



ArtsFest DROITWICH ARTS NETWORKS SUMMER OF ALL THINGS ARTISTIC!



Our curtain raiser to DAN's most ambitious programme yet began at the Chateau Impney on June 25th with over two thousand people attending "Corbett 200", an event principally organised and managed by DAN members with some valuable help from Stoke Prior PC and Amblecote Historical society. During the event DAN members handed out leaflets proclaiming the coming **ArtsFest**, three weekends of non-stop Art, Music, Theatre, Poetry, Photography, Comedy, Exhibitions and workshops.



On 15th July, a grand opening ceremony was attended by Mid Worcestershire MP Nigel Huddlestone and Droitwich Town Mayor Sean Best who declared **ArtsFest** open, reflecting on the fact that he was at the very first **ArtsFest** sitting alone at his keyboard not knowing then how that seed would grow into this truly momentous event.



Voices Unlimited and Sing and Tonic vocal groups commanded the attention of shoppers in St Andrews Square at the opening when the grey skies were firmly put to shame by their passionate and sometimes moving performances.



Originator and organiser of this year's **ArtsFest**, Rhys Jones, is the first to acknowledge the tremendous amount of work put in by so many DAN members. "DAN members have been tireless in their support and commitment to the event and have gone that extra mile to make sure that we delivered on our promise of an **ArtsFest** that would make its mark as a principal event in the Droitwich Spa festival programme".

Rhys acknowledged the support of sponsors of **ArtsFest**, Nicol & Co Estate Agents, Droitwich Spa Town Council and Worcestershire County Council. "Without these important sponsors we would not have been able to put this show on the road and I thank them and all those who have given, time, money and effort to ensure the success of this event".



The first two weeks of events were astounding and "Handel's Water Music" on the canal in Vines Park was a brilliant event attended by over 200 towns folk and visitors, including Handel enthusiasts who came down from Manchester especially to see the event. Alan Davey masterminded and coordinated the musical and dramatic presentation, which was a joint DAN, Norbury Theatre, Blackwell Concert Band and Canal & River Trust Project, was televised in part by



BBC Midlands TV and was favoured by a glorious summer evening - Alan certainly has some very elevated connections.



Keith Slater (Old Blue eyes) sold out his Frank Sinatra celebration – local boy makes good you might say, as Keith is now a Droitwich resident, has been for the last 7 years. The Birmingham Conservatoire trained Musician is already making a name for himself as a solo performer and is one to watch – you saw him first in Droitwich Spa courtesy of DAN.

Excellent Drama from MadCap Theatre was another sell out with an Alfresco “As you Like it” that will stay in the memory. David Izod delighted his audience in The Parish Rooms with anecdotes surrounding his father, grandfather and their friends. Nick Wardle’s pupils from Droitwich High School showcased an eclectic mix of rock, jazz and gospel demonstrating that Droitwich really does have talent.



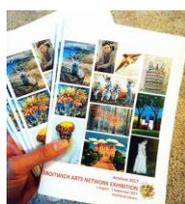
On Saturday 22nd June, a group of poets led by Worcestershire Poet Laureate Nina Lewis, read poetry in St Andrew's Square between 11am and 3pm. They started in the open area outside Boots but after a cloudburst they retreated to the sheltered area outside the Meetbox. Small crowds gathered, some wearing raincoats and carrying umbrellas. From 3pm a group of authors and actors called "Pens and Needles" from Redditch, led by Carla Buckley, read extracts

from their own books as well as other literature. Nina Lewis with ‘Poetry on the Hoof’ and on Saturday evening, Park's Cafe was crowded for the 5th Poetry Extravaganza hosted by the inimitable Fergus Magonigall.

Music and merriment with Malcolm Stent and friends on Sunday 30th: another great ArtsFest event! Malcolms’ “Hilarious Tales of Old Birmingham” concert (which was sold out 3 weeks before the event) lived up to its name with raucous laughter and some rather interesting singalongs raising St Andrews Hotel’s roof.



ArtsFest has run from Saturday July 15 till Saturday August 5 and at time of going to press there are still some events to go including David Holden’s fascinating insight into the Mosaics at The Church of the Sacred Heart on Monday July 31st.



On 1st August DAN’s own art exhibition begins in Droitwich Library and runs until 1st September. Then on Saturday August 5th “Arts in View” takes centre stage in Victoria Square when DAN members set up their easels for a chat with the towns folk and visitors about what makes them pick up their paint brushes, as they draw and paint in public. There are also on the same day at various times - see www.droitwichArtsFest.org for details an Acoustic Guitar Work shop, Mandy plays Sax, Droitwich Community Choir and Kate Weber sings.

Next meeting of the Droitwich Arts Network

15th August, 19:15 at Park’s Cafe, Victoria Square. All are welcome to attend.

Droitwich Exhibitions- is your artwork on show?

Bookings are available at all venues - please contact DAN on info@droitwichartsnetwork.org

Droitwich library: the DAN table is on the ground floor and it has a different artist displayed every fortnight. **Sam Hutchcocks (paintings) until 19th August. Dave Hull (photography) until 2nd September**

Park’s Café, 4 Victoria Square; **Julian Rouse will display his photographs until 29th August**

The Button Tree Café, High Street – **August bookings are currently available**

The Maltstone, Kidderminster Road, Cutnall Green; **Rhys Jones (photography) until 22nd August**

The Meetbox – In St Andrew's Shopping Centre also at Stoke Prior Studios (For information please contact The Meetbox on Email: thecanalsidestudios@gmail.com or Tel: 07789912627 or 07725488513

**For the latest information visit: <http://www.droitwichartsnetwork.org/>
DAN Contact: 07766 415094 or e-mail info@droitwichartsnetwork.org**

Link: August 2017