

# scene

Summer 2016



The magazine of Scottish Community Drama

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## NATIONAL OFFICE

Suite 88, Stirling Enterprise Park, Springkerse,  
Stirling, FK7 7RP phone: 01786 440077

National Administrator e-mail:

headquarters@scda.org.uk

National Drama Advisor email : nda@scda.org.uk

www.scda.org.uk

## OFFICE OPENING HOURS

Our staff work flexible hours but the national administrator's normal office hours are Tues-Thurs 8am-3.30pm, so please leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

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# Chairman's Chat



So we closed the curtain on another hugely successful Scottish Final proudly sending our worthy winners Studio Theatre Group to Cardiff in July, and I know that if you can't be there to support them you'll be wishing them all the very best, and for the Howard De Walden return to Scotland. We must surely be due to keep it soon?

We had excellent audiences, 2 evenings with a full house no less, so if we can do it for a Scottish Final why can't we do it at our Divisionals? Answers on a postcard...

As you know, this is our 90th Anniversary year, and we have so much to look back on that we have achieved, so many British Final Winners, the creation of our National Library in Edinburgh, coming through our "black hole" and now supporting our HQ in Stirling with our 2 brilliant staff, and increasing (and retaining) our membership. But the most important part of SCDA is its people and its clubs, whose views and opinions are what form the basis of national decisions. So if you have something to say, tell your District Rep. who will take it to Division and then National committee, or better still, get involved! Everybody is welcome to get involved, don't stay quiet!

So it's back to old clothes and porridge this week, and believe it or not starting to arrange next years Final.

From a very tired but very proud National Chair, yours aye,

Jackie Westerman  
chair@scda.org.uk

## 90 years of Drama

SCDA is celebrating 90 years of amateur drama. We would like to make the autumn issue of Scene a celebration of these 90 years. Can clubs please send in any photos articles of events from their own history or any article of events they have been party to over the years.

Obviously the older the photos and articles the better. If anyone has copies of photos from the early years can you scan them and email them to us or post the photos to HQ and we will take good care of them and return them after the issue is printed.

As always can you please make sure photos are 300 dpi.

# Error of Judgement

In November, Rutherglen Rep performed in one of their regular Lunchtime Theatre slots at Rutherglen Town Hall. It's a very cosy affair with a stage rigged up in one of the larger rooms. After the lunch of soup and sandwiches served at beautifully laid-out tables, the audience are always relaxed and in a mood to enjoy the one-act play. This time it was 'Error of Judgement' by Isabella Rae, which shows Emanuelle, utterly depressed by the state into which the human race has degenerated, meeting Luke (short for Lucifer) who's been thrown out of Hell by his father, Satan, for being too good. Will Emanuelle give him sanctuary in Heaven? Naturally nothing is simple. We played to an almost full house and the lunchtime audience were their usual responsive selves, laughed at all the right bits and gave us great applause and good feedback when we went out afterwards to mingle.



Isabella Rae

## Membership Renewals 2016-17

Yes, that time of year is rapidly approaching again!

Membership fees for 2016-17 have been kept at the 2015-16 levels of £25 individual members, £35 joint members; £12.50 youth members; £30 senior club; £20 youth club. (Admin fee payable on all late renewals received after 1st July.)

Membership renewal forms for individual members are enclosed with this issue of Scene, and at the same time forms have been posted out to Clubs.

Reminders will be sent out by email and on Facebook from time to time up until the 30 June, but only one paper copy will be issued.

Payment can be made in a variety of ways: cheque or postal order; by standing order; by cash in person at HQ or (for individual members NOT clubs) via paypal on the SCDA website. Please note that HQ cannot accept card payments.

There is no need to send an SAE. Membership stickers will be sent out with the Autumn issue of Scene. Members providing an email address will receive an acknowledgement and copy of the 2016-17 membership handbook after 1st July.

If you have any questions please contact HQ [headquarters@scda.org.uk](mailto:headquarters@scda.org.uk) or our membership secretary, Lesley Syme, [membership@scda.org.uk](mailto:membership@scda.org.uk)

## Advertising in Scene

If you would like to advertise in Scene - it could be a classified advert up to a full colour page. Please contact us at

[Scene@scda.org.uk](mailto:Scene@scda.org.uk)

Discounts available for pre-paid adverts.

## Don't Forget.....

Email club information to [headquarters@scda.org.uk](mailto:headquarters@scda.org.uk) and your information will be entered into the diary. Remember to give as much information as possible, please do not assume that we know your club's contact details. A post code for the venue is always useful too.

## CLASS ADS

(The small ads page)

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# Welcome....

to 5 new members from Orkney :- Kirsten Norquoy, Lorraine Giles, Lydia Campbell, Joe Horrocks, Lynne Nicolson and Robert Rae;

to Owen Derrick from Inverclyde, Maura Currie from Glasgow, Alma Forsyth from Glasgow, Alan Gerrard from Highland, David McCallum from Argyll and Kintyre and Jamie Drummond from Aberdeen;

and to new patrons Iain & Sheena Carmichael, Christine Barron, David Cumming, Alice Ross and Livingston Players

# Thank you....

first of all to the members of the Executive and National Committee for continuing to donate expenses. These amounted to £406;

also to Braemar Performing Artists (£113) and to D Currie, Gordon Hibbert, Betty Mathieson and Iain McEwan for their individual donations;

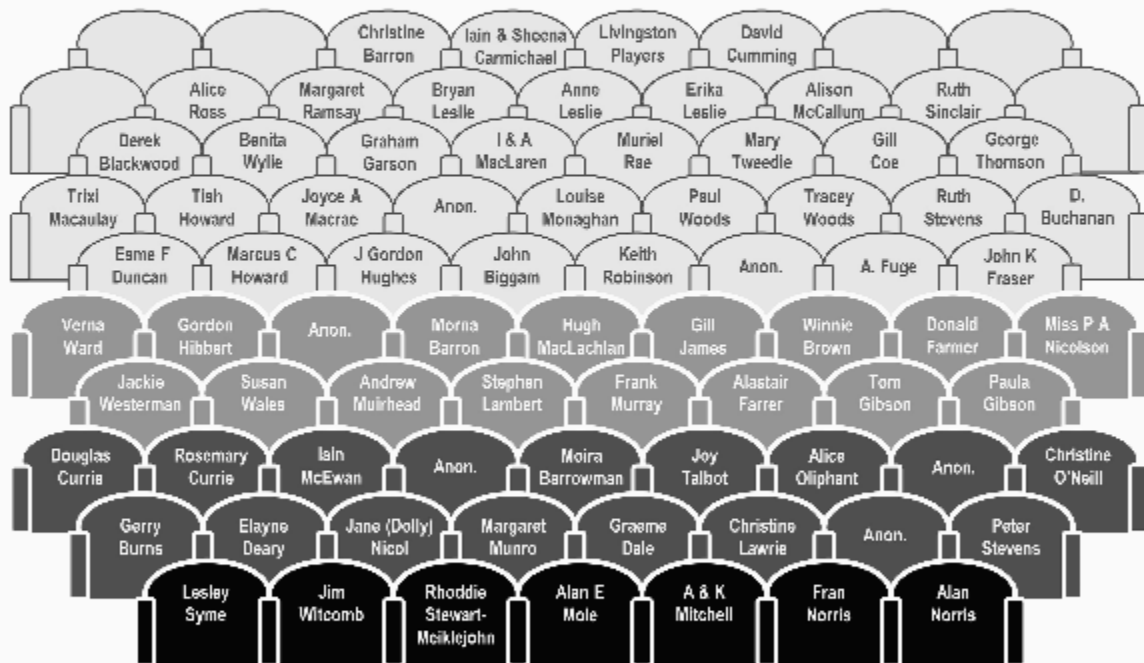
While we made a surplus last year, this will not continue in 2015-16, so we need all the financial aid we can get.

