

VELVET COALMINE FESTIVAL 2017

7th-16th SEPTEMBER BLACKWOOD

INTO THE ARK

JADE JONES MBE

AFRICA WRITES

CHILDREN'S

LITERATURE

FESTIVAL

TONGUE FU

MARTY JOPSON

MIKE WOZNIAK

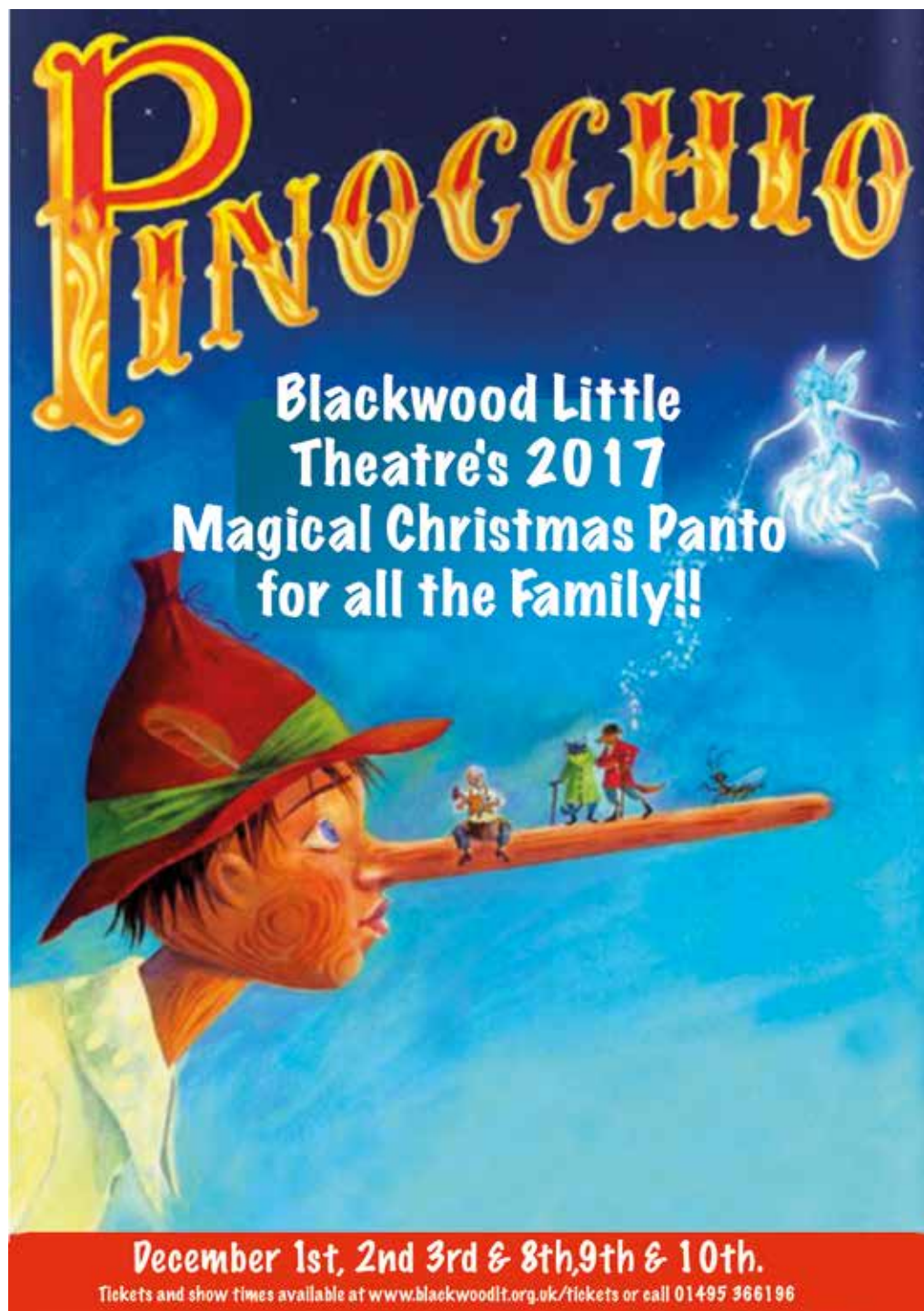


AFRICA
WRITES 2017
The Royal African Society's
annual literature festival



Royal African Society





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welcome to Velvet Coalmine

Velvet Coalmine is thrilled to welcome a host of stars to Blackwood for the 2017 festival.

Wales Sports Personality of the Year and double Olympic Taekwon-do Champion Jade Jones MBE heads a bill that also includes our festival partners 'Africa Writes' who bring their writers to Wales for the very first time.

With spoken word brilliance from the amazing 'Tongue Fu', a host of top Comedians, Science Presenter from BBC1's The One Show Marty Jopson, a one-act Theatre competition, Cardiff's Firefly Press, a fantastic array of workshops, performers and writers including our writer-in-residence Rachel Long and of course, Blackwood's very own singing sensations 'Into the Ark' we have a line-up that is full of quality and diversity and is set to light up Blackwood over 10 days in September.

Our charity partner for 2017 is Gwent Children's Diabetes Fund and the 'Into the Ark' concert on Friday September 8th will double up as a fundraiser for this fantastic cause. Our sincere thanks to Dane and Taylor for supporting the festival in what has been a fantastic year for them both since they captivated Blackwood and the rest of the nation on The Voice!

Our 5-year Title Sponsorship with Blackwood Town Council has been invaluable for growing the festival

and the Council deserve immense credit for their belief and conviction in backing this event and its benefit to Blackwood. Additional thanks must also go to Caerphilly County Council via their Community Regeneration Fund which has enabled us to bring Africa Writes to Blackwood.

There are many people that have made the festival possible not least our team of 'Velveteers' but special thanks must go to Vicki Spencer-Francis at Cowshed and Caitlin Pearson and Joanna Brown at The Royal African Society in London for believing in the idea that 'Africa Writes' could come to Blackwood and providing our children with an amazing opportunity in their own schools. The event



Iain Richards Festival Director

certainly couldn't work without the input of the schools and the commitment of the Head Teachers to the Velvet Coalmine vision is to be applauded as it enables children to benefit directly from what the festival sets out to do. Which is to inspire. 🌟

partners and sponsors 2017

A huge thank you to our individual sponsors.

The Africa Writes weekend is funded by Caerphilly County Borough Council's Community Regeneration Fund. New playwriting competition is very kindly sponsored by Blackwood Town Council. 'Coleg Gwent Day' is generously funded by Coleg Gwent, Cross Keys Campus. The Roper Prize for Literature is very kindly sponsored by Brian Roper. National Poet of Wales Ifor ap Glyn is very kindly sponsored by Blackwood Rotary Club. Taekwon-do-Wales is very kindly sponsored by Pontllanfraith Rotary Club. Lesotho Rugby Academy workshops are very

kindly sponsored by Newbridge & Abercarn Rotary Club. Rachel Long is very kindly sponsored by the Freeman of the City of London Islwyn Association. Trouble comes to Town! is very kindly sponsored by Jim Davies. clare e. potter is very kindly sponsored by John Hold. Elizabeth Millington is very kindly sponsored by Bill Coppage. Music Mayhem is very kindly sponsored by Mayhem music group. Helen Grant is very kindly sponsored by Helen Greenwood and Della Tew.

...and a huge thank you to all the schools for their fabulous fundraising efforts on World Book Day! 🌟



Royal African Society



Big Pit Amgueddfa Lofaol Cymru
Big Pit National Coal Museum

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yn Big Pit!

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at Big Pit!

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Ar agor bob dydd: **9.30am-5pm.**
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a warm welcome from Blackwood Town Council

Blackwood Town Council is very pleased to support this wonderful opportunity that Velvet Coalmine has given to our town - a Children's Literature Festival.

When the idea was first broached by Iain Richards (Festival Director) to myself and Councillor Jim Criddle, we were blown away by his enthusiasm and the fact that he wanted to do this in his hometown, Blackwood, rather than easier options in Newport, Cardiff or most other major towns for that matter.

We all recognised that for this to work the local schools had to be involved. Iain worked his magic on a few head teachers and members of the Town Council to such a degree that the local school cluster group came on board. More astonishingly Iain persuaded members to support his vision by pledging £2,500 each year for 3 years to give our youngsters a chance they might never otherwise get - an opportunity to be inspired, stimulated and

engaged via creative workshops with some of the best writers in Wales and hopefully increase their self-esteem and confidence by equipping them for the rapidly changing world in which we now live.

That was 2016 and what a wonderful success the Festival was, so much so that for 2017 additional Welsh medium schools have come on board. The Town Council recognises the great benefits our youngsters have gained. We are so confident that our Children's Literature Festival will in future years compete with festivals elsewhere in the UK and undoubtedly occupy pride of place in the valleys that we have pledged additional annual support of £7,500 for 5 years.

So what an opportunity for Blackwood. We urge you to show your support throughout the 10 days of this year's Festival. ☺



www.velvetcoalmine.com

contact your town councillor

Blackwood Town Council is situated in the Sirhowy Valley within the Caerphilly County Borough It represents and serves 4 wards - Blackwood North,

Blackwood Central, Blackwood South and Cefn Fforest East, with 16 members serving on the Council.

