

Another STANDARD

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1981

The only National Community Arts Newsletter

25p



photo Peter Lathan

INSIDE....

**RURAL COMMUNITY ARTS ~
INTERVIEW with Tony Banks ~**

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This issue

This, the second issue of 'Another Standard', has a rural theme. (The Community Photography issue will now appear in November). This is not because we feel that July is the right time to think about the country; in fact, some rural community artists wanted us to bring this issue out in the depths of winter to remind people that they have to work then, as well as in the blazing sun. The reason is that rural deprivation is currently receiving considerable publicity, and much rural community arts work can be seen as part of wider attempts both to highlight the problems, and to suggest ways of improving the situation.

This month, *Rural Voice*, a body made up of eight organisations concerned with the countryside, ranging from the Nat. Union of Agricultural Workers and Allied Trades to the Nat. Fed. of W.I.'s, and also inclu-

ding the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, has published a policy document pressing the Government to take urgent action on rural planning, housing, employment etc. The NCVO has also published 'Alternative Rural Services', which we review here.

We have had a strong response to requests for written contributions for this issue, and we are therefore considering bringing out a collection of pieces on rural work in conjunction with the Rural Community Arts Conference to be held in Northumberland in October (see Conferences). Anyone interested in being involved should contact Ros Rigby.

All the regular items are also included, with an interview with the new Chairman of the Arts and Recreation Committee at the GLC, Tony Banks.

LETTER!

Dear Another Standard,

As a group, we have recently subscribed to your community arts newsletter, **Another Standard**. In the May/June issue you had an article on community arts funding. The middle pages showed 'The National Picture'.

Bloomin Arts received a £500 project grant from Southern Arts last year, 80/81. This was to help us with our photography project. In the present financial year, 81/82 we have been given a revenue grant of £4000, our first, biggest grant for four years.

I hope this is useful to add to your information on Arts Funding; it is also quite good to let other groups know of our existence, as quite often we feel quite devoid of contact and information from others.

Anni Janik

Bloomin Arts, c/o East Oxford Community Centre, Princes Street, Oxford.

CONFERENCES & REPORT

COMMUNITY ARTS IN A RURAL CONTEXT – a forum for rural community workers and community artists.

FRI OCT 24 – SUN OCT 26

To be held at Thropton, Nr. Rothbury, Northumberland. Conference fees: £15 including dormitory accommodation, food, speakers etc. Numbers attending limited to 50 so book early by contacting: Alison Hooper, Community Council of Northumberland, Sanderson House, Bridge Street, Morpeth (Morpeth 58806).

For any other details on the conference ring Paul Fahey or Sally Morgan, Northumberland Community Arts: 0665 603069.

BRADFORD COMMUNITY ARTS & EDUCATION CONFERENCE 20 – 22 MAY 1981

This Conference was billed as a 'National' Community Arts Conference but seemed in fact to consist mainly of students from the Bradford College course and at times seemed like an extended seminar with outside experts pulled in by the idea that it was a conference.

There were in fact some good speakers; among them Darcus Howe who spoke about carnival, its history, development and the importance of it to the West Indian community. This talk and Albert Hunt's opening speech proved to be the highlights of the three day conference which was not among the most imaginative or interesting of the last few years.

If the organisers wish to do this again, we feel they would be well advised to plan further ahead, publicise more widely and develop (in conjunction with groups in their region perhaps?) a fuller and more varied programme which might be more directly relevant to the state of community arts in the country. If, however, you feel this conference was successful, let us know.

'NO ACCESS' is an exhibition of photographs taken by a group of young disabled photographers from the Aylesbury Day Centre in S. London. It is not an exhibition of objectifying portraits but one which communicates the frustrations of handicapped people about how they are seen and treated.

At 'CAMERAWORK', 119 Roman Rd., London E2 (01-980-8798) until July 18th.

ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY WORKERS: A.G.M. & Conference -- on the theme 'Welfare State Poverty – Fighting Back – Issues and Strategies for Community Work'.

Trevelyan College, Durham, September 25 – 27. The conference will examine alternative ideologies for practising community workers and strategies for the future in Housing, Health, Education, Welfare Rights, Social Services, Arts & Recreation, Transport, Energy and Employment.

£33 (A.C.W. members) £35 (non members). Fully residential. Creche facilities.

Booking forms and details from Dick Ellison, East C.A., Moor Terrace, Hendon, Sunderland, Tyne & Wear 0783 42306.

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS NEWS

SUPER 8

Joan Munro of the Gulbenkian Foundation is sending out questionnaires exploring the advantages/disadvantages of using this medium with community groups and hoping to develop contact between Super 8 users. And:

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITIONS.

She is also interested in investigating the value and possible distribution of exhibitions about community issues.

People interested in either should contact her at 5 Tavistock Place, London W.C.1 01 387 7719.

A COMMUNITY MEDIA RESEARCH GROUP

is being set up to act as an information exchange and focus for critical intervention in the current debates. They are interested in hearing from people researching into Community Arts fields (theatre, photography etc.) Contact Allan Pond, Dept. Communications Studies, Sheffield City Poly, Totley Hall Lane, Sheffield S17 4AB.

COMCOM PUBLICATIONS

Comcom have recently published a positive response to the depressing 3rd Report of the Home Office Local Radio Working Party – 'The Community Radio Supporters' Open Letter to the Home Secretary' (11pp – 45p). This and many other publications relevant to the important debate on the development of Community Radio, are available from Simon Partridge, 92 Huddleston Road, London N7 0EG. 01 263 6692.

