

ACCESS TO HERITAGE EVALUATION REPORT

A pilot project exploring local heritage for people in recovery from drug and alcohol problems - December 2018, Nottingham, UK



Developed and delivered by

Double Impact



Funded by

The Heritage Lottery Fund



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1. INTRODUCTION

Access to Heritage is a pilot project consisting of a series of visits to heritage venues and places of interest, followed by a series of creative workshops, designed to introduce people in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction to local heritage. This evaluation reports on the pilot, which was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and developed and delivered by Double Impact Services.

Double Impact is a registered charity established in 1998. It supports people to achieve and sustain recovery from alcohol and drug addiction. In the main, these are vulnerable people who experience significant social exclusion due to a wide range of factors including substance misuse/ dependence, homelessness, poor educational and offending backgrounds, mental health problems and long-term unemployment. Its geographical focus is the East Midlands, with services currently in Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Lincoln and Lincolnshire. Since its early days, the charity has developed and refined its services based upon education, employment and peer support, and has successfully delivered many specialist programmes along the way.

This pilot project has used heritage to engage participants often inhibited with numeracy, literacy and well-being problems or fears of traditional learning styles. It strived to give participants opportunities to discover excitement, enrichment and potential in learning, to progress at their own pace, engage in new ways of learning and develop related skills, and include them in the cultural life of the city. It was anticipated that participation would enhance progress towards personal goals related to wellbeing, quality of life, substance abuse, education and employment.

The key findings from this evaluation indicated that there is a demand and potential for developing further provision and it is hoped that the experience of delivering this pilot will lead on to this.

2. THE PROGRAMME

The aim of the sessions was to explore local history/ heritage through the figure of the 'outsider' or 'outlaw' (not just the ubiquitous Robin Hood, but through the introduction of less well-known figures). They touched upon areas such as criminality, poverty, justice and injustice, alcohol and drug use, their social consequences and resulting attempts at social reform, and included some of the portrayals of 'outlaws' in literature and popular entertainment.



The first seven weeks took the form of supported visits to sites of historical interest around the city and two visits to heritage venues, the Framework Knitters' Museum and the National Justice Museum (it was also planned that the group would visit the Malt Cross as part of the session on Entertainment, however due to its sudden closure the session took place in Café Sobar, Double Impact's social enterprise). The visits to venues were supported by venue staff and volunteers, who provided an additional dimension to the visits through guided tours and talks.

Each session included the opportunity to socialise informally as a group over a tea or coffee, either within Café Sobar, or within the heritage venue. This gave opportunities for the content of the visits to be discussed and for the group to get to know each other. These sessions were led by local writer and historian Adam Nightingale, who has a wealth of knowledge of the more obscure aspects of Nottingham's history and he used storytelling, supporting notes and images, as well as resources at the various locations to bring the subject matter to life.



The next four weeks took the form of creative workshops, again hosted at Café Sobar, led by independent audio and visual professional, Pete Spenceley, which enabled participants to connect more deeply with the subject matter and resources/ materials introduced in the visits through creative writing, the spoken word, film, illustration and performance. Within these sessions group members were introduced to, and had the opportunity to develop, digital skills such as video and audio editing.

These responses were shared in a special live performance event at Café Sobar, attended by participants' friends and families as well as funders, where the various performances and pieces that produced by participants were shared.

Afterwards these were transformed into a podcast, which was subsequently broadcast on local community radio station, NG Digital (<http://ng-digital.co.uk/shows/index.php/ng-digital-schedule/>).

