



HENLEY YOUTH FESTIVAL

# NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2024

CHARITY NUMBER 1044280

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## THIS YEAR HENLEY YOUTH FESTIVAL TURNS 30!

**"This year has been a real success, and it was lovely to see so many schools and children take part in the 30th Henley Youth Festival in some way.**

This year's theme "**MY FAVOURITE THINGS**" was represented beautifully through music, dance, art and movement, including the **HYF BIG SING** event where **10 local schools** celebrated together with their favourite songs and we sang "Jewel of the River" written by Alfie Hay (one of the Founders) in ode to the very first HYF in 1994.



The Kenton Theatre hosted **SENIOR PROMS** (a new event for classical musicians) **GIG NIGHT, YOUNG PERFORMER** and **VARIETY**, whilst **MUSIC MAKERS** was hosted at Rupert House School, Henley and included Valley Road Choir and Sonning Common Recorders.

We were also joined again by Young Shakespeare Company, BBC Gastronaut Stefan Gates and Scarlet Oak Theatre, as well as a new performance of an Inspector Calls for older students, bringing

both entertainment and education to so many. Our wonderful school workshops also celebrated our theme with art, photography and creative skills and we had a new Bhangra dance class which delighted students.

We've estimated that nearly **3000** young people took part in HYF this year including **over 100** runners taking on the steep hill in the HYF Run (some doing the hill twice!)

Lastly, I would like to thank all those who sponsored and volunteered to help make this year so memorable. A lot of time and hard work goes into making this festival so special for so many local schools and it wouldn't happen without you.

Thank you and here's to another **30 years of HYF!**



**Laura Law,  
Chair, HYF**

## LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THIS YEARS HIGHLIGHTS...

### EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

We had a jam packed timetable of exciting performances from education and drama workshops and over **15 hours** of art, photography, flamenco and Bhangra dancing workshops across **11 schools** in and around the Henley area.

### **BBC'S GASTRONAUT STEFAN GATES: FARTOLOGY**

Lots of screams of laughter, ooohs and aaaahs filled the Kenton Theatre over two performances of the Fartology.

Stefan Gates spent time with **350 pupils** from Years 4 and 9, demonstrating the workings of the human body from head to toe through thoroughly disgusting but utterly scientific multi-media using lots of spectacular science stunts and audience interaction.



## SCARLET OAK THEATRE – ALONG CAME A MAGPIE



Over 700 pupils from 10 local schools in Years Reception, 1, 2 and 3 all enjoyed Scarlet Oak's gardener and magpie in this playful and heartwarming journey as they navigated the intricacies of friendship.



## YOUNG SHAKESPEAR COMPANY – A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

365 pupils from Years 5 and 6 had the opportunity to act alongside four Young Shakespeare Company members in Shakespeare's enchanting comic tale in a fast-moving fully-costumed interactive production.



## AN INSPECTOR CALLS

340 pupils from Years 10 and 11 at Gillotts enjoyed performances from Globe Players to study this historical play's structure, the use of language, context and the different character types represented.

## ART AND FILM COMPETITION

We had so many beautiful entries for this year's **My Favourite Things** theme which were judged on imagination, creativity, innovations and interpretation.

Including a film documentary of  
24 hours of 24 birds!



## BHANGRA DANCE LESSONS

Over 200 children were treated to fun and educational Bhangra Workshops by Wise Moves and were soon trying out some of the moves themselves!





## PERFORMANCE EVENTS

This year we had acts perform at Music Makers, Senior Proms, Gig Night, Young Performers and Variety.

School performers ranged from Year 1-13, all interpreting **My Favourite Things** theme through dance, music, gymnastics, ballet, jazz and song, including another amazing Springbox gymnastics performance, some amazing showcases by Divas & Dudes, Stageworks and Stagecoach performing arts, and dazzling musical performances from Henley Suzuki Violin Group.



Every Year, HYF award the **Elizabeth Griffin Award**.

This has been awarded since 2003 by the Griffin family in memory of their daughter Elizabeth to a performer each year who epitomises HYF.

This year the award went to Connor Botha who produces our amazing HYF film each year in very short timescales, and also has won our Film Competition twice. Connor is going to study film professionally and is a great example of how HYF can provide a platform for nurturing talent in Henley-on-Thames.



## HYF RUNNERS

HYF wouldn't be the same without the annual HYF Run.

This year saw over **200** runners from Years Reception to Year 6 take part in the HYF Run, hosted by **Physiostistic**. Prizes were given to every runner and £250 to spend on sports equipment went to Valley Road School who had the most participants on the day.

A huge well done to everyone who took part - it isn't an easy course with a challenging hill to get up and over (twice)!



# A BIG THANK YOU...

A special thank you to all our sponsors, partners and volunteers.  
Without this support, HYF would not be possible.

Thank you to Amy Miller, Kirsten Heneghan, Asya Barskaya and Connor Botha for giving up their time to join the events and take some wonderful photos and videos of the festival this year.

HYF Community - Thank you to the HYF Trustees, Steering Committee, our Special Advisors, Volunteers including production, and back-stage teams, workshop and event organisers and so many more.

## Sponsors



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## Partners



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SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!!!