

TODAY★

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The Definitive Guide

A Trip to the Archive

Taking It To The Next Level

All the News From Your Region

Do We Do
Enough For
Youth?

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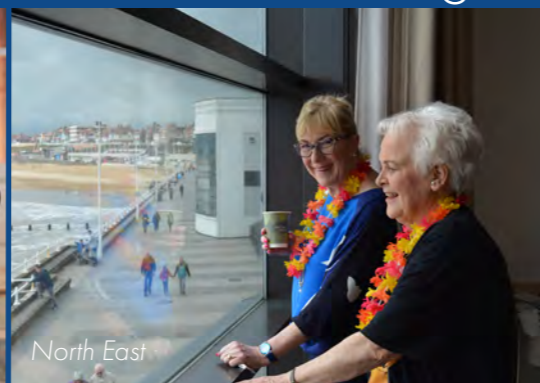
In this edition we celebrate the recipients of awards for 25 to 45 years of service to their societies.

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First Timer Thoughts

What is it like being a first timer at the NODA Summer School. Kevin Stemp tells us his experiences being a newbie

All the News From Your Region



Welcome to the Summer edition of **NODA TODAY**, as you can see the new updates and changes in format are slowly rolling out, we hope the grouping of articles makes for a more informed reading experience and that the magazine will truly be "NODA Today". If you have any comment or suggestions, Rob, our National Editor would like to hear from you, alternatively speak to your Regional Representative or Regional Councillor.

On the theme of knowing what is going on, the Volunteer Conference allowed for some interesting discussions, over the coming months Council and its Regions will be doing what we can to address the issues. An area of concern was our Youth Work, and we have since sought to recruit someone to integrate the fantastic work being done in our regions and better understand what we can do to support this very important aspect of NODA. We are pleased to announce that at the time of publication, we have appointed Mike Mullen as the new Youth Coordinator. I am sure you will all be hearing from him soon to inform you all of his amazing ideas going forward.

Summer is definitely here, marked by the highest temperatures for June recorded and everyone involved with and attending this year's Summer School at Yarnfield starting their packing for what looks at being a tremendous week.

As trustees of a National Charity we have to spend time on governance matters, our constitution has been given a thorough looking-at by councillors, the result of their labours means some tweaks and a revision of Bye Laws to support them. At the National AGM in September you will be asked to approve the changes, full details will be included in the detailed papers for that conference.

We do have a legal helpline which is there to support all societies on a range of matters, we recent had a query about "reasonable adjustment" a simple oversight in how someone discussed accessibility, led to a call to the team. If you have a query, contact Dale, as we may already have had a similar query and can provide a route forward.

Continue to enjoy your involvement in Theatre, in whatever role excites you.

Michael Hastilow - Chairman of Trustees

GETTING IN TOUCH

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Your letters and comments

Does your society have famous alumni?

Has your society pulled off a spectacular show?

Was your last show something out of the ordinary?

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If you have an interesting story to tell, then get in touch with your Regional Editor

NODA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of The National Operatic and Dramatic Association, Charity No 1171216 will take place on Saturday 28th September 2019 at 2.30pm at Conference Centre Southport (The Floral Hall) PR9 0DZ.

The Meeting is called in accordance with Rule 11 of the Associations Constitution to receive the audited annual statement of accounts, the trustees report, receive reports on the number of members, the proposed rates of subscription, elect nominated Trustees, Honorary and Life Members. Appoint the appeals committee and elect the auditors for the ensuing year and receive any other business of which due notice has been given.

To ensure the smooth running of the meeting, any resolutions to be considered at the meeting should be sent to the Chairman of Trustees Michael Hastilow at 15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough, PE2 7UH or by e-mail to michael.hastilow@noda.org.uk to arrive no later than 24th August 2019.

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Where do I go to find out...?

Where do I find contact details for my Regional Representative?

Go to www.noda.org.uk/regions
Click on your region and then the tab saying **Committee**

or
NODA email addresses follow the format of
firstname.lastname@noda.org.uk

To find out more about NODA Pantomimes?

Go to www.noda.org.uk/pantomimes
Here you can read extracts of all of the pantomimes available from NODA

or
You can apply for your performance licence online

We need legal advice - what do we do?

Email info@noda.org.uk clearly detailing your issue or request.

We will then contact our Legal Team who will get in touch with you directly.

Councillors Chat

A quick note from your Regional Councillor



Tessa Davies
East Regional Councillor

NODA East recently held their annual AGM and Gala awards presentation. I want to thank everyone who worked to make the day a success and to all that attended. We are now planning the 2020 event and, with the number of guests growing every year, we are on the lookout for another great venue within the region.

In the meantime, I am looking forward to visiting many of the shows around the region, I am sure they will continue to maintain the high standards that we have come to expect from the societies in NODA East.



Nannette Lovell
East Midlands Regional Councillor

It was great to meet so many of our NODA family at the AGM and Awards Day on 23rd June. Congratulations to all those groups who received nominations for awards. We now have a new Rep for District 4 - Andrew Key and a new Awards Secretary, Caroline Jervis, who will be looking after your requests for Long Service Awards. Alison Roberts has also taken on the role of Membership Secretary. Caroline has taken over from Peter Beddall and Alison from Phil Williams as both of these gentlemen have decided to retire. I hope you all have a brilliant summer!



Andrew Rogers
London Regional Councillor

This has been a year of change for the NODA London committee. A new Councillor, a re-joining Treasurer and now both our Social Media guru and Editor have stood down. We are reviewing the roles and responsibilities of the current committee members and seeing where we need to strengthen the team. Be assured we will continue to work hard to ensure London Societies get the service they require.

All the best for your forthcoming productions – I hope to see you soon.



Gordon Richardson
North Regional Councillor

By the time this magazine is published hopefully all nominees for our youth and performance awards will have accepted their nominations and sent their paperwork and remittance accordingly.

Every year the choosing of my winners becomes harder such is the standard. Same is true of our reps – to be nominated is an honour itself.

See you hopefully at Gosforth Park Hotel September 14th for what proves to be another special evening.



Leslie Smith
North East Regional Councillor

Once again it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to NODA North East where things have been moving pretty quickly since I last spoke to you all.

In April we had our Gala Weekend in Bridlington which once again was a huge success with around 700 members of the NODA North East family in attendance together with our National President Jacquie Stedman and her husband David. I hope they had a much fun as the rest of us.



Christine Hunter Hughes
North West Regional Councillor

My final 'Chat' – very much the end of an era, as you all know, in September I step down from my current post as North West Regional Councillor and hand that particular baton over to Andy McNicholas.

However, I look forward to meeting many, many more members of 'the NODA Family' as I travel around the country as your National President. It has been an honour and a pleasure to serve as the NW Councillor – the region where NODA was originally born!



Stuart McCue-Dick
Scotland Regional Councillor

The NODA Scotland conference will once again return to the iconic Peebles Hydro (25-27 October 2019) for a weekend of workshops, networking and socialising. Workshops will cover singing, movement, drama, licensing of children in theatre and stage management. There will also be a range of theatrical suppliers and rights holders in attendance. The weekend will also include the AGM and the result of the Programme and Poster Competition.

Bookings are now open, and full details are on the NODA Scotland pages at www.noda.org.uk



Kay Rowan
South East Regional Councillor

The Celebration Day of 2018 was held at the Electric Theatre in Guildford. All together during the day nearly 300 people attended. Eight societies entertained us with a range of performances from opera to a modern musical to a serious play.

I have already visited almost 30 societies since the beginning of the year and many more to come. Your productions continue to amaze with their professionalism and vitality.

I look forward to meeting more of you and watching your exciting productions.



Graham Liverton
South West Regional Councillor

I hope you agree that the South West awards evening this year was a most enjoyable evening, and the venue did us proud.

The next awards evening will be on the 9th May 2020. I am aware for some societies this may be inconvenient, but with it currently being in March, it is too near to Christmas to do everything with ease and with weather being difficult (the snow) last year!

The Southwest AGM will be on September 1st 2019, at the Walnut Tree, North Petherton at 11 am. All welcome!



Jordan Spencer
Wales & Ireland Regional Councillor

By the time you receive this edition our Regional Awards and Annual General Meeting in Hereford would have taken place nearly two months ago and the preparation will be underway for 2020.

I will be vacating the role of Councillor in 2020 and therefore if there is anyone that would be interested in possibly taking on this rewarding role please do get in touch with me via email jordan.spencer@noda.org.uk

Please keep inviting me to your shows and where possible Luke and I would be delighted to attend.



Ian G. Cox
West Midlands Regional Councillor

We were delighted to welcome our National President Jacquie Stedman and husband David to mingle and meet with members and delegates at our 2019 Regional Conference and Awards Day in April.

The well attended event included exhibitor partners, a make-up workshop, AGM and spectacular entertainment. There were presentations of 174 awards in 5 categories, along with those for the programme and poster competition. Thank you for the support with 360 members sharing achievements of 2018. I hope to see you all again soon.

Do We Do Enough For Youth?

With the re-launch of the NODA Youth Project approaching, we are pleased to announce the appointment of our new Youth Coordinator, Mike Mullen. He will lead the relaunch and be there to support the amazing work our Youth Advisors do around the country with our amazing members.

The work we do with Youth groups has been a hot topic for some time and the progress already made in such a short time is exciting. I've taken a step back to think about what we as NODA and the industry in general offer youths - the next generation

As a youth director, before we have even finished the current show, I am being quizzed by the cast on what is coming up next; what are the options for the next musical? Quite often I have to reply 'I don't know'.

I find it harder and harder each year to find shows:

- that suit the age range,
- the capability of the company,
- that will actually sell and make our society money,
- that won't break the bank to stage,
- that will fit in a small theatre,
- can be done with a composite set.

So not many limitations! After weighing up all of those factors, we then have to work out if the show choice will actually attract a youth cast.

Both the West End and Broadway over the last few years have seen an explosion of new musicals including *Come From Away*, *Dear Evan Hansen*,

Everybody's Talking About Jamie and more, this has created a new buzz for musical theatre - particularly as these shows incorporate real-life recent events and issues pertinent to youth growing up in today's world. But how does this transfer down to amateur companies; the release of the rights for these types of shows will be years away, if ever?

So, now I have had a little moan about the difficulties finding youth shows, how do we change it? How do we push the industry to give more opportunities to youth - in shows they're so interested in? At the end of the day, as we all know, they are the future of the industry whether amateur or professional.

With the huge amount of cuts to Arts in schools, children are less exposed to theatre and in particular, plays so when it comes to choosing a show, the kids always go for a musical as that is what is most accessible to them and the most well-known ones as well. For years I have tried to stage *Children of Eden* by Stephen Schwartz. It's a show

with amazing music and is fun to stage, but as it hasn't been on the West End in years and is not available on Spotify, Apple Music etc, hence no one knows it and the choice doesn't interest youth. If I suggested *High School Musical* my hand would be bitten off by people wanting to sign up. Don't get me wrong there are still some amazing educational arts programmes in schools but how can we as an industry support, plug the gaps or replace this education if it truly becomes lost in schools?

Youth groups offer an amazing experience to children by introducing them into theatre but again there are limitations. Every group does things differently, but I would expect most groups would say they are met with barriers from the professional world



whether in access to performance rights, venue limitations. Again how can we as an industry support these groups to enable them to offer the best possible education to their members?

Over recent years, we have seen a big change in Rightsholders focus, with a lot more School Editions or Junior versions of major shows being released (much to the adult companies envy!). The group I direct for have performed many of these versions now with great success and this shows that Rightsholders are keen to encourage youth to 'get the bug' early with the big hits. Shows like *Chicago* and *Les Misérables* are suddenly within the scope of a young performer and although in some parts heavily simplified (but certainly not all parts) it does not affect the storyline or the impact these shows have. This is certainly a step in the right direction in terms of show choices but there still seems to be a gap for the older youth sections who are more than capable of doing the full show - a junior version just wouldn't interest or push them.

It isn't just onstage where more needs to be done to encourage youths within the theatre. Sound, lighting, costumes, set building, props, the list goes on. I got involved in theatre as an eager 15 year wanting to perform, but very quickly became interested in all things offstage, in the end concentrating on sound and lighting. I was lucky to be involved at a theatre that was equipt to and encouraged young people to get involved in anything and everything theatre. But not all groups are equipt to do this, where do they go for that support? After doing a small amount of research, I was surprised to see so many holiday and evening classes available to youths in Technical Theatre, some of which were free, heavily



subsidised or taster sessions. The likes of the National Youth Theatre hold a three week Summer School dedicated to pure Technical Theatre.

So how do we support those that want to take their amateur performing to the next level, what route is best - stage school, university, weekend classes/summer schools? When I was 18, I made the decision to not go off to university but to learn within a working theatre, that was the right choice for me but what about others. Whilst we are not careers advisors, children look up to us for guidance. So where do I find the guidance and support to help those children? In the following article, I spoke to Paul Elsam from the University of Hull, who with a background in amateur theatre gives us an insight into the choices available and possibly looking at alternative routes into the industry.

Well, so far I have just posed more questions than giving any answers. But I think that is the point, as a Director where do I go for answers, where do I go for support. But actually, what support do I want, do I want someone to talk to, somewhere I can read it all, a workshop to teach me, a forum to discuss our issues with other youth directors? All I know is that I want to do as much as I can and the best I can for youth theatre, I want to stand on the rooftops beating the drum as the talent involved deserve all of the praise and support we can offer.

For a number of years, NODA has offered a programme of support to members for anything relating to Youth. With the appointment of our new Youth Coordinator, Mike Mullen we will be kick-starting the relaunch of NODA Youth and we want your involvement.

What do you want to get from your membership?

- Do you want us to advocate on your behalf to Rightsholders?
- Hold District/Regional/National workshops?
- A Youth Summer School?
- Create a general forum so members can chat together to overcome issues that others may share?

We have lists and lists of things that we can offer but we want to offer what our membership needs, not what we think it needs.

So now is your chance.

Visit noda.org.uk/youth to help us shape NODA for the future.



Taking It To The Next Level



My Name is Paul Elsam. You might know me as the author of 'Acting Characters'. Here's my story about how a lad from Merseyside came to work with the Stephen Joseph Theatre teaching the actors of tomorrow.

I grew up in Wallasey, over the water from Liverpool. I loved sport, and was on the school team for football and rugby - but I was rather shy in group social situations.

I was always a bit of a clown in private with my brothers, but there was no outlet for that - for example, no drama at all on the school curriculum. Now and then they would hold auditions for a big glitzy musical - *West Side Story* and the like - but that all seemed quite scary.

I did English Lit at 'A' Level, which also meant studying old plays that were hard to decipher. As it happened our English teacher, Mr Coates, was a real theatre lover, and because we were studying Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, he decided we would stage it too. So, we did the full play, 'in the round', in a large classroom, for an invited audience. So aged seventeen, and entirely new to acting, I found myself onstage playing the Pope! I remember still the thrill of audience laughter, and not being able

to join in as I stumbled around being taunted by an invisible Faustus. I was hooked! I joined the newly-formed Wirral Youth Theatre (run by the wise and funny Mary Austin) and promptly fell in love with warm-ups, impro, devising, and pros-arch acting.

The WYT lent me out to a local amateur society in Birkenhead, to play Nick in the cheeky comedy *Two and Two Make Sex*. Things were suddenly grown-up but still playful, and I was mixing with people from across the social spectrum - all of whom made me feel welcome, despite my then yeti-like appearance! By now I'd chosen drama over rugby (not an easy conversation), and had had a mad idea: what if I could get paid for doing what I loved?

I applied to drama schools. RADA seemed too posh for the likes of me, but I managed to successfully fail auditions at Central (in front of a scary Billy-Elliott-style panel) and Bristol Old Vic (who made me sing, unprepared, a wobbly *Three Blind Mice* - I still shudder at the memory). A school in Birmingham (BSSTDA) took pity and offered me a place for the following year. I promptly moved to a bedsit a stone's throw from my youth theatre and carried on with the impro, and the productions - playing

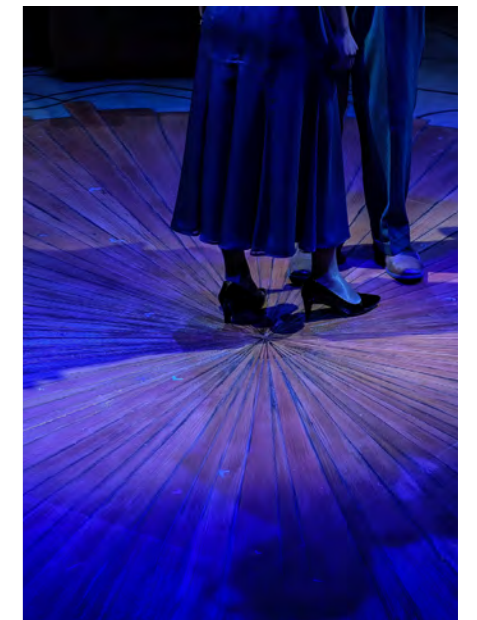
Harry in Peter Terson's wonderful *Zigger Zagger* remains a high point. I was selling petrol in the daytime, booze at night (in a nightclub), and acting and rehearsing in every spare moment I could find.

Months later, I applied to my local education authority for a discretionary grant, and they turned me down flat. If this were a movie script, that would definitely be the protagonist's lowest low point! I'd stumbled late into acting as a shy care leaver, found my mission in life, and then been thwarted horribly at a critical moment.

A bit of panicked research taught me that I could get a mandatory grant at one of just two schools - Rose Bruford College, and Manchester Polytechnic - and within weeks I'd landed a place at the Poly.

Drama school was something else. Everyone in my class was the 'best' actor from their own town or city, and everyone seemed super-confident. I mostly kept my head down, and I studied hard.

Everyone knows how tough it is to earn a living as a professional actor. I think they must've put something in the Didsbury water because I left the Poly feeling like the industry was lucky to have me! Anyway, that, sadly, was the last time I ever acted as an amateur (although 'amateur' seemed to be a banned word at drama school back then, just as 'Ayckbourn' appeared to be a banned playwright).



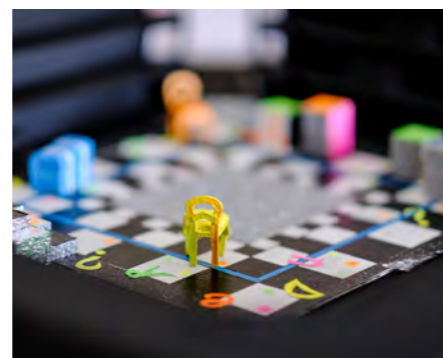
And then? A decade plus of pockets of unemployment, interspersed with some amazing acting adventures that took me all over the UK and abroad, onto TV, and into the West End for an Olivier-nominated new musical (singing 'Three Blind Mice' not required).

Then? My second big love – teaching, which led me into research, which led to my two books for Bloomsbury, 'Acting Characters', plus a study of theatre genius Stephen Joseph.

Fast forward to 2019, and we're about to launch a BA (Hons) Acting course here at CU Scarborough, run in close partnership with the Stephen Joseph Theatre. My new job requires me to plan the curriculum, so now I get to plot learning adventures for a new wave of actors, whatever their current age. It's quite radical. The audition is friendly and personal. And there's no Shakespeare – which I love, but he does tend to dominate drama school training. Instead, we'll teach everything from acting (naturalistic and not), to



vlogging, to producing, to performing for video games. The first module requires no speech at all! I also get to fill our shelves with plays, with cutting-edge advice from our professional partners at the Stephen Joseph Theatre. I'll be picking some personal favourites too, including by a few people who have really shown how to reinvent the theatre experience. Top of my list? Maybe you guessed – a certain Alan Ayckbourn...



