

# 1994/95



THEATRE  
BOOKS  
EXHIBITIONS  
MUSEUM  
TRAINING  
EDUCATION  
RESOURCES  
JOURNAL  
NETWORKING  
IN EUROPE

## 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.



# REPORT FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**1993 was a difficult year to follow. The European Year had offered Age Exchange the opportunity to make many new contacts through training programmes in reminiscence in Europe, to run a major international conference on reminiscence and to operate a theatre programme (both professional and amateur) throughout the year across the UK and Europe.**

1994 began quietly as we had temporarily exhausted funds and energy and needed to take stock. Professional theatre work was suspended for a while, though the Good Companions, our newly formed older people's theatre group, continued to operate, to make new productions and to give pleasure to audiences on both sides of the Channel.

## A GARDEN FOR THE CENTRE

There was a capital works programme including long-overdue renovation of our main office (largely by volunteers), the completion of the photographic darkroom and the creation of a new walled garden for our users, designed in consultation with the older members of the Reminiscence Centre.

Lewisham Council and New Horizons helped us with this project which has been a major asset to us over the last year. To mark the opening of the garden we created a special reminiscence exhibition in the Centre entitled "Back In Your Own Backyard", based on older people's memories of gardens and gardening and this proved very popular with all our visitors.

## NETWORKING IN EUROPE

A lot of energy went into consolidating the European relationships the charity had

forged in 1992-3 and these began to take shape in the European Reminiscence Network which we proposed to the Commission in early 1994 and which they accepted in May 1994.

The proposal included setting up a computerised database of reminiscence contacts, establishing a journal to feature good practice and innovative work, running a professional training programme, theatre and computer projects for older people and establishing a European Reminiscence Training and Development Centre. The Commission approved of our efforts in 1994 and have ratified the European Reminiscence Network with Age Exchange as co-ordinating body for 1995-6.

## A NEW BUILDING

The base for the European Reminiscence Training and Development Centre is the Old Bakehouse beside Age Exchange Reminiscence Centre. We had bought the building in 1992 with a loan from the Nuffield Foundation and had been waiting for the tenants' lease to expire. During the period of 1993-5 we worked

hard to raise the money for a major adaptation and refurbishment programme for this building, and thanks to the generosity of the Department of Health, the Baring Foundation, the St James's Trust and the London Boroughs Grants Scheme, we were able to proceed in the autumn of 1994 and should complete by the end of 1995.

## EUROPEAN REMINISCENCE SYMPOSIUM

The new building was opened officially in May 1995 with the European Reminiscence Symposium, a major event in our current European programme. Age Exchange and the European Reminiscence Network hosted a week of lectures and workshops by experts from across Europe with special emphasis on Inter-generational Reminiscence and Reminiscence in Dementia Care. Delegates from almost every country in the European Union attended, exchanging ideas on their current work practice, enjoying the reminiscence theatre performances and social events we offered, and relaxing together in glorious sunshine in the Centre's new garden.



*Delegates from Greece, Italy, Denmark, Germany, Belgium, France and the UK enjoy a hands-on reminiscence session at the European Symposium.*

## "A TIME TO REMEMBER"

In October 1995, the building is to be the base for the first European Older People's Theatre Festival. Entitled "A Time To Remember", the festival will feature ten specially commissioned works by groups from different countries commemorating the end of World War II. The older people from different countries (Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, France, Ireland, Austria, Norway, USA and Taiwan) will participate in shared workshops in mime, music and improvisation as well as enjoying each other's performances. Throughout this year we have been working hard preparing this festival, supporting the initiatives from the different countries and designing what we hope will be a wonderful week for all concerned.

In fact, Age Exchange has had a high profile throughout this anniversary year as a result of our extensive programme of new theatre projects (see below), special VE Day exhibitions and publications. Many organisations have approached us for help in marking important events in their calendars with special performances or reminiscence workshops. We have been commissioned by two London Boroughs, Lewisham and Southwark, to produce new reminiscence publications and schools packs reflecting the Home Front in those boroughs and these works are now published or in production. The autumn Older People's Theatre Festival will be the highlight of our anniversary year programme.

## NEW TRAINING INITIATIVES

The training and project side of our work has been progressing rapidly, with record take-up of training programmes and a new 50+ Project designed to give older workers new skills in reminiscence. This latest project, generously supported by BT,

started in July 1994 and finished in August 1995, after a very successful year of training for 14 project workers aged between 50 and 70 and operating reminiscence project placements in 16 settings across London. Running alongside our existing Reminiscence Project which is supported by the London Boroughs Grants Scheme, the 50+ Project has enabled us to make contact with many new groups of elderly people and their carers who now have the experience to run their own reminiscence sessions and to continue the work we began.

## THEATRE PROJECTS

In February 1994 we began our work on the "Routes" project, a professional touring theatre production based on the memories of Punjabi elders. "Routes" had been piloted in 1992 and 1993, and was now going on a long tour all over the UK. For the first time in our twelve year history, the Arts Council subsidised our work which meant that we were able to offer "Routes" at affordable prices to groups of ethnic elders across the country. The show was a tremendous success and reached audiences who did not know our work before and who responded very whole-heartedly to the production which reflected so closely their own histories. We also had the opportunity to play to audiences in Holland and Germany where we met with great acclaim.

"Routes" was immediately followed by "When The Lights Go On Again", a new production based on memories of the end of World War II, with an accompanying book and a very exciting new exhibition in the Reminiscence Centre to fit in with all the VE and VJ Day celebrations. The new show is now fully booked and is touring throughout the year to sheltered houses, homes, clubs, hospitals, libraries and community centres.

The Good Companions are also creating a new show (together with children from the Age Exchange Youth Theatre) to mark the anniversary of the end of the war and this will have its first airing at our Festival of Older People's Theatre in the autumn. A new professional production will follow on the theme of winter remedies and recipes, so the theatre side of Age Exchange is at full stretch again this year.

