

BUSINESS NEWS

Stratforward Newsletter

Issue 49 - 14 December 2016

Winter Wonderland Windows Winners Wow

Huge congratulations to the winners and runners-up of our Stratforward Christmas Window Competition - florist Hidden Garden (Red Lion Court) and DR CP Grey Opticians (Chapel Street) jointly win the prize for best Independent Retailer and Lakeland (Henley Street) scoop the top National Shop award.



Hidden Garden



Dr C P Grey



Lakeland

Compton & Clarke (Henley Street), Vinegar Hill (Meer Street) and Something Different (Meer Street) were also highly commended by the judges for the overall impact, traditional style and effort involved in putting together their festive frontages.



Annie Rockley
Compton & Clarke



I-r Amy Whittaker, Katie Pick
Vinegar Hill



Emma Leahy, Dayna Edwards
For Something Different

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Dr Christopher Grey, optometrist at Grey's Opticians, said: "We're over the moon, we're obviously delighted.

"I can't take the credit, a young lady called Grace Wheeler did it and she is brilliant. We give her carte blanche to do what she wants and she comes up with the goods.

"We have got big windows that lend themselves well to a great display. The competition is a great idea, it encourages people to decorate their windows and make an effort."

Sam Bush, from Hidden Garden, said their displays, depicting several festive scenes, were planned months in advance and they're already full of ideas for next year, including Mr and Mrs Claus' wedding, or Father Christmas's workshop.

"My wife and son come up with the ideas but they're very particular, so I make it, then they change it, so I make it again," he said. "I don't like to do things half-hearted, so we really do put a lot of effort in."

Wendy Holloway, team leader at Lakeland said: "The team at Lakeland are delighted to have won this competition, they are all very excited.

She gave special credit to Jenny Fawkner, who was behind the Henley Street store's displays.

"It's great to be involved in something like this during the festive season. And to win is a wonderful end to the year."

The winning businesses got a trophy and a certificate.



Hidden Garden
L-r Joe Baconnet,
Sharon & Sam Bush



Dr C P Grey
L-r Joe Baconnet, Nick Grey



Lakeland
L-r Wendy Holloway, Kasia Opila,
Marilyn Crichton, Joe Baconnet
Jenny Fawkner
Greg Higginson, Julie Farr.

Stratfordward Director Joseph Baconnet said the judges had been blown away by the efforts of businesses in the town to dress their windows for the festive season.

He said: "I cannot emphasise how important dressing windows for Christmas is. The more we make the town feel festive the more people will be attracted to come here and spend time and money. We have to do everything we can to encourage shoppers into town rather than sit at home and buy on line.

He had particular praise for the independent businesses in town.

"The judges were blown away by the efforts gone to by the independent businesses in particular. Undertaking a Christmas window takes time, money and effort but as anyone can see when walking round the town it makes a massive difference. Well done to everyone."

Twilight Thursday Promises to Pull In Shoppers Again.

Free evening parking, a bustling Christmas market, late-night shopping and kids club are all back tomorrow (Thursday) as Stratford continues to try to pull in maximum crowds in the run-up to Christmas.

Thursdays are 'Shoppers Specials' during the festive season, and this week is the penultimate Christmas market on Bridge street, with the last taking place next Thursday (December 22nd). Businesses have joined in the festive cheer, opening late to showcase the best Stratford has to offer to visitors coming to the town for Christmas shopping and entertainment.

On top of this, free parking is available every Thursday from 4pm to midnight in all SDC Pay and Display car parks, including next Thursday.

And for people running out of time to finish their shopping, Escape Arts is offering a late-night shopping service at The Old Slaughterhouse to entertain the little ones while their parents battle the Christmas crowds.

Don't forget, road closures will be in place on Bridge Street from 4am to 11.59pm on the days the festive market is on.



Come Carol Singing With The Shakespeare Lions

The annual Shakespeare Lions Carol Service takes place tomorrow on Bridge Street, bringing added festive cheer to the popular Christmas market.

