
artsrichmond
(Richmond upon Thames Arts Council)
Annual Report 2008-2009

What the future holds?

2009 has been a bumpy year for everyone, most marked for *artsrichmond* by the success we have had in maintaining and expanding our programme, but with deep concerns about our future funding. One major funder has been forced to halve its grant because of the decline in its own income as a result of the financial turmoil, while the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames has had to reduce its basic grant towards our core costs for the next three years because of its own essential austerity programme.

Nevertheless we have been able to generate some more income out of our own activities, with several well-supported events resulting in worthwhile surpluses, and for the coming year we are setting out on an ambitious fund-raising programme which we hope will enable us to continue our activities without serious reductions. The first of these is an evening we are planning jointly with the Museum of Richmond, itself facing similar financial problems and with an overdue development programme coming up. This will be on Monday 25 January when Oscar-prize winning scriptwriter (*Gosford Park*, and now *The Young Victoria*), actor and director Julian Fellowes has generously agreed to take part in a gala 'conversation' with theatre biographer and Winchester Festival Artistic Director John Miller.

This is definitely a *fund*-raising event for two important cultural organizations in the borough, and to raise funds we need to ask for contributions larger than we might normally expect (though, having heard one, to be at a conversation with Julian Fellowes is worth almost any price we might be able to charge). So we ask our members and friends to be willing to pay out and bring parties with them – it's known as self-help, and if our activities in promoting our local arts are thought to be valuable, then do please give us your full support on this and our other fund-raising occasions. If you do, this will enable us to keep our charges for our exhibitions, competitions, events for young people, ShowCoach programme, and all that at their current near-cost levels.

The end of this year marks a change in chairmanship, in that the current chairman has completed the constitutional maximum of six years' service. Actually, this is a job that necessarily rotates between different people who lead our work, so the change is more a shuffling of the pack than the end of an era. But perhaps

members will forgive the outgoing chairman a few remarks on his experiences.

First, there is the incredible contribution made by the elected officers and executive committee, all of whom give their services for nothing and often devote long days and weekends to organizing our events, helping run the office, and speaking up for the arts. Many of them are also active in other cultural organizations, and we cannot thank them enough.

One such is Vice President Edie Purdue, who has run ShowCoach with flair and dedication, and with a devoted and growing bunch of participants, for as many years as can be remembered. At the end of this year she is stepping down (though continuing to run the holiday programme), but we know we will continue to see her in her active roles at all our events, and that the New Writing Competition she founded in memory of her husband Roy will continue to produce fine writing and acting under her distinguished leadership.

There are others who deserve a billing as well, but, hopefully, they are continuing in their current roles, so individual Thank Yous must wait their turn.

But we must mention the excellent executive officers we have had during these six years: the late lamented Annie Stevens, a creative artist herself, Josie Shantonas, a dedicated and enthusiastic organiser, and now Sian Morgan, with her deep knowledge of and concern for arts policy.

Second, there is the range of events and activities run by **artsrichmond**. Indeed, *artsrichmond* can justifiably claim to be one of the most successful local arts councils in the country. Some of our events, like the Swan Drama Awards, have a long and distinguished history, others are new. Our ambition is to ensure that our programme remains innovative and constantly refreshed, so nothing is sacred except making our events better and more relevant each time they occur.

Third, it is delightful to report the growing cooperation between *artsrichmond*, a voluntary charity, and the cultural, arts and library teams of the borough council. In the past, this has not always been easy – it is now a working relationship, and this enables us to work in partnership to achieve our own objectives and those of the Council, set out so well in its new Cultural Plan for the next four years. This is the only way to achieve

worthwhile results: horses for courses. The Council, for example, can use its resources to develop areas we, with smaller resources and reliance on volunteers, can find difficult, while we can promote the work of our many affiliated societies – our main purpose – and reach out to new participants and new audiences.

Fourth, the joy we have had from being able to involve so many people successful in the arts who live locally in our activities, particularly through the highly successful one-year Presidencies, but also through the warm support of our patrons. If anything, please give yet more: nothing encourages endeavour and talent more than the realization that people who have succeeded already are there to support you.

Fifth, the less successful side. We would dearly love to have more involvement, more participation, more cross-arts sharing, by the members of our affiliated societies. We depend on too few people, and need more. We have recruited some excellent new people to the executive committee, but we need more of you who benefit from our work to give us a little of your talent as well.

Then there is some disappointment that we have not been more successful at involving more schools in our activities: schools so often feel so overloaded with their statutory obligations that they feel unable to encourage their pupils to participate in local activities, so denying them so much.

And then there is the difficulty of involving all parts of a rather disparate borough in our activity, so that some feel left out. It remains a priority target to ensure that we do reach all parts.

Here's a quick summary of those activities in the calendar year 2009.

