



Kent's Sporting Memories

National Lottery Heritage Fund

Evaluation Report

September 2021

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Background

Kent's Sporting Memories strived to explore, preserve and promote the rich history of sport in east Kent through oral history and reminiscence sessions. By raising into focus people's memories and lived experiences of sport in the region, the project has painted a fuller picture of east Kent's sporting past since 1945 – including some of its traditions, places, social practices, events and icons – and illuminated the ways in which this sporting and social landscape has changed over time. It is our hope that the project will give people the opportunity to discover and share the history of sport in east Kent for generations to come.

Beginning in January 2019, the two-year funded project was carried out on behalf of Kent County Council & Kent Sport, the Active Partnership for Kent and Medway, and in coordination with the Sporting Memories Foundation (SMF), Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh (CARM), and Kent Libraries, Registration & Archives. With the support of Kent Sport and its partner organisations, it was delivered by a project coordinator and a team of volunteers.

Kent's Sporting Memories was created to achieve two key goals, addressing two key areas of need: firstly, the preservation of sporting heritage in east Kent. As far as we know, there have been few sporting heritage projects undertaken in the region, and indeed in the county as a whole. While eminently worthwhile, the projects of which we are aware were narrowly focused on individual clubs, and have operated in isolation, with little coordination or sharing of resources and outcomes between them. In contrast, our project explored a much wider range of historical documents, memories and experiences via collaboration with a diversity of sports clubs, community

organisations, charities and individuals. We created and highlighted this substantial history through our online archive, a public exhibit, and a project book, thus enabling people to access and engage with their local sporting past.

The second key area was to improve the health and wellbeing of older and socially isolated people in the area, including those living with dementia. Community groups such as CARM, and the local branches of Age UK are struggling to combat social isolation in older people, particularly in men. Preliminary conversations with these groups identified sporting heritage as an opportunity to engage with this audience, using it as a vehicle to bring them together through a mutual interest. Working with CARM, SMF, Age UK, and various care homes and dementia groups, the project provided opportunities for greater social involvement, either through volunteering or as participants.

- **Good Practice**

Our reminiscence volunteers were provided training and support by the SMF; likewise, those undertaking oral history were trained and supported by our project coordinator, and adhered to the ethical considerations of the Oral History Society. Oral history respondents were given an information sheet, and were asked to sign a consent form, on which they could stipulate how they wanted their testimony to be used (see Appendix A). Participant information was stored securely, and an Equality Impact Assessment was carried out prior to the project start. In addition, quarterly steering group meetings were convened and attended by the project coordinator, representatives from Kent Sport, SMF, and CARM.



'Folkestone was really innovative in those days, with skiing, with developing skiing, and actually, you know, it's a very small slope, but it actually reproduced incredible results. We had British champions, national champions, we had people who skied abroad, skied in the Europa Cups.' - Hilary Casey, Hythe Lawn Tennis Club and Folkestone Ski Centre.

Gathering and Preserving Heritage

- **Introduction**

Kent's Sporting Memories was created to address an absence in the exploration, recording and preservation of sporting heritage in east Kent. In attempting to fill this lacuna, we have helped to uncover the significance – even the centrality – of sport to the social and cultural make-up and identity of the region. Using oral history as our primary tool of inquiry, we have captured a vivid, varied, detailed, and ultimately personal reconstruction of east Kent's sporting and social past, while also advancing the wider social purposes of the project — of combatting isolation, and bringing people and communities together.

- **Gathering Heritage**

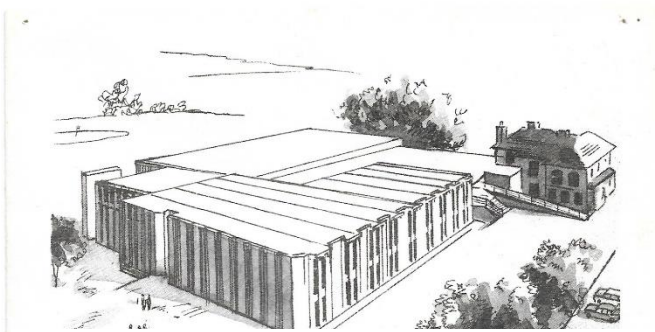
We used reminiscence sessions, archival research, photography and photo-essays to explore and capture a wealth of sporting and social heritage in the region. Oral history, however, was the primary methodology through which we identified and recorded heritage. The interviews were carried out by the project coordinator and by volunteers trained by the coordinator; volunteer interviewers were given ongoing support, and also had access to an oral history handbook (see Appendix B). The handbook, 'Kent's Sporting Memories: An Introduction to Oral History', outlines the Whys, Wheres. And Hows of Oral History, while also providing background on the project and ideas for further reading and research.

Covid-19 forced the project to suspend in-person interviewing for long periods; however, with guidance from the Oral History Society and other oral history centres, the project coordinator was able to carry out several interviews remotely, either by telephone or digitally, over Zoom.

Respondents were identified in a variety of ways: word of mouth; our work with care homes, older people's groups and charities; through our own Sporting Memories reminiscence clubs; and through dialogue with local sports clubs and local history associations. While typically older, the interviewees encompassed a broad range of ages; we also strove to find a representative balance in terms of gender. In all, the project recorded the stories of 32 people across east Kent. These stories touched on a wide range of sports, including cricket, men's and women's football, wheelchair racing, power lifting, disability fencing, boxing, and basketball, as well as those active pastimes orientated around the east Kent coast, such as wind surfing, waterskiing, and sea swimming.

To further investigate the region's sporting heritage, and to supplement the oral histories, respondents were encouraged to explore and share their own personal collections and archives;

indeed, the majority of the photographs and documentary materials we gathered – including photographs, newspaper clippings, and posters, as well as photos of medals and trophies - were unearthed in this manner. Additional materials were also found through archival research; the collections at Kent



An example of material held in the collection at Folkestone Sports Centre.

Archives, Folkestone Sports Centre, and Folkestone Cricket Club provided a wealth of material for the project, including much that had been little-seen by the public.

Other ways in which heritage was gathered include two photo-essays – one of which recounts the life of Harry Beeson, who was the coach and founder of Folkestone Sports Centre's over-55s

Badminton Club; the other explores

the history of the Cheriton Road ground in Folkestone from the early

1900s – and an ‘as-told-to’ account of the Kent cricketer, Mike Dennes.

