

**Sporting Heritage
Storage Success Blog
30 September 2023**

Victoria Baths is Grade II* listed and widely recognised as Britain's finest historic swimming pool. First opened in 1906, the Baths has played an important part in the health and well-being of local people and is now a very popular heritage, events, and community venue.



The Victoria Baths Archive, supported by the passionate History Group volunteers, is a treasure trove of swimming, water polo, and related memorabilia. This collection, comprising items donated by the public, swimming clubs, and Swim England NW, tells the story of Victoria Baths' history as a hub for aquatic sports and community health.

A recent addition to this remarkable collection is a set of trophies from the South Manchester Swimming Club. For decades, Victoria Baths was their training ground and competition venue, producing Olympic and international swimmers. The story of the Club and its swimmers is deeply intertwined with the history of Victoria Baths and the local community. Ordinary individuals achieved extraordinary feats, like a local firefighter who trained as an Olympic swimmer before his day job. The archive reflects the triumphs and contributions of these unsung heroes.

As the Archive grows our volunteers are working hard to ensure the safekeeping of these historic items and local memories. The successful application to the NSHD Microform Support grant has enabled us to acquire a secure cupboard for the South Manchester SC trophies and ensure both the safe storage of the items and a step towards increased public access and preservation of Manchester's aquatic legacy. This opportunity to secure a new chapter of the archive will support the Victoria Baths History Group to tell the story of Victoria Baths and Manchester's sporting heritage to generations to come.

If you want to learn more about the Victoria Baths Archive, or have any items or memories of the Baths to share, please email history@victoriabaths.org.uk.

Sporting Heritage are proud to support community sporting heritage activity across the UK through a programme of locally focused projects which celebrate National Sporting Heritage Day on the 30th September every year. Follow the action #sportinghistory. #NSHD2023