

Report from Angie Goodman for Larkhall Festival AGM 2nd November 2009.

Teen Fiction

10 entries and the standard was EXTREMELY high.

ALL Bath schools - state and private - including hospital school and PRUs were contacted by letter and email. Classroom posters were designed, printed and included in initial contact package; also further reminders and follow-up emails posters and letters. Entries came from Corsham, Chippenham, Ralph Allen, St Stephens Primary, R B High School.

Thanks to John McClay and Caroline Harris for their wonderful, kind and positive support. And to all the talented young writers who had the courage to submit work.

Plan for 2010 - apart from this, there was no writing by children or young people featured in the 2009 Festival, it would therefore be good to feel that it could be continued to become an established event which would motivate and inspire young writers across the area.

Open Studios

Larkhall Open Studios was more of a success than any of the participants dreamed.

Some artists were concerned that the Bank Holiday weekend might not be a good time for an Open Studios (in that a lot of people on artists' mailing lists were away) however the view is that the benefit of running concurrently with and being a part of the Festival overrides that.

LOS is now part of BOS along with BFA BAS and WAT - means we are joined (in spirit at least) with Bear Flat Artists, Bath Artists Studios and Widcombe Art Trail, and as Bath Open Studios, we are planning a joint blog, sharing resources and forthcoming events.

Thanks to: Kat Whelan for her unflinching, optimistic and friendly support in designing and maintaining the website, (as well as all her other jobs!); to Kaye for designing the paper brochure; to Vicky Sander for laminating signs and to all the artists involved for their kind encouragement and participation.

2010 – All who have expressed their view are keen to do it again next year and I am hoping that some people will open for more days. I have since had interest from some more artists so I hope we can expand.

ART EXHIBITION

Well attended though as not many visitors signed the visiting book. Having obtained a tally counter through the kind efforts of Bryan Chalker for use in the Oriel Hall only, there is no tally of how many people visited the church.

All artists were positive and cheerful that their work had been seen as part of an Arts Festival - but we need to offer rather more (ie private view -*better promotion of both art and venue by Festival committee*) to justify everyone's efforts (and the expense of framing and transport etc) to encourage the artists' participation next year.

Discussion point - The church team are skilled, talented and enthusiastic; they are a wonderful resource in our community and couldn't have been more helpful. Furthermore the building is a very beautiful setting. However there is a concern (as would be in any place of religious worship) about content. This could in future restrict the scope of the art which we feel able to put on public display.

As a general Festival point, is there any circumstance in which we might feel constrained to censor Art in future?

With regard to venues it would not be helpful or desirable to split the exhibition. Therefore the following might be discussed by the committee: that Art and Photography are shown in the New Oriel Hall (whose managers kindly installed picture rails for the purpose) and that other events, such as, for example, talks with slides, children's artwork, and the local History projects together with more music and maybe drama - are scheduled in the church.

Display boards. These were initially a headache for everyone displaying work in 2009, so....

BIG Thanks to Becky Hurwitz and Geoff Wood for collecting the donated boards for 2010. These will look clean and professional and in terms of children's art displays - general art - the photography exhibitions - partitioning for rooms - will benefit the whole Festival for years to come. There may also be the possibility of renting out to other events to gain Festival income?

2010 - More support for Art and a recognition of its centrality in an *Arts* Festival would enable the Larkhall Festival to be visually stunning and even ground breaking in future years.

BIG Thanks - to Alec Robertson of the Festival Committee, for his kind, friendly and wonderful support.

AOB

INCLUSIVENESS - it would be an idea for the committee to seriously consider making it possible for elderly/disabled visitors to have transport. At least two lifelong Larkhall residents who helped with quiz questions couldn't manage to attend the Festival itself. Perhaps it could be possible to mobilise people who are already local volunteer drivers.