

When I was 18....

Project 18....

60s 30s 50s 40s 18

Project 18

I was in my father's shoe and leather business. It was called leather and grindery (the word used for leather in shoe repair).  
Mr Whelan, 18 in 1950

I joined the Navy at 16 ½, the discipline, corporal punishment was the order of the day. I was made to run around the deck in heavy boots with no socks on, which made my feet bleed.  
Paul Henry Gowman, 18 in 1962

I went to the local grammar school, the City of Norwich Grammar School, as it was then.  
Bernard Brock, 18 in 1950

Our project has been about being 18 now and what it was like to be 18 in the past. We have looked at changes in people's homes, work and entertainment as reflected in their oral history testimony and material culture. We have also explored the challenges young people face today and the challenges they have faced in the last 60 years.

There have been many different activities in this project. We have:

- researched relevant objects from the museum collections
- interviewed people of different ages, including local celebrities
- held informal reminiscence/tea parties at Norwich Castle and in residential homes
- taken part in training with the BBC and Signals Media
- enjoyed team building activities including an animation workshop and an outdoor adventure day
- written synopses of the 39 interviews we conducted
- prepared this publication, an e-booklet and a film about the project

In this booklet we have gathered together some quotes from the older people we interviewed with illustrations of objects from the museum's collections. We have also included some of our reflections on the project.

The project has been a collaboration between Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service and MAP.

MAP is a youth charity providing free and independent advice, counselling, youth work and education for young people.

(I) had very little ambitions apart from getting married and having children. Because that's was what it seemed to be all about in those days, that's really why no one seemed to mind when I left school at 15.  
Vera McLean, 18 in 1962

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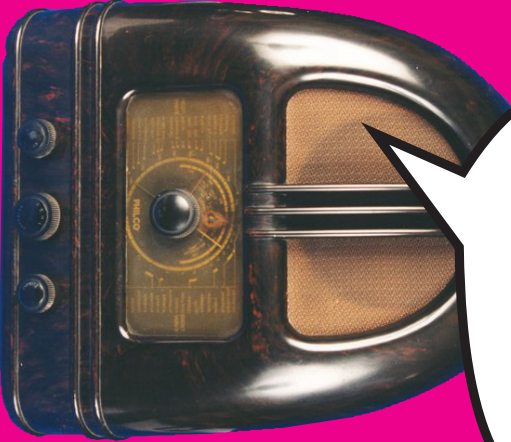
People were predicting that drums and guitar music were finished.

Paul Greener, 18 in 1978



We were playing a game called: You Duck. If you were hit on the knees you were out. I had the stupidity to header the ball and got concussed, so I think I was in a world of my own, some say I've never recovered.....

Keith Skipper, 18 in 1962



The radio seemed to be on all the time, I suppose like television is now.

Josie Strong, 18 in 1954



In the evenings when I was 18 I was out every night going to local discotheque, youth club, café, dances, cinema and cafes.

My ambition when I was 18 was to travel and see the world, no career ambitions though.

Marilyn Taylor, 18 in 1966

www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk

www.map.uk.net



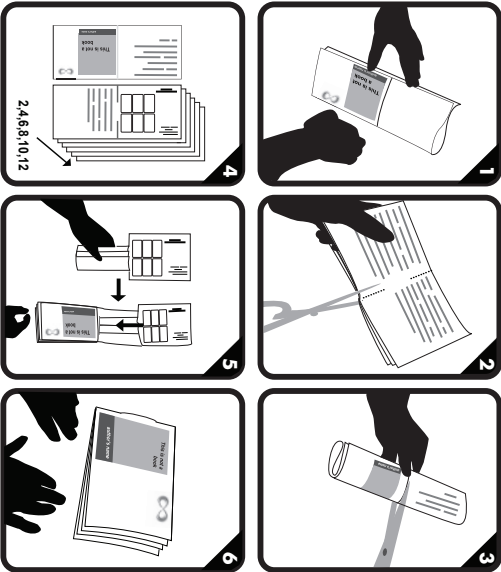
Project 18

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I think I enjoyed the things I did, cycling and swimming and mathematics and going to church....I enjoyed them all. I can't do lots of them now.