Members of the public can join Shakespeare Lions as well as Mayor Juliet **Short, Stratford's Beadle and other dignitaries for the carol service, which** takes place outside Marks & Spencer at 7.30pm.

Compered by Lion John Jacobs, the service will include classic carols like **Once in Royal David's City, Hark the Herald Angels Sing and Away in a Manger.**

There will be a welcome from Lion Vice President Kelvin McIntosh, music from Stratford Concert Band and their conductor Jonathan Earle and a Christmas reading and prayer from Rev. Dr Roy Lodge MBE.

The tradition dates back to 1983 when the Shakespeare Lions Club held its first carol concert in Bridge Street to say thank you to the people of Stratford-upon-Avon for supporting the club in their charitable activities and fund raising, and continues to this day.

Shakespeare Lions Club was chartered in 1967 and is a member of Lions Clubs International - **the world's largest humanitarian service organization, which has more than 1,300,000** members in more than 45,000 clubs in 206 countries and geographical locations.

Shakespeare Lions meet on the second Thursday of each month at 8pm in the Falcon Hotel. For more information visit www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/shakespeare



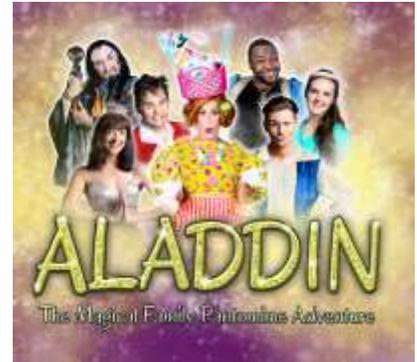
They're Behind You!!!!

It's panto season in The Bard's town, so take your pick this festive season with not one, but two, on offer in Stratford.

Hop on a magic carpet ride with the arrival of Aladdin at the Stratford ArtsHouse.

Featuring a West End cast, spectacular special effects and all the classic audience participation, it's guaranteed to be a crowd-pleaser this Christmas.

To reserve tickets call the Arts House box office on 01789 207100.



The Attic Theatre presents Beauty and the Beast, starring presenter Joanna Tidman, award-winning funnyman Marc Alden Taylor, and Stratford's funniest dame John-Robert Partridge as Dame Dotty. The show tells the tale of the Prince of Stratfordia, a selfish and unkind man who is transformed into a hideous beast by a

magical sorceress keen to show him the error of his ways.

For more information visit www.theattictheatre.co.uk

After-Dark Adventures Set For New Place

One of the highlights of Christmas in Stratford this year takes place later this week with Shakespeare's New Place transformed into an interactive light and sound experience taking visitors on a journey to meet some of The Bard's 'muses'.



From tomorrow (Thursday) until Saturday (December 17th), the site of Shakespeare's family home will become the 'Garden of Curious A-Muse-ments' as part of a project between the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and the United Nations Board of Significant Inspiration (UNBOSI).

The after-dark adventure, supported using public funding by Arts Council England, will use award-winning sound and light artists to take visitors, or 'muse catchers', on a journey to encounter the "muses" who inspired Shakespeare himself.

Chloe Malendewicz, Shakespeare's New Place Manager, said: "We wanted to close the 400th anniversary year of Shakespeare's death with an exciting new interactive concept in tribute to Shakespeare's creative genius.

"Working with UNBOSI enables us to explore opportunities to extend our creative programming and capture moments of inspiration from visitors. We hope to see many muse catchers join us on a dazzling journey through the New Place gardens."

'Muse catching parties' will set off several times an hour from 4.30pm onwards, with the last entry at 8.15pm. Tickets are £8 for adults, £5 for children, and £20 for families.

For more information and to book tickets, visit www.musecatcher.org.

Experience A Tudor Christmas At Shakespeare's Birthplace

Visitors to Stratford will be able to step back in time with a Tudor Christmas taking place at **Shakespeare's Birthplace from this Saturday (December 17th) until January 2nd**. The Birthplace is showing visitors how the Tudors decorated their homes for Christmas, with the opportunity to make and take home your very own Tudor Christmas card.