So you're thinking of taking it to the next level and acting professionally. How do you get there? Everyone has an opinion on this - so here's my pennyworth.

Professional acting work these days is intermittent so that other thing you're trained to do could be the key to helping you enter and stay 'in the business'. Virtually every actor needs a second income – the hard part is to be able to earn money while still being able to get to auditions. So, self-employment can be ideal. Failing that, it helps to have an understanding boss! The biggest challenge is to be taken seriously by the 'gatekeepers' – casting directors, directors, and the higher-status agents. They stake their reputation on the quality and reliability of the actors they work with - so you need to persuade them somehow you are both talented and reliable.

Joining Equity, the actors' union, is a good start. But training is useful too. Everyone's heard of RADA, so if you train there, or at one of the other top-division UK schools, you'll be leaving with a real badge of quality. But the competition to get in is fierce, and even if you can get a loan to cover fees, your living costs in London will probably be the thing that keeps you awake at night, when you should be learning lines!

There are alternatives, including a



handful of conservatoire-schools outside London – however only the most prestigious few can help you land a good agent when you graduate.

That leads us to universities and colleges. Search the UCAS database, and you'll see dozens of courses – degree, HND and so on – offering to train you as an actor. The training is less intensive – maybe three or four hours a day, rather than eight – but then at least you can take on part-time work alongside the course, to help you survive. But the bit that's often missing at this level is exposure to the professionals who might employ you when you graduate.

That's why the BA (Hons) Acting at CU Scarborough is run in formal partnership with the Stephen Joseph Theatre (SJT). This is no rubber-stamping exercise – the SJT people helped to shape and write the degree, and they will be centrally involved in lots of elements, including the end-of-course professional showcases in London and the North. No-one can guarantee you work as an actor, but they can help you get there, which is why the syllabus of this degree is dedicated to sniffing out alternative sources of employment for actors. This includes linking you into the other professional training on campus – nursing, policing, business, and so on – to give you further evidence of your versatility.

Study BA (Hons) Acting at a world- famous theatre – starts September



The new BA (Hons) Acting degree, starting September 2019, is a partnership between CU Scarborough, the UK's leading modern university and Scarborough's world-famous Stephen Joseph Theatre.

This partnership allows students to gain first-hand acting experience directly from the theatre professionals, whilst simultaneously achieving a professional qualification.

The students will be immersed in the workings of a professional theatre from the beginning, which provides them with an invaluable insight into the profession; a feature which most traditional courses cannot provide.

The diversity of the curriculum allows students to train in both traditional and non-traditional acting techniques. This includes acting for stage, TV and radio alongside the rather non-traditional training in presenting, corporate role-play, vlogging and gaming. In addition, students will have the opportunity to audition for the SJT and be a part of a professional acting company in their third year.

A full course description and information on how to apply is available on the CU Scarborough website www.coventry.ac.uk/cus/acting.

Coventry University*
Ranked No.13
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Guide 2019

*CU Scarborough is part of the Coventry University Group

Coventry University*
UK's highest ranking
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At the heart of the cultural life of Scarborough for more than sixty years, the Stephen Joseph Theatre has a unique connection with world-renowned playwright, Sir Alan Ayckbourn, who regards it as his home theatre. The majority of his 80 plays have premiered there.

The theatre continues to innovate with the introduction of an acting degree in association with CU Scarborough, part of the Coventry University Group.

Places available for September 2019. Apply now.



Photography by Mark Lamb

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see. www.coventry.ac.uk/cus



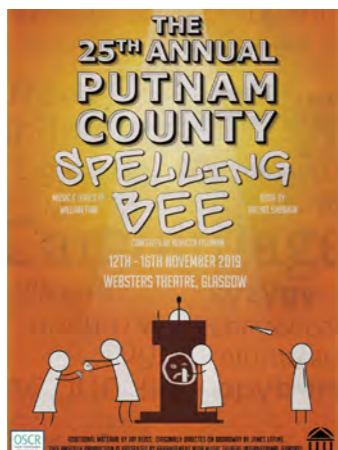
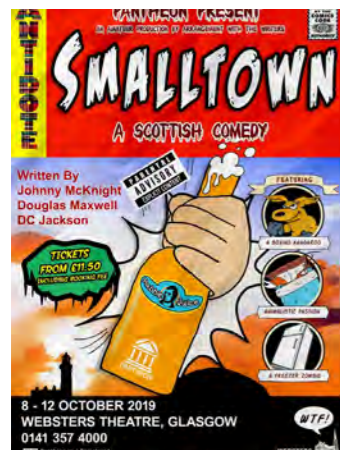
visit. CU Scarborough Ashburn Road, off Valley Road, Scarborough YO11 2JW



PARTNER ADVERTISING FEATURE

Pantheon's Three Show Year

NODA Scotland



The Pantheon Club Glasgow are halfway through their **three show year** - *Cats*, *Smalltown*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*.

Pantheon has over 95 years of experience staging large scale productions in Glasgow's biggest theatres and is Glasgow's largest non-professional theatre organisation. We stage two to three shows per year in venues across the city, with major productions usually being performed at The King's Theatre.

Cats

The Pantheon production of *Cats* at the King's Theatre Glasgow this spring was absolutely mesmerising and truly stunning, with choreography and direction by Chris J S Wilson, musical direction by Kieran Young, lighting design by Jonnie Clough (Blue Parrot Theatre & Live Events), bespoke costume design and make up design by Emma Leigh Porter and June Young at That Looks Good, photography

by Lewis Milne Photography and produced by Pantheon's president David Robertson.

Following the recent success of *Cats*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Elf: The Musical*, *Spamalot*, *Legally Blonde*, *Sister Act* and *Grease*, Pantheon returned to a more intimate venue with *Lovers*, *Urinetown*, *Men Should Weep*, and *Into The Woods* in the last two years. Pantheon are back at Websters Theatre Glasgow in 2019 with *Smalltown* and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* this autumn.

Smalltown

Smalltown is a dark, dynamic and delightfully outrageous wee Scottish comedy telling the story of what happens when contaminated water ('Rabbie Juice') causes extraordinary events to happen to ordinary people. Unleashing all sorts of comedic carnage along the way; from rag-dolling on Girvan beach to the release of animal passions in Stewarton, to the

containment of a Zombie in a freezer in an Ardrossan café. Find yourself trapped in three separate stories of *Smalltown* life, before you, the audience, vote to decide how the story ends; making for a truly memorable evening of entertainment with partial nudity, marsupial violence and zombie vomit! What's not to love? At Websters Theatre Glasgow from 8 to 12 October 2019

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

Pantheon's next musical will be the side-splittingly hilarious, wildly unpredictable and heart-warmingly endearing *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, the story of a group of socially awkward teenage rejects battling it out for the title of best speller in Putnam County. Catch the big event at Websters Theatre Glasgow from 12 to 16 November 2019. It's going to be one hell of a showdown!

David Cooke, Pantheon Club

A Fitting Award

NODA East



The Councillors Cup 2019 was awarded to Daniel Schumann of Viva Arts and Community Group based in NODA District 4S. Initially a small youth group, founded in 1997 by Daniel, then aged fifteen, who after borrowing fifty pounds, gathered together a group

of volunteers and young actors to put on a production of *Bugsy Malone* in Soham Village. Playing to an audience of just 400 the company now put on productions to audiences of thousands in a variety of theatrical arenas.

Viva's Youth Theatre attracts young people from 5 to 25 years to audition for around 5 to 7 productions a year, and as its status has grown, it has extended to incorporate an Adult Theatre group whose extensive programme of productions has received awards for the quality of its classical drama. Over the years Viva has gained a reputation for attendance at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival with many productions receiving 5 stars. Also, they have received the Queen's

Award for Voluntary Service; and numerous Awards and nominations from NODA.

In 2008 a converted Methodist Chapel was purchased enabling Viva to branch into after-school drama clubs and the development of accredited training such as LAMDA and the Arts Award. Viva's foundation evolved through Daniel's inspired drive to bring community theatre to young people for whom opportunities were few. His vision has benefited many, and the results of that vision continue to flourish. Daniel went on to study at the Central School of Speech and Drama and is now a West End Director still involved in enabling young people to follow their dream as he had.

Richings Players Perform Play at Girton College, Cambridge

NODA London



Iver's award-winning company, The Richings Players, are honoured that Girton College, Cambridge - the UK's first residential institution for the higher education of women - has invited the company to perform Jessica Swale's inspiring play *Blue Stockings* at a Festival to celebrate the college's 150th anniversary in June.

The Players performed *Blue Stockings* at Iver Village Hall in October 2018, directed by Sophie Torrent, and received rave reviews from audiences. Sophie is delighted to take up the mantle of bringing this play to life again in its true setting, with many of her original cast.

The play, which opened at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in 2013, follows the challenges faced by women in education at the turn of the Twentieth Century and sheds light on this real event that coincided with the growing campaign for suffrage. It was just one step on the road to equality of opportunity for women and was met with fierce and ugly

opposition, culminating in a riot on the streets of Cambridge. The so-called 'blue stockings' had a long way to go, but their strong spirit and persistence were important elements in the story of suffrage, equality and emancipation for women.

Although Girton has spent more than half its 150 years educating brilliant women to levels of excellence comparable with, or better than, those of men, they were unfortunately not allowed to graduate until 1948. The College has therefore always set the pace on matters of equality and inclusion and continues to prioritise widening participation, alongside academic achievement and all-around personal development for students and staff alike.

Rooted in real events in and around Girton College, this will be the first time the play has been performed on site, amid the Victorian buildings where the story unfolded. Author of the play, Jessica Swale says; "I am so delighted that *Blue Stockings* is 'coming home' to

Girton... It's been an absolute privilege to spend time in this world, to imagine this story and to, I hope, honour those early pioneers in doing so. And now, to know it is being performed only a stone's throw from the portraits of the real Miss Welsh and Emily Davies is such a thrill. I wish all at Girton the most fantastic and well-deserved celebration in their 150th Anniversary year."

The Mistress of Girton College, Professor Susan J Smith, says: "My favourite line in Jessica Swale's riveting play about Girton's early days is: 'we don't get buffeted by the wind, we change its course'. As we approach the 150th anniversary of our foundation, this on-site production by the Richings Players is a timely reminder of the triumph of hope over experience that our College represents."

The play poses the very real question; love or knowledge; which would you choose?

Will Torrent

A Little Lincolnshire Theatre with Unique Beginnings

NODA East Midlands



Alex Wood tells the story of The Broadbent Theatre in Wickenby

Conscientious objectors came to Lincolnshire to farm during the Second World War. In the evenings they sometimes read plays. Among their number was a Quaker, Roy Broadbent, father of Oscar-winning actor Jim Broadbent and a Frenchman called Francis Cammaerts who later left to become one of the heroes of the French resistance.

After the war, a group called Holton Players was formed which included some former COs. This group used an old Nissen hut, fully kitted out as a theatre, called the Country Theatre. Jim Broadbent made his acting debut here as one of the children in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*.

But this wasn't to last. An extract from the Player's minutes book tells us what happened next. "On the evening of

the 22nd March (1960), Tuesday a late rehearsal of *Maria Martin* ended at 12pm and HC, the last out of the theatre, switched off the heating and lights. At 7am on 23rd March, VF as he went to his office opposite the theatre, noticed smoke from the roof. He called the Fire Brigade, who were quickly on the scene. The fire started behind the proscenium arch, and the stage, curtains, lighting etc. were entirely burnt; the roof above ruined."

The play was put on somewhere else, and for the next several years there were suggestions about using the insurance money to build a stage at Wragby Town Hall or extend Holton Hall. In the meantime the Players continued to meet in the magnificent drawing room of Holton Hall, staging their productions in the bay window and making their entrances and exits through the sliding sashes!

But in 1970 the Players purchased the



Brief Encounter 1955



The Country Theatre

Methodist Chapel in Wickenby with Roy Broadbent being very instrumental in the project. The building was to be called The Country Theatre but when Roy died the company, who were now named Lindsey Rural Players, decided to call the theatre The Broadbent. They subsequently negotiated about buying some land to the rear so they could build an extension in the late '70s and early '80s.

The 100-seat Broadbent Theatre continues to thrive to this day. As well as the Players' own productions it hosts many companies from around the country and even one from America. This July Lindsey Rural Players will be celebrating the history of the theatre when they reprise *A Certain Demographic - Conchies*, which tells the story of the conscientious objectors who started it all.

With thanks to Gail Dennis and Bill Bartlett for their help with this article.

From Brigadoon to Vulgaria

NODA North



Founded in 1961 Spittal Variety Group have entertained audiences in the Scottish Borders to a vast selection of productions over the years with variety, musicals but predominantly pantomimes.

Although sticking to the traditional pantos, we do sometimes stray on occasion; staging in January 2019, *The Snow Queen*, having in previous years presented *Snow White* and also *The Pied Piper* as well.

We have in our society now the fourth generation of some families, proving ourselves to be a family as opposed to just a society. Indeed, after forty pantos our resident Dame has recently hung up his wigs and retired!

Only doing musicals (our first being *Brigadoon* in 1965) mainly when celebrating landmark anniversaries 25yrs, 30yrs etc. or when unmissable musicals become available, the opportunity to stage *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* was too good a chance to miss.

Imagine *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* in the Borders!

Auditions were held not only for the parts but also for people wishing to be in the show - interest was immense! Planning was intense for the production, but the greatest hurdle to overcome was the car. Due to building design at the theatre, the cars available for the show were unable to reach the stage!!! What to do? Never known to be beaten the S.V.G. sent out a call to the local community asking for their help to build our own car and received offers from local engineers, mechanics and tradesmen offering their services free of charge. Which goes to prove that "Teamwork makes the dream work!"

After many headaches, which after all is part and parcel of Am Dram, our society has like many others covered all sorts of productions. So, having gone from *Brigadoon* to *Vulgaria*, where will we go in the future? Only time will tell!



Local Writer is Best in Britain

NODA North East

Pateley Bridge playwright Keith Burton has been chosen to receive this year's Geoffrey Whitworth Award for the best play in Britain written by an amateur writer. And his success is doubly rewarding as he will be presented with his award in front of a home crowd because the awards ceremony is taking place in Harrogate.

The 2019 British Final of One-Act Plays is being held on 5th and 6th July at Harrogate Theatre. It is one of the most prestigious amateur drama events in the land featuring the champions of national festivals run by the All-England Theatre Festival, the Drama Association of Wales, the Scottish Community Drama Association and the Association of Ulster Drama Festivals. The Geoffrey Whitworth Cup is the final award of the night and guarantees a publishing contract for the writer.

Keith's winning script is his play *A Penny for Them* which Pateley Bridge Dramatic Society performed in this year's All-England Theatre Festival.

Keith said: This caps-off a great first half of the year following the publication of one of my other plays 'On False Premises' which was a finalist in this year's Tennessee Williams One Act Play Festival. And Harrogate is so much nearer than New Orleans!



Gladys Blackler

9th March 1924 – 7th June 2019
NODA West Midlands

It is with much sadness that we announce the death of Gladys Blackler who has passed away peacefully at the grand age of 95. In recent years she had been living in a Worcester care home.

Gladys served as a Regional Representative in Worcestershire and also was awards secretary for Midlands Region.

We remember Gladys with much fondness together with her late husband Stan, both of whom moved to Worcester in 1970 after establishing an operatic society in Banbury, Oxfordshire.

Our condolences, thought and prayers are with their son Colin and his wife Rose and their daughter Liz, husband John and families.

We Won't Throw Away Our Shot!



Now in its third year, the Youth Event at the NODA NE Gala Weekend aims to provide a great introduction to the Gala Weekend as well as providing exciting workshops and the chance for young people to share in the excitement of the nearly 700 members of the Region who gather together for this annual event.

Held at the Spa Complex in Bridlington the day involved the opportunity to attend dance, acting and singing

workshops. Additionally, the young people saw some of what is available at the weekend as well as viewing the evening cabaret performance of *A Chorus Line* by Guiseley Amateur Operatic Society. All three workshops were led by experienced, professional tutors who have supported NODA at a regional and national level in terms of delivering workshops.

The dancing workshop was a 2½ hour

themed dance-a-thon to the songs of *Mamma Mia* with participants enhancing the atmosphere by wearing flower garlands and fun accessories. Sarah Osborne, Director of NODA Summer School, ran an Actor's Toolbox session working on character development through scripted pieces and also awakened the interest of the young people by telling them all about NODA Summer School. The final workshop responded to requests from previous attendees to have a themed singing workshop. *Hamilton* was chosen, and the participants enjoyed the challenging scores. The t-shirts for the event were designed by Rob Williams at Head Office, and we were assured that they would be worn again – promoting the NODA Youth brand.

Feedback from those attending was very positive, and plans are underway for an event in 2020.

Jo Sykes
Youth Adviser-NODA North East

A Cinderella Story

NODA West Midlands



Being Cinderella is never an easy task, she's an overworked, downtrodden and kind-hearted character who's on stage or not far from it for the entire production. So when 13-Year-old Sophia Powers auditioned for CLOC's *Cinderella* little did she know she would land this prestigious role and feel like a real princess. I caught up with Sophie to find out how she got on as she juggled school, learning lines and taking to the stage on opening night.

'I did not expect to be cast as a leading

part in the adult company. I first heard I was Cinderella during rehearsals. I was slightly apprehensive at the beginning as I was playing alongside adults who had years of experience and did not want to let them down, but at the same time, I was over the moon as I had been given this opportunity to prove myself.

It was time to get organised. I made sure my homework was completed on time and I highlighted all my lines and concentrated on learning a page at a time. Between school and homework, I practised my lines whenever possible.

There are always things that could go wrong crossing your mind. I focused on the things I could control and found everybody at CLOC Adults were very supportive, so I didn't have to worry. I would like to say a special thank you to Teresa Biddell the producer and Rosemary Ravenscroft who both had great faith in me from the start and also to all the principal roles who guided me along the way.

On the opening night, I was extremely excited but obviously had a few

pre-stage nerves as I wanted to give an amazing performance. The first night was so special, I had support from lots of family and friends. The last performance was to a full house where the atmosphere and applause was fantastic, I will never forget it.

I loved every minute of it. I enjoyed playing poor Cinders but wearing the ball gown made me feel special and like a real princess. I loved being part of a pantomime that so many people said they had enjoyed and I received many compliments on my performance. It made all the hard work worthwhile. I felt very sad when the last performance was over, I did not ever want it to end!

Since finishing *Cinderella*, Sophia has appeared in a production of *Joseph and the Technicolour Dream Coat*. Auditioned and got the part of *Oliver* which she looks forward to playing this July at the Highbury Theatre and also, she will be playing the role of Tiger Lily in a production of *Peter Pan* at the Sutton Town Hall.

Sophia Powers of CLOC and
Janine Graeme Regional Editor

In every job that must be done, there is an element of fun

NODA North West



"It all started last year in the summer term when we were informed that our next production was going to be *Mary Poppins Jr.* Everyone was very excited, and the school was buzzing. The auditions took place in our school hall where we had to sing, dance and act a monologue. It was a very tense time!