AN INTERVIEW with Tony Banks

Tony Banks, the new Chairman of the GLC's Art & Recreation Committee, has been in the news lately as a result of his comments about proposed changes in GLC arts policy since Labour took control of the Council. Felicity Harvest interviewed him for "Another Standard".

Community Artists have, of course, responded well to your statements about the GLC making an increased commitment to our area of work — in general, how do you see GLC arts policy changing?

We need to re-examine the whole basis of our relationship to the Arts in London. The GLC has traditionally tended to concentrate on 'centres of excellence', and sub-regional resources. It has acted as an agency, rather than becoming involved in what the groups are trying to do, or considering overall policies. We shall be looking at how arts policy is integrated into our other policies; housing, transport and so on. These considerations lead to the idea of withdrawing from the national companies which happen to be in London, and letting the Arts Council deal with them. Then we could take over the Arts Council's functions in relation to locally based arts activities. The GLC should be the *local* sponsor of the arts. It's a local authority, not a national one. If we make a contribution to the National Theatre or the English National opera, we can only ever be the junior partner.

You have been accused of making 'political' decisions about art.

Politics are an integral part of art. These charges of philistinism are nonsense. The GLC has not got a bottomless purse, therefore we need to evolve a policy. If we channel money into the areas which are the most culturally deprived, those will be working class areas.

How do you see the relationship between the GLC and GLAA?

I can't answer that fully at the moment, because we have not had the necessary discussions with GLAA. But there has to be a rationalisation. We're not seeking to impose our will on them, we wish to examine the relationship. At present the options are open. There has been so little examination of arts policy in the GLC in the past. The arts have been the poor relation, and that's a serious omission. But everything needs re-viewing from time to time. What we need now is a radical approach to arts funding in London.

You mentioned earlier the concept of funding organisations of 'regional and sub-regional significance'

We have to get away from that. We must intervene at an appropriate level in all activities that are worthy of support, and such intervention has to be partly governed by subjective decisions. But what could be more subjective than the previous administration cutting a grant because they didn't like one play? We don't intend to impose censorship. We also have responsibilities as a film viewing board. We intend to start consultations with feminist groups to try to evolve some real criteria for deciding whether or not a film is acceptable. We can't continue on a 'Do I like it?' basis.

Do you intend to have similar consultations on arts policy?

I think we should have a series of formal consultations, seminars at County Hall for people with clear and distinct ideas on arts policy. We can't push through a policy in a few weeks, but it does have to emerge before the end of this financial year. We have to identify the people who can contribute to the debate, which shouldn't be a problem. The arts lobby is strong. People haven't been slow to get in touch. I believe that the response to such a call will be large. Meanwhile I can float ideas through articles and interviews. It amazes me that what I've been saying is seen as so revolutionary. Why is this so in an area of work where there are so many imaginative and articulate individuals?

It is unusual to hear a politician so valuable about the arts: it's politically unfashionable.

It is. It's usually seen as a junior job, or a dumping ground, which is one of the challenges in taking it on. For me, I'll admit, it's a convenient challenge. I don't want to be a full-time local government person, which means I haven't the time for some of the more traditionally senior areas, like transport. But I feel there's much that can be done in the arts, radical initiatives and significant improvements. Although I've little experience of arts administration, I've a good grasp of political priorities. I can act as a catalyst.

GLC seeks control of the arts

By Nicholas de Jongh, Arts Correspondent

A startling new policy is being outlined for the arts in London which would involve direct political control of the Greater London Arts Association, termination of grant aid to the National Theatre and the English National Opera (receiving £630,000 and £850,000 in this financial year from the GLC), and new policies which would "recognise the unemployment crisis in London."

The Greater London Council's arts and recreation committee is to be asked to approve this today. The discussion paper will

sioners' and tenants' associations will

NICHOLAS DE JONGH on a proposal to reform arts spending in London

Left Banks

THE REMARKABLE new cultural policy for London

... night, in a first of the policy document Michael Elliott, Theatre's administrator: "A withdrawal of the annual subsidies will cripple our operations, but it has a good sense in the future."

... the English National Opera withdrawal of GLC aid would be even more serious.

... proposal for the GLC committee to take over the Greater London Council is the most radical of all the recommendations.

Community arts work almost always implies development — new projects developing, increased demands on funding. How do you feel about this?

I don't want to create a level of expectation we cannot fulfill. On the other hand, we have to spend more rather than less on the arts. In order to do this, we have to encourage the sort of local initiatives which will provide examples with which to influence the next Labour government, so that we can, ask them for more money to fund community arts.

How do you see the relationship between GLC arts policy and Borough Arts policy?

We need far closer discussions. Personally I would like to see more GLC officers based around London, maintaining local contact with local groups. This would allow continuous assessment. Why can't we have local arts officers like local housing officers? We certainly need a more sensitive network, but not of bureaucrats, more of — what's the European term — animateurs?

Are you talking about new appointments, or exploiting existing networks?

That needs to be discussed. They would certainly need to be conversant with the areas in which they were working.

Many community artists would say you're talking about a job which is already being done.

Then a coherent structure is needed. The bureaucracy is only here to inform and improve, not to instruct.

Is there any point in community artists submitting applications at the moment?

I wouldn't discourage anyone, but there is no guarantee they will be satisfied, because although we're endeavouring to create funds, the government's onslaught on our autonomy is limiting us more and more. However, such applications would serve to show us what the demand is. If we're serious about opening up arts policy for discussion, we need to get as much involvement as we can from people in the arts. We need a real public debate on the Arts in London.

outside London

IN OTHER REGIONS, changes from Conservative to Labour control have had implications for Community Arts...

