

DEPTFORD STORIES

Friday 7th July 2006



The Story

'Deptford - the name to me meant unimaginable squalor...'
Welcome to Deptford in the late nineteenth century.

'...unhealthy rooms, impure language and deeds, drunkenness, blasphemy and vice ...'

Lord Tarleton's observations about life in Deptford at the turn of the last century. He went on to help set up the Deptford Fund, which later became the Albany.

Deptford Stories is a celebration of a local community and its changing fortunes since the time of Queen Victoria's reign. At the heart of the story is the development of the old Albany, which was established as a response to the extreme poverty and hardship experienced by the inhabitants of Deptford.

Act 1 - The Promenade

Ghostly figures from the past come alive in the back streets of Deptford to tell the story of a time rife with unemployment and poverty. The Gut Girls, Edgar Wallace, author of King Kong, and Keir Hardie, the founder of the Labour Party all have a tale to tell.

Act 2 – The Show

A cast of over 100 present stories based on historical research and interviews with local people about their memories of Deptford and The Albany. The show opens with a scene about families living in cramped and squalid conditions in Albury Street at the turn of the nineteenth century. A re-enactment of A Masque of Life, which was first performed at the old Albany in 1907, follows as the performers evocatively recreate scenes from the past.

A 1930s ballroom, a party in the late 1950s and a Rock Against Racism event are the backdrops for a performance that tells the story of a centre that has supported its local community for over a century.

'...The Albany is a beacon in South East London.'
The Guardian newspaper, 1972

Deptford Stories is an arts and heritage project that celebrates Deptford's community over the last 100 years. It has been organised by Art of Regeneration in collaboration with The Albany.

The History

The Albany was originally established in 1894 as the Deptford Fund. The Founders wanted to improve the plight of Deptford's community, many of whom suffered from deprivation and the adverse effects of unemployment as a result of the closure of the docks in 1869.

In 1889 the foundation stone of the Deptford Fund's purpose built building, the Albany Institute, was laid and in 1899 the building, on the corner of Lamerton Street, Albany Street and Creek Road, was officially opened by its patron, the Duchess of Albany.

The Deptford Fund's first major project was a Sick Kitchen in Creek Road for the convalescent poor. The Kitchen provided simple meals at a penny each of meat with vegetables, fish with rice, milk puddings and beef or veal tea.

Much of the Albany Institute's early efforts were directed at improving the lives and opportunities for the Gut Girls, women who, from the age of 14, were employed to work in the Foreign Cattle Market, a slaughterhouse for imported meat, which opened in 1871 following the closure of the docks. The Duchess of Albany successfully lobbied for the prohibition of the Gut Girls' work and then provided

alternative career opportunities through the Albany Institute's School of Domestic Economy. The school opened in 1899 and provided training in the skills of domestic science - such as cooking, sewing, laundry - to enable young girls to move from the slaughterhouse into domestic service for a local family.

As the twentieth century gathered pace, the range and extent of the Albany Institute's activities flourished. By the 1930s there were classes and workshops for grandmothers, grandfathers and married mothers, a Poor Man's Lawyer's Service, Happy Evenings for children, a nursery, a Babies Hospital which provided care for poorly babies, and a gym for unemployed men.

As one of Deptford's main community buildings, the Albany Institute served multiple functions throughout World War II. It served meals through the London Meals Service, the basement and gym became an air raid shelter

in 1939, and the building was also used as a third line rest centre, providing overnight accommodation for people whose houses has been destroyed during the Blitz. Given the degree of wartime destruction to Deptford, the Albany Institute was fortunate to emerge from the war unscathed.

After the war the Albany Institute continued much of its pre-war activities, with clubs and outings for mothers and grandparents. There was a growth in recreational activities for children, with the basement becoming an efficiently run boxing club for young boys in 1942 (re-formed in 1965).

Despite its continued use by the local community, by the mid 1960s the Albany Institute was in decline. Fortunately the Albany Institute's fortunes were transformed with

the appointment of a director, Paul Curno in 1966, who gave the Albany Institute a new lease of life, focusing on social issues of importance to local people. The Albany Institute was renamed the Albany and the Combination, a touring fringe theatre group became the resident theatre company at the Albany. This was the beginning of a fusion between community work and the arts that still informs the Albany today.

One of the many campaigns that the Albany supported in the 1970s was Rock Against Racism (RAR), a national anti-racism campaign, which brought black and white musicians together in a series of concerts across the country. During the Albany's support of RAR, in July 1978, the Albany Empire, - the name the Combination had given to the Albany's theatre - was burnt down. The fire has subsequently been attributed to an arson attack by a group opposed to Albany's support of RAR and its wider commitment to multiculturalism.