The Cheriton Road photo-essay, which was put together by a local

resident with the help of the project coordinator, also explores the

participant’s own experience of and attachment to the ground.



Harry Beeson (front middle) and members of Folkestone Sports Centre’s over-55s Badminton Club, c. 1980.

- **Preserving Heritage**

The project’s oral histories have been digitized and published (with relevant metadata) on our online archive, hosted by Omeka.net (<https://sportingmemorieskent.omeka.net/>). In addition to an audio recording of the oral history interview, the oral history ‘collections’ also contain a full transcript of the interview, recordings of particular excerpts of the interview, transcripts of

interview excerpts, a summary of the interview, a photo of the interviewee, and any supplementary materials, including associated photographs, newspaper articles and other documentary resources. Some collections also link to other resources, such as catalogued items at Kent Archives, for example. The archive currently holds 285 items across 32 oral history ‘collections’ and 10 ‘exhibits’. Thanks to the work of one of our volunteer interviewers, several of the interviews were recorded using film. These are held in both the archive and on the Kent’s Sporting Memories YouTube channel: (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcp71g_b3Ag_8WAWF5iuklw). As a dynamic face for the project, and a key means of public and participant engagement, the archive will be maintained online as a lasting resource by Kent Sport and the Sporting Memories Foundation.

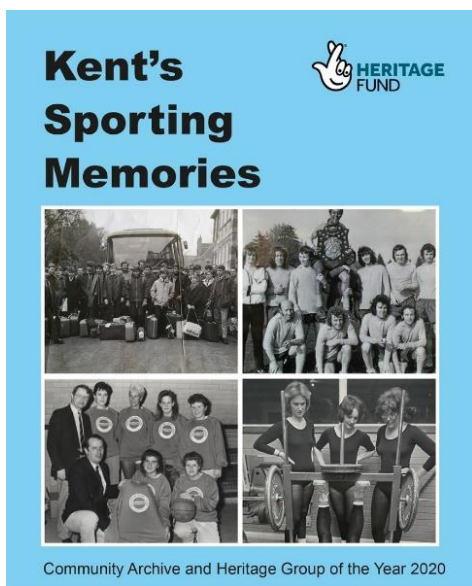
For National Sporting Heritage Day (NSHD) 2019, we worked closely with Folkestone Sports Centre to excavate its history and to highlight its continued historical and social value to the town and surrounding area through a pop-up exhibition. Drawing on documents and photographs from the sports centre’s archive, and using oral history testimony, the three-week exhibition explored the origins, construction and opening of the centre, and various aspects of its changes and continuity. The exhibition was used as a case study by Sporting Heritage to promote NSHD 2021.



NSHD 2019 at Folkestone Sports Centre.

The creation and distribution of our book, *Kent's Sporting Memories* – which encompasses the edited transcripts of many of the oral history recordings carried out by the interviewing team, and includes links to corresponding audio recordings through QR codes – added another facet to the way heritage was recorded, preserved and disseminated within the project. The book is illustrated with a number of the photographs gathered over the course of the project and includes a foreword by former England International rugby captain and east Kent resident, Catherine Spencer.

In lieu of in-person interviewing from March 2019, a number of volunteers created full transcripts of the interviews. These were added to the archive and formed the basis of our project book. Volunteers continued to learn and develop oral history and research techniques in this way; the process of transcribing oral history interviews – a key feature in the preservation and dissemination



of oral history – was undertaken with the guidance of the project coordinator, and with the help of a transcription information sheet produced by the coordinator (see Appendix C).

Roughly 200 copies of the book have been distributed to interviewees, local schools, libraries, social hubs, youth and community groups, and sports clubs. An e-version of the book is also freely available from the project archive and from Kent Libraries e-Library.



- **Disseminating Heritage**

Since the project's inception, we fostered robust informational and dialogic links with a variety of community groups and organisations in order to attract a range of volunteers and participants, and to highlight the work undertaken. With the help of Kent Sport and our partner organisations, as well as various sports clubs, community centres, historical societies, media outlets, social media, local businesses and care providers, the project contributed to a variety of enterprises – reminiscence sessions, public talks, exhibitions, radio interviews, training events – and thus reached a wide community audience.

The project coordinator presented the project's findings variously: a talk at New Romney History Society; a talk at Hythe Age UK; presentations at Kent Archives, Folkestone Care Centre, Folkestone Sports Centre, at several dementia groups; and on Folkestone Academy FM. The coordinator also spoke at digital talks and events at and



Talk at New Romney Historical Society, May 2019.

surrounding the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) Awards 2020, for which we were a participating group. The project's online book launch – which was attended and featured contributions by many of our interviewees – and an associated *BBC Radio Kent* interview with the

project coordinator and two of the participants featured in the book also provided an excellent opportunity to reflect upon the memories the project extracted.

The book launch (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IG6jqfYJbng>), hosted by former rugby union star John Taylor, featured contributions by some of the project participants in the form of an interview panel and an intergenerational Q&A session. It also allowed us the opportunity to engage with pupils from two local primary schools, who have used both the publication and the wider archive to learn more about their local sporting heritage. Students from Stowting Church of England Primary School read the book in class and then wrote letters to the participants, so as to facilitate their comprehension. One of these letters was shared during the launch (Appendix D):

'We have greatly enjoyed reading through [the book] and looking through the old photographs inside. It was wonderful hearing about each person's achievements and how much sport means to them. My teacher was pleasantly surprised to find his Maths teacher from the Harvey Grammar School among the 222 pages. The Year 5 and 6 pupils thought the book was amazingly written with a wide range of sports included inside from Wind surfing to Netball. In Shepway Cross Country Competitions, I have won bronze, silver and gold medals. It is nice to think I could be in a book like yours someday.'

St Nicholas Church of England Primary Academy in New Romney sent in pupils' questions for participants via video, much to the participants' delight. At a time when restrictions made the carrying out of intergenerational activities more difficult, we feel this engagement with local

schools added an important and – thanks to the pupils’ incisive questions - instructive element to the project that benefitted children and participants alike. Rob Illingworth, Community History Officer at Kent Libraries, Registration & Archives, said of the event:

‘I very much enjoyed the book launch event — entertaining conversations and remarkably searching questions from the school children. I was struck by how important the establishment of the Folkestone Sports Centre was to many of your project participants.’

