



BUSINESS NEWS

Stratforward Newsletter

Issue 50 - 22 December 2016

WOW 2016! - A Great Year For Stratford!

It's been a memorable year for Stratford businesses, and for the town as a whole.

From awards, new openings, and events - many anchored around the historic Shakespeare 400 celebrations - **it's been non-stop**and Stratforward is thrilled to have been a part of it.

Stratforward's own show stopping events - including the Fashion Show in March, Motor Festival in May, River Festival in July and September's Food Festival **not only have also attracted** tens of thousands of people to the town from across the region and beyond but also generated great media coverage that showcased the town to others.



Charity Fashion Show



Motor Festival



River Festival



Food Festival

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But it was Mr Shakespeare himself and the 400th anniversary of his death that put Stratford firmly on the world media map this year. The anniversary has generated millions of pounds worth of coverage across the world for the town, which should help bring visitors to the town for years to come.



Shakespeare 400 celebrations



Prince Charles performs at the RSC © BBC

The pictures of the Shakespeare celebrations parade, the live celebrity-packed homage to Shakespeare at the RSC on the anniversary itself, the visit by the Prince of Wales, the opening of New Place, Shakespeare's Will arriving in town, the opening of Shakespeare's Schoolroom were all beamed around the world and which in turn helped to bring people here in 2016 and will continue to do so in 2017 and beyond.

World-wide coverage of the Aviva Woman's Cycle Tour in Stratford, a Countryfile special and various other BBC live outside broadcasts just added to the media frenzy.



Aviva Bike Race



Countryfile © Stratford Herald

Although figures for the year are still being worked on, BID member The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust have just revealed that the year has broken all records with around 825,000 visitors being welcomed to their five historic Shakespeare houses – up 6% on 2015.

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With the anniversary has come several major milestones for the Trust, including the return of **Shakespeare's Will to Stratford for the first time** since it was written and the reopening of **Shakespeare's New Place in August, which has already** seen nearly 50,000 people walk through its grand oak and bronze gatehouse to visit the site. The Trust also co-hosted 750 Shakespeare academics from across the world for the 10th World Shakespeare Congress in August. Dr Diana Owen, Chief Executive Officer of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, said: "The world's eyes were on Shakespeare and his hometown of Stratford upon Avon for this special anniversary year and **we're proud to have played a huge part in** these historic Shakespeare celebrations. More people than ever before connected with our work which underpins our ongoing investment in the conservation of the Shakespeare family homes, the care of our world-class Shakespeare museum and archive collection and delivery of award-winning education programmes."



The Original Will & Testament of William Shakespeare 1616 (c) The National Archives



SBT New Place

Pride of Stratford Awards 2017

Congratulations to all those BID businesses and attractions shortlisted in **Touch FM's Pride of Stratford Awards.**

More on this in the first newsletter of 2017.



Message from The Director of Stratforward Joe Baconnet



For Stratford, 2016 has been a year of contrasts with new businesses opening in town such as Nuts In Ya Mouth, Fraser Hart and Joules (to name a handful) and national closures such as BHS and Austin Reed having an impact. The town has received significant international and national news coverage that should ensure that in 2017 people are still thinking about Stratford as a place to visit, stay and shop. 2017 is looking positive with the Bell Court development heading for a first half opening and Hotel du Vin bringing new accommodation to the town in the last quarter (hopefully).

The Team at Stratforward wishes you all a Merry Christmas and we are looking forward to working with you in a prosperous 2017.

Final Christmas Market For All Those Last Minute Shoppers



Today sees the last of Stratford's popular Christmas markets - with a record number of shoppers expected to hit the town centre for all that last-minute shopping.

Stratford's Thursday 'Shoppers Specials' have proved a hit, with thousands of people coming to try out Stratford's shops, markets, restaurants and bars over the last few weeks.

A big thank you to the BID businesses who have embraced the festive season, opening late to take advantage of extra footfall encouraged by the market, free parking and festive entertainment.

Free parking will be on offer once again today at all SDC Pay and Display car parks from 4pm to midnight. Businesses are reminded that road closures will be in place in Bridge Street from 4am to 11.59pm.