## ALL IN ALL

This has been a very busy and productive period, starting quietly and then quickly picking up pace again, with a multitude of new projects and a major new European programme to organise. The capital programme has made huge progress, thanks to the enormous efforts of Alex Schweitzer (our architect, builder and hidden asset) and the first rate team he built up to prepare the Bakehouse for its official opening in May. We now have excellent new staff members in place who are eager to help our work thrive and develop in the coming months. Our thanks are due as always to the band of Volunteers and Friends of Age Exchange who form the backbone of the organisation, who help it to continue to function through thick and thin times and who give it its soul.

## PAM SCHWEITZER



Dorothy Barton and Eileen O'Sullivan getting to grips with the garden



# THE REMINISCENCE CENTRE

**Amidst the many changes at Age Exchange this last year, the Centre has remained constant. It's the people who visit and use the centre who are changed by discovering it! The interweaving of people and situations contribute to the atmosphere of the Centre.**

A typical working day at Age Exchange starts with preparations in the kitchen - 'Are there any groups today?' is a regular question from our volunteers, keen to make their excellent sandwiches for the visitors! Then it's opening time - usually a group of elders or children is booked in for a morning or afternoon session but around this 'known factor', each day offers infinite variety. A couple visiting for the first time see toys they remember and start talking of their favourite games, 'Gobs and Bonsters' like Jacks or Five Stones they explain. The man remembers when footballs were 6d and how he made footballs out of newspaper tied with string. Too bad if it rolled into water! The woman now remembers her father - a cattle drover licensed to take cattle over Tower Bridge to the Caledonian Market and the abattoir. Memories expand - she is surprised at just how much she remembers 'as if it were yesterday.' Whilst she and her husband exchange memories, a couple of regulars come in. They enjoy knowing their mug of tea and cup of coffee will be just how they like it! They sit and exchange news.

Later two schoolgirls drop by, their mission to buy a wide variety of sweets with a small amount of money! They too visit regularly. This time, being the holidays, they offer to help in the Centre. They water the garden and pick flowers for the tables. They enjoy being in the centre



*Barbara McKenzie with children at the Reminiscence Centre*

and the older people enjoy seeing and talking to them, passing on memories of how they spent their spare time, cleaning cutlery, polishing the grate and earning pocket money of one penny.

Next there is the teacher hoping to bring her class to Age Exchange. We discuss her curriculum needs, how sessions work, how our older volunteers will talk from their own life experiences on agreed topics, such as shopping in the past, life without electricity, etc.

The group of elders and carers arrive. Lots of exclamations and lots of recognition. The fun and enjoyment begin as the memories are triggered by the displays and exhibitions and the opportunity to see, smell, touch objects from their past. It is as if the Centre reveals to the visitors their own past; things they didn't even know they remembered and certainly had never bothered to tell.

The Centre continues to be the focal point for Age Exchange, offering the opportunity for

discovery, inspiration and celebration of life to people of all ages and cultures and those with disabilities. As a ten year old 'regular' exclaimed: "I enjoy coming here, there is always something new!" It is this feeling which draws our visitors back to the Centre, the exciting, rewarding atmosphere and a possibility of reassessing our past.

**Jyl Cowley,**  
Centre Worker

## **VOLUNTEERS HAVE THEIR SAY**

I joined Age Exchange in February as a voluntary worker. I had passed the building many times, but little did I realise the world that lay behind those doors. It's hard to put into words the atmosphere that the Reminiscence Centre evokes, and although it is extremely busy there all the time it has a very peaceful feeling.

I really enjoy meeting all the people who come into the Exchange. They all have a story





Left to right ; Kitty Finch, Joyce Milan and Penny Cheesman in rehearsal for a Good Companions Show

to tell and I love to hear them reminiscing about the old days when they recognise the things on display and say, "Oh, I had one of those!" and "I remember when we used to use that."

Although I have learnt a lot at Age Exchange there is still a lot more to learn. We had a volunteers' training day and I realised the importance of our Reminiscence Boxes which we hire out to hospitals, schools or to people starting a reminiscence group themselves. We have over 40 boxes full of memorabilia.

I find the visits from groups, some in wheelchairs, some blind, and some with senile dementia, extremely interesting as you can see for yourself the benefit of reminiscence for these people. Just to see a blank face show some emotion is extremely gratifying.

In October we are being host to groups from many countries in Europe and also from America and Taiwan with their reminiscence plays. That will be exciting. Our group of players, "The Good Companions" have also been abroad many times with our plays and I am looking forward to joining them for the next show.

I was in business in Blackheath Village myself for over fifty years and old customers think I must miss my shops after all that time,

but I don't at all as Age Exchange has filled that void and also the sad loss of my husband. To sum up, I would like to thank Age Exchange for 'having me'. I find it a privilege to be involved with the project.

**Barbara MacKenzie,**  
Volunteer

My visit to Age Exchange with a party of elders in 1993 fired my interest in reminiscence. To my delight, volunteers made a substantial contribution to manning the Centre so I put my name forward at once. Fortunate timing put me on a volunteers' training course prior to starting at the Centre. The course was informative and very enjoyable indeed; a chance to meet like-minded volunteers. My work with elders as an Activities Organiser has been greatly enhanced by the stimulation of working at the Centre, watching plays, taking further courses, exhibition launches and social events. I can't wait to be old enough to join the Good Companions!

**Sue Sangster,**  
Volunteer

Just before Christmas 1994, I was feeling rather depressed and fed up with my life, having not much to do. My friend and neighbour Joyce Milan had asked

me a few times to consider becoming a volunteer at Age Exchange Reminiscence Centre. In January 1995, I did just that. I was accepted and started doing work one afternoon and every other Saturday in the cafe. What a difference it has made to my life! I have made new friends and enjoy talking to the visitors who come to the Centre, listening to their stories both funny and sad. My latest venture is to join the drama group, The Good Companions, and I find this both exciting and rewarding. I now have too much to think about, but I fully recommend becoming a volunteer at Age Exchange.

