so far as they relate to some aspect of remembered life-experience, and act as a trigger for some form of positive engagement.

A key component in developing positive reminiscence work is a session leader who is:

- a good listener
- able to acknowledge and respect the uniqueness of individuals
- sensitive to both verbal and non-verbal communication
- empathetic, recognizing and acknowledging feelings expressed
- able to value older people's histories and enjoy being 'taught' about the past

Closed questions requiring a specific answer can promote examination, explanation and comparison

- e.g. What is this for?
- What year did that happen in?

Open questions are better at generating discussion and promoting problem solving

- e.g. How have things changed since...?
- What did you like best about...?

Artifacts, music, smells, drawing, miming or role play, and taking part in traditional domestic tasks all prompt memories.

Remember

Sharing one memory can set off a reminiscence chain on the same or different subjects.

The process cannot be hurried. Older people potentially have a lifetime of experience to share.

Be prepared to allow time to respond to prompts, rephrasing questions if necessary.

Reminiscence activities may appeal to individuals at different times. It is important that individuals understand that a refusal today does not preclude taking part on another occasion.

Different people gain enjoyment from different forms of reminiscence work in various ways. Someone may be reluctant to share their memories with a group, but enjoy listening to others or reminiscing in one-to-one sessions.

Not everyone wants to reminisce. Some do not see any value in 'dwelling' on the past. Others avoid remembering the past because it is painful or because of the feeling of loss that it provokes.

The Children's Room

Box 1 Objects

Magnifying sheet and magnifying glass

Soft Toys and Dolls

- CR1: Stuffed toy dog
- CR2: Monkey hand puppet
- CR3: Small doll
- CR4: Squeaky Kewpie doll



Toy Models

- CR5: Micromodels locomotives cutouts
- CR6: Hornby train wagon 'LNE 12530'
- CR7: Lead farm animals (carthorse, cow, calves x 2, sheep, pig, goose)
- CR8: Lead mounted guardsmen x 2
- CR9: Corgi 'Bluebird' car

Crafts and Construction

- CR10: Box of 'Goliath' crayons
- CR11: Tuck's 'Pastime Pictures' transfers
- CR12: *Crafts for Girls* (1954)
- CR13: Building blocks

Box 2 Objects

Magnifying sheet and magnifying glass

Books

- CR14: *Rupert and the Holiday Ship* comic No. 22
- CR15: Ladybird books: *The Wise Robin* and *Beside the Sea with Uncle Mac*
- CR16: *The Pleasure Book for Boys and Girls*
- CR17: *The New Target Book for Boys*

Games and Puzzles

- CR18: 'Hopla' game
- CR19: Cow & Gate 'Happy Families' card game (46 cards; 2 missing)
- CR20: Poultry puzzle blocks

Extras

- CR21: Wooden 'Buzzy Bee' pull-along toy
- CR22: Gyroscope
- CR23: *View-Master* 3-D viewer with reels (8)
- CR24: Kaleidoscope
- CR25: Moneybox

Schooldays

Objects

Magnifying sheet and magnifying glass

Reading, Writing and Arithmetic

- SD1: Collection school readers
- *The Dale Readers First Primer*
 - *Kingsway Readers: Book One*
 - *The Happy Venture Readers: Book Two* (1940)
- SD2: Copy Book
- SD3: CN national handwriting test
- SD4: Wooden pencil box with three dip pens
- SD5: Glass inkpot
- SD6: Box of *Harbutt's* coloured chalks
- SD7: Chinese abacus in box

Science and Geography

- SD8: Collection nature books
- *The Golden Nature Readers: Book One*
 - *Stories of Animal Life*
- SD9: Victory puzzle of Scottish industry

Music

- SD10: *The School Recorder Book: Part 1*
- SD11: *100 Songs for Children* CD.