Blackwood South

Zoe Hammond, 32 Meadow Road , Pontllanfraith NP12 2AQ	PC	07449 489453
Jim Criddle, Islwyn, Llanarth Road, Pontllanfraith NP12 2LG	PC	07908 898518
William (Bill) Baber, 27 Pontgam Terrace, Ynysddu NP11 7LD	IND	01495 200827

Blackwood Central

James (Jim) Edwards, 39 Highfield Road, Pontllanfraith, Blackwood NP12 2EB	IND	07564 065430
Paula Dauncey, 22 Rhos Y Dderwen, Highfields, Blackwood NP12 1HB	LAB	07816 658135
Darren Jones, 2 Newfoundland Way, Blackwood NP12 1FS	PC	07933 997658
Andrew Short, 28 Cwm Braenar, Pontllanfraith, Blackwood N12 2DS	PC	07980 001171

Blackwood North

Carol Erasmus, 7 Parklands, Blackwood NP12 1JA	PC	01495 224726
Janet Griffiths, 11 St. Peter's Drive, Libanus Fields, Pontllanfraith NP12 2ER	LAB	07982 711708
Jan Weeks, 47 Sunnysbank Road, Blackwood NP12 1HZ	IND	01495 228480
Robert Weeks, 47 Sunnysbank Road, Blackwood NP12 1H	IND	01495 228480

Cefn Fforest East*

Andrew Farina-Childs, 3 Beech Cottages, Twynyffald Rd, Blackwood NP12 3HG	IND	01443 837780
Delwyn Davies, Flat 9 Fitzroy Lodge, Twyn Gardens, Bryn Rd, Blackwood NP12 3LT	IND	07943 495869
Noel Turner, 30A Victoria Road, Fleur de Lis, Blackwood NP12 3UG	PC	01443 879220
Pat Cook, 13 Sycamore Court, Woodfieldside, Blackwood NP12 0DA	LAB	01495 225164

*A vacancy currently exists in Cefn Fforest East Ward.

The new Mayor is Councillor Jan Weeks. Her nominated charity is the British Heart Foundation.

The new Deputy Mayor is Councillor Jim Edwards.

We consider ourselves fortunate to be living in a community minded Valleys town with such a varied history, especially its key role in the Chartist movement in South East Wales.

Blackwood was crucial to Chartism, which saw rallies across Britain ignored by Parliament. Violence broke out and on November 4th 1839, the Newport Rising was born, planned at the Coach & Horses pub in the town. Zephaniah Williams led a column from Blackwood which marched on the Westgate Hotel in Newport, where bloodshed ensued with more than 200 Chartists arrested and their leaders, including Williams transported for life to Tasmania. The Chartists' failure was relatively short lived, as many of their demands were adopted by 1918, forming the basis of the current UK electoral system.

Our town's historic role in the Chartist movement was commemorated in the form of a statue at the end of 2008 – the 180th anniversary of the workers' fight for political and social reform. The 25ft. steel man, with pike in hand, looking towards Newport with his back to Oakdale Colliery stands on the roundabout at the end of the Chartist Bridge at the northern end of town.

Town Council levy a precept each year, and provide the Hanging Baskets and Christmas Lighting/ Decorations on the High Street, organise and sponsor the very popular Town Carnival, Christmas Lantern Parade and Carol Concert and fund grants to charitable organisations and local groups.

The Council also sponsors a Blackwood in Bloom competition, which encourages people to

make the most of their front gardens and also recognises those local individuals who have made a contribution to the well being of the Town, by presenting them with a Civic Award.

More recently, the Council has become the Title Sponsor of the Velvet Coalmine Children's Literature Festival.

Town Council is consulted on Planning and other matters affecting the town, and work closely with Caerphilly Borough Council, the Police and other multi agency groups on the Town Centre Management, Retail Partnership, After Hours and Bus Station Groups to try and ensure the towns interests, safety and needs are reflected and met.

Blackwood is twinned with Protivin, a small town in the district of Pisek in the South Bohemian region of the Czech Republic, and this is recognised by the Torc Gateway sign opposite the library – a Blackwood Entrance sign depicting oak trees/wood from which our town derived its name, and plane trees native to the Protivin area.

The Town Council, together with the newly established Blackwood & District Heritage Association are determined that Coed Duon, a small remnant of the original wood that gave our town its name, remains a valuable asset for the local community for generations to come, and that the towns historic role in the Chartist movement is never forgotten.

Working with local groups and schools will ensure future generations are aware of our rich and varied heritage. 🌳

For more information about Blackwood Town Council visit www.blackwoodtowncouncil.org.uk

Africa Writes

at the Velvet Coalmine Festival

Founded in 2012, the Africa Writes festival is an annual celebration of contemporary literature from Africa and the diaspora. This year, Africa Writes is on tour! We are visiting Rwanda and Tanzania in East Africa, and Edinburgh, Bristol, Birmingham and Blackwood in the UK. Stopping off at Velvet Coalmine festival in Blackwood, Wales, will be a group of internationally recognised poets and facilitators. Through creative collaborations and captivating performances, Africa Writes at Velvet Coalmine festival promises to be an exciting weekend!

Both Africa Writes and Velvet Coalmine exist to celebrate and promote history, heritage, and creativity and innovation. We are about bringing people together to discover things about themselves and other people through art. With the packed programme of events including poetry performances, workshops for teachers, book club discussions and creative writing sessions, there are many engaging ways for the Blackwood community to discover African literature.

Africa Writes at Velvet Coalmine Festival is made possible through the support of Caerphilly County Borough Council.

About Africa Writes

The Africa Writes festival is an annual celebration of contemporary literature from Africa and the diaspora brought to you by The

Royal African Society. The festival showcases established and emerging talent from the African continent and its diaspora in what is now the UK's biggest celebration of contemporary African writing taking place over an exciting summer weekend in London. The festival features book launches, readings, author appearances, panel discussions, writing masterclasses, young people's workshops and other activities. Our previous headline speakers have been Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Ngugi wa Thiong'o with son Mukoma wa Ngugi, Wole Soyinka, Ama Ata Aidoo, Ben Okri, Nawal El Saadawi and Alain Mabanckou.

In 2017 the festival expanded beyond London to hold pop-up events in Rwanda and Tanzania in East Africa, and in Edinburgh, Blackwood, Bristol and Birmingham in the UK. africawrites.org

About the Royal African Society

The Royal African Society is Britain's prime Africa organisation with more than a century of in-depth knowledge and experience of the continent and its peoples. We foster a better understanding of Africa in the UK and throughout the world, exploring the continent's history, politics, culture, problems and potential. We disseminate knowledge and insight to make a positive difference to Africa's development and celebrate the diversity and depth of African culture. www.royalafricansociety.org

writer in residence

Rachel Long

Velvet Coalmine is proud to welcome Rachel Long as our very first writer in residence. Rachel will visit many of the schools as well as perform during the festival and will present her work in conversation on the final day of the event.



Picture ©Amaal Said

www.velvetcoalmine.com

@velvetcoalminer @velvetcoalmine

Africa Writes poets and facilitators

AFRICA
WRITES
The Royal African Society's
annual literature festival

Victoria Adukwei Bulley is a British-born Ghanaian poet, writer and filmmaker. A former Barbican Young Poet, her work has been commissioned by the Royal Academy of Arts, in addition to being featured on BBC Radio 4. She was shortlisted for the Brunel University African Poetry Prize 2016, and is a fellow of the acclaimed mentorship programme, The



Complete Works. Her debut pamphlet, *Girl B*, edited by Kwame Dawes, forms part of the 2017 New-Generation African Poets series.

She is the director of *MOTHER TONGUES*, a intergenerational poetry, translation and film project supported by Arts Council England and Autograph ABP.

Afrikult. is a literary platform dedicated to exploring, discussing and celebrating African literature. Afrikult.'s website consists of bite-size book reviews, interviews with writers, translators, publishers and organisations to opinion pieces. Afrikult. hosts workshops, panel discussions and present papers at conferences and literary festivals. Afrikult. was formed in



July 2014 by three friends passionate about African literature, and is now run

by Marcelle Mateki Akita - writer, reader and researcher who shares her work on *matekiwrites* – and Zaahida Nabagereka - currently studying for a PhD in African Languages and Cultures at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Zaahida's research focuses on literary production processes in Kampala, Uganda. www.afrikult.com @afrikult.

Rachel Long was awarded a Jerwood/Arvon mentorship in 2015. Her work has featured in *Magma*, *The London Magazine*, and is forthcoming in *Butcher's Dog*. She won The Poetry School and Soda Pictures poetry competition 2016. Rachel is Assistant Tutor to Jacob Sam-La Rose on the Barbican Young Poets programme, and is the leader of Octavia - poetry collective for women of colour - housed at Southbank Centre, London.

Nick Makoha is author of *Kingdom of Gravity* (Peepal Tree Press). Nick is a Cave Canem Graduate Fellow and Complete Works Alumni. Nick won the 2015 Brunel international African Poetry Prize and is the 2016 winner of the Toi Derricotte & Cornelius Eady Chapbook Prize for his manuscript



Resurrection Man. His poems appeared in *The Poetry Review*, *Rialto*, *The Triquarterly Review*, *Boston Review*, *Callaloo*, and *Wasafiri*. www.nickmakoha.com

Belinda Zhawi is a Zimbabwean-born writer and educator who lives and works in London. Her work mostly focuses on memories of living in rural and urban Zimbabwe. She has performed across the UK in numerous venues, festivals and events including at Africa Writes, Bestival and TATE, with her work published in the anthologies *Liminal Animals* and *Casagrande: Rain Of Poems*. In 2013, Zhawi featured on



Channel 4's *Random Acts* and also co-founded the monthly poetry night, *BORN::FREE*. Zhawi was shortlisted for 2015-16 Young Poet Laureate's London role.