**Penny Cheesman,**  
Volunteer

I am from Iran and working as an accounts assistant in the Age Exchange office on a voluntary basis. I enjoy the work here since all the staff members are friendly and it has provided me with the opportunity to sharpen my skills and to gain fresh experience for a better chance towards employment. It is also enjoyable for me to learn how Age Exchange puts value on the old people's experiences and how these experiences are shared out with the young generation.

**Amrollah Karimi,**  
Volunteer



# THE GOOD COMPANIONS TAKE NEW DIRECTIONS

## "GRANDMOTHER'S FOOTSTEPS":

### AN INTER-GENERATIONAL THEATRE PROJECT

**This project was designed as our contribution to the United Nations International Year of the Family. We would make a new show bringing together a group of older people in their seventies with children aged ten to seventeen.**

With such a big age gap between the two groups, the subject of grandparents and grandchildren arose naturally. The older people recalled their grandparents in taped interviews which formed the basis of an accompanying book which won the backing of Help The Aged. The children listened to their stories and learned a great deal about what it was like to be young sixty years ago.

They needed this information, as they would play the older people when they were little and the older people would remember and recreate their grandparents in theatrical scenes devised through improvisation. We received generous support from the European Commission to tour this work in Europe as part of the 'Year of the Family' celebrations, highlighting the role of older people in the family past and present. The tour was a great success and here are some responses from participants young and old.

*We flew to Munich and then travelled by coach through the beautiful mountainous countryside of Austria and arrived finally at Salzburg. The shows were a great success and we were filmed by Austrian television. We also performed in Cologne, Lille and finally in Brussels at a day centre, where the elderly people and school children thought the show was hilarious.*

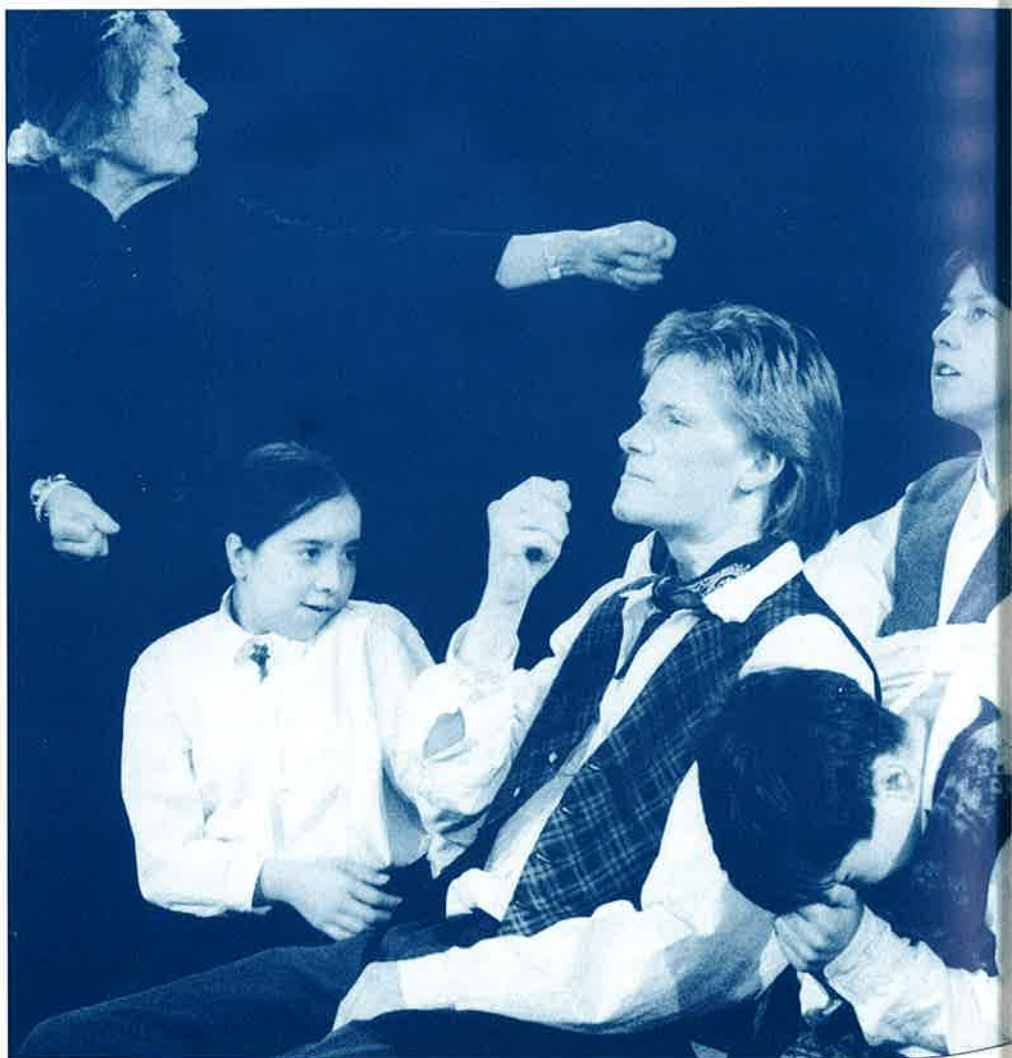
**Cusi Laine, aged 13**

*Last October's visit to Europe with the Age Exchange's "Grandmother's Footsteps" show was a fascinating and most worthwhile week. The children and older people had already performed in Austria when I met up with them in Cologne for the second leg of the tour. The performances reached a wide range of groups from different backgrounds. It was a truly inter-generational experience from the point of view of performers and audience. Our hosts were very welcoming in Germany, Belgium and France, and they gave us the opportunity to meet ordinary people from different families and professional groups. Being on tour involved sharing day to day activities and getting to know the different personalities involved. Both children and older people needed to be accommodating and caring towards each other and formed very valuable relationships whilst on tour. Despite some tiredness and enormous energy expended, all those involved were enthusiastic and thrilled at the reaction of the different audiences. Re-living memories through theatre brings so much alive in the minds of all concerned.*

**Mandy Hitchcock, parent of two members of the Youth Theatre**

*On the trip we were totally pampered and always living in luxury, from drinking mock beer in Cologne to flying to Austria. It was a thoroughly enjoyable trip and as well as acting we also shopped, ate fine food, had private parties (no parents or older people allowed!). I think that the trip was really fun and it really taught me a lot about performing to different generations, ages and cultures.*

**Laura Hitchcock, aged 11**



"Grandmother's Footsteps"

One Monday morning in late July 1994 I had a phone call from a very good friend, Joyce Milan asking if I'd consider playing piano and taking part in a new play the 'Good Companions' at Age Exchange were putting together. My first reaction was one of deep interest, then panic set in. I was seventy four years of age, no experience of acting and hadn't touched the piano for nearly twenty years.

