Devon social entrepreneur, Brian Norris, receives 10 Downing Street National Points of Light Award for a digital project that can help lonely older adults across the UK.

Monday 15 July, 2024

Recently Devon based Brian Norris was recognised by the national charitable, all-party Points of Light organization for creating Living Memories Online, an innovative archive reminiscence streaming platform offering almost 3000 20th-century archive programmes. **This service is helping to reduce isolation and improve the well-being of older adults, particularly those living with dementia, across the UK.**

Brian is one of the recent recipients of the Points of Light Award, which recognises outstanding individuals who are making a real change in our communities and inspiring others. Each day, the Points of Light organisation, based in 10, Downing Street, selects an inspirational volunteer to receive the award to celebrate their achievements.

In a personal letter the Prime Minister said: "I was inspired to learn about how you have used your passion for archive films to create the Living Memories Online streaming service. **Your innovative platform is bringing the therapeutic benefits of reminiscence to older people across the UK, including those living with dementia. The Tea & Memories community groups and home visits you have pioneered are helping to tackle the isolation felt by so many older people.**

"So I am delighted to recognise your wonderful service by naming you as the UK's 2068th Point of Light. Thank you for all that you do."

Brian reacted to the Prime Minister's announcement: "I was surprised and honoured to receive this Award. When we first started sharing archive films in care homes and Memory Cafes, we saw the positive impact they had, especially for people with dementia, so we realised this could help so many others. With the support of an amazing small team at Living Memories CIC we've been able to develop Living Memories into a service benefiting older people across the UK. This award is really for all of the team as well, including my fellow director, Paul Boult. I hope it inspires more people to volunteer to share memories with the older generation."

The daily Points of Light award recognises outstanding individual volunteers, people whose service makes a real difference in their communities and whose story can inspire others to create innovative solutions to social challenges in their communities and beyond.

Brian has been a community volunteer for over 60 years, but his reminiscence journey began ten years ago when and his wife, Leonore started showing archive films in Cornish and Devon care homes and saw the powerful way they stimulated memories and encouraged communication, especially for residents with dementia. He realised there was a need to make reminiscence using archive film more accessible.

This led him to establish **Living Memories C.I.C., a non-profit social enterprise** dedicated to creating reminiscence resources and services using archive newsreels and documentaries from the early-mid 20th century. The jewel in their crown is Living Memories Online, an online streaming platform, like Netflix for nostalgia, which gives subscribers access to a vast library of over 2,800 archive films.

Designed to be dementia-friendly and easy to use on multiple devices, Living Memories Online is transforming the way image based reminiscence resources are delivered. Older people and their families or carers can now access an entire archive of memory-triggering films at the touch of a button, whether at home, in care homes, community settings, or hospitals. The platform has seen a surge in popularity interest since the pandemic when many older people became more isolated than ever.

Brian and his team have also developed an innovative range of other services that have been recognised with several awards:

- DVDs with printed Reminiscence Guides, available online, that can be used one-to-one or with groups to stimulate conversations and sharing of memories
- Tea & Memories Groups where older people meet regularly in a community setting for a cup of tea, a vintage film screening, and a chat about memories
- Piloting Tea & Memories @ Home with trained volunteer “Memory Buddies” using a digital tablet

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and sharing Living Memories Online with older people in their own homes, often working in association with NHS Social Prescribers.

Living Memories is a prime example of the difference one person with a good idea can make. From a community project in Devon, it has grown to a non-profit service benefiting older people and people with dementia across the UK. Brian and his growing team of volunteers are not only preserving history through archive films, but also preserving the personal histories of older generations by unlocking forgotten memories and encouraging their stories to be heard.

Adopting the US National Award programme created by President George W Bush in 1990, the UK daily Points of Light Award was first launched in April 2014 by Prime Minister David Cameron to recognise outstanding individuals making a difference where they live. Brian is the 2068th person to be recognised.

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Activites of Living Memories CIC

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