The project, archive and book have been featured in a number of publications, newsletters and websites, including *Oral History* (Autumn 2020) — the oldest and only independent journal publishing the work of oral historians in the UK; the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) website; and, more locally, in the *Old Harveians’* (Summer 2021), the newsletter for alumni of Folkestone’s Harvey Grammar School.

Our social media channels, as well as those of our partners, were a significant means of promoting the project, and of circulating our work widely. We utilised the Kent’s Sporting Memories Twitter account and Facebook page to raise our various activities into greater focus; the Facebook page was particularly useful for sharing outcomes with relevant organisations and groups. Several of the oral histories were reached by more than 1,000 Facebook users, and comments generated by posts across both social media platforms provided a plethora of feedback, leads for further investigation, and thankful sentiments:

'We have made it into a lovely book about all sorts of sports in Kent over the years. Super honoured to have been asked to contribute. Check out Kent's Sporting Memories.' —
Hawkinge Hurricanes Running Club via Facebook.

- **Outcomes**

The value of oral history is in creating and highlighting the views and experiences of a wide and diverse range of people who are often passed by or even excluded by more traditional methods of history making. A record for now and the future, oral history fills in gaps in the historical record and provides a unique and personal insight into the past where written documents often cannot.

It is in this sense that our respondents' unique memories and life stories represent an invaluable contribution to the local historical record; their stories, which touch on a range of social clubs and sports, provide a fascinating, uplifting, changing, and often emotional picture of east Kent's sporting past and present.

'Many thanks for inviting me to be a part of this project and having me on board, I enjoyed it very much and it was great to hear some of the other participants. The whole concept behind the project is great, giving a voice and hearing the stories of a few of the "non-famous" sports people that are abundant in all areas of the nation! I do hope the same project happens in other regions too.' — *Mark Steeple, sea swimmer.*

The project has further shown that conducting oral history through the lens of local sport can reveal the extent to which sport is embedded within and intertwined with the social and historical fabric of place. By talking about their personal experiences, and reflecting upon how their lives have changed over the years, the interviewees shed light on aspects of social stratification in Kent village and town life, and about changing patterns of class and gender inequality. Conversely, their testimony also demonstrated that sport was a great source of social participation, and could engender commonality and communication, even across social and cultural divides. Indeed, within the context of sport in east Kent, we learnt how acts of community building and friendship shaped the way lives are led and communities are arranged.

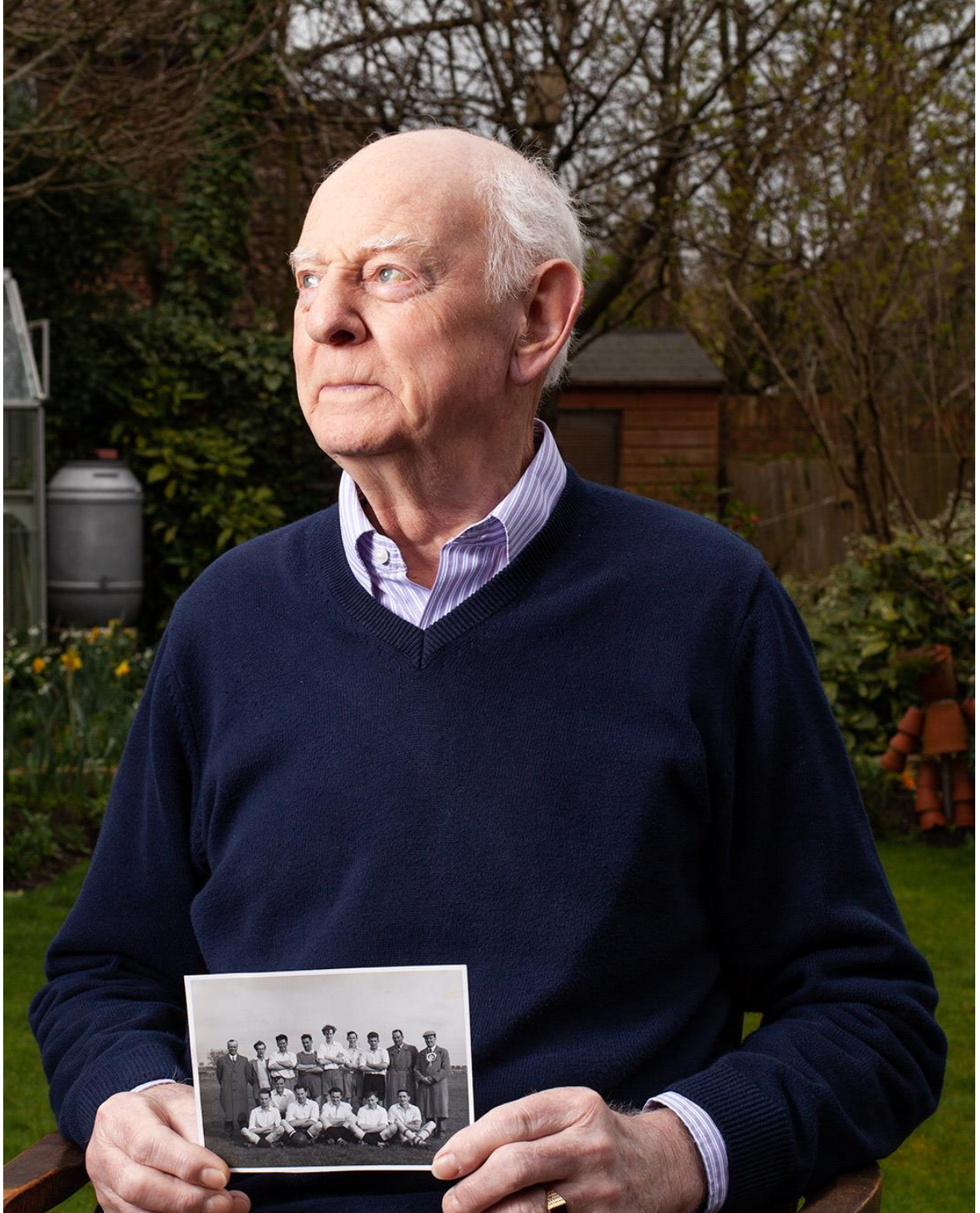
The publication of the book in particular has emphasised how myriad connections are formed around shared goals and identities, and commonalities of place. Feedback we received from readers told us of connections they have to interviewees, or that they have a friend, family member, or local team in common with a participant. This broad web of personal ties and social connections should be considered a legacy of the community building and friendship that the project sought to explore, record and share.