Tony Flisch  
National Vice-Chairman  
[vicechair@scda.org.uk](mailto:vicechair@scda.org.uk)

## Can you spare between £5 and £10 a month to help SCDA survive the biggest challenge of its 90 year history?

Please join our band of supporters. SCDA faces a huge ongoing challenge to meet its goals without the benefit of funding from Creative Scotland. Your donation of £5 (or more!) per month will help us achieve those goals. You'll find an application form on our website and they are also available from SCDA HQ.

<b>Fintry A D S</b>	<b>Killin Komedly Festival</b>		<b>Scottish Building Society</b>	<b>The Weir Trust</b>
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**Over £5100 per year already pledged to SCDA funds**

Our grateful thanks go to our Patrons and Corporate Donors for supporting our virtual theatre. These donations are vital to the success of our Association.

# Welcome to Wales

The Drama Association of Wales is proud to be hosting, for the first time in twenty two years, the 83rd British Final of One-Act Plays in the vibrant city of Cardiff ([www.visitcardiff.com](http://www.visitcardiff.com)) at the beautiful Sherman Theatre on 1st and 2nd July, 2016.

This prestigious festival only comes to each country once every four years. The last time it was in Cardiff, it was won by Castaway Theatre Group from Aberystwyth who were awarded the winner's trophy, the Howard de Walden cup, for their production of 'After Liverpool'.

Each year the United Kingdom Community Drama Festivals Federation (UKCKFF) promotes a series of One-Act Play Festivals in which theatre groups from the four corners of the UK compete to represent their own country at the British Final. These groups in communities throughout the UK read, cast, rehearse, produce, direct and perform one-act plays. Behind the scenes members put other valued skills to use in the areas of costume, hair and makeup, set designing, set building, set dressing, lighting, sound and stage managing.

These One-Act Festivals provide a unique opportunity for amateur theatre companies to appear in new and varying venues before widely differing audiences and receive professional

constructive advice from the internationally recognised body of the Guild of Drama Adjudicators (GoDA).

Founded in 1934 and registered as a charity since 1973, the Drama Association of Wales (DAW) aims to create opportunities for people of all ages and walks of life to become actively engaged with theatre activities which are of a high standard, rewarding and fun.

Based in Cardiff, DAW membership is open to everyone across the UK as well as internationally and includes amateur and professional theatre practitioners, playwrights, amateur theatre groups, teachers, academics,



schools, colleges and universities and everyone who has an interest in theatre. Many of our members have journeyed with us throughout the years.

Mr. Michael Sheen, OBE and patron of DAW writes:

'My family have been involved in amateur theatre for generations, so I have experienced first-hand the creative and social benefits it provides and the strong sense of community it can engender. This annual competition is a fantastic example of hundreds of amateur groups competing in their respective parts of the UK to be the representative group from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales at this prestigious annual event.

I am delighted to be a Patron of DAW and support this brilliant event in 2016.'

The plays will commence each evening at 7pm with Wales & Northern Ireland on the Friday and Scotland and England on the Saturday. Tickets can be purchased from the Sherman Theatre Box Office at 029 2064 6900 or on line at [www.shermancymru.co.uk](http://www.shermancymru.co.uk)

Please also feel free to visit our website at [www.dramawales.org.uk](http://www.dramawales.org.uk) or better still come along and enjoy the festival with us!

We look forward to seeing you.

Teri McCarthy  
Chairman

## One play Two Venues

Livingston Players celebrated their 45th Anniversary earlier this year and although they are now in the second half of their fourth decade they are as busy as ever. After performing Robert Harling's *Steel Magnolias* at the Howden Park Centre in January they decided to take their successful production to the Regal Community Theatre in Bathgate, of which Susan Boyle is a Patron. The show was met with a warm reception as it has many heart-warming qualities and proves that women can be hard as steel and soft as magnolias. This is the second time that the Players have taken a show "on tour" performing "The Steamie" at the Regal last year. Whilst rehearsing and performing *Steel Magnolias* the company were also in the throws of rehearsing for their May production of *Sister Act* and are looking forward to performing "Allo Allo" back on their home turf of Howden Park Centre in May.

Pam Murray



Back L-R Elspeth Whyte (Truvy), Lynne Hurst (Shelby), Gill Sullivan (Ouiser), Suzanne Smail (Annelle) Front L-R Judith Hutchison (M'Lynn), Niccy Angus (Clairee). Photo: Grant Collier

# New Victory Players

## Toad of Toad Hall

In November New Victory Players made their home (or should that be riverbed) in East Kilbride Arts Centre for their final production of 2015, which was their 70th Anniversary year, Toad of Toad Hall. It was a musical spectacle with lots of furry creatures - the crafty toad, the wise old badger, the clever rat, the shy mole, the conniving weasel and many more. Toad of Toad Hall is a play by A. A. Milne which is an adaption of Kenneth Grahame's 1908 novel, The Wind in the Willows. For a small club this was a huge undertaking, however as it



was an extra special anniversary year all club members were keen to crack on and wanted to end the year on a high. The rehearsal period was long and stressful at times, but what a show at the end! Hats off to the four leads - Alistair Mann as Toad, Cameron Melville as Rat, Frank Chambers as Badger and Lauren Fairley as Mole, a special mention for Lauren who took over the role only two weeks before the first performance due to another club member pulling out due to unforeseen circumstances. They had the audience in the palm of their hands at each performance. This was all the vision of Mary Fairley the clubs resident director. She was extremely



proud of the end result and very proud of her cast.

New Victory Players took a well deserved rest over the festive period before kicking off their 2016 session with their annual Burns supper in January and then returning to the SCDA Glasgow districts one act festival with two entries. Also look out for information on the full length plays that will be performed in May and November, both at East Kilbride Arts Centre.

