

WIMBORNE COMMUNITY THEATRE AGM

WEDNESDAY 16th MAY 2018 AT 5 MIDDLEHILL ROAD, COLEHILL, WIMBORNE

CHAIR'S REPORT

Review of WCT activities in 2017

This report covers activities between October 2016 and September 2017.

Following the success of *What They Left Behind*, this year we were preparing for our next production at BytheWay Common in Wimborne.

We also built on our successful fundraising efforts to continue to raise funds for this and future projects.



Autumn Workshops 2016

In our Autumn workshops we worked on a traditional Dorset tale *The Beggars' Wedding* using different media (drama, music and sound recording) to explore the story's key themes of love and betrayal, cruelty and kindness.

Taking the text as a starting point Tony Horitz led an enjoyable Theatre Workshop on 13th October, followed by Karen Wimbhurst's Music Workshop on 3rd November in which we composed a song based on lines of the text and learned how music can be used to reflect emotions. Finally, on 30th November Adrian Newton took us on a sonic journey through the story using sounds made by found objects as a story-telling device.

This all informed our thinking about a future project involving different media.

Preparatory Work for BytheWay project

- We initially started by meeting with Adrian Newton on 12th January 2017 to discuss how we might use different sound techniques on the next production.
- The group also undertook different areas of research regarding historical and literary connections in the Wimborne area and explored ideas for sites and themes.

- Having identified BytheWay Field and Wood as a venue, the group visited the site to investigate possible locations for scenes and routes.
- We also met with Hannah Bosence, the Countryside Officer from Christchurch and East Dorset Councils, to discuss the practicalities of staging a production on the site and have continued this very useful partnership throughout the project.
- A Creative Group was formed to develop an outline for the production and work on the existing materials as well as research new ones.
- The group met for a programme of 8 rehearsals and recording sessions throughout the months of February to July 2017.

In July 2017 it was agreed by the Steering Group that the production originally planned for October 2017 should be postponed to the early summer of 2018. This was because of concerns that we would not be able to produce a quality production in the time available, particularly as we had ambitious plans to record much of the material and use headsets as a vital part of the production.

We decided to use the additional time for the Creative Group to review and develop a refreshed storyline and run a further series of workshops in the Autumn with the aim of starting rehearsals in early 2018.

- The Creative Group met to start this work on 14th September and have continued to meet to develop the framework and characters, incorporate research material into the production and develop the script.

Autumn Workshops 2017

The programme started on 28th September with a workshop on Singing for Theatre led by Karen Wimhurst in which we developed the music and songs for possible use in the Navvies' scene.

Two further workshops were planned - Movement for Theatre led by Jasmine Taylor on 19th October and a Sound and Performance Workshop on 23rd November led by Tony Horitz and Adrian Newton when we would pull together the themes and recordings developed so far in preparation for rehearsals starting in 2018.

Further Activities

• Website

Throughout the year there was ongoing work on the website, in particular posting archive material related to *What They Left Behind*. Gill and Barbara met several times in the year to review and update the content and continue to post news of our activities regularly on the website.

Having changed our managing agents of the website to Wimborne Business Systems Ltd., we are now receiving valuable support from Harry Andrews, including a training session attended by Gill and Barbara on October 3rd 2016.

• Fundraising

This year was again a successful one for fundraising.

- We held a Quiz Evening on 19th October 2016 at the Colehill Sports and Social Club which raised £300.
- We also held a Skittles Evening at the Coach and Horses pub on February 10th 2017 and raised £300.00. We are grateful to John Billington for hosting both of these events.

- On 14th July we held our annual Treasure Trail around the streets of Wimborne. Thanks are due to Chris and Frank Dowdle for compiling the trail and Clare Small for providing a hamper for the raffle. Over £300 was raised for WCT funds from ticket sales and the raffle.
- £800 grant was awarded for the *BytheWay* production from EDDC.

• **Christmas Social Evening**

An enjoyable party for members was held at Dave and Viv Arkell's house on 16th December 2016 which also raised funds through a raffle run by Clare.

• **Steering Group**

The Steering Group continued to meet monthly to plan events and development, particularly the production of *BytheWay*, as well as to ensure that the group's administrative affairs were in order, dealing with matters such as finance, insurance and Safeguarding.

• **AGM**

Last year's AGM was held on 3rd May 2017 at Tony and Gill Horitz's house to review the year October 2015 – September 2016 and elect officers for the following year. The Steering Group remained unchanged, with additional support from Stewart Bullen on membership and subscriptions.

• **Communication**

The website remains the main means of keeping members and followers informed of our activities.

Regular *Mailchimp* newsletters are also sent out and members are emailed with relevant news and dates of specific events.

We have worked on developing our social media presence through Facebook and Twitter and hope to encourage members to be more active in using these means of communication. Postcards were designed and produced as a means of promoting the group. Plans were made to distribute these over the coming months.

Two new banners were also designed and will be used at events in the future.

• **Bistaki**

WCT was invited to take part in the Inside Out Festival in September 2018 working with the French theatre group Bistaki as the community volunteers supporting the performance. In September 2017 Clare and David Small travelled to Hull to see the production *The Baina Trampa Fritz Fallen* and were able to report back to the group on our likely involvement.

Thus 2016 - 17 was a year of consolidation and development for the group. Although we did not stage a new production, we did a lot of preparation for the next project and developed our skills in music, sound and movement. We also moved forward in our ambition to focus on innovative sound techniques, as well as raising funds through three events to help finance the group.

We are grateful to supporters who come along to events and fundraising activities.

Our thanks are due to several key people who continue to promote and develop the group's work, in particular Tony and Gill Horitz. Also, Tuppy Hill, our secretary, and Adrian Williams, our Treasurer, who manage the affairs of the group extremely well. Finally, thanks to Ian Metcalfe for reviewing our accounts.

Jeff Hart
Chair WCT
29.04.2018