'Although I am not particularly interested in sport, I think it's a fascinating book well worth the effort to get it published!..Reading Pradip's article brings back memories for me. I did National Service in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and I was an ammunition store man stationed in Singapore. There were Gurkhas out there at the time 1958-59 and they would come to our depot to draw ammunition!... I was interested in Alan's article not because of his sport, but where he lived and

worked. I worked for Sealink for 22 years as a ship carpenter from 1970. The first three winters I worked in the marine workshops and got to know a lot of Dover people and places of work, quite well... I knew Graeme's father when he had his photographer's shop in Tontine Street. In 1965 I was a partner in a speedboat called "Miss Folkestone" we took out passengers during the summer months from the inner harbour when the tide was up and from the beach by the Rotunda when the tide was out. Mr Fuller came down to the beach in 1965 to take photographs of the boat for the 1966 Town Guide published by Folkestone Town Council. He did the same in 1966 for the 1967 Town Guide.'

— Alan Taylor, Chairman of the Folkestone & District Local History Society

Kent's Sporting Memories was a heritage project built around people; it thrust life into history, and - through the social processes of oral history, and the creation of our archive and book - brought history into, and out of, the community. The continued preservation and dissemination of the project archive and book will create contact, and thus understanding, between different generations and social classes. And for students, historians, researchers and others, the archive will provide a broad source of enquiry, and an invaluable sense of place, change, people and time.



'I like to be on a level footing with everybody, and I couldn't see myself going over there and being a little working-class boy.' – Sid Gittens, Ruckinge FC.

Wellbeing

- **Introduction**

Kent's Sporting Memories brought many older and socially isolated people together by engaging them in oral history and in sports-themed activities such as group and individual reminiscence sessions. Working with a range of participants and volunteers from across east Kent, including those living with dementia, bereavement, and depression, we used these activities as a means of reawakening positive thoughts and memories, and of fighting off feelings of alienation and loneliness.

- **Oral History**

The intrinsic nature of the oral history approach opened up the possibility of constructive social and personal outcomes. Oral history is about individual lives, and for oral historians any life is of interest. It is also incredibly inclusive and accessible as a methodology. Dependent upon speech, it is untethered to the often demanding and restrictive skill of writing implicit in more traditional avenues of historical research.

The vast majority of our oral history respondents were older people, many of whom live alone, and some of whom have dementia and physical disabilities. CARM – a partner organisation and a charity supporting people who are socially isolated – was a significant referrer. We also sourced interviewees from our Sporting Memories reminiscence sessions at Folkestone Care Centre and

Folkestone Sports Centre, as well as other community and dementia groups. We saw first-hand how the interview process gave older, often vulnerable people, a sense of importance and purpose; by giving people a chance to reflect upon their lives – to remember, for example, moments of joy, affection and achievement – we also saw how the release of memory can work as a therapeutic process. Moreover, by showing participants that their own history is valued, and indeed historically significant, the project gave people greater confidence both in their own memories and in themselves.



'I am so proud to be in this book. So many memories. Thank-you Kent's Sporting Memories.' – Jean Penfold, Hamstreet White Wanderers.

'For once I am lost for words, I cannot thank you enough. Having been and read the details and seen the photos I am so pleased for what you have done. So, all I can say is with a big Thank You.' – Paul Hatcher, Stock Car Racing.



- **Reminiscence**

Between September 2019 and March 2020, the project’s weekly Sporting Memories ‘clubs’ in Folkestone brought together older and isolated people, and people living with dementia, through sporting and life reminiscence. Participants were encouraged to share their sporting stories, to play sports-based quizzes, and to take part in light physical activities. We used resources provided by the SMF, as well as our own archive of sound recordings, artefacts, and documentary sources, to stimulate conversation and reflection.

The project’s first regular club was held at Folkestone Care Centre, a residential home for older people that provides specialist dementia care. After trialing larger groups of up to 20 residents and their carers, the sessions were downsized and typically attended by between three and ten participants — a more manageable number for volunteers and the facilitator, and thus more engaging and interactive for participants, some of whom had dementia and other care needs. Group and one-to-one conversations, reminiscence activities and quizzes were supplemented by games



Sporting Memories celebrating the Rugby World Cup at Folkestone Care Centre.

like Boccia, pool and indoor golf. We also used the home’s ‘cinema’ room to watch old sporting highlights and contemporary sporting events; in September 2019 the groups watched several Rugby World Cup matches as part of wider celebrations at the home to mark the tournament.

Our second club started at Folkestone Sports Centre in November 2019. While the session had a slow start in terms of numbers, we soon built it up to a fortnightly meeting of between six and eight participants. Again, many of the participants had dementia and other care needs, and some were accompanied by carers. In addition to group and one-to-one reminiscence activities, the group enjoyed the use of the various facilities available in the ‘bar’ section of the sports centre, where it was usually based. These included pool and darts. Both this and the care centre group were free to attend, and refreshments were provided as part of the sessions.

