

A group of Boston residents known as The South End Seniors have collectively written a memoir which totals over 200 pages, titled *South Enders Remember: Life and Times of Our Neighborhood*.

The group has plans to make the work available online via the South End Public Library and Historical Society websites and is also in the beginning stages of publishing the work as a book.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, The South End Seniors held weekly meetings on Tuesdays in person at Haley House Soup Kitchen on Dartmouth Street.

Originating in 2008, the group had seen its member numbers steadily growing over the years until meetings suddenly came to a halt with the onset of the Covid-19 lock down in 2020. To continue meeting, the group improvised and began to host their gatherings over Zoom.

The number of people who attended the virtual gatherings began to grow as did the frequency at which they occurred.

According to South Enders Remember, the group's meetings increased from their original once a week to three times per week.

"It started during Covid, everybody home in front of their computers and little by little over the weeks and months, everybody submitted what their memories were. It was in bits and pieces, but in the end, it made a whole," said Paul Duffy, a South End native and contributor to the work.

The work, which is a collective of different memoir- style retellings of general life in the South End, was inspired after one South End Senior meeting resulted in various members sharing stories and anecdotes of the neighborhood's past.

"It made some of us remember things that we had forgotten long ago," said Duffy. "It reminded folk of why they moved here and how much it has changed and how much work each individual has given to make that change."

The memoir, which was contributed to by over 50 individuals, divides the retellings into 21 sections. The section topics vary from "Growing Up in the Neighborhood" to "Memorable Occupants" and "Trolleys, Stoops, a Blizzard and a Pope."

The memoir was primarily compiled by only a few group members, including Arnold Zack, a retired judge. The group is currently seeking publication for its work. In total the writing amounts to over 200 pages of various memories about the South End.

Retellings range from smaller memories such as member's stories of moving to their first house, to larger collective ones such as the 'nor'easter of 1978.' "They were just pouring out the information and the memories that they had, and it just became so interesting to everyone that that's where it ended up," said Duffy. "I don't think anyone was even thinking of even publishing in the beginning, but it got so interesting and large that, you know, that the thought finally entered the street."

---

From: <https://read.thebostonguardian.com/the-boston-guardian;see-2022/09/09;c-4018885>