



# Oxfordshire Museum Service

Stimulating conversation inspired by museum  
collections and shared experiences

Talking

objects

*In the community*



Oxfordshire  
Museum  
Service



OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL

# Welcome to: hands on Oxfordshire's Heritage

## Who we are

We are a small team from Oxfordshire County Council's Museum Service, based at the Museums Resource Centre in Standlake.

## What we do

We run 'hands on' sessions that provide an opportunity for object led conversations which can stimulate memories.

Which enables people to learn more about and engage with each other, perhaps learn something new and above all enjoy themselves.

Our trained facilitators visit community groups across Oxfordshire with a carefully chosen selection of interesting objects, photos and documents on a variety of themes.



# Session Guidelines

- A member of your organisation must be present at all times. Their involvement is critical to a successful session to support members of the group and encourage participation.
- A semi circle format of chairs arranged around a central table works best, with chairs close enough together to allow objects to be easily passed around.
- Sessions usually last for 45 minutes to an hour, but we can tailor the session to your group's particular need.

## Charges

We currently charge £25 for groups of 15 people and under and £35 for groups of over 15 people.

This can be paid either by:  
Cash or Cheque (made payable to Oxfordshire County Council) on the day.

We can invoice for your group.

Visit our website and complete our online booking form.



[service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/  
groupsession](https://service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/groupsession)

*“Excellent session again. We will book you again!” – Burford Time out Lunch Club”*





# Talking Objects in the Community

## Soap and bubbles

Where would we be without our washing machines and tumble driers? In this session we remember when Monday was washday and all the hard work needed to get the weekly wash done, never mind the ironing!

## Fun and games

Do you remember your childhood toys and games? We had fun with spinning tops, conkers, skipping ropes and enjoyed playing out. Do you think we had just as much fun as children to day?

## Buying it by the ounce

How shops have changed! This box helps you to remember all the individual shops we used to visit like greengrocers, haberdashers and ironmongers and how we used to buy food 'by the ounce' and receive service with a smile.

## The daily grind

We all have memories of how we joined the world of work: our first pay-packet, workmates, our journey to work, maybe even our first boss! Join us in recalling the best and worst of 'the daily grind'.

## Home Front spirit

Whether you remember the War well or were just a child, certain memories and practices lived on, long after the VE Day celebrations were over. Maybe you recall the sense of community or the fact that nothing ever went to waste? Perhaps it's the songs which you can still sing or the lengths people went to, to look fashionable despite everything? Re-live the lighter legacies of the War years with this box.

## Land of nod

Apparently we spend a third of our lives asleep – so that's a lot of time tucked up in bed! Do you remember using a 'gazunder'? Did you share a bedroom (or bed) with your brothers and sisters? What helps you drop off to sleep? Come and share your memories.

## A trip to the seaside

Re-live a great British institution – a day at the seaside. Whether we stayed in guesthouses, or Butlins, or went on a day trip. We all have memories of seaside holidays.

## All dressed up

This popular box looks at the fashions of yesteryear, when the men wore shirts and ties and everyone wore a hat. A fascinating collection of objects and photographs that will soon get everyone talking.



# Talking Objects in the Community

## **Famous Oxfordshire**

A thousand years of Oxfordshire has produced a lot of famous folk. This box recalls some of the famous county names from past and present, from Morris to Maxwell and Bannister to Branson.

## **Making your own entertainment**

Listen to a crackly record played on a wind up gramophone, recall the radio stars of yesterday and reminisce about getting dressed up for the cinema or theatre. This box is all about what we did before television.

## **Going back to school**

School days – were they the best years of your life? Step back in time and remember the days of blazers and chalk, ink blots, maybe the cane or the nit nurse? Have things changed for the better?

## **The country village**

The village shop, the church, the pub and the blacksmith were just a few of the landmarks of village life. Compare village life when you were growing up to life there now.

## **Potions, lotions and cure alls**

How has healthcare changed in your lifetime? Do you remember the district nurse? What potions and pills have you tried to cure your ills? This box is sure to provoke some lively debate!

## **Food to the table**

Forget convenience foods and microwaves – we expect that you remember great meals which were cooked from scratch! Share your memories of kitchens and food from when you were younger. This box is full of fascinating objects and photographs.



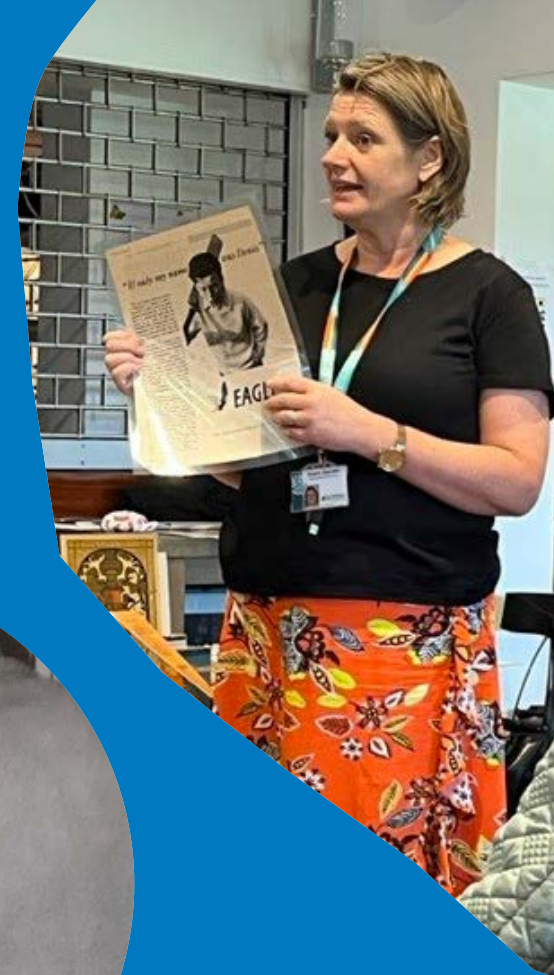
# Talking Objects in the Community

## *Landmarks of life*

This box is all about the memorable events in our lives from birth to retirement. What stands out in your memory as a particular time for celebration or as a defining moment?