Working with Age UK Hythe and Lyminge, Kent Libraries, Romney Marsh Day Centre, and local

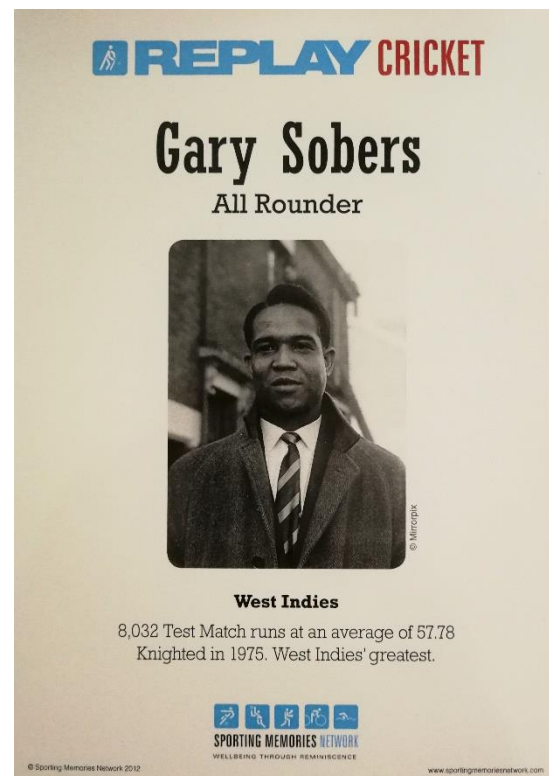


dementia groups, Kent’s Sporting Memories also facilitated a number of one-off reminiscence sessions across the district. These were a useful way of reaching people in the east Kent area who were unable to attend the Folkestone sessions, of forging links with local community groups, and of promoting the Folkestone ‘clubs’ and the wider project. For example, the Hawkinge SUNshiners, a group for people of all ages in the early stages of dementia, became an important link for the project in terms of referring participants and endorsing the clubs.

Kent’s Sporting Memories at Hythe Library’s ‘Let’s Talk Dementia’ Group.

With the suspension of groups due to Covid-19, the project's volunteers and coordinator remained in contact and engaged with as many participants and their carers/family members as possible. This included: weekly catch-up calls and emails, over the phone reminiscence sessions, and encouraging participants to create sports-based memoirs and scrap books. Thanks to our partnership with the SMF, two of our one-to-one reminiscence sessions were broadcast nationally on talkSPORT radio. These conversations, which featured participants from our weekly clubs, were a wonderful way of promoting the Sporting Memories programme, and of emphasising the value of reminiscence among older and isolated people, especially during periods of little social contact.

The introduction of our online (via Zoom) Sporting Memories Club in March 2021 enabled us to continue with group reminiscence activities despite the closure of in-person groups due to Covid-19. The weekly group, which continues to operate as an online SMF club, was a key strand of our wellbeing work: it allowed us to stay in touch with project participants, and was a means through which our volunteers continued to develop as facilitators and supporters. The remote nature of the group also created opportunities for those who, under normal circumstances, would not have been able to attend the in-person sessions in Folkstone. Similar to in-



*Sporting Memories Foundation
'Replay Card'.*

person sessions, participants engaged in sporting reminiscence, and, prompted by both SMF and Kent's Sporting Memories resources, took part in a variety of quizzes and games. Each member of the club also received a SMF KITbag — a personalised pack of equipment and exercises designed to encourage and aid physical activity at home.

- **Outcomes**

Engaging with older and socially isolated people was at the forefront of our work. It quickly became apparent that the undertaking of oral history in this project was not only important for the exploration of local sporting and social history; it also provided a social and intellectual outlet for the participants themselves, many of whom live alone. To our joy, our oral history work helped acquaint friends who had played together on a village women's football team in the 1970s.

Prior to March 2020, our weekly reminiscence sessions at Folkestone Care Centre and Folkestone Sports Centre, as well as other less regular groups held throughout east Kent, provided a valuable means of engagement with older and socially isolated people, and people living with dementia; in lieu of these sessions, we have kept in touch with participants remotely, including through a regular online group session. The various groups demonstrated how recollections of sport can provide a valuable psychic link to childhoods and family members, to cherished routines, and to fond moments and events. We saw that to recall such things and to share them with others – others who



Alan Bartley

often have similar experiences in common – is a simple, practical and positive way of bringing people together and improving wellbeing. Alan Bartley, who has dementia, was a regular participant of both the sports centre and care centre clubs, and now attends the online club. He said of the groups: *‘It’s a way of getting with fellow sufferers, talking to them, sharing stories, being open, telling them problems.’*

As stated, participants and volunteers continue to enjoy (and return to) the online Kent Sporting Memories club. It was rewarding to see participants who had never met one another before - but who had a number of interests, sporting and otherwise, in common - become friends through these sessions. This was an outcome borne out by their eagerness to meet as a club in-person, which we did in August 2021.

Our activity at Folkestone Care Centre was another source of pride for the project. We were particularly happy that by January 2020, several of the sports centre group participants were also regularly attending the care centre sessions. This was an opportunity for care home residents to come together with the wider community to discuss their sporting pasts, to engage with the project’s findings, and to take part in light physical activities. Stephen Callis, the centre’s Social Therapies and Wellbeing Manager, said:

'The Sporting Memories group gives our residents the opportunity to connect with the community and other individuals out of the home giving them a sense of belonging and freedom. Sports is a big part of our home and the residents share a lot of interests and stories that are expressed clearly and with joy in the sessions. There have been life stories that we have been able to share and focus our activity programme around, interactive cinema screen showings, intellectual quiz's, physical games and reminiscence resources that are all aimed around the groups needs and interests... Overall, we have been proud to be a part of a project that has given everyone a new opportunity in our home and within the community that will promote wellbeing and reduce isolation with the feelings of loneliness. Our residents and their relations very much look forward to the sessions in the home and we have seen the group grow with confidence and numbers over the past 6 months. We are so grateful for The Sporting Memories Foundation and I hope we will have many more magical moments to share in the future.' (See Appendix E for full testimonial.)



'We are quite deprived from accessibility in terms of fitness and rehabilitation, because that is part of getting you well and fit and get motivated. I've got constant pain so, I have to be able to fight with something, to be engaged in something, that's why I do photography, and fitness things. That keeps me going.' — Pradip Rai, Wheelchair Racing.

Volunteers

Our volunteers were integral to the setting-up and successful running of the project. Whether it was carrying out interviews, facilitating reminiscence sessions, filming, photography, proofreading or transcribing, without the contributions of volunteers the project would have been much diminished, and the participants much fewer. Overall, more than 45 volunteers committed their time, effort and expertise to the project.

The recruitment of volunteers was initially slow. However, through extensive promotional work, and by placing trust in this work, we began to recruit a number of volunteers for both reminiscence and oral history activities. Promotional work included: poster distribution, appearances on local radio, advertising through social and local media, presentations to community groups, one-off reminiscence sessions, and attending networking events.

