

Time-Travelling in Brize Norton

How can you engage a group of computer-savvy 10 and 11 year olds with the history of their village and get them to write poetry and drama about long ago customs like harvest and milk delivery by horse and cart?

As it turned out, it was easier than you might think! Take a collection of model carts, old photographs and museum artefacts and a visit to a medieval barn and hey presto children from Brize Norton Primary school were creating stories that took them time-travelling via an old lemonade bottle into Victorian times and writing poems about mouth watering sweets sold in Miss Whorley's shop.

Mia spoke for many of the children, "I loved our Brize Norton topic. It was very interesting learning about where I live. I enjoyed all of it but particularly writing our imagined shops. I also like making our peg dolls, they were awesome! I didn't think I would like learning about the carts but that proves that everyone is wrong sometimes. The carts were more interesting than I thought; there was loads to learn about. I loved every second of it and I have learnt a lot about the village that I will always remember.



The inter-generational project between the children, older residents of Brize Norton and parents, Lizzy McBain from Under Construction Theatre and the Museums Service delved into the past inspired by a collection of model carts which depict people and businesses from the village during 1920s and 1930s. These had been lovingly made by Eric Faulkner in the late 1970s and donated to the Oxfordshire Museums Service in 2012 by his stepson Peter Faulkner. The carts were the stars of the show at a successful Village Festival on August Bank Holiday Monday which attracted people of all ages, and a trip to Swalcliffe Barn to see life-sized carts and waggons was a big hit with the

children - the sheer size of the carts was a revelation to children, including one who "liked the waggons because of the big wheels that were bigger than me."

The project took place over six consecutive Thursdays and culminated in an assembly for the school and parents. The value of the project was summed up by Finlay who, "enjoyed all of it, but my favourite bit was all the drama which I thought was very amusing! It was also really fun to do as well. It was the best 5 weeks of school I have ever had! The assembly was very good! Very well thought out. I know that all the parents loved it, especially my Mum! "

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Gill Munday
Learning & Access Manager
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