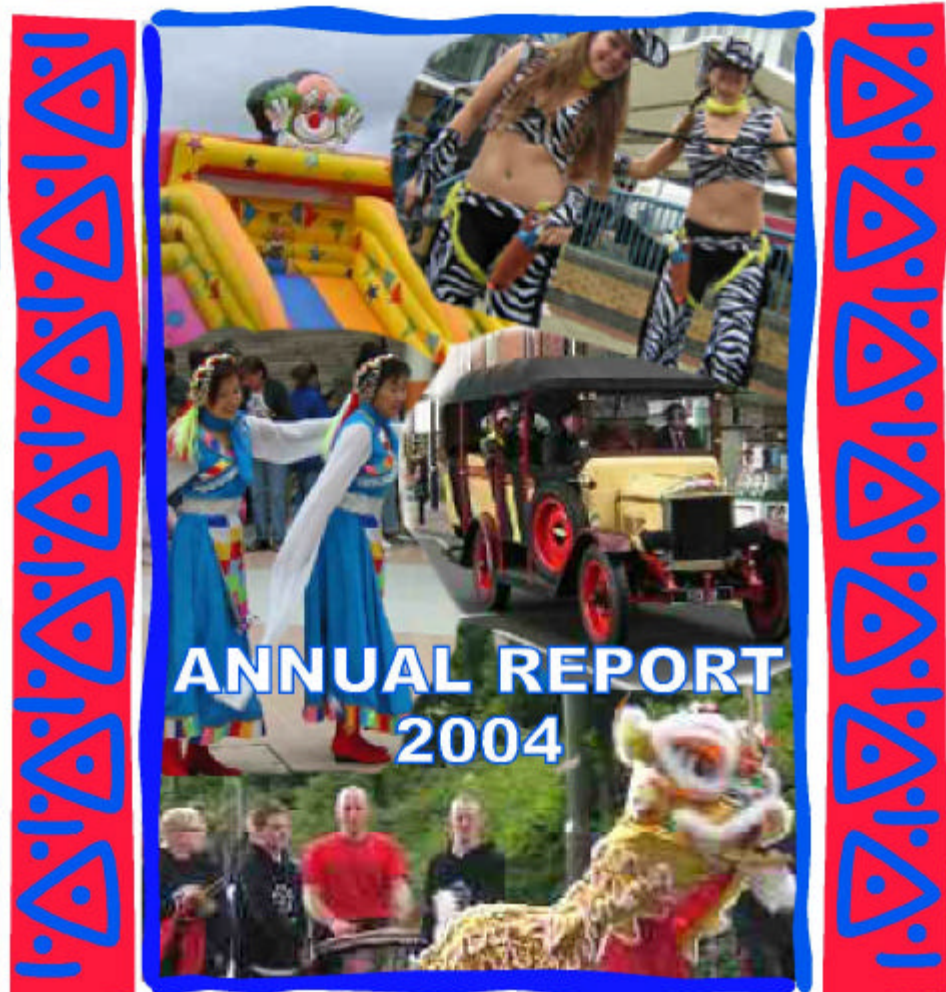


WALLSEND



FESTIVAL

Chair's and Secretary's Report

I am pleased to report on another successful year for the Wallsend Festival Association during which we planned and delivered the fourth Wallsend Festival over the period of July 7th - 11th, 2004.

As ever the Festival was the result of much hard work by many people and in particular those who worked on the Management Committee throughout the year. My thanks to them all and once again a special mention for the work done by Edmund Hall in organising the parade and display area.

As mentioned in last year's report during the course of this year we once again lost and gained a treasurer! This time for the best of reasons, in that Laura Seghal who succeeded John Patrickson, herself resigned due to impending motherhood. We thank her for her work during her short time with the WFA and wish her and the new baby all the best.

Tom Fairhurst our third treasurer has brought a wealth of experience and good ideas to the WFA and has kept our funds under very precise and accurate control, freeing me to concentrate on the fun aspects of the work, i.e. organising the Festival itself, for which I'm very grateful.

Once again Jim Graham has kindly agreed to audit our books and his report together with the 2004 accounts appears at the end of this report.

