



## 2006 Round-up

A real festival atmosphere was created in West Leeds in July with the arrival of the second I Love West Leeds Festival. For 8 days residents and visitors were spoilt for choice as to which event to attend. The festival featured professional performances of music, dance, poetry, photography, film and theatre as well as community events and a scorchingly hot Festival Day in Bramley park.

- 26 festival events.
- Approximately 6000 people participated in the festival.
- 106 artists given work/performance/exhibition opportunities.
- Events/projects took place in all 5 wards.
- Daily ward focus on festival radio with pre-records and live interviews with community groups & personalities from each area. Radio expanded to include live internet streaming to broaden audience access.
- Excellent press coverage for west Leeds, strong links made with YEP who ran several articles, YP (not traditionally fans of covering anything Leeds based) did two great pieces, Leeds Guide article and 5 BBC Radio Leeds interviews. Festival branding also beginning now to take hold and be recognised.
- This years festival stepped up a gear in size and quality of events.

### Festival Future

- Festival now firmly embedded in West Leeds Calendar.
- Good attendance at all events indicates need for high quality festival.
- Festival now poised to really expand and become a flagship city event. Currently no other festival in the city of similar nature and length.
- A real buzz generated within the arts and local community, artists already contacting me wanting to get involved with next years event.
- Immediate planning needed to involve med/large business in the festival due to slow reaction times of large organisations. It is worth noting however that business sponsorship of the arts in general is at an all time low and that Leeds is a notoriously difficult place to secure arts sponsorship.
- Much more commitment from local authority and additional external arts fundraising needed to grow festival as events still largely reliant on personal contacts/good will and the festival should be promoting good practice in paying artists appropriately.

### Festival highlights included...

The Marvellous Armley Tea Dance brought together the young, old and the retro crowd to share pimms, sandwiches and an extraordinary amount of cake! Live music, posh frocks and dapper chaps and fantastic array of 1950's aprons transformed Interplays Headquarters on Armley Ridge Rd for a delightful Saturday afternoon party that kept on going into the night.

Deep Waters brought together 10 dancers and a narrow boat full of musicians for a travelling performance through 3 wards along the Leeds-Liverpool canal. A Hundred-strong audience gathered at Armley Mills Museum to walk and watch as ball gowned dancers performed on bridges and locks. By 3.30pm the spectacle had reached Newlay locks for a beautiful finale with dancers on all the locks. The audience had walked with us all the way even though they had to walk back!

Drive-In Movies combined a giant screen hung from a crane with festival radio technology to bring classic films to Pudsey. Venue problems immediately prior to the festival almost scuppered this event but dogged perseverance from festival staff and artists meant the event was successfully relocated. Grease, Bollywood and Hitchcock brought residents from all over west Leeds together to experience the Drive-In. Ice cream and popcorn served to the cars added to the occasion and all attending left feedback demanding more! One local resident, interviewed at the Drive In on Monday told how she was working through the Festival Brochure having already attended the Marvellous Armley Tea Dance and the Deep Waters event on the Canal and how she was off to find the Ironmongers of illusion next. Addresses from feedback forms identified that the audience for the drive-ins had travelled from all corners of west Leeds to the event. (armley, Pudsey, farsley, stanningley, wortley, calverley, bramley, new farnley!)

The Ironmongers of Illusion was a smash hit at the festival. Bramley Ironmongers & DIY successfully operated as hardware shop and art gallery at the same time. 3D images of shop stock meant an interactive shopping experience that not only brought festival goers into the shop but also took the festival to regular shop goers. This type of gentle intervention will be expanded for next years festival, continuing the theme of making the everyday unusual.

Festival Day in Bramley Park featured a turn out of thousands on a scorching hot Saturday. 15 garden sheds decorated and inhabited by 15 artists aroused curiosity, provided endless entertainment and the pub shed even provided refreshments! Live music was provided by bands from West Leeds and a choir from Bramley Primary School who are located just across the park. Festival Stalls, acrobats, inflatables, willow weavers, theatrical make-up artists and workshops completed the line up and a fantastic time was had by all. Feedback from artists taking part cited the day as the best event they had worked on in terms of organisation and enjoyment. Local community stalls were run off their feet and several were very successful in using the day to publicise and raise funds for their own causes including Bramley Juniors who raised enough from penalty shoot outs to buy the teams wet weather gear.

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