Philip Ball, 18 in 1935



In harbour we would play cards, a lot of cards, and tell tall tales.

Paul Gowman, 18 in 1962



"In 1952 we had the first television in the street with a 9 inch screen... It was our pride and joy and on for 3 hours per evening. We had a household for the Coronation."

Margaret Jones, 18 in 1961



I was interested in photography, mountain cycling and gardening.

Mr Whelan, 18 in 1950

THE END....

It was really surprising that people of the same age had completely different experiences, especially of freedom.

I definitely noticed parallels between the older generation and us.

I found it really interesting that lots of the women thought things had changed for the better, while men thought things were worse because there are no jobs.

I'm definitely more familiar with the museums now.

I didn't realise there were so many objects.

planning it made me feel like I had an important role.

It has helped me with my confidence and it made me feel included and because I was involved in the

The animation workshop was great fun. I was surprised how hard animation was.

## Quotes from the young people.....

## Young people who have had some involvement in the project:

Amy Jones  
Andrew Jarvis  
Beccy Lawrence  
Bella Booty  
Bex Toft  
Brodie Harrison-Merritt  
Charlie Avison  
Charlie Leeds  
Chris Betts  
David Williamson  
Emma Turner  
Gavin Richardson  
Jack Williams  
Jacob Coran Sebastian  
Katherine Andrews  
Kathryn Waldron  
Kirsty  
Lexie Chorlton  
Lucy Wallis

Misha Julian  
Nancy Rolph  
Pip Sessions  
Poppy Wilkins  
Rachel Willis  
Ricky Wenn  
Ross Buxton  
Rowena Alston  
Ruby Phillips  
Ruth Farnan  
Sarah Vickers  
Sarah Wiley  
Shauna Gordon  
Suzanne Lam

Some people have been along to a session or two, others have been able to give the project their full support over the 18 months. Without all these young people Project 18 could never have happened.



People who have had some involvement in the project....



Quotes from the young people.....

I've found it interesting. It's fun to sit and ask people questions. The others showed us how to record stuff. They were good.

The best thing has been meeting new people. I've learned more than I expected. It's been fun. It's been quite interesting hearing what some of the people had to say. I was surprised how routine people's lives were, one guy I was talking to, he just went school, work, forces, work. He didn't seem to have anything else in his life.

Old people and young people aren't so different, you see old people nagging young people, yet when they were our age they were doing the same thing. The similarities are outstanding. It wasn't until I came on the project that I noticed the similarities.

I've found the further you go back in time the more different eighteen year olds lives were. Matthew made animation seem simple to do with step by step procedure, making it easy, it allowed me to bring out a never seen creative side. I realise that more steps are needed for a smooth animation, the results were good though.

It was fantastic to have a go at animating, which I have never done before. There weren't many of us but it was great to have 1-1 tuition. I really enjoyed it and wished I could have stayed longer. I was surprised how I had to think about the subtle details of each still.

(Whilst in Switzerland) Me and my mate went and bought all the fags we could afford and attempted to sell them to the rest of the boys when they ran out of money.

Keith Skipper, 18 in 1962



I was a fencer, and only gave up a few years ago.

George Middleton, 18 in 1963



We had to walk 5 miles at 5am to queue up for tickets (for the Beatles).

Trudy Johnson, 18 in 1969



I went to the pictures and to the theatre once or twice a week because it was reasonable.

Shirley, 18 in 1955





Young people feel that they haven't got anything of their own anymore...they want to shock people, whereas then all you had to do was to dye your hair.

Paul Greener, 18 in 1978

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IN FAIRNESS TO OUR CUSTOMERS WE GIVE WARNING THAT THE PROCESS OF HAIR DYEING ENTAILS A RISK OF CONTRACTING DERMATITIS & SUBSEQUENT INJURY OR DISABILITY. NOTICE IS GIVEN THAT THE STAFF ARE FORBIDDEN TO CARRY OUT ANY PROCESS UNTIL A FORM HAS BEEN SIGNED ACKNOWLEDGING ACCEPTANCE OF SOLE RISK BY THE CUSTOMER

We all had hair pieces when we were eighteen, everyone had polystyrene heads in our bedrooms to pin them on when we weren't wearing them and you used to take them to the hairdressers to have them done when you had your hair done...in those days you went every week.