The Playground

- SD12: Skipping rope
- SD13: Marbles in polka dot bag
- SD14: Whizzing top
- SD15: Cigarette cards in Oxo tin

Extras

- SD16: Milk bottle
- SD17: Tin of boot polish
- SD18: Collection of photographs

Activities

- CRA1: Plasticine modelling
- CRA2: Circus Ring Crossword / Who's Who at the Zoo
- CRA3: Advertising for a Friend

Going Places

Box 1 Objects

Magnifying sheet and magnifying glass

Getting Ready

- GP1: Cami-knickers
GP2: Stockings
GP3: Enamel compact
GP4: *Revlon* lipstick tube
GP5: Perfume bottle
GP6: Small suede jewellery box
 - Cascade bead brooch
 - Diamond shape Lucite brooch
 - Floral china brooch
 - Lucite clip on earrings
 - Diamante necklace
GP7: Scarves (2)
GP8: Black suede high heel shoes
GP9: White kid gloves
GP10: Black angora hat
GP11: Detachable collars in collar box
GP12: Stud box with studs
GP13: Gold metal tie pin and cufflinks
GP14: Leather wallet
 - Pre-decimal notes (2) and pennies (3)
 - Automobile Club membership card
GP15: National Registration Identity Card



On the Road

- GP16: Model bus
GP17: *London Transport Country Bus* tickets (12)
GP18: Model car
GP19: *The Highway Code*
GP20: Petrol ration book
GP21: *AA Drives from Reigate*
GP22: RAC road map
GP23: Man's driving gauntlets
GP24: Lady's driving gauntlets
GP25: Photographs for 'On the Road'

Going Places

Box 2

Objects

Magnifying sheet and magnifying glass

Shopping

- GP26: Clothing ration book (1947-48)
- GP27: Bentall's Christmas catalogue (c.1950)
- GP28: String shopping bag
- GP29: Photographs for 'Shopping'

Going Out

- GP30: Collection of beer mats
- GP31: Plays for amateur theatricals
- GP32: *The Scottish Country Dance Book*
- GP33: Pencils for dance cards
- GP34: *Ballroom Dancing* CD
- GP35: Cinema programmes
 - *Cleopatra*
 - *Solomon and Sheba*
- GP36: Theatre programmes
- GP37: Photographs for 'Going Out'

On Holiday

- GP38: Luggage labels
- GP39: Evelyn Thomas *London Handy Guide*
- GP40: *Festival of Britain* guide book and photograph
- GP41: Deck chair ticket (Penzance)
- GP42: Kodak photo envelope and holiday photos
- GP43: Souvenirs from the UK and Ireland
 - Handkerchief (England)
 - Teaspoon (Scotland)
 - China dish (Wales)
 - Tea towel (Ireland)
 - Postcards (5)
- GP44: Goya 'Sombrero' sun tan cream
- GP45: BOAC 'Britain to Middle East' brochure
- GP46: *AA Conversation Handbook for Tourists*
- GP47: View-Master viewer and reels (8)

Activities

- GPA1: Favourite Fragrances
- GPA2: Amateur Theatricals (script for *The Withering Look*)
- GPA3: Passports Please (souvenirs from other countries)



Take Good Care of Yourself

Objects

Feeling Good

- FG1: Box of 'Beecham Pills'
- FG2: Box for 'Rhubarb Pills'
- FG3: Bottle of 'Bile Beans'
- FG4: Box of 'Sublimed Sulphur'
- FG5: Tin of zinc ointment
- FG6: Jar of *Dettol* ointment
- FG7: Jar of 'Unguentum penicillini' ointment
- FG8: 'Spirit of Camphor' bottle
- FG9: 'Oil of Eucalyptus' bottle
- FG10: Bottle for tonsillitis tablets
- FG11: *Robinson's* 'Patent Groats' tin
- FG12: *Parker & Sons* 'Invalid Jelly' pot
- FG13: Glass thermometer in bakelite case
- FG14: Glass eye bath
- FG15: Rubber *Albany* ear syringe
- FG16: *Protection Against Poliomyelitis* and *Vaccination Scheme* notices (copies)

Activities

- FGA1: What's That Smell?
- FGA2: The Home Doctor



An Evening at Home

Box 1

Objects

Magnifying sheet and magnifying glass

- EH1: Small mantelpiece clock
- EH2: Bakelite wall light switch
- EH3: Telephone handset
- EH4: Pipe and pipe cleaners
- EH5: Tin of pipe tobacco