In Nottinghamshire, John Deere, the County Council Arts Officer is suggesting that a small Community Arts fund is established within the County Council budget; a meeting is to be held at the end of July at which specific details will be sorted out. Anyone wanting to know more should contact John Deere on Nottingham 866555.

The new Chairman of the Arts and Recreation Committee at Greater Manchester Council, Councillor Goldstone, reports that his committee is currently looking at new policy directives. Although there are no major commitments at present, his personal view is that art forms involving a wider section of the community should be given priority.

RURAL COMMUNITY ARTS

Downton Cuckoo Fair ~

Chris Foster started work as Rural Project Worker at St Edmund's Arts Centre in Salisbury, in January this year. He inherited a commitment to the 'Downton Cuckoo Fair', and here he tries to convey some of the frustrations and difficulties involved in working on this village event.

When I arrived in Salisbury, plans were well advanced for this year's Fair, to be run by the same small committee as in 1980. At the first meeting I attended, I got quite a shock.

There was a shopkeeper, a dentist, an estate agent's wife and a factory owner; all involved in various local committees, but certainly not representative of the whole village. They were middle aged and comfortably bourgeois. I had not inherited a community festival in any sense in which I understood the term, and Community Arts was nowhere in it. Nevertheless we had to contribute something, which could be justified for the village and our project. After careful thought we offered to design and print posters in the village using our portable silkscreen workshop boxes, and to co-ordinate a May Day procession.

Visits to the village in February to discuss attitudes to the idea of a fair and procession revealed a general suspicion of the committee which reflected onto us. When the Chairman realised we were talking to the villagers he instructed us not to meet any more without his permission! We suggested a procession throughout the village, led by the village band, to include a large banner, Jack in the Green, and a May Prince and Princess. People would be encouraged to dress in style with floral hats and the procession would end at a large decorated Maypole with dancing and games. The idea met with guarded enthusiasm from the committee.

The route, chosen to include as much of the village as possible, met with some resistance. Somebody said that nobody lived on one estate. The band, complaining that it was too long, had to be cajoled into playing — their image of themselves as a competition band almost outweighed any feelings for their village's festival. Eventually they joined the procession halfway through and refused to go round the council houses because 'nobody would be interested up there'.

Fending off an attempt to make the Conservative candidate in the impending County elections the May Prince, we got the two schools in the village to choose two children for us. Three days making decorated floral hats at the primary school were a great success. Children from the secondary school designed posters and did the Maypole dancing, the school giving us free use of a classroom for workshops over Easter. From February at weekly workshops we worked on the banner and made decorations for the Maypole. These sessions built up nicely over the weeks producing ever more splendid garlands of paper flowers.

The banner represented two facets of May Day. The front showed the floral, spring aspect and the reverse depicted work past and present in the village. Contemporary work, including a line of washing which fluttered free of the surface was encircled by a rainbow ring of people. The motto 'Unity is Strength' was somewhat ironic in the circumstances. Several people from the village got very interested in making the banner and certainly contributed a lot to the design. However without a lot of additional time put in by friends from the Arts Centre it would not have been finished.

The committee took little interest in the workshops, the chairman dropped in regularly and left us feeling he was checking up on us. The problem was that the committee did not see the fair



as a vehicle for creative expression in the village. Far from releasing imagination and building bridges, they were reimposing reactionary values and controls, reinforcing entrenched divisions. They were giving something to the village and there was little opportunity for anyone else to say what they wanted.

In many ways the Maypole was the most impressive part of the event. It was over 40 feet high and weighed in at $\frac{3}{4}$ ton. The village Scout troop got the tree and erected the pole, no mean feat of engineering but not as tricky as getting it down again. People were genuinely excited about it and threw themselves into the project with a will. The pole and guy ropes were decorated with garlands and fresh greenery and the top was graced with a straw cuckoo specially made by a local thatcher. It looked very impressive.

We had little idea how the village would respond to the event. Gradually in various ways quite a lot of people had become involved and enthusiastic. There were over a hundred kids from the school with decorated hats for a kick off, but of course this was only a small percentage of the 3000 people in the village. We leafleted the village several times, but were painfully aware of just how little we had really got to know people and also the extent to which we had imposed things from outside. Would people feel it was their day?

After all the battles and problems we were not prepared for the response. At the start of the procession there were a hundred or so people waiting. As we went round lots of people came out of their houses and more joined in. By the time we reached the middle of the village, people blocked the road and as we arrived at the Maypole with a crowd of 1500-2000 it was hard to remember what all the fuss had been about. The Maypole dancers finally got it all right, the Maypole and banner looked fantastic. Even if there were not too many adults with flowery hats the kids looked great and the sun shone. Everyone agreed that it was a tremendous success, but was it?

From start to finish we struggled and fought to make the space for people to meet and let their imaginations go and create something new together in the village. We had to fight for our fee, fight for our ideas and fight to finish what we began. I feel the success on the day was largely superficial. The product looked good because we were not prepared to have it any other way, but the process by which we achieved it left a tremendous amount to be desired. Yet within the failure there were successes. The kick the women got from making the banner, the disabled man who had been watching TV for 5 years and then made the cuckoo on the banner, the kids who designed and printed the posters. Most of all we made friends and began the slow process of establishing an independent identity for our project in the village. Perhaps we laid some foundations on which to build future work, only time will tell.