The following day, I spoke to Pam on the phone and she gave me details of the new venture. The older people would be working with the children from the Age Exchange Youth Theatre. Hopefully, the show would play in Salzburg, Cologne, Brussels and Lille in October. I agreed to write and forward to her reminiscences of my early childhood and favourite Grandmother, material which could be used in the play.

*Right ; Silke Klug teaches Lil Murrell how to scream in "Friends and Neighbours". Lil is remembering kicking up a fuss at school 65 years ago when the teacher wouldn't let her hold onto her flag on Empire Day.*



A couple of weeks later I went to Blackheath and met Pam and members of the 'Companions' for the first time. There was lots of warmth and friendliness which eased my apprehension. I had a 'go' (as Pam always says) on the piano. Boy, was I rusty! My brain and fingers wouldn't co-ordinate and both of us were shaking like jellies. On hearing that I had no success on the piano, Pam immediately came to the rescue. "There's a keyboard knocking around somewhere - Alex will bring it over to you tomorrow." The keyboard duly arrived and I was able to get working on scales and harmony. On Friday, the 27th of August, we started four days intensive work on "Grandmother's Footsteps." By Monday afternoon we were all fed up, but the various scenes were taking shape. After lots of frustrations and rehearsals, we eventually arrived in Salzburg on Saturday

evening, October 22nd. We gave our first performance to a lovely audience on the following Sunday night. The play was very well received and all seemed worthwhile. The Monday afternoon was a free period so Joyce and I fulfilled a wish, to visit Mozart's Geburtshaus. We were very lucky to spend over half an hour by ourselves in a tourist free display room looking at Mozart's piano, clavichord and other memorabilia.

I shall always remember that afternoon. On Tuesday we travelled by train to Cologne, performing there to appreciative audiences and receiving wonderful hospitality. This was repeated in Brussels and Lille, so much kindness is very heart warming. The pace of the tour was sometimes very hectic and tiring, but always it was lots of fun.

**Olive Smith, aged 75**



Early last summer we members of the "Good Companions" decided on an idea to put on a show together based on our memories of life in a London street when we were young. It was a close knit community, so we soon decided on a title, "Friends & Neighbours", and to produce us came two experienced theatre directors from overseas. Silke Klug from Munich, Germany and Sarah Worthington from Ohio, USA had a daunting task as our stories of street life in London was a subject they knew little about, but in only a few weeks we had a sharp little show full of fun, laughter and music.

They had a fresh and somewhat zany approach to our style of "acting" which worked admirably, teaching us methods we remember still. They were charming people and we all became good friends. I was privileged to welcome them in my home during their stay, as I live in sheltered accommodation, and have access to a nice guest room, so we got to know each other very well, having long talks over breakfast and at the end of the day on all subjects, life, families and acting.

We all appreciated them very much and looking forward to meeting again in October 1995 when we hold our Autumn Festival at Blackheath hosting older people's theatre groups from countries world-wide, including Sarah's group from Ohio.

**Joyce Milan, aged 74**



# THE EUROPEAN REMINISCENCE NETWORK

In 1994 Age Exchange proposed the establishment of a Europe-wide Reminiscence Network so that the valuable initiatives taken in 1993, the European Year of Older People and Solidarity Between Generations, should not evaporate. During 1994, we took on the **REMINISCENCE MAGAZINE** from Help the Aged and gave it a European dimension and a much increased circulation.

We set up the beginnings of a European Reminiscence Database to put projects in easy contact with each other. We kept alive our contacts in other European countries with touring shows (by our professional theatre company and by our older people's group, The Good Companions) and by offering professional workshops to those working with older people.

The remit of the **EUROPEAN REMINISCENCE NETWORK**, ratified by the Commission in 1995, is to be a co-ordinating body bringing together reminiscence workers and creating a forum where skills can be exchanged, best practice shared and joint projects initiated. The Network also aims to promote exchanges between older people from different European countries who wish to share memories and

learn new ways of working with their reminiscences through theatre, writing and other arts.

Key elements of the Network are the Reminiscence Magazine, which is developing as an invaluable communication tool of Reminiscence workers, the Database and the European Reminiscence Training and Development Centre. Age Exchange's role as Network co-ordinator is to facilitate events, meetings, documentation and research to increase the profile and the quality of Reminiscence work in Europe.

The establishment of the European Reminiscence Network is no mean feat on the part of Age Exchange given that it is one of only a handful of Europe-wide networks concerning older people's organisations to be funded by the Commission and these networks will be a focal point for older people's issues in the second wave of the Commission's older people's programme which (subject to confirmation) will run to **1999 - the United Nations Year of Older People**.

To help us with the increased workload and financial responsibility in relation to the European Reminiscence Network we have taken on Bridget Knapper, our European Officer,

who has been with us since autumn 1994. Bridget is proving a great asset to Age Exchange as she is fluent in French and German and is a highly competent administrator of our European events. Matthew Couper has joined us on the administrative side to help with the increased financial administration.

## EUROPEAN THEATRE AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES 1994-5

Age Exchange maintained a high European profile in 1994/5, building on the programme of 1993/4. The Good Companions had a very active time with their show *"I Remember When"* as well as the new inter-generational play with the Age Exchange Youth Theatre, *"Grandmother's Footsteps"*.

