



## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE CIRCULATION  
FROM Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011

**ARTS EVENT:**  
**Stirchley from the Top Deck**



Photo credit: Harry Starling, <http://harrystarling.co.uk/>

## PRESS RELEASE START

### Vera and Doris give passengers a bus journey with a difference

On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November, passengers aboard 47 and 45 bus services traveled back in time with bus conductors Vera and Doris on their nostalgic journey through Stirchley.

Over 100 passengers and ten bus journeys were part of a unique performance of 'Stirchley from the Top Deck', taking place between Dogpool Lane and Llifford Lane, along the Pershore Road.

Actresses Charlotte Gregory and Melissa Hurlbutt, of Birmingham theatre collective Needless Allies, shared bus conductress characters Vera and Doris' memories of Stirchley, celebrating its rich history and all the busy village has to offer through this site-specific performance.

Historic points of interest included jazz at the social clubs and upstairs at the Three Horse Shoes, the Den Jones Dance Orchestra playing at the Stirchley Baths Ballroom, the pre-1970s Co-operative store, the Pavilion Cinema (now Stirchley Bowls), the fire at the Church of Ascension in 1965, and the Fordhouse Farm and mill.

Vera and Doris were met with positive reactions from unsuspecting passengers, some of whom contributed their own histories of the area to the performance. "I could have listened to them all day," commented one passenger.

'Stirchley from the Top Deck' was written Roxie Collins of local arts organisation Stirchley Happenings in collaboration with Needless Allies, and has been commissioned by, and was inspired by research collected as part of 'Stirchley Prospects' – a six-month programme funded by Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund that seeks to raise the profile of Stirchley and contribute to the regeneration of the area.

**PRESS RELEASE END**



## NOTES

Vera and Doris are fictional characters. The stories they tell are based on historical events and information researched by Roxie Collins of Stirchley Happenings, and Stirchley Prospects.

Audiences were encouraged to upload their photos and comments about Stirchley from the Top Deck to twitter tagged with #topdeckstirchley.

## CONTACTS

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