Mirrored Memories

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During the 1940s Barton Boys Club provided facilities for the boys and young men of Barton.

Situated in Maltby Lane in a former Wesleyan Methodist School, snooker, table tennis, darts and football were enjoyed by those who attended. Regular concerts and parties gave young people the chance to meet and have fun. Today, within the walls of that same building, a new generation of young people meet, socialise and play games and sports in much the same way as they did 70 years ago. Despite a gap of almost a century the experiences of these two different generations are surprisingly similar.

The importance of sharing memories and common experiences between generations is the subject of a new project by CHAMP (Community, Heritage, Arts and Media Project). Mirrored Memories, aims to bring young people together with older members of the community in a celebration of shared history.

The project has been funded by a £50,000 Your Heritage grant from HLF.

The project will focus on young people in their final years of primary school and members of the community aged 55 and over. CHAMP staff and volunteers will work closely with a number of community groups, retirement homes and schools to develop a series of reminiscence or memory sessions focusing on universal themes such as sport, games, music and school.

Neil Turner, Managing Director of CHAMP, said: “ We are delighted to have secured funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The project will give young people a unique opportunity to interact with members of the community in a positive way and learn about local heritage through their experiences. From these sessions the children will work with our staff and volunteers to create a display focusing on how the memories of those in later life reflect the experiences of young people today. This project demonstrates the way CHAMP works with the local community to provide unique and exciting opportunities to engage with heritage.”

Fiona Spiers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund Yorkshire and the Humber, said: “Memories, stories and reminiscences are a popular way of learning about our past and sharing this with future generations. Although much has changed in Barton over the past 70 years, this exciting project will investigate how that the different generations have more in common than they initially thought, allowing them to document and preserve their shared heritage!”

Material created by the children involved in the project will be displayed across the four Barton sites currently managed by CHAMP. Baysgarth House Museum, The Hub, 51 Fleetgate and The Assembly Rooms will all stage the exhibition along with related workshops and events. CHAMP will also work in towns and villages across the area to encourage local people to share their own memories and experiences.

Rose Marie Pugh, Head Teacher of of Castledyke Primary School, said: “The work will support people, young and old, all of whom are citizens of the Barton area, in understanding each others lives. In these changing times it is very good for children to feel that they have a strong heritage; that they are part of a bigger picture. Sharing is one of the qualities that we strive to teach in education today, we do not always have a platform that allows children to share with the older generation much can be learnt when these groups come together.”

CHAMP will work with a number of partners during the project including North Lincolnshire Council, Castledyke Primary School, St Peters Primary School and Age UK.

Janet Stewart, Head Teacher at Barton St Peters Church of England Primary School, said: “This is going to be a very exciting project for the whole community. It will bring together different generations across all walks of life to share their personal experiences of what it was / is like growing up and will be a great opportunity for pupils to widen their own knowledge and experiences.”

Jane Paine, Chief Executive for Age UK North Lincolnshire, said: “This project is a wonderful opportunity to facilitate communication and understanding across the generations. People in later life can sometimes feel quite isolated and misunderstood by younger members of the community. This project will go some way towards addressing this issue by encouraging both groups to share their experiences and feel they are making a contribution to preserving local heritage.”

The project will begin in April 2012 and the Mirrored Memoires exhibitions will open in February 2013.

Further information

The museum is looking for volunteers to help run the project. If you would like to be involved in the project please contact CHAMP at Baysgarth Museum on 01652 637 568 or email info@champltd.org to find out more.