Irrespective of the damage caused by the fire to the Albany Empire in 1978, the staff and board of the Albany had long been planning and fundraising for a new building, accessible and specifically designed to fulfill the needs of a modern Deptford community. At the end of the 1970s the old building was demolished to make way for road widening and in 1982 the new Albany was officially opened by its new patron, Diana, Princess of Wales.



The Theatre Company

In order of appearance

Promenade Group One:

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Narrator (Young Soldier , 50's Teenager) | Bola Bamgboye |
| Grey Lady (Jane Adams, Gert, 50's Teenager, Albany Staff) | Pauline Armour |
| Grey Lady (Rose, 50's Teenager, Albany Staff) | Alessandra Perotto |
| Grey Lady (Eileen) | Martine Ferry |
| Documentary Director | Kimberly Walker |

Promenade Group Two:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Narrator (Combo Actor) | Nicky Edmett |
| Grey Lady (Albany Staff) | Wabriya King |
| Grey Lady (Jane Adams/Peggy) | Claire McRandal |
| Grey Lady (Gert, Albany Staff) | Elaine Carby |
| Documentary Director | Brent Ambacher |

back streets of Deptford:

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Mudlark (Fred, 50's Teenager, Albany Staff) | Oliver Petts |
| Edgar Wallace (Curator, Albany Staff) | Antonio Ferraria |
| Harridan (Mistress, Vera, 50's Teenager) | Heather Gilmore |
| Kier Hardie | |

| | |
|---|----------------|
| (Butler, Flanigan, 50's Teenager, Boxer Bill, Albany Staff) | Paul Stephens |
| Young Edgar Wallace | Jess McFarlane |
| "King Kong" | Sam Dransfiel |

Deptford Fund House:

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|---|------------------|
| Lord Tarleton (Master, 50's Teenager, Albany Staff) | Rankin McFarlane |
| Reverend (Sarge, 50's Teenager, Totter) | Ben Burke |
| Local Business Man (Bill, 50's Teenager, Totter) | Patrick Brown |
| Street Singer | Rachael Bennett |

Arches (Foreign Cattle Market):

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|--|-----------|
| Gut Girl (Maid, 50's Teenager, Albany Staff) | Iris Dove |
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| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Gut Girl (Maid, Alice, 50's Teenager, Albany Staff) | Rachel Gibson |
| Gut Girl (Maid, Ivy, 50's Teenager, Albany Staff) | Catherine Showlin |
| Gut Girl (Young Girl, Girl in the Blitz) | Kerry Connolly |

Royal Visit:

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|--|---------------|
| Princesses (Victorian and Modern, 50's Teenager) | Shennel Brown |
|--|---------------|

Market Scene:

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|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Suffragette | Almu Sequra |
| Suffragette | Teri Williams |
| Salvation Army | Saphire Modre-Finlay |
| Eleanor Marx | Louise Drewett |
| Soldier | Michael Le |
| Irish Home Ruler | Desron Ryan |
| Irish Home Ruler | Damar Markham |
| Lumper | Ervis Halill |
| Temperance Society Member | Faye Russell |

The Shoppers of Today:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Young Asian Woman | Palesa Mokoena |
| Goth | Nikki Kosegbe |
| Bored Teen | Elizabeth Odukoya |
| Shopaholic (1) | Cynthia Wangai |
| Shopaholic (2) | Faye Hoyle |
| Granddaughter | Sharnelle Lopez |
| Grandma | Joanna Babika |
| Elder Brother | Theo Lobe |
| Rasta Man | Tope Cole |
| Stalker | Carly Gearing |
| Teenage Mum | Aieshia Lindsay |

Inside the Theatre

Roots of the Albany

John Stainer Community Primary School (Friday)

Mahmuda Akhtur, Stephany Alleyroux, Fatin Atirah, Ben Austin, Arran Brown, Jurell Campbell, Shaquille Campbell, Rochelle Green, Toby Hews, Corin Holloway, Fearghal Hughes, Maryam Iqbal, Daisy Japes-Waatam, Ece Kafur, Chemra Mason, Habib Obileye, Ethan O'Donnell, Absana Rahman, Danere Riviere, Monique Smith, Shela Tezo, Leon Thompson, Fran Tuitt, Leah Walsh.

