Carnival Celebrates 20th Birthday

Monday 5 July, 2021

Cowley Road Carnival festivities went ahead all over Oxford on 4 July as residents decorated the UK's first House Floats, organised community get-togethers and took the Carnival vibe online.

The Carnival spirit shone bright in Oxford as the city celebrated 20 years of the Cowley Road Carnival on Sunday 4 July.

Organisers had already made the call to replace the usual gathering of up to 50,000 people on the streets of East Oxford with House Floats, smaller scale community gatherings and a virtual Carnival online.

Carnival Director, Sean Duvall, commented: "After a challenging build up to July 4th, we are delighted with the impact and positivity that was felt around the city on Carnival Day this year.

"Not only did we run a brilliant Virtual Carnival featuring our wonderful bands, dancers and artists, but we also saw Carnival being celebrated across the city in the form of House Floats, garden parties and local events. The Blackbird Leys Family Day was a particular highlight, showcasing the talents of those in the community to lead and organise wonderful positive events for all.

"We will be back in 2022 stronger than ever. Planning starts soon ....."

Anneliese Dodds, MP for East Oxford said it was: "Great to see fantastic performance, community family activities, house floats and of course the after party, still taking place albeit socially distanced and virtually."

In addition to the Family Fun Day, events that went ahead included the Confluence Safe Tea Party at the Westbury People's Gallery in Rose Hill, and a Windrush Caribbean celebration at Littlemore where Jackie Hemmings decorated her home with flags of the Caribbean as a House Float.

Pictured clockwise from top left: Blackbird Leys family day, St Frideswide's Primary School, St Mary & St John's Church, Windrush House Float, Littlemore

At St Frideswide's Primary School, the whole school helped decorate for Carnival with the theme Mother Earth.

Teacher, Lauren Arbour, said: "The whole school loved it. The Year 6's learnt how to sew and made clouds using different materials. Our year 5 and 6's made birds out of recycled bottles, waves and a rainbow out of an old paddling pool and wrote prayers about our beautiful world. Our year 1 and 2 children made a world and wrote how they are going to look after the planet and make it a better place- they are real life eco warriors! Our reception class made Mother Nature herself! She is truly beautiful. She is made of natural materials and the children added butterflies that had plenty of texture and materials."

Children at Comper School made butterflies to decorate the Church of St Mary & St John on the Cowley Road and artist Alex Singleton created a Sunflower House Float.

School children also got involved in designing a Car-nival MINI car for the future in a competition run with MINI Plant Oxford. The entries were very impressive, and after much deliberation the judges awarded first prize to Thuwayba Abbasi from North Hinksey Primary School.

Virtual Carnival @ Home

The Carnival's Creative Consultant Director Pax Nindi hosted the virtual Carnival online from 6pm with a packed programme of performers including a special 'procession' from 1AfroFusion African Rhythm and Dance along the Cowley Road.

You can still catch up and see the whole Carnival streaming on the website www.cowleyroadworks.org

Media:

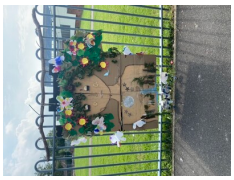
















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and YouTube.

Events concluded with a Carnival After Party hosted by local DJ Count Skylarkin on Mixcloud throughout the evening.

For more information go to the website www.cowleyroadworks.org

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