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"A Hiding to Nothing" ~

The North Sea — Rural? Somehow a film dealing with the problems of the British fishing industry is not the type of project to spring to mind when one thinks of Rural Community Arts. However, **A Hiding to Nothing**, a 30 minute Super 8mm film made with the Amble Seine Net and Keel Boat Association, has been a major project for Northumberland Community Arts over the last year.

By June 1980, fishermen from Amble, on the Northumberland coast south of Alnwick, were dumping fish, as the price had fallen so low. They were at a loss as to how to draw the attention of the public to the problem. An article in the local paper about the lack of import controls prompted Paul Fahey of Northumberland C.A. to approach them to discuss the best way to put their case. Why was Super 8mm film chosen? Unlike many community arts groups, N.C.A. has opted for 8mm film as a resource, rather than video. *'It's cheaper to buy the equipment,'* Sally Morgan, the other worker at N.C.A., explains *'editing is much easier, and when the film is made, it is much easier to show it to large numbers of people. Also, having learnt to use our equipment people are then capable of doing similar work on their own or borrowed home movie set ups. The quality, of course, is not as good as 16mm, and it is important, before people see the film, for them to realise that they are not going to see something of the technical standard of a TV documentary. However, for a film made on home movie equipment, by people who had never done anything like this before, it is impressive.'*

A Hiding to Nothing (meaning a situation where you can't win whichever way you turn) gives a general picture of the life of an Amble fisherman, with detailed descriptions of the two methods of fishing, trawling (dragging the sea bed), and seine netting (using a huge circle of rope with a net at the top). It describes the hardships of this way of life, both for the fisherman and their wives, and also deals with more recent additional problems, such as the higher level of subsidy enjoyed by fishermen from other EEC countries (such as France and Holland), the lack of import controls, and the ignoring, by foreign fishermen, of regulations governing net sizes etc. *'We might go through this whole procedure seven to eight times a day, and wonder whether it's worth it. We've had as little as £6.00 for a 6 stone box, and it doesn't even cover the diesel bill.'*

The sequences at sea are the most memorable, filmed by the fishermen themselves, with little assistance from the N.C.A. workers, who were sea-sick on their two trips out in one of the boats (on the first occasion continually from 5.30a.m. to 4p.m.!) *'We had some differences of opinion regarding the strength of the message about the problems faced by the fishermen today,'* Sally added, *'in that I felt that more time could have been given to these points, and perhaps some of the explanations about fishing left out. But the fishermen wanted the film to have a general educational purpose as well as dealing with the particular issues.'*

It seems that the original aim, at any rate, has been fulfilled, and even surpassed. Not only has the making of the film drawn the attention of Northumberland residents to the plight of

their own fishing industry, but interest has been shown nationally (via BBC Radio and TV coverage), and by the European Parliament. Northern Euro M.P.'s have asked for a copy of the film to take to the Parliament to show the strength of feeling among British fishermen about the problems facing them since Britain entered the EEC.

PROJECTS

The following work either wholly or to a substantial extent in rural areas:

ARRAN COMMUNITY ARTS (Contact: David Aitcheson, Broomhill Cottage, Whiting Bay, Isle of Arran, SCOTLAND.)

Founded in Jan. 1979 by Ken Wolverton and Chrissie Orr, the project now operates with the two co-directors and five Community Service Agency workers. Supported by a committee of local residents, they undertake a wide variety of activities (visual arts workshops, drama, puppetry, mime, concrete sculpture) working from two bases and a playbus. They work throughout the island with all ages and all types of people.

NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITY ARTS (Contact: Paul Fahey and Sally Morgan, Lindisfarne Middle School, Lindisfarne Rd., Alnwick. Tel: 0665 603069)

This two worker project, founded by Northumberland Community Council in 1979, works in villages and towns mainly in the Alnwick District Council area, offering visual arts workshops, film-making, and inflatables. They work on 'issue-based' projects where possible, but also respond to requests from playschemes, youth clubs, etc.

PLAY ON WHEELS (Contact: Fraser Brown, NPFA Regional Officer, 5 Garden Terrace, Alnmouth, Alnwick, Northumberland.)

This group has recently moved from being a play project, to a community arts project still closely linked with playscheme groups. They run craft and video workshops in Hexham and other villages in the western part of Northumberland, and have undertaken mural projects with youth clubs.

CLEVELAND VILLAGE ARTS (Contact: Doff Pollard. Tel: Guisborough 52392)

This new project has one worker, with a Y.O.P. assistant, supported by a local steering group. Doff will concentrate her work in ten villages between Guisborough and Saltburn, offering dance, drama, crafts and video skills, working both with existing groups and forming new ones. She will also offer playscheme and training work throughout Langbaugh District area.

HIGH PEAK COMMUNITY ARTS (Contact: Gerri Moriarty, Chapel Adult Centre, Long Lane, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Derbyshire. Tel: Chapel 2968)

Based in North Derbyshire (including Glossop, Buxton and New Mills as well as similar towns and villages) the project was set up 18 months ago by a local committee. There is one full time worker, about to be joined by a second. The range of work includes offering printing resources, a community circus project, puppet

workshops in small villages, and drama work with local groups; future plans involve photography and youth unemployment schemes.

MASQUE THEATRE COMPANY (Contact: Mike and Sandy Wilson, 3 Kings Rd., Fakenham, Norfolk. Tel: 0328 4319)

Masque has been working in North Norfolk since 1976, and now employs two full time workers plus other part time and short term project workers. Their aim is to bring live theatre to rural North Norfolk, and the community arts element in their work involves workshops, large scale youth drama projects, and work with the mentally handicapped.

