



**Editor's Corner - Chris Bailey**

# ● Global Conference

**Yes, I know we haven't had the 2005 Conference yet, but I can speak with the voice of experience when I say that these things take time to organise!**

Each division of IMTAL (US, Australia and Europe) takes it in turn to host the global conference every two years and in 2007 it is the turn of IMTAL-Europe once again. The 2001 conference was hosted in London and attracted over 100 live interpretation professionals from all over the world. Some suggestions for 2007 have already been put forward and members are asked to let us know their preferences, or if they wish to champion any other place to host it. A possible theme for the conference relates to 2007 being the anniversary of the abolition of slavery – using theatre in museum to explore peace/reconciliation /conflict/slavery.

Manchester – This was the first proposal made at the last AGM as there are many museums and galleries within the city, easy access

with airport and rail. Many key cultural developments have taken place over the last few years and Manchester venues can offer a range of live interpretation. An issue is that in 2008 the University of Manchester will be having an academic/research conference to discuss their findings from the 'Performance, Learning & Heritage' research they are undertaking over the next three years. It may not be advisable to have two museum theatre conferences in the same city just one year apart.

Belfast – Robert has made initial inquiries regarding the feasibility of this venue and responses have been very positive. In addition to the Living History by Armagh City & District Council, there is now live interpretation in Derry. Have visitor conference bureau and good transport/access from Europe, America and Australia and flights are very cheap to Belfast which has two airports to fly into. – anywhere in Northern Ireland is only an hour and a half away.

Inverness – 2007 is the

Highland Year of Culture and they are keen to attract conferences etc here (with potential for financial support). Good interpreting at nearby Culloden nearby, plus the Caledonian Canal and lots of other heritage sites.

And, of course, we are IMTAL Europe, and some members have already suggested the Netherlands, France, Sweden and Germany as possible venues. It would of course depend on willingness of an organisation there to host, and that there would be a sufficient programme of events to see - but importing performances could help with the latter, and at the same time possibly give a large boost to the development of theatre in museum in mainland Europe.

**What do you think? Let us know!** It would be great if a decision on the venue (and theme if possible) could be made in time to be announced in Canberra in October.

## Current Board:

**Robert Forshaw** - (Director)  
Living History Co-ordinator

**Chris Bailey** - (Treasurer)  
Interpreter

**Jo Kemp** - (Company Secretary)  
Nottingham City Museums  
and Galleries

**Verity Walker** - (Director)  
Interpretation

**Mark Wallis** - (Director)  
Past Pleasures

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1/4 page ad: Individual:  
£30.00 all ads at 1/2  
regular price

Full page ad:  
£100.00

## Articles/ Letters/ Ads/ Announcements

all contributions for the next  
issue by May 7th

## Welcome new members

### Institutional:

**British Waterways**  
Contact:  
Annette Simpson

**The Manchester Museum**  
Contact:  
Bernadette Lynch

**Norfolk Museums and  
Archaeology Service**  
Contact:  
Katrina Siliprandi

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## AN INTERVIEW WITH ...

**Guest Editor  
Chris Bailey,  
Treasurer/  
Membership  
Secretary – and  
IMTAL Europe's  
second ever  
member!**

**Today's date: March 10th 2005**

**I work at/as...** a costumed interpreter, working mainly for Andrew Ashmore & Associates and Past Pleasures. I've had the good fortune to work in such wonderful locations as the British Museum, Hampton Court, the Tower of London and the Botanic Gardens in Oxford and Cambridge (the latter two causing me to finally make use of my long-neglected Botany degree!)

**I first got interested in live interpretation/on-site theatre...** through working at the late lamented Museum of the Moving Image. Little did I know when I went to that first audition that it would be a life-changing experience. As someone who soaks up information like a sponge and gets excited about telling other people about it, and who gave up history at school out of frustration at the poor teaching of the subject, I suddenly found myself in my dream job. It's all Andrew Ashmore's fault, basically.

**My worst professional moment was...** trying to be a very gentlemanly Victorian on Tower Bridge, faced with an elderly man with Tourette's Syndrome. It's not easy trying to continue your dialogue as if nothing is happening when the other person is sticking his tongue out, barking or saying "F\*\*k!" or "S\*\*t!" every few seconds.

**If I could change one thing about what I do for a living it would be...** to create another few hours in a day, and have more days in a week for sitting down and reading. And to have more costumes actually made to fit me!

And here I am as the Treasurer/Membership Secretary of IMTAL Europe – a post I've occupied for almost three years now, so it's about time the baton drops from my nerveless fingers into the strong grasp of my successor, whoever he or she may be, it falls to me to edit this newsletter...so on with the show.

# IMTAL – Europe Meeting at The Herbert, Coventry

Many thanks to Jo Kemp for the minutes printed below.