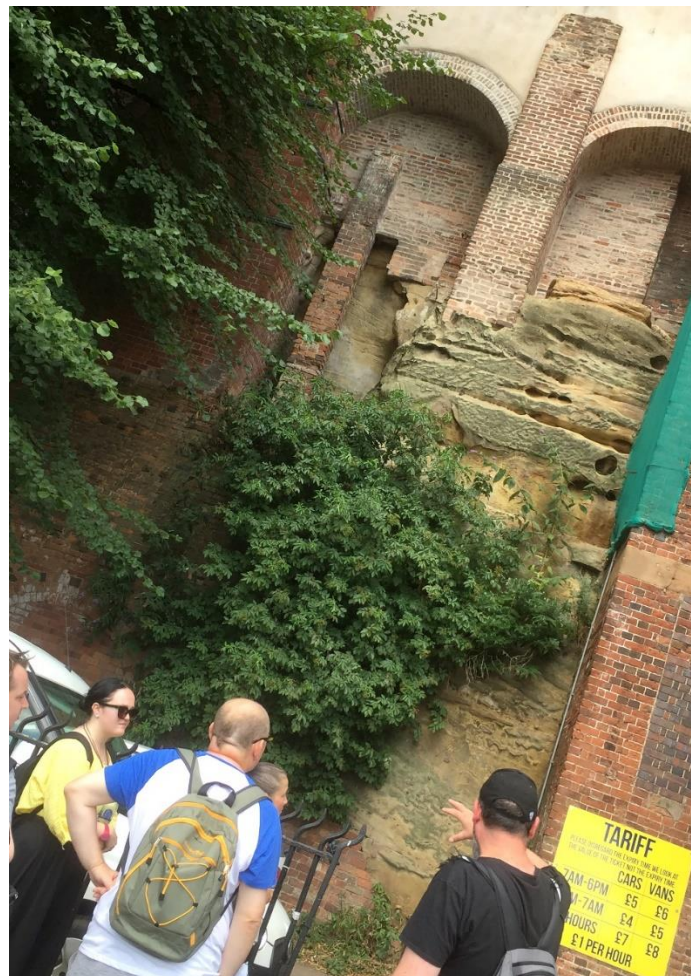


Following the performance, an additional session was held to present the podcast to participants, and to view a short film which was commissioned as part of the pilot (<https://www.doubleimpact.org.uk/access-to-heritage-exhibition/>). Participants were also consulted about the content of a small exhibition about the project to be displayed at Café Sobar.

Additional support was provided by Double Impact in the form of coordination of referrals, staff support for each session to deal with any wellbeing or safety issues which might arise, and project management overall.

Sessions:

- Week 1 Introductory Session – What Is Heritage?
- Week 2 Home Life/ Domesticity - visit to site of Narrow Marsh slums
- Week 3 Working Life- visit to the Framework Knitters Museum, Ruddington
- Week 4 Entertainment – Visit and performance by Milly Fry, Lady Historian
- Week 5 Crime & Punishment – Visit to National Justice Museum
- Week 6 Literature & Culture
- Week 7 Urban/ Landscape – visit to two local churches
- Week 8 Creative Responses Workshop
- Week 9 Creative Responses Workshop
- Week 10 Creative Responses Workshop
- Week 11 Creative Responses Workshop
- Week 12 Sharing/ Performance Event



Follow on activities: An additional session was held after the finale, so that participants could listen to the podcast, view the commissioned film and help to curate the content of the forthcoming exhibition.

Exhibition : This went on display in early December 2018 within Café Sobar and the intention is for it to run until January 2019, giving the project wider exposure to the general public and promoting the digital content which resulted from the activity.



3. KEY FINDINGS

Evaluation was carried out using the following methods:

- Initial questions included within the project referral form, measuring participants' base rate of engagement with heritage venues and existing knowledge of heritage
- Session evaluation forms completed for each session with five questions to gauge enjoyment and benefits gained on each separate occasion
- Recorded video interviews with certain participants during and after most sessions

- An interview with the two session leaders at the end of the project exploring their perspective on how things has gone
- A short commissioned film which interviewed two participants and Adam Nightingale.
- There were eleven referrals into the programme from Double Impact’s Nottingham city based services and projects. These translated into nine participants overall throughout the programme. Over the twelve- week period, this consolidated to a core group of five who attended the creative workshops and contributed to the final performance event.

Baseline engagement with heritage

Of the eleven referrals received, three people reported they had never visited a heritage venue, and a further seven saying they visited heritage venues occasionally.

When asked how much they felt they knew about heritage, two people responded ‘Nothing’ and nine said ‘A little’.

Evaluation forms

After each session, attendees were asked to fill in a brief evaluation form, combining tick box answers and room for free comment, the results of which have been summarised and are set out below.

