

## Arrivals and Departures

Our Volunteer Co-ordinator, Rosie Martin, moved to a larger charity in January. Rosie had been with Bag Books for almost four years and during that time the number of volunteer days increased two and a half fold which has helped to reduce our average book production costs by 29% over the same period. Thanks to funding from The Sobell Foundation and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation we have been able to make the role full-time and after receiving 19 applications we have appointed Karen Shand, a former volunteer.

Our freelance Storyteller for the North East, Gary Cordingly, has moved to Cornwall which would be rather a long commute! We received 42 applications for the post and are pleased to welcome Vicki Kennedy to replace him.



Meanwhile, Stuart Cummings, our Director of Services, has managed to cut his two and a half hour commute to Bag Books to just 30 minutes by returning to teach students with at a local Special School. Stuart had been with us

for six and a half years and had set up several new projects for us including Tall Stories and the Do-It-Yourself Books. He had also written six classic stories including "What Am I?" and "The Great Train Rescue" which is due to be published over the summer.

Since he joined us the number of people with learning disabilities participating in our storytelling sessions has grown from 1,200 to 6,400 p.a. He's also been very "hands-on" and in 2015 he visited 30 special schools, a children's hospice and 17 different adult SLD/PMLD settings. Following applications from 11 candidates, his role has been replaced by Storytelling Manager, Nina Martinez. Many of you will know Nina, who has been our freelance London Storyteller for the past ten years.

We are sad to see all our leavers go but are excited to welcome all our new arrivals.



*Our team of eleven Storytellers wrote a bespoke "Stuart's Visit" story which was told to Stuart by our Chief Executive, Dean Casswell, and Nina as part of Stuart's farewell party.*

*Storyline is published two or three times a year and is available in email and print versions. If you would like to change the format you receive in future please contact us.*

*Similarly, please let us know if you'd rather not receive future editions.*



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# Storyline

July 2016

Multi-sensory stories for people with learning disabilities



## Tall Stories success

In previous years this project has been supported by several funders including the Big Lottery Fund, The Lloyds TSB Foundation and The Garfield Weston Foundation and although those grants have now come to an end we are pleased to announce that The BAND Trust have agreed to fund the project over the next year, albeit in a smaller form.

Over the past four years we have visited 288 adult day centres or care homes, involving 4,414 participants with learning disabilities and training 806 staff.

A follow-up survey of venues taken at least six months later found that the storytelling was still taking place at 92% of the locations with an average frequency of five sessions per month and an average of 20 participants with learning disabilities per venue per month. This is far in excess of our wildest dreams and we are so pleased that our project has stimulated multi-sensory storytelling so well.



In addition we found that 95% of venues had cascaded their training so that there were now an average of 6.7 people storytelling at each venue, far more than the 2.8 people we trained and thus strengthening the ongoing legacy of the project.

## Build a Book expands

Our Build-a-Book project is also going from strength to strength with over fifty visits to special schools planned for this year; a five-fold increase on last year. This is due to generous donations from funders including The People's Postcode Trust, The Garfield Weston Foundation, Simmons & Simmons, QBE and The Paphitis Charitable Trust.

This craft-based project for children with severe or profound & multiple learning disabilities involves using unfamiliar equipment such as saws and drills to make a bespoke Bag Book story, "The Queen's Visit" for the participating school. Feedback to date has been very encouraging.

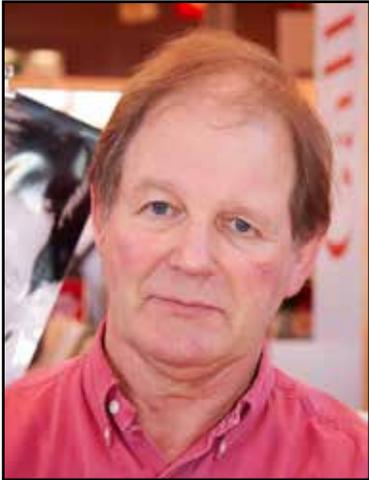
*"Today's session will give the pupils a higher level of confidence in achieving a goal through working as part of a team. It will give them greater understanding of how to use different materials."*

*"Today's workshop was a great opportunity for the students to use equipment they wouldn't usually have the chance to use and to contribute to the final production of the book. I was surprised how engaged our students were throughout."*

Build-a-Book is currently restricted to London but we hope to secure funding to expand the project nationwide in 2017.

## Radio Times

Bag Books has been selected to benefit from a BBC Radio 4 Appeal later this year. The broadcast date is likely to be October 23rd but could possibly be sooner depending on schedules. We are delighted that our long-standing Patron, the author Michael Morpurgo has agreed to present the appeal. We've had lots of fun writing the script. Look out for a special guest appearance from a badly behaved seagull!



A BBC Radio 4 Appeal is a great opportunity to not only raise funds for Bag Books but to raise awareness about our work. Our last appeal in 2012 hosted by Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson raised over £6,000 and enabled us to attract new supporters.

We remain extremely grateful to one listener, Tony Robertson, who heard the appeal and



got in touch to offer his brilliant wood and metal work skills. Since the last appeal, Tony has made 89 locks and treasure chests for "A Pirate Adventure", 85 suits of armour and space shuttles for "Museum Mystery", and 818 wooden seeds and 1,227 plant pot lids for "The Little Seed."



We are hugely grateful to Tony and indeed to all our volunteers for their support.

## Road Trip

Bag Books will be exhibiting at the forthcoming "Kidz to Adultz Wales" show in Cardiff on July 7th.

The event is taking place at the House of Sport from 09.30 – 16.30 and will feature over 100 exhibitors offering services and products for children and adults with disabilities. Please do come to our stand and say "Hello" if you happen to be visiting.

## National Multi-Sensory Storytelling Day 23rd Sept 2016

We'd like to remind you that the third annual National Multi-Sensory Storytelling Day will be on Friday 23rd September.

If you have any storytelling planned, please let our Storytelling Manager, Nina Martinez, know by email: [nina@bagbooks.org](mailto:nina@bagbooks.org)

## Storytelling in Pictures - A Pirate Adventure



*It was Jake's birthday. He was surprised to see his friend Harry wearing a beard.*



*"I've set up a pirate treasure hunt for your birthday" said Harry "and here's the map."*



*The map said to head north until they saw an island. Harry checked the compass.*



*It was time to set sail. Jake hoisted the flag. "Heave ho! Sail away me hearties!"*



*When they got to the island, they could smell something sweet and tropical. "Mangos!"*



*"If you go near the trees, watch out for the snakes!"*



*"What's that wooden chest doing there?" asked Jake. Harry passed Jake a key.*



*Jake opened the chest. "It's full of treasure!" "Thank you for my birthday pirate adventure."*