The European tour in October 1994 took both plays to a conference in Salzburg, Austria on age and culture. The actors, old and young, then made tracks by train to Cologne and thence by minibuses to Brussels and Lille. The play *"Grandmother's Footsteps"* was a shining example of how communication across the generations and across the language barrier is possible.

No sooner had the Good Companions come home, than they had to pack their bags and set off to Germany. This time to Berlin by invitation of Greenwich's twin town, Reinickendorf. A week's programme of sightseeing and performances included a performance in Potsdam, former East Germany and lunch with the Mayor of Reinickendorf.

In March 1995, *The Good Companions* took part in a Festival of Older People's Theatre hosted by the town of Mülheim an der Ruhr. Age Exchange provided the foreign element in a Festival made up of German groups, and were extremely warmly received in the town by our generous hosts.



*"Routes"* : left to right, Robina Mir, Rosaline Dean and Ajay Chhabra



European tours by the professional theatre company included a week in Germany with *"A Merry Little Christmas"* which was performed in Hildesheim, Kassel, Cologne, Frankfurt and Ulm in December 1994 and *"Routes"* which was played in South Holland, Cologne and Hildesheim.

Nearly all of the appearances by the theatre groups in Europe were supported by workshops and training sessions for professionals led by Pam Schweitzer. These were presented at several key international conferences on age, culture and inter-generational work in Salzburg, Frankfurt and Bonn. Training courses were held for drama and social work students in Hildesheim, Kassel and Cologne and for Care Workers in Kassel and South Holland.

European activities by the Age Exchange theatre groups (both the Good Companions and the professional companies) not only act as good examples of valuing older people's memories and experience, but also create valuable contacts with organisations and individuals keen to further this work. This has resulted in a higher take-up by Europeans on Age Exchange training programmes held at the Reminiscence Centre in London.



*Douglas Stevens and Olive Smith in "Grandmother's Footsteps"*

### REMINISCENCE DATABASE & REMINISCENCE MAGAZINE

Acquiring new software for the Reminiscence database at Christmas has improved communication with Age Exchange contacts enormously. The flexible and user-friendly set-up of Access made administration of the Symposium much smoother as well as helping to maintain the subscribers to Reminiscence Magazine. There is still much work to be done with cleaning up the data which was transferred from the old system and in integrating other services onto

the database such as the training bookings and the hiring of Reminiscence Boxes.

Subscriptions to Reminiscence Magazine continue to increase with many Europeans who attended the Symposium and training courses also signing up. It is hoped that the addition of a subscription form to the new books leaflet will also help to boost subscriptions.

### THE OLDER PEOPLE'S WORD-PROCESSING COURSE

The first of the Older People's Word-Processing courses which started in February were extremely successful. Enthusiastic, though tentative and hesitant trainees lost their anxieties about computers after their first session at the machines and went on to master the workings of Windows, Mice and Word-Processing. Further courses are planned for the autumn for beginners and also intermediate courses for those who've already started. The latter will encourage trainees to use the word-processing functions to record their memories.

**Bridget Knapper and Pam Schweitzer**



*Bridget Knapper initiates Dorothy Barton into the mysteries of "Word for Windows"*

# AGE EXCHANGE TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

The year 1994-95 has been one of continued development for our training section. Progress has been made in all areas, and the challenge for the future is to build on our links with academic institutes and other professional practitioners in order to develop further the theory and practice of reminiscence work. We are very grateful for the generous financial support which we have received for our training services from the Department of Health, the London Boroughs Grants Committee, the Linbury Trust, BT and the European Commission.

## THE REMINISCENCE CENTRE SHORT COURSE PROGRAMME

The high take-up on our regular Centre courses has been maintained, and there has been encouraging interest in the new courses we have developed. We are also providing introductory reminiscence training for Age Exchange volunteers. The Old Bakehouse, headquarters of the new European Training and Development Centre, is proving to

be an ideal venue for workers to receive and exchange new ideas in a comfortable yet stimulating setting.

## NATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

We continue to provide in-house training for organisations around the United Kingdom, working towards the development of local reminiscence projects which benefit from the links we provide with the fast-expanding European Reminiscence Network.

## PROMOTING THE VALUE OF REMINISCENCE WORK

Developing the public and professional profile of reminiscence work involves action on a number of fronts: press releases, articles in relevant books and journals (including our own Reminiscence Magazine), grant applications, talks and presentations at conferences, group-visits to the Reminiscence Centre, and participation in professional and academic courses of higher education. Our new marketing administrator, Patricia Juarez, will be seeking to reach increasing numbers of people with information about our services.

## THE FIFTY PLUS REMINISCENCE PROJECT

14 trainees successfully completed the BT sponsored Fifty-Plus Reminiscence Project, our accredited Project Worker training course for people over the age of fifty.

### One of the 50 + Project Trainees writes as follows:

*On Thursday, 17th of August, I received my certificate from the Age Exchange 50+ Project. This was sponsored by BT and consisted of ten days of in-house training and two project placements. It was a very comprehensive course and explored all aspects of reminiscence. I came to the course with some knowledge of reminiscence, but the guidance, training and encouragement given by all concerned has enabled me to add new dimensions to my work. The reception held at the Old Bakehouse was most enjoyable, and a fitting end to an excellent course.*

**Sue Lazenbury**



50+ trainees in a practical reminiscence training





*Reminiscence resources - professionals trying out ideas from a Reminiscence Box on an Age Exchange training course*

## THE REMINISCENCE PROJECT

A total of 27 reminiscence projects were organised in this year, representing a considerable expansion on all previous years, and ensuring that reminiscence activities become available to more older people.

## ACCREDITATION

Eight of our training courses are now accredited at degree-level. The machinery of accreditation is set up with Bernie Arigho acting as student assessor working alongside the School of Humanities at the University of Greenwich. This represents a major new development, offering reminiscence workers the chance to gain academic recognition for their achievements.

## EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENTS

We continue to extend our contacts with workers in other European countries through training events here at the Reminiscence Centre

and abroad. Many people from outside the United Kingdom are now attending our short courses at the Reminiscence Centre, and contributing articles on related work in their countries to Reminiscence Magazine.