At the end of the year, we were each presented with a script and a letter to say which part we had been given. The students that had landed principal roles had to start learning their lines and songs straight away, which was a challenge that everyone accomplished. In September, we started rehearsals, and it was amazing to see the first scene coming together.

During the months leading up to the show, lots of break times and after-school sessions, as well as our



Arts Afternoons, were taken up with rehearsals.

With only a few weeks to opening night, we started having weekend rehearsals which lasted between four and six hours. We also had the opportunity to meet lots of new people such as the Radio Lancashire team and Dermot O'Leary, who we performed to.

The set came a week before the show, and we were all so amazed at how incredible it was, it was like a set from a West End show! All our shows took place in the Summerlee Hall at the Senior School. We performed two evening and two afternoon performances.

The crowds were huge, and all we could hear from backstage was the excited murmur of the audience. Before

every show, we ran around saying 'Break a leg' to all members of the cast. We had a prop area where we had to collect our props such as the sweep brush, carpet bag and the parrot head umbrella.

We had lots of help from our school's fifth-year pupils and sixth formers, all our amazing teachers and, of course, our Producer and Director, Mrs Shuttleworth, and our Assistant Director and Choreographer, Shelley Stott. It has been great fun working with all our friends on the production of *Mary Poppins Jr.*, and it is definitely an experience we shall never forget!"

Brooke Medhurst (age 11) and
Morgan Cuthbert (age 10)
'Mary Poppins' and 'Bert'
Kirkham Grammar School

Llandudno Youth Music Theatre performer appears with the Welsh National Opera

NODA Wales & Ireland



Erin Hornsby, a 15-year-old member of Llandudno Youth Music Theatre, has made her professional debut in the Welsh National Opera's production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

The tour began in February 2019 in the Millennium Centre Cardiff and finished in Venue Cymru, Llandudno on 27th April.

In the production, Erin plays one of the three spirits who act as guardians and advisors in the performance. Erin got the part after sending a voice recording of her singing after receiving an email

from the WNO Youth Opera.

Erin, a pupil at Ysgol John Bright, said "I taught myself the song they had sent and recorded that. I also recorded a folk song I knew. The WNO emailed back to ask if I could go down to Cardiff and audition. I was really excited when I got the part as this is the biggest thing I've ever done and such an amazing opportunity for me.

I feel very lucky to have been given this opportunity, and I hope to continue to grow from this experience."

Children in Entertainment

The Definitive Guide for England and Wales

For the Definitive Guide for Scotland please visit our website noda.org.uk/factsheets

With thanks to Cambridgeshire County Council Children in Entertainment and the NNCEE

Legislation

The legislation below relates to:

- Children in entertainment, performing on stage or television, in film, or commercials.
- Children working in paid/professional sport
- Children working as models

The legislation that deals with children in entertainment is:

- The Children and Young Persons Act 1933 Section 23 to 30
- The Children and Young Persons Act 1963 Section 37 to 44
- The Children (performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014

The legislation requires that all children, from birth until they cease to be of compulsory school age, be licensed by the local authority in which they live, when they take part in a performance on stage or in broadcast.

A child remains subject to these regulations until the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they turn 16. The academic year runs from 1 September to the 31 August inclusive.



A performance licence

A performance licence is required when one of the following applies -

- When performing in a licenced premises or area (including events/festivals)
- When the child is receiving payment for taking part
- When the child has to take time off school in order to take part in the performance or rehearsal
- When the performance is ticketed
- When the performance is broadcast

This licence can come in three forms

- a full performance licence
- a 4 Day exemption

Both of these are issued by the local authority where the child lives

- a Body of Persons Authority (BOPA) - issued by the Local Authority where the performance is located.

If the activity is directed in any way, it may be considered a performance and consequently may need to be licenced

A Performance Licence

A licence is granted by the Local Authority (LA) where the child lives (this may not necessarily be the same LA as the child's school). The applicant completes and signs their part of the performance licence application form and the parent then completes and signs the other part. The complete form is then sent to the LA. The form and attachments will include:

- Who the applicant is
- Where is the performance/rehearsal venue
- When is the performance and the rehearsal
- What is the child's role/Health and Safety assessment
- The child expected Call Time/Finish Time including travel arrangements
- Who are the chaperones/copy

of their approval and the ratio of children (no more than 12:1)

- Child's name, DOB and address, are they missing school
- Photo of the child – clear head and shoulders
- Have parents completed the medical form/if they answer yes include details
- Birth certificate/passport

A 4 Day Exemption

If the child does not perform on more than four days in any period of six months and no payment has been made to the child or any other person providing that there is no absence from school.

A 4 day rule exemption rule would need to be issued by your Local Authority.

Body of Persons Approval

A BOPA, if granted, removes the need to apply for an individual licence for each child; it is granted to the organisation that is responsible for the performance.

The approval is granted by the local authority where the performance is taking place; the local authority can grant the approval even if the children taking part do not live within its' boundaries.

It is the organisation which is approved not the children i.e. the local authority is confirming that the group or organisation is a 'suitable' or 'approved' group and therefore must be certain that they (the Local Authority) have taken every reasonable precaution to ensure the group is indeed a suitable group.

A BOPA can be granted to an organisation for a single performance or for a series of performances within a specified time providing no payment is made to the child or to anyone else in respect of the child taking part in the performance and the child does not require absence from school.

Talk to your LA child employment officer as this could take up to 21 days.



Permitted hours of performance

With the introduction of the Children (Performance and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014 the permitted hours for all performances changed. The table summarises the maximum permitted hours and breaks that apply for the different ages of children. These apply to all performances whether the children are licensed or are performing without a licence under Section 37(3)(a) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963. The table gives a summary of the regulations, however, where the performance has been delayed

due to unforeseen circumstances, a chaperone may give permission for a child to perform for an extra one hour for that age of child, if he/she feels that the welfare of the child will not be prejudiced and the child has not already performed the maximum number of performance hours that day. There must be an interval of at least one and a half hours between two performance or rehearsals in the same day. The interval may be reduced to 45 minutes when two performances take place at the same venue and the first

performance or rehearsal lasts for not more than one hour.

If a child has taken part in a performance or rehearsal on the previous day, there must be a break of at least 16 hours before they are present again at a place of performance. For example, if a technical rehearsal continued until 10:30pm one night, the child could not attend a dress rehearsal until at least 2:30pm the following day.

Age of Child	Maximum number of hours permitted at place of performance or rehearsal	Earliest and latest permitted times at that place	Maximum period of continuous performance or rehearsal	Maximum number of hours of performance or rehearsal	Minimum intervals for meals and rest
Birth until child reaches 5 years old	5 hours	7am to 10pm	30 minutes	2 hours	Any breaks must be for a minimum of 15 minutes. If at a place of performance or rehearsal for more than 4 hours, breaks must include at least one 45 minute meal break
5 years old until child reaches 9 years old	8 hours	7am to 11pm	2.5 hours	3 hours	If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 4 hours but less than 8 hours, they must have at least one break of 15 minutes If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 8 hours or more, they must have another break of 15 minutes
9 years old until school leaving age	9.5 hours	7am to 11pm	2.5 hours	5 hours	If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 4 hours but less than 8 hours, they must have at least one meal break 45 minutes and one break of 15 minutes If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 8 hours or more, they must have the above breaks plus another break of 15 minutes



Venues - Performance or Rehearsals

The local authority has an obligation towards all children to ensure that the premises where either a performance or rehearsal is to take place, meets certain criteria.

Therefore the LA will approve a place of performance or rehearsal only if it is satisfied that"

- suitable arrangements have been made for meals, rest and recreation
- the place is supplied with suitable and sufficient toilets and washing facilities
- the child will be adequately protected against inclement weather
- suitable arrangements have been made for the child to dress for the performance or rehearsal.

Children aged five and over should only dress with children of the same sex. Children under five may change in dressing rooms of mixed gender provided they are with other children aged under five years only.

Children must never change in an area where adults (other than chaperone) are present.

Dangerous Performances

The extent to which a child may be involved in dangerous performances is extremely limited.

Performances of a dangerous nature include all acrobatic performances and performances as a contortionist

In addition, the regulations state:

- no child shall take part in any public performance whereby their life or limbs are endangered
- no child under 12 years may be trained in such work
- a child who is aged 12 or more may be trained under licence issued by the local authority of the area in which the training is to take place (or any one area if more than one local authority is involved) subject to conditions which may be imposed

Venue Inspections

As part of the issued licences, the Local Authority have the power to visit your venue to carry out an inspection related to your performance.

The inspecting officer will expect to see your chaperone ID / DBS and also talk to you about any concerns they or you may have.

They will also inspect the arrangements for the children e.g. copy of licence / BOPA, schedule 3 record sheets, signing in and out, the dressing rooms, green rooms, toilets and the area back stage.

A LA officer can ask you to stop the production / ask you to remove unlicensed children. They may ask you to take immediate steps to remedy any dangerous concerns and if it is felt that a child is in immediate danger they may involve the police if you do not follow their reasonable instructions.

Where there are concerns but no immediate danger they may follow this up with a letter or they may take legal action against the applicant for failing to ensure the child's safety and welfare. Concerns could lead to your BOPA being suspended / revoked.

Safe Working Practices

All societies should have procedures in place and staff/volunteers should understand what to do if they receive an allegation against another member of staff/volunteer.

Most theatres will have a child protection policy and a named member of staff to speak to.

Larger production companies may also have someone to speak to.

All Local Authorities have their own Child Protection Procedures provide a framework for managing and dealing with all such allegations.

Follow the DfE guidance around 1-1 working and personal care and the DfE Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Working with Children and Young People.

Establish a partnership with parents Keep good, clear boundaries in your role as a professional carer.

Avoid Allegations Through Safe Working Practices

If there are male and female chaperone use them for appropriate genders

- Do not go to the toilet at the same time children are using the toilet
- Do not allow other adults to use toilets designated for children
- Don't Facebook friend a child or use other social media apps
- Don't give them your personal mobile number – have a work only mobile
- Never to promise to keep secrets with children or their parents.
- Confidentiality and share information on a need to know basis only – it's not to be shared in the green room or in the wings.
- Do not discuss what you may have heard with other members of staff, your friends or family.

The Role of the Chaperone



It is a condition from the LA that whenever children are engaged in public performances or activities under a licence issued by the local authority, they must be supervised at all times by an approved chaperone, unless they are under the direct supervision of either their parent or the teacher that ordinarily provides their education.

Chaperones hold a key role in ensuring that the experience a child gains whilst engaged in such performances or activities is one that they enjoy and find beneficial. Children taking part in performances gives them the opportunity to grow as individuals, develop their life skills. It helps them gain confidence and promotes self-esteem whilst enabling them to appreciate the needs of others.

Understanding the role of the chaperone is extremely important to both the chaperone and to the children under their supervision.

Children take part in performances which are individually very different and varied so may be difficult to appreciate the vast contrast in the type of performances a chaperone could be asked to supervise.

The law states that the maximum number of children an individual chaperone may supervise is 12. However, the local authority may consider due to the ages and/or gender of the children, the chaperone would only be able to effectively supervise a smaller number. For instance, if boys and girls were in separate changing rooms, as required by law, there would have to

be at least two chaperones on duty. This is because the regulations state that chaperones must remain with the children at all times. This includes in the dressing room.

It is only when they are on stage or performing that chaperones are not required to be by their side, but they must have them in view at such times. Experience shows that children are not always safe, even when on the stage performing.

Chaperones may feel that they are in the way, and to some extent not giving the child/ren sufficient freedom. However, their sole concern must be to safeguard support and promote their well-being whilst ensuring the kind treatment of every child in their care.

Never be afraid to pass on concerns that you have about a child or young person.

You may have vital information that could safeguard a child / young person from harm.

You are the eyes and ears that help safeguard children from harm.

Where to go for more information or help

If you think you or a child is in immediate danger and needs urgent help, please call the Police on 999.

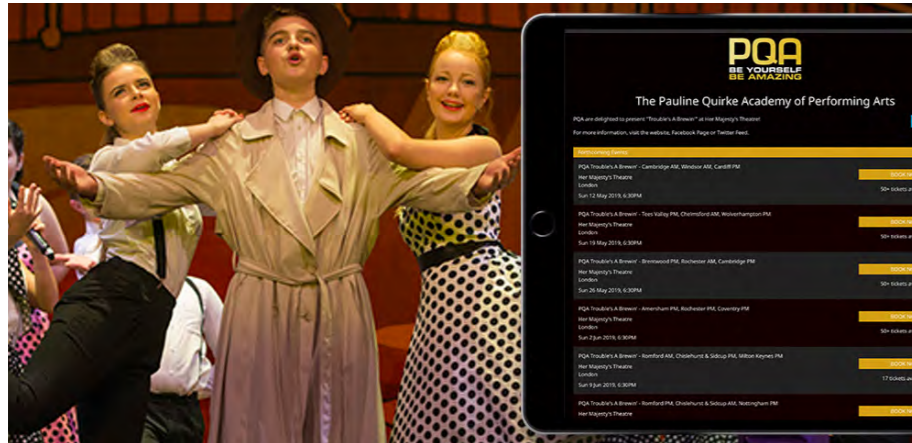
For non-urgent queries the best place to start is always with your Local Authority - their contact details can be found online or by calling you County Council / Borough Council.

For more advice or training

NSPCC - www.nspcc.org.uk

NNCEE - National Network for Children in Employment and Entertainment - www.nncee.org.uk

Safe and Sound: Secure Ticketing for Performing Arts Academy



Discover how the Pauline Quirke Academy (PQA) utilises TicketSource to safeguard their ticket sales, making them available to only parents and guardians.

Founded by much-loved star Pauline Quirke in 2007, the PQA provides weekend stage and screen training to more than 13,000 children and young people at over 170 Academies across the UK. PQA produces regular performances to showcase their students' achievements in comedy, drama, musical theatre, film and television, and uses TicketSource, the online ticketing platform, to manage their audiences.

A unique opportunity offered by the Academy is a performance in London's West End, in a specially-written musical at Her Majesty's Theatre. The theatre is a major venue – home to Phantom of the Opera and with a capacity of over

1,200. The show features three Academies performing two scenes each from a storyline that runs across two acts, with each Academy rehearsing for nine months before travelling to London to perform live on stage in front of a huge audience.

Although Her Majesty's Theatre has its own box office, PQA uses TicketSource to manage sales. "Tickets for our West End shows are not available to the general public," explained Jill Goff, Production Co-ordinator. "In order to control who buys tickets in line with our safeguarding policy, we set up a password on our TicketSource account, which we then send to our students' parents and guardians."

PQA uses TicketSource's free telephone box office service, enabling parents to book tickets by phone. The system also gives PQA control over seating plans, enabling staff to assign accessible seating and reserve areas of the auditorium. "It gives us a real-time understanding of audience numbers, which allows us to plan staffing," said Goff.

PQA Cardiff uses TicketSource for their end-of-term projects, which can range from cinema screenings to fully-staged musicals. "TicketSource works well for us," explained Barker. "It's straightforward and cost-effective. Child protection is the most important consideration, and the system allows us to manage that by only sharing the booking link with parents."

As well as providing exciting opportunities in performance and production, PQA helps children and young people develop important skills. "There's so much you can do with the performing arts skill set," said Barker. "It covers team-building, communication, leadership and self-discipline – there's a huge amount of crossover for any career." Supported by the security features of TicketSource, PQA provides a safe space for students to enjoy expressing their creativity while cultivating essential skills for life, allowing them to do what PQA is known for – be themselves and be amazing.

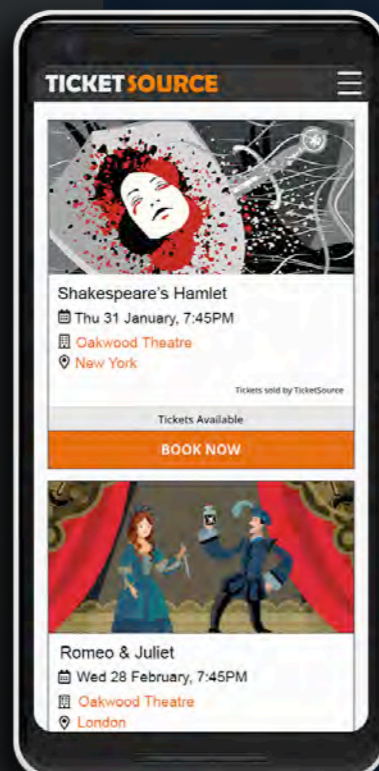
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Exmouth Players Reach 90 Year Milestone!

NODA South West



The Exmouth Players were delighted and honoured to receive a visit from NODA National President, Jacquie Stedman and her husband, David, during their 90th year to see their production of *Alice* and tour the theatre. Founded in 1928 by the late Jessie Blackmore, Exmouth Players reach 90 year milestone! Ray Moxey and his

father, many productions, including pantomimes, shows and other events have been performed and have taken place over this time.

In December 2000, the group were able to buy their own Theatre – The Blackmore. This was through a loan of £70,000, approved by East Devon

District Council and subsequent grants of £5,000 from the District Council and the Exmouth Town Council. Following a lot of hard work by many of their members and some eleven years later, the loan was repaid, and the Exmouth Players took outright ownership of this wonderful venue. A great deal of thanks and gratitude is owed to those who helped to form this Society and dared to dream of achieving this remarkable ambition. It has often been said that this is Exmouth's very own theatre!

The Exmouth Players currently stage three main plays each year along with a seasonal presentation. Since 1979, they have been hosting an annual One-Act Play Festival as part of The All England Theatre Festival.

So, here they are - 90 years later and still going strong. As they say in show business, "The Show must go on!"

Winchester Musical Opera Society: What a year!

NODA South East



Last spring as Royal Wedding fever was at its height, we were preparing for our run of *Utopia Limited*, one of Gilbert & Sullivan's lesser-performed operettas. The plot is simple (though oddly baffling at times); we find ourselves on the island of Utopia, totally unspoiled except that the inhabitants are obsessed by British culture. The King of Utopia sends his eldest daughter to be educated in England, and she returns engaged and accompanied by Britain's best and brightest, ready to finally introduce English 'civilisation' to Utopia. We swapped the Victorian references for the modern royal family, introducing Prince Charles, Camilla, Prince Andrew, William and Kate and the soon to be wed Prince Harry onto the island to hilarious consequences, along with many other up to date references. *Utopia Limited* was well

received in Winchester in the Royal Wedding week, it was wacky and fun, and with many of the cast new to Gilbert and Sullivan this updated version was a good mix of the modern and the traditional.

During the summer the cast of *Utopia Limited* had the opportunity to take the production to the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival, a chance to perform our production on a professional stage, with a professional orchestra and complete the Gilbert & Sullivan canon of the festival. We were incredibly excited. So, after a few rehearsals to refresh our memory, off we went to Harrogate.

The adjudicator got up on to the stage and ripped the production apart, no one got out alive. The changes were

sacrilegious, the cast untalented, the direction misguided, the set incorrect. He did manage to say that the lighting was good during one of the numbers, and he thought the female chorus 'sang well at times'. I guess we could say with some certainty that he wasn't a fan. Some of the cast took it lightly, in fact, the verdict was so truly awful it was almost funny; on the other hand, the review had been quite personal, and many of the cast were hurt by the comments made. At this point, we all would have liked to have scuttled out of the theatre with our tails between our legs, but this was not to be the case. It is the tradition for the visiting company that night to perform a cabaret after the show, and many members of our cast had been privately practising numbers and comedy routines.

