

AGE EXCHANGE ANNUAL REPORT



1988 / 89

“MAKING MEMORIES MATTER”

AGE EXCHANGE WORKERS

STAFF

Pam Schweitzer	- Artistic Director
Melanie Mousley	- Administrator
Caroline Osborn	- Reminiscence Project Co-ordinator
Helen Gaynor	- Production Manager
Deborah Pearson	- Finance Worker
Mark Slaughter	- Press and Publicity Officer
Eileen Taylor	- Centre Worker
Kathy White	- Centre Worker
Rachael Dalton	- Trainee Administrative Worker
Karen Venn	- Trainee Production Assistant
Bob Little	- Development Worker
Gemma Hunter	- Development Worker

FREELANCE WORKERS

John Green	- Accountant
Graham Dodd	- Legal Advisor
Aileen La Tourette	- Youth Theatre Director
Julian Waite	- Youth Theatre Director
Sandra Kerr	- Musical Director
Paula Gardiner	- Musical Director
Lisa Wilson	- Designer
Alex Schweitzer	- Architect

REMINISCENCE PROJECT WORKERS

Liz Bartlett	Shirley McCaw
Noelle Blackman	Sue Rennie
Jon Cannon	Sandy Ruxton
Tina Clarke	Diana Senior
Anne Dundon	Andy Soloman
Michael Green	Eileen Taylor
Sally Flood	Jean Taylor
Hugh Gubbin	Mark Williams
Aileen La Tourette	Becky Wylde

COMMUNITY PROJECT WORKERS

Ben Beck
 Andy Cork
 Anna Griffiths
 John Shergold
 Andy Soloman

THEATRE PROJECTS 1988 / 89

ON THE RIVER	CAN WE AFFORD THE DOCTOR?	DECK THE HALLS	GOOD MORNING CHILDREN	MANY HAPPY RETIREMENTS
Andy Andrews Anna Palmer Rob Sturt Charles Wegner	Andy Andrews Lucy Bagley Di Langford Mary Pegler Charles Wegner	Marie Waldron Charles Wegner Kerryann White	Ilona Linthwaite Jane Cunningham	Barry J. Gordon Godfrey Jackman Pam Lyne

THEATRE PROJECTS 1989 / 90

ACROSS THE IRISH SEA	ON THE RIVER	GOODNIGHT CHILDREN EVERYWHERE	CHRISTMAS AT WAR	MANY HAPPY RETIREMENTS
Donal Cox Denise Hirst Mandy MacIlwaine	Andy Andrews Janine Elton Rob Sturt Charles Wegner	Andy Andrews Amanda Hurwitz Maurice Iley	Andy Andrews Rebecca Clow Clare Summerskill	Barry J. Gordon Godfrey Jackman Pam Lyne

COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT

Dorothy Barton	Friend of Age Exchange	Del Pasterfield	Ford Motor Company
Graham Dodd	Solicitor	Ron Pepper	ILEA/LB Lewisham Councillor
Joy Drewett-Browne	Friend of Age Exchange	Peter Reid	LB Ealing
Anne Dundon	Shape/LB Hammersmith	Ron Robinson	GLA
Robin Ellison	Occupational Pensions Board	Tom Schuller	University of Warwick
Jim Gillman	LB Greenwich Councillor	Pat Thomas	Nuffield Foundation
Clare Hanson-Kahn	Age Concern Greater London	Robert Thorne	English Heritage
Peter Kent	Pensioners Link	Lloyd Trott	ILEA and RADA
Catherine Mullan	Help the Aged	Deirdre Wynne-Harley	Centre for Policy on Ageing
Lil Murrell	Friend of Age Exchange		

WORKING WITH OLD AND YOUNG THROUGH REMINISCENCE

AGE EXCHANGE AIMS to improve the quality of life of older people by emphasising the value of their reminiscences to old and young, through pioneering artistic, educational and welfare activities.

*** Theatre * Books * Exhibitions * Museum * Education * Training ***

THEATRE - Age Exchange is the only professional Reminiscence Theatre company in the country. We mount four or five productions each year, touring to elderly audiences in pensioners' clubs, theatres, community centres, sheltered housing units, homes and hospitals.

BOOKS - Our attractive and reasonably priced illustrated reminiscence books of London's many different communities are held up to other projects nationwide as examples of how to produce community history in an accessible and well designed format.