Iain Wilson

## Leitheatre

Leitheatre presented Brian Friel's double bill "Lovers: Winners and Losers" at the Church Hill theatre in November. The play is one of Friel's earlier and less well-known works and both parts are set in Northern Ireland in 1966. Rehearsals had just begun when the news of his death aged 83 was announced.

The first "act" Winners is about a young couple just leaving school and already about to embark on married life together. Along with the two youngsters the play features two narrators who calmly describe the tragic events that occur. Don Arnott directed and a simple but effective

set was designed by Derek Blackwood.

The second part Losers, was directed by Effie Robertson and tells the story of a middle-aged couple who find themselves stuck in a loveless marriage and sharing their home with the woman's domineering mother.

Leitheatre President Lynne Morris (who played the old battleaxe Mrs Wilson in Losers) said "We all enjoyed doing these plays: thinking about making the stories resonate with modern audiences, working on



the accents and finding the humour in the sadness of the two scripts. We are particularly proud of our two young actors Alistair Robertson and Chloe McIntyre who did a great job."

Lynne Morris



## EK Rep - The God of Carnage

Billed as a dramatic comedy the tension slowly builds as the play wends its way through the straight run of an hour and twenty minutes.

This 'no interval' was a bit of a new experience for our audience but they appreciated that as the play progresses the tension builds to the end and any break in that would deflate the enjoyment., which was clearly shown by their appreciation at the end.

Ken Lawton

# Youth Final



The highlight in the SCDA Youth calendar is the Scottish Youth Final, which this year will take place in Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock on Saturday 18th June. It is the privilege of Glasgow District to organise this year's final and planning is well underway. Members of Glasgow District are looking forward to welcoming the youth

teams and are excited about the prospect of hosting another prestigious festival (they have previously organised a British and Scottish Final).

Eastwood Park Theatre is an excellent venue and the helpful staff are used to working with community drama groups and professional groups. It is ideally located near the M77 motorway making easier travel for the teams and the audience.

This year we have an exciting line up of plays for the audiences to enjoy over the two sessions (2pm and 6:30pm). The afternoon session will open with Thistle Theatre Company, (representing Western Division) performing 'Rabbit' by David Foxtan, followed by Breadalbane Academy (representing Northern Division) performing 'DNA' by Dennis Kelly. The evening session will open with Fintry ADS (representing Eastern Division) performing 'Tuesdays and Sundays' by Daniel Arnold and

Medina Hahn and the festival will conclude with Inverness Royal Academy (representing Highland Division) performing 'Rabbit' by David Foxtan. It will fall to adjudicator Alasdair Hawthorn to make the difficult final decision and decide who will win the Quidi Vidi trophy.

The young actors who will perform in the final, along with all the others who performed at the various district and divisional rounds are the future of the SCDA and need to be encouraged. If you have never been to a youth festival, then you don't know what you are missing. Why not arrange to come along this year and support the youth members, as well as enjoying an excellent day's entertainment? Tickets are available from the Eastwood Park Theatre's box office or online from the theatre's website.

Lorna Campbell

## SCDA is really a big family



SCDA celebrates our 90th anniversary this year and it is fitting that we have proof it is really just a great big family.

At the Northern Divisional Youth Final in Birnam this year, Carnoustie Theatre club performed 'The

Amazing Dream Ticket' by Carolyn Harrison. Carolyn has been involved with SCDA since a child through her mother Winnie Brown, who has directed many Scottish Final productions with Forfar Dramatic Society. Carolyn has now performed regularly with Carnoustie Theatre Club seniors.

Two young member of the Carnoustie Youth team, Jessica and Emily Taylor have even longer roots in SCDA. Their great grandfather is none other than Robert Pollock McKell. Their mother Rebecca tells us that her grandparents were involved with Troon Players back in the day.

"My Grandfather was chairman of the SCDA for a few years, (1954 -1957) travelling a lot with the role. My grandma Eunice was a keen actor and my grandfather (Known as Bob) favoured directing and producing. Their children (my dad and Aunt Nicé) were involved in the Troon players, my Aunt acting and

dad back stage when he was young. No anecdotes are known but I know SCDA was an important part of my Grandparents lives."

Who knows maybe in the future we will see Jessica or Emily follow in their great-grandfathers footsteps and be National Chairman.

Morna Barron





# Northern Division Youth Final



Once again the Northern Divisional Youth Finals in the Birnam Institute proved an excellent evening of theatre and the young people of Orkney, Stonehaven Aberfeldy and Carnoustie should be very proud.

Perthshire District provided the FOH staff and back stage

entertaining performance that the audience loved.

The evening had commenced with Breadalbane Academy's powerful production of DNA by Dennis Kelly. Ron thought the acting throughout this production was very strong with not a single weak character, there was excellent teamwork and awareness. This was a most convincing interpretation of a dramatic story.

DNA was a gripping and outstanding production which held the audience throughout and thoroughly deserved to win the Jayne Nicol Youth trophy presented by Ron's wife Norma.

Not to be out done Molly Black from Unmasked Drama Co. chaired the platform party along with Andrew Shannon from Blairgowrie Players, who gave the vote of thanks, both did an exceptionally professional job. Future National Chairman in the making perhaps?



crew and the evening was run by their youngsters from their youth groups. Ron Nicol the adjudicator was impressed by the standard of theatre he saw.

Ury Players gave us Knock, Knock, Knock by Bob Eccles. Ron thought it was a well thought out set which gave good acting areas. The pace was established and maintained but there needed at times to be more forceful delivery.

Palace Players gave us Driver's Test by Don Zolidis which had an infectious sense of fun. The two girls provided well defined and differentiated characters which were real and believable. Ron thought this was a most enjoyable and entertaining production.

Carnoustie Theatre Group with The Amazing Dream Ticket by our own Carolyn Harrison filled the stage with what appeared to be all the children from Carnoustie! A wonderful colourful production with a particularly wonderful monkey dance sequence, not to mention the brilliant sinking of the cruise ship followed by an appearance of a couple of sharks. Ron was delighted to see so many young people on stage obviously thoroughly enjoying themselves. This was a great lively



# JOHN MORLEY'S PANTOMIMES

**"THE DOYEN OF GOOD PANTOMIME WRITERS"** (*The Times* 1994)

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**"WRITTEN BY JOHN MORLEY, THIS IS PANTO AT ITS BEST"**

*(The Guardian)*

**FROM SAMUEL FRENCH LTD.**

# Trawling the Archives

Hearken back - 1976 and 1951 - How much do you remember of these years?

1976 - SCDA - GOLDEN Jubilee production of "The World's Wonder" by Alexander Reid,



*Some souvenir pics from 'World's Wonder' held by Jenny Calcott, a Life member of SCDA.*

directed by Marillyn Gray, in the Church Hill Theatre, Edinburgh (part of the FRINGE).

