

learning & participation 2012

The Story Museum exists to inspire learning through story. Stories lie at the heart of human culture and have the power to develop the vital language, emotional and imaginative skills we need to understand the world and each other. We believe that experiencing and creating a rich variety of stories is one of the best ways to help people, especially young people, to fulfil their potential.

Since 2005, thanks to the support of individual and charitable donors we have been running story programmes in schools and communities in Oxfordshire and beyond, reaching some 10,000 people a year. We trained teachers in storytelling skills, spreading the impact of our approach still further. In 2012 we began bringing audiences into the building in central Oxford that we are gradually transforming into a unique museum of story.

We have welcomed **12,081** people so far. Here are some highlights.

storytelling schools



January: Pupils from Pegasus School delight HRH The Earl of Wessex and our other guests with the story of 'The Monkeys and the Hats' at our showcase event in the Museum.

In a Storytelling School stories are at the heart of learning: teachers and children learn to tell stories from memory and stories are used across the curriculum. Greatly enjoyed by teachers and students, this approach builds language, creativity, empathy and confidence for children of all abilities. It is particularly successful in schools where children are at risk of 'word poverty' and social exclusion. Developed by Dr Chris Smith, Adam Guillain and educational advisor and poet Pie Corbett with help from our many partner schools the Story Museum's Storytelling Schools programme is attracting growing interest from across the UK.

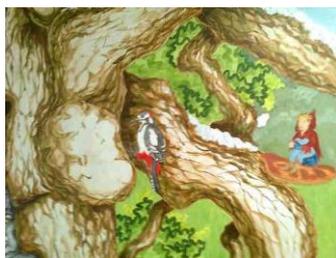
"Stories are magical. Every teacher knows that. You read or tell a story. Silence descends. Children stare at you, through you and into a world beyond and yet inside them." Pie Corbett

the story museum

- 30 Oxfordshire schools are Storytelling Schools, with many more adopting elements of this approach.
- Larkrise Primary School's SAT results went from **42% to 82%** achieving level 4 in their first year of becoming a Storytelling School, and Rose Hill Primary became the **'most improved school in the country'** (Ofsted).
- This year, after a successful pilot supported by SHINE, we launched a London programme with nine primary schools in Tower Hamlets and two in Lambeth, with help from SHINE, the Peter Minet Trust and Schroder Foundation.
- We also piloted partnerships with two Oxfordshire secondary schools with support from the Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts, working with Year 7 and 8 students in Oxford Academy and Cheney School.

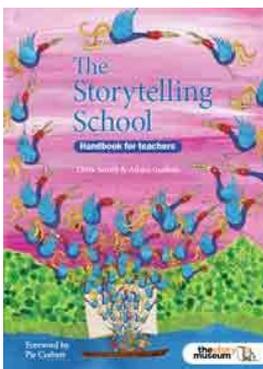
"Storytelling is the 'something' I and others have all been looking for, for a long time. It's good because it's cross-cultural and it's accessible; it's about being human and it's deep."
Jill Hudson, Head Teacher, Pegasus Primary School, Blackbird Leys, Oxford

The programme has benefitted hugely from the active involvement of teachers and head teachers in our partner schools. Nanette Stormont, literacy coordinator at Pegasus Primary School, became our first 'embedded' teacher trainer, spending one day a week supporting and coaching teachers in nearby schools, initially as part of The Story Museum team and then as an independent consultant. In October 2012 Jill Hudson, head teacher of Pegasus Primary, one of our flagship schools, joined The Story Museum board.



July: Commissioned by Sue Mortimer, head teacher of Rose Hill Primary, the 'Story Oak' mural by artist Mary-Jo Drew inspires storytelling and creative writing.

September: 47 teachers, literacy coordinators and head teachers joined our Bronze, Silver and Gold Storytelling School training schemes held at The Story Museum. We reached more areas of the country than ever before, with participants from Northants, Cheshire and Leicestershire as well as Oxford. Next year these will also be run elsewhere in the UK.



December: Advance copies of The Story Museum's first book, *A Handbook for Teachers*, were issued. The book was written by Chris Smith and Adam Guillain, with a foreword by Pie Corbett, and will be published in February 2013.