SPARE P. ARTS (Contact: Sheila Metson, 23 Crown St., Leiston, Suffolk. Tel: 0728 830771)

A two worker project based in Leiston, working in East Suffolk; developed from the 'Magic Lantern' community arts group.

PENTABUS RURAL THEATRE COMPANY AND COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECT (Contact: Heather Langridge; Tel: 054 45 8161)

Operating in Hereford, Worcester and Shropshire, this project is promoted by West Midlands Arts and comprises a small performance team and two community arts workers. The performance team is based in Stourport, and the community arts project in Weobley, a village near Hereford, undertaking workshops and long term projects mainly in south Shropshire and N. Herefordshire.

GROUNDWELL FARMERS (Contact: Robert Stredder, Groundwell Farmers, Upper Stratton, Swindon, Wilts. 0793 721111)

The project has a nucleus of four full time and a number of other 'visiting' workers. They work both in small-scale urban and rural settings, mainly in Wiltshire, but also touring nationally on occasions. Their work involves performance, participatory drama, and inflatables, and work with the disabled, and maladjusted children.

ST. EDMUND'S ARTS CENTRE (Contact: Chris Foster, St. Edmund's Arts Centre, Bedwin St., Salisbury, Wilts. Tel: 0722 4299)

The Centre runs a rural community arts project employing one full-time and one part-time worker, and draws on help from the Arts Centre, and local volunteers. The project works mainly with existing village organisations, festival committees and schools. The work involves music, folklore, and visual arts skills.

BEAFORD CENTRE COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECT (Contact: Diana Murray and Pete Loveday, 1 Alexandra Rd., Barnstaple, N. Devon. Tel: 0271 75285)

Although the project is administratively part of the Beaford Centre, it has a separate base in Barnstaple. It employs two full-time workers who offer print, puppetry, craft, inflatables, and drama skills, and work in villages and small towns throughout N. Devon.

MEDIUM FAIR COMMUNITY ARTS (Contact: Dave Gill, Marlborough Hall, Kimberley Rd., Exeter. Tel: 0392 32617)

Soon to change its name to 'Fair Exchange', the project employs 2½ workers, and works mainly in the Teignbridge and E. Devon District Council areas. Some of their work uses a 'village week' format whereby they work with local people on a week of intensive activities, sometimes involving the production of a daily newspaper. Their work involves drama (liaising with the 'Fair Play' Theatre in Education group), print and photography (using both a portable and static darkroom).

PAUL WILSON/EXETER FOLK WORK-SHOP (30 Old Tiverton Road, Exeter, Devon. Tel: 0392 51529)

The overall aim of the project (not exclusively 'rural' or 'urban') is to assist the development of a healthy song and music tradition, involving researching and collecting folk songs, redis-seminating what has been collected (via records, broadsheets and other media), strengthening folk music's information base via talks, workshops, etc.) and extending the tradition by writing new songs for special needs. Live performance plays an important part, involving events in Exeter and throughout the South West, including programmes for special audiences (old folk's centres etc.)

SAM RICHARDS AND TISH STUBBS (6

South Street, Totnes, S. Devon TQ9 5DZ. Tel: Totnes 862935)

Essentially, they see their job as 'to discover local folklore, and to encourage people to use it'. This is done via long-term research 'to locate effective tradition bearers', encouraging where and when appropriate, live performance of the songs, dances, stories etc. involved. Although they work extensively in the rural South West, they feel strongly that 'folk' should not be seen purely as a rural phenomenon.

WORD AND ACTION (DORSET) (Contact:

R.G. Gregory, 23 Beaucroft Lane, Colehill, Wimborne, Dorset. Tel: 0202 883197)
Word and Action does not see itself as devoting itself to one community, rather 'gathering its community around an interest in instant theatre, W&A's particular contribution to group creativity.' Although it works throughout Britain, and abroad, it does see Dorset as its primary commitment, and all ages and ranges of people have been involved in instant theatre, poetry workshops, fairs, and local writing projects.

FOLKLORE AS COMMUNITY ARTS

by Sam Richards[©]

A good working approach to folklore would be to regard it as traditional community arts. In the mainly rural West Country, Tish Stubbs and myself have, for some years, set ourselves the task of bringing to the surface performance-conscious folk expressions. There is no doubt that without extensive fieldwork, such a programme could not exist. So the first part of the process is to locate effective tradition bearers. At this point we often encounter the miserable fragmentation of our culture as reflected in the attitudes of funding organisations. Recording people, they say, is academic work. No concern of ours...

The real point is to increase awareness of the possibilities of local songs, dances, music, plays or whatever — this may consist of working with schools, arranging visits, village concerts, pub sessions, a folk club, workshops. It may also consist of visiting people for weeks on end without any performance in sight. One gypsy singer we met over eight years ago has just, as I write, a week ago for the first time come to sing at one of our organised events.

What has happened over that period of eight years? Firstly, we have a systematic recorded document of that man's songs and something of his attitude to them. One of them has appeared alongside other gypsy singers, on a commercially available L.P. Other revival and local singers have been able to hear and learn his songs or enhance their appreciation of them. They, in turn, have performed locally. The singer and his family have become more aware of their own heritage. The children now make a point of singing to us what they have learnt since our last visit. Being gypsies they already have a strong sense of being a group on their

own. The songs figure as part of that pride and are a source of strength. We have been told in so many words that this has intensified due to our interest. All without a single arranged performance.

Considering community arts work in terms of events and projects is a limitation which in the last analysis, stems from a bourgeois view of the artistic event as something apart from the rest of life. How is one supposed to tot up the amount of influence one has had on an individual or community? By the number of times you visit? By the amount of tunes you record? By head counting at organised events?