## RESEARCH

As part of our aim to raise the profile of reminiscence work we are making a proposal for a doctoral research project to investigate thoroughly how people are benefiting from their involvement in reminiscence activities.

## REFERENCE LIBRARY

We now have funding from the European Commission to establish a reminiscence reference library in the Old Bakehouse. Work has begun on building up and cataloguing a collection of key practical and theoretical papers.

**Bernie Arigho,**  
**Reminiscence Co-ordinator**

## PRESS AND PUBLICITY

With the creation of a freelance Press Officer post (part-time) in January of this year, much time has been devoted to increasing awareness of Age Exchange in the national and local media. As well as making sure all media are notified of events as they occur, the Press Officer has devoted time to developing contacts in different areas of the media to ensure long-term coverage.

In the local press new contacts have been forged, as well as renewing old relationships. With press releases going out each month, Age Exchange has a high local profile. Journalists have been encouraged to visit the centre regularly to be updated on Age Exchange activities. Age Exchange has an excellent relationship with the specialist/care media but regular, targeted press releases and submitted articles have increased coverage further.

Age Exchange is used widely by the media as an invaluable resource. Due to this demand (which was highlighted in the run up to V.E. Day), the Press Officer drew up a formal rate card for Age Exchange services. The rate card, distributed to all staff, has standardised charges for what are often very time consuming activities, thus ensuring an income for assisting the media.

On a national scale much has been done to cultivate broadsheet, radio and TV contacts in order to get feature coverage specifically about Age Exchange.

This is an important and ongoing process which is already showing results. The press database, which includes arts and theatre, education, care, health, social affairs correspondents, TV, radio and local lists has been completely updated and re-categorised. A European press list is currently being researched.

**Maggie Jones**

## ADMINISTRATION

In December 1994, Age Exchange lost the services of **Penny Rossetter** as Administrative Director after four years valuable contribution to the development of the organisation.

She was replaced by **Frank Thackaberry**, who took over the post of Administrator at a time of expanding workload and reduced staffing.

While the greater role Age Exchange plays as European Network Co-ordinator resulted in further administrative demands on the organisation, fortunately the increased funding provided by the European Commission allowed the re-instatement of the post of Assistant Administrator in July 1995.

The appointment of **Matthew Couper** to that post will provide administrative support for our theatre touring and the day to day running of the expanding organisation as well as for the European dimension of our work.

Following one full year of the operation of our computerised accounts system, it has been possible to evaluate its strengths and refine procedures to improve the efficiency of the financial administration and to allow ease of access to information needed for effective decision-making.

Improved procedures to speed up invoicing and implement more effective credit control have been possible with the help of increased staffing, both paid and voluntary. Volunteers in the area of administration are also helping to improve the mail order book service and the Reminiscence Box hire scheme.

**Frank Thackaberry**

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

1994/95 was a year in which Age Exchange enjoyed stability in core funding after years of grant reductions and a consolidation of its position in Europe with further funding from the European Commission of £48,704 (1994 - £35,275).

Income from direct charity activity fell by 25% to £110,726 (1994 - £148,734) as the company concentrated much of its efforts on its capital programme. However, a massive fund-raising drive saw grants increase from £116,231 in 1994 to £228,399 in 1995. 25% of funds raised in 1994/95 were for capital projects.

The Income and Expenditure Account shows an overall surplus of £80,656. Of this surplus £66,641 is restricted grant income of which £36,920 has been used to finance the Company's capital programme during the year and the balances to be carried forward to meet specific commitments in 1995/96, mostly in connection with the conversion of the Bakehouse.

There was a small surplus of £14,015 on unrestricted funds and the unrestricted fund balance at 31 March 1995 amounted to £264,218 (1994 - £219,882). However, these funds are mostly tied up in fixed assets. The net current assets of £64,761 is considered satisfactory to meet future liabilities. However, it should be borne in mind that £36,320 of this is grants received in advance of works and projects carried over to the next financial year.

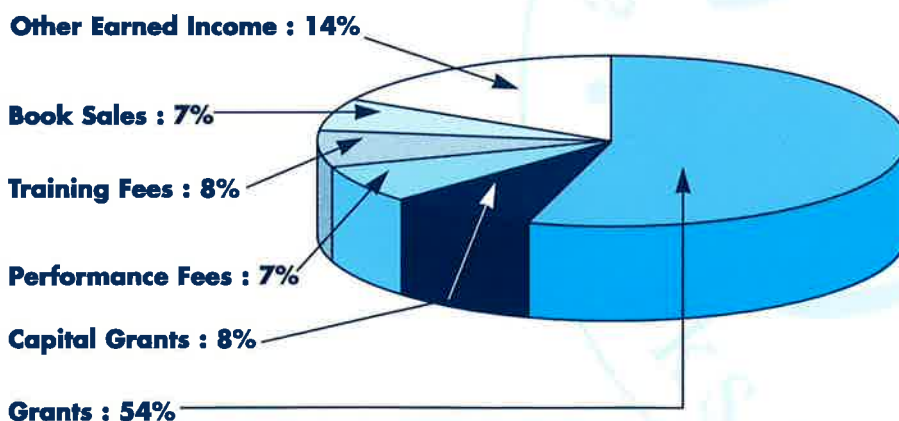
Whilst European Commission funding is most welcome, with working capital in short supply it does place cash flow burdens on the smaller charity in that work is often required to be completed in advance of receiving the funding. This being the case, it is essential that the Company retain surplus funds to see it through short term cash flow difficulties.

Due to limitations of space, the accounts are shown in abbreviated format and represent a summary of information extracted from the statutory accounts which have been delivered to the Registrar of Companies.

The Auditors, John Green & Co., have made an unqualified report on the accounts.