EXHIBITIONS - Our thematic exhibitions are of photographs and text mounted on boards suitable for display in libraries, hospitals, schools and at conferences and festivals. Exhibitions in our own base are ambitious three-dimensional displays of objects, photos, murals and memories around important reminiscence themes.

REMINISCENCE CENTRE - In 1987, we established Britain's first Reminiscence Centre, now visited by over 15,000 people per year. This is a thriving centre for creative activities for older people. Individuals and groups of elderly people can always be sure of a warm welcome and a stimulating visit.



MUSEUM - All the objects in our collection can be handled by visitors, and for many elderly people and the younger generation, this is a refreshing change from the normal museum visit where objects are behind glass.

REMINISCENCE PROJECT - Our project has worked in 76 hospitals and residential homes in greater London on seven week placements. These are designed to train residential

workers and health service staff in reminiscence skills while facilitating enjoyable weekly reminiscence sessions for their residents.

TRAINING - The Reminiscence Centre is a training centre for those who wish to develop stimulating ways of working with elderly people. The participants come from all over the country to train with Age Exchange.

EDUCATION - As an educational resource, we offer a unique service to schools. Children visiting the Centre work closely with older people investigating social and historical themes throughout their reminiscences and through exploring the fascinating collection of objects in our museum.



THEATRE IN EDUCATION - We now run special theatre projects for schools, with children, professional actors and pensioners working together at the Centre to explore such themes as schooldays in the 1920s, and wartime evacuation in 1939.

YOUTH THEATRE - Now in its fourth year, the Youth Theatre prepares reminiscence plays along similar lines to the adult company. Children aged 10-15 work together with pensioners and professional theatre directors and technicians to develop new community shows based on local people's memories.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES - From the Reminiscence Centre we run special writing reminiscence and drama groups for older people, as well as offering a range of community activities such as tea dances, concerts and workshops.

INTO THE 1990s

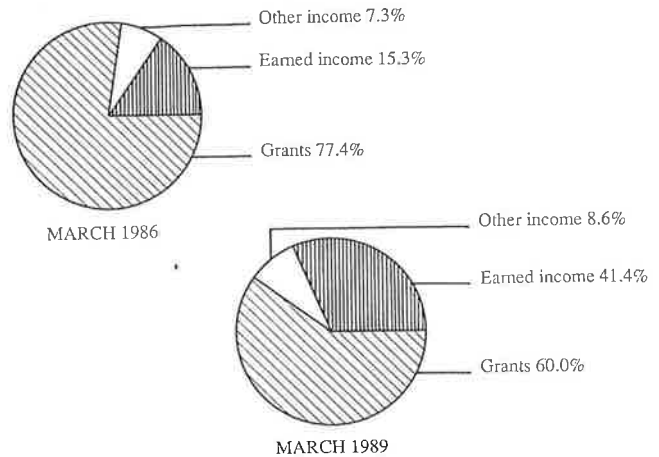
FUNDING

Throughout 1988 and 1989, a great deal of effort has gone into generating new funding for the work of Age Exchange. We have been intensely aware of the mounting pressures on our core funders, and so have redoubled our efforts to secure new sponsors both for projects and for posts. We have succeeded in lessening our dependence on grant aid by broadening our funding base and increasing our level of earned income. However, we still rely heavily for our three key salaries on funding from our two local boroughs, Greenwich and Lewisham, on the London Boroughs Grants Scheme and the Department of Health for our reminiscence activity, and on ILEA for our work with schools.

Company turnover has been steadily increasing, partly thanks to some successful applications for building and project grants to generous charitable trusts and businesses, and partly as a result of a considerable increase in earnings from our own training and publishing activities.

Age Exchange has also become more enterprising in its general fundraising programme, and has been grateful for the generous efforts made by groups and individuals at special events like benefit concerts, jumble sales and the London Marathon. Proceeds from these events are going into a special disabled minibus fund, which would enable us to bring many people to the Centre who are currently unable to reach us.

We have recently computerised our accounting system in the hope that we can undertake more sophisticated analysis of our financial position and potential. Our Assistant Administrator, Deborah Pearson, whose post was funded by B.P. for two years, has stayed on as a part-time Finance Worker to handle our accounting and invoicing departments.



Pie chart showing increase in earned income

STAFFING

Having lost five workers with the demise of the Community Programme, we were extremely short-staffed for a time, so we decided to recruit two school leavers, Rachael Dalton and Karen Venn. Both are excellent workers who are fitting in really well with the organisation, and they are apprenticed to our Administrator, Melanie Mousley, and our Company Manager, Helen Gaynor, who are teaching them new skills which will stand them in good stead for the future.