Events and projects — the twin tyranny of grant application forms — imply that those things we value most in culture can be measured by those devices we value least, and that community artists should dream up elaborate games to justify their funded existence. Without glorified accounts of events and projects many funding bodies (the Community Arts Panel of ACGB being a good example) are at a loss as to what to do.

In a folk tradition, performances surface continually without ever being organised or advertised. We may not reach that level of social integration, but there are times when we aspire to it.

SAM RICHARDS, with Tish Stubbs, has worked for many years as a folklorist and community arts worker in the South West. He maintains that 'folk' should not be seen as something quaint and rustic, but that 'folklore is part of the fabric of cultural life, and this applies to urban and rural areas equally'. This article is part of a longer piece, which we plan to publish in full later in the year.

OPINION.....

I have come to detest the description 'rural community arts'. It conjures up a vision of well-meaning, wholefood eating, goat-herding community artists, invading Ambridge or Emmerdale. They organise Maypole dancing on the village green, corn dolly workshops, the revival of long (and best) forgotten rustic customs, and encourage Jill Archer to run a little playgroup in her spare time. I am afraid that this 'rural' myth — of a Utopian haven of light, peace and harmony — also invades the minds of all those people (fellow community arts workers included) whose only experience of the country is a fortnight's holiday at the seaside, or in the National Parks. My heart sinks at 'How lucky you are to live in such a beautiful part of the world'. Taken to its logical conclusion, the same remark could be made about Argentina, or Northern Ireland.

The truth is that many of the problems facing rural communities, although quantitatively less, are qualitatively the same, as those faced by urban communities. Short-time working and redundancy hit hard in areas where there is often only one major employer. School-leavers, finding no local employment, are further impeded in their search for work by transport difficulties. Other issues are perhaps even more acutely felt in rural areas. Campaigns for environmental change, or conservation, or against nuclear power, evoke strong feelings — for obvious reasons. My favourite anti-nuclear slogan is 'If it's so bloody safe, why not build it in London?'

housing, low wages, the closure of neighbourhood services, the spending of public money on tourism rather than local needs, that stifling parochialism that begins in envy and ends in apathy — community arts workers in cities and towns can see the equivalent in their own areas.

Given this situation, the rural community artist works for change in ways that would be familiar to an urban counterpart. On a superficial level, the tools are the same — the silk-screens, the slide/tape sequence, the film, the local drama group. But from the grand objectives — like enabling people to use communication resources for specific needs, or using creative processes to analyse issues and develop solutions, or demonstrating the achievements which can be made by working co-operatively, or making the project really accountable to the community — to the everyday worries — like how to make the books balance, where to buy cheap photographic paper, the similarities are greater than the differences. And no doubt the failures are also shared — the constant struggle between practical necessity and ideal principles, inadequate funding, the project which falls apart for some trivial reason, the awful feeling that much more could have been achieved.

I would be the first to admit that there are acute differences between community arts projects; and that these may eventually become so irreconcilable that the movement will be split, fragmented and weakened. But the differences arise not from geographical isolation, but from ignorance of the existence of other groups, or from a deliberate decision to ignore them. You can be as isolated in Leeds as in Cornwall, or as fully in touch in the Isle of Arran as in



London. It is not miles that matter, but, on the one hand, the attitude of workers and management groups, and on the other hand the degree of welcome/sympathy/understanding extended by other community arts groups.

The community arts movement has made its own small contribution to the fight to convince people that the British Isles don't end at Watford Gap. It would be a fatal mistake to believe that an alien world begins at the city derestriction sign.

Gerri Moriarty[©]

Gerri Moriarty founded the High Peaks Community Arts project in Derbyshire.

I have tried to find concerns which are specifically rural — but decaying transport systems, bad

PUBLICATIONS

ALTERNATIVE RURAL SERVICES

A Valuable Handbook for Rural Work



Here at last is a book which should dispel once and for all the myth that rural England is a modern Eden and that social problems are confined to the inner city areas. In 16 brief and well laid out chapters, Steven Woollett's book gives a general analysis of rural decline and then proceeds to take a closer look at specific problems and how they can be approached. If public transport is cut, what are the possibilities for community buses or social car schemes? If the pub closes, should community ownership be considered, as at Meavy in Devon? A most refreshing feature of the book is that possible solutions are analysed realistically and many of the more feasible ones are illustrated with case studies.

A significant omission from the book lies in the absence of any reference to community arts or even to the arts in general. However, this probably stems from the fact that rural community councils have only recently begun to become involved in this work. Despite this lapse, the book should become required reading for all community artists working in rural areas. It contains a useful list of relevant organisations at local and national level, and it is doubtful whether one could find a more comprehensive and down to earth description of rural problems. The book therefore sets the context in which rural community arts work will be carried out.

Hugo Perks

"Alternative Rural Services" is available from the Bedford Square Press of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, 26 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HU. Price £3.50p.

WORK WANTED

Qualified thoughtful photographer seeks work. Photos in pine frames. Alan Gracie: Tel 021 443 3431.

THE CONCRETE DINOSAUR BOOK

This 'common sense guide' is published by Arran Community Arts, whose co-directors, Ken Wolverton and Chrissie Orr, conceived the idea of building a half-size concrete dinosaur as a group project. They first built a Tyrannosaurus Rex with local children, soon to be followed by a Protoceratops, built by Community Service Agency workers.