You might think that our cast went away pretty dejected, but actually, a lot of positives came out of our experience. The first was that like it or hate it, for 24hrs we were the talk of the Gilbert & Sullivan Festival. It was so heart-warming speaking to so many kind and supportive people that night who sought us out to tell us how much they enjoyed the show. As a society, we bounced back for a stellar night of entertainment just minutes after receiving some pretty soul-crushing criticism.

Fond Farewells

Mary Titterton, NODA North East Regional Representative



Mary Titterton with NE Councillor Les Smith and President Jacquie Stedman

At the Region's AGM at Bridlington in April NODA North East said au revoir to Mary Titterton who has served the Association for more than 30 years. However, Mary's theatrical career goes back further than that so "Let's start at the very beginning, a very good place to start".

In 1961/62 Harry Richardson, a work colleague in the Midland Bank (now HSBC), introduced her to Sheffield Teachers Operatic Society - now STOS Theatre Company - (playing at the Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield) and Woodseats Operatic Society (playing at the Montgomery Hall, Sheffield).

Her first shows with both societies were in 1962, *Song of Norway* for Sheffield Teachers and *White Horse Inn* for Woodseats. Whilst remaining a playing member of the former until 1986 Mary was appointed Secretary of Woodseats in 1967, retiring in 1991 when she was made a Vice President. She was a non-playing Member until 2005 and in 2012 was made a Life Member of the society.

Mary was a playing member of Meersbrook Park Church Operatic Society from 1968 to 1972 and was with Croft House Operatic Society as a playing member from 1970 to 1973.

In 1971 there was fire at Montgomery Hall following the dress rehearsal for a production of *A Country Girl* by Woodseats. All societies that performed at the venue rallied round, and the Amateur Societies Theatre Project was formed with Mary being appointed Secretary. The project raised funds for the new seating in the theatre. In the same year, Sheffield & District Theatre Diary was born, edited and published by Mary until 2007 although it is no longer published.

Mary's NODA service began in 1984, and until 2011 she was North East Regional Secretary working with three Regional Councillors namely George Adlington (1984 - 1991), Reg Vinnicombe (1991 - 2001) and Chris Ingram (2001 - 2011). From 1991 to 2011 she worked with Reg and Chris organising the North East Region AGM and Gala Weekend at Bridlington hosting between 700 and 1000 members.

2001 saw Mary working with Reg Vinnicombe on his Presidential and NODA National Weekend at Bridlington, and the event welcomed over 650 members from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland making it the largest national weekend ever - a very proud moment. Also

in 2001, she was elected Regional Representative for Sheffield & District following the retirement of her mentor, Harry Brailey, after 38 years.

Mary received the Association's Silver Medal for 25 years service to Amateur Theatre in 1986, and she received the Association's Gold Award for 50 years service in 2011. In 2009 she had been made an Honorary Member of NODA for 25 years service to the Association.

Congratulations, Mary, we shall miss you.

Mary's position has been taken by Philip Smith following his election at the AGM. He has been involved in Amateur Theatre for 20 years in Sheffield and has been a part of Easy Street Youth Theatre for 11 years, seeing many of their youngsters progress to senior societies and some to the professional stage.

Rosemary Roberts, NODA London Region Editor



Some 9 years ago I took a phone call from Jacquie Stedman, then London Councillor. Experience has since taught me that when Jacquie phones out of the blue and casually asks how you are, it is not the state of your health that is really at the forefront of her mind. And so, much to my surprise, I found myself a few weeks later becoming Editor for the London Region. How did that happen!

This was around the time that NODA joined forces with AmateurStage magazine, giving each region between three and five pages each month. Yes - each month! It was quite an undertaking, both for the Regional Editors and the magazine, and it became apparent fairly quickly that the

partnership was in trouble. Deadlines and distribution dates became, shall we say, flexible and eventually petered out, meaning that for a time NODA was without a vehicle for communicating with its members, at least in magazine form. At this stage, Jacquie and I met up over coffee, which ran into lunch, then on into afternoon tea, and finally, we emerged with a plan. We would start the London e-newsletter. And thus London Latest (later rechristened Curtain Up!) was born. It was to be for NODA London members only, to be emailed to all societies; no advertising, no flyers, a newsletter for and about our members, plus a What's On listing. Deep breath!

To my relief, it took off right from the word go, and the problem became not, as I had feared, how to get articles, but were we publishing too many. Going out quarterly, we usually ran to 12-14 pages. For me, it was quite a learning curve. I knew something about marketing and publicity, having worked in those fields for some time, but publishing...? However, the sense of achievement and pride was worth all the stress as the copy date approached, though I did quickly learn that the concept of deadlines escapes about 80% of people within am dram.

Over the years, I've read hundreds of articles. Quite a few of them starting

"It was on a sunny day in May 60 (70, 80, 100) years ago that a group of like-minded people got together in a village hall and formed (fill in the blank) Operatic Society", and marvelled that almost all of these groups seemed to have been created on a sunny day. Amazing! I've received excellent articles, including a favourite in the first ever edition about a young girl sent to represent her society at a Buckingham Palace Garden Party who, when introduced to the Queen, beamed and said "Hiya". We've had contributions from big societies run on professional lines, to groups performing once a year in village halls; groups just starting out, societies reinventing themselves against all the odds to rebuild and succeed. And they all have one thing in common - their love of theatre.

I was very lucky throughout this time to have not only the unfailing support and energy of Jacquie Stedman but also of the whole London committee, who suggested and chivvied their groups into submitting articles. It's not a job you can do without this kind of team behind you, and I thank all the present and past members for their help. But most of all, my thanks go to the London NODA groups who made my job so exciting and rewarding.

Rosemary Roberts

Darlington Operatic Society Scoops Prestigious Town Award

NODA North



At the latest annual Best of Darlington awards ceremony held in June, members of Darlington Operatic Society (Darlington OS) were proud to win the category Contribution to the Arts.

The Best of Darlington Awards have been held for the last 13 years and celebrate the hard work and achievements of individuals, groups and businesses in Darlington. The awards are an initiative from the One Darlington Partnership which was set up to engage and work with the major

private sector companies in Darlington, alongside influential individuals and representatives from the community and voluntary sectors to share a positive ambition and strive for the best possible future for Darlington and the surrounding area.

Board members of One Darlington Partnership include the leader of Darlington Council, the local Member of Parliament, the Chief Constable of Durham & Darlington Constabulary, the Director of Teesside University, the Chief Executive of Darlington Building

Society and the Head of Investment for Northumbrian Water.

At this year's awards ceremony Darlington OS was one of three nominees and six representatives of the company were on hand to accept the award - our current Chairman Sarah Singleton, Trustees Linda Sams and Sarah Steel, Luke Oldfield and Claire Monaghan who played the lead roles of Jerry and Dale in our most recent production, *Top Hat*, alongside company member Darrien Wright.

Julian Cound of Darlington OS said "We were so proud to have been nominated for a Best of Darlington Award. To come away with the trophy was the icing on the cake. To be recognized for our contribution to the cultural heartbeat of Darlington by such an influential board really underlines the important role amateur theatre plays in the success and growth of the town and local community in general."

Chelmsford Collaboration for Charity!

NODA East



In March this year, the Mayor of Chelmsford, Counsellor Mrs Yvonne Spence, invited five musical societies in Chelmsford to come together to prepare and perform a concert in aid of her chosen charities – Kids Inspire and The Dementia Project at Broomfield Hospital.

The groups, coordinated by NODA Past President & Chairman Eric Smart, all were NODA members. The title of the show was *We Love Musicals*. Each group presented songs of their own choice, including some songs from past shows, their next production and shows which they might never get the chance to perform; hence the theme being Past, Present and Future. The programme was wide and varied, and each section very different from the one before and

after. Three numbers were chosen to be performed by the whole company – *Another Opening, Another Show* from *Kiss Me Kate*, *Lullaby of Broadway* from *42nd Street* and *One Day More* from *Les Miserables*.

Under the guidance of Musical Director Ian Myers and Director Sallie Warrington, individual groups rehearsed their own sections and also meeting on three occasions to put the show together. Jean Pinkney, a member of CAODS, was the link between the Mayor's charity committee and the organising group, formed in October of last year with one member representing each group – Chelmsford Young Generation, Essex Police Musical Society, Chelmsford AODS, Springers AODS and Trinity Methodist Music &

Drama Fellowship. The camaraderie was exceptional, with around 80 performers enjoying a celebratory tea between the two performances, with everybody contributing to the food table.

A truly sensational time was had by all. The Mayor, who was absolutely delighted with the outcome met her husband John when they were performing in pantomime with the Southern Light in their home city of Edinburgh many years ago. She confides that she still has a passion for musicals and the stage, which was the seed that germinated into this tremendous joint effort which raised over £6,500 for the charities the success of which is likely to lead to another joint concert in the future.

West Midlands Anniversaries

NODA West Midlands



Kays Theatre Group 65th Anniversary



Erdington Operatic Society 60th Anniversary

NODA West Midlands Societies are again clocking up the years and celebrating anniversaries in fine voice. We send our congratulations to all including Erdington Operatic Society who marked their 60th Year with many of their society members also celebrating milestone anniversaries of their own as they took to the stage in *Pirates of Penzance* last November.

Horsehay Amateur Dramatic Society are drawing their steely strength to celebrate their 75th year, Codsall Dramatic Society is celebrating its 70th anniversary with some divine intervention with *The Vicar of Dibley* welcoming their Visually Impaired Audiences with Touch Tours. Kays Theatre Group celebrated its 65th anniversary in Worcester, attended by 100 members and friends, while Pershore Operatic and Dramatic Society are having a bit of 'Grease Lightenin' with their production of *Grease* for their 40th year.



Horsehay Amateur Dramatic Society 75th Anniversary

Louisa's Story

NODA Scotland



When Louisa Goldie visited The Foundling Museum before her major heart surgery, little did she know that it would lead to meeting the Duchess of Cambridge. Louisa was scheduled to have her surgery at Great Ormond Street Hospital, who partner with The Foundling Museum to run art projects involving patients to help in their convalescence. Emma, the coordinator for the project, met Louisa during her recovery period and was intrigued

by her interest in the Hetty Feather books written by her personal friend Jacqueline Wilson. Emma was very impressed with young Louisa and also her own personal story about her interest in musical theatre, with a dream to play orphan Annie one day. When Louisa's dream came true to play the role at Act 1 Youth Theatre, Hawick, she was so proud to let Emma know about her good news. Emma, at that time was in the process of organising



the Royal visit to The Foundling Museum and felt that Louisa would be the perfect young person to meet The Duchess, who was considering becoming a patron of the museum. The honour of having tea and a chat with the Duchess was a wonderful experience for Louisa, who had taken the weekend off Annie rehearsals to make the trip to London. Louisa shared the role of Annie with Marli Kiore in September 2018.

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After a 29-year spell of sleeping sickness, Deborah regains consciousness and tries to adjust to the world around her.

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- Open to licence requests
- Casting: 1m / 2f



CELEBRATION

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A menacing comedy revolving around the lives of the residents of a small seaside boarding house.

- Script Available (£9.99)
- Open to licence requests
- Casting: 4m / 2f

A CONCORD THEATRICALS COMPANY
SAMUEL FRENCH

The Middle Leg of the Presidential Tour

Breaking news... We are having an absolutely wonderful time! Travelling to NODA Societies and Regional Conferences seeing superb shows, presenting Long Service Awards and meeting dedicated, hard-working members is a terrific way to pass the days (and nights) in this Presidential year!!! Wherever we go, we are greeted with smiles and words of welcome – and such gratitude for being there. It's like we are bound

together by an invisible thread called amateur theatre, and it matters not where we come from, we are all brothers and sisters under the skin... Simply amazing!

Since I last wrote David and I have travelled many miles over the whole of the British Isles, including Shetland (where I am assured no one ever locks their doors at night - it is so safe, despite what the BBC would have us believe)

and Zurich in Switzerland. Both these invitations were through my involvement with NODA Theatre Summer School and really brought home to me how far people will travel to take part in this special event.

Thank you for so many invitations and making us so welcome...see you soon.

Jacquie Stedman
NODA National President



Would you like the NODA President to attend
your upcoming show?

Email jacquie.stedman@noda.org.uk

A Trip to the Archives

At NODA we have documents, librettos, scores, meeting minutes dating back to our beginning in 1899. In each edition of NODA Today we will be taking a trip down into the archives to showcase some of our more interesting and historically important documents.

2019 marks the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings, contained within 'A Century of Service' by John N. Young, the official NODA history marking 100 years in 1999, there is a chapter dedicated to 'the War Years'

A period known as the phoney war followed the outbreak of World War II in September 1939 as the Nation braced itself in anticipation of imminent attack. Apprehension gripped the Capital where risk of bombing was greatest and everyone who could sought sanctuary in the country. The atmosphere was tense with normal bustling streets eerily quiet, especially after dark when blackout was enforced, and activity was largely confined to air raid wardens at ground level and fire watchers on the roof tops. All theatres were dark for several weeks.

The October 1939 issue of 'Wartime Drama', a monthly bulletin issued by the British Drama League, contained an article written by Geoffrey Whitworth, the League's founder, who wrote eloquently of the task ahead. Reminding readers of the broader need for theatre in wartime to 'hearten our people for their great task, the maintenance of their good humour, their courage and their will to victory' he continued:

"In saying this we do not suggest that the stage has nothing to offer but "entertainment" in its aspect of anodyne or restorative. It includes these excellent and necessary things. But drama interprets every mood and its noblest function remains to work upon man's should and to inspire his spirit with exaltation. There let (drama) remain true to this ideal, placing the highest things first always.

And the humbler things too will not and must not be forgotten. This latter problem has to some extent been solved as regards the provision of stage plays and concert parties for the troops by ENSA, the Entertainment National Service Association. But aside from this lie the needs of the workers for Civilian Defence, the evacuees, the emergency munition workers, to say nothing of these more normal groups that have come back to look to the theatre as chief source of amusement and intellectual life.

To cater adequately for this sudden necessity would seem to be beyond the scope of any voluntary organisation. Yet failing some adequate action by the Government we must do what we can."

Needs and requirements of the Armed Forces remained paramount throughout hostilities with the value of entertainment, self-produced or by others, officially recognised at the highest level as an invaluable morale booster. ENSA and the newly-formed Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) were both supported and financed by the Treasury. Entertainment of troops in the capital was co-ordinated by a London District Theatre Unit, similar arrangements pertaining also in other areas. It was even suggested that amateur concert parties might adopt the name 'NODA Parties'

Up and down the country the amateur theatre scene resembled a patchwork quilt, as it did for much of the War. Here and there, particularly in rural district groups managed



85 Eccleston Square, London SW1.
The Association moved to 8 Bernard Street WC1 after bomb damage in 1941.

to carry on virtually uninterrupted, while others combined to produce fund-raising concerts and small shows. But it was a different story in larger towns and cities. On the initiative of Freddie Lloyd, long-time controller of Scala Theatre, an organisation called London Amateur Stage was formed in December 1939 with the Lord Mayor as President. Members of various societies combined to present four plays at the Fortune Theatre and two musicals at the Scala. Plays comprised "An Inspector Calls", "And So to Bed", "Berkley Square" and "Dinner at Eight", the musicals being "Bitter Sweet" and "The Desert Song", with part of the latter being broadcast live by the BBC Home Service. "The Vagabond King" was in rehearsal when the venture was forced to disband in 1940 as the Battle of Britain commenced and bombing of London began in earnest. In addition, the Musical Director, Norman Bidgood, was called up and Freddie Lloyd himself joined ENSA.

At NODA the Emergency Committee took charge and



Dorothy Mason, Arthur Sexton, Lionel Dumayne Warne c1938. A rare photograph featuring three major figures in the development of NODA. Arthur Sexton spent most of his working life at NODA and Lionel Dumayne Ware served in various capacities for almost 50 years.

temporarily shut HQ for normal business while arrangements were made to disperse non-essential assets and records elsewhere. As in 1914 many members suspended productions decimating their own income and leading to gradual decline in subscriptions received by the Association. HQ reopened in November 1939 as the expected blitz failed to materialise at that stage though activity and services proceeded were at a greatly reduced level and there was soon office space and personnel to spare.

An attempt to sub-let part of 85 Eccleston Square proved abortive. It was situated in a vulnerable location close to the railway sidings on the approach to Victoria Station and just across the River Thames from the prominent Battersea Power Station – both likely targets for the Luftwaffe. Despite a grant from the Carnegie UK Trust which ensured survival of the Association for the duration of War, it was still necessary for the staff to be laid off and for the Director and Secretary to take a reduction in salary. Although in his 44th year, Tommy Bamford, whose acclaimed book 'Practical Make-up for the Stage' had recently been published, re-joined his Regiment in summer 1940, leaving Arthur Sexton virtually single-handed in the office. The crisis was averted when a former staff member was able to return, until she too was required to report for National Service in May 1943.

A supplement to the 1939-40 NODA Year Book was issued in October 1940 and gave members guidance on some aspects of wartime modus operandi. Emphasising that traders and Rightsholders were adopting a most helpful attitude, appreciating the risk of last-minute cancellation, members were urged to remember that permission should always be obtained for 'Songs from the Shows' where more than two members were involved from any particular show. Fees were normally waived for entertainment for the Forces so long as performances took place in barracks or camps and

no charges whatsoever were made for admission, sale of programmes etc. The Association was always prepared to negotiate on behalf of member societies and Arthur Sexton's technical knowledge and vast range of contacts must have been invaluable in this regard. Circulars were available giving advice and suggestions on the composition and building of concert party programmes.

Six issues of the 'NODA Bulletin' appeared in War years, slim editions being published in January and April 1940 and each January from 1942 to 1945. News was censored, printing was difficult, and paper rationed, in 1943 the familiar pink cover was replaced by a dingy khaki one! Inevitably there were sad tidings, enemy action accounting for the loss of both Secretary and Treasurer of Aberdeen Lyric OC while Redcar & District AOS lost its President, Chairman, Treasurer and another member of the Committee. Occasional light-hearted items relieved the gloom such as a reminder that 'Frederic' in "The Pirates of Penzance" came of age on 29 February 1940. Contact with the membership was thus maintained as circumstances permitted.



Thomas Banford, Secretary of NODA from 1934 to 1954 and Director from 1954 until his retirement in 1962

The Eccleston Square offices suffered bomb damage in April and May 1941 before NODA's lease expired in 1942 where alternative accommodation was taken at Emanwye House, 8 Bernard Street, above Russell Square Tube Station. Removal costs were met from the HQ Establishment Fund. Life could not have been much fun for Mr. Sexton. Together with difficulties experienced on a day-by-day basis by virtue of austerity,

enemy action regularly disrupted his journey into Central London from Balham and in July 1944 he was rendered homeless when his house was badly damaged in an air raid. Testing time, particularly for a man already past retirement age. Although much activity concerned the Library there were more important decisions to be made and, fortuitously, the Association President, Lionel Dumayne Warne, was in London

throughout the War and in almost daily contact with the Director.

The War Emergency Committee met on 17 occasions between September 1939 and August 1945, usually at NODA HQ though the Grand Hotel in Manchester was used in September 1944 when London was under siege from Hitler's V-2 rockets. Arthur Sexton attended everyone and Dumayne Warne missed only two. Although 205 societies were elected to member ship during the War, the names of many new groups such as Epsom Services Club, Ministry of Pensions Headlantic DS at Newquay, Cornwall, Southgate ARP Entertainments and Standard Aero No 1 Entertainments Committee reflecting the circumstances pertaining. Post-war policy was discussed several times, especially once the Allies began making positive progress towards victory. Though concert parties and G&S Operas were produced at various 'Stalag' POW camps in Germany, no records survive of assistance by the Association.