## IMTAL – Europe Meeting @ The Herbert, Coventry 22 February 2005

Present: Robert Forshaw (Chair), Jo Kemp (Secretary), Anna Farthing - British Empire and Commonwealth Museum, Camille Qwamina & Patrice Briggs – Arts-in-Action (on exchange programme with Manchester Uni & University of the Western Lees), Heidi Hollis, British Empire and Commonwealth Museum, John Paul Cole - Armagh City & District Council, Tony Jackson – University of Manchester, Rebecca O'Brien – Triangle/freelance, Hazel Barnfather – Triangle/freelance, Richard Talbot – Triangle/Nina & Frederick, Carran Waterfield – Triangle/Nina & Frederick.

**Apologies:** Verity Walker, Chris Bailey, Mark Wallis

The morning session was a live interpretation/interactive presentation by Triangle. Coventry Kids in the Blitz was a five-day, 'immersive museum theatre' project with schools, based on WWII.

### 1. Reading and Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the AGM were not read. To be approved at next AGM.

### 2. Updates

◆ **Website** – Members were reminded to inform Verity of any changes to their contact details and to be aware that these details are on the website for the public to view. Care should therefore be taken not to include any details that members do not wish to be available widely. Discussion of the website followed; The IMTAL Europe website is an opportunity for members to 'sell their service' and as such, must be updated as a matter of urgency. There is much that is out of date on the website which does not inspire confidence and encourage people to use it or return to it. The website needs to be re-launched with a new refreshed identity and better information on the site. Members questioned the need for

a paper directory to be created if the website is the 'shop window'. Could funds be redirected from the paper directory, to further development of the website and perhaps a publicity leaflet that could outline what IMTAL-Europe is, the benefits of being members and the website address etc. It needs a dedicated person to work on the development, and there may be a member with the skills and ability to be involved in co-ordinating and updating it. It was suggested that one of the member institutions may be able to host the IMTAL website on their server which would be better than having it as a stand-alone site.

**ACTION** – Board to discuss the way forward / notification in next newsletter regarding website and directory.

◆ **Newsletter** – Chris Bailey is compiling the Spring newsletter and has put out a request to the E-list for articles.

**ACTION** - Rebecca and Hazel to write a short piece about their experience of immersive training in museum theatre with Triangle during the WWII project and to forward to Jo via Carran. (See later in Newsletter! Ed.)

◆ **E-List** – Please update Verity on all changes to email addresses.

◆ **Directory** – See under 'website' above. However, Jo will be contacting members in April for their updated details for the Directory (or website directory). It is vital that members respond within the deadline as there will not be time to chase people for their information.

◆ **Training Days** – The following dates are confirmed, and more details will follow.

### Monday 23 May 2005

Joint training/workshop day with the National Trust on the theme of: Live interpretation within the man-made landscape. A practical hands-on day looking at live interpretation among gardens, parkland and ruins. Participants will be asked to send details of their own live interpretation challenges and experience so that the day can be tailored to their needs. Workshops will be led by IMTAL members and NT staff. Greys Court, near Henley in Oxfordshire, is a delightful and little-known NT property featuring varied walled gardens at their finest in spring, landscaped wood- and park-land, a romantic ruin and tower and even industrial archaeology in the form of an

ice-house and a deep well with donkey-wheel. Choose your stage...

There will be a charge for this day to cover refreshments and lunch but we'll try to keep it to around £15/head. Places are limited to 30 (15 from NT, 15 from us) so if you want to come, book soon via Verity.

### Tuesday 9 August 2005

Our AGM will be held in Nottingham, with a chance to see round the award-winning Galleries of Justice and other museums and historic houses including our host site, NT's Southwell work-house. Details to follow.

### Wednesday 5 October 2005

Meeting/training day at Buckland Abbey, Somerset. Details to follow..

### 3. Conferences

Global IMTAL conference 2005 – Canberra, Australia 13-16 October 2005. Hosted by the National Museum of Australia, the Australian War Memorial, Old Parliament House, Questacon: the National Science and Technology Centre, ScreenSound Australia and the National Gallery of Australia.

Extending Our Reach will explore the following themes:

- Connecting: The use of museum theatre techniques to establish connections with new audiences and targeted communities;
- Exploring: The exploration of current research and new techniques in the field of museum theatre, both practical and academic; and
- Provoking: Methods and examples of tackling contemporary and controversial issues in public performance programs.

The deadline for submissions for presentations was 10/12/04 and will be considered by the forum working group. Robert Forshaw has submitted a proposal to do a joint presentation with Paul Taylor on developing evening programmes.

### Museums Association Conference, 24-26 Oct 2005, Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre, London – Our

Chair, Robert Forshaw, has been speaking to the MA about getting a stand at the MA Conference to showcase various Museum Theatre performances. It has been suggested that IMTAL could host a two hour slot each day around lunchtime 12 – 2pm in which there would be 5-6 performances. Each performance would have a short question and answer session to enable delegates to question the

performers on what they were trying to achieve and how they went about developing the performance. This Q&A would be led by an IMTAL board member.