Havilands Welcoming The Homeless On Christmas Day

Meer Street tea room Havilands is opening its doors on Christmas Day to offer a **slap-up meal to the town's homeless community**.

The gesture comes just five weeks after new owner Ali Akbas took over Havilands, but he said it is something he has always done in the past in restaurants he has run in



Havilands, Meer Street
L-r Ali Akbas, Hayri Ozdemir &
Eray Kinay

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London.

"I just love helping people", he said. "I have always done it in the past in London so now we are in Stratford we want to do it here.

"My whole family will be here, my wife and my two kids will help me make it and we will serve everyone then sit down and eat with them."

Anyone who wants to drop by will be able to enjoy a three-course meal of soup, turkey or moussaka for vegetarians, and Christmas pudding as well as mince pies.

There will also be Christmas presents, for all the people who might not be expecting a gift.

But Mr Akbas said it would be useful to know how many people are planning on coming, so if anyone would like to, they are welcome to pop in and let him know.

"I have been going around and talking to homeless people and telling them we're open," he said. "We want people to spread the word that we are open, and if people want to come if they can let me know it will help me know how many we are catering for.

"I will probably go around again on Christmas Day and see them and tell them they can come."

Mr Akbas, who is originally from Worcestershire, took over Havilands just five weeks ago and **said he had had a great welcome from fellow businesses and customers in Stratford. "People have been great and really welcoming, we're looking forward to meeting more people in 2017," he added.**

Have a Festive Stroll With Stratford Town Walk On Christmas Day

While many places are shutting up shop for Christmas, the award-winning Stratford Town Walk continues through the festive period - even on Christmas Day.

The popular tour, compared to "walking through the pages of history", is offering a Festive Walk at 10.30am on Christmas Day, as well as walks on Christmas Eve, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, all at 11am.

The festive guided walk will allow visitors to discover Stratford's history, attractions and famous relationship with William Shakespeare, included houses connected with **The Bard, like Shakespeare's Birthplace, Nash's House, New Place and Hall's Croft. Other highlights include the River Avon, the Royal Shakespeare Theatres, 15th century timber-framed buildings and Guild Chapel as well as Holy Trinity Church.**



The Christmas Day walk meets at Waterside, opposite the junction with Sheep Street, at 10.30am and the walk lasts around an hour-an-a-half. For more information visit www.stratfordtownwalk.co.uk

Bah Humbug! **Scrooge Is Moving Into The Enchanted Manor**

Forget Santa..... from next week The Enchanted Manor will have a new resident - Scrooge!

From next Wednesday, Ebenezer Scrooge and his family will be taking up residence at the Enchanted Manor from December 28th until the end of January.

Visitors will be able to meet Ebenezer himself and share their Christmas grievances with him, as well as trying to cheer Miss Effie Scrooge or Great Auntie Gert up in order to win a late Christmas gift.

There's also the chance to do a bit of ghost spotting and have your photo taken with one of the world famous Christmas Grumps.

Meet the Scrooges is open until the end of January 2017 from 11am to 3pm, but is closed on **New Year's Day. Tickets cost £7 for adults, with student tickets and concessions available.**

To book, please call 01789 290969 to check availability. Spaces are limited and only those who have booked a place will be guaranteed entry. Tickets, which are all for timed entry, are non-transferable.



Twixmas Entertainment On Offer from Escape Arts

Stuck for how to keep your children entertained between Christmas and New Year?

Popular Stratford community arts group Escape Arts could have the answer.....the charity has been holding a range of **festive activities in the run up to Christmas, but isn't stopping now.**

In the second of two full-day art camps, it is holding a Twixmas animation day next Wednesday (December 28th) to keep children occupied even after the excitement of Christmas is **over and allow them to step into the future. The full day of entertainment follows today's session, which is creating Winter Wonderlands with igloos and crystal caverns.**



The Twixmas animation day, held at The Old Slaughterhouse on Sheep Street, runs from 9am to 4pm and is suitable for children aged six to 13. It costs £25 but places are limited and must be booked in advance.