The Jubilee Programme includes names of well-known (some no longer with us) SCDA Present and Former Members, such as Bill Graham, Jimmy Chisholm, the Arnotts, Jim Witcomb, John Ramage, Craig Melville, Jenny Calcott, Dorsay Larnach, Mandy Black, Jimmy Maxwell, Derek Blackwood, Trevor Garlick, and many more!

1951 (before some of your time here!) - SCDA Semi-Jubilee Scottish Finals in Troon Concert Hall - 5th - 7th April - yes much earlier than in recent years.

The plays presented were "Whaups at Midnight" by John McCabe (Falkirk H.S. F.Ps); "Playgoers" by Arthur Pinero (Dumfries Guild of Players); "Displaced Persons" by Elizabeth Milne (Barrhead Players); "The Long Christmas Dinner" by Thornton Wilder (Torch Theatre, Glasgow); "There's



Rue for You" by Margaret Turner (Blue Triangle, Kirkcaldy) "The Rose and Crown" by J.B. Priestley (St Michael's, Inverness); "The Devil's Stagecoach" by David Monger (The Pantheon, Glasgow); "Lucrezia Borgia's Little Party" by A.J. Talbot (Arabella and Kildary WRI D.S.); "Unto the End" By Wilfrid Grantham (Huntly F.P.s).

The winner of the Wheatley Tassie Trophy for First place were Barrhead Players with "Displaced Persons" by Elizabeth Milne and second were Torch Theatre, Glasgow with "The Long Christmas Dinner" by Thornton Wilder.

Douglas Currie,  
Senior Librarian.

# EK Rep - The Cemetery Club

Written by Ivan Menchell and directed by Michael Emans (of Rapture Theatre and EK Rep Theatre)

East Kilbride Repertory Theatre's February Production was the sparkling new production of the smash hit American comedy: The Cemetery Club directed by Michael Emans.

It was a simple and poignant, yet funny story set around three elderly Jewish widows: sweet tempered Ida, party girl Lucille and devoted Doris meet every month to chat, catch up and visit their husbands' graves.

However when widowed Sam appears on the scene, the friendship of the girls is threatened, when Ida falls in love!! The cat is set among the pigeons.



There was a stellar cast of Aileen Waite (Ida), Jean McMillan (Doris), Susan Hunt (Lucille), Julie Blackburn (Mildred) and Dave Bennett as Sam.

These were all seasoned actors at the top of their game. No one was any better than the other and all pulled together to deliver a powerful, funny and yet poignant story surrounding the friendship of three main protagonists.

The play itself has the benefit of good writing and catches the Jewish delivery in the Manhattan accent and which was well sustained by the actors.

The funny one liners were pointed up by the moments of pathos as we witnessed in the cemetery scenes which Mr Emans captured in a simple set of a white background with tree branches projected on by the clever lighting. and with the wives husband's photos suspended over their respective graves.

The action moved between Ida's New York Manhattan flat and the cemetery and the scene



changes were handled in novel way by the stage hands acting as the 'dead' husbands moving and dancing to a Jewish music backing track. All much appreciated by the large audiences in the East Kilbride Village Theatre.

Once again the EK Rep Theatre has given their public a very high standard piece of theatre. When I was there many of the audience on their way out were saying things like, "Best yet."; "Fantastic"; and "Excellent". So it was obvious that this funny and touching play tickled their funny bone and yet tugged at their heartstrings.

This was an un-missable night at the theatre that proved that age was no barrier to romance.

Ken Lawton

# Scottish Final - Edinburgh 2016



The eagerly awaited day of the Finals arrived and I made the journey down to Edinburgh in the sunshine along with many other drama enthusiasts. The city itself was vibrant and busy as ever as we made our way to the Church Hill theatre for the first night of the SCDA Scottish Finals in the 90th year of the organisation. The foyer and bar area was the setting for the reunions of

many friendships as everyone gathered and greeted familiar faces. After a lovely warm welcome from our National Chairman Jackie Westerman the battle commenced.

Our adjudicator for the weekend was the experienced and well qualified Russell Whiteley who is extremely well known on the SCDA circuit.



**Dingwall Players** had the often unenviable task of opening the Festival with their presentation of 'Picnic on

the Battlefield' by Fernando Arrabal. Russell explained that this play was a satire calling for sympathetic characterisations and also requiring pathos and comic timing. He commended the lively stage presentation although he thought the sandbags may have been previously used in the Yorkshire floods! He also liked the symbolism of the accessories, particularly the clever business with the wine glasses. Russell felt that, just occasionally, it lost momentum but was a confident and successful start to the festival.

Local group **Leitheatre** were next to perform with their production of 'Audience' by Michael Frayn. Russell indicated that this play required theatrical timing and contained themes of escapism and lack of fulfilment. Russell managed to discuss all thirteen characters in a matter of minutes but felt he could most easily play the part of falling asleep on stage himself! He felt there were some very funny moments but at times the pace dropped slightly.

**Crossmichael Drama Club** concluded the Thursday evening with their presentation of the Tennessee Williams play '27 Wagons Full of Cotton'. The demands of this piece included cruelty, innuendo and sexuality of an earthy physical quality with a requirement for strong ensemble playing. The setting of the Porch in



Mississippi received a well-earned round of applause from the audience as the curtain went back. Our adjudicator loved the atmospheric music and effective lighting changes. Russell felt that there was a powerful atmosphere throughout the production with the building of menace, subtle movement and crisp cueing. In summary, Russell felt that the production created effective moods and, at times, was exhausting to watch.



Scott Salver - Isabella Rae

Refreshments were on offer as always in the theatre bar after the evening's entertainment but many weary travellers took the opportunity of a longer night's sleep and jumped on the Lothian buses back to their accommodation.

After a day exploring the sights of our beautiful capital city and ringing the tills in the wonderful array of shops, an even larger audience gathered for the second night of entertainment.

**Lochcarron ADS** kicked off the Friday evening with their production of 'Cruise Missile' by Jean McConnell. Russell described this piece as being well written with beautiful dialogue relying on the contrast of the two characters and pace. The company were commended on their interesting music, clean simple setting of the ship's deck and flamboyant costume. He also complimented the gentle opening pace, staccato dialogue and dance sequence but felt the audience most appreciated the 'wave' section of the play. He felt they were obviously having fun and so were the audience.

**Killin Drama Club** followed with their presentation of 'Into the Mist' by Helen Wyngard. Russell described this as a tender, distressing piece of writing which relies on close relationships and needs to exploit the humour to relieve the intensity. This team also received appreciation from the audience when the stage was revealed. He liked the gentle opening pace and felt that the warm relationship between the couple was well conveyed. He felt the final image was theatrical and well-handled and obviously many members of the audience agreed by the number of tissues which were evident as the lights went up.