Kent's Sporting Memories

Let's Talk Sport
Kent's Sporting Memories Oral History Project aims to explore and record the post-war history of sport in East Kent.

Volunteers and Participants Needed!

- Volunteer roles include: conducting oral history research, portrait photography, film making, facilitating reminiscence sessions.
- Training in oral history provided.
- We'd also love to hear from anyone wishing to share their memories and experiences of sport in East Kent.

For more information, please contact Michael Romyn: on 07423 284045 or Email: michael@thesmf.co.uk
www.sportingmemorieskent.omeka.net

Love sport?

VOLUNTEERS wanted to help facilitate or support weekly **SPORTING MEMORIES CLUBS** in Folkestone.

By tapping into their love of sport, **Sporting Memories Clubs** offer a fun and friendly way of improving the health and wellbeing of older people.

For more information contact Michael on 07423 284045 or michael@thesmf.co.uk

FULL TRAINING IS PROVIDED

www.sportingmemoriesnetwork.com

Love talking sport?

We welcome you to our fun and friendly **Sporting Memories Club** at **Folkestone Sports Centre**
Radnor Park Ave, Folkestone CT19 5HX
Every other Friday, 10:30 - 12:00
Come along, share your sporting memories, and take part in sports-based quizzes and games! Free to join.

FREE REFRESHMENTS

For more information contact Michael on 07423 284045 or michael@thesmf.co.uk

www.sportingmemoriesnetwork.com

Promotional posters.

As stated earlier in the report, volunteers involved in oral history – from interviewing to transcribing – were trained and supported by the project coordinator. Reminiscence volunteers and the project coordinator attended in-person training and informational sessions run by Sporting Memories Foundation staff. The project coordinator was also given support and advice around reminiscence in care settings by experienced staff at CARM. While moving the reminiscence activities online presented a new set of challenges to negotiate and skills to learn, from both a technical and reminiscence standpoint, the Sporting Memories Foundation provided tailored support and training for the running of virtual sessions.



'If you're dedicated, it's easier now than what it was...as I said, I happened to be in the right place in the right time. As otherwise I wouldn't probably have known about the ladies' football to be fair.' — Anne Rutland, Hamstreet White Wanderers.

National Lottery Heritage Fund

We used the National Lottery Heritage fund logo on all promotional materials, including posters, flyers and press releases; on our project archive; on presentation slides and materials; on resources related to our public exhibition at Folkestone Sports Centre; and on the cover of our project book/e-book.

We also thanked the National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery players in all communications with the media – from radio interviews to newspaper articles – and in many of the posts and updates from our social media accounts.

Conclusion

‘The book is, as I expected, a substantial but very accessible publication, a brilliant product of a brilliant project.’ — . Rob Illingworth, Community History Officer at Kent Libraries, Registration & Archives.

Kent’s Sporting Memories used oral history and reminiscence to capture, preserve, and disseminate heritage that was otherwise at risk of being lost or forgotten. Our archive provides a way for local people to discover an important aspect of their region’s history, to trace how social life in the area has changed over time, and to learn how sport often acted as a building block of community life. Moreover, through the processes of uncovering and co-creating this history, the project was able to foster meaningful links with a variety of community groups and

organisations, and, crucially, to engage with and reach a wide community audience, including participants and volunteers.

Alongside the in-depth sharing of individual experience as part of the project's oral history work, it was community engagement through reminiscence sessions and conversations that formed the heart of Kent's Sporting Memories — conversations about sporting history and local connections that created pride of place, a sense of belonging, collective and individual empowerment, and perhaps most importantly of all, friendship. We were honoured to be recognised for this work by CAHG, which named us 'Community Archive and Heritage Group of the Year 2020', and also presented us with a 'Contribution to Wellbeing' award. Commenting on the winning project, the CAHG judges said:

'We would like to congratulate everyone involved in the Kent's Sporting Memories project. We were very impressed with the group's use of the oral history interview process and how it had been used to give older, often vulnerable people, a sense of importance and purpose by giving people a chance to reflect upon their lives. The group themselves shared how the release of memory can work as a therapeutic process. As a result, wellbeing felt truly embedded into the project rather than it being just another outcome. The panel noted how everything felt very connected, and the archive almost felt like the by-product of a wellbeing project rather than the other way around. The judges saw evidence of good training for volunteers at every point and the formation of useful partnerships to continue the legacy of the project.'



‘I was working in a factory, yeah, and one of the guys who was working in the factory, obviously he was a local boy, he knew all the local lads, and he said, “They’re opening a boxing gym down the road – do you fancy coming?”, and I says, “Yeah”, and that was it. I wouldn’t have known it was there because at that time I think I’d just moved down here then but I didn’t know anyone, you know, I’d just moved down here, so I didn’t know anyone but obviously I thought, “Yeah, I’ll go there.”’ — Harry Slater, Folkestone Amateur Boxing Club.

Appendix A

Kent's Sporting Memories

COPYRIGHT ASSIGNMENT & CONSENT FORM FOR PHOTOGRAPHY AND ORAL HISTORY RECORDINGS

The purpose of this assignment and consent form is to enable the Kent's Sporting Memories project to permanently retain and use the recorded recollections and images of individuals.

In respect of the photographic image(s) made by and, or, being deposited with the Kent's Sporting Memories project, consisting of the image(s) of a contributor, I understand that this image(s) will only be used for the following purposes:

- use in displays, publications - including print, audio or video or CD ROM – and exhibitions related to the project.
- use on the Kent's Sporting Memories project website and printed information.

I understand that this image will **NOT** be used for:

- anything that may cause offence, embarrassment or distress.

In respect of the content of a sound and/or video recording made by and, or, being deposited with the Kent's Sporting Memories project consisting of the recollections of a contributor and constituting a literary work as defined by the Copyright, Designs & Patents Act 1988:

As present owner of the copyright in the contributor content (i.e. the words spoken by the interviewee), I hereby assign such copyright to the Kent's Sporting Memories project. I hereby waive any moral rights which I presently own in relation to this work on the understanding that the content will not be used in a derogatory manner and that the author of the contribution will be correctly identified in all uses of it. I understand that no payment is due to me for this assignment and consent. In assigning my copyright, I understand that I am giving the Kent's Sporting Memories project the right to use and make available the content of the recorded interview in the following ways:

- public performance, exhibitions, lectures or talks
- use in publications, including print, digital, audio, video or CD ROM
- public reference purposes in libraries, museums & record offices
- use on radio or television
- publication worldwide on the internet
- use in schools, universities, colleges and other educational establishments, including use in a thesis, dissertation or similar research

Do you want your name to be disclosed? YES/NO

Please state if you have any special provisions or restrictions as to the use of the interview, or portions of the interview, or to the photographic image(s):

.....

