

Have you or your family got a story to tell?

Outline your story here:

If you are happy for a researcher to contact you for more information, please leave your contact details below or via the website:

Name:

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address:

www.dorchestercommunityplay.org.uk

So what is a Community Play?

Locally performed plays have a long tradition but the community play as we understand it today took off in West Dorset and South Somerset in the late 1970s largely thanks to the enthusiasm and expertise of our President Ann Jellicoe, herself a professional playwright and theatre director.

The essence of the modern community play is that it tells a story taken from the community's past. Typically, the historical setting will be factual while the actual story may be fictitious but nevertheless makes use of authentic material. And if the play has resonances today so much the better.

The whole purpose of a community play is to draw together the local community and to involve as many people as possible in all its varying aspects including, of course, those who come simply to watch and enjoy the finished work.

The community play is open to all. It is not just about acting or singing, although there is plenty of both, but about everything which precedes them – the research which goes into the play writing, the workshops, the costume making, the stage design, the props, the sound and lighting, the stage management and all the numerous front of house activities. There can be few people who don't have something to offer among all these different activities.

Participation in the play is a wonderful way of making friends and finding out more about other people – and about yourself. Many of us have hidden talents and abilities which the play draws out to everyone's surprise including our own.

The first Dorchester community play of modern times was *Entertaining Strangers* written by David Edgar and performed in 1985. Since then there have been plays in 1989 (*Under the God*), 1996 (*Running Still*), 2002 (*Fire from Heaven*) and 2007 (*A Time to Keep*).

Join the

'DORCHESTER DIG'

Unearthing stories from Dorchester's Past
1890 – 1914



Dorchester has now produced
5 Community Plays since 1985 - more
than any other town!

The next play is planned for 2012 but
before then we are researching within the
local community, hoping to involve as many
people as possible, so that we can
uncover great stories from this
period in our town's history.

DCPA Dorchester
Community
Plays
Association

Registered Charity Number 900038

Community Play Research

Prior to commissioning a playwright to write the 6th Dorchester Community Play we are gathering as much material as possible about Dorchester between 1890 and 1914 for our writer to explore...

Issues that affected people

Exciting events

Characters involved

Music of the day

Fashions

Local businesses

**Who was who in the community
at the time?**



Are you interested in local history?

Would you like to be part of the research group searching the Archives at the Dorset History Centre or the County Museum, browsing through newspapers of the day and other records?

Or would you prefer to get involved in going out into the community to talk to people and record their stories and recollections?

Fill in the form opposite or visit our website:
www.dorchestercommunityplay.org.uk

We need Stories...

What stories can be unearthed, hidden away in the memories of local families, handed down over the generations?



Maybe you have photographs of your ancestors from this period, recollections from family members, old diaries, records of businesses - Goulds, Channons cars etc...

We hope to gather tales and recollections of real people from Dorchester and to involve local school children in projects to uncover and collect these stories, engaging them in their community and learning about the history of their town.

Please get in touch if you have anything that may be of interest - we will be delighted to hear from you!



Excavations in Maumbury Rings 1906
Cover & photo above: courtesy Dorset County Museum

I am interested in being involved with the Community Play Research

Name:

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Availability:

Any special areas of interest:

Please post to:

David Lang, 6 Cornwall Road, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1RT