Entertainment

- EH6: Box of 'Canasta' cards
- EH7: Box of 'Smartie' cocktail mats
- EH8: *Daily Mail* 'Popular Dogs' jigsaw
- EH9: 78 rpm records x 2
 - 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing'
 - 'Three Dances in Syncopation'
- EH10: *Gracie's Album of 12 Song Hits*
- EH11: *Will's* cigarette cards 'Radio Celebrities'
- EH12: *Radio Times* magazines (1952 and 1953)
- EH13: *Golden Age of Radio* CD
- EH14: *Will's* cigarette card album 'Railway Engines'

An Evening at Home

Box 2

Objects

Magnifying sheet and magnifying glass

Reading

- EH15: Collection of magazines
- *Britannia and Eve* magazine (1934)
 - *Barker's Autumn Book* (1938)
 - *Illustrated Magazine* (1940)
 - *Tatler & Bystander* (1952)

EH16: *The Champion Annual for Boys* 1953

Sewing and Knitting

- EH17: Whicker Sewing basket containing
- Thimbles x 2
 - Packet D.F. Taylor plated pins
 - Packet sewing and darning needles
 - Tin needle cases x 2
 - Card Wenzel linen thread
 - Packet mending lisle
 - Card fan of nylon mending thread
 - Card of lingerie mending thread
 - Card of Chadwick's wool and nylon darning yarn
 - Wooden darning egg
 - Packet New Fashion binding tape
 - Spare shirt collars x 2
 - Skeins of embroidery yarn
- EH18: *Personal Embroideries Book No. 3*
- EH19: Embroidery celebrating 1953 coronation
- EH20: Pattern from *Modern Woman* for embroidered tea cosy
- EH21: Embroidered tea cosy
- EH22: *Singer Illustrated Dressmaking Guide*
- EH23: Paper patterns (2) for shoes / handbags
- EH24: Paper patterns (2) for women's clothing
- EH25: Weldon's *Practical Knitter*

Extras

- EH26: *Avon* Easter egg soap set
- EH27: Advice sheet for the 'Pools'
- EH28: 'Weekly Assortment' sweet tin
- EH29: Collection of photographs

Activities

- EHA1: *PGP* puzzle games (4)
- EHA2: Fabric scrap bag
- EHA3: *Themes From TV & Radio*: Who can remember the name of the show?

House and Garden

Box 1

Objects

Magnifying sheet and magnifying glass

HG1: *Will's* cigarette cards 'Household Hints and Garden Hints'

Laundry

HG2: Box of *Colman's* 'No. 1 Rice Starch'

HG3: Box of *Colman's* 'Azure Blue'

HG4: Boxed bar of *Safeguard* soap

HG5: Packet of *Tintex* dye (dark green)

HG6: Pleater / crimping iron

Kitchen

HG7: MoF ration book 1952-1953

HG8: Recipe book

HG9: Pint dipper for milk

HG10: 'National Dried Milk' tin

HG11: *Farnham Dairy* milk bottle

HG12: *Ovaltine* sample tin

HG13: Pottery bottle of *Baby Polly* Table Water'

HG14: Tea caddy (1950s) and tea

HG15: Egg separator

HG16: Egg beater

HG17: Wire whisk

HG18: Cheese grater (1950s)

House and Garden

Box 2 Objects

Magnifying sheet and magnifying glass

- HG19: Food mincer
- HG20: Tin opener
- HG21: Butter pat press
- HG22: Tin of SPA gelatine
- HG23: Glass jelly ;mould
- HG24: Ice cream scoop
- HG25: Box of *Snap* 'Vacuum Closures' for fruit bottling
- HG26: Pie funnel
- HG27: Toaster

Diningroom

- HG28: China salt and pepper with tray
- HG29: Embroidered tablecloth
- HG30: Tin of *Zebra* 'Grate Polish'
- HG31: Beeswax furniture polish

Handyman

- HG32: *The Handyman's Enquire Within*

Garden

- HG33: *Amateur Gardening* magazine x 2
- HG34: Tin seed box with seeds

Activities

- HGA1: What's Cooking?
- HGA2: Seed Match

