



# **BILLINGHAM**

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **FOLKLORE FESTIVAL**



**BIFF NEWSLETTER No 11, September 2009**

**46<sup>th</sup> BILLINGHAM FESTIVAL – Dates to be Confirmed**  
**THE Festival of Fun and Friendship**

WOW, I think you will all agree, this has got be arguably the BEST Festival in the 45 year history. The Groups were absolutely outstanding not only on the stage, but mixed well with the other participants, Festival Volunteers and Audiences alike and lifetime friendships have been again formed spanning the Globe. The closure of the Forum Theatre, which could have been catastrophic for the Festival, has actually worked in our favour for once. The performances held in the Arc and Middlesbrough Theatres, have definitely attributed to widening our audiences, and people who didn't know the Festival or didn't know what we were all about, have been able to experience the wonder of the Festival and through the e-mails we have received are definitely going to spread the word.

We would like to extend our thanks to the Management and Staff of both the Arc and Middlesbrough Theatre for the help and hospitality shown not only during the Festival but the help they gave to us prior to the Festival regarding the sale of tickets, advertising etc.

Apart from the Opening Ceremony, the weather was great and it enabled us to hold additional Evening Performances in the Town Centre Arena along with the usual daytime performances, and again it proved to be a winner.

The re-location of our "Home" to The Campus School and Art College during the Festival also was a huge success, where we were made to

feel at home right from the start, and we would like on behalf of the Directors, Volunteers and Festival Participants extend our thanks to Angela Warburton and her excellent staff for all their help and hard work.

Our next problem is How on earth do we top this Festival?

We have already had requests from several groups wishing to attend and as usual we have asked

Groups – a concert not to be missed for avid Festival Supporters.

We are hoping that by taking the Festival to different venues in the Tees Valley we will be able to attract a wider audience from further a field and spread the word about our outstanding Festival, as both venues have promoted our Festival in their advertising material and online, at NO additional Charge to us.



In addition to the free advertising from both theatres, we decided this year to advertise on buses, to enable us to spread the word about the festival.

In addition to this, Outside Performances in inclement weather also proved a problem, but we have been able to hire a beautiful high quality marquee which will be erected on the Campus School grounds, which has now solved another problem for the Festival Organisers.

Unfortunately in the case of inclement weather, due to space limitations and Fire Regulations, we will be able to transfer Stand A ticket holders Only – so don't delay, tickets are going fast, hopefully we will not need to use the Marquee for transferred concerts, as the sun will be shining, but just in case....



The Booking Office for Tickets was officially opened on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2009, slightly earlier on-line and is once again proving a great success. Tickets can be purchased at the Booking Office which is situated in Billingham Town Centre (The Old Card Warehouse Shop), Queensway, Billingham, we are unable to take Credit Card Payments in the Shop, but purchases for tickets and other items can be made by Credit and Debit Card on the very secure Pay Pal, online on our Festival Website Store, if you have any queries or problems,

please just give us a ring and we will be happy to help.



Some of you, who have access to our Website, will have noticed an addition to the Line up of Groups.

We have been approached by a group from Antigua and Barbuda (West Indies) who asked if it would be possible for them to come to the Festival and participate in our Anniversary year. After much persuasion (by two people who will remain nameless) the Director did his sums and said YES. The Antigua Dance Academy will be filling our stage with a colourful carnival atmosphere and beating drums (hopefully Steel Drums as well – to be confirmed). We are quite surprised that they want to leave their beautiful Island at this time as they are major players in their own carnival held at the same time - their loss our gain, hope they bring their weather with them.



## SAD NEWS

We are very sad to announce the passing of Ex Festival Committee Member Mr Ted Wood, who worked tirelessly for the Festival for many many years in the Town Centre Arena. Even after retiring from the Festival Committee, he

attended most concerts and very kindly sent his video footage to the Festival as a lasting memory for us to keep. We wish to express our deepest condolences to his wife and family, he will be sadly missed at the Festival.

## BILLINGHAM FESTIVAL SHOP

In addition to the Festival Booking Office, we opened a Festival Shop in Billingham Town Centre (Ex Card Warehouse) selling everything from Christmas Ornaments to CD's Books to DVD's. We are trying to Fund Raise for the Festival and have had some exceptional donations from Festival Supporters. Sandra Cutler has donated an extremely large collection of Lilliput Lane and Ringtons

Teapots, which we will be taking to a specialist as we feel that very kind donation is extremely valuable and could potentially raise a lot of money for us. Thanks Sandra. Maureen Taylor (Our Chairperson) has donated a full collection of Seafarers Books "Specialist Edition" again this will be going to a Specialist as this is very valuable collection. Thanks Maureen.



A special thanks must be extended to all the Festival Volunteers who have started work earlier than normal to man the Box Office and Shop, too numerous to name individually, but a BIG THANK YOU TO YOU ALL.



A Big Thank you must also go to all the volunteers and supporters, who have donated all sorts of articles for sale, if anyone out there has anything they would like to donate, please just bring it along to the shop – we will be very grateful.

Our On-line store will also be represented in the Festival Shop in time for the Festival. However Photographs and DVD's of previous Festivals are already available there.

We are hoping to raise money to contribute to the continuation of our brilliant Festival.

Please if you are in the Town Centre prior to the Festival or during the Festival, pop in have a browse and say hello.

## Website....

Our Festival Website is now fully updated with the latest news and happenings. All groups who are appearing at this years Festival have got photographs and video clips, but you will need Broadband to view them.

## Last But Not Least

This will be the last Newsletter before the Festival starts, as now we get extremely busy,

preparing for our International Guests, so all that's left to do is wish you all a very happy Festival, Keep your fingers crossed that the

weather is good and ENJOY it as much as we will.

Thanks and See you all in Billingham.

Don't forget your Ticket – Book early to avoid disappointment.

## NEXT PUBLICATIONS OF BIFF NEWSLETTER

The next issue of the Billingham International Festival Newsletter will be published in September 2009, unless we have any major News or Updates to inform you about

If you would like to make any comments regarding the Newsletter, or receive the

previous edition of the Newsletter by e-mail, please contact us on:

[info@billinghamfestival.co.uk](mailto:info@billinghamfestival.co.uk)

If you do not wish to receive our Newsletter in the future, please e-mail us back with a word “**unsubscribe**” and we will delete your e-mail address of our mailing list.

*Take Care - Lisa*

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