

Andrew

AGE OF CREATIVITY FESTIVAL 2023

CELEBRATING
OUR STORIES



Andrew Pritchard worked as a professional carpet cleaner for most of his life and composed poems in his head while working. After the sad passing of his wife, he put more time into his poetry and now performs regularly in Oxford.

What does creativity and culture mean to you?

The expression of words! I find it very therapeutic to use the spoken word and did a compilation of poems after my wife died. I live by myself and it was a way to keep my mind occupied. And then I found I was good at it!

How does taking part in creativity and culture impact your life?

When I lost my wife, I did not have anybody and no close family. It's important to mix and mingle - there is nothing worse than coming home to an empty house. Composing and performing poetry lets me reach out to lots of people with my positive vision. I perform to people with dementia, community groups, and open mic nights in local pubs. I don't read my poetry as I have memorised all my poems to make them flow better. I like it when people smile and clap, I get a lot of pleasure out of expressing myself. It makes me happy!

What is your most creative achievement?

It was a big milestone to write my first poem. I was inspired by a greyhound derby. It was a packed stadium and I wanted to convey what that was like to people that couldn't attend. I like performing live at open mic as I can put feeling behind my words when I stand up there and do it.

What would you recommend to someone that had not done anything creative or cultural for a while?

Join Tech Buddies [with Age UK Oxfordshire] - you need to move on with the future. I had no computers at school and I didn't use them for my carpet business. I've got a laptop now and Tech Buddies have helped me get on Zoom and upload my poetry videos to YouTube.

Andrew is one of Age UK Oxfordshire's Age Friendly Creative Ambassadors and also a member of AUKO's Age Friendly Creative Network (OAFCN). Some of his creations have been featured in the OAFCN e-news.



Performing at the Corn Exchange

You can see Andrew perform some of his poems here:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcixkHjMt3I3dMuJYJqGy9Q>