**A full version of the accounts will be sent on request.**

### AGE EXCHANGE INCOME BREAKDOWN 1994-95





# FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1994/95

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1995

### INCOME ARISING

Direct charity activity  
Grants receivable  
Donations  
Other income

#### Total Income arising

### EXPENDITURE

Direct charity expenditure  
Fundraising  
Administration  
Interest payable

#### Total Expenditure

#### Net surplus/(deficit)

### RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS

Balance brought forward 1 April 1994

Net additions to fixed assets

Resources retained for future use

Net movement in year

#### Balance carried forward 31 March 1995

#### Represented by:

Fixed assets  
Current assets  
Current liabilities  
Creditors due after one year

#### Total net assets 31 March 1995

### BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31/3/1995

Fixed assets  
Net Current assets  
Creditors due after one year  
Net Assets

#### Funds:

Restricted fund  
Unrestricted fund

#### Total funds

### GRANTS RECEIVABLE

Arts Council  
Barclays Age Resource Action  
Baring Foundation - Revenue  
Baring Foundation - Capital  
BT  
Department of Health - Revenue  
Department of Health - Capital  
European Commission  
Linbury Trust  
London Arts Board  
London Borough of Ealing  
London Borough of Greenwich  
London Borough of Lambeth  
London Borough of Lewisham  
London Boroughs Grants Unit - Revenue  
London Boroughs Grants Unit - Capital  
Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund  
New Horizons  
Other Grants

#### 1995

£

110,726  
228,399  
3,723  
20,192

#### 363,040

(264,748)  
(11,734)  
(1,704)  
(4,198)

#### (282,384)

#### 80,656

219,882  
31,850  
48,806

80,656

#### 300,538

298,277  
115,143  
(50,382)  
(62,500)

#### 300,538

298,277  
64,761  
(62,500)

#### 300,538

36,320  
264,218

#### 300,538

17,560  
2,000  
10,000  
15,000  
16,000  
15,000  
20,000  
48,704  
14,000  
150  
1,000  
29,630  
3,270  
11,201  
16,464  
4,920  
2,500  
1,000

#### 228,399

#### 1994

£

148,734  
116,231  
17,324  
24,127

#### 306,416

(374,217)  
(11,578)  
(1,392)  
(4,264)

#### (391,451)

#### (85,035)

304,917  
-  
(85,035)

(85,035)

#### 219,882

266,427  
58,469  
(30,014)  
(75,000)

#### 219,882

266,427  
28,455  
(75,000)

#### 219,882

6,599  
213,283

#### 219,882

-  
-  
-  
-  
-  
10,000  
-  
35,275  
-  
-  
2,000  
29,370  
3,270  
5,200  
16,464  
-  
1,500  
-  
13,152

#### 116,231

# WHO'S WHO AT AGE EXCHANGE?

## STAFF

**Pam Schweitzer**

- Artistic Director

**Penny Rossetter**

- Administrator (to Dec.1994)

**Frank Thackaberry**

- Administrator (from Dec.1994)

**Bernie Arigho**

- Reminiscence Co-ordinator

**Bridget Knapper**

- European Officer

**Gail Dawes** - Assistant Administrator  
(to June 1994)

**Matthew Couper** - Assistant  
Administrator (from July 1995)

**Maggie Jones** - Press Officer (p/t)  
(from January 1995)

**Jyl Cowley** - Centre Worker (p/t)

**Eileen Taylor** - Centre Worker (p/t)

**Kathy White** - Centre Worker (p/t)

**Margaret Taylor** - Centre Worker (p/t)

**Patricia Juarez** - Marketing  
(from July 1995)

## FREELANCE WORKERS

Lisa Wilson - Designer

Rib Davis - Writer

Paula Gardiner - Musical Director

Sophie Scarborough - Stage Manager

Alex Schweitzer - Architect and  
Photographer

## FREELANCE REMINISCENCE TRAINERS

Tricia Adams

Lorna Barter

Noelle Blackman

Vanda Carter

Sarah Clevely

Shirley McCaw

Lindsay Royan

Jo Stanley

Peter Watson

## VISITING TRAINERS

John Adams

Joanna Bornat

Alfredo Cinnella

Jeffrey Garland

Faith Gibson

Marie Mills

## REMINISCENCE PROJECT WORKERS

Bernie Arigho

Matthew Audley

Lorna Barter

Noelle Blackman

Vanda Carter

Fiona Clayton

Sarah Clevely

Tess Garrett

Pam Human

Liz Kent

Aileen La Tourette

Shirley McCaw

Pippa Sparkes

Jo Stanley

Eileen Taylor

Peter Watson

## FIFTY-PLUS TRAINEES

Astra Blaug

Paula Chitty

Jyl Cowley

Valerie Dunn

Joy Hall

Jane Langley-Pratt

Susan Lazenbury

Tony Martin

Millie Sayer

Alex Schweitzer

Barbara Seiersen

Veronica Simmonds

Doreen Wilder

Kathleen Yeates

## PROFESSIONAL THEATRE PROJECTS

*"A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS"*

Jeremy Browne

Judith French

Clare Summerskill

*"ROUTES"*

Ajay Chhabra

Roseline Dean

Seva Dhalival

Robina Mir

Sohail Dhin

Ashiq Hussein

*"WHEN THE LIGHTS GO ON  
AGAIN"*

Jules Davison

Neil Gore

Clare Summerskill

*"MANY HAPPY RETIREMENTS"*

Godfrey Jackman

Helen Keene

Pam Lyne

John Lyne

## COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT

*The following have served  
during the period covered by  
this report. Staff at Age  
Exchange wish to thank them  
for their continuing support  
and advice.*

**Graham Dodd**, Solicitor (Chair)

**Joy Drewett-Browne**  
(Friends of Age Exchange)

**Les Eytie**  
(L.B. Lewisham Councillor)

**Jim Gillman**  
(L.B. Greenwich Councillor)

**Bridget Keegan**  
(Age Concern Greater London)

**Lillian Murrell**  
(Friends of Age Exchange)

**Phillip Newton**  
(Independent Theatres Council)

**John O'Shea**  
(L.B. Lewisham Councillor)

**Del Pasterfield**  
(Ford Motor Company)

**Lloyd Trott** (RADA)

## AUDITOR

**John Green**, Certified Accountant



Clare Summerskill and Jules Davison in "When the Lights Go On Again"



