

The Learners' Event

The event organised by CLAN last month, was a great success. Read the full story in the August edition of Beans.

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The Story So Far ...

Seven young women from the Stepping Stones young parents' project in North West Edinburgh recently got together with All Ears Music Production, vocal tutor Polly Phillips, Pilton Youth & Children's Project, Granton Youth Centre and Community Education to write, perform and record a song from scratch over a four-day intensive literacy course.

The participants all worked incredibly hard to produce a great deal of music and words over the four days which were honed into a song called 'So Far'.

The title of the song refers to the young mothers having come so far in coping with parenthood at an early age, but also that they still have their lives ahead of them and that they were drawing on experiences so far.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the project. Some participant comments were:

"... thanks for giving me the chance to achieve this ... I would just like to say thanks for making it possible for this to happen, it has been really enjoyable ... I really enjoyed this course... it was brill ... I enjoyed the whole process from start to finish ... It has helped my confidence I think, and my belief in myself ... I think this group has been the best thing I have ever done, enjoyed everything about it ... It was good that we were allowed to voice our own opinions and that everyone listened to us and put in changes we wanted. I learned a bit more about how to put my own experiences on paper and that it's all important."

CD copies

Copies of the song are available to borrow, but remember that THE SONG IS COPYRIGHT! Contact Siobhan Cavanagh at Craigmoynton Community Education Centre. Tel: 0131 332 7360. Email: siobhan.cavanagh@educ.edin.gov.uk

SO FAR

*People taking me for granted
Weak at the knees and so soft-hearted
Busy street, basement flat
I just want a little more than that*

*It's not what I wanted
Feel so sad and oh so daunted
Not my heaven that I'm looking at
I just want a little more than that*

*I'm strong, walking on air
I'm young and I'm still here*

*Well the tables are turned now
It's not so hard now
I know where I'm going
I just want a little more than that*

*My friends are here now
I'm letting my hair down
We're singing our own song
I just want a little more than that*

*I've been battered
I've been bruised
I've been hurt
I've been used
I got the right
I got the fight
I got the power
I got the might
I got the groove
I got the moves
I've got the choice
I'm free to choose
I got the love
I got the truth
I got the strength
This is the proof*



City Wide Literacies Forum

At the first Edinburgh City Wide Literacies Forum we had agreed the purpose: to exchange ideas and information on good practice; to network; to share approaches and resources and to facilitate lobbying and responding to policies and strategies.

The second Forum took place on 23 June in the Nelson Room at McDonald Road Library. The menu for the day was strawberries and cream, followed by small group discussions on publicity and marketing strategies.

Feedback about what's worked locally and city-wide included:

- involving existing learners in presentations to potential learners
- peer advertising through other courses and groups
- displaying the words "free" and "crêche"
- being visible and going to public places where learners are
- Beans

There was also a chance to look at the Learning Connections progress in developing the Key National Standard Qualification in Adult Literacies Tutoring and to hear an input about the new CLAN Resource Base.

Nineteen literacies practitioners attended from the voluntary sector and Community Education and some of the comments were:

"... very interesting, good networking, good to share ideas and learn new things ... website sounds exciting ... resource base here will be very useful"

If you would like more detailed notes about the publicity and marketing discussions, or if you have suggestions for the next Forum meeting, please contact Gillian at CLAN. Tel: 0131 270 6070. Email: gillian@clanedinburgh.org



GOLDFISH SUPPERS

Goldfish Suppers is a magical anthology of new poetry for young children to share with their families, on the page or out loud. The poems and illustrations feature life in 21st Century Edinburgh, through the eyes of children, parents, grandparents, and a wee blue gnome!

The book, launched earlier this month at the City Art Gallery, is the brainchild of Stewart Conn, the Edinburgh makar (poet laureate) and Nancy Somerville who is part of the Family Learning team. Both are members of Edinburgh's Shore Poets, a group which presents regular poetry and music events in the city.

Nancy had just taken up her post in Community Education as a member of the Family Learning team two years ago, when the idea for the book first came to her. She was aware that there were no poetry anthologies suitable for children of pre-school and lower primary age that focussed on life in Edinburgh today.

As Nancy says,

"Childrens' early literary skills and their phonological awareness get developed through repetition, rhyme and rhythm - things you find in poetry and nursery rhymes. Children, even babies enjoy discovering sounds and repeating them. As my background is in adult education I'm aware that there are two things that can enhance the learning experience for adults. One is relevance. If you're learning or reading about something you can relate to, it makes it easier to understand. The second is affective learning. Learning that engages the emotions. So I thought a children's book, with poems about family life in 21st Century Edinburgh, might be a good idea and as well as being a learning resource for Family Learning groups, schools and nurseries it could be something for parents and children to enjoy together."

The book can be bought for £5 from Wendy Laird, Publications Unit, Education Department, 10 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh EH1 3EG. Tel: 0131 469 3328. Email: wendy.laird@educ.edin.gov.uk. Discounts are available on five or more copies.