St Joseph's RC Primary School (Saturday)

Lincey Bitty, Gowani Brzezinski, Marie-Louise Chin, Henry Conteh, Amy Duong, Celine Erorh, Cyrillia Falana, Jack Hanson, Stephane Lagbre, Kayne Steven McQuilkin, Jean Luc Mizero, Jessie Natufe, Bony N'Dri, Toju Neburagho, Helen Nguyen, Jonathan Nouble, Deji Olusanya, Olga Chinenye Onyenani, Guerschom Onyumba, Vanessa Owale, Shannon Paton, Viet Pham, Peter Sakila-Musungu, Ruby Steele, Bentel Sutton, Krystian Szachno.

The 1930s Gymnastics Club

Ladywell Gym Club

Alex Angus, Amy Ennis, Louise Irving, Jane Monaghan, Tanya Rodwell.

The First Disco at the Albany

50's Teenager / Albany Staff – Eburn Culwin
50s Teenagers – The Company

The Story of Immigration and Employment in the 1960s

The Sunshine Grannies

Norma Walker, Dolceta Dauden, Rose Fowler, Avis Lewingson, Nadine Richardson, Gwendolyn Sewell, Barbara Watts,

Rock Against Racism Concerts

Deptford Green School (Friday)

Shennell Arko-Dadzie, Edward Burkin, T-Sian Charles-Graham, Shannan Cornwall-Hird, Amber Cosgrave, Davina Dunn, Ashto Jackson Farha Khan, Courtnei Lindo, Anna Ngo, Sola Oduneye, Melissa Otoo, Marcia Owusu-Mfum, Eunice Oyabambi, Reanne Phillips, Symone Quest, Femi Raji, Alex Scott, Kimone Spence, Riann St John, Shakera Sutton-Robotham, Princess Thomas Akpan, Sean Wright, Morayo Yayo-Ogundipe.

Addey & Stanhope School (Saturday)

Ashanti Afiotor, Jake Bray, Sam Cooke, Aster Dashim, Jack Dempsey, Ibrahim Diallo, Ashley Francis, Janet Kostucenko, Roxanne Landell, Victoria Marshall, Troy Samuels

Creative Team

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Writer / Director | John Turner |
| Assistant Director | Kimberley Walker |
| Artist in Residence | Alexis Carne |
| Artist in Residence | Tony Nwachukwu |
| Artist in Residence | Laura McFall |
| Artist in Residence | Siobhan O'Neill |
| Artist in Residence | Luke Williams |
| Artist in Residence | Karen Logan |
| Design | Nadia Lakhani |
| Lighting | Neil Brinkworth |
| Sound | Andy Jones |
| Vocal Arranger | Rachel Bennett |
| Film Co-Director | Jake Strickland |
| Film Co-Director | Aron Spall |
| Costume Supervisor | Kinga Hajnal |
| Gymnastics Trainer | Fateh Berrimi |
| 1950s Dance Hall Movement | Miranda Taggart |
| Photography | Jamie Tiller |
| Website | Spark Design |
| Graphics – Flyer and Poster | Darren Harvey |
| Programme Design and Production | Sally Bamber |

Production Team:

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Production Manager | Stuart Calder |
| Production Manager – Promenade | Ruari Cormack |
| Stage Manager – Promenade | Alan Vincent |
| Stage Manager – Promenade | Scott Holland |
| Production Manager – Theatre | Christine Hathway |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Stage Manager – Theatre | Jeni Notley |
| Stage Manager – Theatre | Meryl Couper |
| Assistant Stage Manager – Theatre | Miranda Taggart |
| Albany Box Office Manager | Cat McCurdie |
| Chef | Louise Cusworth |
| Casting Recruitment | Montage Theatre |

Project Team:

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|---------------------|---------------|
| Executive Producer | Jenny Harris |
| Project Manager | Emily Mealey |
| Community Producer | Tony O'Leary |
| Marketing and PR | Wendy Neville |
| Publicity Assistant | Sally Probett |

Thanks to...

Councillor Barrie Anderson, Chair of Lewisham Council; Sally Deeves, John Coulter and Linda Merman from the Lewisham Local History and Archives Centre; Liz Dart, Lewisham Arts; Jennifer Taylor, Deptford Town Centre Manager; Alfie Lockyear, Chair of Deptford Market Traders Association; Lisa Stubbs, Lewisham College; Mark Moynihan music research; Tony McTurk; Bobby Woodruff and Paige Richardson; The Salvation Army Aidan Haughey, New Cross Gate NDC, Pepys Community Forum, Mick Bonfield, Herb Garden, Wavelengths Library; Fred Alyward; Tim Jones; Simon Cowderoy; Andy Calder; Tom Vague, Albany Digital and Albany staff.