Q. What did you get out of today's session?	No. of responses
Gained new skills	16
Spent time with like-minded people	50
Improved sense of wellbeing	32
Learnt about heritage	48

Q. What was the best thing about the session?	No. of instances
Meeting new people/ socialising	7
Discovering/ visiting new places	8
Learning about heritage/ history/ Nottingham	22

Trying/ learning something new (incl. creative sessions)	24
Being entertained	4
Particular activity (including at a venue)	11
Other	1

The evaluation forms demonstrate the value placed by participants on three key things: the social aspect of the experience (not necessarily viewed as ‘socialising’ per se by respondents, but more as spending time with like-minded people), the experience of learning something new (which included both specific skills and new information/ knowledge) and, very importantly, the nature of the subject matter of heritage itself, as the following exchange between two participants demonstrates –

“I’m just really enjoying this project. It’s enlivened a passion for history within me” –

- *“Yeah, literally every time I go home I’m like ‘Let me show you this on Google maps where this happened’ and ‘This person died here and this person was hung...’” (laughing).*

Participation in the project seemed to expand people’s horizons in a number of ways:

“I’m going to look up on Wikipedia and see what I can find about Nottingham’s music hall history – I had no idea there were so many of them... It’s making me think outside of the box in terms of what I want to do for work and a career going forward.”

“It’s made me reflect a lot on how Capitalism has impacted us...it gives you insight into a lot of things – it makes you think”.

“The project so far I’m finding quite fascinating – I love the history of Nottingham – the true history – the real stories – one of the biggest fascinations so far was the Narrow Marsh – it used to be a den of iniquity – I’m hoping to perform something about the history of the Riots – Nottingham was known as Riot City – I think that’s where the saying ‘Reading the Riot

Act'- comes from - the person who did that from the council was actually taken out by a big lump of cheese! That part of history I didn't know much about. I've wrote a few poems about it".

Group members enjoyed what the heritage venues (the National Justice Museum and the Framework Knitters' Museum) had to offer –

It was really enjoyable - I'm very much into history and law, social policy - it was really good to see the reforms which have been put in place...in fact I was so interested I've actually put my name down as a volunteer".

Today I've learnt about the Luddites and how they raged against the gentry who owned all the mills - the working classes were treated quite abysmally...they had to live in cramped conditions ... my favourite part was seeing the machines - but the noise! I don't think I could have coped with it - but I suppose they didn't have much choice."

The opportunity to create responses to the visits seemed to work well and to give participants an opportunity to engage more deeply with some of the themes and stories which had resonated with them –

"I was really taken aback by the lady who came in to talk about music hall entertainment - her ditties have been going round my head for the past couple of weeks! One of my ideas is to come up with a funny song, perhaps incorporating all the places which we've been to and bring it all into a song in a music hall style."

"I feel like once people started talking about it (the performance) we all got motivated. I'm really excited for us to be able to come with some stuff prepared and see where we can go with it - especially bringing all the different media together."

Interview with Adam Nightingale and Pete Spenceley, session leaders

(Responses have been paraphrased, unless they are in direct quotation marks)

Q. What was it about Heritage that engaged the group? The way it was delivered, 'in situ' made it very tangible and accessible for people. Also the quality of Adam's skills in storytelling



brought the history to life. The group responded very well to the entertainment session where freelance historian and performer, Milly Fry, came in character and her 'style, manner and exuberance' so captured their imagination that it inspired the theme of the final performance, which was delivered in an old music hall style.

Q. Did the theme of 'The Outsider' chime with people?

The theme really chimed with participants, and showed up in several pieces of work, for example in T's poem about a woman who was sold by her husband at the market – she identified with the plight of women on the fringes of society and in fact managed to

encapsulate the stories of every woman she had encountered within the sessions in to this one tale of woe.

Several members engaged with the stories of class struggles as well, with the riots and hardships of working class life emerging in several pieces of creative writing as well as in people's interviews during the sessions.

One participant, E, "Just wanted to Hoover up anything that was grim and nasty – she collected the stories – she couldn't wait to get back and tell people about them... "

This participant, who had recently moved to Nottingham, recognised that this was a link with her Dad's family tradition of telling stories about Leeds - There were nice instances of people sharing heritage as well – sharing stories of different cities, including one about 'the Gorbals Vampire' – this from D, possibly the shyest, most reticent member of the group.

Q. Highlights/ Success stories?

'T' managing to overcome her nerves and perform with such composure – all of them performing in fact, as only one of them had ever done anything like this before.