The second night of the festival was brought to a conclusion with 'Degas C'est Moi' by David Ives presented by **Ad Hoc Players**. This challenging play was described as a zany, up-beat satire requiring invention, creativity and style. Russell considered the lighting to be effective as was the inspired introduction of the additional character. He complimented the company on their attack and enthusiasm in creating many characters with excellent comedy timing. The production was described as imaginative, creative and manic which was exhausting for the actors and audience alike.

Photos by Walter Hampson

Everyone came together in the bar following the evening's entertainment to enjoy the now legendary Tom Gibson quiz. Unfortunately, Tom was unable to attend the Finals this year as recovering from illness but Gordon Hibbert was a more than capable understudy. There were a large number of teams competing for the quiz trophy which this year was hotly contested. Who thought that Donny Osmond's love could cause a near riot at the SCDA Scottish Finals! However, the referee's decision was final and Benita Wylie's team triumphed.

The participating teams and patrons were invited to attend the Civic Reception at the Council Chambers on the Saturday morning. Jackie Westerman addressed Bailey Elaine Aitken thanking her for the invitation and hospitality in these times of austerity. Bailey Aitken expressed a keen interest in SCDA having attended a District round previously herself. She explained she had been particularly fascinated by the adjudication which she had never experienced before. She also congratulated SCDA for what the organisation did for community theatre. What more could the Lord Provost of our capital city want than Jackie's kind presentation of an SCDA hessian shopping bag full of SCDA goodies!

There was a packed auditorium on the final night of the festival with an atmosphere of tension and anticipation. There may only have been two plays but quality meant that the theatre audience were certainly not short changed.

First up were **Greenock Players** with their production of 'The Sociable Plover' by Tim Whitnall. Russell Whiteley described this piece as delicious, atmospheric, claustrophobic writing by the narrator of the Teletubbies! This was a play of two halves requiring humour, pathos and an ear for dialogue. He complimented the delightful set of the barren, basic bird keep and excellent storm effects. He felt the company built strong confrontations and body language whilst exploiting comedy



moments to the full. The two actors were thought to be skilled with impeccable acting skills which at times seemed spontaneous, not rehearsed and a pleasure to watch.

Bringing the festival to its conclusion with 'A Bench at the Edge' by Luigi Jannuzzi were **Studio Theatre Group**.

Russell indicated that this piece was a dramatic comedy with edgy dialogue requiring humour, empathy and pathos. The haunting music and simple setting complimented by dark and white costumes was considered to be very effective by the adjudicator as was the clever use of the echo effect. He thought the two characters were well defined and contrasted, with the rapport between them clearly evident. The tension on the



cutting of the cord scene was palpable and you could have heard a pin drop in the auditorium. Russell felt the competent actors worked beautifully, handling the changes in mood and atmosphere with varying pace extremely well. He described them as a theatrical tour de force but was so exhausted by the end he wondered where he could find the nearest abyss!



Finally the moment we were all eagerly anticipating. However, suspense continued as Jackie gave a very touching tribute to the late Sandy Glass and Joy Talbot looked completely stunned and speechless when she was presented with Honorary Life Membership of SCDA by Jackie in recognition of time and work given to SCDA over a number of years.



Russell Whiteley summed up the festival as a fascinating, stimulating three days. The supportive audiences had experienced a true celebration of theatre enjoying laughter and also being moved to tears.

Trophy winners included the Dunmore Trophy for best poster won by Stranraer DC followed by Killin Drama Group who won the Grampian TV Trophy for best stage décor. The Donald T. Farmer trophy for best theatrical moment was awarded to Dingwall Players. The winners were announced in reverse order with Crossmichael winning the David Baxter Salver for third place and Greenock Players lifting the Jim Porteous trophy in the second place. The Connie Fisher Trophy for highest production marks along with the highest accolade, the Wheatley Tassie, to Studio Theatre Group from Northern Division in Aberdeen. They go forward with all the support and best wishes of Scotland to the British Finals in Cardiff in July.



It was a friendly festival with an opportunity to reconnect with old friends and also a time to meet lots of new faces. As I make my way back home I'm already looking forward to the 90th birthday celebrations and the Scottish Finals 2017, both to be held in the beautiful setting of Pitlochry. Why don't you come along too?

Carolyn Harrison

# Playwriting News

## Scott Salver Competition 2016

It's always encouraging to see a variety of original scripts receive their world premiere performance in our annual One Act Play Festivals throughout Scotland and although H.Q. received a much reduced total of only nine entries this season the generally high standard of writing was maintained.

We welcomed two new recruits to our experienced judging panel this year who work completely independent of each other marking and grading the plays under various artistic categories.

Achieving victory for the very first time is prolific playwright and regular entrant Isabella C Rae from Cambuslang with **'Such a Parcel of Rogues'** presented at Glasgow District Festival.

The parallels between the historical periods are well accentuated with a good mix of characters and ages. The complex structure of the piece was handled skilfully with period references and personal tragedies conveyed effectively. There was scope for development of minor characters and confident management of the narrative throughout.

Runner-up was Russell Adams from Stonehaven with **'Grave Concerns'** entered in Aberdeen District Festival.

Skilful plot development featuring an interesting assortment of offbeat characters from conventional TV Time Team personnel, a doric speaking shepherdess to the spirit of a Stone Age chieftain – all served with a pinch of tongue in cheek humour. The convoluted storyline challenges in staging and special effects fitted in general with the context.

In Third Place came last year's winners Kirkintilloch Players Youth

with another of their offerings scripted by cast members in rehearsal also premiered at Glasgow District Festival. **'The Lonely Road to Freedom'** is a well constructed youth drama dealing with a very relevant modern day problem featuring flashback scenes to emphasise the play's morality lessons. Authentic natural dialogue and believable characterisation portraying the target age group. The structure was interesting and well managed providing two different perspectives on the same narrative.

The above top scripts will be forwarded to the Geoffrey Whitworth UK wide Competition for original plays presented in the first round of the One Act Festivals organised by SCDA, AETF, AUDF and DAW with the winning author receiving their prize at the British Final in Sherman Theatre, Cardiff early July.

Brief comments on the remaining scripts entered:-

**'Bright Lights'** by Alan Richardson: A trio of strong well written characters across the age range in this developing tale of revenge and revelations in Theatreland. Neat structure, very economical and technically well managed with the sharp humour fitting the context.

**'Mind Your Own Show Business'** by David Carswell: Original piece of comic writing with send-ups of classic TV genres delivered at pace with lively humour and witty repartee. Twist in the tail where the three characters were neatly shown to be voices of the same person.

**'Listen to the Walls'** by Anna Price and Sandra Batty: Four dramatic cameos from Stanley Mills history. Atmosphere and period delineated by well chosen poetry and songs which provided a gentle rhythm to the writing.

