

# Beyond || Words

## LIVING BEYOND LOSS, A SHOWCASE OF THE BEYOND WORDS PROJECT



**Living Beyond Loss Plenary Speakers**

Belfast Castle was the beautiful setting on Thursday, 5 May for the Living Beyond Loss event which celebrated the Beyond Words project so far. There was a fantastic display of the creative talents of those involved in the project, including picture collages, memory boxes, poetry and coloured salt memory jars. The Larger Than Life comic novel which describes the journey through grief, launched through Open Arts last week, was also on display and many attendees went away with a copy of this fantastic resource.

As well as attendees hearing from Eleanor Ellerslie, Project Manager, Paul Finnegan, Director of Cruse Bereavement NI and Damien Coyle, Deputy Director, Stroke Association, there were lively, interactive plenary talks from James Turner, Principal Lecturer, Sheffield Hallam University and Dr Mo Henderson, Speech and Language Therapy Lecturer, Ulster University. However, those who have benefited from the project then took the attendees on a rollercoaster of emotions. Colin White, Chairperson of the Advisory Group, spoke about the Accessible Resource Pack, which he would have found so helpful when he had his stroke. Helen Collins, Housing and Support Manager from Abbeyfield and Wesley, spoke of the death of two residents within her housing scheme which then prompted Abbeyfield and Wesley to have Bereavement Champions trained within their schemes.



**Attendees listening to Panel Discussion**



**Teresa Close**

Teresa Close, a stroke survivor, talked about her journey after stroke and aphasia, proudly showing the picture collage she made in memory of her husband and son. Linda Nixon's video, made by the Big Lottery Fund, had everyone in tears before Linda joined Flo Woods, John Caulfield and Alex Hall for a panel discussion on their highlights from the first four years of the project. The Big Lottery Fund, who fund the project, were represented by Joanne McDowell, their NI Director. Joanne described the day as a very important and enjoyable day, which she was delighted to be part of. The BLF find it invaluable hearing from those who had benefited from the work of the projects they fund.

We are looking forward to seeing what the next two years bring for the Beyond Words Project.



**Alex, Linda, Flo and John**



**Rab, John and George with their Memory Boxes**