Africa Writes Team

Caitlin Pearson is the Events Programme Manager at the Royal African

Society. She works on the general public events programme as well the annual Africa Writes festival. Her background is in

higher education and scholarship – she previously worked in communications and events at the Centre of African Studies, SOAS and at the Canon Collins Educational and Legal Assistance Trust. Caitlin holds a BA from

Rachel Long



the University of Birmingham and an MA from SOAS, both in African Studies. Her research interests include film and TV, representation,



class and disability. She is working towards expanding the reach of Africa Writes to other parts of England, as well as Wales and Scotland.

Joanna Brown is the Education Programme Manager at the Royal African Society. After six years as a primary teacher in Haringey, specialising in Literacy and Reading Enrichment, she is now developing streams of work to support cultural organisations in their delivery of educational programmes. Prior to working in education, she co-ordinated community projects in the housing sector, with a focus on performing arts. Previously she worked as an events co-ordinator at the British Film Institute and the BBC. She is of Sierra Leonean and English descent. Joanna holds a BA in English Literature from the University of Cambridge and trained to teach at the Institute of Education. Joanna runs the Africa Writes Young Voices



Programme, a series of dynamic creative writing workshops using African art, photography, music and literature as stimulus. 🌍



Royal African Society

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Take a look at our website www.taekwon-do-wales.com

Gwent Children's Diabetes Fund

Gwent Children's Diabetes Fund is the charity fund run by the Paediatric Diabetes Team at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. Any money raised is used directly for children with diabetes in Gwent.

Each year we undertake a number of activities to help improve the quality of life of children living with diabetes. Some of the events organised include:

Activity Day

This fun and action packed day is open to all children with diabetes aged between 8 and 13. It will include activities such as canoeing, climbing and gorge walking which are all supervised by qualified instructors. The feedback from previous activity days has been extremely positive and children have reported increased independence and confidence as a result of attending.

Transition day

Moving from primary school to secondary school can be a big change for any child. However having a chronic condition can make it even harder. Each year the team organise a transition day for all young people about to start in Secondary school. This day helps the children learn how they can manage their

diabetes in and around school. They get the chance to make friends with young people who have diabetes and are in a similar position. It includes team building activities and workshops, and the children are reassured that their diabetes can be managed efficiently in the school environment.

Education Club

Diabetes education club is run over 6 weeks where children are educated more about their diabetes. Each week the children are taught about a certain aspect of diabetes. They stay for an evening meal so they can put the knowledge they have learnt into practice.

Christmas Party

At Christmas time we arrange a party for the younger children. This event is really beneficial to the parents as they get to meet other parents with young children who suffer from the same condition. The children really enjoy themselves and meet new friends and meet Santa which is the highlight of the party.


We are extremely grateful for any donations we receive as we do not receive any external funding.

Contact details:

Claire Baker (Paediatric Dietitian) 01633 234288, claire.baker@wales.nhs.uk

Cheques payable to: Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Aneurin Bevan LHB Charitable Fund, Registered Charity Number: 1098728



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Gwent Children's Diabetes Fund

Local Fund Supporting Children with Type 1 Diabetes

A Charitable fund run by the Paediatric Diabetes Team at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. All money raised is used directly for children with diabetes in Gwent. These include Comprehensive Educational days, Christmas Parties, Diabetes Educational Clubs and Activity days.



Aneurin Bevan LHB Charitable Fund. Registered Charity Number: 1098728

Any queries, please contact: Claire Baker (Paediatric Dietitian)
Tel: 01633 234288 or Email: Claire.baker@wales.nhs.uk

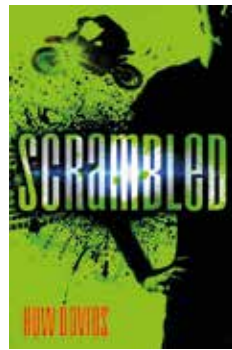
Firefly Press

Stories can happen anywhere. They can happen in some future world, on Mars or just down the road, round the corner, in the next town - on the next mountain.

As Wales' only dedicated children's and young adult publisher in English, Firefly Press, set up four years ago, is already bringing you all of the above.

Our goal is to publish fun, exciting and top-quality books that children as young as five through to teenagers can enjoy reading. So move along the shelf David Walliams and the Wimpy Kid, we now have our own home grown books from Wales too.

Top among these for younger readers are tales of dragons, football-playing vampires, a grumpy ghost and a very clever, very naughty monkey called Thimble – just some of the characters you'll meet in



boys, bikes and art classes – and some not-so-hard bullies. Hero, Davidde, always hands in his homework on time and is a model pupil, but that doesn't stop him getting in trouble with the barmy new headmaster. So when he gets the chance to buy a scrambling bike instead of a telescope with his hard-earned savings, he does! Or there's Aubrey,

our Dragonfly series for Years 2 to 5. And for older primary school readers and first year high school we have some brilliant tales. Take, for example, Scrambled by Huw Davies, a story of



sets off to the rescue, helped just a little by the fact that he can talk to animals! Or if these don't appeal we have stories set everywhere from the dark streets of Victorian Cardiff to the red prairies of Mars!

We think these are great reads, but you don't have to take our word for it. The first Aubrey book by Horatio Clare, Aubrey and the Terrible Yoot, won the Branford Boase Award for the best first children's novel in the UK in 2016. And the sequel, Aubrey and the Terrible Ladybirds – out in May, was a Sunday Times children's book of the week! Scrambled, set in a fictional valley's town was shortlisted for

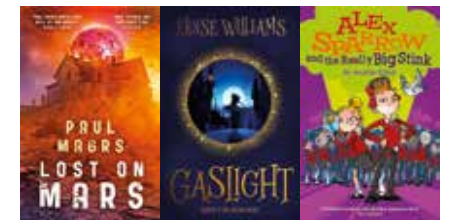


the junior fiction prize in the Heart of Hawick Children's Book Awards on the Scottish borders. And most recently Thimble Monkey Superstar by Jon Blake – the one about the monkey – has been shortlisted in the UK's biggest funny books prize, the Lollies Laugh Out Loud Awards, in the 6-8 year old category. Children across Britain will have the chance to vote for Thimble in the awards right

a rambunctious child who tries to run before he can walk and has crashed two cars before he's old enough to drive one. But when his dad's in trouble with a monster you cannot kill, Aubrey

up until December, with the winner announced in January 18. (Vote Thimble! shop.scholastic.co.uk/lollies/popjam)

For teenage readers we have more: Sarah Govett's The Territory series sees 15-year-old Noah, Jack and Raf, have to take an exam which, if you fail, means almost certain death because you'll be thrown out of the safe but tiny Territory, into the lethal Wetlands outside the fence. Maria Grace's heroine, Emmeline, in White Petals is negotiating difficulties at home and in a south Wales care home, to emerge triumphant against the school bullies, with a little help from her friends. Past meets the present in the Carnegie-nominated The Boy Who Drew the Future by Rhian Ivory, or there are some Virtual Reality nightmares in Purge, by Kat Ellis for 16-19 year olds.



So from Newport, Gwent, (where Steve meets singing pirates) to Snowdonia (where Harri's pet dragon called Tan loves eating chocolate), from Llanidloes (that's the vampires) to Pembrokeshire (a magical island and a very odd granny) we have stories to delight children across the UK, and the world. But whether the tale is from Mold or Mars (try Lost on Mars by Doctor Who novel writer Paul Magrs) you can be sure it was made in Wales. So next time you want a good read for your kids, pupils or yourself, try www.fireflypress.co.uk, or look for us on Amazon, your local independent bookshop or library or Waterstones, and let your imagination fly! 🦋

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Lesotho is internationally twinned with Wales.



Saturday 21st October 2017

INTO THE ARK

+ SPECIAL GUESTS

Tramshed Cardiff



Friday 29th September 2017

TOM GRENNAN

+ SPECIAL GUESTS

The Globe Cardiff



Friday 17th November 2017

HAPPY MONDAYS

+ JOHN DA SILVA

The Great Hall, Cardiff



Wednesday 27th September 2017

SUNDARA KARMA

+ THE MAGIC GANG

Tramshed Cardiff



Tuesday 3rd October 2017

THE JESUS AND THE MARY CHAIN

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Saturday 25th November 2017

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Into The Ark

Iain Richards talks to the Blackwood balladeers riding a tidal wave of pop success

What does it mean to you to come back and perform in Blackwood?

We're very happy that we've been asked to play Velvet Coalmine, it's great that Blackwood gets its own festival. It's always fun playing to a home crowd and the Methodist Church is a great venue so we're really looking forward to playing.

Who have been your musical influences?

Our influences vary but mainly stems from singer/songwriters such as Ray Lamontagne, John Mayer and Ryan Adams. We also spend a lot of time listening to music from the 60s and 70s such as Otis Redding, Al Green and Wilson Pickett.

What has life been like after The Voice?

Life after The Voice has been very positive for us, we managed to sell out a UK Tour off the back of being part of the show and our music now reaches a much wider audience. We're also looking forward to supporting Tom Jones this summer on a run of dates which wouldn't have been possible without taking part of the show.

What piece of advice would you give aspiring musicians?

Our only advice is to play as many shows as you can, the more people you play in front of can only help you, and to spend a lot of time writing and focusing on what sort of band you wish to become.

What's your favourite thing about Blackwood?