The appointment of Gemma Hunter and Bob Little, both well respected professionals in the reminiscence field, to the shared post of Centre Development Worker funded by the Department of Health, will lead to an increase in the earnings potential of the Reminiscence Centre as well as an expansion of our services.



AGE EXCHANGE STAFF WITH SUPPORTING CAST OF EVACUEES FROM OUR CURRENT EXHIBITION

Left to right: Back Row, Bob Little (Development Worker) Mark Slaughter (Press and Publicity) Andy Andrews (Actor and Writer) Helen Gaynor (Production Manager) Karen Venn (Trainee Production Assistant). Front Row, Kathy White (Centre Worker) Melanie Mousley (Administrator) Paula Gardiner (Musical Director) Pam Schweitzer (Artistic Director) Rachael Dalton (Trainee Administrative Worker) Gemma Hunter (Development Worker). Staff missing from the photo Eileen Taylor (Centre Worker) Deborah Pearson (Finance Worker) and Lisa Wilson (Designer) and Caroline Osborn (Reminiscence Project Co-ordinator)

MARKETING

We have worked hard this year on developing more sophisticated methods of marketing our work. We appointed our first Press and Publicity Officer, Mark Slaughter, in July 1989, and we are already noticing a greater level of media interest in our touring theatre company and our publications, as well as in the Centre itself. We anticipate that this increased publicity will lead to an even higher take-up of our services and products, which should be reflected in higher turnover.

What the press said:



A visit to the Reminiscence Centre

PREMISES

We shall also be redoubling our efforts to acquire the freehold of our property, which would considerably increase our sense of security at the Reminiscence Centre. The Nuffield Foundation are generously helping in this plan, and members of our Council of Management are advising us as to how we should proceed. We wish to thank our Council of Management for their good advice and invaluable support throughout the last year.



Through the generous financial assistance of B.P., we have been able to work recently with a marketing consultant, Philip Weisz, who has given us valuable advice and support in developing a marketing plan for the coming years. We are hoping to raise the money in the coming months to implement this plan which is designed to take us up to 1993, our tenth birthday.

We have identified those areas of our work, such as pre-retirement seminars, training, education and resourcing, which we feel have a high future revenue potential. These will be energetically developed in the next year in the hope of still further increasing our degree of financial independence.

PROGRAMME FOR 1990

We have an exciting programme of new shows, books and Centre exhibitions for the coming year, as well as an expanded training programme, a wide range of social and educational events, and a brand new community darkroom project opening in 1990, so we feel confident that the year ahead will be a good one.

THE REMINISCENCE CENTRE

The Reminiscence Centre was opened in June 1987, and since then it has developed into a unique community centre and a valued resource for training and education. Servicing approximately 15,000 people per year, we cater for older people, for those who work with them as carers, and for young people in schools and colleges.



The opening of the Reminiscence Centre by Glenda Jackson and Councillor Norman Smith, the Mayor of Lewisham



Volunteers running the cafe at the Reminiscence Centre

EXHIBITIONS

Since we opened, we have presented a large number of ambitious three-dimensional exhibitions in our studio space all with a reminiscence flavour but on widely varying subjects. Some of the more memorable displays so far have been "Cycling Days" (supported by Greenwich Arts Council as part of the Greenwich Festival) in which a huge array of cycling memorabilia was assembled and many exciting steeds were suspended from high beams in our gallery, "Caribbean Remedies and Recipes" (supported by the Commission for Racial Equality) in which pensioners from Lewisham's Calabash Club joined members of our reminiscence group for a joint day of workshops, a Bakelite display in association with the Bakelite Museum, and a delightful exhibition (in association with the Jewish Museum) of photographs and objects associated with Jewish East End weddings.



A workshop on Afro-Caribbean remedies and recipes in the Reminiscence Centre

VOLUNTEERS

We now have a large and enthusiastic group of volunteers who play an active part in the running of the Centre, working there for at least half a day a week each and participating in our wide range of activities. They organise tea dances and other social events as well as continuing to help the theatre company to create new reminiscence shows and books. We hope that the creation of a new darkroom and layout room with full disabled access (now being built with financial support from the Tudor Trust and Greater London Arts) will enable our volunteers to learn new skills alongside young people from the local area.



