



The Old School Centre Newsletter Autumn 2007

Welcome to the latest news from The Old School Centre, along with the Autumn programme on the reverse of this letter. As you will see it is a full and interesting schedule offering a wide variety of classes and courses, as well as all of the regular groups that regard the Centre as their "home". Last year we made the final repayment on loans which people had been so kind in offering as far back as 10 years ago, in order that the Old School be kept for community use. We were hopeful then, and we are as optimistic now, that it was the right thing to do.

One of the original group members back in 1996 who shared that vision was Peter Kelly, our current Chairman. Peter has said that this is his last year as Chair, and that in November at the AGM he will pass over the reins to someone else. And even though we, on the Management Committee, have tried to persuade him to stayhe feels now is the time for a break. Peter is a "doer".... a "sorter outer".... when something needs attending to he gets it done, along with Glyn our Manager. He'll know the right person, he'll make the call.... and all in his own quiet, effective way. But when challenged you will see the tenacious Peter who has always believed that the Old School was worth putting up a fight for, and still does. So we owe Peter a great vote of thanks for his vision and belief in the Centre; for being so dependable and constant, and for all the things that the Centre has achieved under his Chairmanship. Thank you Peter.

Later in this newsletter you will see the plans the Management Committee have for re-thinking the way they fulfil their responsibilities. Often people shy away from becoming involved when they hear the word "committee" - sometimes because they have had less than happy experiences, sometimes because they are not really sure what the commitment involves. We would like to think that there are lots of ways that our supporters can be involved if they want to....and that doesn't necessarily mean joining a committee. Our Library volunteers are a wonderful example of this. The Library goes from strength to strength with more people joining and donating books. So watch this space.....!!

New funding challenge

When the last repayment was made on the loans, it might have crossed some people's minds that everyone could take a breather for a while on the fundraising front. How wrong we were !!

In Committee meetings we would talk of the next ten years; of making the Centre energy efficient, of offering more and better designed spacesand then suddenly we are faced with a situation that needs our very urgent attention. Of course we knew the windows were rapidly deteriorating; Glyn kept us well informed of the situation and kept them repaired and safe until such time as we could raise the substantial funds to replace them. Now we have no choice - that time is **NOW !!** Some of them are in such a poor state we cannot get them mended any further, and have had to board a couple over. So this year the **Brentathon** is for that very purpose. Our target eventually is 10 windows at around £2,500 each. How many panes and frames do you think we could pay for from one weekends events ??

A small group of people have been meeting to start to plan the **Brentathon** weekend. We want to extend some of the activities, as well as keeping the format that most people want to see of 24 hours of performing. Letters and sponsorship requests will be going out soon to all of the previous years participants, but keep your eyes open around the village about "add-on" events that will hopefully take place. By the time you get this plans should be well under way (we hope!!) but please remember - **"YOUR CENTRE NEEDS YOU TOO !"** Volunteers are needed to take part in performing, be stewards, sell raffle tickets, make tea, sell programmes and help with the multitude of jobs that go to make up this exciting community weekend. Please say yes this year - every little helps ! All information will be available from the Centre, and if you don't know what you'd like to do leave your name and contact number with Glyn , or phone the Centre on **01364 72700** and someone will get in touch with you. **Thank you!**

***The Big One !!
The Brentathon !!
The Old School Centre !!
November 2nd - 4th 2007***

As mentioned before in this newsletter, the Management Committee have been talking about different ways of working and keeping up to date with the substantial work of the Centre. They are going to be trying out a new format to see how things go, and should be able to give some feedback at the AGM. Up until now everyone has gone to the monthly management meeting, and there is always a lot of business that needs attending to. This leaves little time to look at the future plans for the Centre, how they might be funded and how a core of supporters and volunteers could be engaged sometimes to help with some of the work.

Discussion has been based around people being involved in particular areas that interest them, and where their talents and expertise lies. So, one member might be keen to be involved with funding applications, or have a background in finance. Another might be more interested in the fabric of the building and have practical building or design skills.....see how it might work? Smaller groups will take on special areas of work and be responsible for meeting regularly whilst the manager and officers (Chair, vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) keep the day to day business of the Centre ticking over. Every 3 months there could be a whole group meeting where developments, issues and plans are shared.

This ,we hope ,might encourage more people to come forward and offer advice or practical help when special or one-off jobs need to

**THE OLD SCHOOL CENTRE AGM
NOVEMBER 28th 2007 @ 8 p.m.**

(This Autumn edition of the newsletter was written & compiled by Sue Burgess. We need a volunteer for the Spring edition !)

be done. And all help, however small it might seem , is very gratefully received. So **DO** come to the AGM ; just by being there you show the committee that their work is appreciated. We will aim to keep any formal business to a minimum, but look forward to some lively chat and to hear what you think of **YOUR** Centre. And if we keep to the time honoured tradition.....there'll be a glass of something to help the chat along !!

News in Brief

What an achievement the Pre-School's PLAYBARN is !! It was officially opened on Saturday July 21st (one of the dry days of July-remember?) and is a testimony to the hard work and generous spirit of the community. Many craftsmen gave freely of their time and all of the Pre-School staff and supporters are to be congratulated on the tremendous effort. It is hoped that the building represents the joy of children and childhood, and always will do.
.sWell Done !!

The LOGO Competition proved to be very successful, with many entries from all ages. Thank you to The South Brent Primary School for publicising it. The Committee members had such a hard job choosing the one they felt best represented the Centre that they have chosen 2 winners and will be making a composite logo based on those 2 entries. They were from Megan Prosser (in the children's category) and from Jo Thompson & Robert Hurrell (a combined effort). The winners will receive Gift Tokens for their efforts. Very close runners up amongst the excellent standard of entries were Sue Wells, Simon & Robinson Coulton, Liberty Ray and Caitlin Prosser.

Don't forget that memberships will need renewing by the end of the year. They remain the same - £2 for an individual (£1 if unwaged) and £5 for a family. If you also tick the Gift Aid box we can claim 28% extra from the Government.

Your Membership lasts from January '08 - December '08

The next big important date in the Centre's calendar, after the Brentathon, is the **WINTER MARKET**. You may not want to be thinking about winter yet - especially as the summer weather was nothing to be excited about, but please put this date in your diary ;

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 24th. in THE OLD SCHOOL

We'll soon let you know of all the things that will be here - but be sure it will be a good time to come present shopping, and stay and have a warming lunch !