

Shopping and a trip down memory lane

✘ The memories range from the mundane to the magical, sometimes a mix of both: Easter Road lit by gaslight, taking laundry by push cart to the washhouse, playing drums in a band at the Palais de Dance, penny matinees at the Picturedrome.

These vivid recollections and many more have been collected over the years by Edinburgh charity the Living Memory Association (LMA), and are currently part of an exhibition at Ocean Terminal shopping centre.

Alongside quotes from residents and photographs, objects galore are casually dotted around; a Bush radio, colourful Ladybird hardbacks and Christmas annuals, medicine bottles, ration books and cigarette tins.

It's certainly an intriguing draw, not least because it's situated in a unit slap bang in the middle of the glitzy shopping centre, alongside High Street retailers, coffee houses and a multiplex cinema.

LMA, founded three decades ago, works across Edinburgh and the Lothians. It runs reminiscence groups and training sessions, produces books and DVDs, provides themed 'handling boxes' (containing artefacts for use by community and school groups), and runs a huge online archive of photos.

The charity was offered the unit for free in May and since then thousands have called in to view the exhibition, some of whom have heard about it through word of mouth, and others who stumble upon it by chance.

"It's been successful from day one. People get it right away," LMA's Heather Robertson says cheerily. "It is quite a unique

venture and we thought people might not understand it, but very few ask what is for sale!

“We get many people in who have fond memories of the local area, but also curious tourists who are visiting the Royal Yacht Britannia. Our comments book shows people really love it.”

The lease was recently extended to the end of 2014 and LMA plan to host a series of exhibitions over the coming months. The next, in August, is sport-focussed. Taking centre stage will be the story of the Edinburgh Dynamos, an all-woman football team who enjoyed success in the 1940 and 50s.

The new venture means staff and volunteers now divide their time between their main base at Quayside Street (which houses an office and reminiscence/training room), and Ocean Terminal. The latter, with automatically high footfall, has boosted the charity's profile no end.

Robertson adds: “I think it's very important that the private sector works with the public sector; it is a symbiotic relationship and there are huge benefits. We are bringing in customers who are then going round the shops and buying a coffee, and we as a charity get all the benefits of being in a public space.

“At Ocean Terminal we are where the people are, we are connecting with the local community and beyond, and that is the purpose of our charity. It's a tremendous opportunity.”

- LMA is keen to hear from any offspring of members of the Edinburgh Dynamos. Please phone 0131 553 4580 or email comhist@googlemail.com

Submitted by [Rosalind Gibb](#)