A tea dance at the Reminiscence Centre organised by the volunteers

PERFORMANCES IN THE STUDIO

Although the studio space in our Reminiscence Centre can only seat about fifty people, we have used it on several occasions as a performing venue for our own touring company. "All Our Christmases", "From Stepney Green to Golders Green", "On The River" and "Across the Irish Sea" have all been played there, and there is always a specially friendly and warm atmosphere when we are playing "at home" to local audiences.



Donal Cox, Denise Hirst, and Mandy McIlwaine at the Galway races in a scene from "Across the Irish Sea"

SCHOOL CHILDREN AT THE CENTRE

Two of the most exciting new theatre projects, both supported by ILEA in 1988-9, have actually been based around full scale environments designed specially for the Reminiscence Centre. The Theatre in Education programmes "Good Morning Children" on schooldays in the 1920s and "Goodnight Children Everywhere" on the 1939 evacuation, have brought school children, professional actors and old people together to work creatively. Our volunteers have enjoyed this new area of involvement with children at the Centre. These projects were so over-subscribed that we have decided to bring them back in the spring term of 1990, and again we shall be calling on our volunteers to participate.



Morning milk, a ha'penny a bottle, 1930s style in "Good Morning Children"

TRAINING DAYS

Our programme of training days for those who work with elderly people in residential or community settings has catered for well over 1,000 people, many of whom travel across the country. We are offering ideas, skills, resources and encouragement in an expanding but often under-recognised area.

We have recently created a new post with funding from the Department of Health to develop the Centre to its full potential as a national training base in Reminiscence and as a trail-blazing hands-on museum of objects and memories for older people. The two workers who are sharing this post will cope with the cross-generational work, and widen our range of training activities.



Stimulating sense of smell and touch at the Reminiscence Centre

RESOURCING REMINISCENCE WORK

With funding from the City Parochial Foundation, our Development Workers will create a loan service of reminiscence boxes which will be available to staff working with elderly groups. These will contain objects and documents designed to stimulate reminiscence, and ideas which we have tried out on our own Reminiscence Project placements. This will be an excellent follow-on to our "Lifetimes" package of cue cards and ideas for group work in reminiscence which we produced in 1987 with help from the London Boroughs Grants Scheme.

Having a base which is open to the public has had an important effect on our ability to market our products and to build up a continuing relationship with groups, both local and London-wide, and with individuals from all over the country who see us as a Mecca for reminiscence.

TOURING THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

In our touring theatre work we often target groups who are not normally theatre goers but who are attracted by the particular subject areas which we explore. This makes the promotion and funding of shows difficult, but the rewards of playing to audiences for whom the shows have a deep significance makes the effort worthwhile. Actors are often overwhelmed by the intensity of the response the shows evoke from people who feel that their experience is getting 'air time' and recognition for the first time.

"CAN WE AFFORD THE DOCTOR" 1988

Typical Age Exchange Touring Week

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
4.30pm North East Thames Regional Health Authority Paddington W2	7.30pm Woodville Close Sheltered Housing Unit Lewisham SE12	2.30pm Age Concern Greenwich Woolwich SE18	1.45 Lambeth Towers Day Centre Kennington SE11	2.00pm Colindale Hospital Colindale NW9 7.30pm Minnie Bennett House Sheltered Housing Unit Blackheath SE3	8.00pm Windsor Community Arts Centre Windsor	



Home remedies in "Can We Afford the Doctor?"

Left to right: Mary Pegler, Andy Andrews and Lucy Bagley

CAN WE AFFORD THE DOCTOR?

To celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the National Health Service in 1988, we revived our popular show "Can We Afford The Doctor?". This played to venues all over London, and also travelled widely across the country to the North West, the West Midlands, the South West and South Coast areas, winning hundreds of new friends for Age Exchange. In many cases, Pam Schweitzer ran training workshops in areas where the company were performing, so that people got to know about the wide range of reminiscence activity we offer in addition to our more high profile theatre programmes. By popular demand, Channel 4 Television rescreened in summer 1989 their documentary about the making of this show.

