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the arts bulletin



www.independentarts.org.uk

info@independentarts.org.uk

01983 822437

SingAbout makes the cut for “Brilliant Britain” on the Community Channel

SingAbout, our free weekly singing groups for older people to promote wellbeing featured in a recent programme entitled, “Brilliant Britain”, which was broadcast on The Community Channel back in October.

The series visits different areas of the UK, and is a celebration of all that’s good about the UK and Northern Ireland. The episode that featured SingAbout focused on community groups, organisations and individuals from the Isle of Wight.

SingAbout now runs weekly in four towns on the Island: Newport, Freshwater, Ryde and Ventnor. The film-makers caught our Newport group in full voice during one of their sessions. Chair of Trustees, Wendy Varley and Project Manager, Caroline Ash describe how the project has grown and evolved; SingAbout tutor Sandy Kealty gives a singing lesson to the presenter, Joj-Jo Henry; and participants explain why attending SingAbout means so much to them.

Independent Arts was delighted to have been featured in the programme, and are thrilled that SingAbout’s profile has been raised in this way.

To watch the SingAbout section of the “Brilliant Britain” programme, visit our website www.independentarts.org.uk/news/

We are also delighted to announce that SingAbout has recently received further funding from The Daisy Rich Trust and The Garfield Weston Foundation. A huge Thank You to these organisations.



Christmas closure

The Independent Arts office will close for the Christmas and New Year break on Thursday 19th December.

The office will re-open on Monday 7th January 2014.

Independent Arts says Bon Voyage to Workshops Co-ordinator, Hannah

Hannah Joyce has left her role as Workshops Co-ordinator at Independent Arts for pastures new.

Hannah’s last day was on 31st October, and she has since left the UK to undertake an eight week tour of India. Hannah will then return to the Isle of Wight for Christmas and New Year, before embarking on a round the world trip in January 2014.

The team of staff and trustees at Independent Arts would like to take this opportunity to thank Hannah for all of her hard work on the Workshops for Wellbeing programme,

Creative Futures coming to an end

The highly successful Creative Futures project, funded by the CCG’s Innovation Grant Programme will come to an end in December 2013.

The project has seen volunteers being trained and mentored to deliver person-centred one-to-one sessions with the more isolated residents of care homes across the Isle of Wight.

By the end of 2013, Creative Futures will have recruited and trained more than 50 volunteers, and delivered more than 800 sessions.

The project has seen residents and volunteers working together on a number of creative projects including: making and painting bird boxes; working with iPads; making audio recordings of life histories; painting with watercolours; making interactive tactile scented mobiles; and needle felting.

Through the Creative Futures project we hope to have shown the value and impact of creative positive engagement with older people in one-to-one settings.



NAPA Conference provides inspiration for our Workshops for Wellbeing programme



Our Project Manager, Caroline Ash attended the annual NAPA conference in London on 9th October.

NAPA is the National Association of Activities Providers for Older People. The conference was a good opportunity to meet with activities co-ordinators from care homes across the UK, and find out the issues and challenges associated with activity provision.

The key note speaker, Dr Graham Stokes—Bupa's head of dementia care—gave an inspiring presentation. He spoke positively about what can be offered to care home residents in terms of an improved quality of life, and talked about how all too often, he has seen cases of "activities being marginalised, fitted in, as and when".

Delegates were encouraged to discuss barriers to their work, and overall the conference was an engaging and encouraging event which was hugely relevant to the work of Independent Arts.



Older Voices Roadshow successfully completed, with spring dates to follow



Older Voices provides opportunities for social events, and has regular group outings.

One aim of the group is to tackle social isolation amongst older people.

In partnership with Independent Arts, Older Voices delivered an Information Roadshow this autumn.

The Roadshow saw Older Voices hold information sessions at venues in Freshwater, Sandown and Gurnard. There are more sessions being planned for spring 2014.

Over the last few months, new circles have also been established in Ryde, Freshwater and Fairlee. Older Voices is an opportunity for people who are 50+ to come together to discuss the issues that are important to them and have their voices heard. Older Voices is also a social group, where new friendships are forged.

For more information about Older Voices and how you and get involved, please contact Caroline Ash, Project Manager at Independent Arts on 822437 or at oldervoices@outlook.com

Independent Arts was delighted to attend and exhibit at both the Southern Housing Residents Involvement Day on 27th September at Winchester House, and "Together We Can" at the Quay Arts Centre on 16th October.

Distance Learning proving a hit with our staff and creative practitioners

A number of Independent Arts staff members and creative practitioners are currently undertaking a distance learning course, offered by The Isle of Wight College.

The Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Dementia Care course provides a full overview in all aspects of dementia care, including symptoms, behaviours and treatments. The team at Independent Arts recognises the value of undertaking additional learning such as this, and the positive impact it will have on the charity's work.

Please see our website for full details: www.independentarts.org.uk