

Virtual Reality Football Reminiscence Launch

Football is one of the national sports of Scotland and the most popular sport in the country. Since 2009, Alzheimer Scotland has been proud to partner with the Scottish Football Museum to deliver the Football Memories Scotland project – supporting reminiscence groups across Scotland. Since its inception the project has grown to over 500 groups across the whole country.



Patricia with VR headset

SDWG member Patricia Clark, a football fan since the age of 7, is a regular attender at Alzheimer Scotland's Glasgow Football Memories Group. Through that group she was involved in a project with students from Abertay University to create a virtual reality (VR) football reminiscence experience, to transport football fans back to the sights and sounds of a match day in the 1960s.

Patricia was involved in discussions around themes for the experience which takes people on a three part journey – from travelling to the match on a bus, going through the turnstiles into the stadium, and watching the match from Hampden's terraces.



Patricia with Henry Simmons →

The Virtual Reality Football Reminiscence experience was launched at the Scottish Football Museum at Hampden Park on Wednesday 5th June, and Patricia was delighted to be able to join project partners, including Alzheimer Scotland Chief Executive Henry Simmons, and footballing legend and Alzheimer Scotland Ambassador Mark Hatley, in cutting the ribbon to officially open the pioneering project, the first of its kind in the UK.



Cutting the ribbon

Patricia was interviewed by BBC Radio Scotland and Abertay University about her involvement in the project and the importance and benefits of it.



At the event Patricia chatted with Henry Simmons, speaking about her love of football ever since her brother John first lifted her over the turnstiles as a child. She told those at the launch about how the VR experience brings back memories of her early experiences of football, and vividly evokes the sights, sounds and unique atmosphere experienced at a football match. Patricia spoke about the importance of football in her life, and how the VR experience has helped to keep those memories alive.

"I could see all the men wearing their caps and could even smell their cigarette smoke. It was amazing. It brought back so many memories that had been buried. Now I've got them back again, it's wonderful." - Patricia