

# ARTefacts

## “Reliving the Past”

The Oxfordshire Museum creative writing reminiscence project



Photograph of the Wooton Sunshine Club illustrating their writing



Jean in the Victorian gallery at The Oxfordshire Museum



Barbara in the Victorian gallery at the Oxfordshire Museum



Photograph of the Wooton Sunshine Club on the final artefacts session

“Reliving the past” is a collection of creative writing and oral history by seven Oxfordshire women who meet collectively as “The Wooton Sunshine over 50s Club.” The project took place at The Oxfordshire Museum in November 2011.

The project was inspired by the responses of the participants to the new Victorian Oxfordshire Gallery, which explores the lives of Oxfordshire residents during this fascinating period. The participants reminisced about their early lives, focusing on specific topics reflected in the exhibition such as the meals they shared, their childhood games, the jobs they did and the ways they would ‘make do and mend’.

The group worked alongside Kathryn Evans, a creative writing tutor, who enabled them to express and record their memories through prose and poetry. The final project day was a celebration of all the memories recorded. Amanda Beck, a creative artist, helped them display and mount their writing using mixed media such as their own old photographs, knitting patterns, old newspapers and haberdashery items.

The evident enjoyment of the experience was summed up by Joy, “Re exploring my past, my family and remembering so many events and generally sharing every one else’s memories – was so much fun”.