"ACROSS THE IRISH SEA" 1989

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
3.00pm Camden Irish Centre Camden NW1	Whitechester Old People's Home Wimbledon SW19	2.30pm Lambeth Town Hall Brixton SW2 8.30pm South London Irish Association London SW19	3.00pm Haringey Irish Centre Tottenham N17	3.00pm Donmar Warehouse Covent Garden WC2	8.30pm Dartford Irish Centre Dartford Kent	

Denise Hirst and Mandy McIlwaine in "Across the Irish Sea"

ACROSS THE IRISH SEA

In the autumn of 1988 we had previewed our new reminiscence show entitled "Across the Irish Sea", based on the experiences of Irish pensioners now living in London, at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith. This show had been in the pipeline for some time but had been shelved through funding difficulties. We deferred a full tour of the show until the start of the financial year in the hope of new money. Small contributions were forthcoming, but this show was dogged throughout by lack of subsidy. Those who saw it felt that it broke important new ground, and that it should be more widely seen, on both sides of the Irish Sea. It went on a brief tour of Northern Ireland where its mixture of humour, bitterness and nostalgia was extremely well received. As soon as adequate sponsorship can be secured, we should like to revive this production.



Our publication of the same name is selling well and has been very well reviewed in the Irish press. It breaks away from our usual format by telling in detail a set of individual stories, many of which are almost painfully frank as well as highly comic, and retain the individual charm of the speakers.

"ON THE RIVER" 1989

Typical touring week for Age Exchange Theatre in "On the River"

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1.30 pm Riverside School Erith Kent	2.30 pm Crouch Hill Recreation Centre Crouch Hill N19	7.30pm Millpond Tenants Hall Bermondsey SE16	1.00pm London Dockers Club Stepney E1	1.30pm Surdoc Club Rotherhithe SE16 7.00pm Village Court Sheltered Housing Unit Lewisham SE3		7.30pm Greenwich Theatre Greenwich SE10



"On the River" in performance

The publication to go with this show marks a new departure for Age Exchange. We felt that the subject and the excellent photographs which were available to illustrate it would make it attractive to a wider readership. We have therefore experimented with a hardback version, and wait to see if our hunch was correct. So far sales are going well, and we are putting a lot of time into making sure the various river communities get to hear about the book. It was produced with generous financial assistance from Olympia and York Canary Wharf and by the London Docklands Development Corporation.

Throughout the year we have been performing our "Many Happy Retirements" show at conferences and seminars organised by leading pre-retirement organisations. These performances by older professional actors have found a great deal of favour as a unique way of stimulating discussion around the more personal aspects of retirement. We are hoping to appoint a part-time administrator to handle and develop this area of our work which we feel has great potential.

ON THE RIVER

Our touring show "On The River" had a very general appeal to older Londoners and was extremely well received wherever it went. We also played to specialised audiences of pensioners who had worked in the docks or in lighterage, and these were often the most rewarding performances because of the strong instant response and degree of recognition prompted by the show. One of the highlights of this tour was a performance on a specially hired riverboat going up and down The Thames, during which we were actually passing the landmarks mentioned in the show. This show was generously sponsored by TGWU to mark the Centenary of the Dockers' Tanner Strike of 1889, and we gave several performances to their union delegates at their Brighton conference.



Pam Lyne and Barry J. Gordon in "Many Happy Retirements"

"CHRISTMAS AT WAR" 1989

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
2.00pm Dulwich Hospital Dulwich SE22	2.30pm Broadway Theatre Barking Essex	2.00pm Pensioners Link Westway Luncheon Club Ladbroke Grove W10 7.30pm Cheviot Gardens Sheltered Housing Unit West Norwood SE27	2.00pm East Greenwich Community Centre Greenwich SE10 7.30pm Kingsley Old People's Home Lewisham SE13	7.45pm Skinners Alms Houses Hounslow		

CHRISTMAS SHOW

This year, as ever, we shall produce a Christmas show for housebound old people, which will be touring widely in the London area. It is largely based on the stories given to us by Friends of Age Exchange who work as volunteers in the Centre, and they will play a large part in the preparation of the play.

NEW SHOWS

New shows in the pipeline now are "Just Like the Country" which will go on tour in the summer of 1990, with a new Age Exchange book to accompany it, and "What Did You Do In the War, Mum?" which is being revived to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Blitz.

THEATRE IN EDUCATION

This area is a new departure for Age Exchange, and a particularly successful one. We offer classes of primary school children a whole participatory project in the Reminiscence Centre, combining a visit to our display with a theatrical experience. They work with professional actors exploring a reminiscence theme, and then meet the pensioners who have supplied the memories for the project.



