



Newsletter

Keeping in Touch with Friends and Supporters

September 2010

Issue 14

Chairman's Letter

It does not seem any time since the last Arts Festival and Eisteddfod - but here we are starting planning for 2011. So this seems a good time to say a heartfelt thank you to all who made these events such a success in 2010 – the Festival Committee members and especially our artistic director, Liz Wilkins, our assistant director Diana Jensen and Jane Parfitt who organised the Art Trail. But they are supported by a crowd of stewards and tea men and ladies. It is one of the great things about Thornbury that year after year a team of people come forward to take on these jobs and without them there would be no Festival or Eisteddfod. Please stay with us through 2011- you make our events possible.

The Arts Festival Charitable Trust is now a company limited by guarantee. This provides financial protection for the committee members who are trustees. In the most unlikely event of some disaster meaning we could not sell tickets but had to pay the artists with whom we already had contracts, committee members will not have to sell their houses to cover the costs. But we remain a charity so we are not going to get rich on ticket sales! We shall be keeping their prices as low as possible for all our events in 2011.

Phyllida Parsloe Chair

Dates for your diaries

The Eisteddfod is March 18 to 27 but omitting March 21st, 23rd and 25th.

The Eisteddfod Concert will be on April 7th at the Cossham Hall

The Art Trail – opening event at the Town Hall April 13th. Trail April 22nd to May 2nd

The Arts Festival May 6th to May 15th

Severn Vale Art Trail News

The Showcase Exhibition in the Town Hall set the scene for the Severn Vale Art Trail with a busy and well attended preview evening. Thanks are due to the staff at the Town Hall for the extra work involved in the run-up to the trail. Our publicity even made the dizzy heights of Richard Anguin's TV weather forecast, whilst the Arts Festival events were in full swing.

We welcomed two new, shared venues this year; Old Down Country Park and Pound Barn at Wickwar joined the Thornbury Golf Centre and the Whit-sun Hall at the Hatch to provide exhibition space for twenty five of the artists. These often received over a hundred visitors a day, some staying with friends locally especially for the trail. Hopefully this was reflected in the numbers of those making use of shops and businesses in Thornbury during the first nine days of May. Those who opened their own studios were visited less – an opportunity missed by the visitor - as personal venues are fascinating and very much part of the trail! Twenty new artists took part, joining thirty four who have all exhibited on the trail before.

We were supported again this year by those at the Castle School Octagon Art Centre, where the work of current exhibiting artist, Michael Craig-Martin, made a stage on the trail.

The Severn Vale artists met soon after to share feedback from the trail, which will inform our planning to begin again in October, for the coming 2011 Severn Vale Art Trail!

Jane Parfitt – Thornbury Arts Festival visual arts member.

Memories of Thornbury Arts Festival 2010

Thornbury Arts Festival 2010 is packed away and stored in our memories but the hard work, unforgettable moments and enjoyment remains. It was my first Festival as Artistic Director and it certainly had its moments! George Alagiah, our opening guest, was busy in Bristol with the BBC's Political programme the night before but had to return to London with his team on the Friday morning, turn around immediately and tackle the M4 and arrive by 8pm! By 7.55 I was biting my nails and the audience had been dispatched to 'have a stroll' around the town but finally he arrived! His talk was so interesting and he was so charming that nobody minded but I would not want to repeat such a moment!

Dr Alice Roberts and Professor Gareth Williams informed with fascinating talks; Ian McMillan set his scene by greeting the audience as they came through the door; Thornbury Orchestra enthused with their talent; The Sociable Plover overwhelmed us with its unusual plot and twist; Claire Martin sang cool jazz and Srishti dancers leapt, spun and floated through the Armstrong Hall air!

Bob Baker's scriptwriting workshop inspired a group of young people; Storybox Theatre captivated imagination and Olveston walked, talked and gave us yummy cakes! Thanks to everyone who planned, helped and enjoyed the Festival. We wish to do it all again in 2011

.....an amazing musician about to celebrate a 60th Birthday and doing a tour may be heading this way!!!!

Liz Wilkins AD

The Tempest 26th January 2010

The Thornbury Arts Festival committee was able to continue their annual performances for schools by Bristol Old Vic Theatre School in January this year with a fine production of The Tempest. Eight local schools sent along groups of pupils, including for the first time the Sheiling School. The performance captured the imagination with an inspired use of sound effects, mostly a tin bath of water. This was done in view of the children to stimulate imaginations, evoke the necessary watery atmosphere of the play and give a practical lesson in producing simple effects all at the same time. The production was well received and the mainly very young children were very attentive.

Next season we hope that we will be able to book Bristol Old Vic Theatre School's production of Hamlet which will present some challenges as it is also intended for five years and upward. It will be fascinating to see how the production deals with the complex and adult issues in a suitable way for that age group but on past experience we are confident they will rise to it.

GEOFF BRAZIER

We were very sorry to hear of Geoff's death and send our sincere sympathy to Josie and the family. We greatly appreciated Geoff's help in stewarding the Eisteddfod over many years. He was also a loyal supporter of Festival events, especially those involving jazz, right up until this year. He will be sorely missed by many in Thornbury.

MARGARET AND MAURICE BELL

We are delighted to send our good wishes to Margaret and Maurice who have celebrated their Golden Wedding recently. They have served the Arts Festival in many capacities over the years for which we are so grateful.

Festival Committee

Phyllida Parsloe	Chairperson
Paul Morrish	Vice Chairperson
Liz Wilkins	Artistic Director
Diana Jenson	Deputy Artistic Director / Box Office
Chris Coppin	Treasurer
Sandra Doig	Secretary

Sonia Jackson
Peter Minshall
Jane Parfitt
Ralph Shallcross
Shirley Sharp
Tony Wilcock
Trish Wilcock