Project Participant, 18 in 1960



My parents were quite strict particularly with me. I had to leave Art College because they disapproved. My father didn't like make-up, didn't like me dressing up in short skirts (they suddenly came in), I used to put make-up on in the garage and then he found out. We didn't have the freedom that everybody does today.

Neelia Clabburn, 18 in 1960



We all had hair pieces when we were eighteen, everyone had polystyrene heads in our bedrooms to pin them on when we weren't wearing them and you used to take them to the hairdressers to have them done when you had your hair done...in those days you went every week.

Project Participant, 18 in 1960



Here's what comedian Arthur Smith told Project 18 members....

I think it was easier to be 18 when I was than it is now. I don't know if it's got worse in some ways it's got better of course there are many more distractions available, you know it's much easier to be in touch with people all over the place, all round the world, but on the other hand there also fears about global warming which there weren't then, no-one knew about that then.

Well I miss my Dad and I miss my parents. I miss....Its fantastic being 18 in lots of ways. It's the most, you know the whole worlds out there waiting for you.

In a way....there's no way I'm ever going to be prime minister now you know whereas maybe then I could have been. Although to be honest I have no desire to be prime minister and never did but....well maybe I did then....I don't know. I didn't know what I wanted to do....other than chase girls.

'What about teenagers – they hadn't been invented. You were a child until you were 18 then you were grown up, just like that and the whole of the teenage years were gone – they did not exist... Didn't have teenage clothes, didn't have teenage pursuits, didn't have teenagers... a new world today, the world of the teenager.'

'Sex was the great big complete thing....you didn't get married unless you were a virgin.....so much a man's world...men weren't supposed to be virgins when they married, it wasn't fair'.

Barbara Pollard, 18 in 1934

Life has changed but I don't think they will know for better or for worse for another 20 years'

Phillip Ball, 18 in 1935

'You just cannot imagine being allowed to behave the way that young people behave today because we were very much ruled by our parents.'

Brenda Macleod, 18 c1944

'During the war, despite rationing, we were better fed than people are today.'

People don't know how to be parents'.

Rita Stevens, 18 in 1935

'You should never be better off out of work than in work'.

Phyllis Hill, 18 in 1954



'Family life was much better, you sat around and had a meal together and you don't do that now'.  
Roy Wheeler, 18 in 1961


'Too much freedom and not enough discipline ....political correctness and human rights is not always a good thing'  
'I feel young inside but don't like looking in the mirror'.  
Margaret Wheeler, 18 in 1961

'National Service was fun'.  
Tim Hattersley, 18 in 1951


'I'm afraid we are going to turn into people who can't cope without machines and that is a possible disaster.'  
Jennifer Hattersley, 18 in 1950s

'Everything on a plate except what's important like young people having somewhere to live and having jobs and getting into university in a way they can afford. Our life was much more secure. Worse now and will get worse'.  
Mike Woodrow, 18 in 1965

'As matron used to say 'there's nothing for a nice girl to do late at night'.  
Frances Channell, 18 in 1939



Straw hats seemed to be up but we put them down because we thought it was more fashionable.  
Rita Stevens, 18 in 1935



I was 18, and at that time we were called up at 18. I spent about a year in Egypt. At that time you could go, if you wanted leave, to either Cyprus, which was like a big holiday camp for the forces, or you could go to Cairo.  
Harry Basford, 18 in 1949



I remember I went with a friend to Luxembourg.  
Marie Netherton, 18 in 1958



Occasionally I went away with my mother to sea-side places, bed and breakfasts for a few days and that kind of thing.  
Sue Wheeler, 18 in 1965

'I wanted to stay on but in my time it was mostly the posh and rich that went on so I went to work instead. In 1955 I earned £4 9s, a week. At 18 I used to give my mother £1 per week'.  
Shirley, 18 in 1955

