



Newsletter

Mid August 2019

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Life Stories preview at Heritage Open Days

Saturday 14th September, 11am to 3pm
Tavistock Library

In early summer next year we will be presenting performed readings from Life Stories, a project involving older people recording stories from their earlier lives. As a preview we'll be working with the project team to showcase the project during Heritage Open Day.

Many of us have a mum or dad, a friend or relative who's told us stories about their own lives that seemed... ordinary, incredible, hard, unlikely, different, extraordinary... But now? Perhaps these people are old and forgetful, or have passed away, and their stories too are becoming dim and uncertain. The Life Stories Project has been running for six years and its purpose is to give people the chance to document their own lives, in their own words, while they are still able to remember. This activity has proved very beneficial on many levels for those telling

their stories, as well as the volunteers making the recordings and transcriptions.

The Life Stories Project and Tavonians have arranged this Heritage Open Days event partly to celebrate the achievements to date, and partly to raise awareness. We will add drama, depth and context to the oral histories so that visitors will be able to listen to readings of people's unique experiences and hear people tell tales of life in remarkably different times. Visitors will also be able to find out about their own family history with genealogists from Tavistock Library, and could start to have their own life stories recorded.

We'll need a few people to read stories, would you like to be involved? Contact Pam Smith, pamelasmith46@btinternet.com.



Costumes

In a room in the basement of Tavistock Town Council offices Tavonians holds a store of costumes, covering many periods. We had been planning a special event to show some of our costumes to the public as part of Heritage Open Days in September, and although that hasn't proved possible due to holidays and other commitments we will be having some appropriate 1930s to 1950s costumes as part of the Life Stories Heritage Open Days.

If you have an interest in costume and you could spare a little time we are also wanting your help with sorting things. We were recently able to buy storage boxes and other helpful items such as a ladder to reach the top shelves thanks to a grant from Tavistock Town Council, so once everything is sorted, with costumes in order on hanging rails, and hats, gloves and bags etc in appropriate boxes, everything will be much easier to access when needed, and we'll know what we have.

If you can help as part of a small team please contact Rosy Griffith, rosypeter@hotmail.co.uk.



Brontë gets underway

The enthusiastic cast are about to start rehearsals for our November tour of Brontë and the publicity team have started to promote the performances.

Is anyone able to help with poster distribution in the areas around any of the venues? Getting good local publicity is crucial. Or perhaps there are other skills you would like to offer to assist the publicity? A printable copy of the poster is available on the website or by [clicking here](#).

We are looking for a couple of props, which we hope someone might be able to lend us. We need a coat stand, and we need a dog grate (freestanding coal/log fire grate). They must of course be appropriately Victorian, perhaps something like these:



We will also be needing offers of help with the get-in and get-out for each venue, as well as front-of-house and catering. For some, being behind the scenes may not seem quite as rewarding as being on stage but it can be and we'd like to see more members of Tavonians being involved in all sorts of ways.

If you can help in any of these ways please contact the Director of Brontë, Stuart Waterworth, stuwworth@btinternet.com.



We Happy Few

Our Spring Production has been selected and we are planning to take We Happy Few by Imogen Stubbs on tour in March. It will be directed by Di ffitch. It's an affectionate account of a group of female actors setting out in a battered 1920s Rolls-Royce to bring Shakespeare to a culture-starved Britain during the war. There are moments of sadness and a great deal of laughter.

It has a cast of 8 female and 2 male, of varying ages, and all the roles are of more or less equal size and on stage most of the time so it's a beautifully balanced ensemble piece of theatre.

For our plans to come to fruition we just have to have the cast, so please consider getting involved. There is a reading, which anyone whether interested in being in the play or not can come along to, followed a few weeks later by auditions.

Reading: Tuesday 22nd October, 7.30pm, The Studio, Kingdon House
Auditions: Sunday 1st December, 2pm, Northcott Room, Kingdon House

'There isn't a sweeter, warmer, more likeable play' *The Times*
'By far and away the funniest and saddest backstage play for half a century' *Daily Express*
'Very funny. A fascinating slice of social history' *Time Out*



Explore a Play Day

Sunday 5th January from 2pm, Morse Room, Kingdon House

To get next year off to a flying start we will be holding an exciting event, reading

bits of a number of great plays, then working through some of those pieces to put on a lightly rehearsed performance/reading during the early evening.

It will be an opportunity for people to get involved in helping to select plays for future production, a chance to meet up with others associated with Tavonians, and with a bring-and-share tea between the sessions it'll also be a social occasion. We hope it will appeal to those new to involvement with Tavonians as well as those who are more frequently on stage or behind the scenes.

More details will follow in later issues of the newsletter.

Other local theatre news and events

- Starts Summer Season, many different plays, 65 performances, visit www.starts.co.uk/what-s-on.
- Touchwood Theatre Company is due to present Cinderella in early December at the Devonport Playhouse but is in need of four cast members - Cinderella, Prince Charming, Dandini and Buttons. Please phone/text 07393229768.
- Septemberfest, 19th-21st Sept, Barbican Theatre, Plymouth. A mixed bill festival of short work to kickstart the new season. Currently taking expressions of interest. info@thewheel.org.uk, www.thewheel.org.uk/current-productions.
- Paddleboat Theatre Company present the tale of journalist Clare Hollingworth, Sat 21st Sept, Tavistock Library
- Squashbox Theatre presents Shivers and Shadows, Fri 25th Oct 4pm, Starts Studio.
- Tavistock Musical Theatre Company Presents The Sound of Music, 21st to 26th October, Tavistock Town Hall
- Tavonians member Kit Harbottle, who writes as Kit Walkham, appreciates help from those who enjoy informal playreadings to try out drafts of plays she is working on. If you'd like to be included in invitations to do this, let us know and we can put you in touch.