I guess our favourite thing about Blackwood is the community and familiar friendly faces that we know after living here for a long time. Our hometown have been incredibly supportive of us since before appearing on The Voice and have continued their support. 🍷

Into The Ark play Blackwood Methodist Church on Friday September 8th with Mynyddislwyn Male Voice Choir

events

Thursday 7th September

Tongue Fu for Kids

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Velvet Coalmine 2017 kicks off with Tongue Fu for Kids, a brand new show from the acclaimed Tongue Fu team. Created for children aged 7-11 and their grown ups, developed in partnership with London's Southbank, it is jam packed with word play, improv, participation and musical wizardry from poets, storytellers, rappers and the amazing Tongue Fu band. Each show is unique and features stars of UK spoken word. It is lively, fun and appeals to the whole family. Tongue Fu creator and frontman Chris Redmond is a regular at UK music and literature festivals and has featured on BBC R4, R2, R1 and XFM. His experience as an educator includes work with CBBC, BBC 1Xtra and Apples & Snakes. All the Tongue Fu musicians, as well as being top session players (credits include work for Jamie Cullum, Nostalgia 77, Puppini Sisters and Massive Attack) are expert facilitators, working in schools, universities and conservatoires.

Blackwood Little Theatre 2.30pm

Velvet Coalmine Opening Party

Featuring Tongue Fu and Africa Writes poets Belinda Zhawi, Rachel Long, Victoria Adukwai Bulley, and Blackwood's very own clare e. potter. Tongue Fu is one of the UK's leading spoken word shows, a riotous experiment in live literature, music and improvisation. Poets perform with jaw-dropping improvised soundtracks and films from the genre hopping Tongue Fu Band (Nostalgia 77, Jamie Cullum, Beardyman) and East London design studio CR&D.

Tickets £5

Blackwood Little Theatre 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Tongue Fu for Adults 18+

Tongue Fu celebrates its tenth anniversary in 2017 with a reputation as the UK's leading spoken word and music show. Writer, musician, founder and host, Chris Redmond, invites extraordinary poets, comedians, storytellers and rappers to take

risks; re-working material live, with jaw-dropping improvised soundtracks from a crack team of quick witted, genre hopping musicians. No two shows are the same and this irreverent blend of well crafted words, improv and music have earned them critical acclaim at music, poetry and literature festivals across the UK and around the world. Tongue Fu is a high energy, big hearted show. Part gig, part experiment, all fire. Tongue Fu has performed at London's Southbank, Royal Albert Hall, Roundhouse, Bristol Old Vic, Glastonbury Festival, Bestival, Latitude, Lingo Festival - Dublin, Cuirt Literature Festival - Galway, FLUPP Literature - Brazil, Edinburgh International Book Festival and has toured South Africa with the British Council. In 2016 Tongue Fu featured on BBC Radio 2's Arts Show with Jonathan Ross. Previous guests include Kate Tempest, Irvine Welsh, Akala, Robin Ince, Lemn Sissay, Hollie McNish and Beardyman.



"Impossible not to get caught up in the magic... the most remarkable spoken word event going."

★★★★★ Informed Edinburgh

"An event, nay experience, that has taken the literary scene by storm... Tongue Fu has to be experienced to be believed." London Word

"It's poetry, but not as you know it...amazing!" Guardian

"The leading spoken word show" Metro

"A strange kind of alchemy" ★★★★★ Scotsman

Friday 8th September

Africa Writes Young Voices Creative Writing Workshops

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

A series of dynamic creative writing workshops for Key Stage 2 students, using African art, photography, music and literature as stimulus. With African proverbs, poetry, the stories of African footballers, and iconic photography, the Africa Writes poets will bring an exciting day of creative writing and inspiration to the young writers at Blackwood's primary schools.

Libanus Primary School

Markham Primary School

Fleur-de-lis Primary School

Ysgol Bro Sannan

Pengam Primary School

Cefn Fforest Primary School

Blackwood Primary School

Blackwood Library



Belindaa Zhawi



Afrikult



Victoria Adukwai Bulley



Nick Makoha

Rachel Long



www.velvetcoalmine.com

Into The Ark

With Mynyddislwyn Male Voice Choir

Friday September 8th 7.30pm
Blackwood Methodist Church
Tickets £10 from www.velvetcoalmine.com

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📍 @velvetcoalminer 📱 @velvetcoalmine

Saturday 9th September

Creative Writing for Teachers

A morning to develop tools and techniques for creative writing. Whether you're a seasoned writer or a total new-comer, all are welcome to this interactive workshop facilitated by Belinda Zhawi. Lunch included.

Blackwood Library 10am - 12.30pm

Africa in the Syllabus: A Continuing Professional Development Workshop

A Continuing Professional Development workshop for teachers interested in including topics about Africa in the syllabus. In this interactive session, Africa Writes staff, poets and facilitators will take you through teaching about Africa to primary and secondary students, and will provide a guide to the stimuli and resources available that can be used in lessons across the National Curriculum.

Blackwood Library 1pm - 2.30pm

The Magic of Stories Family workshop

Come and discover the magic and mysteries of African stories in this workshop for all the family. Hear new sounds, learn fun facts and explore a magic world of enchanting tales.

Blackwood Library 10.30 - 11.30 & 2pm - 3pm

Africa Writes: Choir Concert and Poetry Performance



Africa Writes Poets with the Newbridge Ladies Choir and ZimVoices. The ZimVoices Choir comprises five Zimbabwean women resident in South Wales. They perform traditional Southern African songs,

mostly from their homeland of Zimbabwe. Their collaborative and interactive style of performing makes sure that audiences and other performers are involved in the act.

Tickets £5

Blackwood Methodist Church 4pm - 5.30pm



THE
ROYAL AFRICAN SOCIETY'S
-ANNUAL-
FILM FESTIVAL
27 OCT - 5 NOV 2017

www.velvetcoalmine.com

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Sunday 10th September

African Books to Inspire: Buchi Emecheta Book Club

Buchi Emecheta (1944 - 2017) was a Nigerian author who received great acclaim for her work both in the UK and Nigeria, as the author of more than 20 books. Emecheta was born in Lagos, Nigeria, and travelled to England in 1962, where she arrived at the Liverpool docks with her two young children. She later settled in London, where she worked to support her five children as a single mother. She would stay up late in the night to study for university degree, and in any spare moment would be found writing. Emecheta authored many critically acclaimed novels, from captivating stories reflecting her experience as a poor, single parent in London, to evocative tales of village life in Nigeria.

In this book club we come together to discuss and celebrate the pioneering writers' body of work. Whether you are a Buchi Emecheta fan or are curious to hear about her writing, all are invited to join this relaxed session.

Emecheta's works include *In The Ditch*, *Second-Class Citizen*, *The Bride Price*, *The Slave Girl*, which was awarded the Jock Campbell Award, *The Joys of Motherhood*, *Destination Biafra*, *Naira Power*, *The Rape of Shavi*, *Double Yoke*, *A Kind of Marriage*, *Gwendolen*, *Kehinde* and *The New Tribe*.

Discover more about Buchi Emecheta in this article written by her son Sylvester Onwordi.

Check website for venue **2pm - 3.30pm**

Caerphilly Nordic Walks



Join Ed Woolley for a stroll down the beautiful canal pathway stretching from Pontywaun to Wysome's Wharf cafe - but not just any stroll. Nordic walking is a supercharged fitness routine for a full body workout, engaging 90% of your muscles through the use of poles (provided). Before leaving, Ed will take you through the basics of the technique. Tickets are available at velvetcoalmine.com for £3 and are limited, so get in fast.

Pontywaun **3pm** **Tickets £3**

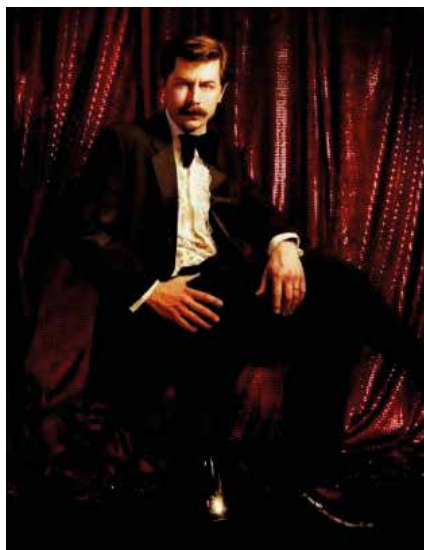
Africa Writes Poetry in the Afternoon

Join us for a drink and a relaxed afternoon of rhythm and words. The Africa Writes poets shine a light on themes of home, language, the journeys we take and unexpected things we find...

The Sirhowy JD Wetherspoon **4pm - 5pm**

comedy night

An evening of comedy at Blackwood Little Theatre with six of the hottest acts on the circuit today. *(Suitable for age 18 and over)*



Mike Wozniak

Mike Wozniak is an Edinburgh Comedy Award nominated comedian best known for playing Brian Ames in "Man Down" on Channel 4 as one of the makers of "Small Scenes" for BBC Radio 4. Dry, deadpan and hilarious.

"Wozniak is bang on the money" ★★★★★
SUNDAY TIMES

"Master of the dead pan" ★★★★★
DAILY EXPRESS

Julian D'Angelo



Julian D'Angelo, South Wales' Leading Psychic Phenom, has been delving into the Nether Regions and touching the Other Side since he was a boy. He is overjoyed to be returning to Blackwood and Velvet Coalmine after realigning the

chakras of the populace in 2015. Julian will be your host for this evening of comedy and will hopefully find time to commune with the Spectral Realm and bring messages of hope from the abyss.

Dan Mitchell



Dan Mitchell is a loud, hairy comedian from the depths of West Wales. He's always excited to see an audience as most of the time he's trying to hold conversations with woodland creatures. He's a regular on

BBC Radio Wales and has appeared on ITV, S4C, Channel 4, BBC1, 2 and 3 as well as supporting Ross Noble on tour and opening for Eddie Izzard.