'I think life has changed for the better, though things may change back again with university fees.'  
Marie Netherton, 18 in 1958

'I believe that the 60s were invented afterwards – most people were still getting over the war.'  
Life is infinitely better for young people'  
Paul Henry Gowman, 18 in 1962

'I miss the fact that people knew each other and talked to each other....Life is a lot of chapters of luck or misfortune'.  
Keith Skipper, 18 in 1962

'Young people are better off financially, but we were more contented.'  
Mr. Whelan, 18 in 1950

'When I was 18, this was a time of change; this was the beginning of teenagers.'  
Project participant, 18 in 1953

'I miss the simplicity – everything is too fast; too complicated.'  
Vince Read, 18 in 1964



# Conclusions....

'Life has changed for the worse. This generation got over the shortages and tried to create a socially just society, all this failed.  
John Martin, 18 in 1954

'I think there are a lot more opportunities now, especially for girls.'  
'I don't like the celebrity culture and consumerism at Christmas'  
Vera McLean, 18 in 1961

'I did a lot of marching and protesting when I was 18 and every step was fighting my parents'  
Katrina Siliprandi, 18 in 1968

'You didn't know the future, you were a number, Today, everyone has everything they want before they even start.'  
Ivor Wilson, 18 in 1944

'Everybody knew that you got a job, if you didn't get a job, you signed on. Now the options are too many, some of which include not doing anything.'  
George Middleton, 18 in 1963

We used to go to Yarmouth every year, and we used to pay £6 per week.'  
'We saw all the live shows and the circus and had great fun.'  
Vince Read,18 in 1964, 18 in 1960

Holidays were not a big event - I didn't go abroad until the 1980s... The only kind of holidays we had were the odd one perhaps at the seaside in boarding houses and the odd caravan holiday.  
Sally Marais, 18 in 1961

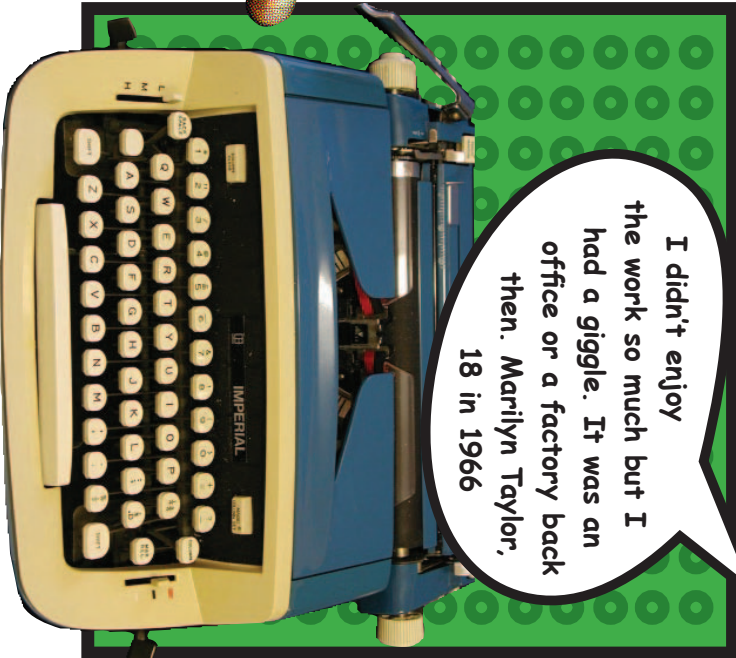
I would go up to work in the morning and one morning the studio I was working at I couldn't get into because bombs had been dropped.  
They were waiting to go off (Saville Row).  
We all had to go to the local pub.  
Barbara Pollard, 18 in 1934

In 1968 I saw a member of CND. I had a Saturday job but in my lunch hour joined others selling Peace News in the High Street.  
Katrina Siliprandi, 18 in 1968