It has also been suggested that DVD's of museum theatre projects could also be shown, and there is also an opportunity to hand out publicity information. If any members have such DVD material, please let us know!

Delegates would get to see good quality interpretation, the show casers get a good opportunity to promote their programmes or services and IMTAL gets a higher profile within the Museums Association.

Robert saw this done by IMTAL America at the American Association of Museums conference last year and it worked very well. The MA are interested and Robert will send in a draft proposal.

**ACTION** – Board members to discuss who would be able to attend, and call out for members to showcase.

#### Upcoming Events

Spring 2006 – Weekend mini-conference in London at the Historic Palaces: Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace etc. To be confirmed and more details to follow.

**Global Conference 2007** – See lead article on the front page of this newsletter

#### 4. AOB –

◆ Tony Jackson outlined the research that The University of Manchester will be undertaking over the next three years. 'Performance, Learning & Heritage: an investigation into the uses and impact of performance as a medium of learning in museums and at historic sites.' Funded by the AHRB, a three year research post has just been advertised. In year 2 of the research they will commission a new professional performance piece to test and build on research findings as they emerge. For more information on this project contact Tony Jackson, Project Director, on [a.r.jackson@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:a.r.jackson@manchester.ac.uk)

**ACTION** – Tony to email Chris the details for inclusion in the next newsletter. (See later! Ed.)

◆ Wigan Pier – Robert reported that Stuart Aiken at Wigan Pier would like to pass on his thanks to everyone who wrote letters in support of the museum

and theatre company after the announcement of major commercial development of the site. Robert had received a letter from the Chief Executive of Wigan Council, which stated that the Wigan Pier theatre company was being taken into consideration in the developments.

With grateful thanks to Carran Waterfield, Richard Talbot and the Herbert Museum & Art Gallery for hosting this meeting.

## Coventry Kids in the Blitz - A Triangle Training Project by Hazel Barnfather

#### Introduction

Last November and December Triangle artists ( and Carran Waterfield) based at The Herbert in Coventry delivered an ambitious multi-site immersive museum theatre experience for groups of thirty school children over a three week period.

The project was called Coventry Kids in the Blitz and was supervised by Whissell and Williams and funded by Renaissance in the Regions and Arts Council England. The project was a collaboration with Robin Johnson, The Herbert's Senior Lifelong Learning Officer and several other heritage sites and services within the city including the Coventry Transport Museum, Coventry Cathedral, Coventry Libraries, and Children and Family Services. Aspects of the project were presented at the last IMTAL meeting.

One particular feature of the project was the training up of three actors in "the way" of the Whissell and Williams regime. This happened on several levels as indicated here by one of the actors – Hazel Barnfather (aka Miss H. Williams)

Having recently graduated with a degree in theatre, I have been looking for different

avenues in which to perform and work with young people. My search culminated with me training in Museum Theatre Practice with Triangle. During the four week training period I played the role of Miss H Williams a 1940's school teacher. It was really rewarding to see the children shift from looking out for what was real or false to wholeheartedly engaging with the Whissell and Williams regime. One girl was particularly drawn in by marching and looking out for spies between sites. For many, their imagination was captured while sitting in an Anderson shelter singing "Tickety Boo". The project really came together on the final day - "the real evacuation". Picture the scene: we arrived at a scout hut after having traveled on an old fashioned bus; it was cold and dark. In one hand the children held a torch and sleeping bag, in another a pillow case full of clothes. The children knew they were there to meet with their prospective foster parents (played by volunteers). I danced with the children to 1940's music and played games until the volunteers arrived. Then, while the children were chatting to their prospective foster parents, a German airman collapsed through the door onto the floor. It was a breathtaking moment. The children reacted very differently. Some debated about what to do; some were concerned; while others intently watched Mr. Whissell approach him. When it was established that the airman spoke some English, the children had the opportunity to ask him questions. It was inspiring to see all the children inter-

act



with the airman; particularly as they were completely transfixed by what he had to say and were eager to offer their opinions. There was no script; simply a time when the airman would arrive. It was really stimulating for me to improvise in response to the dynamics of the situation and the reactions of those involved.

Working with Triangle on the Coventry Kids in the Blitz project was extremely challenging and rewarding. The project involved adopting the role of Miss H Williams - a 1940's school teacher - and training groups (units) of ten year 6's from local Coventry schools for evacuation. Throughout both the preparation week prior to meeting the children and the three week delivery period I trained not as Hazel Barnfather, but as Miss H Williams.

