

- Press Release -

Potter's play acted out against Forest of Dean backdrop

13th August: For immediate release

At 7pm on Friday 27th August, the Dean Heritage Centre will play host to the New Century Theatre Company. The company will be performing *Blue Remembered Hills*, the story of a group of seven-year-olds on a summer's afternoon in the Forest of Dean. In Dennis Potter's brilliant evocation of war-time childhood games, an adult cast acts the roles of the children to draw out the dark side of childhood imagination and perception.

The Dean Heritage Centre is at the heart of the Forest of Dean and is dedicated to the history and heritage of the area. The play will be performed outside against the backdrop of the 'blue hills' Potter recalled from his own childhood in the Forest of Dean during the 1940s.

Jennifer Rigby, the plays producer said, 'The New Century Theatre Company has a tradition of seeking performances that appeal to wide audiences. We particularly enjoy performing *Blue Remembered Hills* as there is a real challenge to acting as children without making them into caricatures.'

The Dean Heritage Centre is the perfect place to watch the play as Jennifer explained, 'The pastoral setting is obviously perfectly realistic and this has a soothing effect on an audience which then adds impact as the story builds towards its climatic end.'

Jennifer Rigby also plays Audrey who she said, 'Is loads of fun to play. Audrey likes a good fight and is just wicked all of the time. The casting has been really obvious with all of us playing roles that fit our personalities.'

One of the most interesting characters is Willy who Jennifer believes is based on Potter himself. She said, 'Willy is the voice of the children's consciousness and the play opens with him. Willy is the level character and makes the observations of the other children.'

The Dean Heritage Centre is delighted to be hosting the event. Kathryn Ashcroft, the marketing manager said, 'Dennis Potter is an important character from Forest of Dean history, he was born here into a mining family and went on to work on an episode of *Panorama* on the closing of the coal pits. We are currently exploring the possibility of putting on an exhibition to celebrate Potter and his work and it is really exciting to be working with the New Century Theatre Company to have one of his plays performed here.'

The Dean Heritage Centre will open its gates at 6pm for picnics and refreshments will be available from the cafe until 7pm. Visitors are advised to bring their own low backed seating or rug and warm clothing.

Tickets cost £8 for adults and £6 for concessions. Tickets can be purchased from the Dean Heritage Centre or by calling the box office on 01594 822170.

The performance will only be cancelled in event of a hurricane!

- End -

For more information or if you would like a photograph to illustrate the article please contact Kathryn Ashcroft on 01594 822170 or email: Kathryn@deanheritagemuseum.com

Visit: deanheritagemuseum.com

Notes to editors

- The Dean Heritage Centre is based in five acres of scenic woodland and is home to the 'Museum of the Forest'. It tells the story of the Forest of Dean and its' people spanning 10,000 years of history, from the ice age to present day.
- It is open 363 days a year and offers a full diary of events, activities and exhibitions.
- The Museum is a centre of education and offers tailored educational workshops and activities to tie in with the school curriculum. For more information please call Sarah Fuller on 01594 822170.
- The Centre has been awarded the accreditation of Quality Assured Visitor Attraction.
- The Dean Heritage Museum Trust (DHMT) is a company limited by guarantee and is a registered charity.

- In March 2007 the Centre was awarded the accreditation of Quality Assured Visitor Attraction.