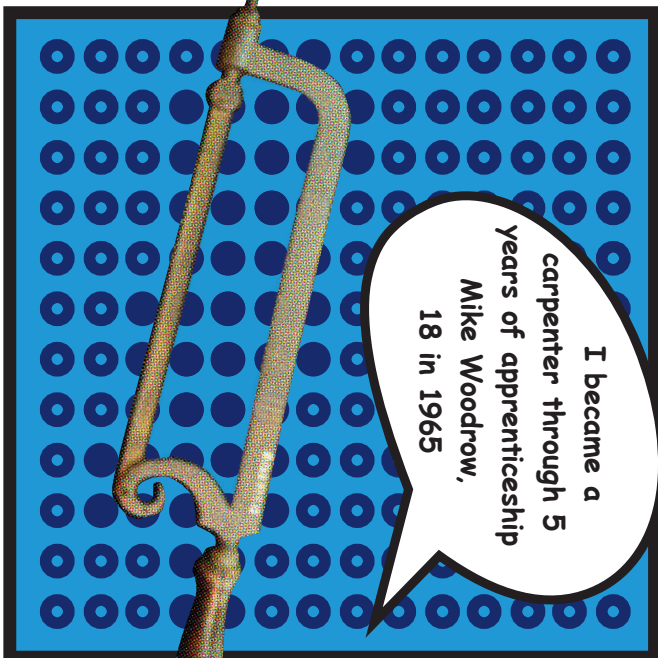
I had a cat, a very proud cat with one eye called Nelson, and next door had about 10 cats and he used to fight them all off.  
Tim Hattersley, 18 in 1951

We were there during the Blitz of the Second World War... we used to sleep in the air-raid shelter during the Norwich Blitz.  
Bernard Brock, 18 in 1950





I didn't enjoy the work so much but I had a giggle. It was an office or a factory back then. Marilyn Taylor, 18 in 1966



I became a carpenter through 5 years of apprenticeship Mike Woodrow, 18 in 1965


I was in the Land Army at 18. I didn't realise what a cow did when it lifted its tail so I got my coat covered in dung. We got engaged at 18 and then he gave me up when he joined the air force. I was last on the farm one Saturday, when he (John) arrived on a motorbike, wanting to give me a lift home for the weekend. I wasn't going home as I had another boyfriend. 6 weeks later we were married by special licence! Queenie Clitheroe, 18 in 1943



I had the best job in the Air Force—a despatch rider for 4 years. As long as you did your job, everyone was happy. John Clitheroe, 18 in 1942



On one occasion, we heard... there was an air raid, and mother heard that one of the streets a mile away from us was hit. Harry Basford, 18 in 1949



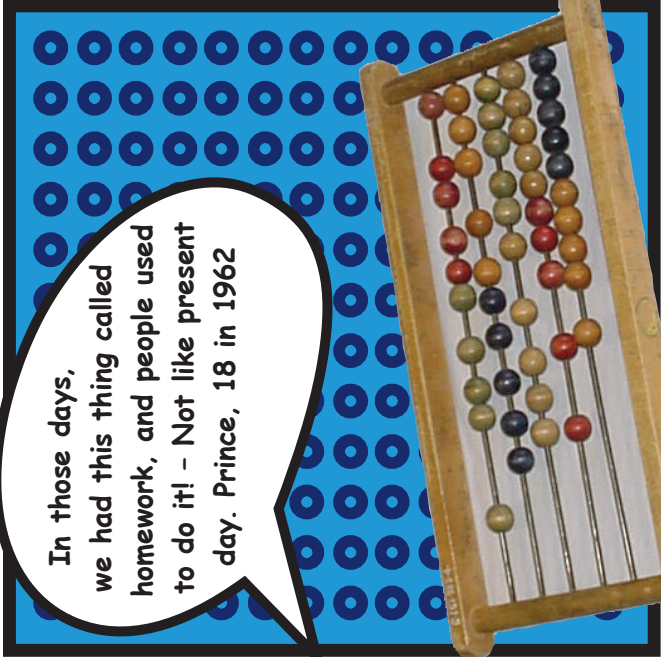
My mum was a very good cook and I always liked her puddings. Bernard Brock, 18 in 1950



School food was not very good, especially the puddings, we had lots of sloppy puddings and lumpy custard! Jennifer Hattersley, 18 in the early fifties.