*Miss H Williams speaks:*

As you know Britain is at war. It is for this reason that The Ministry of Information has put in place the evacuation training camp. Some of my duties in working for the Ministry of Information as a school teacher include issuing identity cards, leading gas mask inspections, marching, looking out for spies, lifting our spirits in the Anderson shelter by singing or playing a game, teaching a lesson on the British Empire, nurturing the recruit's thirst for code cracking and asking questions: all part of the Whissell and Williams regime. As you can imagine this is intense work requiring wholehearted commitment to the training, the ability to think on your feet, enthusiasm and experience in working with and for young people, and openness to working in a variety of different settings.

*A day in the life of Miss H Williams:*

I wake up at 0700, wash, dress and pack my tin lunch box containing one cheese sandwich, a few nuts, home grown carrots and tomatoes. I leave at 0800 to meet Mr. Whissell, Mrs. Williams, Miss R Williams and Miss J Williams at Head Quarters: St Mary's at 0830. We prepare the hall, setting up chairs, tables and write up on the blackboard a timetable for the day. At 0920 we walk in single file to the Cathedral steps and stand in a row awaiting the arrival of the 30 school children, who are recruits on the Whissell and Williams training camp. We do a roll call and march to HQ. After lavatory stops the two other teachers (Miss J Williams and Miss R Williams) and I lead a marching exercise on a large British flag marked out on the floor. We carry out spot checks of identity cards and sing 'Ticky Boo' or 'Pack up your troubles'. A lunch box inspection takes place in which extra vagant food types are rationed. At 1010 each Miss Williams takes charge of her unit of ten year 6s. One unit marches to the Ministry of Faith for a lesson on the British Empire a practice air raid, a walk around the bombed Cathedral and its tower. Another unit runs, ducks, dives and creeps their way to the Ministry of Transport. Here the recruits are met by two factory workers who are part of the WVS. Identity cards are checked. Here the recruits are training in vehicle types, the importance and reasons for the blackout, the workings of factory life and can be drilled in parachuting techniques or create gestures for government slogans. The third unit might march, keep a low profile or sing their way to the Ministry of Arts and Heritage where we are invited into Mrs.

Whittaker's home. She has been asked by the Ministry of Information to share her experience as a mother whose son has been evacuated. Here the recruits can learn about what to pack, make a pillow case into a duffel bag for the

evacuation, are given envelopes and stamps with which to write home. The recruits and I have lunch together. Each unit visits a second ministry on a rotation basis. The days training ends at 1500 when all reconvene at the Cathedral steps.

## Museum Theatre Performance Training

By Rebecca O'Brien

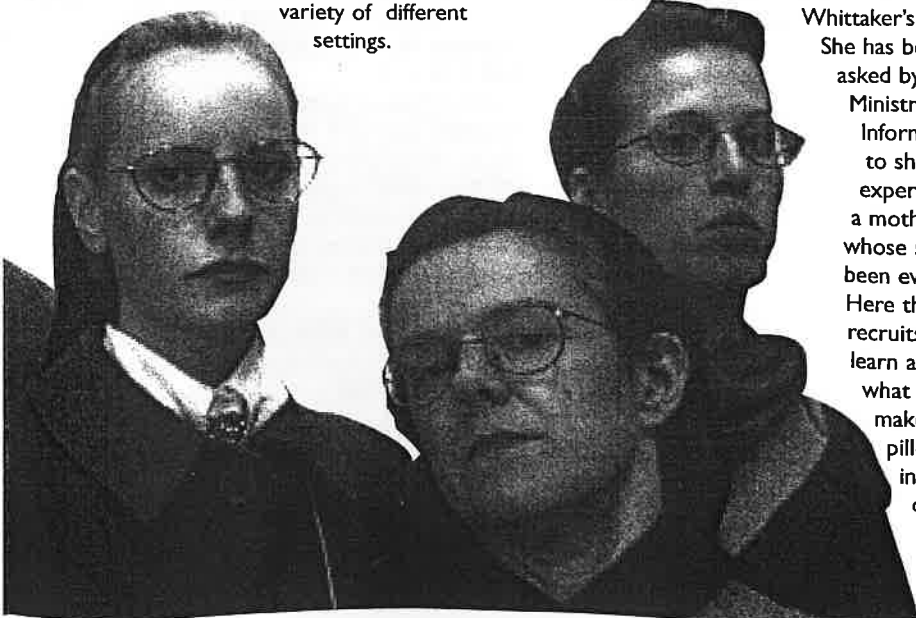
Back in November 2004, Coventry based Theatre Company; 'Triangle' invited me and two other newly established artists to take part in a 'Museum Theatre Performance Training Bursary'. In my opinion the unique aspect of this training was the way in which it was conducted; it was not prescribed; it was more about following - a way of behaving, of doing, of responding that did not seem to require any explanation. This is because the style of this work is not complicated; it just requires the performer to concentrate on creating a convincing identity (In this case to adopt the identity of a 1940's school teacher; 'Miss Williams' a member of the Whissell and Williams regime).