**'The Pits'** by Jamie Thorburn:



Showed a glimpse of the emotional human side to the 1984 Miners' Strike with structure and staging used effectively. However there was a danger that the central characters' story might be swamped by the lengthy monologues and screen projections.

**'The Box'** by Graeme Ferguson: A sentimental family tale of memories and unexpected discovery. Sound structure with some character development but tendency to be theatrically contrived at times.

**'# Likes'** by Claire Wood: Snappy dialogue and quirky characters dealing with 'on trend' issues requiring delivery with pace. The bare script detracts from the climax of the play's resolution.



Many congratulations to winning playwright Isabella Rae who will be presented with the Scott Salver on the last night of Scottish Final in Church Hill Theatre, Edinburgh.

We thank all the writers who entered this season and trust you enjoyed the experience of seeing your work come alive on stage.

As usual the top new scripts will be available to borrow from our Summerhall Library in Edinburgh.

Stephen Lambert  
Playwriting Convenor

Photos are from *Such a Parcel of Rogues*



# Kilmardinny Players

Girl Power came to Bearsden this autumn, with the Kilmardinny Players November production of "Top Girls" by Caryl Churchill.

This play, first seen at London's Royal Court in 1982, was performed by a cast of fourteen women of all ages. They were taking on one of the 20th century's most important plays by one of our greatest living playwrights, who recently celebrated her seventy seventh birthday.

This was a complex and demanding play for all concerned, including the audience, as the play abandons conventional narrative in favour of a



sprawling, fragmented, chaotic and deeply troubling feminist analysis.

Overlapping dialogue, interruptions and up to three characters speaking at the same time, kept everyone on their toes. There were four different sets and a rapidly shifting succession of small scenes. The play is by turns funny and horrifying, mixing realism with flights of fancy and domestic settings with a working environment. Everyone was challenged by these requirements but we all took huge satisfaction in bringing it off. Audience reaction was positive and cast and crew are able to look back on a job well done.

Paul Cockcroft



# Geronimo



Saughtonhall Drama Group brought the pantomime to Edinburgh's 'wild west frontier land' at Saughtonhall Church in late November. This is quite early in pantomime season, this is due to the performances taking place in the church, which itself is very busy during December.

Geronimo! written by Fife author Dave Buchanan, is a traditional pantomime. Complete with a 'quite nasty' baddy, best boy, dame plus an added dash of Indians and a small cat. Not forgetting loads of corny jokes and songs to sing-a-long to. The story, set in 1870, features Billy (best boy) from 'Scotchland' who travels to America to visit 'his' Aunt Belle and to find his fortune. Along the way Billy encounters the perils of the wild west plus learns some great songs. With new friends Billy has to face very strange goings on in Tumbleweed, a deserted former gold mining town.

Director John Webster commented, 'this is a genuine family pantomime which we are delighted to be staging. We have added some Saughtonhall character to the pantomime, including some super special effects. The author said he was coming to see one of the performances and we hope that he enjoyed seeing our version of his show'.

# Youth Shine in Musselburgh

Love youth theatre and want to come support a great cause? The Brunton in Musselburgh is putting on A Night to Shine! The date is Monday 2 May at 7 pm, and there will be performances, a raffle, a bake sale, and much more. Tickets are £2 and can be purchased the night of the event at Venue 2. The money raised will contribute to sending a few of our

members to the National Festival of Youth Theatre in July.

Also, The Brunton will be putting on summer art activities, dates TBC. This includes mini drama camps for 5-7s, workshops for 8-12s, and stage experiences for 12+.

The Brunton, Ladywell Way, Musselburgh, EH21 6AA

Telephone: 0131 6652240 or Email scooke@eastlothian.gov.uk for more details.

Sarah Cooke  
Community Arts Assistant  
The Brunton  
Musselburgh

# “ Peacocks, Pot Bellied Pigs and Perfection “

That was the headline from our once and now first review.

Shakespeare at Traquair was spawned from Under One Roof (UOR) - group formed to campaign for an Arts Centre in Peebles. As great patrons of the arts it was thought to approach Flora and Catherine Maxwell Stuart to possibly do a ONE OFF fundraiser at Traquair. So James Thomerson and Richard Nisbet met with Catherine and Flora one Autumn evening of 1993. But what fundraiser? Patron of UOR, Judy Steel immediately suggested “A Midsummer Night’s Dream - promenade style in the



Midsummer Night's Dream  
1995

grounds”. Two auditions - Tontine Hotel and Traquair Arms. There were members of Borders Youth Theatre, Tweed Theatre, Lucy Howell’s Youth Group in West Linton, a committee member from UOR, Accordionists from the Manor Valley, a Hairdresser from Ashkirk, a school teacher from Priorsford School in Peebles, a Council Worker from Selkirk, a teacher from Drumelzier, a flautist from Innerleithen, a wee girl

from Broughton, a wee boy from Ettrick Valley, a choreographer from Selkirk. New friendships from across the Borders.

ONE OFF fundraiser! - Here we are today 21 years on.

This years production is The Taming Of The Shrew : Wednesday 1st June to Saturday 4th June and Wednesday 8th June to Saturday 11th June. Tickets £8/£14 Eastgate Box Office (01721 725777)

## Directors Notes

To modern audiences, The Taming of the Shrew can present a deeply problematical dilemma, which centres on the relationship between Petruccio and Katherina. How is it that a woman who, by current standards, appears perhaps to be a little too forthright and assertive, submits to the demands of a seemingly domineering and misogynistic suitor?

Indeed, there are hints of discomfort even in Shakespeare’s day. John Fletcher, Shakespeare’s successor as house playwright for the King’s Men, wrote ‘The Tamer Tamed’ as a sequel to Shrew in which Petruccio remarries after Katherina’s death, whereupon the new wife proceeds, successfully, to tame him!

So how do we get round this problem? There are I think three main solutions. Firstly, it can be played as a straight Elizabethan period piece, where a wife is owned solely and wholly by her husband and must obey his every command unquestioningly.

Alternatively, it can be played ironically, so that after Katherina’s final speech in which she chastises the other women present for not obeying their husbands and pledges unyielding fidelity to Petruccio, she

might for example turn to the audience and give a knowing wink as if to say ‘yeah, yeah as if!’.

There is I think a third possibility that is worth exploring and that is their behaviour can to a greater extent be understood if they just lust after each other. It is an instant and electrically animalistic attraction that transcends both reason and common sense.

They will endure virtually any cruelty and privation to get the object of their desires between the sheets! Yes, they are both proud and stubborn and yes neither is going to give way to the other without a battle, but now it becomes much more a battle of equals.

