

Hello Everyone

So what's new since the last newsletter? Well of course it is the summer but unless you are in the USA or somewhere like Italy, which are both having very hot summers, you would hardly know it's that time of year, especially if you have been out when the hailstones have struck. But never mind there is plenty going on around the town to keep you entertained and we have certainly been busy volunteering to support a wide range of events. Please read this newsletter in conjunction with the latest edition of the Volunteer Programme. By the way have you been to the Monday film night at the Forum recently? Still only £3 a ticket and some great films.

Heather Carter, Volunteer Co-ordinator

1. Volunteer Update

Fifty two volunteers are registered on our database today and in addition we are lucky to have eleven new volunteers on our prospective volunteer list who are going through the recruitment process. Our next volunteer induction is planned for Saturday 2nd September 10am – 12.15pm in Heritage Healthcare, Houndgate, which we hope the new volunteers will attend. Our aim is to keep the total complement of volunteers to sixty active volunteers which is where we expect to be by September. The reason we are keeping the number to sixty is to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities to keep volunteers active and engaged and we continue to provide a quality service as opposed to be able to say we have innumerable volunteers.

In addition we are now creating a waiting list of no more than twenty five people interested in volunteering and to date we have sixteen on that list. Over and above that number we will thank people for their interest and ask them to watch the press for details of future recruitment drives

2. What have we been doing?

- **Arts Spark Saturday 8th July**

We were asked to help out at this all day event at Hummersknott School as Arts Spark (Youth Theatre and Youth Dance Class) did their final rehearsal and then put on their end of year show. Volunteers helped out and Lyndsey Middleton the Theatre Audience Development and Participation Officer said afterwards:

'I just wanted to say a huge thank you to the volunteers for all their help on Saturday. I know one or two of them said to me they didn't feel like they'd done very much but I assured them that their presence was very much required as it was important that we were operating with the correct ratio of students to adults. The event couldn't have happened without them so I'm really grateful. I didn't get the chance to say thank you to them all at the end so if you pass that on that would be great.'

- **IncludFEST Saturday 15th July**

Well what a good day that was despite the rain showers. We thoroughly enjoyed the marching band and musical entertainment. Making the gift boxes was a special treat. On the Darlington for Culture Information Stall we shared information about Arts and Culture events and groups around the town and in between the showers took £61 on the Teddy Tombola which goes towards the Darlington for Culture Small Grants Scheme.

Martin Wilson the organiser from Tinarts says:

'Please say a HUGE THANK YOU to the Darlington Culture Volunteers. They were all really positive and extremely helpful and without their support IncludFEST wouldn't be able to go ahead.'

Volunteers Rhona, Sue and Debi join in and enjoy the music at IncludFEST!



Jan said: 'Just a note to say how much we enjoyed IncludFEST at South Park. Although not volunteering that day it still gave me an insight into all the hard work volunteers do at an event. The children particularly enjoyed making up the curiosity boxes and they also saw two autistic children make some wonderful creative items. It was so nice to see this and bring all children together whether they be disabled or with no additional needs. Apart from all the fantastic craft stalls the music and performances looked good too especially when the rain started to ease. We all loved the super face painting. 'Go on Mum' the kids say 'Get a unicorn the next time!'



And here's Jan with her face painted

Oxjam Saturday 15th July had their minijam event at the Forum Music Centre and Val and Molly went to help them. Debi our volunteer is also the volunteer co-ordinator for Oxjam

Oxjam was great. The volunteers were fantastic but as we had a late night we haven't counted our takings yetI think we will have made a good amount though for Oxfam. Thank you very much from all the Oxjam Team. It turned out they made £550 for Oxjam which is a great amount. Well done everyone!

and the next day she said:

- **Darlington Orchestra Saturday 15th July.**

Five volunteers helped with front of house at this biannual concert in Central Hall. It was a great evening with lots more volunteers in the audience with their families. Helen

The volunteers are always a great help at concerts – they're responsible for ticket sales on the door, distributing programmes, collecting feedback forms etc. Their support means orchestra players don't have to do those front of house roles and can concentrate on playing the music.