The Little Theatre Group, formed by the British Drama League just before the War as a pro-am venture, attracted over 40 disparate organisations. Its primary object was to encourage the presentation of plays in small capacity venues and included a Free German society as well as a Yiddish one. Several little theatres were bombed. Despite black-out, problems

with permits to serve refreshments at rehearsals, the need to carry gas masks, lack of private transport etc., more amateur activity took place than in the first War. In the black days of 1940, no fewer than 16 groups affiliated to NODA, five of them newly formed.

It is possible that the Northern Polytechnic OS was the only amateur operatic society to London to play continuously throughout hostilities, as it had been between 1914 and 1919. Most remarkable wartime record must be that of Jersey Green Room Club which put on 18 productions despite German occupation. It even survived a dissolution order undaunted though a minor change of name was necessary for a short while. Perhaps the best manifestation of official optimism was formation of the War Office OS in Whitehall – where the men have always known best! This proceeded VE-Day by about a year.

Following a tough War during which he took part in the Normandy landing and was Mentioned in Despatches, Tommy Bamford resumed full time at NODA in August 1945. Reunited with Arthur Sexton, the two colleagues must have frequently swapped wartime experiences as well as speculating on the future. How would a revived national television network affect the theatre? How long would it be before an enlightened Government would grasp the nettle and abolish

the hated Entertainments Tax? How many societies which dissolved during the War would revive? Thanks to a dedicated Director and President who together and with the goodwill of many others kept the structure intact, NODA would be on hand to help, advise and support its membership – in peace as it had in war.

Let the final thoughts on World War II rest with the 'Tynesiders', apart from various amateur groups in the Newcastle area which toured Northern Germany in September 1945 entertaining British troops. Performances of a 90-minute programme delighted Units in Hamburg, Lubeck, the island of Sylt (now the most expensive seaside resort in a reunified Germany) as well as along the Danish border. Here, some escaping German POWs made a pathetic attempt to hijack the coach in which the intrepid thespians were travelling. Perhaps this sad episode amid the ravages of bitter military action caused some of them to reflect on the wonderful musical legacy shared by the two principal European antagonists. At all events the NODA flag was carried proudly aloft.

*John N. Young
A Century of Service
NODA 100 Year Celebrations 1999*

Available to buy from the Archive

A Century of Service

JOHN N. YOUNG

Centenary Celebrations 1999
THE NATIONAL OPERATIC AND
DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION

A Century of Service - The story of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association since 1899 to 1999

When Members of eleven Operatic and Dramatic Societies gathered in the Grosvenor Hotel, Manchester on 15th February 1899 with the express purpose of creating a Mutual Aid Society for the Amateur Theatre, they cannot have envisaged the trials and tribulations, triumphs and failures, profits and losses, tenacity and determination which would ensure that NODA which they created would celebrate its Centenary in grand style 100 years later.

John Young's book chronicles the progress of service to a hobby which is all consuming to so many, liberally lacing a business story with amusing anecdotes from all aspects of Amateur Theatre in the UK.

£9.99 inc Postage

NODA PRESIDENTIAL GALA AND AGM 2019

The Floral Hall Southport Theatre & Convention Centre Southport PR9 0DZ

Saturday 28th - Sunday 29th September

The North West is proud to welcome you to the Presidential Gala and AGM. Back in 1899 NODA was actually founded in this region, and it is quite fitting that the 70th NODA President is from the same region.

The Southport Convention Centre, having recently undergone a £40 million restoration is the setting for this year's AGM with the Gala being held in the beautiful Floral Hall under the Art Deco dome.

Over the same weekend, Southport will host the British Musical Fireworks Championship. During the competition over two tonnes of explosives are used to create the very best and most entertaining fireworks event in the UK.

Southport is easy to get to whether you are travelling by road, rail, air or sea. By car the M6 is just 20 miles away, Southport train station is a short walk from the hotel and three airports are less than an hour away. If you are travelling from Dublin, Belfast or the Isle of Man there are daily ferry crossings.

If you would like to venture further afield, Liverpool, Preston or Blackpool are all under 1 hour away.

Bookings and full payment must be received by 1st September 2019. Early booking is recommended to guarantee your place.

LOCATION

Picturesque, elegant and rich in heritage, Southport has always been a bustling hub of culture bringing the likes of Marlene Dietrich, Pink Floyd and The Beatles to the stage of The Floral Hall, as well as welcoming generations of families to its beaches and parks for holidays they cherish forever. A little slice of paradise, nestled in a 22 mile stretch of stunning coastline close to Liverpool and Manchester.

NEARBY PLACES OF INTEREST

Wesley Street - full of boutique shops. From cakes to jewellers and butchers to photographers.

Southport Market - fantastic food-retailers, fresh flowers and potted plants are among the few amazing businesses in the market



ENTERTAINMENT OVER THE WEEKEND

FRIDAY

If you are joining us on the Friday evening, why not take a trip to the British Musical Fireworks Championship event nearby. With your AGM booking you will also receive discounted admission tickets for the fireworks event.

SATURDAY GALA EVENING

We are excited to announce that Lancaster Amateur Dramatic & Operatic Society will be providing entertainment after the Gala meal. Back in 1899, NODA was founded by A. P. Bullfield - the musical director of LADOS, so it is only fitting that as the NODA Presidency returns to the North West they are with us to join in the celebrations.

FRIDAY

You may arrive on the evening of Friday 27th for bed and breakfast, see packages below

SATURDAY

The AGM will take place at 2:30pm in The Lakeside Suite on Saturday 28th September, including the presentation of the Programme and Poster Awards and the inauguration of Christine Hunter Hughes as National President.

The evening Gala will be followed by entertainment from Lancaster Amateur Dramatic & Operatic Society. To round our evening off there will be a live band to dance the night away to.

SUNDAY

The Annual Meeting of Regional Committee Members will take place at 10:30am in The Lakeside Suite. Lunch will be provided for those who have stayed overnight.

PACKAGE A

Based on 2 people sharing

2 Nights - Friday & Saturday
Bed & Breakfast
Lunch Saturday & Sunday
Gala Dinner Saturday evening

£260 Per Person

PACKAGE B

Based on 2 people sharing

1 Night - Saturday
Bed & Breakfast
Lunch Saturday & Sunday
Gala Dinner Saturday evening

£175 Per Person

PACKAGE C

Lunch Saturday
Gala Dinner Saturday evening

£75 Per Person

PACKAGE D

Gala Dinner Saturday evening

£45 Per Person

PACKAGE E

Single Occupancy

2 Nights - Friday & Saturday
Bed & Breakfast
Lunch Saturday & Sunday
Gala Dinner Saturday evening

£350 Per Person

PACKAGE F

Single Occupancy

1 Night - Saturday
Bed & Breakfast
Lunch Saturday & Sunday
Gala Dinner Saturday evening

£215 Per Person

There are limited numbers of twin rooms available. Please book early to avoid disappointment. There is no charge for attending just the AGM or the Regional Committee Members' Meeting.



NODA PRESIDENTIAL GALA AND AGM 2019

The Floral Hall Southport Theatre & Convention Centre Southport PR9 0DZ
Saturday 28th - Sunday 29th September

BOOKING FORM

Name (s):

Address:

Postcode:

Email:..... NODA Region:

Phone (emergency only):

N.B. Confirmation and other news about the celebrations will be sent via email. Your tickets and name tags will be available with complete information packs including timings on your arrival.

Package options

- A: to include 2 nights (Friday & Saturday) Bed & Breakfast, Lunch and Gala Dinner Saturday £260 Two people sharing
- B: to include 1 night (Saturday) Bed and Breakfast, Lunch and Gala Dinner Saturday £175 Two people sharing
- C: to include Lunch & Gala Dinner Saturday £75.00
- D: to include Saturday evening Gala Dinner ONLY £45.00
- E: to include 2 nights (Friday & Saturday) Bed & Breakfast, Lunch and Gala Dinner Saturday £350 Single Occupancy
- F: to include 1 night (Saturday) Bed and Breakfast, Lunch and Gala Dinner Saturday £215 Single Occupancy

There is no charge for attending just the AGM or the Regional Committee Members' Meeting.

Type of Room required: Double Twin Single
Vegetarian Vegan Gluten Free
Dietary Requirements: Dairy Intolerant Nut Allergy

Other:

Payment Choices

All payments must be accompanied with a booking form which can be posted to NODA, 15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough, PE2 7UH or emailed to booking@noda.org.uk

Deposit

Non-returnable £50.00 per person

- Cheque made payable to NODA
- Payment by BACS
Sort Code 60 - 83 - 01
Account 20379546
Quote AGM and your name
- Credit Card Payment
Please call 01733 374790

Names of additional members of your party

Disability considerations

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Access to your region's social media to share ideas, ask for help, source props/costumes etc.

Access to Regional Conferences and Workshops

Need Information?

You will find lots of factsheets on our website to help with running your society.

These include

Model Child Protection Policy
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• Robin Hood • Scrooge The Pantomime • The Sword and The
Scone • Sleeping Beauty • Snow Queen • Snow White and the
Seven Dwarfs • Treasure Island



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pantomimes

Director to Retire After 46 Years

NODA North West



Birkenhead Operatic Society Trust (BOST)'s Resident Director, Elsie Kelly, is due to step down next month, following a 46-year career with the society.

Having Directed her first show (*Oliver!*) with BOST in 1974, the award-winning Director has gone on to direct over 90 shows and concerts with the society, as well as directing professional pantomimes across the North-West starring artists including Les Dawson, Windsor Davis, Melvyn Hayes and Norman Vaughan.

Elsie will be retiring after BOST's production of *Hello Dolly*, which was performed at the Liverpool Empire theatre in May.

Elsie said: "*Hello Dolly* is a charming musical about a wonderful matchmaker and it's a super show to go out on a high with. I've actually Directed '*Hello Dolly*' three times before for BOST, the first time being only my second show as the company's Director. The production

starred Meg Johnson in the title role, who is now well known for playing Pearl Ladderbanks in ITV's *Emmerdale*." Elsie is no stranger to the world of television herself, first coming to prominence as Mrs Tardebigge in the original *Crossroads* and later appearing in *Skins*, *The Famous Five* and *Ghosthunters*.

Most recently, she has become best known for playing Noreen Maltby in the hugely successful ITV series *Benidorm*, playing Johnny Vegas' Mum, for all 10 series of the show.

Reflecting on her time in *Benidorm*, Elsie said: "I really admire writer Derren Litten as he delivered exactly what he set out to do.

"Even now, people come up to me in the street to ask why the sitcom ended. It was a great show, and I had a good cast around me."

The past decade has been a

particularly busy time for Elsie, combining her acting contracts alongside her directing work for BOST. Musicals under her leadership include Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Full Monty* and *Sweeney Todd*, showcasing the breadth of her musical theatre expertise.

Reflecting on her time with BOST, Elsie said: "I'm incredibly privileged to have worked with such a responsive company.

"I feel like we've grown together and I'm lucky to have produced such a high standard of shows with them." Meryl Langford, BOST's Chairman, added: "Elsie's contribution to BOST's success is incalculable.

"We would like to thank her for her loyal and long-term service to the society, and there is no doubt that she will be leaving an enormous legacy behind her."

"There aren't many good parts for older actors."
(lament of any actor over the age of 50)



WE BEG TO DIFFER...

...but then we have cornered the market in outstanding new plays for the more, shall we say, seasoned actor, without resorting to parts that call for zimmer frames, deathbed scenes, terminal illness or care homes, (well apart from one play, described by a local newspaper as "A sort of *Sex in the City* for the over 60s").

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The Georgian Theatre Richmond – a theatre of its time

NODA North



ChristineMeldonPhotography

The Grade 1 listed Georgian Theatre Royal in Richmond North Yorkshire built in 1788 is thought to be the only theatre of its age still used for its original purpose with many of its original interior. In the 1830's and its decline the 'pit' (stalls to you and me) was floored over and underneath the stage was turned into a Wine cellar with the upper floors used to store furniture and corn and latterly during WW2 a salvage depot for the war effort. After the war its original purpose was discovered with stage trap doors and curtain tracks from its original Georgian origins.

Fund raising and local community eventually reopened the grand old lady in 1963 and a subsequent £1.6m heritage grant in the early 21st century improved the facilities whilst retaining the original Georgian theatre.

It is hard to believe given its size that it originally held 400 (now reduced to a very tight 214). The stage at 40 sq.m (which includes the orchestra pit) gives any director cold sweats and Jordan Hamilton-Leighton in his directorial debut for Richmond OS was about to embark on the iconic Sister Act using an orchestra that due to size constraints can only accommodate five musicians. However, Jordan postulated that if you



turn it around, it was a great opportunity to use as much creative licence as you want. Richmond Operatic Society are lucky to have a truly dedicated team who love a challenge. Using a mixture of creative lighting, very simply scenery and a strategically placed gauze, they were able to make the most of all of the space and create something very special.

The 'Georgian' already had a special place in the heart of Jordan and his partner Richard as it was theatre that brought the two of them together and

it was inevitable that the Georgian would provide the setting for the pair's marriage in 2018 on the stage surrounded by their theatre friends – even the registrar was a member of the town's Drama group Richmond ADS.

The Georgian might be small, but its unique ambiance has seen it host theatre for the last 240 years, whilst also storing wine, corn, war salvage and even hosting weddings. Truly a versatile venue and a jewel in the heart of rural Yorkshire

Born in the back of a Bus!

NODA South West



David and Gill - 1980 'Oklahoma!' As Will Parker and Ado Annie. Credit: David Powell

At its 40th Anniversary, founder members David and Gill Powell explain how it all got started for Chippenham Light Opera Group ('CLOGS')

In the back of a bus (well, a coach) in 1979, on the way home from performing by invitation in Shaftesbury, David Powell, born and bred in Wiltshire's Chippenham, wondered why all of the town's performing talent had to go elsewhere? This included himself and wife, Gill. The trip to Shaftesbury had shown that even a small town could have its own group and Theatre and it was time to see if Chippenham could shine with its own.

David was the driving force as first Chairman of the Chippenham Light Operatic Group (CLOGs for short and now known as CLOGs Musical Theatre), and while the very active Committee set about raising necessary funds, David's role was to track down the talent. The very experienced Nora Gree was recruited as the first Musical Director, with Muriel Lethbridge as a producer and a very successful production of "La Belle Helene" was the result. Gill took on costumes, with their house becoming the main store – a role she and it still perform today!

In fact, David and Gill have been in every show and every concert since then, most recently 2019's critically acclaimed 40th Anniversary production of Lionel Bart's 'Blitz!'. The group has

changed and developed over that time – from school room to the upgraded Need Centre (which David was able to encourage too, being a local Councillor) and from piano and violin to full-orchestra. David's aim, as part of the Society's Constitution has always been to 'work to as higher a standard as possible'. As with all things, there have been lows, as well as the highs but each new production team 'raises the bar' and with the very successful formation of the Society's youth section - 'The Cloettes' – the future is looking really bright. Here's to the next 40 years!



David and Gill, - 2019 Blitz! Credit: David Powell



Spudfest!

NODA East Midlands

We all know the issue of double show days and what to eat between the shows.

At Milton Keynes Amateur Operatic Society, we hold... Spudfest!!

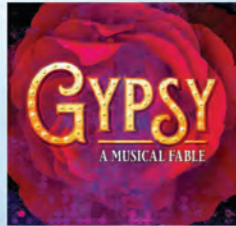
Admittedly it helps if you have an Angel. Ours comes in the form of Mel, who usually helps with refreshments at rehearsals.

On days where we are staging two shows, Mel feeds us with jacket potatoes, chilli, cheese beans and salad trimmings, for a tasty, healthy and nutritious meal that satisfies those post show cravings!

Prep in advance is the secret. There's no kitchen facilities backstage so she bakes the potatoes in the morning, wraps them in tin foil and packs them in an insulated picnic box. Her chilli (much admired!) is comes in a slow cooker and beans etc. are warmed in a microwave that she brings with her. Also on the menu is her home made coleslaw and something magical she does with cocktail sausages. Whatever it is, it is much appreciated by the ravenous cast! And so much healthier for that 2nd show than a dial-up pizza or sneaky trip to maccydees!



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A CONCORD THEATRICALS COMPANY
SAMUEL FRENCH

Family Ties

NODA Wales & Ireland



Following the massive success of their 40th-anniversary production of Barnum in 2018, Llandudno Youth Music Theatre (LYMT) are now in rehearsal for their next offering – Oklahoma!

Although this is the first time the group have taken on this mighty musical, the group's link to the show is quite unique!

Cali Frangos, who will take on the leading female role of Laurey, along with her cousins Jordan (Ike Skidmore) and Jadzea Lawrence (company) are the great-grandchildren of Gwen Overton and Clive Stock. Both met and fell in love over 70 years ago when they were both performing in the original West End production of Oklahoma! At the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane in 1947, where Gwen was the understudy to Laurey. Clive remembers that there were some lovely girls in the

show, but he fell for Gwen. For three weeks, she did not notice him or talk to him just a smile. They gradually became very close, and on the 23rd December, 1948 were engaged and married in 1949.

Gwen was the first British leading lady in Oklahoma! – until that time, the cast had been made up solely of American performers, including Howard Keel who was affectionately known as Harry.

Clive auditioned for a role in the show singing on the empty stage at Drury Lane for an American producer and was accepted. He was given a musical score of the show and told to attend performances, stand at the back, as each performance was sold out, and learn the show musically and see the choreography of the musical numbers. Clive had a scant rehearsal

with the producer and the male singers and one run through with the ensemble, and then he was in the show. Gwen went on to be the original star of the musical Brigadoon in Australia and New Zealand.

In 1947 the actors did nine performances a week with a 37-piece orchestra and not one microphone in the theatre!

In 1947 'Oklahoma!' and 'Annie Get Your Gun' were the most successful and financially rewarding productions in London.

Together Clive and Gwen appeared in the following musicals, Show Boat, the Student Prince, the Merry Widow and CB Cochran's last musical Love at the Top.

Cali, Jordan and Jadzea have enjoyed to opportunity to find out more about such a unique and personal connection to the show. "We find it quite inspirational to have great grandparents who can give us their insight into such a fabulous musical."

Now in their 90s, LYMT hopes that Gwen and Clive will be able to attend the opening night of the show as guests of honour.

A Letter To The Editor

"I enjoyed Michaela Clement Hayes' article 'The Point of NO Return' in the Spring 2019 edition of NODA Today but I would like to add a few points of my own.

First, we need to accept that there is more than one way to skin a cat. (Calm down, Tommy, I didn't mean you.)

Some directors get what they want by knowing exactly what they want and not being shy about letting the cast know about it – sometimes at full volume. A director friend of mine found himself scandalised by Michaela's article. He directs very good musicals and is in the (fortunate) position of being able to cast talented young people, some of whom have done professional work. He observes that they are the best to work with, not necessarily because of their talent but because they are used to trusting the judgement of the director.

On the other hand he does lots of background work ensuring that his cast has a good understanding of what the show is about. Unlike the director of a production of Man of La Mancha I went to see where at the end of the last show it was possible for one of the principals to tell me 'I still don't understand what it was about.'