## Broad Comedy

This is the approach I have chosen to adopt and moreover, it is one that allows the broad comedy to shine through, whilst simultaneously camouflaging some of the darker and crueller elements of the piece. It also allows Petruccio and Katherina to be essentially likeable people, not without their faults, but recognisably, of us.

I have also decided to adopt a broad gypsy theme to the show. I think this enables all the passion, colour and hot-headedness that is required and also gives Chris Dubé, our Director of Music, a suitably fervent canvas upon which to compose and adapt his music for the play.

So there will be music and singing and humour and sauciness and above all enjoyment.

If this all sounds like fun then I can assure you it will be.



Midsummer Night's  
Dream 1995



The cast cover a far bigger area now including Glasgow, Lanark, Edinburgh and the Lothians. Audiences come from all over - regulars from Carlisle, Newcastle and University of Edinburgh overseas students.

Under One Roof's dream became a reality in 2004 with the opening of The Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre. The promenade event raised over £10,000 towards the project. With the opening of the Centre UOR came to an end.

Shakespeare at Traquair is an inclusive group of volunteers. It is open to all age groups, ethnic backgrounds, theatrical experiences, location, politics. We have a strong team behind the scenes. We continue to be given great support and likewise support other community groups throughout the Borders. Having so many different Directors creates a freshness on each production.

Last year has been a 20th celebration. A major project to renew the roof of the Old Coach House at Traquair in October, where we store our extensive investment of costumes, scenery etc., is now very near completion. The roof was very bad - leaking and a lot of costumes to the tip. Pretty soul destroying with



all that cutting, sewing, cuts to the fingers and like. We also co-inhabited with bats - a lot in the cavities of the wall. Barry the Batman working from the Bush Science Park surveyed and advised through the journey. Bat Houses/ boxes are to be installed very soon. Work on the interior will take place after that - electrics, joinery, plumbing, painting and so forth. Hopefully some of your readers will maybe come experience the magic of Shakespeare at Traquair in June this year.

21 years, wow. I know many SCDA members been going way more than that but we are a 21 year old acorn.

Michael Boyd was an Oberon servant at the age of 7 in 1995 and had a year out in Australia, qualified in Architecture at Glasgow, gone on to designing computer programmes - he is playing Petruccio this year. Acorns to hard nuts in 21 years.

S@T would never have happened and



continue today with out the support of Flora and Catherine Maxwell Stuart. The biggest thank you to you both.



Traquair House and grounds is the most special playground. History oozes from every stone and tree. The beautiful house expands and contracts around us as a mother would do.

Richard Fuller

# Largs Players

It is rare for an amateur club to be given the opportunity of staging a world premiere but that is what's happened to Largs Players in April.

The Ayrshire group were handed first shot at presenting the brand new musical 'Caledonia-USA' based around the songs and music of Largs singer songwriters Gallagher and Lyle who had many hits in the pop charts in the 70s.

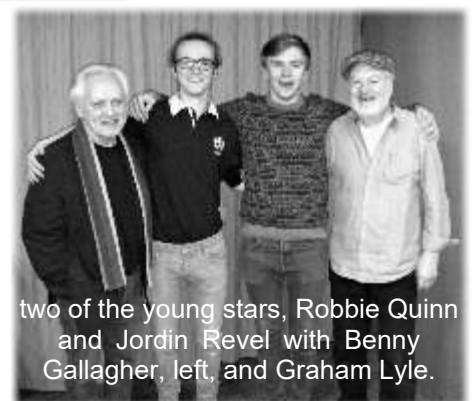
The show was originally called 'When I'm Dead And Gone' after one of Benny Gallagher and Graham Lyle's chart-topping songs when they were members of McGuinness Flint. However, when the veteran musicians got together to write their first song in 30 years they came up with 'Caledonia-USA.'

The musical, written by Maggie Kinloch, vice-principal of the Royal Conservatoire Scotland, and tv scriptwriter Viv Adam is being pitched as a potential professional show on Broadway.

Maggie, who started her career with her home town Largs Players, directed the show, assisted by Ruairidh Forde and musical director Ryan Moir at Barrfields Pavilion Theatre, from April 20 to 23.

With a cast of 44 the story flows between Largs itself and New York and features 20 Gallagher and Lyle songs such as 'Stay Young', 'I Wanna Stay With You' and 'Breakaway.'

Players' president Drew Cochrane, who is in the show, said: "Benny and



Graham will attend every performance and I am sure they will be pleased with the outcome. It is the biggest thing the club has done in 80 years, and it would be great to think that 'Caledonia-USA' went on to be successful on the West End and Broadway. We could truly say "we did that!"

Drew Cochrane

# Play Reviews – BY STEPHEN LAMBERT

Scripts from leading publishing houses can be ordered through the SCDA Discount Scheme - please contact Brenda Williams at our National Office by phone or email for details. Reading copies of all scripts and the top plays in our Scott Salver, Geoffrey Whitworth and Play on Words script writing competitions are available to borrow from the SCDA National Library at Summerhall Arts Centre in Edinburgh. Please note that we cannot guarantee every script reviewed is currently available for amateur performance.

## NICK HERN BOOKS

### 'Bracken Moor' by Alexi Kay Campbell

Two Act Drama ISBN 9781848423329

Cast: 4 Male, 3 Female plus small boy cameo

'We must go down into the dungeons of the heart to the dark places where modern mind imprisons all that is not defined and thought a part. We must let out the terrible creative visions.'

'He calls me sometimes usually in the dark hours of the morning – Mummy where are you? Come and find me!'

After years apart, two families meet to rediscover their lost friendship and instead conjure up the spirit of a buried tragedy in which a young boy falls to his death down a disused mine shaft.

Very powerful and at times frightening ghost story set against the economic crisis which hit the Yorkshire mining industry in the 1930's.

A boldly theatrical tale of grief and denial with a good mix of challenging character roles across the age range. Drawing room set.

### 'Our New Girl' by Nancy Harris

Two Act Drama ISBN 9781848422230

Cast: 1 Male, 2 Female plus small boy

Set in the modern kitchen of the Robinson family where everything is just a little too shiny and bright with a clock ticking ominously in the background.

Behind the front door of former lawyer Hazel Robinson's immaculate London home looks can be deceiving. Her plastic surgeon husband Richard has embarked on his latest charitable mission to assist the people of Haiti recover from their earthquake trauma leaving his heavily pregnant wife to cope with a failing Olive Oil business and her problem eight year old son Daniel and his pet tarantula. When a professional nanny, Annie, arrives unannounced on her doorstep Hazel finds her home under the shadow of a seemingly perfect stranger and one who has her own agenda.

An exceptionally well written psychological drama full of devious twists and unexpected revelations about the darker side of modern parenthood.

In its London premiere the important role of Daniel was played alternately by two talented young actors which would be advisable for amateur staging since the boy plays a crucial role in the action.

