

“IN MY DAY...” - GUIDED VISITS BY RAILWAYMEN| MUSEUM – THE STATION



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY
3. CULTURE AND EDUCATION
6. CULTURE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

COMMUNITY, PARTICIPATION, WELL-BEING, IDENTITY, HERITAGE, MEMORY, HISTORY, ACCESS, INTERGENERATIONAL, CULTURAL RIGHTS

1. Palmela and culture

Pinhal Novo is a town as well as a parish of the municipality of Palmela in the district of Setúbal in Portugal, with an area of 55,84 km² and 27,010 inhabitants. It was over many years a place through which various routes passed. The history of the origins of the parish goes back to 1833, date of the founding of the Carregueira Procession of Pilgrimage that is probably the oldest organisation of popular expression in Pinhal Novo. The railways were first laid in 1856 and the official inauguration of the Barreiro to Venda Novas and Pinhal Novo to Setúbal stretches of track took place on the 1st of February 1861; it was a factor in the development of this locality. The train became one of the engines of local growth, contributing to people relocating from various parts of the country to this region. The railways have been the backbone throughout Pinhal Novo's development. In this way, whilst it divides the population in half it also brings its past and future together.

«Museum - The Station» was inaugurated during the pandemic on the 1st of June 2021, with all health and safety measures observed. The Station is a museum space within the central section of the old Pinhal Novo passenger railway station that dates from 1935. This Museum is dedicated to the theme of the railway, with its collection donated mostly by railwaymen or respective relatives. Taking into account that it is a museum of the community alluding to that which originated the development of the area, its objective is to perpetuate railway memory through the active involvement of the local population. «Museum – The Station» is a community museum made by people and for people on a daily basis. The Museum and the elderly person are centres of cultural memories of the area.



THE OBJECTIVE IS TO PERPETUATE RAILWAY MEMORY THROUGH THE ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF THE LOCAL POPULATION.

2. Project goals and implementation

2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

The «In my day...» project aims to spread the word about this Museum and Railway Heritage through guided visits by former railwaymen. The primary objective of the project is to involve the local community in the life of the Museum. Guided visits by former railwaymen reveal the importance of their contribution to the community's history, perpetuate memories, promote the self-esteem of those involved, stimulate intergenerational contact and reinforce local identity and the role of the Museum as a factor for social change and community development.

The invitation extended to these former workers so that they should play an active part in the life of the Museum counts amongst its main objectives: valuing and perpetuating lifetime memory and history; promoting active ageing, promoting interaction between members of different generations and encouraging a sense of belonging to the community vis-à-vis the station.

2.2. Project development

Visits take place at 10 o'clock on the fourth Saturday of each month between March and November. The activity begins with a presentation by the railwayman who will be the guide on the day; later there will be time for him to describe his duties on the railways, the difficulties he faced, the good times, the connection between personal and professional life. This flowing narrative in which anyone present may intervene to ask questions or share experiences will also contribute to a portrait of life at that time. It is enriching to watch how family members as well as former colleagues react with a sense of pride and affection in their eyes.



Before the day of the activity prior work is carried out by interviewing each of the railwaymen. The selection of the railwaymen in terms of the timing of the monthly visits takes into account the diversity of professions so that there is no repetition. "Being a Railwayman" is one of the Museum's research areas, for a better characterisation of the various professions associated with the railway and the recovery of the knowledge associated with them, much of which already in disuse having been replaced by machinery or other more up-to-date practices. In addition to knowledge and memories, the participants are accompanied by documents and personal items to exemplify the functions performed and the work carried out at the time; some of this material is donated or loaned. The importance that this project has taken on in the community has led to developing an exhibition and publication, above all to thank and underline the importance of these testimonies.

"MUSEUM – THE STATION" IS A COMMUNITY MUSEUM MADE BY PEOPLE AND FOR PEOPLE ON A DAILY BASIS.

3. Impacts

3.1. Direct impacts

With this initiative, the Municipality has established proximity with the older adult population, with the community and has highlighted the relationship between memories and the development of the parish that has grown around the railway. Through this activity further activities were developed with local agents, namely "Carriage Conversations" in partnership with the Odisseia Youth Association and with the Railwaymen's Home Association. In addition to perpetuating memories, the fact of valuing this age group of the population has brought them encouragement and a desire to live, socialise and talk about their lives.

3.2. Assessment

The project has been evaluated via a questionnaire regarding the activities we carry out in the Museum, which among other aspects assesses the relevance of the theme, the duration, the resources used, the creativity in the approach, the mastery of content, the level of group participation permitted.

3.3. Key factors

The success of this initiative is associated with:

- the creativity in the museum's approach to the traditional guided tour, by giving primacy in this project to the voice and narrative of those who have lived their entire lives dedicated to the railway profession;
- the fact that the railwaymen are accompanied by family members and friends, increasing the breadth of the museum's audiences;
- the creation of a space for the participation and recognition of the person, and the contribution of this community in the enhancement and cultural transformation of the town;
- the good relationship amongst the participants;
- the strategy for the collection and preservation of cultural heritage;
- inclusive access, as it is a museum without physical barriers and with communication accessible to all audiences;
- the sharing of experiences between generations;
- the low associated costs;
- assertive dissemination in the media.



GUIDED VISITS BY FORMER RAILWAYMEN REVEAL THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY'S HISTORY, PERPETUATE MEMORIES, AND PROMOTE THEIR SELF-ESTEEM.

3.4. Continuity

This is a land of railwaymen in which there are many former railwaymen. It is therefore a project of continuity, with a number of visits already pencilled in for 2022. Furthermore, the project is part of a municipal strategy regarding active and health-conscious ageing.

4. Further information

Palmela was a candidate for the fifth “UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21” International Award (February – June 2022). The jury for the award drew up its final report in September 2022, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

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