I have never had to work with a martinet but on balance I think I would prefer the commitment and pressure (and occasional frustration) implied by that with someone whose idea of direction in rehearsal was to listen to the actors as she read through the script, stopping us now and then to point out a word we had missed out or to tell someone to "Make that 'Ah' another second longer."

I guess the happy medium is for the director to be aware of the need to build a team who are confident about what they are doing and appreciate

that their aim is to be able to put on a show which will entertain the audience.

Finally, I think we would all agree on the point she makes about performers having a life beyond am-dram and that getting to a rehearsal late does not warrant the hair-dryer treatment. But on the other hand we all recognise the situation where someone takes 'being human' beyond the pale; persistent lateness or missing one rehearsal after another and still expecting to be in the show (in this case often an example – for various reasons - of misplaced director tolerance). Never mind the director – that shows disrespect for the whole company.

Maybe the best philosophy – and unbelievably, even in these enlightened times, it is not always a shared one – is for director, cast and crew to remember that we're all in this together!"

Ann Actor

Debbie Turner... You're One of Our Favourite Things!

NODA East

The Sound of Music proved a very special show for Bury St Edmunds Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society (BSEAODS). During the run at the Theatre Royal on Wednesday 1st May, the cast were honoured to have Debbie Turner in the audience.

Debbie played the seven-year-old Marta Von Trapp in the Hollywood adaptation of *The Sound of Music* with Julie Andrews and Christopher Plummer. Regaling the cast, especially the children, with stories of filming especially the scene where Maria and the children fall in a lake," she said. "The lake was very cold and the director, Robert Wise, wanted to be sure that he got every angle, so he had us do it a second time when Julie Andrews fell backwards off, and of course, he used that clip. Julie Andrews she said, was wonderful when we weren't filming she would pull us aside, pick up the guitar and sing and tell us jokes. She was pretty much our governess on and off camera.

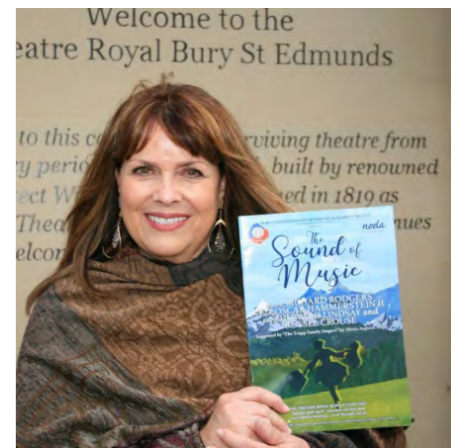
Debbie who lives in America was visiting her family in Suffolk when she

called into Theatre Royal, Bury St. Edmunds to watch friends in *The Sound of Music* cast, Holly Hayhurst (Sister Margaretta) and Isabella Sica (Gretl). She also met Eleni South and Oonagh Cantillon who played Marta Von Trapp on alternate nights and gave the whole cast some fantastic advice to boost their confidence. It must have worked, as they received a standing ovation! Debbie said: "It was fantastic, I really enjoyed a thoroughly impressive show from beginning to end and which had some real stand out performances.

Debbie left acting to concentrate on her studies and is now a successful floral designer, but despite the passage of time remembers a great deal of making the film thanks to "a good photographic memory" and lots of photographs taken on set by her parents. First performed in London's West End in 1961, the score to *The Sound of Music* was the last to be written by Rodgers and Hammerstein. *The Sound of Music* remains one of the most popular and successful musical films of all time, thanks to songs such as Edelweiss, The Sound of Music, My Favourite Things and Do-Re-Me.



Joe Taylor Photography



Joe Taylor Photography



Joe Taylor Photography

Congratulations and Celebrations

NODA Scotland

Kirkcaldy Gilbert & Sullivan Society

At the end of their recent 80th-anniversary concert, NODA Scotland Councillor, Stuart McCue-Dick, was delighted to present a 70-year long service award to one of the members of Kirkcaldy G & S Society, Margaret Mentiplay.

Margaret's first show with Kirkcaldy G & S Society was *The Gondoliers* in 1949/50 which was their first fully costumed show after the war. She sang mostly in the chorus but did step out a few times to play minor roles such as Isabel in *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Margaret's friendship with a young gentleman, named Ivan, who also sang in the Society began to blossom and they eventually married and had two daughters who accompanied Margaret

to the presentation. Margaret and her husband Ivan became stalwarts of the Society. They were also great supporters of NODA and enjoyed attending many NODA Scotland Conferences over the years at Peebles Hydro.

When Margaret retired from singing, she remained helping behind the scenes. She has been a tremendous supporter of Kirkcaldy G & S Society over her 70 years and is a Life Member of the company.

Stuart thanked Margaret on behalf of NODA for her 70 years of dedicated service to amateur theatre, ensuring Kirkcaldy G & S Society has gone from strength to strength.



Inverness Musical Theatre

The club recognised 266 years of dedicated service to amateur theatre, and NODA Scotland Councillor Stuart McCue-Dick was delighted to be asked to present these awards to the following members (L to R):

Stuart McCue-Dick (NODA Scotland Councillor)

Carol Robertson (27 years)

Louise Munro (61 years)

Maureen Pringle (59 years)

Stella Reynolds (42 years)

George Reynolds (45 years)

George also received a NODA Recognition of Commitment certificate for his service to Inverness Musical Theatre for all his hard work and dedication to backstage.

2020 sees the 95th anniversary of Inverness Musical Theatre, which was previously called Inverness Opera Company. They are currently planning a show to celebrate this milestone as well as a number of events to commemorate this landmark in the history of amateur theatre in Inverness.



At a dinner dance and awards ceremony following their recent production of *Footloose – the Musical* at the Eden Court Theatre, presentations were made to members of the company:

Backstage Award - Margaret Burgess Aburn;

Diva Award - Darren McMillan;

Devine Award for Personality of the Year - Sophie Marr;

Best Newcomer Award - Alan Banner;

and Director's Award - Morven Reid.

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Specially written for amateur musical groups with largely female memberships. A therapy clinic for celebrities, down on its luck, is forced to take in a bunch of old folk as their Home is uninhabitable. A mystery celebrity phones to check in, and it's all hands to the pump to try and convince her that the place is well run and managed; when in fact it's the old folk who are gearing up to administer their own bizarre range of alternative therapies.

Next Production: *Your Town, Next Year?*



This excellent musical is based on the true story of what happened (with a bit of artistic licence) when a ship containing 50,000 cases of whisky runs aground on a remote Scottish island in 1943. Adapted from Compton Mackenzie's novel, this musical has had two very successful productions at the Pitlochry Festival Theatre in 2009 and 2011 and numerous amateur societies in Scotland have produced it. However, it awaits its premier production outside of Scotland.

Next production: *Innerleithen, 30/3-04/04/20*



In 1612, James and Catherine both from different classes, backgrounds and worlds find themselves in a melting pot of politics and suspicion. In newly Protestant London, the King, his court and his henchman (the Witchfinder), each with a different vested interest, take up against the innocent Catholic residents of Pendle who they suspect are witches. A powerful story with dominant characters and soaring themes, the musical traces the heart-rending events and their consequences, painting a picture that encompasses life and of loss, but equally tells of love and of hope.

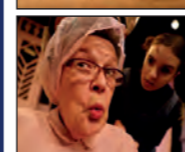
Next production: *Lytham St Annes, 30/10- 2/11/19*

And for the dramatically-minded our plays are top notch...



Hoovering on The Edge by Hilary Spiers

(1m, 7f) Full Length Drama. Discover the unlikely friendships that develop between seven very different women, tutored by one hapless male, on a summer writing holiday. Sun, sangria and story-telling, what could possibly go wrong! Meet Moira the tactless hypochondriac, Clare the dippy yoga teacher, and feisty Rita, to name but a few, as the women embark on a voyage of discovery about themselves, their hopes and their dreams... and uncover some surprising home truths.



Curl Up And Die by Anna Longaretti

(3m, 7f) Full Length Comedy. Ruth's antiquated hairdressing salon's only chance of survival is a complete make-over, funded by winning the cash-prize hairdressing competition run by 'Fab Hair' magazine. Things are looking hopeful until Ruth's old faithful blue rinse ladies arrive during the judging and inveigle their shampoo and sets from her. The petulant model throws a strop, the Spanish photographer fuses the lights, and a pompous H&S Officer arrives for an 'in depth' inspection. During the mayhem one of the 'old biddy' customers seemingly dies under the drier. Could things get any worse?

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NODA Celebrations



Bridlington Here We Go Again!

NODA North East

The North East Region's annual Gala Weekend took place in April and, once again, a full programme of events took place. A Dance Workshop had Dee Bennie-Marshall choreographing an amazing Mamma Mia theme. Sarah Osborne ran an Improvisation and Creativity workshop for us and led us carefully through a journey, enacting stories in a few minutes, incorporating making pictures with our bodies as diverse as 'a park', and 'the colour blue' helping us realise the potential for this sort of work as actors or directors. It felt as though it would be somehow undervaluing them to call some of these exercises 'games' – but they were such fun!

Another highlight was the "Do you see what I sign" workshop run by Paul Whittaker, who has been deaf from birth and who has music degrees

from various universities, and Natalie Davies. They gave a very humorous insight into the art of signing with the attendees encouraged to join in. While we are fully aware that signing is of major importance to our friends who are hard of hearing and in some cases profoundly deaf, there is also a large amount of fun to be had in this genre.

At Saturday evening's Ball, we danced the night away with The Magnetics making their first appearance at the event. They said "What can we say? Just a big thank you for letting us be part of your wonderful Gala Weekend. The NODA members who attended the Ball certainly know how to have a good time!"

The Ball followed two performance by Guiseley AOS of *A Chorus Line*. Friday's Gala Dinner evening included

a cabaret provided by Acorn Theatre Company and the weekend also included a Youth Day.

On the Sunday morning in the Royal Hall at The Spa, we were treated to cabaret from the Grumbleweeds, who had the assembled masses in hysterics. James Brandon and Robin Colvill gave us their special brand of comedy to ensure the weekend ended on a high and many people said that their performance was a comedy masterclass. James said "There's no middle ground with comedy, they're either laughing or they're not. As the old saying goes: There's no such thing as a background comedian..." and NODA NE were certainly laughing out loud!

Thank you, Grumbleweeds, for your wonderful company!



NODA North West



Once again Manchester was awash with glitz and glamour as the NODA North West Regional Awards dinner took place over the weekend of Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th May. The occasion is marked to not only celebrate the nominees and eventual winners from throughout the year, but to also celebrate everybody's hard work, determination and dedication to perform to the highest levels and to elevate the standard of amateur theatre across the country.



The Youth Awards took centre stage on the Saturday night with the announcements preceded by the impeccable talent of Manchester Musical Youth Theatre who took to the stage in a scintillating performance showcasing so many memorable performances from the stars of our future.

The Adult Awards followed on Sunday night with a superb performance from the Morecombe Warblers who provided such wonderful entertainment. Visit the website for full list of winners.

NODA South West

Another successful night of fun and recognition of the best in NODA South West!

With the aspiration of trying to get the awards around to all areas of a very big region, 2019 saw the NODA Southwest Awards arrive at The Crown Plaza, Plymouth.

The awards are recognition of progress and excellence in the region and so just being nominated and getting along for the night are really the main achievements. It was another fun evening of meeting and making new friends, hosted by NODA President Jacquie Stedman and Southwest Regional Councillor Graham Liverton. A full list of the awards are on the NODA South West website.

2020 will see a return to the Crown Plaza Plymouth, but in early May. This is to allow more groups to attend. Hope to see you there!



NODA East



NODA West Midlands



Pershore Operatic & Dramatic Society (PODS)



Paul Herrington's Makeup workshop



Jacquie Stedman with Renee Field



Regional Councillor Ian G. Cox



NODA WM Committee



Alan Bruce Wyn Mason, Chris Bell, with Jacquie Stedman and Ian G Cox

NODA London



We gathered, once again, at the Radlett Centre, for our Theatre Festival and Awards Presentation. It was great to welcome Jacquie back to her home Region to present the awards.

A morning of masterclasses covering acting, accents and make up was followed by a showcase by last year's winners of the London Youngstars Award, Musical Youth Company of Oxford, to open the afternoon. Our AGM was then followed by the presentation of the London Regional Awards and District Flames.

We return to Radlett in 2020 and planning is already underway to make Youth at the heart of our Festival Weekend.



NODA Wales & Ireland



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

In 2018, 1295 people were awarded Long Service Awards, ranging from 10 Years up to an amazing 70 Years!

NODA wants to recognise everyone who is awarded one of these prestigious awards, to show our gratitude to all those people who have given years of their life unpaid to amateur theatre.

In this edition we showcase the 25 Year Winners up to 45 Year from 2018.



Download an application form today at noda.org.uk/awards

East

25 Years Lynda Morgan	Lowestoft Players	30 Years Wendy Barber	Springers Amateur ODS
25 Years Louise Byrne	Shenfield Operatic Society	30 Years Sharon Jane Gardner	Springers Amateur ODS
25 Years Kerry Cooke	Shenfield Operatic Society	35 Years Mary Driver	Letchworth Arcadians
25 Years Andrew Corrie	Springers Amateur ODS	35 Years Jenny Wright	Lowestoft Players
25 Years Matthew Gregory	St Albans Musical Theatre Company	35 Years Judy Molyneux	Springers Amateur ODS
25 Years Michael Readman	St Albans Musical Theatre Company	40 Years Pat Tegerdine	East Norfolk Operatic Society
25 Years Madeleine Emmerson	Thurrock Courts Players	40 Years Janet Milton	Letchworth Arcadians
25 Years Helen Steed	Waveney Light Opera Group	40 Years David Walker	Letchworth Arcadians
30 Years Janet Barley	East Norfolk Operatic Society	40 Years Geraldine Duffield	Lowestoft Players
30 Years Suzanne Kingston	Lowestoft Players	45 Years Sheila Tuffield	East Norfolk Operatic Society
30 Years Deborah Anderson	Springers Amateur ODS	45 Years Deanne Dickson	Lowestoft Players

East Midlands

25 Years Lisa Cooke	Bonkers Theatrical	30 Years Lee Hartshorn	Watson Players
25 Years Jane Walker	Bonkers Theatrical	35 Years Valerie Crick	Chesterfield G&S Society
25 Years Louise O'Boyle	Erewash Musical Society	40 Years Alan Galway	Bonkers Theatrical
25 Years Sarah Liverton	Irchester Players	40 Years Tracey Galway	Bonkers Theatrical
25 Years Michael Tanser	Welford Amateur Dramatic Society	40 Years Mark Walker	Bonkers Theatrical
25 Years Hilary Whorton	Welford Amateur Dramatic Society	40 Years Judith Doram	Chesterfield Operatic Society
25 Years Timothy Whorton	Welford Amateur Dramatic Society	40 Years Mandy Kovacs	Coalville Amateur Operatic Society
30 Years Claire Farrand-Preston	Beeston Musical Theatre Group	40 Years Alison Everitt	Irchester Players
30 Years Rachel Bass	Irchester Players	40 Years Sue Smith	Irchester Players
30 Years Anthony Curson	Irchester Players	45 Years Nanette Lovell	Nothampton Musical Theatre Company
30 Years Julie Haydon	Irchester Players		

London

25 Years	Wycombe Society for Performing Arts	30 Years Tony Lo	HEOS Musical Theatre
25 Years	Wycombe Society for Performing Arts	30 Years David Hornsby	Banbury Operatic
25 Years Mr Nigel Winter	Abingdon Op. Soc.	35 Years Mrs Janet Trinder	Abingdon Op. Society
25 Years Mrs Sue Payne	Abingdon Op. Soc.	35 Years Mrs Lucy Thompson	Barking Music and Drama
25 Years Mr Oliver Hemming	Sinodun Players	35 Years Mr Keith Yapp	Sinodun Players
25 Years Mr Nick Morley	Sinodun Players	40 Years Mr Martin Wheatley	Sinodun Players
30 Years Mrs Tina Hood Liles	Abingdon Op. Society	45 Years Mrs Chris Waite	Abingdon Op. Society
30 Years Karen Parker	Forest Musical Theatre Company	45 Years Mrs Lynne Winter	Abingdon Op. Society
30 Years Mr John Wilkes	Abingdon Op. Society	45 Years Mrs Jenny Crumpton	Chesham Musical Theatre Group

North

30 Years P.A. Johnson	Riverside Musical Theatre Company	40 Years C. Hillam	Riverside Musical Theatre Company
30 Years I. Wheatley	Ferry Hill Stage Society	40 Years D. Beall	Tees Valley Gilbert & Sullivan
30 Years G. Robertson	Tees Valley Gilbert & Sullivan	45 Years B. Everitt	Teesside Musical Theatre Company
35 Years S. Dale	Teesside Musical Theatre Company	45 Years S. Emmerson	Teesside Musical Theatre Company
35 Years L. Thompson	Teesside Musical Theatre Company	45 Years D. Coleman	West End Operatic Society
35 Years M.E. Dunne	St. Andres O.S. Sunderland	45 Years D. Rae	Dryburn Theatrical Workshop
35 Years K. Simpson	Tees Valley Gilbert & Sullivan	45 Years A. Jackson	Tees Valley Gilbert & Sullivan
40 Years S. Armitage	Vane Tempest Theatre Group	45 Years M. Jones	Tees Valley Gilbert & Sullivan
40 Years F. Sanderson	Darlington Operatic Society	45 Years E. Nellist	Tees Valley Gilbert & Sullivan
40 Years L.E. Gowan	Riverside Musical Theatre Company	45 Years A.B. Simpson	Tees Valley Gilbert & Sullivan

North East

25 Years John Sheard	Batley Amateur Thespian Society	25 Years Elizabeth Ross	Suttons Green Hut Theatre Company
25 Years Andrea Ball	Batley Amateur Thespian Society	25 Years Shona Preston	The Bradford Catholic Players
25 Years Margaret Hanson	Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society	25 Years Adrienne Denton	Wombwell AOS
25 Years Leslie Walker	Bingley G&S Society	25 Years Kath Turp	Wombwell AOS
25 Years Jennifer Walker	Bingley G&S Society	25 Years Jasmine Gillespie	Wombwell AOS
25 Years Russel Thornton	Dinnington Operatic Society	25 Years Pauline Elliot	Scarborough Musicals
25 Years Gail Cobb	Dinnington Operatic Society	25 Years Robert Pogson	Marsden PC AODS
25 Years Beverley Day	Goole AODS	25 Years Richard Phillip	Settle AOS
25 Years John Hurst	Halifax Light Opera Society	25 Years Eric Parker	Settle AOS
25 Years Marjorie Bond	Leeds AOS	30 Years Alison Smith	Batley Amateur Thespian Society
25 Years David Knights	Suttons Green Hut Theatre Company	30 Years Andrea Ball	Batley Amateur Thespian Society

North East cont.