Ink monitor at Age Exchange in "Good Morning Children"

GOOD MORNING CHILDREN

"Good Morning Children" was our first Theatre in Education project and we based it on our own book of school memories. Our Stage Manager created a complete 1920s classroom in the Reminiscence Centre with all the period teaching aids she could muster from friendly museums and individuals. This became the set for the theatre project as well as a powerful reminiscence stimulus to older visitors to the Centre. The children had a chance to write with dip-in pens, to look at maps of the world with the 'pink bits' marked, to learn by rote, and above all to experience what it was like to work under a stern 'period' teacher, Miss Hood.



The volunteers worked with the children in the afternoon, reminiscing and improvising with them to everyone's great satisfaction. The children's follow-up work arising from this project made a delightful exhibition at the Centre which many parents and grandparents came in to inspect and admire.

GOODNIGHT CHILDREN EVERYWHERE

To mark the fiftieth anniversary of World War II, we mounted an ambitious three-dimensional exhibition of memories, photos and memorabilia. Again this became the setting for a whole day participatory play for children from local schools in which they experienced what it must have been like to be evacuated to the countryside in September 1939. The volunteers who took part in this project, not all pensioners this time but old enough to remember the evacuation, told the children what happened to them and supervised the children in acting out scenes based on these experiences.



Children's work arising from "Goodnight Children Everywhere"

VOLUNTEERS PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE

In these Theatre in Education projects, the volunteers have been actively involved in the creative interpretation of their own experience by actors and by children. They attended rehearsals as well, not only as 'guinea pigs' for the actors, but to give new ideas for possible ways of getting information across. Working through the arts at the Reminiscence Centre has a marked effect on the confidence and morale of older people and we warmly welcome their ideas and their commitment to our projects.



A 'real' evacuee tells today's children how it was

THE SCHOOLS RESPOND

Both our Theatre in Education projects were extremely popular and over-subscribed, so we shall repeat them in the spring of 1990 and look for other suitable themes to explore with this special combination of children, actors and pensioners. Teachers expressed a very high level of satisfaction, and again the children's follow-up work has given pleasure to many visitors to the Centre. We are particularly anxious to secure funding for this area of work, since schools can only raise a very small proportion of the real costs of mounting these productions.

Children taking part in our evacuation project - "Goodnight Children Everywhere" - trying out gas masks



YOUTH THEATRE

GOOD MORNING CHILDREN

During the summer of 1988, the Youth Theatre created a show called "Good Morning Children" based on interviews with pensioners about their schooldays in the 1920s and 1930s. Our own reminiscence group worked on a book of photos and memories on the same subject to coincide with the children's show. The two groups worked well together on this project, with pensioners visiting the children's rehearsals to advise on the scripting and staging and to give the flavour of the classrooms they remembered. At the opening performance, the pensioners launched their book, also called "Good Morning Children" and gave readings from it to set the scene for the play, so that the link between the two groups was clear for the audience.



The Age Exchange Youth Theatre in "Good Morning Children"

CHILDREN AND PENSIONERS ACT TOGETHER

Subsequently the children have worked with the pensioners on other shared projects, and in one of them there were two parallel plays. It was an exciting, if nerve-wracking experience for the pensioners to perform, but they were all glad they had given it a try. For one of them, Jenny Hinchelwood, it was something she had wanted to do for a long time. She had played an active part in our pensioners' drama classes and always helped us a lot with our professional productions. Sadly Jenny died in 1989 and is missed by us all, for she was very much the inspiration behind these joint projects.



The Age Exchange Reminiscence Group preparing their book of memories and photographs, "Good Morning Children"

A NEW SHOW IN PREPARATION

The Youth Theatre are now developing a new reminiscence play based on the life of a Greenwich street in the 1920s and 1930s, and interviewing a lot of elderly people for their research. The children work on these projects with professional directors, and they always design and create their own sets and props under the supervision of professional designers and stage managers from Age Exchange.



The Youth Theatre making props for their new show

AGE EXCHANGE REMINISCENCE PROJECT



Residents of an old people's home enjoy a reminiscence session

The Reminiscence Project has two briefs. One is to develop ways of stimulating reminiscence for the residents of old peoples' homes and patients of continuing care wards. The other is to share skills and ideas in reminiscence work with staff of residential homes, nursing homes and long-stay hospitals. It does this by using Reminiscence Workers to run reminiscence sessions jointly with members of staff at the place of work for a group of old people.