For more information, contact emmastuchbury@escapearts.org.uk

Festive Fun in Stratford for Christmas Jumper Day

Festive fun was had by all as Stratford staff donned their Christmas jumpers for charity on Friday.

Businesses across the town were brightened up with the sight of festive finery to mark the day, with many raising money for local charity The Shakespeare Hospice as part of its 'Jolly Jumper Day'.

Christmas jumpers were spotted all over town, including Henley Street, Meer Street, Bridge Street, High Street and Rother Street.

And more than 50 businesses had signed up to help the Shakespeare Hospice, to raise funds for its Hospice at Home team which will continue to provide 24/7 support to patients and families in their homes over the Christmas period.

Matthew Price, Corporate Fundraiser for the hospice, said: "Christmas is a wonderful time of year for most of us. However there are those who need support over the Christmas period.

"Our 24/7 Hospice at Home nurses are busy supporting patients in their own homes in our community.

The Shakespeare Hospice Jolly Jumper Day helps to fund this service so the support of schools, companies and community groups is vital and makes a huge difference.

"We've seen some great jumpers, '#elfie selfies' and snowmen and are looking set to raise over £10,000 so thank you to everyone for your support this Christmas."



Customers at Hobsons in Henley Street
L-r Claire, Cassie & Alex Baker supporting Save the Children.



Edinburgh Woollen Mill - Henley Street
Daniela Shepherd



El Greco customer
Eithne Batt



3 Mobile - High Street
L-r Jack Snowdon, Simon Miller. Supporting Save the Children



Customer at Hobsons in Henley Street
Ella Preedy supporting Save the Children



Bensons Henley Street
L-r Helen Downing, Victoria Lucas



Joe Woods working on Peter Burton's stall on Stratford Market



Superdrug - High Street
L-r Louisa Forsyth, Misha Monk-Terry



Boots Opticians, Wood Street.
L-r Rob Hermitage, Nigel Perfett,
Ruth Fisher.
Supporting National Literature Trust.



Tourist Information Office supporting
Shakespeare Hospice
L-r Bethany Glenn, John Callaghan,
Malcolm Clarke, Laura Smith



The Flower Shop,
Rother Street,
Heather Manners.



Henley Street
Phil Byerely from
Rugby.



HROC/Pen & Parchment in
Henley Street
L-r Alex Ross, Katy Pea-
cock, Kate Morris, Mike
Hunt, Michael Abley,
Owen Wilson, Tom Gibbins.



The Works.
Matt Vale.



Santander staff,
Wood Street.
L-r Amy Carpenter, Ryan
Allen, Helen Stout.



NIYM Henley Street
Rikki hansel supporting The
Shakespeare Hospice.



Thorntons, Bridge Street



Specsavers Wood Street.
L-r Andy Davies, Leigh Powell,
Munisha Patel.



Patisserie Valerie
Henley Street
Ann Tidmarsh.



Munchies
Meer Street
Bill Thomson



Body Shop, High Street.
L-r Bev Seymour,
Jo Hulcoop



Dates for your diary!

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
 16th to 28th December - Beauty and the Beast at The Attic Theatre
 17th December to 3rd January 2017 - Warwickshire Schools Christmas holiday
 17th to 23rd December - **Tudor Christmas Talk at Shakespeare's Birthplace**
 28th December to 31st January - Meet the Scrooges at the Enchanted Manor, Henley Street
 28th December - Escape Arts kids Xmas art camp

2017

24th January - Provisional date for Stratforward AGM
 18th to 26th February - Warwickshire Schools Spring half term holiday
 8th to 23rd April - Warwickshire Schools Easter holiday
 30th April & 1st May - Festival of Motoring

Stratforward team's hours over Christmas

Office: Closed 24th to 27th December 2016 and Monday 2nd January 2017.

Office hours between Christmas and New Year 10am to 4pm

Town Hosts: 24th December finish at 3pm

25th & 26th December no Hosts working

27th December 10am to 4pm

28th to 30th December 9am to 5pm

31st December finish at 3pm

1st January no Hosts working

2nd January 10am to 4pm

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

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