Signed: Date:

(Print name):

Address:

.....

Postcode Telephone:

Email:

Kent's Sporting Memories use

Signed on behalf of the Kent's Sporting Memories project (Print name):

Subject of deposit:

Appendix B



Kent's Sporting Memories: An Introduction to Oral History

Michael Romyn
michael@thesmf.co.uk
07423 284045
@SMN_Kent

The Project

Kent's Sporting Memories aims to record and preserve the post-war history of sport in east Kent using oral history. By raising into focus people's memories and lived experiences of sport in the region, we intend to build a fuller picture of east Kent's sporting past – including some of its traditions, places, social practices, events and icons – and to illuminate the ways in which this sporting and social landscape has changed over time. It is our hope that the project will give people the opportunity to discover and share the history of sport in east Kent for generations to come.

Background: Beginning in 2019, the two-year funded Kent's Sporting Memories project is being carried out on behalf of Kent Sport, the Active Partnership for Kent, and in coordination with the Sporting Memories Foundation. It is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Our online archive is hosted by Omeka, a purpose-built site for online archives. Each oral history collection will focus on an individual's life and experience as a way of building up a detailed and multi-layered picture of the local sporting past. Each collection will usually contain an audio recording of the oral history interview, a summary of the interview, audio excerpts of the interview with accompanying transcripts, a contemporary photo of the interviewee, and any supplementary materials that are available, including old photos, newspaper articles or match programmes. The archive can be found at:

<https://sportingmemorieskent.omeka.net/>

Kent's Sporting Memories: An Introduction to Oral History



'We all played one particular game and that bonded us, brought us all together. They became your friends, and they've been lifetime friends, from all walks of life actually.' - Bill Day

Kent's Sporting Memories: An Introduction to Oral History

What is Oral History?

Oral history can be defined variously:

- The recording of an individual's memories, experiences and life stories.
- The recording, preservation and interpretation of historical information based on the personal experience and opinions of the interviewee.
- An important source of information about the past.

Oral history is both a process (the act of interviewing and recording) and a product that is created (the audio file and/or the transcript).

Oral history is a widely-used and accessible research practice, used by academic researchers, family historians, schools and community groups. It can provide one of the richest sources of information for the recent past, and is by nature creative, sociable and co-operative.

Unlike other types of interviewing, like journalism, oral history is about a distinctive engagement with the past. As an oral historian, you are creating a source about the past that will be used in the future - a first-hand record of an individual's memories, life stories and experiences.

Kent's Sporting Memories: An Introduction to Oral History

Why do Oral History?

From the friends you'll make, to the cups of tea (and possibly biscuits) you'll consume, to the fascinating stories you'll hear, the reasons to carry out oral history are numerous. Here are a few more:

- Oral history fills in gaps in the historical record; it can provide new information, alternative explanations, and unique and personal insights into the past.
- Oral history creates a record for now and for the future. By recording stories and first-hand experiences now, we are capturing a valuable resource for future use.
- Oral history testimonies are often rich in meaning. By shedding light on the not always apparent bond between individual experience and the wider processes of history, they can help us explore how we understand our lives on a personal level but also on broader social and cultural levels.
- Oral history can change what we think about the past because it can be used to document the lives of people often marginalized in 'authorised versions' of history - the working classes, women, and ethnic minorities, for example. In doing so, it can challenge elite and official definitions of what counts as 'conventional' or 'proper history'.
- Oral history can also contribute to wider social purposes - it is a collaborative effort, bringing together interviewers and interviewees, communities and the wider world.

Kent's Sporting Memories: An Introduction to Oral History

Getting Organised

Preparation:

- Have you done some background research on the subject matter and historical context?
- Have you come up with a list of interview prompts to keep the conversation going?
- If this is your first interview, have you practiced interviewing a friend or family member?
- Have you organised a quiet place to carry out the interview?

Before you leave home, check you have the following items:

- Charged audio recorder and spare batteries.
- List of questions/interview prompts.
- Recording consent form.
- Information sheet to explain your project.
- Address and contact number of person you will be interviewing.
- Pen and paper.

The Interview: Questions

- It helps to have an idea of the topics you want to cover. With some background research (or a preliminary conversation), you can gain a better understanding of the subject and will be able to ask more informed questions.
- Prepare an outline of topics rather than a list of questions. This will help to keep the interview feeling natural and avoid it turning into a stilted Q&A session.
- Start off with some basic information about the interviewee: their name and place and date of birth, for example. Think of this as labeling the interview.
- You could then structure the interview either 1) chronologically - starting with the person's childhood and working through their life and experiences. Or 2) thematically - by focusing on one particular event or theme, such as their experience of sport at school, or village cricket.
- Try to use 'open-ended' questions (Why was that? How did that make you feel? Was that typical?) and encourage the person to explore, evaluate, or to reflect on how they felt at the time and after.
- Ask for clarification and confirmation of specific details, such as dates and names, if these are not clear.
- In general, questions should be neutral in tone, but don't be frightened of raising difficult topics so long as they are dealt with carefully and sensitively.

Kent's Sporting Memories: An Introduction to Oral History

The Interview: Some Tips

You only get what you ask for: Prepare for an interview where possible. Try looking at historical sources, other oral histories, or having a preliminary conversation with the interviewee. Think about the questions you want to ask and the topics you want to explore, but be open to any new angles, topics or experiences that may come up during the interview.

Be interested: Typically the people who you interview won't be used to being questioned about their lives. They may lack confidence or think their lives and experiences are just 'ordinary'. Demonstrate that you are really interested and encourage them to open up through eye contact and positive body language.