The Educational Programme

Six local schools have been involved in the Deptford Stories Project. Four schools will join the cast of Deptford Stories at The Albany Theatre on 7 and 8 July and two schools have created Memory Maps which will be displayed at the Albany on the evenings of the performances, following which they will be permanently housed in their schools.

The Show

The schools researched and developed scenes for the performance in the Albany Theatre. They worked with visiting artists and an oral historian, using primary source material - old maps, reports, magazines, press coverage, the census and oral history interviews – to develop a ten minute scene. Each school interviewed a local person about their memories which informed their work.

Children from John Stainer Community and St Joseph's RC Primary Schools have developed a scene about the opening of the opening of the old Albany in 1894 (which started as the Deptford Fund) and its early projects, such as the sick kitchen.

The children studied old photographs of Albany Street and used the 1901 census as a starting point for the development of their characters.

Students from Deptford Green and Addey & Stanhope Schools have created scenes that explore the 1970s and the Albany's development as a community arts centre, with a particular focus on Rock Against Racism concerts. They worked with original copies of Temporary Hoarding, the Rock Against Racism fanzine, and Sniffin Glue, the punk magazine. They also interviewed Trix Worrell about his memories of The Albany and the Albany Empire Fire in 1978.

The Memory Maps

Young people from Lucas Vale and St Stephen's Primary School researched the 1950's. They worked with oral historian Rib Davies and interviewed Eddie Giddings who worked as a local totter during this period, and the Sunshine Grannies - a reminiscence theatre group of Caribbean women. They then used the reminiscences to create Memory Maps; St Stephen's School's map features highlights from Eddie's memories and St Joseph's RC School focuses on food. The artists are:

Lucas Vale

Abigail, Aleyfiah, Chloe, Dariyen, Denneil, Emmanuel, Elizabeth, Frankie, Gabriella, Havza, Ilyes, Jessica, Joae, Jodie, Kamar, Kane, Keisha, Kieanna, Kyle, Lauren, Lebianga, Lewis, Mark, Osnose, Rachel, Rima, Sanica, Sarah, Taliah, Tremaine.

St Stephen's Primary School

Chioma Anaka, Maame Atuah, Sarah Boyd, Charlotte Childs, Renee Edwards, Hien Hang, Georgina Hoffman, Jordan Holder, Kingsley Iloghalu, Ikra Javaid, Jonelle Lisle-Thomas, Alexandra Lowe, Pearl Ly, Lucy Manley, Obatare Martin, Elisha Moore, David Passer, Jordan Prendergast, Chloe Qureshi, Ken Shoniregun, Tai Shoniregun, Tehellah Simpson, Hayley Thomas, Nicoy Tomlin, Joanna Tull, David Tyoember, Tia Varnard.

We are grateful to the following teachers who helped the schools to develop their projects:

Teachers - Maxine Andersen, Carla Bowman-Vaughan, Laura Murphy, Shelly Page, Paige Richardson, Alexandra Roberts



The Memories

Integral to the development of the Deptford Stories performance was the collection of oral history interviews with local people, about their memories of the Albany and Deptford. The interviews, conducted by Oral Historians Rib Davis and Meena Khatwa, will be transcribed and deposited at the Lewisham Local History and Archives Centre and selected sound clips are included in the Albany Album on the 'Albany History' section of the Albany's website www.thealbany.org.uk/history/history.html

We are grateful to the following people who have been generous enough to give their time and memories to the Deptford Stories project.

Margaret Allender, Mary Andersen, Fred Aylward, Barbara Banks, Colin Bodiam, Wozzy Brewster, Ann Bridgeman, Pete Caldwell, Sharon Collins, Eileen Connelly, Raymond Corbin, Graham Corneck, Sue Corneck, Simon

Cowderoy, Kathy Crossan, Barry Cunningham, Ann Curno, Paul Curno, Iris Dove, Eileen Evans, David Findlay, Gladys Florey, Eddie Giddings, Pat Greenwood, Jean Hall, Jenny Harris, Peggy Harrison, Les Hawkins, John Hole, Paul Hood, Alan Hooton, Pauline Jacobs, Sue Leader, Steve Mannix, Hugh Maloney, Harold Marchant, William Moynes, Doris Odell, Cle Newhook, Dave O'Donnell, Jessica Playle, Moira Rafferty, JB Rose, Rose Short, Andy Stuart, Peggy Taggart, Susannah Tidswell, John Turner, Trix Worrell.

With special thanks to Deptford Action Group for the Elderly (DAGE) and the Salvation Army based at Mary Ann Gardens for their help in introducing us to older members of the community.

Thanks also to Stephen Flinn who transcribed the interviews.