Sarah Breese



Sarah Breese is a mischievous ball of comedy nonsense. Since joining the circuit in 2015, Breese has been making waves on the Welsh standup scene and beyond. Funny, excitable and engaging, her comedy is a combination of sharp observations, skewed logic, and boundless enthusiasm.

Ignacio Lopez



Welsh/Spaniard Ignacio Lopez has been wowing audiences with his individual style and high gag-rate since moving to the UK to perform comedy full-time. A frequent headliner in top comedy clubs all over the UK,

Ignacio has also performed sold-out solo shows at Edinburgh, Reading, Brighton Fringe festivals.

Jenny Lockyer

Jenny loves performing original songs and characters that make people laugh and is never sure when to talk about herself in the third person. She takes her mix of storytelling and comedy to all sorts of gigs in all sorts of places. Cabarets and variety nights, festivals and camping trips, school assemblies, libraries, pubs, clubs, people's front rooms and queues at the chemist.



"But surely she should be on the telly? Her stuff's so funny and so brilliantly performed" MJ Hibbett

"Too likeable" BBC Bradford

"Musical comedy joy! A comic songstress with delightfully insane, catchy, charming musical numbers. Mixes the worlds of music and comedy with a guitar, a golden voice and a twisted lyric or two!" Paul Kerensa

Blackwood Little Theatre **7.30pm** **Tickets £10**

Monday 11th September

Dina Williams: Anansi Stories Play in a Day

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS



Dina Williams is originally from Blackwood and returned 3 years ago after spending 28 years in London. During her time in London, Dina joined Chickenshed, an inclusive theatre company in North London, as a

Youth Theatre member and then a junior member of artistic staff. Fulfilling her dream, she won a scholarship to London Contemporary Dance School where she gained her BA (hons) in Contemporary Dance. Dina will be launching a new theatre company initially in the borough of Caerphilly, Valley Inclusive Performance (V.I.P) and is excited to be by this opportunity to be part of the Velvet Coalmine festival, returning to Blackwood where her story began. *With Blackwood Primary School.*

Blackwood Little Theatre **9.30am**

clare e. potter

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS



Poet-in-residence at Llwyn Celyn medieval house, for Wales Arts Review, and recently Moravian Academy Pennsylvania. Translated poems for Wales' National Poet. Collaborates in community

projects, acted in two films and dance production Coal. Published widely in UK and USA, Faber & Faber, Seren, Mslexia. Second poetry collection on the way. www.clareawenydd.com

Ysgol Bro Sannan **9.30am**

Taekwon-do-Wales

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Taekwon-do demonstration with the founder of Taekwon-do-Wales Peter Kent Marrast.

Ysgol Bro Sannan **9.30am - 3pm**

Burst Publishing Presents Pat Roper

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Blackwood Primary School **9.30am**

Trouble Comes to Town

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Details on page 36

Libanus Primary School **9.30am and 11am**

Lesotho Rugby Academy

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Iain Richards talks about Rugby in Africa and presents a coaching session as used in the mountainous Kingdom of Lesotho!

Libanus Primary School **11am**



Burst Publishing Presents Pat Roper

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Planet Adventures: The Lost Moon book reading/signing.

Blackwood Primary School **11am**

Gwent Archives

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Fleur-de-lis Primary School **11am**

Burst Publishing Presents Pat Roper

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Libanus Primary School **1pm**

Lesotho Rugby Academy

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Cefn Fforest Primary School **1.30pm**

Gwent Archives

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Pengam Primary School **1.30pm**

Trouble comes to Town

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Libanus Primary School **1.30pm**

Burst Publishing Presents Pat Roper

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Libanus Primary School **2pm**

Marty Jopson

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

He's back! BBC's The One Show science presenter returns to Blackwood with 'Body Tricks' an event for KS1 school pupils only.

Blackwood Primary School **2pm**

Marty Jopson

Blackwood Primary School **5pm**

Marty Jopson

Blackwood Primary School **7.30pm**



Trouble Comes to Town

In this brilliant scientific tour of household science, BBC1 One Show resident scientist, writer, prop-builder and all-round Science Bloke Dr Marty Jopson addresses conundrums such as: What really makes cakes rise? Why do soap bubbles burst? And how you get the quartz out of a clock using a hammer? The book that accompanies this talk serves as a guide to life with the cure for a dribblesome teapot, the solution to shocks from your car and why any of this matters at all. Answers will be provided, electrical devices dismantled and mess created in the name of science.

the science of everyday life

Blackwood Primary School 5pm and 7.30pm
Tickets per performance: Adults £8, Children £6
Family of 4 (2 Adults, 2 children under 16) £23

www.velvetcoalmine.com

Tuesday 12th September

Rachel Long

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Velvet Coalmine Writer-in-Residence Rachel Long presents a creative writing workshop for children at Blackwood Primary.

Blackwood Primary School 9.30am

Dina Williams:
Anansi Stories Play in a Day

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

With Libanus Primary School.

Blackwood Little Theatre 9.30am

The Roper Prize for Literature

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS



Simone Greenwood of Burst Publishing introduces this year's topic 'Our Future' for the second year of The Roper Prize for Literature won in 2016 by Kian Carpenter of Markham Primary School.

Pengam Primary School 9.30am

Size of Wales

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Size of Wales is a climate change charity that brings people in Wales together to help protect an area of tropical forest twice the size of Wales.

Markham Primary School 9.30am

Lesotho Rugby Academy

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Iain Richards talks about Rugby in Africa and presents a coaching session as used in the mountainous Kingdom of Lesotho!

Pengam Primary School 11am

The Roper Prize for Literature

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Simone Greenwood of Burst Publishing introduces this year's topic 'Our Future' for the second year of The Roper Prize won in 2016 by Kian Carpenter of Markham Primary School.

11am Fleur-de-lis

Gwent Archives

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Gwent Archives is a local authority archive that collects and preserves any documents that relate

to the old county of Gwent. Featuring photographs, maps, adverts and more, the Archives will demonstrate Blackwood and the surrounding areas from a hundred years ago, the impact of the First and Second World Wars and the changing face of Blackwood High Street."

Ysgol Bro Sannan 11am

Illustration Workshop

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Blackwood illustrator Elizabeth Millington delivers an illustration workshop on 'Our Future'.

Cefn Fforest Primary School 11am

Size of Wales

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Cefn Fforest 1pm

The Roper Prize for Literature

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Simone Greenwood of Burst Publishing introduces this year's topic 'Our Future' for the second year of The Roper Prize won in 2016 by Kian Carpenter of Markham Primary School.

Libanus Primary School 1.30pm

Lesotho Rugby Academy

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Iain Richards talks about Rugby in Africa and presents a coaching session as used in the mountainous Kingdom of Lesotho!

Fleur-de-lis 1.30pm

Gwent Archives

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Markham Primary School 1.30pm

Jade Jones

Olympic Taekwon-do Champion and Wales Sports Personality of the Year, Jade Jones, will demonstrate her brilliant skills and take questions from the audience. **Tickets £9**

Fleur-de-lis Community Centre 5pm

Jade Jones

Olympic Taekwon-do Champion and Wales Sports Personality of the Year, Jade Jones, will demonstrate her brilliant skills and take questions from the audience. **Tickets £9**

Fleur-de-lis Community Centre 6.30pm

Jade Jones MBE

Fleur-de-lis Community Centre
Tuesday 12th September
5pm and 6.30pm £9



At 19 years old Jade Jones became Great Britain's first ever Taekwon-do athlete to win gold at the Olympics during London 2012. She was later awarded an MBE, after being named among the 2013 New Year's honours list. She has since gone onto win a Commonwealth title and European Championships gold to add to the continental bronzes she took in 2010 and 12. Jones was the winner of the inaugural Youth Olympic Games in 2010. She also competed at the 2015 European Games in Baku and won gold in the -57kg weight division, making her the second female Taekwon-do athlete to do so. More recently, Jones made further history by winning gold and becoming double Olympic Champion at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and also in 2016 won Wales Sports Personality of the Year. 🌟

Wednesday 13th September

Rachel Long, Writer-in-Residence

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Libanus Primary School

9.30am

Taekwon-do-Wales

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Taekwon-do demonstration with the founder of Taekwon-do-Wales Peter Kent Marrast.

Cefn-Fforest Primary School

9.30am

The Roper Prize for Literature

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Simone Greenwood of Burst Publishing introduces this year's topic 'Our Future' for the second year of The Roper Prize won in 2016 by Kian Carpenter of Markham Primary School.

Markham Primary School

9.30am

Dina Williams:

Anansi Stories Fast Forward

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Fleur-de-lis Primary School

9.30am

Firefly Presents

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Ysgol Bro Sannan

9.30am

Firefly Presents

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Ysgol Bro Sannan

9.30am

Trouble comes to Town

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Markham Primary School

9.30am

Gwent Archives

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Blackwood Primary School

11am

Firefly Presents

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Ysgol Bro Sannan

11am

Lesotho Rugby Academy

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Iain Richards talks about Rugby in Africa and presents a coaching session as used in the mountainous Kingdom of Lesotho!