I found that in training, I hardly ever found myself thinking about such notions as characterisation, improvisation, or performance methods. This work is not about 'performing' for the sake of bringing-history-to-life as such, but about believing in the freedom and playfulness of the imagination. This training programme was for a four week period only and as the weeks progressed 'Miss Williams' was given more responsibility towards the structure, design and content of her workshop sessions with the young people, working alongside museum staff and professionals: various historic objects were accessible to work with in the heritage spaces, therefore giving the trainee the freedom to explore how one might use the Union Jack flag or a picture postcard of a child wearing a gas mask to stimulate creative interactivity from the young people.

As a result of this training, I have found a methodology that I would like to explore further and would welcome the opportunity to develop this initial induction in museum theatre.

**Editors note:** A big thank you to both Hazel and Rebecca for their contributions. Hopefully this won't be the last IMTAL Europe sees of you.

Continued over



## Report on Triangle Theatre Company Performance Whissell & Williams project

By Robert Forshaw

On Tuesday 22nd February, at 3.30am, John-Paul and I set off for the Dublin Airport to fly the most definitely aptly named "red eye" plane to Birmingham Airport. Although completely knackered and wondering what the hell we were doing, we made it to Birmingham and then onto Coventry to the Herbert Gallery and to the IMTAL training day and meeting therein. We arrived for coffee and after only a few minutes, and some nicotine later, four prim and proper characters marched single file down the stair case to greet us.

Somewhat confused and dazed and I suppose jet lagged (well we are technically 15 minutes behind in Ireland and no jokes please about being 50 years behind thank you very much) John-Paul and I found ourselves being dragged back in time to war torn Britain during the height of the Second World War. All those attending were presented with a "confidential" folder containing literature on the gallery and the Triangle Theatre Company, a name badge and a serial number which was to be our new identification for the rest of the morning. Mr Whissell, Mrs Williams and the two Miss Williams then escorted us to the venue for their presentation, treating us as if we were new evacuees and they the Evacuee Officers. Not once did they break from character.

If I was honest this all sort of went over my head to begin with, I wasn't sure what was going on really but hey I went with the flow. Little did I know that what we were about to hear and see was a project that truly opened my eyes, which was no mean feat. All safely ensconced in the Herbert's Drama area, we were given a presentation by Richard Talbot and Carran Waterfield, a.k.a. Mr Whissell and Mrs Williams. In a nut shell The Triangle Theatre Company and the Herbert's Education Officer have devised a form of immersive museum theatre that truly was like nothing I had witnessed before.

Children were brought on a week long project to bring to life the horrors of 1940's Coventry and dealing with the various subjects of evacuation and air raids. From the off the children were treated as if they were back in the

1940's and fairly quickly they immersed into the whole scenario. The children spent four days coming to the gallery and visiting various sites around Coventry, as part of the whole project; each site getting involved and maintaining the immersive experience. Then on the Thursday night the children were whisked away to a camp in a bus at the dead of night, as the evacuees would have had to face themselves, and found themselves in a completely alien environment, having to sell themselves to prospective foster parents, explaining what they were good at and what they could do around the house or farms, then they enjoyed some entertainment only to be interrupted by a shot down German pilot. The week ended and the children had immersed themselves into the whole period and had suspended disbelief.

Interestingly it seems that their knowledge of this era greatly improved to the point of even showing up the guides at the Imperial War Museum on a subsequent visit. Now I have to say I am not really doing this performance justice, and my advice would be to contact Richard & Carran and purchase one of the DVD's made of this project and see it for yourself, but truly John-Paul and I couldn't stop talking about it and how we could incorporate some of what we saw into our own programme here in Armagh. Thanks Richard and Carran for a truly eye opening day.

## Upcoming Events

This is one part of the website that has never really taken off, so I thought it might be nice to include a section in this newsletter to let you know what your fellow members are up to. Here follows the results of a plea made by email. Many thanks to....Lynne Ashton...

### SeaGuernsey 'Living History' festival at Castle Cornet

**With Guernsey's 'History in Action' Company** - throughout the day in Castle Cornet Guernsey  
March 25, 26, 27  
July 3, 4, 5  
September 2, 3, 4  
October 20, 21, 22

### Festival programme includes:

'All Hands on Deck!'  
Round the world in 30 minutes! From 1740-1744, Commander Anson's Royal

Navy Squadron circumnavigated the globe in pursuit of Spanish and treasure ships. On board is Guernsey man Philip Saumarez. A story of ill-manned ships, disease, determination and eventually - triumph!

**Trafalgar- The Ropemaker's Story**  
Guernseyman Peter Sylvie- ropemaker and seaman, served in many ships during the battles against Napoleon & the French. On board HMS Royal Sovereign at Trafalgar in 1805; 40 years on he is to receive a medal. He recalls Trafalgar and life below decks.

