

Marathon effort

For the first time ever, we had runners in the London Marathon. Neil Davidson, Graeme Stewart and Chris Don not only managed to complete the course but also raised a staggering £10,500 between them. Well done to the three of you.

We have two places for the 2010 Marathon, please contact Dean Casswell for more information.



Website awards

Our website www.bagbooks.org has won two more awards. Schoolzone has given it a "Highly Recommended" award; and EduNET have given it their "Choice Award".

Future Storyline's

We produce pdf and print versions of this newsletter. If you would like to change the format you receive in future please contact Dean Casswell. Similarly please let us know if you'd rather not receive future editions.



1 Stewart's Court, 218-220 Stewart's Road, London SW8 4UB
Tel: 020 7627 0444 Fax: 020 7627 0999
email: office@bagbooks.org web: www.bagbooks.org
Registered Charity No. 1026432

Bag Books International



In March, we were invited to attend the ACCESS Abu Dhabi Conference as guests of His Highness General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Abu Dhabi Crown Prince. The theme of the Conference was "Supporting Families to empower People with Disabilities."

Our Workshop Manager, Sophie Baker, represented Bag Books at the three-day event and displayed a selection of our books.



Storyline

Issue 11, Summer 2009



The news from Bag Books

Tour update

Since the last *Storyline*, we have completed two more Story-Go-Round regional tours: the North East and North West of England. Together, the two tours visited 51 libraries and reached 691 children with severe learning disabilities.

A typical day involves basing ourselves in a local library which then hosts three story-telling sessions, usually with three different Special Schools from the local area. This develops the interest of library staff through a "safe" environment by observing and learning about the children's needs, with someone else in control. A fourth session at the end of each day is a training programme giving library staff the skills they need to tell a multi-sensory story themselves.



At the end of the day, we ask the teachers and librarians to complete feedback forms and to date 95% of the teachers responding have said that the children benefited from the sessions.

We are now planning a tour of the West Midlands in October 2009 and a tour of the East Midlands in February 2010.

Our new home



The move to our new premises went very smoothly and, thanks to funding from The Clothworkers' Foundation, we have been able to make maximum use of the available space with tall racking against most walls. This has meant that it is much easier to keep an eye on the 400 odd items of stock we need for the books. It also means that we can maximise the floorspace and we have already been making good use of that space with many more volunteers (see page 2).

If you are in the area, you are most welcome to pop in.



Volunteers

For many years we have benefited from the services of three home-based volunteers: Mrs Oakley, Mary and Priscilla. They have now been joined by Alison, Caroline and Jacqui.

The new workshop space has enabled us to recruit some regular craft volunteers, including Nee, Sarah and Süle. It also means we can accommodate corporate teams on a craft day. We recently had a team from Linklaters and teams from Standard Chartered are booked in for two days in August.

In a new development we had a request from HSBC to take part in their Global Community Partnership Day in June. Instead of their staff coming to our workshop, two of our staff visited their offices in Canada Tower and over 50 bank staff popped into our rolling craft sessions throughout the day.



Some of the team from Linklaters in our workshop.



Taking care not to scratch the tables in Canada Tower with the HSBC volunteers.

We have also been fortunate in recruiting some very able volunteers to assist on our administrative work, most notably Steve, Grace and Susie.

On a sad note, we would like to pay tribute to our former volunteer, Charles Walford, who passed away in May. He had retired from Sotheby's after 40 years' service and from early 2005 he assisted us with our administrative tasks for two days per week until his illness last Autumn. He was a charming character who would be equally happy answering the phone, mending workshop equipment or shopping for our stock. He is greatly missed.

Win a Car

Bag Books is taking part in a draw organised by The Foundation for Social Improvement (FSI). The FSI small charity car draw is helping small charities to raise money for their causes without cost to them and it's offering supporters a chance to win a fabulous brand new Fiat 500, kindly donated by Zurich!

Tickets cost £2 each and if you buy them from Bag Books we will receive a whopping 95.2% of every ticket sold (the FSI take just 4.8% for their administrative costs). You can buy the tickets online at tinyurl.com/bagacar or we also have a small supply of traditional paper

tickets available, contact Dean Casswell for details.



Thanks John and Bill

The Actor and Comedian, John Sessions, recorded a Radio 4 Appeal for Bag Books which was broadcast in November. It has raised £16,000 which is wonderful. If you missed the broadcast you can listen to it again online at tinyurl.com/bagradio4.



John's friend, the Actor, Bill Paterson, heard the appeal and Bill kindly gave Bag Books his fee from a book signing event at the National Theatre.

Many thanks to both of them.



New introductory leaflet

We have a new leaflet aiming to give an introduction to Bag Books and what we do. It features a series of photographs showing children's reactions to various pages in our "Charmaine's Bonfire Adventure" story.

A copy of the leaflet should be included with this copy of *Storyline*; if yours is missing please ask us for one. Many of you will already know about us but you can help spread the word by passing on the leaflet to a relative, friend or colleague.



Shop and Support

As well as giving details of all our books and services, our website www.bagbooks.org also offers you the chance to shop from well-know retailers and earn commission for your favourite multi-sensory story charity.

In the left hand column of every page on our website you can click on links to "Amazon", "Buy.At" or "ebay for Charity".

Amazon has grown beyond being an online book shop and now sells a wide range of other goods such as electrical products and toys plus they offer free delivery on orders over £5. By clicking through from the Bag Books website, you still pay the standard Amazon discounted price but we earn up to 5% commission from them.

Buy.At is a virtual shopping centre and we get commission from a wide range of retailers: 8% from Littlewoods; 3% from Marks & Spencer; and 2% from Next for example. Why not get your discounted office supplies from Eurooffice and earn us 8% commission at the same time? Current special offers include: an extra 10% discount for you from Superdrug plus 6.5% commission to us; and £85 commission to us for every home and car policy through Zurich Insurance.

ebay for Charity gives you a way to sell your unwanted items on ebay and choose a percentage of the sale price to come to us.