



Books are in at the inn

It all took place in a little pub called Perdiswell in Worcester; a local Authors' Fayre that drew in more than the regulars. The event provided a unique opportunity for children and adults to meet authors and spend time talking about books. Linda Bromyard, organiser of the event and librarian at Bishop Perowne Church of England College, explains.

I have previously organised author fayres in our college but this time I wanted to do something different. A pub seemed like the perfect setting, inviting, popular and definitely different and really helped reel in the crowds.

Sixteen local authors attended with the opportunity to showcase their books and several other authors came along to support the event. Each author was allocated a table and many brought extra props with them, such as boards and posters. Author Chris Smith brought his walking boots for his display and Wolfren Riverstick brought his life size, hand-made puppets, "Wonky the Wonder Wolf" and "Spider Cat", which entertained the adults and children alike.



Linda with the authors

The Fayre drew in much interest from the members of the community, who were able to chat to authors and purchase signed books. Usborne Books were also on sale and attracted a lot of attention from the children. One little girl called over to her friend, "There are lots of awesome books here!". One little boy said, "I love these books. I want them all". His Grandma bought him three. Mark Edwards, professional photographer, volunteered to photograph the event. The photos show lots of happy faces of all ages enjoying books.



The children get stuck in

Local primary school children were invited to name characters created by professional artists and illustrators, Adrian Mills and David Webb. The winner of Adrian's artwork was Chloe, six, from Northwick Manor Primary School, who named the character Archie, "because he is the shape of an arch and has arch in his name". Stacie, nine, from St Barnabas Primary School, named her character, created by David, Crafty Chris, "as he has a very crafty grin". Both winners were presented with the original signed and framed art work.



Character naming winner receiving a prize

The excitement did not stop there. A "Blurb Busting Crossword Quiz" took place during the evening. All the answers could be located on the "blurb" of the authors' books. Leo, eight, won this quiz and was presented with original artwork, painted by children's author and illustrator Petr Horacek. One boy, who enjoyed doing the quiz said, "I actually got to speak to real live authors".



Authors and readers meet

Many of the authors would like to do a similar event in the future. Author Robert Ronsson said, "Well done on a very successful event. It had a real buzz about it". One member of the public said that she was amazed at the numbers of children that were there, "Books are still alive for them and meeting authors is a wonderful experience". Father and daughter, Terry and Claire Wardle, have written local history books together. Claire commented "it was an excellent opportunity for us to talk to readers and for readers to talk to us about the things that interest them." The Perdiswell Pub manager was delighted with the event, and had not hosted anything like this before: "It is interesting to do something different. The event was a complete success".

After months of planning I am delighted that the event was such a success of this event especially as it took months of planning. I have had nothing but positive feedback from the authors, the charity and the public so I will definitely be organising another event like this in the future.



This looks interesting!