The session with Milly Fry being such a success, despite it not being able to take place at the venue (The Malt Cross). It still made a huge impression on the participants and played a big part in their thinking around how they wanted to approach the sharing/ performance event.

One participant did a day's volunteering at the National Justice Museum – she decided it wasn't for her, but regardless, to have made that leap was amazing.

All of the group members really want to be involved as volunteers in any future programme. One participant was commuting from Leeds to Nottingham to attend the sessions during one part of the programme, which demonstrates a huge commitment.

Everyone did lots of work on their performance pieces in their own time. I think their expectations were exceeded by the project.

The supportive group dynamic which formed early on.



4. WHAT NEXT?

Recommendations

Given the participants, enthusiasm, commitment to and value of this programme it would be helpful to find ways to:

- Continue supporting vulnerable groups and individuals to access the heritage venues, sites and events Nottingham has to offer.
- Have a conversation with the Heritage Lottery Fund about their recommendations for developing an application for a larger funded programme and what form this might take

- Speak to Nottingham city council (and other councils?) about how such a programme could align with local Heritage strategies.
- Work closely with venues to extend their offer, to develop a more cohesive programme incorporating more activity and discussion utilising the expertise of the venue staff
- Extend either the duration of individuals' participation in the visits/ sessions or extend the number of participants to cover one or more other service bases where Double Impact works (i.e. Mansfield and Lincoln/ shire)
- Develop volunteering options within the programme that could feed into existing venues' volunteering schemes.
- Research appropriate / optional accreditation for participants through partnership with a local college.
- Work with venues to identify practical ways to support their staff's professional development in hosting and welcoming more vulnerable adults.
- Employ a coordinator to manage the programme's coordination, partnerships and development.



5. APPENDIX

Outputs of the programme

Short film: The short film about the project created by Crocodile House can be viewed at:

<https://vimeo.com/295759744>

Podcast: The podcast can be listened to at <https://www.mixcloud.com/NGDigital/ng-meets-specialthe-heritage-lottery-players-at-cafe-sobar/>

Exhibition: The exhibition is currently on display at Café Sobar on Friar Lane, Nottingham, NG1, until early January 2019.

Poems: Performance poetry performed on the night and displayed in written form in the exhibition:

Riot Chaos: 1766-1831

by Adrian

There is no rhyme,
There is no reason,
In a season of treason,
Reading the Riot Act in front of the crowd,
The dogs of war are barking enraged,
The mob engaged in disharmony,
Hand to mouth, hand to mouth,
Feast and famine, feast and famine,
Who has the feast, who has the famine,
Decent pay for a decent day's work,

Send on the dragoons and watch
From the castle and remember
This day, for justice,
For freedom
And much better pay!

Riot City: 1766-1831

by Adrian

They heard the crowd,
The castle was burnt,
The Clifton Lambs a gang proud of their work
With their names on bricks, weapons made
From sticks, the Narrow Marsh a den of
Iniquity where the poor sold their
Excrement for the gardens of the
Rich, the Marsh a place for many,
The water 31% filth and the liquor
Hundred % hitting the roof,
The din was raucous and foul,
The governor of the jail complained
My prisoners can't sleep, too much
Profanity coming from below.
A female prisoner escapes tying
Sheets together from High Pavement and
To freedom across The Marsh,
Only a copper's rattle informs
And protects whilst Read 'em the Riot
Act the Lord Mayor said, before
A barrel of cheese, hits him in
The head!

This City Speaks To Me

by Ella

We spoke about a focus on the 'outsider'

I see my reflection in the shower door

Shivering on the bathroom floor

Think

What does it mean to her

I put my phone on silent

Sick of high-pitched beeps

Now, my phone is buzzing

She calls me on repeat

6 months ago, I had a mouthful of mud

Earth between my teeth

Ears stuffed with gravel wondering

What the f**k am I meant to do

Jesus Christ I'm only 22

And my life is slipping through my fingers

Dry sand

Nothing good lingers

My grip is poor

Quivering hands

No sleep

Count mistakes instead of sheep

Can hear her calling me

Every day

Constantly

She calls on repeat

A buzz can be a background noise
Something you get used to
Something that can be comforting
You can switch off to it if you have to
But eventually
It will leave your brain buzzing
And your eyes vibrate too
And your nose gets itchy
'Til there's only one thing left to do
Slowly
In time
I unearthed myself
Dug my head out of the mud
And now – this time
It's mine
And this city
Is full of life
And life can be hard
And can make us want to tare ourselves apart
And life can be bloody bizarre
People have riots over cheese
The wasteland of a building site was at one time full of trees
Little terrors running riot
Picking rich men's pockets
Poverty so rough and cruel
People slept in pools of vomit
I answered her call
And each Monday I trolled