The project works with old people in very great need of stimulation and appreciation, people who can no longer care for themselves and do not live at home. It also works with the staff who look after them, many of whom receive little training and welcome new ideas which will make their hard work more rewarding.



WORKING ACROSS LONDON

The Project, which started in the field in 1986, will by the end of 1989 have completed 76 placements in all parts of Greater London. During 1988 the Project worked in nine hospitals, five local authority residential homes, and three voluntary homes. This year we will have worked in fifteen hospitals or nursing homes and six local authority residential homes. The continued support of the London Boroughs' Grants Scheme makes this work possible.

SPECIAL NEEDS GROUPS

The Project is working increasingly with old people who are confused and living in units run by the mental health services or designated as for the Elderly Mentally Infirm. We are frequently able to show staff positive and creative ways of using reminiscence with this group of old people with whom it is so difficult to work.

EVALUATION

We were delighted that the Centre for Policy on Ageing agreed in 1988 to evaluate the work of the Project. The report, 'Housing Memories', published in September 1989, considers the work in detail and is extremely positive as well as making some useful suggestions for new directions and modifications. It ends with the words:

...the Age Exchange Reminiscence Project is offering a valuable and valued contribution to the lives of many elderly people and those who work with them. Substantial achievements have been made...

The experience gained on the Reminiscence Project is a valuable background to the many direct training activities which are undertaken by Age Exchange.



The Reminiscence Project in operation

Our second group of Reminiscence Project Workers, all arts workers with special needs groups, started with a week of orientation to reminiscence and Age Exchange in March 1988. Most of them have been working steadily on the Project since then and are now highly experienced reminiscence workers who handle their difficult role with great skill. They value the support and stimulation which they get from Age Exchange, from each other, and from regular Saturday workshops and Age Exchange sees them as making an important contribution to the development of reminiscence work in London and beyond.

AGE EXCHANGE TRAINING WORKSHOPS



A Training Day at the Reminiscence Centre

REGULAR TRAINING DAYS AT THE CENTRE

Age Exchange staff have always responded to requests to run training in reminiscence and share their experience with others, either at their place of work or at Age Exchange. During 1988 we established on a regular quarterly basis a programme of training days for inexperienced and experienced people in various aspects of reminiscence work and this pattern continued during 1989. For 1990 we have a more ambitious programme planned which includes several two and three day courses, in addition to our popular single days.



A training day on resources at Age Exchange

NEW COURSES

Our new programme ranges from a single introductory day for people just beginning on reminiscence work to more specialised days for people with some experience. The day called 'Introduction to Reminiscence' includes direct experience of the processes involved in remembering the past, discussion about resources, planning sessions and suggestions about getting started. Our new two-day course on reminiscence activities will cover a much wider range of ideas about reminiscence stimulus focusing particularly on the use of drama, art and music.

A two-day course called Process to Product looks at ways of translating memories into permanent forms such as theatre, published writing or exhibitions. In response to requests we are also offering a new two-day course for people working with mentally infirm old people which will look at appropriate ways of working on an individual basis or in small groups.



A visit to the Reminiscence Centre

WHERE OUR TRAINEES COME FROM

We anticipate that the new people attending the days will continue to come from a wide range of working situations. During the past year the following types of organisation sent people to Age Exchange for training: local authority social services departments, the voluntary sector, health authority nursing services and occupational therapy departments, private nursing homes, adult education institutes and schools, libraries, museums, sheltered housing schemes, arts projects and a few private individuals. They work in a wide geographical area well beyond the south east: recent attenders have included a sizeable number from Wales and the North of England, several from Scotland and Northern Ireland, and even someone from the Channel Islands.

OUTREACH WORK

In addition to the Training Days at the Reminiscence Centre, we run workshops at the request of other organisations, particularly for social service training departments, nurse training schools, arts projects, the London Boroughs Training Committee, higher education courses for carers, as well as special interest groups in the field of housing, activity nursing, and speech therapy. Some of these are two-day or longer courses which stand on their own. Others are a half-day input into another course. The increasing number of requests for these courses indicate the recognition which is now being given to reminiscence, and the respect with which the work of Age Exchange is regarded.

