

WIMBORNE COMMUNITY THEATRE

AGM

WEDNESDAY 29th APRIL 2009 AT ALLENDALE HOUSE, WIMBORNE

CHAIR'S REPORT

Review of WCT activities in 2008

At the AGM last year, we continued planning for a large-scale project in Wimborne town centre in 2009. Much of the work of the steering group in 2008 was focused on this. Related to the 2009 project and also to raise funds and keep the group involved, we have had a number of events and activities:

- A series of workshops was held and led by different practitioners during September – December 2008:
 - Andrew Cuthbert - *The Private Voice and Public Places* (voice workshop) September 10th 2008
 - Geraldine Pilgrim – *Objects and Atmospheres* - site-specific work (Saturday workshop)
 - Pete Talman – *Acting for a Purpose* (working with text) November 13th 2008
 - Jonathan Petheridge – site-specific work (Saturday workshop)

Overall all four workshops were well attended, enjoyable and helped retain the identity of the group. Also, potential new members took part and we linked with members of the Dorchester Community Play group. All workshops helped develop possible ideas and themes for the next project.

- A Treasure Hunt organised by Chris Dowdle and Dave Arkell on 11th May 2008 raised £35.00 and was good fun and helped us learn more about the hidden detail of Wimborne's town centre.
- The Holtwood Fete on 5th July 2008 enabled the group to perform a short piece drawing on material from the Holt Wood production. We also ran a stall and Jeff Hart was interviewed by Forest FM about WCT, which all helped keep the profile of the group going.
- The group ran a stall at Wimborne Market on 13th September 2008 which raised over £100.00 for the group's funds. Particular thanks are due to Dunja Wood and Paul Wilshaw for organising this.
- The laptop and projector was sold to WHT for £900.00 which has contributed to WCT's funds while the group has retained continuing use of this equipment when needed. Thanks are due to Alan Wilson for this.
- An enjoyable social evening hosted by Tony and Gill Horitz was held over the Christmas period.

The ongoing focus of the steering group has been to secure funding and commitment to a major project for 2009 with a working title of *Behind Closed Doors*. Gill Horitz worked extremely hard to write and submit a G4A Arts Council bid which unfortunately was unsuccessful. In fact, relatively few of these bids are successful but the process helped us structure the thinking and purpose of our next project. However, East Dorset District Council has contributed £2000.00 and the steering group continues to bid for funding to a range of potential providers. Claire Small and Paul Wilshaw represented WCT at the Council committee to consider this bid and evidently performed really well to secure this funding.

The group has also made closer connections with the community of East Dorset and been invited to various local conferences and events held by East Dorset Community Partnership. We are grateful to Ken Horitz and Chris Dowdle for representing the group at the Community lunch and project ideas discussion on 28th January 2009.

The Saturday workshop run by Jonathan Petheridge which explored the theme of *Rivers* was particularly successful and it was agreed by the group that we should invite Jonathan to direct the 2009 project. The steering group has met with Jonathan and plans are now in place to stage a production in September 2009. Currently the proposal is to site the production at Wimborne Market and the nearby river, although we are also investigating potential sites in the town centre, such as Woolworths or other empty retail premises to publicise the event.

Gill Horitz has done a sterling job in promoting the group's work in press releases and flyers – e.g. the Echo recently advertised the first workshops for the 2009 project and Forest FM have also featured our work. The steering group has plans to further promote WCT through development of our website through a student placement. We are also investigating production of sets of postcards to use in various ways for publicity.

The group continues to be indebted to the invaluable help and support of EDHT.

Jeff Hart
Chair WCT
26.04.2009