

Oswestry and District Arts Association Chairman's Newsletter

Dear members

First of all, may I thank everyone for their attendance at the A.G.M.? It was wonderful to see so many organisations represented and was a great show of strength for the various councillors there for the presentation of the cheque from the three LJs, Oswestry, Gobowen, St Martins & Weston Rhyn and St. Oswald's and Llanymynech. As Councillor Bennett pointed out, Oswestry is unique in this funding as we are the only Arts Association in Shropshire.

Of course, the extra funding brings with it responsibility and there may be some changes in the way we work and to that end the Executive will be meeting very soon to look at the way forward. It is a very exciting time and rest assured, you, as members of the Association, will be kept informed at every step. May I make a plea here for a secretary? It is not an onerous job – taking minutes, sending out agendas and invitations to applicants. This is the time to get involved as it will be very interesting and there is an honorarium. If you are interested, please ring me on 01691 662417 for a chat.

It was very gratifying to meet the young people who were given Bursaries and of their plans for the future. Good luck and success to all of them.

I was happy to introduce Councillor Steve Charmely and Susie Hancock of the Oswestry Games Organisation who gave the outline of their plans for the Oswestry Games next year to celebrate the London Olympics.

In connection to that I spoke about the Cultural Olympics which will run alongside under the wing of the Royal Shakespeare Company. I am so pleased that no fewer than three local groups, Attfield Theatre Company, L.A.D.S. and Oswestry Drama Project, have been accepted by the RSC to take part. Quite an achievement – well done Oswestry.

Val McGrath, Chairman of L.A.D.S gave a brief account of their plans and that their resident playwright, Neil Rhodes will be writing a play for the event. Allison Heward of Attfield Theatre Company reported that no decision has been made yet – however, I have heard of some of their plans which are very exciting – so watch this space. Debbie Glenn and Hazel Davis of the Oswestry Drama Project spoke of their ideas for a Community Project based on 'The Tempest'.

They have arranged a workshop in which they invite people to 'whip up a storm'. Debbie's and Hazel's enthusiasm and energy is catching and they certainly caught my imagination. As Debbie said they want anyone, any ability, from 7 to 107 to take part. You don't have to perform, as there are many ways to become involved.

The workshop is scheduled for Sunday July 24th and will be at the Venue in Park Hall from 10.00 – 4.00pm. If you wish to take part, phone Debbie on 653413. This will be the first of many leading to four performances at the venue in July 2012.

The Oswestry and District Arts Association will be giving all three projects our full support, not just with funding but with practical help and very importantly in a coordinating role. All of our organisations are needed and all included from artists to handbell ringers to singers and dancers, actors and musicians, poets, writers embroiderers, visual arts, civic society everyone and anyone – if you have a talent, we want it.

We have heard it said so many times 'there is nothing to do in Oswestry'. Well, Oswestry is alive and well and has plenty to do between now and next July. Please come and join in the fun – the town will be buzzing and make sure you are a part of it.

Christine Hughes
Chairman

