

A COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECT FOR LEWTRENCHARD

Paul Wilson & Keith Urro

It is proposed that Devon's leading Community Folk Arts Organisation WREN TRUST, works with Lewtrenchard Primary School and others still to be identified on a Village-based Community Arts Project, focusing on the Folk Song collecting of the Rev. Sabine Baring Gould.

Baring Gould lived at Lewtrenchard while he undertook his collecting and this project would aim not only to re-emphasise the value of his work, but to creatively re-interpret the themes thrown up by the collection such as social history, modal music, the topography of the area, folk songs and local stories.

Any of these might be made into performance pieces by the children at the school or others, studied by local historians, photographed or otherwise recorded for future work. The project would use the photography and fine art skills and considerable I.T. resources of the school.

Timing

A long 'lead in' to such a big project is necessary to raise profile, funding and performance standards. The project is seen as coming to fruition sometime in the Summer/Autumn of 1997. An early start is also desirable - a meeting to start spreading the word to others who might be enthusiastic (e.g. School Governors) should take place very soon (Spring '96), and it would be good to run a short project as a precursor to the main celebration. This might be a reinvigorating of the Parish Walk project for example in Autumn 1996.

People

Anyone living in or near the Parish, or who would have an interest in Baring Gould, Village Celebrations, School activities or any of the artistic disciplines would be welcome to join in: for example the W.I., Business Group, Parish Council, Parish Project Group. The project will be co-ordinated by Wren Trust in touch with all the participants.

Where the project will happen

The project is seen as having very much a Lewtrenchard/ Lewdown focus and we will need to find an appropriate venue for the final event in the area. Preparation work might happen either at the school, the Parish Hall or other public places. Research work will probably reach into private houses, libraries or other collections of material.

The final event (Summer/Autumn '97) will be dependent on what skills come forward and what kind of thing local people want to do. but it should have a strong performance element, reflecting the nature of the material collected by Baring Gould which will act as a guide and anchor for the whole thing.

Paul Wilson, Wren Trust / Keith Urro, M Lewtrenchard

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