Ysgol Bro Sannan

11am

The Roper Prize for Literature

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

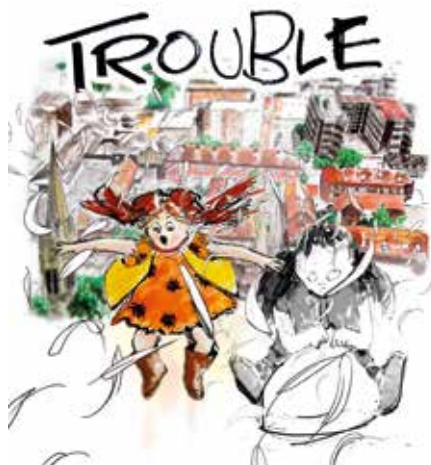
Ysgol Bro Sannan

11am

Trouble comes to Town

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

The two headed, word wrestling, paint splattering Wooliams Beast wrote their series of five Trouble books after being pole-axed by the protagonist. Try



as they might, they never did manage to capture bedlam she wrought, and have since retired to document the life of Og (the evolutionary lightening rod) and cautionary tales about Dogs. In Clogs.

Markham Primary School

11am

Firefly Presents

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Ysgol Bro Sannan

1.30pm

Trouble comes to Town

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Markham Primary School

1.30pm

The Roper Prize for Literature

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Blackwood Primary

1.30pm

Lesotho Rugby Academy

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Markham Primary School

1.30pm

Gwent Archives

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Libanus Primary School

1.30pm

Dina Williams:

Anansi Stories Fast Forward

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Pengam Primary School

1.30pm

Dina Williams:

Anansi Stories Fast Forward

ONLY FOR SCHOOLS

Blackwood Little Theatre

7.30pm

New Writing Festival

See page 35 for details.

Ticket £7

Blackwood Little Theatre

7.30pm

Firefly Press writers

Huw Davies



Huw Davies grew up in Nantylfyllon, near Maesteg and teaches English. He has an MA in Scriptwriting from the University of Glamorgan. As an English teacher, he came to realise that there was a lack of what he called 'daft books for boys', and started work on his first children's book, Scrambled. He lives in Carmarthen with his wife and three children.

Eloise Williams



Eloise was born in Cardiff and grew up in Llantrisant. She now lives in Saundersfoot, Pembrokeshire, very close to the beach where she walks her dog Watson Jones and collects sea glass with her artist husband, Guy Manning. She worked in the theatre in various odd jobs before going on to study Drama at The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and Guildford School of Acting. After working for over ten years as an actor, she decided to change path a little and take a Masters in Creative Writing at Swansea University. She is the author of Elen's Island and Gaslight. Find out more at www.eloisewilliams.com

Dan Anthony



Dan lives in Pembrokeshire and writes for children and grown-ups. His radio plays have been broadcast on Radio 4, Radio 3 and Radio Wales, he helped S4C develop its successful children's series Y Meees

and was a scriptwriter on CBBC's Tracy Beaker series. As a result of this experience he plucked up the courage to try writing a book himself, something

his school teachers told him never to do. His first children's book, The RugbyZombies was nominated for a Tir na n-Og award from the Welsh Books council and he has since completed the popular RugbyZombie trilogy. Dan has visited many schools to talk about his work and leads themed walks around Cardiff for Cardiff Children's Literature Festival. He is the author of Steve's Dreams: Steve and the Sabretooth Tiger and Steve and the Singing Pirates.

Jon Blake



Jon Blake lives in Cardiff with his partner and two young children. He qualified as a teacher in 1979. His first story was published in 1984; since then he has earned his living as a writer of books, TV and radio scripts, and as a teacher of creative writing. Previous books include the best-selling You're a Hero, Daley B!, Stinky Finger's House of Fun and The Last Free Cat. His latest book for children, Thimble Monkey Superstar, was shortlisted for the Lollies Awards 2017. Find out more at jonblakeblog.wordpress.com

Laura Sheldon



Laura is a teacher at Sully Primary School in the Vale of Glamorgan, south Wales, where there is a real writers' shed overlooking the sea. Laura was born and brought up in Hillside Crescent in

Swansea, around the corner from where Dylan used to live. She has always enjoyed writing stories and spent most of her childhood in a fantasy world. She became a primary school teacher in 2000 and finds lots of opportunities for exploring fantasy worlds with her pupils. She believes that everything is more fun taught in a story. Her first book for children, Mr Mahli's Shed and the ghost of Dylan, was a runner up in the Firefly Children's Book Prize 2014. 🌟

Thursday 14th September

Dina Williams: Anansi Stories Play in a Day	ONLY FOR SCHOOLS
Fleur-de-lis Primary School	9.30am
Size of Wales	ONLY FOR SCHOOLS
Size of Wales is a climate change charity that brings people in Wales together to help protect an area of tropical forest twice the size of Wales.	
Pengam Primary School	9.30am
Never Such Innocence	ONLY FOR SCHOOLS
Commemorating the First World War through poetry & art. Launched in Wales at Velvet Coalmine 2016.	
Libanus Primary School	9.30am
Taekwon-do Demonstration	ONLY FOR SCHOOLS
Taekwon-do demonstration with the founder of Taekwon-do-Wales Peter Kent Marrast.	
Markham Primary School	9.30am
Helen Grant Creative Writing Workshop	ONLY FOR SCHOOLS
Helen Grant is a poet from Wales who studied poetry at Columbia College Chicago, and has performed with the UK's leading spoken word organisation Hammer & Tongue.	
Cefn Fforest Primary School	9.30am
Size of Wales	ONLY FOR SCHOOLS
Fleur-de-lis Primary School	1pm
Music Mayhem	ONLY FOR SCHOOLS
Noise, melody and tub-thumping at Libanus.	
Libanus Primary School	1pm
Dina Williams: Anansi Stories Fast Forward	ONLY FOR SCHOOLS
Pengam Primary School	1pm
Sophie McKeand	
Young People's Laureate Wales 'In Performance'.	
Costa Coffee	6pm
Ceri Thompson	
Big Pit's Ceri Thompson discusses the life of Dr Henry Naunton Davies, surgeon to 11 mines in the Rhondda Valley.	
Costa Coffee	6.30pm

New Writing Festival

Blackwood Little Theatre was formed in 1929 and has been serving its patrons with high quality theatre ever since. It owns and maintains a premises on Woodbine Road. Blackwood Little Theatre produces at least 5 productions a year, as well as competing in One Act Festivals. Over the past 10 years, the theatre has been the proud recipient of 35 awards, including the Gwent Festival of One Act Plays, The IATA Liverpool (Nova Scotia) International Festival award for best new play and the 2008 Wales Final for Last Tango in Blackwood and the again in 2012 with Biscuits. Blackwood Little Theatre has represented Wales at International Festivals in Canada on 3 occasions and is proud to be taking part in the Velvet Coalmine this year. You can follow all the news from Blackwood Little Theatre on facebook.com/blackwoodlt or at www.blackwoodlt.org.uk

Blackwood Little Theatre 7.30pm Ticket £7

Events at Coleg Gwent ALL EVENTS ARE FOR CROSS KEYS STUDENTS ONLY
Cross Keys Campus

Careers in Publishing Workshop

Simone Greenwood **9.30am - 10.30am**

Creative Writing Workshop for Young Women

Rachel Long **10.30am - 11.30am**

Organising a Festival: How to get started

Iain Richards **11.30am - 12.30am**

Toby Gentle and the Winter Assassin

Book reading and signing.

C.G. Hickling **12.30pm - 1.30pm**

Gwent Archives: Crosskeys Local History

See page 37 for details. **1.30pm - 2.30pm**

Vern Griffiths 'Building Character'

Using physicality to create compelling characters.

Acting workshop **1.30pm - 2.30pm**

World Rugby: The problems, the solutions and where Wales fits in: An open discussion

Iain Richards **1.30pm - 2.30pm**

POWER//LINES LLINELLAU//PŴER

Young People's Laureate Wales Sophie McKeand is launching a poetry revolution for 14 - 25 year olds at this year's Velvet Coalmine Festival. P O W E R // L I N E S offers an opportunity for young people across Wales to explore and express their identity; a platform for a generation to speak out about what shapes them, what moves them, and how they see their future. The anthology will be published in 2018 by Burst in partnership with Full Circle Education and with support from Literature Wales and Coleg Gwent.

Cross Keys Campus 1.30pm - 2.30pm

Do you want to work in the music industry?



Estelle Wilkinson has worked in the UK and International music industry for the best part of two decades. After working for a few Manchester bands including, Happy Mondays and much loved Intastella. Estelle started working with Coldplay at the beginning of their career

when their first album Parachutes shot to number 1 and became their manager from 2002-06. She is currently engaged by Damon Albarn's management team Eleven to project manage Demon Dayz Festival. Estelle has also set up 'Talks on Tour' which offers young people aged 16-24 a unique opportunity to learn about the music industry and the variety of roles involved from the crew and teams 'behind the scenes' of major artists touring the UK including Robbie Williams, Coldplay and Gorillaz by holding talks at a venue on a show day. Estelle sat on the board of the Welsh Music Foundation and was last year awarded the Blackwood Civic Award alongside Iain Richards for supporting Iain in his role as founder of Velvet Coalmine. To find out more visit the facebook page @talksontour or follow on Twitter.

Estelle Wilkinson and Niamh Byrne **2.30pm**

Amy Johnson: Last Flight Out

A play by Jenny Lockyer **4pm**

Sophie McKeand

young people's laureate Wales



Sophie McKeand is an award-winning poet and the current Young People's Laureate Wales. Her work has been published widely including Poetry Wales, Dark Mountain and The Lonely Crowd. She performs regularly across the UK (such as at the Wales Millennium Centre and with Caught by the River) and has been on stage internationally in Ireland and at the Kolkata Literature Festival, India. Sophie has created two hand-stitched poetry pamphlets, Prophecy: conversations with my Self and Hanes; and collaborated on two touring arts projects: Metaforestry: storïau o'r Gogs, and DRKMTR which was also an album released on the Drum With Our Hands record label. She is a recipient of a Literature Wales writers bursary for 2017. Her new poetry collection Rebel Sun is out with Parthian Books. ☺

www.sophiemckeand.com

Friday 15th September

Dina Williams:
Anansi Stories Fast Forward

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Markham Primary School **9.30am**

Gwent Archives

Gwent Archives is a local authority archive that collects and preserves any documents that relate to the old county of Gwent. Featuring photographs, maps, adverts and more, the Archives will demonstrate Blackwood and the surrounding areas from a hundred years ago, the impact of the First and Second World Wars and the changing face of Blackwood High Street."