- The year started with the choral workshop, led by John Sutton and attended by over 100 singers, working on *The Armed Man*, with – great privilege – the composer Karl Jenkins (now a patron) there himself.
- February: Fund-raising book and music evening at the Music Museum, Brentford, with Anne de Courcy, Anne Sebba, Lee Langley and international pianist Miriam Brickman and Richard Cole at the Mighty Wurlitzer.
- March: Friends of the Libraries Open Forum with the LBRuT Head of Culture and Libraries, and regular discussions on library development throughout the year.
- March: Edie Purdue's *New Writing Competition* at the Orange Tree Theatre.
- May: A highly successful *art tent* at the Richmond May Fair, and, the next day, the *book picnic* on Richmond Green with P D James and Gyles Brandreth, talking with co-President Lee Langley
- In June, we celebrated co-President Camilla Jessel Panufnik FRPS's brilliant photography exhibition in the Stables Gallery at Orleans House with a private view for members.

- July: The garden party in co-President Camilla Panufnik's Wild Garden on Twickenham Riverside, with the unexpected pleasure of seeing her spectacular house and its great musical instruments when it rained, as it does.

- September: The *Swan Drama Awards*, more successful than ever, the culmination of a year's work on 42 productions and by the dedicated judges: Hilary Dodman, Pam Frazer, Steve Macvicar, Greg Nicoll and Keith Wait.

- November: *Art Exhibition* at the Duke Street Church – with nearly 200 paintings exhibited and artist David Parfitt commenting on their qualities.

- John Julius Norwich with John Miller at the Book Buffet (Thai Square and Orange Tree Theatre), Lord Owen with James Naughtie at a *Books for Our Time* evening at the Duke Street Church, and the Young Writers Awards at the Orange Tree Theatre.

- Two ShowCoach holidays, seven theatre visits, one concert and five excursions, giving great pleasure especially to those welcoming the benefits of shared and convenient transport and social acquaintance with like-minded people.

- Plus the extensive and excellent activities of our 100 affiliated societies, and our activities and advisory services in their support, twelve well-filled monthly mailings, replete with flyers, eleven newsletters, and increasing media publicity for all that is going on.

We are now required by the Charity Commission to set out the *Public Benefit* we offer. The **Objectives of the Council** are to advance education by fostering and promoting the maintenance, improvement and development of artistic taste and the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the arts, and the promotion, support, assistance and improvement of libraries, through the activities of Friends and user groups, in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. We believe that this Annual Report shows that these Objectives are amply fulfilled to great public benefit.

We are deeply grateful to our Presidents for the year, Lee Langley and Camilla Panufnik, for their leadership and ready involvement. We welcome new patrons Anne Sebba, author, Gyles Brandreth, raconteur and writer, Karl Jenkins, composer, Liz Crowther, actor, and Jason Bowyer, artist, and look forward to working with our Presidents for 2010, Clive Francis and Liz Crowther.

Grants and donations We gratefully acknowledge grants from the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Richmond Parish Lands Charity, Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity, St George plc, Kay Williams, Joan Russell-Williams, and anonymous donors.

Richmond upon Thames Arts Council

Presidents 2008 Isla Blair and Julian Glover

Presidents 2009 Lee Langley and Lady Panufnik

Presidents 2010 Clive Francis and Liz Crowther

Vice Presidents Rosemary Leach Sandra Green John Coombs Edie Purdue

Officers and Executive 2008-9

Chairman Clive Bradley CBE
Deputy chairman David Ward
Treasurer Pam Frazer
Executive Officer Sian Morgan

Elected : Sue Bell - Patricia Caunter – Laurie Coombs – Miranda Corben - Hilary Dodman – Jenny Grose-Hodge- Karen Hindle - Barnaby Marder - Heather Morgan - Frances Neale - Greg Nicoll – Nuala Rowland - Gillian Thorpe - Gillian Wade

Co-opted members Francis Bennett (*Chairman – of the Friends of Richmond Libraries*) - Cllr Pat Parsons – Lesley Bossine (Landmark Arts Centre)

Nominated by London Borough of Richmond upon Thames: Cllr Geoffrey Acton – Cllr Jonathan Cardy – Cllr Bob King

Holding trustees: John Coombs – Sara Burn Edwards - Sandra Green – Howard Greenwood – Edie Purdue

Patrons of artsrichmond

The Mayor of Richmond upon Thames - Marcia Ashton - Lord Attenborough - Lady Attenborough - Sir David Attenborough OM CH - Lt Col Duncan Beat - Isla Blair - Jason Bowyer PNEAC - Gyles Brandreth - Sara Burn Edwards - Dr Vincent Cable MP - Helena Caletta - Liz Crowther - Stephen Dodgson - Clive Francis - Michael Frayn - Bamber Gascoigne - Julian Glover - Howard Greenwood - Jerry Hall - Sir Jeremy Hanley - Toby Jessel - Karl Jenkins - Susan Kramer MP - Lee Langley - Rosemary Leach - Bernard Marder QC - Sir Trevor McDonald OBE - James Naughtie - Lady Panufnik - Cllr Pat Parsons - Maurice Press - Alan Price - Anne Sebba - Colin Squire - Frank Thornton - Claire Tomalin - Sam Walters MBE
Convenor of patrons: Sara Burn Edwards

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