30 Years	Ann Jones	Dinnington Operatic Society
30 Years	Linda West	Encore Theatre Company
30 Years	John Whelpton	Encore Theatre Company
30 Years	Katrina Knights	Suttons Green Hut Theatre Company
30 Years	Tracey Moulson	The Bradford Players
30 Years	Jean Waldie	Wickersley Musical Theatre Company
30 Years	Claire Fielding	Marsden PC AODS
35 Years	Susan Sheppard	Encore Theatre Company
35 Years	Carole Whelpton	Encore Theatre Company
35 Years	Andrew Sheppard	Encore Theatre Company
35 Years	Nicola Brook	Leeds AOS
35 Years	Richard White	Leeds AOS
35 Years	Jane Allerton	Leeds AOS
35 Years	Sally Barnes	Leeds AOS
35 Years	Helen Narcross	Leeds G&S Society
35 Years	Raymond Waters	Suttons Green Hut Theatre Company
35 Years	Anna Stead	Suttons Green Hut Theatre Company
35 Years	Philip Michael Smith	Suttons Green Hut Theatre Company
35 Years	Terence Stamp	The Bradford Catholic Players
35 Years	Robert Thurman	Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society
35 Years	Jenny McAndrew	Wickersley Musical Theatre Company

North West

25 Years	Brenda Murray	Blackburn Musical Theatre Company
25 Years	Andrew Bours	Centre Stage Youth Theatre Company
25 Years	Katherine Brady	Heywood Amateur ODS
25 Years	Lynn Byrne	Heywood Amateur ODS
25 Years	Vanessa Turpin	Whitehaven Theatre Group Trust Ltd
25 Years	Tracy McOuat	Whitehaven & District Amateur OS
30 Years	Mr Tony Yates	Garstang Theatre Group
30 Years	Mrs Pamela Yates	Garstang Theatre Group
30 Years	Mrs Hilary Stubbs	Grange & Dist Amateur OS
30 Years	Mr Clifford Beckett	Lancaster Amateur Dramatic & OS
30 years	Miss Jill Mason	Centre Stage Youth Theatre Company
30 Years	Gordon Peterson	Dadleston Youth Players
30 Years	Nicholas Collinge	Abbey Musical Society
35 Years	Mrs Vanessa Turpin	Whitehaven Theatre Group Trust Ltd
35 Years	Miss Beth Lawrence	Whitehaven Theatre Group Trust Ltd
35 Years	Anne Whittaker Pearce	Burnley Light Opera Society
35 Years	Susan Avanson	Burnley Light Opera Society
35 Years	Joanne Gill	Burnley Light Opera Society

Scotland

25 Years	Claire Mallinson	Alyth Musical Society
25 Years	Annette Crawford Fraser	Arbroath Amateur Musical Society
25 Years	Jo-Ann Robinson	Ayr Amateur Opera Company
25 Years	David Newton	Broughty Ferry Amateur OS
25 Years	Susan James	Carlisle Amateur Operatic Society
25 Years	Karen Fleming	Carnoustie Musical Society
25 Years	Linsey McDonald	Carnoustie Musical Society
25 Years	Jen Shearer	Downfield Musical Society
25 Years	Jack Archibald	Dunfermline Gilbert & Sullivan Society
25 Years	Anne Anderson	Elgin Musical Theatre
25 Years	Mike Driscoll	EROS Musical Society
25 Years	Paul Hannigan	EROS Musical Society
25 Years	Jane Sinclair	EROS Musical Society
25 Years	Lucy Thomson	Galashiels Amateur Operatic Society
25 Years	Diane White	Glenrothes Amateur Musical Association
25 Years	Ann Gardiner	Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
25 Years	Shirley Bean	Innerleithen Amateur Operatic Society
25 Years	Allan Graham	Innerleithen Amateur Operatic Society
25 Years	Gillian Rendle	Innerleithen Amateur Operatic Society
25 Years	Nicola Watt	Innerleithen Amateur Operatic Society
25 Years	Marilyn Susan Gowland	Kirkwall Amateur Operatic Society

35 Years	Claire Fielding
40 Years	Richard Howard Mitchell
40 Years	Pamela Robinson (Oxley)
40 Years	Catherine Pidd
40 Years	Frank Appleyard
40 Years	Bryan Blackie
40 Years	Alison Waters
40 Years	Martin Walker
40 Years	Tim Rutherford
40 Years	Ann Rutherford
40 Years	Richard Howard Mitchell
40 Years	Robert Thurman
40 Years	Jennifer Normanton
40 Years	Andrew Wallbank
45 Years	John Andrews White
45 Years	David Wozencroft
45 Years	Ann Webster
45 Years	Margaret Elizabeth Jennings
45 Years	Malcolm Hyde
45 Years	Julie Bee
45 Years	Ray Smith

35 Years	Christine Taylor
40 Years	Mr Martin Neil Craig
40 Years	Mrs Anne Pegg
40 Years	Mrs Christine Parker
40 Years	Mrs Patricia Beckett
40 Years	Mrs Joan Simpson
40 Years	Mrs Joan Simpson
40 Years	Mr John Currie Savage
40 Years	Martin Craig
40 Years	Sandra Ashton
40 Years	Michael Taylor
40 Years	Aileen Toole
45 Years	Mrs Alison Sheridan Eaton
45 Years	Mrs Ghislain Coleman
45 Years	Mr John Ripley Spencer
45 Years	Mr Eric Richard Parkington
45 Years	Sue Ramsey
45 Years	John Spencer

25 Years	Sandra Shearer
25 Years	Shelley McLaren
25 Years	Margot McKay
25 Years	Elaine Barlow
25 Years	Audrey Westwaters
25 Years	Liz Smith
25 Years	Jacqui Baxter
25 Years	Valerie Goff
25 Years	Leah Smith
25 Years	Wendy Young
25 Years	Laura Moore
30 Years	Rose McCann
30 Years	Fay Caird
30 Years	Chris Brooks
30 Years	Angela Pichlmayer
30 Years	Gregor Small
30 Years	Barbara Churcher
30 Years	Cathy Endeacott
30 Years	Stewart Borthwick
30 Years	Janette Leask

Marsden PC AODS
Brighthouse Theatre Productions
Encore Theatre Company
Encore Theatre Company
Leeds AOS
Suttons Green Hut Theatre Company
Suttons Green Hut Theatre Company
The Bradford Catholic Players
Greaseborough OS
Greaseborough OS
Brighthouse Theatre Productions
Batley Gilbert & Sullivan Society
Brighthouse Theatre Productions
Ilkley AOS
Brighthouse Theatre Productions
Brighthouse Theatre Productions
Leeds AOS
Suttons Green Hut Theatre Company
Wombwell AOS
Meersbrook Park Church OS
Meersbrook Park Church OS

Walmsley Church AODS
Barrow Operatic & Dramatic Society
Shavington Village Festival Committee
Shavington Village Festival Committee
Lancaster Amateur DOS
Blackburn Musical Theatre Company
Blackburn Musical Theatre Company
Pilling and Over-Wyre Drama Group
Barrow Operatic & Dramatic Society
Farnworth Performing Arts Company
Walmsley Church AODS
Farnworth Performing Arts Company
St Thomas ADS Golborne
St Thomas ADS Golborne
Whitehaven & District AOS
Blackburn G & S Society
Dadleston Youth Players
Whitehaven & District AOS

Kirkwall Amateur Operatic Society
Larbert Amateur Operatic Society
Leven Amateur Musical Association
Markinch Amateur Operatic Society
Markinch Amateur Operatic Society
Opus Theatre Club
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
St Paul's Church Dramatic Society
St Paul's Church Dramatic Society
The Lyric Club
Airdrie & Coalbridge Amateur OOS
Cupar Amateur Musical Society
Falkirk Operatic Society
Innerleithen Amateur Operatic Society
Innerleithen Amateur Operatic Society
Johnstone Phoenix Theatre Group
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
Larbert Amateur Operatic Society
Larbert Amateur Operatic Society

Scotland cont.

30 Years	Carol Fraser
30 Years	Anna McKinnon
30 Years	Sandra Oliver
30 Years	Carol McGovern
30 Years	Cameron Lowe
35 Years	Dianne Connor
35 Years	Netta Brewster
35 Years	Ian James
35 Years	Gordon Wood
35 Years	Jennifer Finnie

35 Years	Patricia Brown
35 Years	Cathie Brannigan
35 Years	Roland Russell
35 Years	Margaret Thomson
35 Years	Kay Dickson
35 Years	Gillian Maitland
35 Years	John Scott
35 Years	Fiona Margaret Scott
35 Years	Janine Hardie
35 Years	Robbie Menzies
35 Years	Carol McGovern
40 Years	Brian Boyd
40 Years	Jean Mitchell
40 Years	Martin Tarr

South East

25 Years	Julia Brown
25 Years	Karen Martin
25 Years	Stuart Clements
25 Years	Caroline Egg

25 Years	Diane James
25 Years	William Hann
30 Years	Caroline Mary Balcom
30 Years	Dot Jenkins
30 Years	Richard Lee
30 Years	Simon Dade
30 Years	Kay Rowan
30 Years	Sandy Simpson
30 Years	Veronica Johnstone
30 Years	Adele Ebbage

South West

25 Years	Mrs Pauline Harris
25 Years	Mrs Annette Lee
25 Years	Mrs Pamela Nielson
25 Years	Mrs Mary Elizabeth Clements
25 Years	Mr Graham Liverton
25 Years	Ms Sally Mathews
25 Years	Mrs Jean Rudd
25 Years	Mr Mark Rudd
25 Years	Mrs Mary Clements
25 Years	Mrs Christine West
25 Years	Ms Claire Whitmarsh
25 Years	Mr Andrew Scammell
30 Years	Mrs Geraldine Way
30 Years	Mrs Angela Margret Rebbeck
30 Years	Mr James Tucker
30 Years	Mr James Tampin
30 Years	Mr Graham Liverton
30 Years	Mr Michael White
30 Years	Ms Sally Mathews
30 Years	Mrs Jean Rudd
30 Years	Claire Parrett

Linlithgow Amateur Musical Productions
Musselburgh Amateur Musical Assoc.
Selkirk Musical Theatre Company
Southern Light Opera Company
Theatre Guild Glasgow
Anstruther & District Amateur MS
Broughty Ferry Amateur OS
Carlisle Amateur Operatic Society
Cupar Amateur Musical Society
Dalziel High School Former Pupils'
Easter Egg Club
Elgin Musical Theatre
Glenrothes Amateur Musical Assoc.
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
Larbert Amateur Operatic Society
Leven Amateur Musical Association
Linlithgow Amateur Musical Productions
Markinch Amateur Operatic Society
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
Southern Light Opera Company
Carnoustie Musical Society
Downfield Musical Society
Dunfermline Gilbert & Sullivan Society

South Downe Musical Society
Margate Operatic Society
Margate Operatic Society
Romsey Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society
Staines Musical Theatre Group
Staines Musical Theatre Group
Fareham Musical Society
Margate Operatic Society
Walton & Weybridge AOS
Milton Musical Society
Rowan, Kay
Burley Players
Burley Players
Local Amateur Music Players (LAMPS)

40 Years	Joyce Gallacher
40 Years	Lawrence Phillips
40 Years	Sheila Wilson
40 Years	Adrienne F. Robb
40 Years	Maira Robertson
40 Years	Charles Small
40 Years	Barbara Hood
40 Years	Shirley Reid
40 Years	Martin Smith
45 Years	Sheena Seaton
45 Years	David Mitchinson
45 Years	Gordon Hogg
45 Years	Mike Pendlowski
45 Years	Helen Brown
45 Years	Fiona Wilson
45 Years	Anne Morrison
45 Years	Aileen Dumper
45 Years	Jack Rigg
45 Years	Jeanna Connell
45 Years	Dale Henry
45 Years	Evelyn Purves
45 Years	Gordon Smith
45 Years	Janette MacDonald
45 Years	Eileen Cant

35 Years	Anita Waterhouse
35 years	Sherry Underwood
35 Years	Annie Yorath
35 years	Anne Bell
35 Years	Timothy Price
35 Years	Lynda Taylor
40 Years	Marie Coltman
40 Years	Neil Harris
40 Years	Sue Tregoning
40 Years	Christine Eastwood
40 Years	Anne Jagger
40 Years	Peter Colley
45 Years	Gordon Gransbury
45 Years	Chris Alderton

Falkirk Bohemians Amateur ODS
Falkirk Operatic Society
Galashiels Amateur Operatic Society
Innerleithen Amateur Operatic Society
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
Leven Amateur Musical Association
Selkirk Musical Theatre Company
The Lyric Club
The Lyric Club
Carnoustie Musical Society
Carpe Diem Productions
Downfield Musical Society
Dunfermline Gilbert & Sullivan Society
Falkirk Operatic Society
Galashiels Amateur Operatic Society
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Innerleithen Amateur Operatic Society
Kirkcaldy Gilbert & Sullivan Society
Larbert Amateur Operatic Society
Larbert Amateur Operatic Society
Musselburgh Amateur Musical Assoc.
Opus Theatre Club
Rosyth & District Musical Society
Southern Light Opera Company

South Downe Musical Society
Margate Operatic Society
Margate Operatic Society
Basingstoke Amateur Operatic Society
Basingstoke Amateur Operatic Society
CODY Musical Theatre Company
Milton Musical Society
Tunbridge Wells ODS
Staines Musical Theatre Group
Milton Musical Society
Milton Musical Society
Portsmouth Players
Margate Operatic Society
Walton & Weybridge AOS

Thornbury Musical Theatre Group
Sidmouth Musical Comedy Club
Axminster Musical Theatre
Yeovil Amateur Operatic Society
Yeovil Amateur Operatic Society
WOW Musical Theatre
Axminster Musical Theatre
Bridgwater Operatic Society
Sidmouth Musical Comedy Club
Rex Players Wareham
The Bridgwater Pantomime Society
Yeovil Amateur Operatic Society
Yeovil Amateur Operatic Society
Thornbury Musical Theatre Group
Thornbury Musical Theatre Group
Musical Theatre Salisbury
Bridgwater Operatic Society
Bridgwater Operatic Society
Thornbury Musical Theatre Group
Bridgwater Operatic Society
Axminster Musical Theatre

Wales & Ireland

25 Years Jane Taffrey
 25 Years David Crawford
 25 Years Howie Johnson
 25 Years Judith Rees
 25 Years Mark Thomas
 25 Years Gareth Edwards
 25 Years Helen Caudle
 25 Years Deborah Harrington

Llandudno Musical Productions
 Llandudno Musical Productions
 Port Talbot & District A.O.S.
 Port Talbot & District A.O.S.
 Port Talbot & District A.O.S.
 Port Talbot & District A.O.S.
 Port Talbot & District A.O.S.
 Abergavenny A.O.D.S.

25 Years Julie Faulkner
 25 Years Sandra Williams
 30 Years Luke A.N.Spencer
 35 Years Dee McIlroy
 35 Years Cynthia J Shepherd
 40 Years Christine Mcivor
 45 Years Linda Davies

Londonderry Musical Society
 Rhos On Sea Savoyards
 Bishop Vaughan Catholic School
 Abergavenny A.O.D.S.
 Rhos On Sea Savoyards
 Londonderry Musical Society
 Port Talbot & District A.O.S.

West Midlands

25 Years Avril Bell
 25 Years Briony Symonds
 25 Years Carol Bannister
 25 Years Claire Hemming
 25 Years Di Mannion
 25 Years Diane Phizacklea
 25 Years Elizabeth Bird
 25 Years Jane Mitchell
 25 Years Jenny Chappell
 25 Years John Gooden
 25 Years Pamela Abbott
 25 Years Paul Bowman
 25 Years Richard Yates
 25 Years Rosalyn Chalk
 30 Years Carol Bannister
 30 Years David Pears
 30 Years Gillian Black
 30 Years Jill Thomas
 30 Years Kate Perks
 30 Years Pamela Abbott
 30 Years Paul Millward
 30 Years Steven Coussens
 30 Years Tony Deeming
 35 Years Belinda Richards

Birmingham Savoyards
 Holy Trinity Choral Society
 Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw MS
 BMOS Musical Theatre Company
 Trinity Players
 Musical Theatre Stafford
 Redditch Operatic Society
 Musical Theatre Stafford
 Masqueraders Theatrical Society
 Erdington Operatic Society
 Stourbridge Pantomime Company
 Harlequin Pantomimes
 Masqueraders Theatrical Society
 Redditch Operatic Society
 Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw MS
 Hereford Amateur Pantomime Society
 Erdington Operatic Society
 Queensbridge Musical Theatre Society
 Queensbridge Musical Theatre Society
 Stourbridge Pantomime Company
 Cradley Heath Amateur OS
 Stourbridge Pantomime Company
 Masqueraders Theatrical Society
 Brownhills Musical Theatre Company

35 Years Carol Bannister
 35 Years Christopher Paine
 35 Years Dawn Shillingford
 35 Years Jane Chadbourne
 35 Years Jane Chadbourne
 35 Years Maureen Woodcock
 35 Years Pamela Abbott
 35 Years Philippa Bishop
 35 Years Robert Wilson
 40 Years Hugh Roymer
 40 Years Pat Wilson
 40 Years Patricia Howarth
 40 Years Susan Wells
 40 Years Susan Williams
 45 Years Ann Foulds
 45 Years Dorothy Britton
 45 Years Isobel Walter
 45 Years Jayne Crowther
 45 Years Jayne Saunders
 45 Years Jeanette Greenway
 45 Years Kay Edith Paine
 45 Years Melanie Greenfield
 45 Years Sue Percy
 45 Years Susan Doran

Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw MS
 Kidderminster ODS
 Stourbridge Amateur Operatic Society
 Brierley Hill Musical Theatre Company
 Brierley Hill Musical Theatre Company
 Walsall Operatic Society
 Stourbridge Pantomime Company
 Kinver Light Operatic Society
 Birmingham Savoyards
 Ombersley Dramatic Society
 Birmingham Savoyards
 Queensbridge Musical Theatre Society
 BMOS Musical Theatre Company
 Ombersley Dramatic Society
 Erdington Operatic Society
 Cradley Heath Amateur OS
 Musical Theatre Stafford
 Walsall Operatic Society
 Cradley Heath Amateur OS
 Startime Variety
 Kidderminster ODS
 Kidderminster ODS
 Birmingham Savoyards
 Kidderminster ODS

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Tacoma Weekly, Washington, USA



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Music: Piers Chater Robinson

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Centre Stage Youth Theatre, UK

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You could be entitled to a NODA Long Service Award

Normally presented by societies to individuals as an expression of gratitude, medals, bars and badges for 10 years to 70 years of service are available upon application, supported by confirmation from a society official. Service does not have to have been continuous, nor with one society alone. Whether you are a performer, backstage or front of house you could be entitled to the award.

Application forms and full details of eligibility are available at noda.org.uk/awards

Contact Richard now for more details: Richard@ITMShows.com

International Theatre & Music, 4 Queen's Road, London SW19 8YB, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 3405 2402

NODA Theatre Summer School



The nights are getting lighter, an increase in the amount of sunshine and the schools going back for their last half term can only mean one thing – we're on the home straight to NODA Theatre Summer School...those returning know exactly what they are getting excited about – top class tuition, being reunited with friends, an opportunity to be entirely themselves – in fact the most generous helping of creativity, collaboration and confidence building imaginable.

However for those attending for the first time the unknown element can be a little more daunting and so Kevin's eloquent account of his first experience of Summer School is timely and reassuring. We can't wait to welcome all of our students to Summer School in just a few weeks!!

*Sarah Osborne – Director NODA Theatre Summer School
Jacquie Stedman – Chairman Summer School Committee*

First Timer Thoughts

Written by Kevin Stemp

Having attended my first NODA Summer School...here are some of my reflections on what turned out to be a fantastic week!