"Our work together has had an outstanding effect on our teachers and children, creating wonder, excitement and engagement in our school through the magic of story." Jo Milham, Head Teacher St John Fisher Primary, Blackbird Leys

visits from schools

During 2012 we began to welcome school groups of different sizes and stages into our semi-dilapidated building and to involve staff and students in our plans for its refurbishment.



April: We were visited by year 7 & 8 groups from Cheney School and Oxford Academy. The pupils had tours of the building, watched a story performance, and then enjoyed a story workshop with our Head of Outreach, Chris Smith – who had also given training sessions to their teachers.

“The students seemed to gain a greater insight into imagination and what a powerful tool it can be. Thank you for the fun activities and for helping to make the exhibitions come alive for the students.” Teacher

May: Pupils enjoyed poetry-making with John Foster and Paul Cookson at sessions organised by Bookfeast.

“I’ve not seen so many smiles in one place for ages!” Visitor



May: ‘Windows to Other Worlds’, miniature theatres created by Dragon School Year 7 children based on their favourite stories, for the museum’s first public exhibition, *Other Worlds*.

“It’s so creative and really fun to look at. It’s different to anything else, I loved it so much” Visitor

July: Michael Rosen, the museum’s Curator of Stories, and Bhavit Mehta of Translation Nation ran schools workshops on stories in translation.

“Wonderful and really, really fun. I love it!” Indra, 8.



families

In 2012 we welcomed approximately **11,684** members of the public to our building for **3** exhibitions, **17** workshops and events, **2** tours and **3** open days.



May: *Other Worlds* turned our dilapidated building into a giant compendium of strange, amusing and haunting stories. **43** writers and artists, **150** university students and **30** school children created **25** installations in spaces large and small. **2,538** people visited the exhibition, producing **1,465** pieces of writing.

"Such a fantastic use of space! We loved whiling away a few hours dipping in and out of different creative's imaginations. Amazing."
Visitor

June: *Rochester's Extraordinary Storyloom* was a 3-dimensional storybook telling the tale of an artefact created by our artist-in-residence Ted Dewan: The Storyloom. It was chosen to be part of the Cultural Olympics' London 2012 Festival.



"Inspiring treat for the imagination - we especially loved the Storyloom- a great idea, should be turned into a film!" Visitor



July: *Tea with Alice* was an exhibition celebrating the last decade of *Alice In Wonderland* illustration, with original and unpublished examples of artists' work from around the world.

2,377 people attended the joint *Tea With Alice* and *Storyloom* exhibitions.

"This was a perfect example of what an exhibition of Alice-inspired book illustrations should be like: it is exactly how I would want everyone to be introduced to the subject." Mark Richards, chair of the Lewis Carroll Society.

December: Nick Cope's first Saturday-morning music session for younger children was a sell-out, proving so popular that we have invited him back on the second Saturday of every month in 2013.

114 people, **50** of them children, attended Nick's first workshop on 8 December.



adults



August-December: 15 adults not in training or employment joined our first 3-month course to develop story guide and volunteer skills. Supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, this included numerous trips and tours as well as modules on research and storytelling skills. The students divided into three groups to create walking tours, digital resources and an illustrated map of the city's story heritage.



August: Our *Tea with Alice* exhibition, featuring editions of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* from around the world, proved a perfect springboard for language students, many of whom take summer courses in the city.

Ongoing: We are delighted to be giving a temporary home to five of the Bodleian Library's antique printing presses. These are used by the University for teaching graduate literature students, and Dr Paul Nash's hand printing workshops and courses are proving extremely popular with families and adults.



September: We launched our 'Thousand and One' series of conversations between Michael Rosen, story experts and audiences to help us identify 1001 stories – from all times and places - to go into the future Story Museum. Topics ranged from Greek myths to bawdy ballads, graphic novels to autobiographical poetry. Everyone is invited to add suggestions to our storywall. Next year we plan to run similar events for young people, training young interviewers to co-host with Michael Rosen.