### Mr Lihou Reports

( July, Sept and Oct only)  
Guernseyman Admiral Sir James Saumarez was one of Nelson's captains. In charge of the Channel Island Squadron in 1805 he missed Trafalgar, but his nephew John Lihou, who was on board the 'Swiftsure' is back and ready to report on the battle. Sir James is also entertaining the delightful Miss Miffy who is fascinated by the story- and Mr Lihou.

### 'A Narrow Escape'

Guernsey man Admiral Sir James Saumarez served with Lord Nelson and had a distinguished career in the British Navy. Our lively story reflects on his life and in particular his escape from a superior French squadron through the treacherous rocks of Guernsey - helped by Guernsey man Jean Breton.

### 'Full Steam Ahead!'

A Victorian tale of competition, heroism and tragedy as the railway companies strive to be the first to the Channel Islands. On Maundy Thursday 1899 the London & South Western Railway steamer 'Stella' struck the Casquets rocks. Over 100 people perished in the disaster.

### And many more!

For details ring Castle Cornet on 01481 721657, Fort Grey on 01481 265036 or Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery on 01481 726518

...and to Robert Forshaw....

**Armagh City and District Council Living History Department**  
**VE Day 1945 - Living History Festival**, Mon 28th & Tue 29th of March  
@ the Palace Stables Heritage Centre ,  
Armagh, N.Ireland 12pm - 5pm both days

**The Belfast Blitz - Lagan Lookout**,  
Belfast, N.Ireland, 10am - 12pm Mon 16th  
May - Fri 20th May

**1910 History House, Sentry Hill Newtownabbey, N.Ireland**, 12pm - 4pm  
Mon 30th May to Sunday 5th June



**Myths & Legends, Celtic Evening -**  
Navan Heritage Centre, Armagh,  
Northern Ireland 7.30pm - 9pm, advance  
booking at £10 per person

...and Jane Glennie at Milestones in  
Basingstoke tells us...

"We are planning a local election here in  
the Milestones village to coincide with  
this year's general election. However  
the twist is setting ours in 1945 so  
also celebrating 60 years since end of  
the war.

The elections will take place during May  
half-term (31st May-5th June), based on  
the original 1945 party manifestos, a  
Tory and Labour candidate will do  
battle daily, visitors will be able to vote  
and the winner will be announced at the  
end of each day!

Visitors will be able to find out if either  
party's policies have changed dramati-  
cally over the past 60 years.....and  
compare with the recent election."

If your event is not listed here, why not  
add it to the relevant page on the  
website?

## Performance, Learning and 'Heritage':

an investigation into the  
uses and impact of  
performance as a  
medium of learning in  
museums and at historic  
sites 2005-8

The Centre for Applied Theatre  
Research at the University of  
Manchester (UK) has been awarded a  
major research grant by the Arts &  
Humanities Research Board to  
undertake research into this expanding  
but relatively under-researched field of  
performance practice. The project will  
be led by Tony Jackson in partnership  
with the university's Centre for  
Museology and the Manchester Museum;  
further partners will include museums  
and sites involved in the research  
process. The research will encompass  
the experience of independent adult

visitors and families as well as organised  
educational groups; conduct longitudinal  
audience/visitor research to gauge effec-  
tiveness; consider a variety of perfor-  
mance styles in relation to their site-  
specific contexts, from 'first person'  
interpretation to complete dramatic  
performances; and initiate – and develop  
methods of assessing – innovative prac-  
tice: in collaboration with Manchester  
Museum, we will in Year 2 commission a  
new professional performance piece  
to test and build on research findings as  
they begin to emerge.

The project has funding for 3  
years 3 months and will start on 1st  
June 2005. We are now looking to  
appoint a full-time post-doctoral (or  
equivalent) researcher. There will also  
be a full-time fully funded PhD stu-  
dentship attached to the project, com-  
mencing not later than 1st September  
2005. We are also interested in talking  
with colleagues from museums or his-  
toric sites who already offer pro-  
grammes of museum theatre/live inter-  
pretation and who might be interested  
in participating in the project.

**Enquiries to** Tony Jackson (0161 275  
3356; email:  
a.r.jackson@manchester.ac.uk).

## CALL FOR PAPERS

People and their Pasts  
International Public History  
Conference  
Held at Ruskin College,  
Oxford, UK  
Friday - Saturday September  
16th / 17th 2005

Speakers include:

Paul Ashton: co-director 'Australians &  
the past' project, University of  
Technology, Sydney Bronwyn Dalley:  
chief historian, New Zealand ministry  
for culture & heritage Lawrence  
Goldman: director of the  
New Dictionary of National Biography,  
Oxford Darryl MacIntyre: group  
director Museum of London, formerly of  
National Museum, Canberra Patrick  
Wright: writer and broadcaster  
Papers, presentations, displays,  
contributions and inter-active workshop  
sessions are invited on the broad theme  
of people and their pasts. Topics  
contributors are invited to consider  
include:

- ◆ the relationship between personal,  
local and national histories
- ◆ forms of radical /popular history the  
relationship between the ways in which  
the past is both presented for people  
and people's own practices & sense of  
the past
- ◆ the role of art, memorials and build-  
ings in creating particular histories
- ◆ recent developments in education,  
museums and television

These themes are not intended to be  
restrictive- we positively welcome  
contributions crossing subject  
boundaries /forms of understanding of  
the past.