I learned the lesson about applying the hard way, for my colleague Christine had urged me to make my application at the exact time that the "booking lines were open" ...which in this case was 9pm one Friday last December. However, I got home from a social event around 10.30pm and thought "Oh, I'm off tomorrow, I'll do it first thing in the morning..." Result: the course that I wanted had filled already, and I was placed on a waiting list... Thankfully I was very high up on the list and on the 6th of July ...about 3 weeks before "curtain up" at the school, I was informed by the lovely booking lady Beverley Clarke that a place had now become available for me. On Christine's advice, I'd also applied and qualified for a bursary which I had filled out ages before (and which I understand often favours first timers) and so a significant portion of the fees due (about 50%) was met through this...so let's make that the 2nd point I learned! Remember...apply as soon as the courses are open and try for a bursary!

The venue was Yarnfield Park Conference Centre, not far from Stafford. It was an easy drive - some 185 miles and about 3 hours from Chelmsford - A12, M25, M1, M6 through the toll-road and follow the signs and sat-nav for Stafford. Good weather, great car music and I was in high spirits!! This continued when I arrived because I was greeted by

the 3Es as soon as I pulled up in the campus car park: Energy, Enthusiasm and Excitement...everywhere!! I took my bag, and with the distinct feeling that I was returning to Uni, I headed for the reception for check-in. All around me was a high octane buzz of... Effervescence! People were catching up - the first time they had seen each other for a year, lots of hugging and celebrations. I felt a bit out of it being a "newbie" but was greeted by numerous NODA helpers all adorned in the Green (that year's theme was 'Wicked'!) NODA Summer School polo shirts. Unbeknown to me I was greeted by the legendary Phil Barnett..... a really friendly face and the chap behind it was so genuine..... who would also impart the morning notices at 9am daily before the teaching sessions began. After I'd collected my key, Phil made sure I had my bearings and got someone to get me headed in the right direction to my room. I said goodbye to him as he reminded me where the dining room was and not to forget that we were all invited to the School Meeting at 5pm.

"I came out of it really having tapped into my creative side..."

I'd asked for a quieter room, and as requested, they'd put me on the top floor, and it turned out to be perfect. My room had a double bedperfectly adequate for a six-footer like me (some rooms had twin beds). The bath was

OK but I'm a shower man, and the water strength was really strong...most invigorating! I unpacked and found loads of space in the wardrobe and multiple-drawer space provided. I opened the window, helped myself to a complimentary coffee, munched on some biscuits that are provided daily and chilled for a bit, before getting dressed again and ready for the big Show and Tell...meeting people at dinner and eventually those that would also be on my course - "Devising Drama" after the welcome meeting.

Next....off to the School Meeting. Here, we were informed of the week...what to expect, where to go, extra events and sign-ups if we wanted. The quiz night was to take place on Sunday evening in the same location" and don't forget to bring a £1 coin for the Heads or Tails competition!!! Matthew Kelly from "Stars in their eyes" is connected to NODA and would be a guest speaker on Tuesday evening. Wow!!

Interestingly enough, there were several evening classes for people to get a piece of as well, and I signed up for a taster of Shakespeare set for Monday evening with a chap from the RSC no less and "an introduction to Pantomime" on Wednesday evening. Both were absolutely superb..... 2 hours in the company of experts and of course... learners like me. So having attended the welcoming in and the launch of the NODA Summer School I left for a one-hour intro class with my Devising Drama tutor and a chance to meet my colleagues who would be sharing the journey with me over the week.

Dinner was good - because it catered for those who wanted light and delicate....soup, salad and pasta etc. as well as those for whom eating was a way of life....good wholehearted stodge....plus one or two other choices in between. And the desserts set the bar very high (and very yummy)...happily a feat that was to be met day after day and even occasionally surpassed!! There were juices to choose from plus tea and coffee for those looking for the caffeine fix. I didn't know anyone when I sat down at one of the large tables...but you know what...it didn't matter. There were lots of new people, I estimated about 35% of us were there for the first time and whether we were newbies or old hands at it, everyone opened up and started chatting. And I have to say that is one of the beauties of NODA Summer School...everyone is there because they have a creative streak and WANT to be there. I quickly learned the expression used for the environment we were to be in for the next 8 days...."The Bubble". Perfect!! A place where you can feel wonderfully safe, able to investigate, explore and experiment with your creative side and...no-one judges... because we were ALL there for precisely the same



reason. I'd only had my first meal, and I felt really engaged and full of enthusiasm for the week that lay ahead! Plus I had bumped into someone who was also on my Devising Drama course; the bonding had begun.

I opened the classroom door and gasped at the size of the workspace we had...enormous...and caught up with the rest of the class...including Neil who I had become acquainted with at dinner. There were to be twenty-two of us in all...a range of ages and backgrounds from the '20's to the '70s from retail and a background in local government to a drama teacher and someone who had retired. From Cornwall, Zurich and the Shetlands, they had come and signed up for the course.....I felt so lucky to

be a part of it. The tutor introduced herself...an absolute wizard of Drama, and I wouldn't have been surprised if she'd up and announced that she'd just arrived from Hogwarts itself. This lady was incredible...full of invention, encouragement and ...mercurial wonder. She set the scene for what we were going to do...pushing boundaries for invention and taking us together to places of creativity that we'd never dreamed of.....and guess what.....SHE DID JUST THAT!

I purposely haven't spoken more here about the class that I attended for the week....because it was our class and ...yours, whatever you choose....will be different...and ...it will be unique and uniquely yours ...if you decide to be part of this fantastic experience. I can tell you that during the week I made friends with people from other courses. There is a broad range to choose from, and at the end of the week on the Friday afternoon all of us were privileged to see a display of the work created by the various classes and for this year, in addition to our own creative display from "Devising Drama" for the audience, these included:
- A course all about the Musical

reason. I'd only had my first meal, and I felt really engaged and full of enthusiasm for the week that lay ahead! Plus I had bumped into someone who was also on my Devising Drama course; the bonding had begun.

"Wicked"...obviously very physical and lots of fantastic dancing and singing!
- There was one about Stage Make-up...amazing and visually stunning, what came out of that!
- Learning about Sondheim looked to be a work of the class as its attendees mastered many of the techniques he uses.
- There was a fantastic one about Shakespearean Combat taught by Tom Jordan and Michael Corbridge, the RSC teacher to whom I went for my evening class.
- Making a Musical earned nothing but respect from all of us for what they put together from scratch.
- And the showstopper...Lady May and the class for...Burlesque. No phones, no photos...what happened in the Bubble



stayed in the Bubble. The team under the tutelage of Lady May set our hearts racing, and we were full of admiration for the montage they produced to showcase their work - such truth and such bravery.

So you see....there is something for everyone. People bonded, people's confidence soared, people felt safe to explore their creative side and very much got out of it all that they wanted to. Naturally, there was a farewell party on Friday evening and this year's theme was Wicked...with many dressing up in Black or Green, Witches and Warlocks. We had a good dance and people swapped addresses as the night turned into morning and the last breakfast arrived. It was very sad to say goodbye and to "burst the Bubble" after being on such a high, but the Devising Drama closed group we created on Messenger continues to this day, and we are keeping in touch. We even arranged a "mini-bubble" event, where we were able to explore this avenue of creative art further... plus it legitimises the reason to get together and have a party over a long weekend!!

In summary, I'd say if you have sat on the sidelines and thought about applying before ...why not go one step further and try it out? If you love theatre and the myriad of disciplines it contains from Musical to Physical from Stage Management to Contemporary Drama or even if you have a Clown yearning to come out and play. Maybe you want to pursue Director tutelage, or Film and Camera is your thing... whatever aspect, there will usually be something for you to grasp, to learn, to incorporate into your kit-bag of experience and to take away. I came out of it really having tapped into my creative side...I certainly came away on a high...and personally could've driven home hands-free all the way back to Essex - I was buzzing so much!! I'm grateful for the opportunity, I loved all of it... and as Big Man Arnie said...."I'll be Back"!!

Have you got the touch?

NODA West Midlands

Box office duties can bring some interesting requests, among the ticket requests for the first play of our 70th Anniversary year was one message that was a little different.

"Hello", the message began, "I would like two tickets to your production of *The Vicar Of Dibley*, for the Thursday evening – oh, as I'm blind and have a guide dog, perhaps you could call me and let me know what happens as I've never visited your venue before."

I have been running our Box Office for several years and have never been asked if someone could bring a guide dog before; asking around our members, nobody could remember anyone bringing a guide dog to one of our productions ever. One of the play's Directors suggested that he could offer a 'Touch Tour' of the set about half

an hour before curtain up. (A Touch Tour is one of the ways we can support Visually Impaired Theatre goers)

At half past six, we met Jane, her guide dog and a guide in our auditorium. Our production of *The Vicar of Dibley* had a fairly complex set with five different acting areas on two different levels.

We guided her around that set, touching props, scenery and some costumes. This took us a while as we explained how the play unfolds and how the different parts of the set and props are used. Then she settled in the auditorium to hear the play with guide dog happily at her feet.

At the end of the play, I noticed Jane was applauding vigorously, as were many others I'm happy to say, but I

was struck by the sight of her dog, standing wagging his tail which I can only assume was a display of approval. Talking to Jane afterwards she said how much she had enjoyed the production and how much the guided 'Touch Tour' had helped her to get a real sense of what was happening on the set. We were pleased that we had helped an audience member to have such a positive experience, so much so that we repeated the 'Touch Tour' for another audience member who has advanced macular degeneration the next evening, again with a positive result.

We will be offering 'Touch Tours' as a feature at as many of our future productions as we can. Do you have the touch?

Colin Peterson
Codsall Dramatic Society



Vicarage Set.



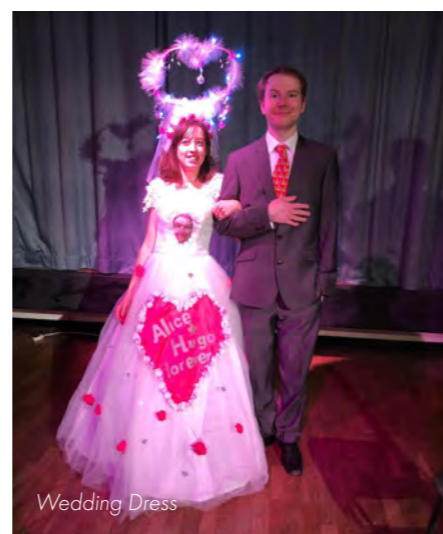
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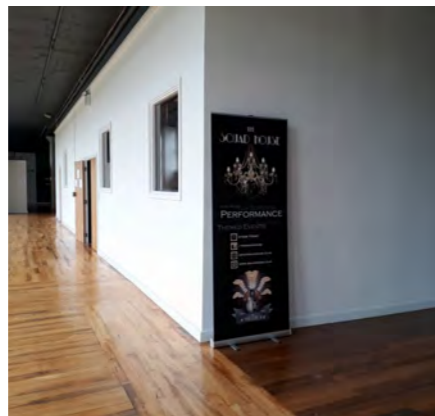
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There Is Business Like Show Business

NODA North West



Sean Kennedy has been involved in theatre from a very early age. He left school at 16 and then met someone who was involved in a theatre group who wanted help backstage and things have taken off from there.

There came a moment in Sean's career three years after he first joined the theatre group when the Producers said they wouldn't be doing the next panto, so he took responsibility. Sean hired a script for £250 but changed it slightly to suit the group. When he saw what the script had turned out like he thought it would be easier to write their own, so that is exactly what Sean did at the age of 19 – wrote his first script.

Sean eventually left the group to set up another company with a partner, but they unfortunately split and he ended up joining the Police Force. This change in career meant that he wasn't involved in theatre at all for 12 months as he was working 24/7 shifts and couldn't commit to it. One day he attended a Police leisure facility in Charlton as part of a training course he was on and walked into a 1920's style cabaret lounge. He knew straight

away that he had to do something with it. So, after a meeting with the social committee manager, he was given full funding. Sean eventually left the Police Force and set up the group outside of it and so became the birth of "Stage Squad" a move which also made them become financially independent. Sean has bankrolled the company since they started, but it was getting to a point where he knew he wasn't going to be able to do that much longer because of his circumstances, so questioned how do they make it last long term and achieve the goals they wanted to workwise. The result was in Sean became a Director of the limited company and signed the lease over for the premises. As a business it works much better now as all funds made on the shows goes straight back into the company whereas before everything was going back to the Greater Manchester Police. Overheads have gone from around £3,000 to around £1,000 as all they need to pay for is costume and staging. It is definitely a bold and brave move, but a clever one as well. In January of this year Sean received a nomination at the NODA awards for Business Acumen which

took him a little by surprise he admits himself.

Today Stage Squad is bigger and better than ever. Sean admits himself that they are not your traditional 'run of the mill' theatre groups and like to do productions that are often 'off-the-shelf' Their productions sometimes give the classic stories their own twist. For example, their next performance is their own cabaret rendition of 'Allo 'Allo entitled, 'Allo - Goodbye! They also have a drag night at the venue every month. Stage Squad isn't a group just for adults though. They have a Youth Theatre Group set up on the side which is thriving and, again, all funds made goes back into the group. Sean hires out the venue to other parties, but all of this has been done by word of mouth and not publicity. This is about to change though and he knows it will generate a lot more interest when they have a bigger platform to engage with people on. Sean saw an opportunity and turned it into a business which he is now working on full-time. He admits the key to the success of the group comes down to adapting and being versatile – he'll try anything once!

Award for Society and NODA stalwart NODA North East

Julie Webb spent 36 years as NODA North East District 6 Regional Representative covering Rotherham and Sheffield. During her time as Regional Rep., Julie also managed to fit in being Editor for NODA North East Scratchings until it ceased to exist in 2011 and was the Region's Editor for NODA Today until 2015. It was a great pleasure therefore, on 23rd January and after watching a performance of *Season's Greetings* by Rotherham Phoenix Players which she directed, to present her with her NODA Diamond award for 60 years service to Amateur Theatre.

Julie has been a very active member of Rotherham Phoenix Players for all of 60 years, in fact it is 62 years since she joined and during that time she has directed plays, performed in them, done props, costumes, scenery and possibly every other job to ensure the show goes on.

A few years ago I had the pleasure of watching Julie playing "The Old Woman" in *The Lady Killers*, a brilliant



play in which she had the major role with many, many lines to learn and certainly on the night I was there she never dropped a line or needed a prompt.

Les Smith, NODA North East Regional Councillor

Photo showing Julie Webb, centre having received her NODA Diamond Award from Les Smith, NODA North East Regional Councillor with members of Rotherham Phoenix Players.

Keeping the 'O' in NODA!

NODA South West



Cast of *La Sonnambula* Principals for the Photo. From left to right: Niall Hoskin CQC Inspector, Rupert Drury Elvino, Sara Grosvenor Amina, and the chorus. Credit: Alec Deighton

Alec Deighton of Bath Opera details how they set Opera for a more modern audience, while retaining the joy of the original!

Opera is an all-encompassing art form - aural, visual, dramatic and if done well utterly enthralling. Grand Opera, as its name implies, usually has a large Orchestra, a large chorus and highly skilled principals. This makes the production of any opera expensive. I have huge respect for all of those amateur companies who put on operas every year and are able to keep financially stable. To maintain their financial position these opera companies must do two things, firstly keep production costs to a level that enables them to remain solvent, and secondly appeal to their potential audience to ensure that ticket sales remain as high as possible.

Bath Opera's 2019 production of Bellini's *La Sonnambula* is an appropriate example of how this may be achieved. The original 19th century production was set in a remote, inward looking Swiss village, where comings and goings would be quickly recognised. Director, Neil Kirkman, decided to update the story to a retirement home where the philandering Count Rodolfo was transformed into a Care Quality Commission inspector. Besides making the story much more relevant to today, it also made for a much less complicated set! The younger chorus became members of staff and the more mature became residents. The production became relevant and enjoyable while retaining the excitement and story of the original.

Our 2019 summer tour of Mozart's ever popular *Così fan tutte* is updated to the 1960s allowing the original concept



to still reflect on human frailties and characteristics without expecting the audience to know that 18th Century Albanian dress was so distinct from that worn in Naples!

The 2020 production of Gounod's *Faust* will be set in an indeterminate modern state where the emphasis on youth, power and wealth is very real and the unscrupulous have the opportunity to manipulate the innocent. This process will resonate with much that we see on our television screens today. It is our belief that a sympathetic and sensible adaptation can make the experience of Grand Opera much more approachable to a modern audience. At the same time the music and the original concept behind the opera is retained. If you have never attended a complete opera why not add it to your bucket list and give it a try. You may even enjoy it.

Surrey Performing Arts Library - A New Beginning with NewSPAL



Some of the 200,000 items currently housed at Ewell Library which will be transferred to Woking
Photo: Victoria Taylor

What is the New Surrey Performing Arts Library (NewSPAL)?

Like many local authorities, Surrey County Council has been running a performing arts library for its residents, including hiring out multiple sets of plays, often used by drama reading groups, youth theatres and amateur theatre groups (in that case mostly for research prior to production – for the real thing, it's obviously better to own a copy and be able to scribble all over it...)

The collection in Surrey, which also includes a vast amount of sheet music in constant demand from the hundreds of choirs and instrumental groups in the county, is one of the largest in England. 18 months ago, it was seriously threatened with closure.

Sadly, there is nothing new about that: many local authorities are struggling with significant budget reductions, so a performing arts library, a non-statutory service, is often an early contender for cuts. In Surrey, residents, whilst sympathetic to their council's plight, were not prepared to see this collection be either dispersed or closed and so have fought to take on responsibility for the performing arts library themselves.

A new, user-led charity was set up in January 2018 and finally, in February 2019, Surrey County Council agreed that NewSPAL would be allowed to set up a new performing arts library and receive the collection (on loan until ownership can be permanently transferred).

Hurrah! However, that isn't where the work ends – it's where it starts! Woking Borough Council have already offered premises to house the new facility free of charge. Whilst waiting for the building to be made ready, NewSPAL has to raise funds for the transition (and to stay afloat until income can be generated) and transfer the entire collection of over 200,000 items to a new online catalogue, employ specialist librarians and more.

So how can you help?

- Please spread the word amongst all your contacts, and not just in Surrey: the new facility will be available to users registering from anywhere in the UK.
- Donate or fundraise so that NewSPAL can get up and running! 60% of our £125,000 target has already been raised – help us get to the finish line!
- Sign up as a volunteer – the more people offer to help, the shorter the volunteer shifts will be, so even if you only have a day here and there, or a few hours on a Thursday morning once a month, we'd love to hear from you!

You can find out more at www.newspal.org.uk or email Victoria Taylor, the Transition Project Manager, to be added to the mailing list on victoria.taylor@newspal.org.uk.

Programme and Poster Competition

NODA's annual Programme and Poster Competition is a very popular competition for societies and highlights the promotion of amateur theatre in the UK. Its purpose is to encourage high standards in programme and poster design.

Each region holds its own competition, using the criteria set out below, with the winning entries then put forward to the national competition. Trophies for the winners and runners up of the national competition are currently awarded at the NODA Annual General Meeting.

For the full criteria please visit our website - noda.org.uk/programme-and-poster-competition

We are currently updating the criteria for our Programme and Poster Competition for 2021 onwards. With the changes in technology and accessibility of images and design we want to level the playing field for all societies.

We want to hear from you, our members on how you think we can improve the guidelines and competition process

Please contact your Regional Councillor with any feedback



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