



At Topsham Museum, we treasure memories of people and events. These have come to us because people have written them down or recorded them in some way.



Why not write your own history?

You have a rich store of memories of family, friends, travels and day-to-day living. Now or later, others including children and grandchildren will want to know about your life. There may be stories you haven't told or no one has thought to ask about. There will be happy parts and sad parts to your history, but your family will treasure them all.

You could speak to brothers and sisters or friends and have a happy time remembering events from the past. You might like to add photographs, newspaper cuttings, invitation cards, tickets or other memorabilia. You could record on a phone or send the story in emails, little by little.

And when you finish, keep your history safe for your family . . . or share it with them now.

If it's difficult to write your history down yourself, perhaps you could tell the stories and someone could write it for you.

1 Setting the scene

Set the background by writing down:

Who your parents were (names and dates of birth, marriage and death).

Where they grew up and lived before they were married.

Who your grandparents were.

You may also know how your parents met, or stories about them and other relatives.

2 At the beginning

Give some information about yourself:

Your full name including your surname at birth, and any changed or married names.

The date and place you were born.

Brothers or sisters (older or younger).

Where you and your parents lived.

3 First memories

Write about when you were very young:

Your home and your parents.

Your brothers and sisters.

The toys you played with, games and special events.

Other people who were important to you.

4 A young child at school

Where was your primary school? Write about:

The teachers and the lessons.

School friends and classmates.

The school building, the playground and the games you played.

School dinners . . . or packed lunch . . . or going home for lunch.

Sports days and other special occasions.

5 Weekends and holidays

Write about life outside school:

After-school classes or activities.

Games and playmates.

Shopping, clothes and food.

Your parents and their work.

Outings to the seaside or to visit relatives.

Did world events have any meaning for you or change your life in any way?

6 Later school education

Write about your schooldays after you were eleven:

The name of your school and how you felt about it (was it scary or enjoyable?)

School uniform, school building, school dinners.

Getting to school and home again.

Your favourite - and least favourite - subjects.

Your friends and teachers.

Taking tests and exams.

After school, weekends and school holidays.



7 A young adult

Write about what happened after you left school:

How old were you then?

Training, apprenticeship or college.

The first job(s) you did? Did you enjoy working?

8 Living, loving and friendships

Write about life outside work. You might include:

Where you lived - flat or house, rented or bought?

Furnishing, cleaning, cooking, decorating, DIY, gardening.

Hobbies and interests, holidays, special events.

Boy/girlfriends, other friends and family.



9 Family times

Now we come to your twenties, thirties and forties. Perhaps you can write about:

Moving home.

Changing jobs.

Relationships, if you got married remember to include the date of your wedding.

If you had children how they changed your life.

Your bike, motorcycle or car ownership.

Memories of trips and holidays.

How national events affected your life.

10 Where did the years go?

Did you celebrate your half century? You may have memories good and bad about these times. Perhaps a parent died, perhaps the family was not united, perhaps jobs were difficult.

What jobs did you do?

If you have children, what were they doing?

Write about friends and relatives from this time.

Explain how holidays, hobbies and activities fitted in.



11 Retired from work

Bring the story up to date. Perhaps you moved . . . perhaps friends and family changed . . . perhaps grandchildren changed your life . . .

Where do you live now?

What activities do you enjoy?

Write about the special possessions you cherish - and why.

12 Topsham connections and life in the town

Write your memories of the town, the people, the shops and the activities.

Add anything else you would like your family to know, and . . .

Thank you!

This wonderful account will be treasured by those who read it.