Also at Shakespeare's Birthplace, from Saturday until next Friday (December 23rd) visitors can get into the festive spirit with a Tudor Christmas Talk at 12pm and 2pm covering Christmas in the Tudor period.

And next Wednesday (December 21st), a Tudor storytelling session with ZooLab will bring Shakespearean learning to life with the opportunity to meet and touch some of the animals that would have crossed Shakespeare's path.



For more information on events at Shakespeare's Birthplace, visit www.shakespeare.org.uk/visit/whats-on/

Join A Prelude to Christmas At Holy Trinity



Get in the festive spirit this weekend at Holy Trinity Church with a programme of Christmas music, carols and readings performed by Stratford Choral Society.

The programme, called Prelude to Christmas, will be conducted by the society's Music Director Stephen Dodsworth and accompanied by organist Benedict Wilson, with readings by local actor and writer Mark Carey.

The evening, which takes place this Saturday (December 17th) at 7.30pm will include plenty of Christmas music, from Coventry Carol and The Twelve Days of Christmas, as well as the chance to sing along to classic carols like Hark the Herald Angels Sing and O Come All Ye Faithful.

Tickets are £12, including a programme, and £6 for students under 24. For more information visit www.stratfordchoral.org.uk/concerts

Christmas Camps With Escape Arts

If you're looking for some festive fun for your young ones, try Escape Arts' Christmas Art Camps.



The full day art camps, held at The Old Slaughterhouse on Sheep Street, are held next Wednesday (December 21st) and the following week.

Next Wednesday children will be creating a Winter Wonderland with igloos and crystal caverns.

And the following week, on Wednesday December 28th, children can leave behind the excitement of Christmas and step into the future with the community arts group's Twixmas animation day.

Both art camps take place from 9am to 4pm and are suitable for children aged six to 13. They cost £25 per day but places are limited and must be booked in advance.

And if you haven't finished your Christmas shopping yet, why not take advantage of Escape Arts' final Late Night Shopping Service this Thursday (December 15th).

Held from 5-7pm, children will create their own Christmas gifts while you shop. The £10 price includes activity, materials, soft drinks and pizza tea.

For more information on Escape Arts' events, contact emmastuchbury@escapearts.org.uk

In Conversation With Harriet Walter and Gregory Doran

The RSC is offering the opportunity to hear a talk by veteran actress Dame Harriet Walter and RSC Artistic Director Gregory Doran next week.

The stage and screen star will appear at the RSC in conversation about her new book, Brutus and Other Heroines, with Mr Doran.

The talk, which takes place from 5pm-5.45pm on Monday (December 19th) in the Swan Theatre, is a chance to hear insights into the great heroines Harriet has played, including Helena, Viola, Imogen, Lady Macbeth, Beatrice and Cleopatra, and her thoughts on playing Shakespeare's mature male characters, Brutus, Henry IV and Prospero.

It also looks at Harriet's career with the RSC where she is an Honorary Associate Artist.

Harriet Walter, who was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) in 2011 for services to drama, started her career in 1974.

Her notable roles for the RSC include Twelfth Night and Three Sisters, for which she won an Olivier Award, as well as taking on roles in Macbeth and Antony and Cleopatra.

Her film appearances include Sense and Sensibility, The Governess and Atonement, as well as popular period drama Downton Abbey.



Dame Harriet Walter courtesy of the RSC



Gregory Doran
Photo by Ellie Kurtz © RSC

Gregory Doran, Artistic Director of the RSC has previously been dubbed “one of the great Shakespearians of his generation.

His notable productions include a production of Macbeth starring Antony Sher, which was filmed for Channel 4 in 2001 as well as Hamlet in 2008, starring David Tennant and Patrick Stewart.

His most recent work is a boundary-pushing production of The Tempest in collaboration with Intel and The Imaginarium Studios, which uses live performance capture to create animated versions of Ariel live on stage.

