

# Annual Report

## Headstrong Productions

trading as



2009 - 2010

# THE STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT US ...

**Headstrong Productions** trade as

**Headway Arts**

We are a

Registered Charity No. 1049698

and a

Company Limited by Guarantee No. 3006904

Our address (and registered office) is:

21 Quay Road, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 2AS

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and you can check out our website at:

[www.headwayhq.co.uk](http://www.headwayhq.co.uk)

## ... AND OUR TRUSTEES

Trustees are the people who make sure we do things in the right way, for the right reasons and for the right people. We are always looking for new people to join the Board so if you think you might like to become a Trustee please come and talk to us about it.

We have 7 Trustees who are:

Michael Dungworth (Treasurer)

Paul James

Heather Mills

Stuart Morland (Vice Chair)

Bernard Pidcock (Chair)

Tom Richardson

Catherine Ross

and a Company Secretary who is:

Frances Castle

The Trustees have delegated the responsibility for running Headway Arts on a day to day basis to the Headway Team, led by Fran, the Chief Executive.

## The Headway team are:

Frances Castle - Chief Executive  
Alison Walton-Robson - Creative Director  
Paul Denton - Project Development  
Steve Byron - Theatre Arts Worker  
Chris Bowman - Project Worker  
Kerri Brown - Administrative Assistant  
Kayleigh Welford - Project Support Worker

and

Ruth Fenwick, James Johnson-Perkins and Ally Hunter

# HEADWAY ARTS

**Headway Arts was established in 1995 to ‘*advance education for the public benefit by the promotion of the arts*’. This means we will use a range of arts mediums to promote the inclusion of groups who are seen to be disadvantaged.**

## A Letter from the Chief Executive

Every year at Headway brings something new. As our very own Steve Byron commented last year “you couldn't make this up” and how right he was. All the hard work from the previous year paid off with some wonderful projects this year. A double celebration at the D'Oscars ceremony winning both the Best Animation Film (Rosemary's Birthday) and Best Fantasy Film (Robots from Space) along with several other awards (most notably the North East VCS award for 'Most Exciting Project' and the European Year of Creativity and Innovation award as 'Winning Visionary of the Future') helped to make this a very positive year. Have a look at our brand new website to see the films and more about the year's projects. We've also been lucky enough to add to our team this year thanks to the Future Jobs Fund. Hopefully we can continue this growth over the coming year as Headway goes from strength to strength.

*Frances Castle*

## SOME OF OUR BEST MOMENTS ...

We were delighted this year to be nominated as the **Proctor and Gamble Charity of the Year** and would like to thank all those who helped raise money on our behalf. It was greatly appreciated.

**Seven Stars** are Northumberland's Learning Disabled Theatre Company and are supported by Headway Arts through the Northern Rock Foundation & Northumberland Care Trust. This year they received additional funding from Lloyds TSB Foundation to employ a part-time support worker which will help them boost their numbers.

The Stars had a busy schedule this year with two major productions: '**A Midsummer Nights Dream**' and their Christmas show '**Arthur's Children**'. Both productions were toured to Community Centres around Northumberland.



We were also very pleased to support Stars member Kris Brown as he received the **NIACE Individual Learner Award North East**, both for his amazing work with the Seven Stars (and especially on Lives Worth Living) and for his sheer tenacity in continuing to

reach for his goals. Well done Kris!



## Random Young People's Theatre Group

continued to meet and work on their performance skills. This year Random worked in partnership with Blyth High School using their auditorium for rehearsals and performances. The group worked on a contemporary adaptation of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. In this condensed version they have given the play a modern northern makeover, featuring Chavs and Emos and local hang outs. The group have improvised the drama in their own words & explored serious issues relevant to their age such as gang culture, under age drinking & knife crime and ... of course ... love.

The **Opening Doors** project reached its climax with a festival in Belgium. Members of Seven Stars Theatre Company, supported by Headway Arts, travelled to Leopoldsburg in Belgium and performed at the Cultural Centre to a packed audience. Funded by the European Union through the Grundtvig programme, Opening Doors was a collaborative project between three partner organisations: Headway Arts from the UK, St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity from Malta and the Cultural Centre of Leopoldsburg from Belgium, and promoted opportunities for Learning Disabled people to participate in creativity across Europe. The project was voted '**A Winning Visionary of the Future**' during the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009 and won the North East VCS Award for '**Most Exciting Project**'.



**Come On Down!** a festival of creativity led by and for Learning Disabled people is now in its 5<sup>th</sup> year. Held at the Isabella Community Centre in Blyth over 3 days in November this year we welcomed groups from all over the North East region. Bedlington Day Centre entertained everyone with three exciting and emotional dance routines, Berwick Northstar came dressed to the nines and regaled us with an excellent recreation of their Ball from earlier in the year. Workshops with groups from



Northumberland College, Collingwood School, The Pottergate Centre and Blyth Riverside Centre produced great work throughout the festival which was eventually brought to a close with a fantastic performance by Ronnie from Tynedale as Elvis Presley! A great time was had by all!



## 'Lives Worth Living'



Originally devised by Belgrade Theatre Company in 1983 *Lives Worth Living* remains as relevant today as it ever was. *Lives Worth Living* is an emotionally powerful piece of drama addressing disability and its effect on those around it, aimed at young people aged 13 - 16 years. In this version the story follows the lives of two brothers after the death of their mother. Mark, the youngest of the brothers is learning disabled. Joe is his full-time carer. Mark is due to move into his new residential support home where he will learn to live independently. He does not want to go. He would rather, much to Joe's annoyance, continue to live with Joe and his partner Tracy. This thought provoking play was toured to over 20 schools and colleges in the region performing 22 times to over 3,000 young people.

'Rosemary's Birthday' is an animated film based on secrets and friendship. Developed through Headway's 'Hush Hush' project, and funded through Northumberland Learning Disability Development, it brought together individual participants and groups from The Tynedale Centre in Hexham, Gateway into the Community in Hexham, Blyth Riverside Centre and Seven Stars Theatre Company. The process explored issues around secrets, speaking up, expressing views, consequences and seeking help and support. The devising, production, creating and filming of puppets in the story was all done by members of the group, supported by artists Paul Denton and Alison Walton-Robson.



We are proud to say Rosemary's Birthday won 'Best Animated Film' at this year's D'Oscars.

## We'd like to thank the following:

The BIG Lottery Young People's Fund  
The Northern Rock Foundation  
Northumberland Learning Disabilities Fund  
The Ron & Louise Bowey Fund  
The Sherburn House Charity  
The Community Foundation for England and Wales  
The Coalfield Regeneration Trust  
Blyth and Wansbeck Communities for Health Scheme  
The Transformation Fund  
The Co-operative Community Fund  
Grundtvig Lifelong Learning Partnership Programme  
The Proctor and Gamble Charity Fund  
Lloyds TSB Foundation  
Future Jobs Fund

Because we couldn't have done it without them.  
Thanks!



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