Ongoing: The Story Museum supports local artists by commissioning works (such as *The Storyloom*) and inviting them into the building – for art workshops (such as those run by Francesca Shakespeare with her gold, silver & bronze statues), music performances, and storytelling.



city-wide events



7 July: Alice's Day 2012 celebrated the 150th anniversary of Carroll's iconic story with The Story Museum coordinating a programme of events in **27** venues that reached **10,000** people. We welcomed **570** visitors to the museum that day to learn why Alice is known across the world.

'Absolutely superb – adults and kids loved it. Very informative. Brilliant!'

8 July: We marked the special year – and the 2012 Cultural Olympiad - with a Caucus Race, an Alice-inspired eccentric outdoor spectacle at which there were 'no rules and everyone wins a prize'. During the summer term **100** artists, dancers and musicians worked with schoolchildren and young adults to create the songs, dances, costumes and scenery. A further **2,500** people joined the performers in Merton Fields for the big event.



"Congratulations on a really great event at the weekend. The Caucus Race was fantastic."
Bridget, participant.



September: As part of Oxford's Open Doors weekend, The Story Museum gave public tours of our home on Pembroke St to **120** people over one weekend. Rochester House has previously been college lodging, a pub, a post office and a telephone exchange, and the public showed a keen interest in the history of our building. The tour groups contained several people who had worked in the building during its previous incarnations, who were delighted to have the chance to see it as it is now.

December: We hosted singing and storytelling in and around the building on Christmas Light Night, with something in every corner of the Museum – including the Storyloom and the Bodleian presses. Local charity One-Eighty also held an exhibition of work they had done with five Oxford primary schools.

600 people, of all ages, visited the building and took part in the festivities.



volunteers

We benefitted hugely from learning alongside our student and adult volunteers.



150 first year architecture students from Oxford Brookes University designed installations and towers for the museum.

8 graduate and undergraduate students from Oxford University helped to research retail, cafe and crowd funding opportunities.

10 film students from SAE College in Oxford for a digital film project.

3 secondary school pupils came for their Duke of Edinburgh community service.

5 secondary school pupils did work experience.

25 interns had extended placements during or after university.

105 adult volunteers assisted all aspects of our programme and development.

cultural and commercial partners

Many of our projects involve partnerships.

- In addition to our city-wide events we were delighted to collaborate with The Bodleian Library; Ashmolean Museum; Bookfeast; The British Museum; Discover, East London and many others
- We ran tours for several specialist groups – US librarians, children’s book groups, writers’ groups, business groups, city guides, students of migration studies, museum studies, social enterprise and architectural design students.
- We hosted events for estate agents and organic gardeners, financial advisors and Early Years teachers, which featured stories in many different ways.



November: The Story Museum is proud to be one of 12 ‘Happy Museums’ across the UK, charged with ‘re-imagining museums for a changing world’ by learning and evaluating how museums can contribute to well-being and sustainability. We were delighted to host the project’s November symposium.

on the box



May: We celebrated Edward Lear's 200th birthday by decorating the disused telephone box on Pembroke Street with a nonsense theme. It features an intriguing Owl and the Pussycat diorama and recordings of the famous rhyme read by Michael Rosen, which passers-by can listen to.

During 2012:

77,882 people visited our website. Many were children using our audio stories.

And we began to build up our contacts through social media:

426 new Facebook 'likes'

1,942 new Twitter followers.

We have also gained a reputation as an organisation of story experts, being called on to give opinions in the media on a variety of subjects, from ----- to Noddy.



And during 2012 we counted:

More than **150** newspaper articles and features

40 press releases

16 blog mentions

35 radio interviews

And **6** youtube videos.

thank you

We would like to thank our audiences, partners and friends and the many generous funders who have made this learning possible including The Barcapel Foundation, The Connecticut Komonia Charitable Trust, The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, WREN, the Dragon Christmas Charity Sale, The National Lottery through Arts Council England and The Heritage Lottery Fund, The Prince's Foundation for Children & the Arts, SHINE, The Woodward Charitable Trust and The Young Writers Charitable Trust, as well as many generous individuals.

Charity no.: 1107809

www.storymuseum.org.uk