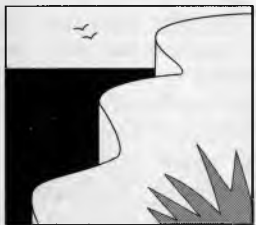




COASTAL



landscapes

PREVIEW OF THE
ARTS & SPECIAL EVENTS
PROGRAMME 1998

— LISA WEBB —

Arts Development Officer, Dover District Council
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Each year the Arts and Special Events Department adopts a theme for the programme for the year ahead. For 1998 the activities are centred around the theme 'Coastal Landscapes' providing an opportunity to celebrate the unique landscape of White Cliffs Country, as well as encouraging the public to be more sensitive to environmental issues.

'Coastal Landscapes' will provide a challenging and innovative approach to experiencing arts and special events. It aims to encourage people to become more responsible for their surroundings, using practical projects which simultaneously enhance the wildlife and landscape of the area, as well as making it more accessible to everyone.

To ensure that the Arts and Events Department is providing a broad range of relevant projects and activities, it has been crucial to work closely with the District Council's Recycling Officer and the White Cliffs Countryside Project, in addition to consultation and advice from other environmental agencies.

The programme was launched on Friday 13 February with a ghost walk through the South Foreland Valley, organised by the White Cliffs Countryside Project. The event marked the reported sighting of the ghost ship,

the Lady Lovibund, which ran aground on the Goodwin Sands in 1748. This legend attracted much media attention, with national television companies and newspapers covering the event - along with an intrepid team of walkers and ghost hunters participating in the event.

Following this launch event, the White Cliffs Countryside Project organised the "Green Gang" as a major half term project, along with the new Dance into Dover initiative, which was a great success. Loop Dance Company worked with a team of over 30 young people on a series of master classes, leading up to a finale performance at the end of the half term week, performed at the White Cliffs Theatre in Dover.

Other projects within the Noastal Landscapes year will include: National Spring Clean Month in April, during which the White Cliffs Countryside Project will invite the local community to take part in the Great Beach Clean and a variety of activities along the

26 shorelines. Local school children will be involved in a mural painting project, the climax of an environmental improvement programme coordinated by Dover District Council.

This will be followed by the Festival of Dover (23 - 30 May); the annual community arts celebration will present an environmentally friendly programme of events including Seashore Safaris, Rockpool Adventures, Low Tide Event, Kites on the Heights, plus proposed arts projects from Strange Cargo, Footlights Young People's Theatre, CJ's Dance and Fitness, Dover Museum, KCC Beach Bus and much more. A full programme of events will be available from all the usual outlets from 1 April.

In July, the Royal Navy frigate HMS Brave returns to the port of Dover after its Atlantic voyage. The programme will feature special trips on board the ship and a range of celebratory events to welcome the crew back to Dover.

During August, the National Trust is coordinating a series of Coast and Countryside Projects. On 29 July and 17 August they are organising a seven mile walk along the coast from Langdon Cliffs to Deal, with a return trip by fishing boat along the Straits of Dover past the spectacular White Cliffs. The annual Sea Shanty Festival takes place in September; the three day celebration of Deal's maritime heritage will feature a full programme of free family entertainment. This festival of fishy frolics includes many special events for children and a full programme of folk entertainment.

Finally from 24 - 31 October the Coastal Landscapes Festival takes place at venues throughout the Dover District. This is an environmental extravaganza of events including art and craft exhibitions, walks and talks, workshops

and displays, plus traditional Green Gang activities such as Pumpkin Parades, Coastal Collages and Fossil Forays. Further details will be available later in the year.

It is estimated that the total cost of the nine month programme will be approximately £35,000; to date a total of £32,000 has been secured towards delivery of the 'Coastal Landscapes' programme. This figure includes £15,000 from commercial businesses, £6,500 from grant funding, and £10,500 from the Arts and Special Events budget.

Supporters of the programme include De Bradelei Wharf, Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts (ABSA), South East Arts, Pfizer and many other local businesses. New sponsors for 1998 include Dover Town Council (for the Festival of Dover) and a major commitment from J Sainsbury's (for sponsorship of the Deal Sea Shanty Festival).

The work of raising grant funding and sponsorship from local, regional and national businesses will continue throughout the year in order to meet specified funding targets and further develop the Coastal Landscapes programme. However, funding of the arts is becoming increasingly difficult to secure, and new and innovative projects are required which satisfy the aims of both the fund raisers and the Council.

We hope that the 1998 Coastal Landscapes package will provide an innovative programme of arts and special events, within an environmental theme, offering unique opportunities for our local community to become involved in arts celebrations throughout the District. For further information on these, or any other of the events organised by Dover District Council, please call Lisa Webb on (01304) 872058.