Cefn Fforest Primary School **9.30am**

Taekwon-do Demonstration

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Peter Kent Marrast

Libanus Primary School **9.30am**

Helen Grant Creative Writing Workshop

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS



Helen Grant is a poet from Wales who studied poetry at Columbia College Chicago, and has performed with the UK's leading spoken word organisation Hammer and Tongue.

Fleur-de-lis Primary School **9.30am**

Nikki Giant

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS



Nikki is the founder of Full Circle Education, a non-profit organisation based in Wales, UK that connects children and young people to their potential through a range of educational and extra-curricular programmes to

raise aspirations, attainment and school attendance. The work of Full Circle specifically seeks to empower girls and young women.

Blackwood Comprehensive School **9.30am**

Ifor ap Glyn Creative Writing Workshop

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Blackwood Comprehensive School **9.30am**

Sophie McKeand
Creative Writing Workshop

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Blackwood Comprehensive School **9.30am**

Rachel Long Writer-in-residence

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Community Event (See website for details)

TBC **9.30am**

Lesotho Rugby Academy

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Iain Richards talks about Rugby in Africa and presents a coaching session as used in the mountainous Kingdom of Lesotho!

Blackwood Primary School **11am**

Gwent Archives

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Blackwood Comprehensive **1pm**

Do You Want to Work in the Music Industry?

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Estelle Wilkinson

Blackwood Comprehensive School **1pm**

Helen Grant Creative Writing Workshop

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Pengam Primary School **1pm**

The Roper Prize for Literature

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Simone Greenwood of Burst Publishing introduces this year's topic 'Our Future' for the second year of The Roper Prize won in 2016 by Kian Carpenter of Markham Primary School.

Cefn Fforest Primary School **1.30pm**

Dina Williams:
Anansi Stories Fast Forward

ONLY FOR
SCHOOLS

Ysgol Bro Sannan **1.30pm**

Ifor ap Glyn: National Poet of Wales

Ifor ap Glyn in performance. Please check www.velvetcoalmine.com for venue and details.

TBC **5pm**

Live reading of the new playwriting winner sponsored by Blackwood Town Council

Blackwood Little Theatre **7pm**

New Writing Festival

See page 35 for details.

Blackwood Little Theatre **7.30pm** **Ticket £7**

Ifor ap Glyn national poet of Wales

Ifor ap Glyn is the current National Poet of Wales.

Born in London to Welsh parents, he is a multi award-winning poet, presenter, director and producer.

Ifor has won the Crown at the National Eisteddfod – one of the festival's most prestigious prizes – on two occasions, first in 1999 and again in 2013.

From 2008 – 2009 Ifor was Bardd Plant Cymru, the Welsh-language Children's Poet Laureate.

He has represented Welsh poetry around the world in both the Welsh and English language, having performed at festivals such as the Smithsonian Folk Life Festival in Washington DC.

Ifor ap Glyn yw Bardd Cenedlaethol Cymru.

Wedi'i eni a'i fagu yn un o Gymry Llundain, mae'n fardd, cyflwynydd, cyfarwyddwr ac yn gynhyrchydd teledu sydd wedi ennill nifer helaeth o wobrau yn y meysydd amrywiol hyn. Mae'n Brifardd sydd wedi ennill Coron yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol ddwywaith, yn 1999 ac eto yn 2013. Ef oedd Bardd Plant Cymru rhwng 2008-2009.

Mae Ifor wedi camu ar lwyfannau amrywiol ar draws y byd gan berfformio mewn gŵyliau megis Gŵyl Werin y Smithsonian yn Washington DC.



© Rhys Iwan

www.velvetcoalmine.com

Saturday 16th September

Bursting with Creativity



Simone Greenwood founder of Burst Publishing leads a creative writing workshop for children. Simone is the founder of Burst, a new children's and young adults' publisher based in Caerphilly. She is

passionate about giving debut authors a platform, as well as co-creating with children and young people through workshops and publishing projects. Pat grew up near the coast in South Wales. After graduating from Cardiff University, she taught English, History and Drama at various comprehensive schools in England. When her two children were born, she retrained as a primary school teacher and particularly enjoyed writing plays and dramas for the children to perform. On returning to Wales, she continued to teach and began reviewing plays and shows on the National Theatre of Wales Community website. After reviewing a literary festival, she was fired up to complete a children's book she had started years previously. The Lost Moon was born out of the excitement that her young pupils always displayed when learning about Space.

Blackwood Library **10am**

Rachel Long

Rachel Long discusses her 10 days in Blackwood as Velvet Coalmine 2017 Writer-in-residence with Iain Richards and reads her work written during her stay.

Blackwood Library **2pm**

Jon Gower

Writer, documentary maker, arts and media correspondent and Hay Festival International Fellow Jon Gower discusses his book of short stories on David Bowie.

Blackwood Library **3pm**

Finding Wales: A New Book Brought to Life



Introducing a new book by Peter Daniels which explores the attitudes and motivations of a group of exiles who have realised their desire to return to their roots in Wales. In this session the book is brought to life as the author talks to/two of the characters featured in the narrative: Rhian Jones, originally

from mid Wales, a development officer at Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, encouraging education through the medium of Welsh, and Iain Richards of this south Wales valley community of Blackwood and the driving force behind Velvet Coalmine.

Blackwood Library **4pm**

Music Industry Panels

FORTE presents a series of panels looking at music management and other aspects of the music industry. See website for final line-up and start time.

The Black Sheep

Make Noise

Make Noise is music and recycling project that has toured all around the UK and most recently set off on 5 dates around Wales in 2016 - Make Noise Wales. Put on in association with Resource Efficiency Wales and Heavenly Recordings, Make Noise is a FREE initiative to help raise awareness about the importance of recycling electronic goods. To help channel this message Make Noise puts on amazing live music and DJs and asks everyone to bring along an old or unwanted handheld electronic item for recycling to gain entry. This could be a broken hairdryer, a drowned phone, busted iPod or even a couple of old batteries - anything that's electrical - and you will get entry to the night for free! More info on the line up for this party to follow.

@makenoiseuk

The Black Sheep **7.30pm**

the Roper Prize for Literature 2017

The Roper Prize for Literature was created by Brian Roper to support the Velvet Coalmine festival in inspiring excellence in Literature.

The inaugural competition in 2016 saw Kian Carpenter of Markham Primary as the overall winner with his brilliant poem 'My Terrible Teacher'.

The theme for the 2017 competition is "Our Future" and is open to Year 6 Pupils at the following schools:

Blackwood, Libanus, Pengam, Cefn Fforest, Fleur-de-lis, Markham and Ysgol Bro Sannan



Entry Criteria

- Each entry must be a poem or a short story
- Each entry must be no more than 300 words in length
- 3 entries per child maximum
- Deadline for ALL ENTRIES - Friday September 29th 2017
- Workshops to be held throughout the Velvet Coalmine Festival
- Awards presented on Wednesday November 22nd 2017 at Blackwood Town Council's Civic Awards

Prizes

- Winner for each school gets a £20 book token
- Runner-up for each school gets a £10 book token
- One overall winner from all the entries who wins The Roper Prize for Literature 2017 gets £50 in book tokens

Entries to be submitted within each school and each school to submit the collected entries to Velvet Coalmine at the end of September.