The guide gives details of materials, tools, site preparation, the construction of the armature, sheathing and application of the various layers of concrete. It is fully illustrated with photos and diagrams, and should be of use to anyone planning to build concrete sculptures (not only of dinosaurs!)

For further details contact: David Aitcheson, Arran Community Arts, Broomhill Cottage, Whiting Bay, Isle of Arran, Scotland.

BUILDING CONCRETE SCULPTURES

A 'step by step' leaflet is being produced by Bernard Brasseur and Ian Hinde at Community Arts West Cumbria. It is based on a specific project they undertook with under 11s, illustrated by them, with background details and ideas for different projects on Play sites.

For further details contact Bernard or Ian, Community Arts West Cumbria, The Howgill Centre, 14-15 Howgill St., Whitehaven, Cumbria (0946 62681).

OUT OF TOWN OUT OF MIND

- A Programme for Rural Revival

The Labour Party has just published this booklet - a policy statement stemming from the N.E.C.'s Rural Areas Study Group. It covers the fields of employment, transport, education, social services, health services, housing and general amenities, as well as the possibilities of a Minister of Rural Affairs and the problems of party and union organisation in rural areas. An encouraging and attractively readable document, it is available price 80p from The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Rd., London SE17 1JT.

CETU'S LIST OF INFORMATION ON COMMUNITY ARTS, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Compiled by Anne Davies.
A bibliography containing over 700 entries of books, pamphlets and journal articles; price £2.00 (incl. P&P) from Mary Emery, Publications Unit, Dept. of Adult Education, University of Nottingham, 14-22 Shakespeare Street, Nottingham NC1 4FJ.

WE NEED YOU

Support Community Arts in Lambeth

Lambeth Amenity Services are compiling a register of individuals with an interest and experience in Community Arts, especially those interested in possible voluntary work or employment on a sessional basis to devise arts activities/workshops in the Borough.

Details and forms from: Judith Schrut, Arts Officer, London Borough of Lambeth Directorate of Amenity Services, 164 Clapham Park Road, London SW4 7DD.

AFCA

As from 5 June, A NEW AFCA BRANCH now exists in Yorkshire & Humberside. Anyone interested in joining should contact: Alan Wallace 0532 31005/6.

WEST MIDLANDS AFCA is still involved in the current discussions taking place regarding the proposed changes within West Midlands Arts (from a panel structure to a system of 'advisors'). AFCA members have been among those client groups who have submitted a letter to W.M.A. expressing concern about the speed with which this change is to be implemented.

Cathy McKerras (Telford Community Arts) has had a daughter, Alice; according to reports sometime in the week beginning June 15.

NORTH WEST AFCA have recently called a large open meeting made up of N.W. Arts Community Arts clients, panel members and other interested people, to discuss assessment methods by the N.W. Arts Community Arts panel.

From the meeting came the production of a paper, to be sent to N.W. Arts making a number of recommendations:

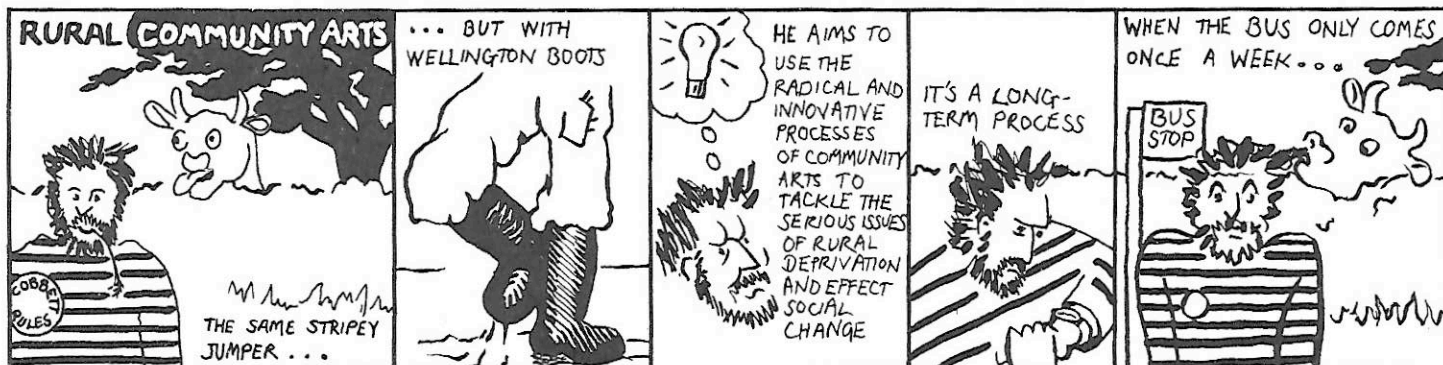
- The establishment of a 'warning and appeal system'.
- The right of a project to object to an assessor they have been allocated.
- At least one of the two assessors for each project to have practical experience of the media used.
- One assessor to be linked to each project for at least two years.
- 2 visits to be made by assessors to see practical work each year; 2 for discussions and 1 formal assessment visit.
- Written reports to be made after visits, copies of which should be sent to clients, with the opportunity for them to reply.

Anyone interested in finding out more details of these proposals should contact:

Janet Matthewman, Community Arts Workshop, 22 Willert St., Collyhurst, Manchester (061 202 2037).

TAKING CONTROL

We plan to run Taking Control as a regular cartoon strip; and would welcome contributions (realise your potential as a cartoonist!)



SHELTON TRUST

The Shelton Trust was formed in 1980, as an education and information body for those involved or interested in Community Arts, and also to open up more channels of communication between the Community Arts movement and bodies who have similar aims. As the Association for Community Arts now exists only at a regional level, the Shelton Trust is the only national body established to provide services for those involved in Community Arts in the U.K.