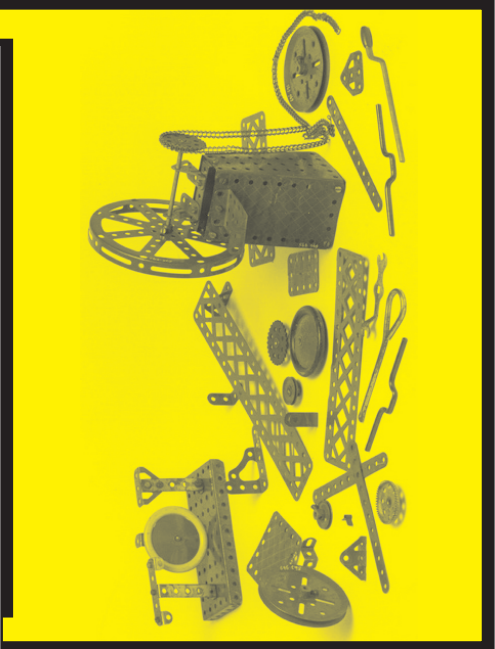
In those days, we had this thing called homework, and people used to do it! – Not like present day. Prince, 18 in 1962



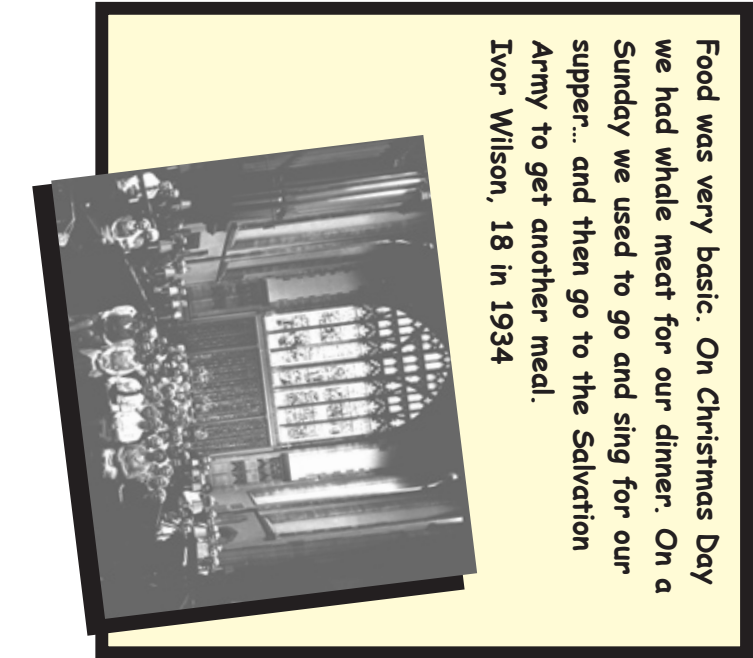
Friday was punishment day... All the boys would get caned or slipped depending on the degree of naughtiness. Megan Killington, 18 in 1974



I worked in Norwich for a photographer on Elm Hill... I was meeting people all day and it wasn't a difficult job. Neelia Clabburn, 18 in 1960



I left school at 15 and did an engineering apprenticeship. There were loads and loads of jobs available in all sorts of industries. Project participant, 18 in 1962



Food was very basic. On Christmas Day we had whale meat for our dinner. On a Sunday we used to go and sing for our supper... and then go to the Salvation Army to get another meal. Ivor Wilson, 18 in 1934



It was only about one day a week when I wasn't involved in something to do with the Church. Project participant, 18 in 1962



They asked me if I wanted to go to university and I said no....They gave me a load of pamphlets and I picked out one that was hospital laboratory work. As luck would have it there was a vacancy at the local hospital and I got a job straight away which I guess wouldn't happen today. Sue Wheeler, 18 in 1965



I wanted to go in the Post Office but I couldn't get a job there. I went to the Mill aged 13. This was in the war and the family were all weaving in the black out. We used to weave cloth in khaki and air force blue. Hours were 7am till 6pm. Rita Boothman, 18 in the 1940s