Devonshire a volunteer herself, as well as a cello player in the orchestra said:

- **Fieldworker Training Tuesday 25th July 5.30 – 7.30pm**

Sixteen of us attended this event at the Dolphin Centre run by the Audience Development Agency showing us the kind of audience surveys the Theatre Town group were thinking of using. We gave our feedback on the surveys and enjoyed asking each other the range of questions. Thank you to everyone who attended this event. From what I understand our feedback will inform the way the surveys are constructed. I do hope you will come forward to help engage with some of the various future show audiences which will give the Theatre Town group vital feedback.

- **Researching/Archiving.**

As we start a new era working with Darlington Hippodrome volunteers are needed to develop and support the theatre archives. To get the ball rolling twelve places were available for volunteers to be involved in doing some research for planned exhibitions. On Friday and Saturday 2nd and 3rd June and 30th June and 1st July - Paul, Teresa, Lesley Mc, Richard, Glenda, Carol, Allan, Valerie, Molly, Helen, Gena and Rhona attended initial training sessions to discover what this would involve. Glenda tells us: *'Archiving for the theatre is going to be a massive project, one in which a significant number of volunteers have expressed an interest. The researching for specific exhibitions, which are coming up in the next few months, is part of the bigger archiving project which has not yet got underway. The theatre asked for twelve volunteers to get the research work underway and we took these from those who had already told us they were interested in archiving. I think I speak for everyone when I say that we all very much enjoyed the sessions on 2nd and 3rd June and are looking forward to getting this work in full swing. On a personal level, I found I was strangely moved by the history of all that has gone on in that wonderful building over the years.'*

We continue to take the names of volunteers and have six more names in addition to the original twelve who are interested in the archiving project. We are waiting for a new date to be notified to get some work underway. Please get in touch if you would like to be involved and haven't put your name on the rota yet.

- **Hippodrome Brochures – week beginning 31st July** – Didn't you all do well when the call came from the Hippodrome to help distribute the new brochures? Eleven of you came forward to help with the distribution. Sue Wilson Marketing Manager

'Just wanted to say how successful the distribution of brochures by the volunteers has been. We have covered a much larger area than we could have managed. Please pass on my thanks to all involved.'

says:

- **History of the Hippodrome Exhibition in the Library**

This runs from 27th July to 9th September in Crown Street Gallery and is a fascinating history of the development of theatre in the town. Steve one of our volunteers has shared a significant number of photos from the days of the Civic Theatre which will be projected continuously on the wall so I'm looking forward to seeing those. Check out the photograph of the hard hat tour of the Hippodrome site on the first display board on the right hand side in the Gallery and see our volunteers Dave, Babs, Glenda and Sue looking very smart in their high visibility jackets, hard hats and very large boots!

Volunteers will be in the Gallery between 1 and 2pm every Wednesday and Friday from 2nd August to 8th September talking to the public and showing additional archive material. Thanks to all those who attended the briefing session given by Cait Barratt, the Heritage, Learning and Engagement Officer from the Hippodrome, on Monday 31st July. In all seven volunteers are covering these sessions in the Crown Street Gallery so thanks to them. If you haven't been to see the exhibition yet then pop in as it's certainly worth seeing.

- **Theatre Town Festival**

Theatre Town is a project which brings together the expertise of partners Creative Darlington, Darlington Hippodrome, Luxi (who bring us Jabberwocky), Theatre Hullabaloo and ODDMANOUT.

Our first gig for the Theatre Town Festival was on Saturday 5th August where eight volunteers were in Pease Place from 10 – 2pm with a live DJ. We asked the public their favourite tune to be played at the after show party of 'The Ball' which is produced by the Wet Picnic Group. It is a free event on Saturday 26th August at 9.30pm in the Market Square with no ticket required. The whole audience will be invited to join the after show party with music as per the requests taken on Saturday 5th August. Sounds like fun then why not join in over the Bank Holiday weekend? Check out the website www.darlingtontheatretown.co.uk