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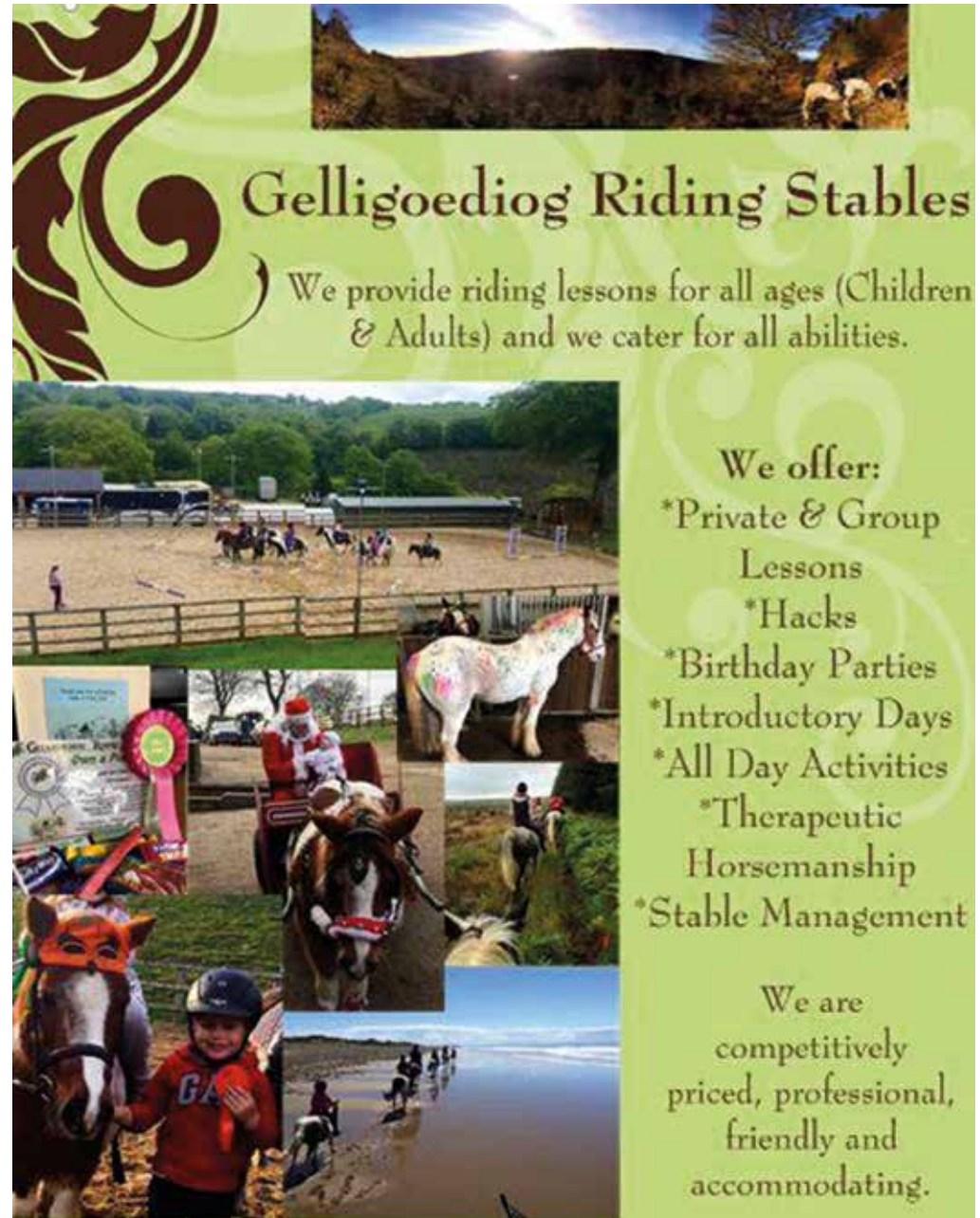
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essential mentions

Festival Directors: **Iain Richards, Estelle Wilkinson**

Title Sponsors: **Blackwood Town Council**

PR and Marketing support: **Cowshed**

Artwork and Design: **Loftus Graphic Design**

Printing: **Forest Printers**

Website and Social Media: **Trillion Macmillan**

The Roper Prize for Literature: **Brian Roper**

Velveteers

John Hold, Jim Criddle, Zoe Hammond, Helen Greenwood, Nicola Cummins, Simone Greenwood, Della Tew, Zoey Taylor.

Special Thanks

Angela and Clifford Richards, John Hold, Vicki Spencer-Francis and Stacey Oliver at Cowshed, Neil Maidman, Sarah Hanley, Blackwood Town Council, Caerphilly County Council, Blackwood Little Theatre, Blackwood, Pontllanfraith, Newbridge and Abercarn Rotary clubs, Freeman of the City of London Islwyn Association, Bill Coppage, Jim Davies, Mayhem music group, Helen Greenwood, Della Tew, Caitlin Pearson and Joanna Brown at The Royal African Society, Rachel Long, Everyone involved with Africa Writes, Simone Greenwood and Burst Publishing, Penny and Megan at Firefly Press, Kathryn and Ceri at Big Pit, Mared Roberts and Louise Richards at Literature Wales, Vern Griffiths, Andrew Williams and Dane and Taylor of Into the Ark.

Schools and Venues

Jane Mather at Blackwood Primary, Nicola Williams at Libanus, Sue Witchell at Fleur-de-lis & Pengam, Julie Farmer at Cefn Forest, Lindsey Prichard at Markham, Tracey Addicott at Ysgol Bro Sannan, Stacey Corcoran at Blackwood Comprehensive and Leah Fox at Coleg Gwent, Jeff Mudford at Blackwood Methodist Church, Erin Julian at The Black Sheep, Dan at The Sirhowy, Samantha Beckett at Blackwood Library, Siobhan at Costa Coffee, Peter Kent Marrast at Taekwon-do-Wales, Fleur-de-lis Community Centre, Nabillah Akhtar at GB Taekwon-do, Gavyn Bolton at Bryn Meadows and finally Logan Sadler for his technical assistance on those important funding applications.

And to the artists, writers, performers, musicians and sports stars – thank you!

THE CHERRY ORCHARD

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Director Rachel O'Riordan

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029 2064 6900    #CherryOrchard

Sherman Theatre, Senghennydd Road,
Cardiff, CF24 3YE

venue finder

Blackwood Primary School

Apollo Way, Blackwood NP12 1WA. 01495 224111

Bus: From Newport: 56 or 151. From Cardiff: 26.

Train: Cardiff - Ystrad Mynach then 901 rail-link.

GPS: Lat: 51.66714 Long: -3.204133

Libanus Primary School

Libanus Rd, Blackwood, NP12 1EH. 01495 225736

Bus: From Newport: 56 or 151. From Cardiff: 26.

Train: Cardiff - Ystrad Mynach then 901 rail-link.

GPS: Lat: 51.660804 Long: -3.193682

Cefn Fforest Primary School

64 Cefn Fforest Avenue, Blackwood, NP12 3JZ.

01443 830602. **Bus:** From Cardiff: 26 to Blackwood

then 14 to Twynyffald Club. From Newport: 56 to

Blackwood then 14 to Twynyffald Club.

Train: Cardiff - Rhymney, alight Pengam.

GPS: Lat: 51.660804 Long: -3.193682

Fleur-de-lis Primary School

10 School Street, Fleur-de-lis, Blackwood, NP12 3UX

01443 830539. **Bus:** From Cardiff: 26 to Castle Court

then 50 (Bargoed) to Allotments. From Newport: 56

then 14. **Train:** Cardiff - Rhymney, alight Pengam.

GPS: Lat: 51.658051 Long: -3.219609

Pengam Primary School

3 Commercial St, Pengam, Blackwood, NP12 3ST

01443 830429. **Bus:** From Cardiff: B to Senghenydd

then 50 (Bargoed) to Lewis School. From Newport:

50. **Train:** Cardiff - Rhymney/Bargoed, alight

Pengam. **GPS:** Lat: 51.66931 Long: -3.223046

Markham Primary School

18 Pantycefnd Rd, Markham, Blackwood, NP12 0QD

01495 224811. **Bus:** From Newport: 56 (Tredegar)

Train: Cardiff - Bargoed, then bus 27 (Blackwood).

GPS: Lat: 51.703559 Long: -3.2073

Ysgol Bro Sannan

2 Ty Fry Rd, Aberbargoed, CF81 9FN

01443 828000. **Bus:** From Cardiff: 26 (Blackwood)

then 27 (Bargoed). From Newport: 56 (Blackwood)

then 27 (Bargoed). **Train:** Cardiff - Bargoed

GPS: Lat: 51.689759 Long: -3.219579

The Black Sheep

Pentwyn Road, Blackwood, NP12 1HN

Bus: From Newport: 56 or 151. From Cardiff: 26.

Train: Cardiff - Ystrad Mynach then 901 rail-link.

GPS: Lat: 51.669787 Long: -3.196489

Blackwood Comprehensive School

Ty-Isha Terrace, Blackwood NP12 1ER

01495 225566. **Bus:** From Newport: 56 or 151. From

Cardiff: 26. **Train:** Cardiff - Ystrad Mynach then 901

rail-link. **GPS:** Lat: 51.671416 Long: -3.20358

Coleg Gwent Cross Keys Campus

Risca Road, Cross Keys, NP11 7ZA. 01495 333777

Bus: From Newport: 151 or 56.

Train: Cardiff - Ebbw Vale, alight Crosskeys.

GPS: Lat: 51.618078 Long: -3.122146

Fleur-de-lis Community Centre

37 High Street, Fleur-de-lis, Blackwood, NP12 3UE

01443 836558. **Bus:** From Cardiff: 26 to Castle Court

then 50 (Bargoed) to Allotments. From Newport: 56

then 14. **Train:** Cardiff - Rhymney, alight Pengam.

GPS: Lat: 51.663275 Long: -3.222247

Blackwood Little Theatre

Woodbine Rd, Blackwood, NP12 1QJ.

01495 223485. **Bus:** From Newport: 56 or 151. From

Cardiff: 26. **Train:** Cardiff - Ystrad Mynach then 901

rail-link. **GPS:** Lat: 51.666829 Long: -3.197986

Blackwood Library

192 High St, Blackwood, NP12 1AJ. 01495 235656

Bus: From Newport: 56 or 151. From Cardiff: 26.

Train: Cardiff - Ystrad Mynach then 901 rail-link.

GPS: Lat: 51.664026 Long: -3.193882

Blackwood Methodist Church

Wesley Road, The Square, Blackwood, NP12 1PP

01495 225296. **Bus:** From Newport: 56 or 151. From

Cardiff: 26. **Train:** Cardiff - Ystrad Mynach then 901

rail-link. **GPS:** Lat: 51.667707 Long: -3.196836

The Sirhowy

61 High St, Blackwood, NP12 1BA. 01495 226374

Bus: From Newport: 56 or 151. From Cardiff: 26.

Train: Cardiff - Ystrad Mynach then 901 rail-link.

GPS: Lat: 51.669173 Long: -3.195395

Costa Coffee

151 High Street, Blackwood, NP12 1AB

Bus: From Newport: 56 or 151. From Cardiff: 26.

Train: Cardiff - Ystrad Mynach then 901 rail-link.

GPS: Lat: 51.666229 Long: -3.195092

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