

Workshop Review: RAYMOND

Question 1. What was the most useful aspect of the workshops?

RAYMOND:

It got me active. Once I actually committed to doing it I had things to do. I think otherwise I would not have done anything given I have other things happening. The useful thing is what I produced the couple of stories and going through the process of creating them regardless of the quality. I doubt whether the quality of them will set the world on fire but actually going through the process and achieving something you know and actual output. And also I think it gave me a reason to reflect to my being in Milton Keynes from a different direction than what I'm used to.

Question 2. Do you see any far-reaching effects from being involved in this workshop?

RAYMOND:

I don't know really, it may be that I decide to do more storytelling and continue with this is an activity rather than letting it drop which I might have done otherwise. I think I found it difficult to come up with new things to do actually and be committed and motivated. As it is mostly I rely upon improvisation and not a huge amount of research and combining that with things are already in my possession I could draw upon, such as photographs and information so I was able to use that for the digital storytelling.

Question 3. What was most difficult element of the workshop?

RAYMOND:

Partly thinking of an idea and selecting an appropriate idea that I could work with, also a lack of time because of the other commitments I didn't really spend a lot of time on the project as much as I would

have liked to have done or as much that I could have used to do justice. I've kind of run through it but not a huge amount, I haven't invested a great deal of commitment to.

Question 4. What you think could be improved about the workshops?

RAYMOND:

I think partly more participants. I know I was a bit slow on the uptake. I kind of missed out on the digital day, I probably could have attended that I don't because doing anything special is just so starting on a training course hours focus on that and I wasn't really thinking about other things and find all of that quite tiring because of the novelty. Up until recently I have had a lot of spare time I haven't been working so I could afford to waste time and not really structure it now that I'm having 30 or 40 hours taken out of my week is rather different set of demands on my organisational skills. Any to organise myself more efficiently I haven't got that stage yet. I'm not sure how long I'd want to be doing it [the new job] I don't discuss long future in it anyway. I feel committed until the New Year at least and then seeing how it goes in the New Year. But it sort of messes up the storytelling. I struggled last week actually that was my first week of working, a bit of a shock. I think this week can be hard because it's all evenings.

Question 5. Has the workshops increased your interest in: a) storytelling, b) Milton Keynes, c) intangible cultural heritage?

RAYMOND:

I think have been considering this quite a lot anyway, it's coming at the same thing from a different direction in part.

Question 6. What you think other people will get out of hearing stories about Milton Keynes?

RAYMOND:

That I don't know really, actually, because a digital storytelling thing was quite personal possibly a bit whiny because it was a personal experience so I don't know if that's going to be attractive. The film's story the conventional story might be entertaining but I don't know because it was improvised I don't make sense, so it was kind of very brief.

Question 7a. Comments on Digital Story

RAYMOND:

I think that for something that was fairly off-the-cuff, I didn't structure it, I didn't spend a lot of time structuring it, or writing it, because I did it very quickly within the hour before I recorded it in fact, although I prepared that material beforehand I think it's a reasonable production. Its kind of a bit of confusion between communication and initiative but they were two different aspects which might have been confused in the video there. Everything that happened was more complicated than set out there. As a record of everything that happened it's sort of complete. But it is what it is I can't say any more than that. I think it is positive towards the end because it was details of achievements rather than obstacles.

Question 7b. How did you find the process of doing the digital story?

RAYMOND:

It was interesting because I've been interested in making YouTube videos actually and I might do some point I've done the occasional thing and put on YouTube but not really with me in it a vlog.

Question 7c. Comments on Recorded Oral Story

RAYMOND:

[Participant laughs at self-doing improvised physical movement to begin story.]

The sound is a bit low

[participant laughs at their howling during their story]

It was funny seeing myself like that actually. Laughs. It is all a lot of nonsense basically.

Interviewer: What worked well about your stories?

RAYMOND: I think probably being put on the spot and coming up with something.

Interviewer: Are there any 'even better if's?

RAYMOND:

It would be different if I had done more preparation for both of them, if I had scripted the digital storytelling and actually researched a bit more and planned out the actual story I think it came across that I was making it up as I went along which I pretty much did with a few ideas beforehand. I was thinking what shall I say next, I think that probably came across in the conclusion. It might have been better if I'd researched more and planned it, not necessary scripting it, and having actual facts about it.

Question 8. Has taking part in these workshops altered your perspective about Milton Keynes in any way?

RAYMOND:

I don't know about this, possibly, I heard more people talking about Milton Keynes, so hearing about other people's stories has changed my perspective to some percent. It is different to most places although it's similar to a lot of places to.

Question 9. How did taking part in these workshops impacted your sense of place, if at all, in regards to: a) local connection, b) your impression of local identity, c) and your local knowledge?

RAYMOND:

I live in Shenley Lodge and I've lived in Shenley Lodge for a long time. I'm not sure it's given me a reason to look at it more I was kind of aware of it already, I go out on my bike and I go slow picking locally so get out the country quite a bit so I was aware of places close to me around Shenley in Shenley Lodge like the Toot at Shenley church end and the village there and the roads roundabout and obviously Shenley would and Westbury farm. I wasn't aware of the Saxon background or the display at Westbury farm on their open weekend which mentioned the Saxon graves. So it has obviously got a history that is well over 1000 years old. That continual habitation. A wider field around Milton Keynes there's lots of ancient habitation as well as Roman mediaeval and so on. The complexity of the history is very interesting. You feel disconnected walking around the countryside thinking how it may have looked at different times and who was walking around.