3. Events Coming Up

- **Theatre Town Flyers** – we did such an amazing job with the Theatre brochures that we are in demand again to distribute these flyers around local businesses in the town. We need a couple of people for this task. If that's you just let me know.
- **GOLD Tea Dance** Wednesday 17th August in Darlington Market Place. Darlington for Culture have their Information Stand to share all things Arts, Crafts, Culture and Music. Thanks to Glenda, Beth, Babs and Lesley who will be staffing the stand that day. Let's hope the sun shines and the cream teas are up to the usual standards!
- **First Wednesday of the Month – 6th September** – Volunteer drop in at the Forum Music Centre 6 – 8pm. Stay for a few minutes or two hours. Chat about volunteering or find out about events in and around the town. Catch up with other volunteers. Drink coffee, wine or beer. The Open Mic Music Night is on from 7pm onwards and you are welcome to join that at any time for no cost. Sorry I won't be there this month as I'll be going down south in readiness to enjoy myself at Salisbury Races the next day but rest assured Glenda and a merry band of volunteers will be on hand to keep you up to date.
- **BigLittleGigs** Saturday 23rd September at St Augustine's Parish Centre. The event is 2pm to 3pm and is live music for 0 - 10 year olds and their families. Volunteers are needed 1pm to 4pm to support the running of the event by setting up the room, staffing the door, supervising the children, setting up and running the refreshment stall, enjoying the music and tidying up after the event to ensure the room is as we found it. These events have been great fun and the Lions of Zululand who featured in the last newsletter were especially memorable. Jane and Lorraine have already volunteered for this. Do you want to join them?
- **Manic Mums** have been awarded a DfC small grant to put on an Arts Day on Thursday 26th October 10 – 4pm in the Dolphin Centre. We are looking for volunteers to support this event.

4. Thanks to:

- **Social Media Volunteer Staff**

Darlington Culture Volunteers (DCV) support lots of great events and organisations in and around the town and we want to showcase some of these achievements. DCV uses Instagram for photo-sharing (www.instagram/darlingtonculturevolunteers) so when you are volunteering at events, we'd appreciate your photos of activities, people, places or whatever interests you. Please e mail photos to DCVinstagram@hotmail.com including the events title, organiser, venue, date/time, plus a few words about the people in the photos if possible.

Photography is allowed in most public places but might be restricted or require a permit in some areas such as museums, churches, shopping malls, railway stations and council/government buildings. If people you don't know will be clearly identifiable in the photos please check that they are happy for photos to be posted on DCV social media. And of course be especially careful not to take photos of children without the parent's permission. Molly is the volunteer who is doing a great job with Instagram.



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You can also follow DCV on Twitter **@DtonCultureVols** for informal updates about events we are attending. Helen leads on Twitter and also supports our other social media volunteers as well as working with Rebecca Howarth from the Hippodrome on the DCV website which is coming soon.

Darlington Culture Volunteers is now on Facebook and you can find them on [Facebook.com/DarlingtonCultureVolunteers](https://www.facebook.com/DarlingtonCultureVolunteers)

There aren't many followers yet so can you boost our numbers please?

From July we will no longer be using the e mail address volunteerdarlingtonforculture@gmail.com but switching to our new DCV one which is **darlingtonculturevolunteers@hotmail.com**

Check your spam boxes to make sure our requests for you to volunteer are not piling up in there! So far the change has not caused too many issues but if you have any feedback please let us know.

5. Snippets

Do you volunteer in a museum in the North East? If you do, could you help our volunteer Molly with her dissertation survey? If you can then follow the link to:

<https://durham.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/volunteer-expenses-in-museums>

Assistant Treasurer – due to the imminent retirement of Mary Griss we are looking for someone to take on a regular role supporting the work of both the Darlington for Culture Treasurer and Secretary. This role involves basic management of incomings and outgoings and working with Committee Members. This will take about two hours of your time each week. Mary is very willing to support you through the first two or three months until you feel competent. Want something to add to your CV or keep your skills from going rusty then this could be for you.

Contact You - If you have changed your contact details recently please let us know and we'll amend our records. **Contact Us** - If you have any queries, questions, suggestions, amendments or offers of help then e mail darlingtonculturevolunteers@hotmail.com or text or ring Heather on 07775996098

Want to Volunteer for an event? - Please read this in conjunction with the latest version of the Volunteer Programme which you will have received via e mail. If you have seen anything you want to know more about and/or are interested in volunteering at an event then please let me know. Even if it appears there are no vacant slots it is often possible to accommodate willing volunteers in addition to or in other roles or for the next similar event. Your enthusiasm is all that is required. Thank you.

Websites – check out the new Hippodrome website **darlingtonhippodrome.co.uk** and don't forget there are lots of news items on Darlington for Cultures website **darlingtonforculture.org**



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Your day will go the way the corners of your mouth turn!