Listen and try not to interrupt: Let people tell their story. This is probably the most difficult thing to do. There might be points you want to clarify, or different topics you wish to explore, but try to wait until they have finished speaking. An oral history interview is not a conversation - you are there to gather their story, not for them to hear yours. That said, there'll be plenty of time for conversation when the recorder is turned off!

Be respectful: No matter how much research you've done, you won't know it all. Bill or Jean, Hilary or Sid's experience and way of seeing things is just that - their own experience and perspective. Of course, some people's memories are more vivid than others, and the passage of time does sometimes mean that people will make mistakes. However, you should always show the person you are interviewing that you have respect for them and for their memories.

Reading and Resources

East Midlands Oral History Archive has produced a fantastic series of information sheets for people getting started in oral history:

<https://www.le.ac.uk/emoha/training/infosheet.html>

Manchester Histories has a great oral history toolkit, created by Dr Fiona Cosson:

<https://manchesterhistories.co.uk/getinvolved/toolkits>

The Oral History Society website contains lots of valuable information and resources for budding oral historians:

<https://www.ohs.org.uk/>

The Institute of Historical Research has a page dedicated to the history and development of oral history:

https://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/oral_history.html

An online guide to the oral history collections housed at the British Library: <https://www.bl.uk/collection-guides/oral-history>

British historian and sociologist Paul Thompson played a leading role in the creation of the Oral History Society and the international oral history movement. His seminal work, *The Voice of the Past*, explains how oral history has transformed both the content of history and the processes of writing history. A brilliant starting point and overview for students of oral history: Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Kent's Sporting Memories: An Introduction to Oral History

Appendix C



Oral History Transcription

Overview

A transcript of the interview turns the words spoken on the audio file into a written document. The process of transcribing oral history interviews is undoubtedly very time-consuming, but it is a key feature of recording and archiving oral history. Some of the benefits to transcription:

- It can help to clear up any confusions, mispronunciations, or misunderstandings on the tape.
- Reading through the transcript is a quicker way to find information than listening to the whole recording.
- **It can be used to find texts and quotes for your project presentation or exhibition.**
- Paper is still a very effective archiving format.

Process

You should try to transcribe the interviewee's speech as accurately as you can. The grammar and word order must be left as spoken. If a word or phrase cannot be deciphered, it should be indicated in the transcript as such: [inaudible]. Fumbling for a word may be left out, but stop-gaps like 'you know' and 'see' should be included at this stage. Hesitations ('errs' and 'ums'), as well as any interjections by the interviewer ('rights' and 'okays') may be left out unless they seem important. The real art of the transcriber is in using punctuation to convey the character of the speech. For example, use an Em dash (—) for a pause or prolonged hesitation. Whatever method you use, be consistent in style and layout.

Software

Express Scribe is a free professional audio player software. You can use it to control playback of your recording using your mouse or keyboard 'hot' keys (F keys). It also offers valuable features, including variable speed playback and rewind features. It is easiest (and quickest!) to type the text in the Express Scribe Notes Field and then copy and paste it into your Word document — toggling between the audio and Word document is time consuming.

- Visit this website: www.nch.com.au/scribe/ and download the software: 'Download now' in a red box.
- Allow the software to make changes (a pop up will appear) and accept the conditions.
- When in the app, use the load button to find the audio file. This will automatically open your documents folder. If the audio file is saved elsewhere (on a memory stick for example), go to the folder icon and it will allow you to access the rest of your computer.
- Double click on the audio file and it will be saved in the scribe software.

Help and Feedback

If you have any transcription questions, or are having any technical problems, please get in touch. Equally, please send any samples of transcriptions in progress if you'd like some feedback. Many thanks for all your help, and happy transcribing! Email: michael@thesmf.co.uk
Phone: 07423 284045

Appendix D



Stowting Church of England Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Uden

14th June 2021

Dear Mr. Romgh

Thank you so much for giving us a few copies your book, **Kent's Sporting Memories**, we have greatly enjoyed reading through it and looking at all the old photographs inside. It was wonderful hearing about each person's achievements and how much sport means to them. My teacher was pleasantly surprised to find his Maths teacher from the Harvey Grammar School among the 222 pages of sportsmen.

The Year 5 and 6 thought the book was amazingly written with a wide range of sports included inside from Wind surfing to Netball. In Shepway Cross Country Competitions, I have won bronze, silver and gold medals. It is nice to think I could be in a book like yours someday.

Thank you once again.

Best wishes

Thomas, Owls class, Stowting CE Primary

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Webb". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Appendix E

Sporting Memories Foundation

Stephen Callis – Social Therapies and Wellbeing Manager for Opus Care Ltd

Date: 12/03/20

I believe we had our first Sporting Memories Foundation group here at Folkestone Care Centre in September 2019. When we first started talking about the group and the possibility of being able to host it within our care home setting it was a very exciting opportunity. As a home we support a various range of individuals from residential to nursing and dementia care and it is priceless to have a group that can be flexible with its resources to support everyone's needs. As a home we are driven to be a community 'hub' that is collaborating closely with the local businesses and new projects which enable people to live well with new opportunities.

When our first group started it was exciting to see the support from volunteers and our project coordinator Michael Romyn who has excelled in his delivery, especially around building relationships with our residents, family/ friends and the wider team. He is very much part of our vision as a company to promote independence and purpose in people lives. The Sporting Memories group gives our residents the opportunity to connect with the community and other individuals out of the home giving them a sense of belonging and freedom. Sports is a big part of our home and the residents share a lot of interests and stories that are expressed clearly and with joy in the sessions. There have been life stories that we have been able to share and focus our activity programme around, interactive cinema screen showings, intellectual quiz's, physical games and reminiscence resources that are all aimed around the groups needs and interests. Working closely with Michael we have also been able to make a connection with the local sports centre and we have planned events for the future which will give the opportunity for our residents to see live sports games and enjoy a range of sports that would not necessarily be available in our care home due to space and safety.

Overall, we have been proud to be a part of a project that has given everyone a new opportunity in our home and within the community that will promote wellbeing and reduce isolation with the feelings of loneliness. Our residents and their relations very much look forward to the sessions in the home and we have seen the group grow with confidence and numbers over the past 6 months. We are so grateful for The Sporting Memories Foundation, and I hope we will have many more magical moments to share in the future.

Many thanks,

Stephen Callis