Question 10. What, if any, qualities make Milton Keynes unique?

RAYMOND:

It has similarities to Warrington which is where I'm from, superficially, has lots of roundabouts for one thing. Warrington's roundabout city North, and Milton Keynes's roundabout city south. But Milton Keynes is more prosperous because of its location close to London. Because there were several small existing towns that comprise the basis Milton Keynes with their estates and the developments in between, and because those towns have different and varied histories some from the mediaeval or Roman times and others from the Industrial Revolution, there's the variety of characters that merged into Milton Keynes so it's a composite sort of place. It's certainly not without character but has varied character so doesn't have an overall character except for the merging of these aspects. Yeah think you can pick and choose about what you're interested in it does provide that the varied experience and interest.

Question 11. In your opinion, what element of Milton Keynes is: The best. The most exciting. The hardest. Lacking. The most culturally significant. The richest in heritage?

RAYMOND:

Best - The natural features been improved on by humanity, the canal in the countryside features like that, and the pleasant walks that you can have without having to go away very far, it's safely enclosed and it's within walking or cycling distance so the natural recreation is a amenity. I think it was one thing that was planned for but planning that has worked.

Exciting - I'm not sure really because I was here by default. I'm here because as much as anything I never moved away.

Hardest - I think in a way it is too accessible, it is very accessible from various places, I think because it is so close to London it has been influenced by London and people move out and move into Milton

Keynes and sometimes don't have a sense of belonging to it [Milton Keynes] so it's other people really.

Lacking - I think because of the planning part of it there seems to me a deficiency of organic growth in a natural grassroots growth. Because so much of its planned a lot depends on people who have political power or economic power, less of the shopkeepers, small businesses than other places. So people look down on it because of that. I think is an example of that is the football team, the way that that was created in Milton Keynes the fact it was brought in from another venue and people called a franchise, the franchise club. I think it would have been a better image if they just got a small team and got them to play in the big stadium and they were able to be promoted the fourth division of the southern league and went up to where they are now. As it was Wimbledon people Wimbledon created their own football team called AFC Wimbledon while Milton Keynes took their team, and now the team they created to replace the one that went to Milton Keynes is now in a higher division than the one at Milton Keynes, then MK dons which is a bit humiliating I think. That doesn't reflect well on Milton Keynes reputation.

Culturally Significant - I think for me Stony Stratford as a location and the things that happened there. When I first moved here I was more interested in fringe theatre so I enjoyed going to events at the stables and small theatres at Stantonbury and Woughton. I wasn't so keen on mainstream theatre I was here before the theatre was built in the theatre district and have rarely been there, everything is just too big a mainstream. For me it stony Stratford is the centre producing self-created cultural events rather than stuff that is created by professionals.

Heritage - How do you define heritage because am not sure?

Interviewer: Any element that is passed from one generation to the next.

RAYMOND:

Heritage - I think there are all parts of it for different reasons and in different ways. There's more concentrated around here (north Milton Keynes and around the Watling Street) because of the history in the Roman road and its significant as a main stopping for travelling travellers historically so Stony Stratford. So seeing the ancient fields which are where there are ruined villages there are several places where there are towns and villages which aren't there any more like Wolverton and Broughton and Bradwell village. There are so many places where there is a regular ground and a plaque that says they used to be something there I want to go through them and remember what they are and aim to walk through them. It's difficult to compare bits to each other. I also have personal connections to the Greek community to, so that's an aspect that I don't necessarily talk about as much but it's a personal connection - there's aspects of heritage of that to.

Question 12. Has Milton Keynes played a part in helping you gain any achievements which you might not have been successful in if you lived elsewhere? Has it aided any failures?

RAYMOND:

Yes I think so actually partly because London is very accessible from Milton Keynes I could just get on the train and do things in London like workshops and courses in London so it's not necessarily benefiting from the heritage of Milton Keynes. I was bard and the president of the Milton Keynes Junior Chamber (1994) although sadly that's not possible anymore because it folded.

Question 13. If you were in charge of advertising Milton Keynes what tag line would you give it?

RAYMOND: I think it's been used but the city of trees.

Question 14. If Milton Keynes was a person could you describe them and the type of 50th party they might have?

RAYMOND:

Person - I'm stumped there really.

Party - There are a lot of open spaces to take advantage of especially in the summer, where you can use the open spaces there's Campbell Park and all the other venues. So an open-air party I'm pretty sure. And I'd probably go.

Gift - A rugby league team, but not one that belongs to somebody else.

Question 15. What you think the role of storytelling is within communities, especially new communities?

RAYMOND:

I think the most important thing is to entertain. To stimulate imagination. To present ideas and to challenge conceptions, impressions and conventions.

Question 16. Will you continue to share the stories you created in the workshops and who will you share them with?

RAYMOND:

I don't know really. I think digital storytelling, it depends, really could you put out there and people look at them. I think the other its storytelling clubs, I don't really know I haven't really looked into it. So I've been interested in various different aspects of performance, the storytelling isn't the only thing I've done recently. I'm involved with panto rehearsals at the moment, they're going quite well I've only got a few lines and one song is hard work on the thighs and taking part in a sketch room do lots of bobbing up and down to avoid getting hit in the head.

Question 17. Do think you will look for other local stories?

RAYMOND:

Possibly. The ones I did were either totally relevant to me or made up using natural features rather than necessarily having any truth in them. If I did I'd probably I'd refine them if I did them again especially the tree one the boundary tree story.