Harriet Walter in conversation with Gregory Doran takes place at the Swan Theatre on Monday (December 19th) from 5pm-5.45pm. Tickets cost £5. To book visit www.rsc.org.uk/

New Stratford Hearing Centre Officially Opened By Nadhim Zahawi

Stratford MP Nadhim Zahawi officially opened **one of the town’s newest BID members, Stratford Hearing Centre**, last week.

The official opening of the centre, based in The Minorities, took place on Friday with a ribbon-cutting ceremony by the MP.

Director Of Audiology Tom Dixon gave Mr Zahawi a guided tour of the centre and explained how customer experience is at the top of the agenda for the family-run business..

Mr Dixon, who owns another branch in Worcester with mother Victoria, said: “As audiologists we are trained to the very highest standard but service to our customers is paramount to our business.

“We provide our customers a warm welcome from the minute they walk through the door to the professional advice they receive that is bespoke to their hearing needs.”

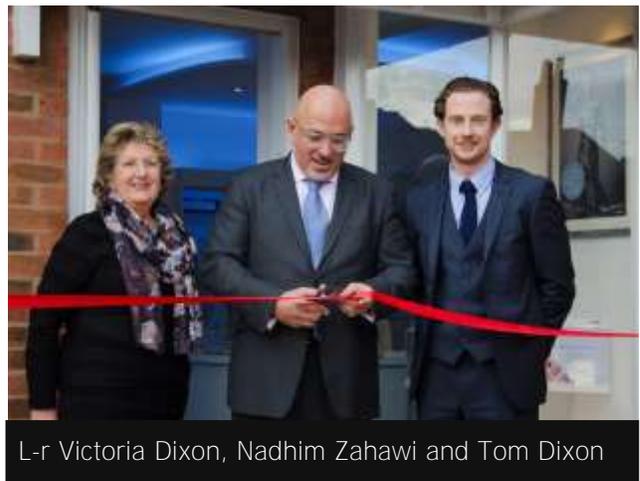
Mr Zahawi said he was impressed by the centre’s efforts to reach out to local people in Stratford and surrounding areas, as well as its professionalism.

“It was like going into a Harley street clinic but in a professional and welcoming environment.” he said.

Stratford Hearing Centre offers a range of services from custom-made hearing protection to bespoke hearing aids and clinical procedures like ear wax removal.

Mr Dixon said the new branch has been well received by local people and businesses in Stratford that the centre is committed to providing the best in hearing solutions.

The centre is offering a complimentary hearing assessment, so if you or your loved ones are concerned about your hearing please call on 01789 264111 or call in to book an appointment.



L-r Victoria Dixon, Nadhim Zahawi and Tom Dixon



Dates for your diary!

19th October to 14th December - Charity Christmas Card sale at The United Reformed Church

24th November to 24th December - Father Christmas at Magic Alley, Henley Street

Until 21st January 2017 - The Tempest at the RSC

14th to 27th December - Aladdin, Stratford Arts House

15th December - Christmas Market

15th December - Lions Christmas Carol Service in Bridge Street

15th to 17th December - Garden of Curious A-Muse-ments at Shakespeare's New Place

15th December - Late night kids event at Escape Arts

16th December - Christmas jumper day

16th to 28th December - Beauty and the Beast at The Attic Theatre

16th & 17th December - Christmas Tree Festival at The United Reformed Church

17th December - Prelude to Christmas Stratford Choral Society, Stratford Arts House

17th December - Dame Harriet Walter and Greg Doran talk at RSC

17th December to 3rd January 2017 - Warwickshire Schools Christmas holiday

17th to 23rd December - **Tudor Christmas Talk at Shakespeare's Birthplace**

21st December - **Tudor Storytelling with ZooLab at Shakespeare's Birthplace**

21st December - Escape Arts kids Xmas art camp

22nd December - Christmas Market

28th December to 31st January - Meet the Scrooges at the Enchanted Manor, Henley Street

28th December - Escape Arts kids Xmas art camp

24th January - Provisional date for Stratforward AGM

Contact Us - Give us a call for more information about our services and products

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