70 miles to her
And 70 miles back
Taking every opportunity
Trying to pack my brain
Load it with history
Learn about the mysteries of these streets
And some of the feet
That I am following
Find some paths that I could follow
And ones that I should not
Learn of battles
And of blood baths
See where brave men got shot
This opportunity
This gift we received from you
To meet
To learn
To try kale kicks
Has had a massive impact and
I just want to say thank you

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During that opportunity  
For me to practice consistency  
I proved, to me  
My commitment to recovery



## There's Something About Notts

by Ella

The North / South divide doesn't matter  
And you don't have to hear people slander  
The English language  
It's bath, not barth here  
There's something about Notts

The Locals here are proper friendly  
No regional accent will offend thee  
No "ere lad yer not frum theese paarts"  
There's something about Notts

The city centre's so compact  
There's not a chance you'll lose your path  
You'll always find your own way back  
There's something about Notts

The people here have got some passion  
They cause a stir in a right fashion  
Not scared to tell governments off  
There's something about Notts

Activism is real in this city  
And it is not always dead pretty  
You will always find some food for thought  
There's something about Notts

This city overflows with artists  
Creativity can't be tarnished  
Just look around, there's loads to harvest  
There's something about Notts

If I cannot see  
That there's no better place to be  
To Specsavers off you should be  
There's something about Notts

## I was 'only' a farmer's daughter

By Tracy

Life is hard enough...and sadly I must bear, that chances for a girl like me are really just too rare.

I was a farmer's daughter, no voice of my own;

No voice; no choice and slim rejoice...to get my freedom, now I've flown.

*[To the audience]: Now here's my reasoning....*

I heard about a man, sold his wife at the fair

*[To the audience, as an aside]: For only 1 and 6!*

She were better than ten of 'im, but 'e din't seem to care....

*[To the audience]: "Where's your choice, when you have no voice?"*

So, before I'd ever be a wife, I really must declare.....that I wouldn't mind a partner, but I'd want my equal share!

*[To the audience]: ...Maybe a choice? For a girl with no voice??*

S'pose ...? I could'a bin a working drudge; with a boss that wouldn't budge. Working for near nothing, every hour of my life;

Or doting and scraping, giving rights up as a wife; living in the Narrowmarsh.

*[To the audience as an aside]: Not my cup'a tea, it's damp and cramped without a lamp - songs and shouts, till all hours 'wee.*

P'raps I'd 'a bin a street 'Angel' along the Foreman beat; you meet all kinds of folk, when you use your plates of meat. So... I could have been an 'Angel', or a drudge... or a wife?

But I believe 'that' stuff can only ever lead to strife.

*[To the audience]: What a choice! 'IF' a girl has no voice...*

*[Puts on a hat and pulls out her gun]:*

I'd rather have excitement, a life upon the run; my trusty horse beneath me and my solid Weston gun.

The life I really sought, was staring right at me; the spice of the threat, excitement ...maybe celebrity....?

*[To the audience - in very jolly voice]: What a great choice! For the girl who had no voice....*

*[To the audience]: After all...Crime is within the culture where I live - especially in the politics...the rights I fight to live -*

When transportation is cheaper and more profitable than prison -

Where poverty and degradation lead to societal division.

Such is life in my world.

*[To the audience]: So... dressed very well, in my 'gentlemen's clothes...*

I'd ride all day and mix with 'em all...they 'dint perceived the guise, 'cos my bluff they didn't call.

I loved an open life - excitement! Notoriety... outside the boundaries of Polite society.

My only mistake in retrospect,

*[To the audience]: Which was obvious very soon after! ...*

When I swapped my horse in Clacton- on- Sea, she found her way right back to me; and that was that, I was out to sea;

*[To the audience]: Cos I hadn't had the heart to blind her.*

Hung in front of shire hall; the public came and had a ball.