Please provide an abstract of c.100  
words and contact one of the following  
organisers with your proposal by April  
8th at the latest. Please feel free to  
contact us for initial discussion on  
your proposal:

Phil Coward WEA organiser  
(particularly for community history)  
pcoward@wea.org.uk

Hilda Kean (particularly for family histo-  
ry or the visual) hkean@ruskin.ac.uk

Paul Martin Museum Studies, Leicester  
University & Ruskin  
(particularly for museums /collecting)  
paul@mardel.free-online.co.uk

Steve Mills American Studies,  
Keele University  
(particularly for landscape/  
commemoration)  
s.f.mills@ams.keele.ac.uk

Ron Noon Social Sciences School,  
Liverpool John Moores  
(particularly for popular/radical  
history) r.p.noon@livjm.ac.uk  
Martin Spafford, History teacher in an  
East London school (particularly for  
education) martinspaff@ntlworld.com

Melanie Tebbutt History Department  
Manchester Metropolitan University  
(particularly for local history/land-  
scape) m.tebbutt@mmu.ac.uk

General enquiries to - Hilda Kean,  
Course Director MA in Public History,  
Ruskin College, Walton Street, Oxford,  
OX1 2HE hkean@ruskin.ac.uk

As Verity Walker says, "Looks like a good  
networking opportunity at the very  
least!"

Continued from page 7

Andrew Ashmore stood down and Robert Forshaw was elected as Director.

On behalf of the Board, the incoming Director expressed gratitude for Andrew's service both as Company Secretary for four years and Director for five. Andrew was the driving force behind setting up IMTAL-Europe and has been one of its strongest advocates. His work for IMTAL – Europe has been unstinting, including liaison with IMTAL in the US, compiling the regular Newsletters and Members' Directory and working on the successful 'Expanding Horizons' conference in London in September 2001. The Board expressed their sadness at losing Andrew as a Director, but are glad that his energy and enthusiasm will still be present through his input as an IMTAL Europe member.

Andrew expressed his enjoyment of being involved in IMTAL Europe and said he was looking forward to being involved as a member. He thanked the Board and wished them all the best for taking the company forward.

**e) Directors' Responsibilities:** The Directors' responsibilities need to be clear to all members, so that they know who to contact regarding particular issues.

**Website** – We know this needs updating and we need a step-by-step approach for members about how to update their own entry. Members need to update their own contact details. At the moment members cannot add their events, but it could be made possible to do so. It would be good to have a continual change of the news page (every month), so that newcomers to the website know that it is being used and updated. Individual entries – Chris Bailey has been adding new members contact details as they come along and is happy to continue to do so, but members must update their own extended information. Members are not always updating us/telling us when they move. We need to link more with the US IMTAL website.

Verity will take the lead on website change with support from other directors, primarily Chris.

**Newsletter** – This is a quarterly publication at present. Those present wanted to continue to receive four copies per year. Previously it has been Andrew who edited each one

which has been a great undertaking. This time, in order to spread the workload, each director will take on one newsletter each, and each newsletter will have a theme. Members will be approached directly to write articles for the newsletter relating to a particular theme, but if you have an idea for an article, please contact Jo or Verity. The newsletter should also include all the Director contacts and what each director is responsible for.

Chris will continue to liaise with Dave the graphic designer, regarding typesetting and printing.

Verity & Chris – Vol 6, No 2, (Autumn), September 2004  
Robert – Vol 6, No 3, (Winter), December 2004  
Chris – Vol 6, No 4, (Spring), March 2005  
Mark – Vol 7, No 1, (Summer), June 2005  
Jo – Vol 7, No 2, (Autumn), September 2005

**E-list** – Verity manages this and will continue to do so. She requested that members who are members are on other e-lists to forward emails of interest.

**Directory** – Jo will compile the Directory for 2005, with Chris supporting. Andrew said that the Directory is only as good as the information in it and that it had been very hard to get members to send in their updated information. Jo requested that members appreciate the difficulties of this task and respond more quickly in future. She will begin work on the Directory in April, so will be contacting members then.