The Trust operates via a board of regional directors (elected at the A.G.M. in November).

DIRECTORS

Bernard Ross (Chairman) 0632 832744
45 Victoria Rd. East, HEBBURN, Tyne & Wear
Felicity Harvest (Membership Sec.) 01-249-3394
Freeform, 38 Dalston Lane, LONDON E8 3AZ
Tim Pearce (Treasurer) 0985 213891
Athenaeum Arts Centre, WARMINSTER, Wilts.
Cynthia Woodhouse (Secretary) 021-557-1569
Jubilee Community Arts, Jubilee Arts Centre,
Greets Green, WEST BROMWICH, West Midlands

Chris Foster 0722 4299
St Edmund's Arts Centre, SALISBURY, Wilts.
Nigel Leach 0274 23051

Yorkshire Arts Association, Glyde House,
Glydegate, BRADFORD, West Yorkshire
Cilla Baynes 061-202-2037
Community Arts Workshop, 22 Willert Street,
MANCHESTER M10 8LQ

David Pole 0272 279258
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Su Braden 0273 685027
20 Canning Street, BRIGHTON, Sussex
Paul Fahey 0665 75507
High Steads Cottages, NEWTON ON THE
MOOR, Northumberland

CO-ORDINATOR (for general enquiries)
Ros Rigby 0385 881170
48 Grange Terrace, PELTON FELL, Chester-le-
Street, Co. Durham.

AGM
Details re nomination procedures etc. for the
A.G.M. to be held in late November, will be
given in the next issue.

SHELTON TRUST/NCVO CONFERENCE: COMMUNITY ARTS AND Y.O.P. SCHEMES: June 25

65 people attended the conference, including representatives of M.S.C.; A.C.G.B., R.A.A.'s, community arts groups, Y.O.P. projects local authorities and education. The day was based on four presentations, each demonstrating a different kind of work with young people — W.E.E.P. placements, arts work incorporated into Y.O.P. projects, community artists serving the training needs of a Y.O.P. scheme, and a group of Y.O.P. workers supporting a community artist. In the subsequent discussion, the major questions were so major (what can community arts offer to Y.O.P.? what can it not offer?) that no resolution was sought, but rather an exchange of ideas. The debate will be continued in the conference report, which will be compiled from the record of the conference, plus extra relevant material. For details send SAE to Felicity Harvest

SHELTON TRUST MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Trust is open to anyone working "in or for Community Arts" — that is, either employed as a community arts worker, or, if not, interested in and supporting the aims of the Community Arts movement.

(The Articles of Association for the Trust are available on request). Membership is currently £1.00, which runs up to the next A.G.M. in November, at which the fee will be reviewed. Members are entitled to:

I wish to apply for membership of the Shelton Trust (which includes subscription to 'Another Standard')

Name Date

Address

County Post Code

Please give details below of your involvement/interest in

Community Arts

I enclose P.O./Cheque (made out to the Shelton Trust Ltd.) for £1

I wish to transfer my subscription (already paid) to a membership
and therefore enclose no money.

Send to: Felicity Harvest, Membership Secretary,
Freeform, 38 Dalston Lane, London E8.

— Free copies of the Sept. and
Nov. issues of 'Another Stan-
dard' plus May/June back
issue on Community Arts
Funding.

— attendance at any of the
Directors' meetings (held
monthly, usually on the 1st
Tuesday of the month, at the
Aston Centre for the Arts,
Birmingham). Anyone inter-
ested in attending should
contact the Co-ordinator, to
confirm time and place of
meeting.

— entitlement to vote or to
stand at the election of new
directors at the A.G.M. in
November.

STANDARDS

Two of the Trust's directors, Dave Pole and Tim Pearce, would like to open up a debate on the question of 'standards' in community arts.

Should they be applied? If so, from where should criteria be drawn? How should a community artist deal with the question of standards when working with groups? If there is sufficient interest, a conference could be organised early next year, at which people would be invited to speak about their work from this angle. Send contributions please to Another Standard, and we will keep readers posted on how the debate progresses; or ring Dave or Tim direct.

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Full page £50; Half page £30;

1/3 page £20; 1/4 page £15;

1/6 page £10; 1/9 page £7.50

Artwork preferred.

SMALL ADS ARE FREE

INSERTS . . . three inserts can be included with each issue, rates from Ros Rigby!

ANOTHER STANDARD will be published mid-month of September, November & January. **COPY DEADLINE FOR THE SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER ISSUE IS AUGUST 15.** SEND TO: ANOTHER STANDARD, 48 Grange Terrace, Pelton Fell, Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham DH2 2DP.

'Another Standard' cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies in information given. Details should be checked with the relevant organisations.

The views expressed by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of the Shelton Trust, the publishers.

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Compiled by Ros Rigby

SUBSCRIPTION TO 'ANOTHER STANDARD'

(for those not wishing to take out Shelton Trust membership)

Name Date

Address

County Postcode

I enclose a P.O./Cheque made out to the Shelton Trust Ltd. for £1.25

The £1.25 subscription is for a set of four issues, brought out bi-monthly between May and November this year; on Community Arts Funding, Rural Community Arts, Community Arts in Scotland and Community Photography. You will therefore be sent whichever three issues you have not yet received.

Send to: Ros Rigby, Co-ordinator, Shelton Trust, 48 Grange Terrace, Pelton Fell, Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham DH2 2DP.