A last cup of ale...then 'onto the wagon.'

*[To the audience as an aside]: The price I paid for bed and board, it should have been a flagon!*

The very last thought I had, as the rope began to fall, was... 'If I had my life again I'd probably do it all...'

*[Smiles and hugs shoulders against the cold....]*

The gibbet on the lonely common, swinging in the wind; a body dissected, left to rot; 'Had I so cruelly sinned'?

*[To the audience]: What a Hobson's choice for the girl with no voice.*

## **The Animal Court**

**By Douglas**

Next, I remember being in silent darkness; no light, no sound, just a feeling of heavy, almost crushing pressure from an unseen hand on the back of my head. Softly at first, a sound began. The sound of breathing, like a bull steadily building in volume becoming more harsh as it grew louder building up to a gruff, guttural gasp. The breathing belonged to whatever was gripping the back of my neck.

I began to feel a sensation of motion as though I was being carried by the unseen thing. Out of the darkness, a beam of light appeared showing steps leading up to a chamber above. I was carried up the stone steps and into the blinding light. As my eyes adjusted, I was released from the vice-like grip and I looked around to see that I was in an empty courtroom standing in the dock. I turned to look at what had brought me here. Before me, towering over me was a monstrous beast that snarled and snorted in between its heavy breathing, sharp yellow teeth bared in a hyena like face.

I turned away in fright to see the once empty courtroom now occupied by many people who were not quite people but who were, like my jailer, animal men and animal women with animal heads that barked and brayed and bleated at me and each other. Surrounded, alone and afraid, my escape blocked by the Jailer Beast, I saw that one animal man, a serpent like creature dressed as a barrister was fixated upon me with a predatory gaze.

Suddenly, from high above, came a sharp piercing screech that cut the menagerie of noise into silence. Sitting upon a throne at the top of the courtroom was a creature with aquiline features; a sharp eagle's beak and cold dead alien eyes that looked down upon me with judgement and disdain.

In the silence I realised that I was on trial. The animal men and women were my jury, the predator serpent my prosecutor, the bird man was my judge.

The animal court had begun.

## **The Outsider**

**by James**

Good evening ladies & gentlemen I trust you are enjoying our show...?

At this point in the proceedings I beg your indulgence as, for the next few minutes, I show you...

The Future...!

*(Dramatic chords, eerie atmosphere)*

*(Time/space vortex type backdrop)*

Let me take you forward to show you a glimpse of two future decades...

*(Clock/calendar going from Victorian date stopping at 1997)*

Our first stop is the late 20th century which was a time of concern as the turn of the new century was approaching & fear Mr Babbage's glorious invention which had revolutionised the working world & had begun to show it's uses to individuals in their personal time would be wiped out by a new lifeform of which Mr Darwin would be intrigued as well as concerned by...

*(Millennium bug pic fades in then out to happy scenes/music)*

But the fears were unfounded & around this time the city welcomed me as a regular visitor...

*(Railway station - bookshop - Vic Centre/Emmett clock - Broadmarsh - buses - Beeston - Market Square - Arnold - Sneinton library & Co-op - gang crime reduction -*

*Other happy/positive images accompanied by music "In my life")*



Life was good with my partner & as this seemed like a nice place I decided to uproot from my home town & move permanently to start a new life here...

*(Aerial view of city - crest/road sign)*

As my residency began things continued to go well but it wasn't long before...

*(City crest/sign morphs into Royston Vasey sign - gloomy atmosphere/music -*

*Quotes echoing including "Happy families became dungeons & dragons" - "local jobs for local people" - "you're not local", etc.)*

And we find ourselves in the year 2018...

A time of uncertainty, anger, despair, hatred & intolerance where the issues that should be focused on & being acted against are ignored for fear of being "Politically Correct" & at all times we must ensure "The Snowflakes are happy!"...

*("Boulevard of broken dreams" fades in with updated version of previous pics + litter on streets - chuggers - empty buildings - homeless people - station fire - demolition sites - traffic jams - gun/knife crime - demonstrations in Market Square/at Brian Clough statue - 'mobile Zombies' meme - other negative images)*

Thank you for your time & enjoy the rest of our show...

*(Swirling image with music becoming Victorian & upbeat/happy leading back to the scheduled performances).*