The Festival would not have been possible without support from a number of bodies, most notably the Community Foundation who gave a grant of £4428.50 and DTZ the operators of the Forum Shopping Centre who once again donated £1,000 as well as offering facilities and space within the centre. North Tyneside Council's Events Unit also deserve a special mention for their unstinting and ever cheerful work particularly on Festival Saturday.

On the membership front, numbers have stayed relatively steady in the high twenties and whilst this is not a large number those who are formal members are in many cases there as representatives of groups throughout the community. Nonetheless, we are keen to broaden our base within the community and have plans for initiatives to achieve this during 2005.

John Fleet
Chair/Secretary

Wallsend Festival 2004

Festival Week 2004 culminated in Festival Saturday July 10th. Following the successful pattern established in previous years, a range of activities took place in the town centre on that day. Perhaps the most notable event to record was the experiment of closing High Street East between Station Road and Park Road. This enabled us to move the display area into the town centre for the first time and meant far more visitors to the exhibits. With the co-operation and support of Northumbria Police and support from the Council's Events Unit, the road closure caused few traffic difficulties and worked very well in linking the ever popular children's fairground at the Coronation Club car park with the other elements of the Festival. At the same time, shop keepers appreciated the extra business opportunities that closing this section of road to vehicular traffic gave them, so all in all the experiment was judged to be a success and it is likely that we will repeat this closure in future years.

This year we were particularly pleased that the new Chairman of North Tyneside Council, Councillor Goveas, and his consort joined us for the opening ceremony, together with Swan Hunters' Chairman Jaap Kroese. Both sets of dignitaries later enjoyed leading the cavalcade through the town centre from the comfort of a 1920's charabanc. Our bandstand music programme was well appreciated, with an additional act squeezed into the end of the day's programme giving a total of six different performances representing a wide spectrum of musical styles to appeal to all tastes.

Demand for stalls at our craft market was unprecedented this year, so that in addition to the 24 stalls situated outside the Forum we introduced stalls inside the mall itself. This allowed us to accommodate more than a dozen extra stalls and gave a real buzz to the centre during the day, alongside the entertainment taking place in the mall atrium.

The Festival parade was scheduled an hour earlier than in 2003 and was led by an impressive collection of vehicles old and new. We estimate that around 200 people took part in the parade, with the uniformed services, including the Wallsend Air Cadets, particularly well represented. We would have liked to see more local community organisations represented and steps are in hand to encourage wider participation in next year's Parade.

Saturday evening saw a choice of musical entertainment. Wallsend Memorial Hall hosted a concert by the group Encore, singing songs from the shows with more than a hint of humour. Organised by the North Tyneside Council Employees Charity Committee, the show was greatly enjoyed by those who attended. At the same time Enigma (a group of sixth form students from Burnside College), presented a rock concert at the Buddle, which again attracted a lively and appreciate audience. Sunday featured special events at Segedunum allowing visitors to take advantage of the 'pop in for a pound' vouchers distributed the previous day and the Churches Songs of Praise event was the culmination of this year's Festival.

Wallsend People's Centre

Once again the festival went very well. There were around about 350 people through the doors on Saturday, the best part being after lunch. Almost everything went to plan, with only one of the entertainers not turning up on the day. Highlights of the day included:

Irish Dancing: Thanks to Vicki and her friend the entertainment was well received, there were 50 people in the small hall watching the dancing.

Drum workshop: Great fun and entertainment. A mixed group of 25 people and children had a great drumming session, the outcome being a drumming workshop being set up in the Centre, for next year.

Indian Art & Sari Display: Once again a very successful event; lots of Henna Art, and many children putting on the Saris and getting their photographs taken.

Café: Great food, lots of people enjoying a sit down and a chat to their friends whilst enjoying Karen's cooking.

Stalls: We ran a Tombola, Cake stall, Art stall, Leaded Glass Art, and Bric-Brac stall.

All in all hard work but good fun, looking forward to next year!

John Jasper

The Wallsend Festival Association is an unincorporated body with charitable aims that was formed in January 2002 following the successful Wallsend Festival event held in July 2001.

It seeks to celebrate all that is good in Wallsend: past, present and future and its main focus of activity to date has been planning and delivery of the annual Wallsend Festival, held for the fourth time in July 2004.

