Introduction
Many homes like to use old photos to help spark reminiscence and generate conversation. Due to poor eyesight a significant number of older people cannot see small images. The A4 photos provided here in the downloads folder are large enough for the vast majority of people and will hopefully help them to remember times when they were younger, stronger, and more important than they might feel nowadays.

Preparation
Preview each photo before printing. Select from print options ‘landscape’ or ‘portrait’ as appropriate.

Environment
Once printed on paper these photos can be used at any time, anywhere, by anybody. Use in a group (residents lounge), or one-to-one in any location, including resident’s rooms for those who are currently bedroom-bound.

Time
Again, these photos can be used for a quick two minute chat or for an hour long group session. They will fit into any time slot you have.

Resources
The photos can be used by themselves or you can use them in conjunction with any objects that are associated with the subjects of the photos.

What to do
Let people see the photos and wait a few seconds to see if they start talking about them spontaneously. If they don’t, gently prompt them with relevant questions. Starting off with closed questions is fine (questions that have one word or short answers) but then try to move into more open-ended questions (these often start off with ‘Why’, ‘What’ or ‘How?’)

If you are working with a group make sure the photo gets passed around so that everyone feels included. Ideally in a group session you will be active in getting the group started but will soon fade into the background as the participants talk and share amongst themselves.

Only work with one photo at a time and complete the conversations about this photo before collecting it back and working with the next one. If the conversation veers off to subjects unrelated to the photo just let it flow. If you think it necessary you can always bring the conversation back by asking a question about the photo.

Keep an eye out that everyone has a chance to contribute. If someone is not very involved you can ask them a question by name, e.g. “Mary, what do you think of that?”