# USEFUL AGE EXCHANGE STATISTICS

April 1994-July 1995

## REMINISCENCE CENTRE

Individual Visitors : 24,872

Visiting groups : 741 pensioners attended the Centre (91 Group Visits)

676 school children and college students

Total numbers on group visits: 1,417

## PROFESSIONAL THEATRE PERFORMANCES IN THE U.K.

"Routes" : 57 performances playing to 3,240 people all over the UK

"A Merry Little Christmas" : 29 performances playing to 1,653 people mainly in sheltered accommodation in London and the south east of England

"When The Lights Go On Again" : 23 performances playing to 1,027 people in London and Kent

"Many Happy Retirements" : 30 performances to pre-retirement groups across the UK

## PROFESSIONAL THEATRE PERFORMANCES IN EUROPE

"A Merry Little Christmas" : 6 performances in Belgium and Germany to approx. 800 people

"Routes" : 7 performances in Germany and Holland to approx. 650 people

## THE GOOD COMPANIONS

"I Remember When" : 12 performances, 3 in London, 1 in Stoke, 1 in Suffolk, 1 in Salzburg, 5 in Berlin, 1 in Mullheim

"Friends and Neighbours" : a new play about memories of the neighbourhoods where our older performers grew up. 2 performances at the Reminiscence Centre, but more planned for the future

## THE GOOD COMPANIONS & YOUTH THEATRE

"Grandmother's Footsteps" : 11 performances, 4 in London, 3 in Cologne, 1 in Brussels, 1 in Salzburg, 2 in Lille

## EUROPEAN REMINISCENCE SYMPOSIUM

93 delegates attending over 6 days of lectures, workshops and performances 175 people involved when volunteers, speakers and guests are included

## REMINISCENCE CENTRE EXHIBITIONS

"Divi Days" : 150 years of the Co-operative movement

"Back In Your Own Backyard" : Memories of gardens and gardening

"When The Lights Go On Again" : Memories of the end of World War II

"Meetings Between Generations" : a pan-European look at inter-generational work from Il Melo project in Gallarate, Italy, displayed in the Bakehouse

## PUBLICATIONS

"Grandmother's Footsteps" in which older people recall their grandparents

"When The Lights Go On Again"

Memories of the end of World War II

"How We Went To War"

Lewisham memories researched by Age Exchange for Lewisham Libraries publication

"Southwark Wartime Memories"

(in preparation) for Southwark Council

European Reminiscence Symposium Papers

## MAGAZINES

Reminiscence Magazine :

4 issues produced, including 2 "specials" on Inter-generational Reminiscence Work and Reminiscence in Dementia Care

Generations Magazine :

2 issues of this Brussels-based European magazine on inter-generational work translated into English and distributed by Age Exchange

## REMINISCENCE CENTRE TRAINING COURSES

Total number of day-places booked by trainees, May 1994 - July 1995 = 646

## EXTERNAL TRAINING COURSES (THE U.K.)

Total = 26 days - approx. 520 participants

## TALKS, WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS (REMINISCENCE CENTRE AND THE U.K.)

Total = 30 (including Counsel and Care, PSIGE, Age Concern, the British Society of Gerontology, the Royal College of Nursing, the Nursing Times and the Red Cross Society)

## REMINISCENCE PROJECTS

11 placements, 16 Fifty-Plus Project placements

Total 24 placements

## THE FIFTY-PLUS REMINISCENCE PROJECT

14 people over the age of 50 have successfully completed the course.

Training days = 10

Fifty-Plus Reminiscence Projects = 16

## CAPITAL PROJECTS

Reminiscence Centre Garden

Darkroom

Completed

Old Bakehouse adapted and refurbished by Age Exchange.

Opened May 1995

Restoration work to walls and ceiling of main office at Age Exchange

Purchase and set-up of new upgraded computer system for all workers

# EUROPEAN REMINISCENCE NETWORK PARTNERS

## ■ AUSTRIA

Heinrich Hoffer,  
Altern & Kultur, Vienna

## ■ BELGIUM

Marie-Louise Carette,  
Entr'Ages, Brussels

## ■ DENMARK

Brita Lovedahl,  
DaneAge,  
Copenhagen

## ■ FRANCE

Romola Sabourin,  
Points Communs,  
Paris

Daniel Juif,  
ORPAB,  
Brest

## ■ FINLAND

Viveca Hagmark,  
Folkhalsan,  
Helsinki

## ■ HOLLAND

Loise Meijer,  
Social Service Department,  
Province of South Holland

## ■ GERMANY

Ingrid Berzau & Dieter  
Scholz,  
Freies Werkstatt Theater,  
Köln

Angelika Trilling,  
Town Social  
Administration,  
Kassel

Birgit Jansen,  
Social Gerontology Dept  
Kassel University, Kassel

Maria Beimel,  
Inter-Generational Action  
Research Project,  
Ministry of Education,  
Hamburg

Franz Matzke,  
Hildesheim University

## ■ GREECE

Cleo Mavroudi,  
Family and Child Care  
Centre,  
Athens

## ■ NORWAY

Liv Hulteng,  
Nordic Conference on  
Reminiscence,  
Oslo

## ■ SWEDEN

Fern Scott,  
Social Gerontology Dept.,  
University of Uppsala,  
Uppsala

## ■ UNITED KINGDOM

Faith Gibson,  
Professor in Social Work,  
University of Ulster,  
Coleraine,  
N. Ireland

Lindsay Royan,  
Clinical Psychologist,  
Chase Farm Hospital,  
London

Paul Stigant,  
Humanities Department,  
University of Greenwich,  
London



Delegates from Denmark, Germany, Brazil and Ireland at the European Reminiscence Symposium

**Age Exchange Theatre Trust, The Reminiscence Centre,  
11 Blackheath Village, London SE3 9LA  
Tel. 0181 318 9105, Fax 0181 318 0060  
Registered Charity Number 326899  
Company Limited by Guarantee Number 1929724**