Writing PLATYPUS



"IT MADE MONDAYS WORTH GETTING UP FOR". This was one student's comment about the Writing for Yourself group at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital's Henderson Resource Centre.

Set up as part of the range of South East adult learning literacies through the CLAN Edinburgh Challenge Fund in partnership with the South Central Edinburgh LHCC, the writing group has helped students to explore their creativity in a supportive environment that takes into account their mental health issues.

At times the writing was moving, at times extremely funny, as each week brought new ideas and themes. Some students were motivated to begin writing at home, proof that the group was having a positive impact on their lives in general and not simply on Mondays.

The culmination of the project was the production of a booklet called 'Platypus' which was celebrated this month with a lunch for staff and centre users at the Henderson Centre. It was great to see so many people reading the booklet and for the students to receive so much positive feedback. It is hoped that funding can be secured to enable the group to continue after the summer.

For further information about this project and the publication please contact Merlyn Bell at Gracemount Community Education Office. Tel: 0131 664 5101. Email: merlyn.bell@educ.edin.gov.uk

Dorothy Baird



The Young Tenants Group is a CLAN funded course aimed at 15-19 year olds living in North East Edinburgh who want their own tenancy and be able to manage their lives more effectively through the development of a range of life skills underpinned by enhanced abilities in literacy and numeracy.

Starting shortly, the course consists of 2 hours a week workshops for 6 months. Jan Robertson, the Housing Department's Young Person's Service Worker, and the group members will be looking at housing issues. Lynda Peachey, Course Tutor, will cover budgeting, form filling, letter writing, crafts, D.I.Y. tips and safety in the house. Visiting guests will cover cooking on a budget, health issues and guidance. The community venue is still to be confirmed but it will probably be The Jack Kane Centre.

The whole programme is free and will be integrated with literacy and numeracy. Free tea/coffee and healthy snacks will be provided. A free crèche is available.

If you know someone who would be interested in coming to all the sessions or if you would like more information then contact Fiona Evans at Adult Learning Link. Tel: 0131 652 6324. Email: fiona.evans@educ.edin.gov.uk

OR

Karen McLean at Craigenfinny Community Centre. Tel: 0131 661 2912. Email: karen.mclean@educ.edin.gov.uk

eNews

Learning Connections would like to invite you to register for their new adult literacies eNewsletter. This new monthly bulletin will cover a range of items relating to the ongoing adult literacies work of Learning Connections as well as other national or local adult literacies information from across Scotland.

If you wish to contribute information for inclusion in LC eNews, you should send your information to Peter Lanigan at laniganp@communitiesscotland.gov.uk for consideration. Information should be kept brief and should be sent by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the next issue.

To receive the first issue direct to your email inbox, go to this web address which will take you to the online registration page: www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/web/site/email/mail_signup.asp

You will be asked to provide your name and email address and then to create your own log-in name and password. You will receive an email from Learning Connections entitled, 'Communities Scotland Registration Confirmation'. Simply click on the link in that email to confirm your registration. Once registered, you will be free to register for any other Communities Scotland eNewsletters as they become available.

Writers' Camp

Writers' Camp is a festival of writing workshops supported by CLAN and the Arts Council. The festival will be running from Monday 9 to Friday 13 August at Carrickvale Community Centre, Stenhouse Street West.

During the week there will be various workshops including:

- Crime Writing – investigate the secrets of crime writing and write your own whodunnit
- Songwriting – how to turn your poems, or thoughts into lyrics. Fun session with a musician!
- Playwriting – write a one act play with the help of professional actors and playwright, Janet Paisley.
- Screenwriting – learn the tricks of the trade from an established screenwriter.
- Write Your Own Story – turn memories into stories with the help of writer, Brian McCabe.
- Short Stories – what makes a good short story? Find out from award-winning author, Chris Dolan.
- Contemporary Poetry – Performance poet, Cecelia Grainger, shares her work and leads this session.
- Writing for Children – tips on writing for the youngest readers.
- Writing Comedy – from situation comedy to stand-up, what makes good comedy?

Other writers include Stuart MacHardy (Scottish Folklore) and Michael Russell (non fiction).

There will be a trip to the book festival, access to computers, practical sessions, etc. and fun grand finale – reading of new work –on Friday evening! There will be sessions to suit all levels and ability. A free crèche is available. Transport may be provided. Registration fee is £5.00.

For further information phone 0131 458 5082 or email Grace at litanlit@yahoo.co.uk

Adult Education Classes

Courses for Term 1 start the week beginning 27 September (apart from Higher qualifications classes which will start 6 September).

The free booklet giving full details of courses, times, prices, venues and how to enrol can be picked up from libraries and community centres across the city from 19 August.

You can visit our website on egfl.myed.org to request a brochure or alternatively, you can call the information line during office hours on 0131 469 3250. Large print versions are available from this number too.

Malcolm Parnell, Community Education Worker, Community Based Adult Learning. Tel: 0131 469 3376 (direct dial).

If you would like to contribute to future issues of 'Beans', please send your contribution to Fiona Holmes, CLAN Edinburgh, 1-3 Canon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5HE.

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