AGE EXCHANGE ACCOUNTS 1988-9

AGE EXCHANGE THEATRE TRUST LIMITED A Company Limited by Guarantee

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1989

			Year Ended 31.3.88
INCOME	£	£	£
Fees Receivable		39376	27630
Book Sales		17811	14359
Grants Received		110219	106246
Other Income		16163	15116
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		183569	163351
 EXPENDITURE			
Salaries and Wages	92282		76089
Professional Fees	14455		11734
Book Printing Costs	3937		14482
Administration Expenses	34441		31598
Audit Fees	540		540
Rent and Rates	17237		14045
Other Operating Charges	7011		9582
	<hr/>		<hr/>
		169903	158070
 NET SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		<hr/>	<hr/>
		£13666	£5281

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 1989

	£	£
TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	4508	2932
NET CURRENT ASSETS	38797	26707
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL NET ASSETS	43305	29639
 CAPITAL AND RESERVES		
GENERAL RESERVE	36638	22972
CAPITAL RESERVE	6667	6667
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£43305	£29639

Due to limitation of space, the accounts are shown in an abbreviated version, full accounts will be sent on request.

Please note that this report also covers many of the activities undertaken in the financial year 1989 to 1990. More up to date financial information is available on request.

**CASH FUNDS STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1989**

	£	£	Year Ended 31.3.88 £
SOURCE OF FUNDS			
Surplus on General Account		13666	5281
Adjustment for items not involving the movement of funds: Depreciation		2253	628
		<u>15919</u>	<u>5909</u>
FUNDS FROM OTHER SOURCES			
Capital Grants		4626	35499
		<u>20545</u>	<u>41408</u>
APPLICATION OF FUNDS			
Purchase and improvement of leasehold property	4626		24745
Purchase of other tangible assets	<u>3829</u>		<u>4352</u>
		<u>8455</u>	<u>29097</u>
		<u>12090</u>	<u>12311</u>
MOVEMENT IN WORKING CAPITAL			
Stocks	2042		3770
Debtors	5426		2119
Creditors	<u>(3838)</u>		<u>(22744)</u>
	3630		(16885)
Movement in net liquid funds			
Cash and Bank balances	<u>8460</u>		<u>29166</u>
		<u>£12090</u>	<u>£12311</u>
REVENUE GRANTS			
B. P.		8000	
DHSS		10000	
Greater London Arts		1500	
ILEA		6700	
London Borough Grants Scheme		15831	
London Borough of Greenwich		31360	
London Borough of Lewisham		12882	
London Borough of Lambeth		545	
London Docklands Development Corporation		3000	
Lord Ashdown Charitable Settlement		5000	
Marks and Spencer plc		1500	
North West Shape		1930	
St. James' Trust		10000	
Transport and General Workers' Union		1000	
Other Grants		971	
		<u>110219</u>	

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

Increasingly our work for elderly people depends on individual and corporate donations and legacies.

Please consider a regular gift to Age Exchange. A covenant will enable us to reclaim basic income tax on your gift, making it worth more to our work.

You can also help us regularly through payroll giving. We are registered to receive payments via the Charities Aid Foundation.

Or you may prefer to make a single donation to help us with our work.

For more details on how you can help us contact:

Melanie Mousley
Age Exchange
The Reminiscence Centre
11 Blackheath Village
London SE3 9LA
Tel: 01-318 9105
From May 1990: 081 318 9105

Charity Number 326899
Company Limited by Guarantee Number 1929724



FINANCIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For generous financial support during the period covered by this report, Age Exchange wishes to thank the following:

Age Concern	London Borough of Lambeth
Arts Council Northern Ireland	London Borough of Lewisham
B. P.	London Borough of Westminster
Baring Foundation	London Borough Grants Scheme
Charities Aid Foundation	London Docklands Development Corporation
Citibank	Lord Ashdown Charitable Settlement
City Parochial Foundation	Marks and Spencer
Department of Health	Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund
Ford Motor Company	National Union of Public Employees
Greater London Arts	New Horizon Trust
Guinness Brewing	News International
Hayward Foundation	Noble Lowndes & Partners
Helen Hamlyn Trust	Olympia and York Canary Wharf Limited
Help The Aged	Park Hill Trust
Ideal Home	Peter Minet Trust
Inner London Education Authority	St. James's Trust
Irish Cultural Relations Committee	Sir Sigmund Sternberg Charitable Foundation
Lankelly Foundation	The Chase Charity
Leigh Trust	The King's Fund
Lex Garages	The Nuffield Foundation
London Borough of Ealing	Transport and General Workers' Union
London Borough of Greenwich	Tudor Trust