**Training Days** – It was agreed that training days should be programmed well in advance as people's diaries are very busy. We have had offers of training from the National Trust, Triangle and Past Pleasures – other members are welcome to put themselves forward with training suggestions. The Chair suggested that the following be planned;

**22nd October 2004**  
– Buckland Abbey, Yelverton, Devon (subject to confirmed attendances)

**Spring 2005**  
– in Coventry – Triangle Theatre

**Summer 2005** – In the South –

possibly Stowe or Cliveden - Joint training day with National Trust Learning staff on interpreting in open air and countryside

**AGM** – early July 2005 – Nottingham – ?Galleries of Justice/Southall Workhouse

**Global IMTAL conference** – Canberra, Australia 13-16 October 2005

**Spring 2006** – Weekend mini-conference - London – Past Pleasures sites: Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace etc

**Global IMTAL conference 2007** – Manchester?!

Precise dates will be sent to members as soon as possible.

**Working with other organisations** – The Chair suggested that to gain recognition as an organisation, IMTAL Europe should become affiliated to MA (like GEM and Engage are). Anyone who has strong links with other organisations please to suggest contacts (e.g. AHI). Suggested having a stand at the MA conference and offering a seminar at the MA conference in 2005.

**f) IMTAL as a training organisation:** The purpose of training is two-fold - training ourselves to be better at what we do and training the outside world to be more aware of what we do. It is important that we are advocates for live interpretation, with members attend conferences to represent the field and IMTAL Europe. It was suggested that IMTAL Europe provide 3-4 travel bursaries a year for members to attend appropriate conferences/training and to report back through company meetings and articles in the newsletter. Chris Bailey will set up the bursary scheme.

**g) Diary dates:** Diary dates – see above and a potential mini-conference for Spring 2006. The next AGM will be held in early July 2005 in Nottingham, possibly at Southall Workhouse.

**h) IMTAL meeting – Australia 2005:** The major IMTAL Conference is to be held in Canberra, Australia 13-16 October 2005 (provisional dates). Robert will contact IMTAL to find out further details on theme, content and possible bursaries.



**Global 2007.** Ideas were discussed for where the next conference could be held and Manchester / North West was suggested – could include visits to: Manchester Museum of Science & Industry amongst others, National Museums Liverpool, Wigan Pier, Royal Armouries at Leeds, but does it have the pull of London or Paris? Has an airport. The conference in Boston took two years to plan. For the London each of the four host venues took on responsibility for that day's programme which helped to spread the load.

Meeting ended at 3pm.

### **0AN INTERVIEW WITH: Paul Bisson**

**I work as:** Programmes Manager at the National Railway Museum, York

#### **I first got interested in live interpretation/on-site theatre...**

When I organised a major Muster with the English Civil War Society at Fountains Abbey & Studley Royal (National Trust) in 1995. Despite the headaches, the sight of 1200 re-enactors was very thrilling and ultimately led me on to put on a large-scale event, "Mr Aislabie's Revels", which was a recreation of the 18th-century Pleasure Gardens at Ranelagh and Vauxhall, in Studley Royal Water Garden, for three years in a row.

#### **The thing I love about my work is...**

The creative people I am able to work with, and the evident joy they can evoke in the people they perform to.

#### **The worst professional moment I've had is...**

Either – when I was a humble ASM, having publicly to reprimand Alan Rickman for nearly impaling me with a prop dagger he threw offstage in a fit of petulance

Or – , having to cope with dealing with a situation caused by one of our actors on tour. As we were returning home at about midnight, after a performance of "Can't Pay? Won't Pay!", which we were touring around venues in the Nottinghamshire coalfield in 1984, one of our company jokingly told a point cop that we had "flying pickets" stashed in the back of our 6-ton van. After we had completely unloaded then reloaded our van to prove our innocence, we eventually arrived back at base around 3am ...

#### **If I could change one thing about what I do for a living it would be...**

Persuading people that Health and Safety is NOT AT ALL interesting and that, for the sake of humanity's ultimate survival, those people who have no common sense at all are better off not remaining in the human gene pool

**Editor's note: don't forget to answer the same questions and send us your own interview!**

# IMTAL-EUROPE

Please complete this form and return with your cheque (made payable to IMTAL-Europe) to: Chris Bailey, Treasurer/Membership Secretary, 9 Glengall Court, 58 Codrington Hill, London SE23 1NE

Yes, I would like to join IMTAL-Europe

## **Institutional Member - Rate £50 per year**

Benefits: Free advertising in Newsletter; up to 5 additional newsletter copies; annual Membership Resource Directory; annual meeting regular seminars.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Fax No. \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional members can include up to 4 additional names for newsletter, depending on staff size:

1-25 1 additional copy 26 -50 2 additional copies 51 - 100 3 additional copies 100 + 4 additional copies

## **Individual Member - Rate £25 per year**

Benefits: Quarterly newsletter; regular seminar; annual Membership Resource Directory; annual meeting.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Fax No. \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_