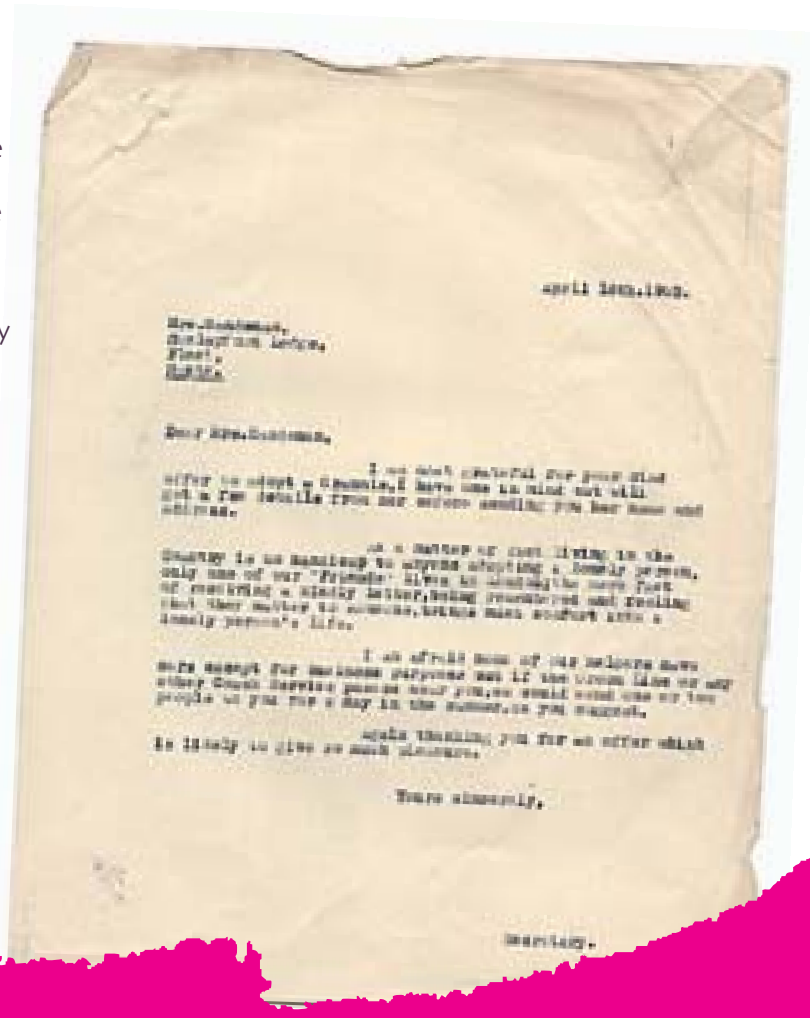


The Legacy

Support from the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, and the London Borough of Lewisham, has enabled us to create a lasting legacy to enable local people to explore the history of the Albany and Deptford.

In addition to the performance, the collection of over 40 oral history interviews and the creation of two Memory Maps by local schools, the project has:

- Created a documentary film about of the making of the Deptford Stories performance. Copies of the film will be kept in the Albany archive and will be available for anyone to use.
- Developed resource packs for local schools. The packs contain facsimiles of primary source material from the Albany archive, focusing on people living in late Victorian Deptford and the opening of the Albany (initially called the Deptford Fund) in 1894.
- Developed an 'Albany History' section for the Albany Web site, featuring the Albany Album, an online archive of documents, photographs and oral history interviews detailing the history of the Albany www.thealbany.org.uk/history/history.html.



The Deptford Stories performance is dedicated to the people of Deptford and to Miss Rose Short and Mr William Moynes

Miss Rose Short
1919-2006

Deptford Stories is dedicated to Rose Short, who died on 11th June 2006. Through the support of the Salvation Army Rose made a significant contribution to the Deptford Stories project through sharing and recording her memories of growing up in Deptford. Rose also visited local school children at St Joseph's RC Primary School to tell her stories.

Rose was a kind and generous lady with a positive attitude to life that shone through and was evident to all those who knew her. Her ability to find contentment and happiness, despite the difficulties that life presented her, is the example that she set and the legacy that she left for others.

Mr William Moynes (Wee Wee)
1914-2006

Deptford Stories is also dedicated to Mr William Moynes, known to his friends as Wee Wee, who sadly died in March month this year. Wee Wee was a well-loved member of the local community and an integral member of Deptford Action Group for the Elderly (DAGE). Wee Wee shared his stories with the Deptford Stories team, describing working in Deptford in the early part of the twentieth century, providing a unique insight into the slaughterhouses of the Foreign Cattle Market, which played an influential role in the lives of the people of Deptford.