## *Tea and toasting forks*

Do you remember your family gathering around the fireside on a cold evening? With the fire lit it was time to warm toes and toast bread, and of course, enjoy a nice cup of tea. But whose job was it to light the fire or bring in the coal? Come and share your top tips for making perfect afternoon tea and recall other family rituals.



*“Touching an object makes history more real & tangible”*

# Talking Objects in the Community

## ***Moving along***

With the roads so busy and crowded these days, this box celebrates the more leisurely ways of getting from A to B. We talk about cycles.

## ***Measure for measure***

Do you still think in old money? Are your scales still set to pounds and ounces? In this box there is an intriguing collection of implements that track the changes in the way we measure things.



## ***That's not my job!***

There's always a list of jobs to be done around the house (usually written by the women!) Which jobs were the male domain and which belonged to the women? Was it a fair division of labour? Have things changed much over time? This box is sure to encourage lively debate and perhaps remind us how much easier life is today.

## ***Raising the next generation***

From sleepless nights and smelly nappies through to first dates and first shaves, this box traces the highs and lows of raising a family.

## ***The mystery box***

This popular box is full of unusual and interesting objects - some you may recognise, but many that you won't. This session will get everyone guessing.

## ***Christmas past***

In this session we discuss the customs and traditions of the festive season - much more than just turkey and trimmings. We bet that you will have seen some changes.

## ***Made in Oxfordshire***

Oxfordshire has been the home of some memorable firms and products: from motor cars to marmalade. This is your chance to celebrate the things that have put Oxfordshire on the map.





# Talking Objects in the Community

## Highdays and holidays

What did you do on your holidays and days off? Did you laze on the beach or enjoy the outdoor life of camping and walking? We remember the anticipation, the packing up, the journey and the things we did when we got there.

## Sporting life

Whether you enjoyed watching sport or taking part, there is something here to remind you of the ways we tried to keep fit. From cricket to cycling, football to fishing – what was your game?



## The best things in life

The smell of freshly baked bread, the taste of old-fashioned sweets and the crackle of the Autumn bonfire. These are the things which don't cost a lot of money, they may even be free, but what they all have in common is that they bring a smile to our faces.

## The 1950s

This decade saw the dawn of rock 'n' roll, teddy boys and Elvis Presley, Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation, the conquest of Everest, and the end of rationing. Come and share your memories of food, fashion and famous events and people.

## The 1960s

The Swinging Sixties. What an eventful decade this turned out to be! Who could forget the Beatles and the mini-skirt, not to mention the mini-car? Man landed on the moon and the Pill first made its appearance. What memories do you have of this colourful era?

## The 1970s

We embraced Europe and Decimalisation in the 1970s and elected our first female Prime Minister. We endured power cuts during the 3-day week and tutted at hot-pants and platform heels. What else can you remember?



## Home sweet home

'Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.' What was yours like? A collection of items that remind us of outside privies, scrubbed front steps, draughty bedrooms and cosy firesides.

## Sunday best

How Sundays have changed! How did you spend Sundays when the shops were shut, all was quiet and Sunday was a day of rest? Relive the memories of Sunday school, a proper roast and Sunday Night at the London Palladium.





# Talking Objects in the Community

## **The good old days**

Chips in newspaper, Bobbies on the beat, a guilt free smoke and wind up gramophones which played 'proper songs' This session looks back to a world where the technology was simpler and the pace of life slower.

## **A box for all seasons**

Do the changing seasons still mark our lives as much as they did in the past? Spring cleaning, strawberries in June, bottling and pickling and snow at Christmas. How much has changed and how much remains?



## **Hobbies and handicrafts**

It's time to get crafty. This box is a celebration of creativity and looks back to a time when home amusements were possibly cheap, but always cheerful! From rag rugs and crocheted stockings to homemade toys and DIY projects, there's something here for everyone.

## **A night out at the social**

Everyone likes a night out, whether it's down the pub, the social club or maybe the bingo or local dance hall. Enjoy recalling times spent with your friends the places you went, the drinks you drank, the music you listened to and the games you played. (Games and music supplied!)

## **All creatures great and small**

An animal centred box which is bound to have something for everyone. From farm animals to favourite pets, creepy crawlies to more unusual animals, we have a fascinating selection of objects and photographs but we'd love it if you brought in yours too!



# Talking Objects in the Community

## What did we do before...

Looking at how changing technology has affected everyday life, for better or worse. Do you remember your first telephone, camera or automatic washing machine? Have you kept up with new technology or is it moving too fast?

## To make a booking please:

Visit our website and complete our online booking form.



[service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/  
groupsession](https://service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/groupsession)