The volume also includes the Nancy Harris short play 'Little Dolls', 1 Male, 1 Female, concerning an interview following an unexpected death.

### 'Four Play' by Jake Brunger

Comedy in fifteen scenes

Cast: 4 Male ISBN: 9781848425552

Rafe and Pete have hit a rut in their personal relationship and after seven blissfully happy years their lack of sexual experience is finally driving them apart.

When they proposition mutual friend Michael to help them out with their problems, knowing full well Michael has his own partner Andrew, what seemed like a simple solution quickly spirals out of control.

The work is a new comedy for four twenty-somethings about sex and commitment. Jake Brunger's writing includes a musical adaptation of 'The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13¾'.

Written as open text with no specific set locations and helpful punctuation marks to assist the quick fire dialogue delivery, the play was commissioned by Old Vic New Voices as part of the T.S. Eliot Commissions and premiered at London's Theatre 503 in February 2016.

## SAMUEL FRENCH

### 'Private Peaceful' by Michael Morpurgo adapted by Simon Reade

Drama in thirty eight short scenes

Ensemble Piece. ISBN: 9780573110955

An infinitely touching, intensely acted account of a young First World War soldier's final day, the play relives the life of Private Tommo Peaceful awaiting the firing squad at dawn.

During the night he looks back at his short but joyful past growing up in rural Devon, his exciting first days at school, the accident in the forest which killed his father, his adventures with Molly the love of his life and the battles and injustices of war that brought him to the front line.

In the Great War over 290 soldiers of the British and Commonwealth armies were executed by firing squad, some for desertion and cowardice, others for simply sleeping at their posts.

Many of these young men were traumatised by shell shock and at the Courts Martial the accused were often unrepresented.

Their injustice was only officially recognised by the British Government at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and some 90 years later the men were granted posthumous pardons.

No set required with bare minimum of props and imaginative inventiveness essential to the storytelling. Lighting and sound effects list.

The script is also published by French's as a play for one actor with adaptor's note on the ending. Available from National Library, Summerhall. ISBN: 9780573142024

### 'Mrs Pat' by Anton Burge

Two Act Monologue ISBN: 9780573130083

Cast: 1 Female

Beatrice Stella Patrick Campbell (Mrs Pat) was a 19<sup>th</sup> Century leading lady, the toast of London and New York theatres, famed for her beauty and wit pioneering interpreter of Ibsen and co-star of Sara Bernhardt. She was George Bernard Shaw's original Eliza Dolittle and a legendary Hedda Gabler.

Yet in spite of her towering achievements in the final year of her life she faces her greatest challenge. Feeling abandoned by her art and country, at the mercy of the newly imposed quarantine laws, Mrs Pat and her adored

Pekinese Moonbeam find themselves fleeing Paris as the Nazis approach.

On a railway station platform she contemplates a life that has encompassed theatrical superstardom, financial ruin, public plaudits and personal loss yet even in her most difficult hour she remains a tour de force.

Full property, lighting and effects list. The play was first staged at Chichester Festival Theatre in October 2015 starring Penelope Keith.

Actor and writer Anton Burge has written 8 plays celebrating the lives of famous women and is author of 'Portraying Elizabeth', a study of actresses' interpretations with Eileen Atkins, Glenda Jackson Anna Massey, Greta Scacchi and Miranda Richardson.

He is currently completing a biography of Bette Davis.

### 'Thomas Tallis' by Jessica Swale

Drama in eight scenes ISBN: 9780573111334

Cast: 3 Male, 1 Female (doubling eighteen roles)

A portrait of the life of one of Britain's most successful composers set against the tumultuous political backdrop of the Renaissance. Living under four monarchs, Tallis was forced to adapt his compositions to suit their varying religious demands.

In Jessica's vividly imagined play we follow the contrasting fates of Tallis and a young priest from the dissolution of the monasteries through Mary's bloody reign, encounters with a young Elizabeth and the mysterious Dr Dee to their dramatic conclusion.

An elegant script with an ambitious storyline.

Property and music notes supplied.

Ideally the play should be staged with a choir performing Tallis' choral canon throughout.

Script contains programme notes on Thomas Tallis by the playwright.

### 'A Christmas Carol' by Patrick Barlow adapted from Dickens' novel

Two Act Drama ISBN: 9780573111471

Cast: 3 Male, 2 Female (doubling) plus puppeteers

In this stage version Olivier Award winning and Tony nominated Patrick Barlow takes Dickens' story of greed, grief, ghoulish ghosts and eleventh hour redemption to new levels bringing the timeless tale of life with just five actors using wit, flair and theatrical invention.

Comprehensive props, lighting and effects listings. Various London settings around 1842. Helpful character age and dialect descriptions.

Puppeteers bring to life Little Scrooge, Cratchit children, spirits and phantoms.

Premiered at Noel Coward Theatre in November 2015 with Jim Broadbent as Ebenezer Scrooge.

# It's all about the One Acts

Before moving to Edinburgh, I didn't know that such a wonderful thing as the One Act Play Festival existed. I'm jealous of all the people who grow up organising their calendar around the Youth competition and then graduate to the fully fledged version. As it's the most brilliant opportunity to experiment.

Experiment I did. First with a cracking play by writer, philosopher and one-time President of the Czech Republic, Vaclav Havel. *Private View* poked fun at the middle class ability to survive and thrive in a restrictive regime. 'Blood and meat oozes between the lines' wrote one reviewer (of the script). Ross Hope, Frances Swanwick and Pay Hymers did a lovely job in the Edinburgh Graduate Theatre Group entry to the One Act Play festival that year of conveying the 'blood and meat' alongside an overpowering cloying smugness.

We followed up this entry with a couple of pieces by brilliant British writer Sarah Kane, *Crave* and *4:48 Psychosis*. Her particular form of

writing isn't everyone's cup of tea but the One Act Play Festival gave us the opportunity to present these difficult dramatic pieces of theatre.

The One Acts are also a wonderful opportunity to explore a piece of a longer play. So one year, we entered the first scene from a play called *The Pillowman* by Martin McDonagh, better known now for his film scripts but at the time, recognised principally for his masterful work, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*. David Grimes, Gordon Craig and Chris Condie did an exceptional job of bringing the 'not quite what they seem' characters to life and we loved bringing that particular slice of menace to the competition that year.

This year, I've decided to go the whole hog as far as experimentation is concerned. I've written something. It was great to see some new writing

in the competition last year and I'm hoping that the audience will be tolerant of my efforts this years.

My mother ship, the Grads, entered their own play, *The Rose and Crown* by the excellent J B Priestly, so we've created a brand new group, Production Lines. And produced a brand new script called *Likes*. Dealing with self-image in a society that expects carefully curated perfection, *Likes* looks at two teenage girls' attempts to navigate expectations, online and off.

I'm delighted to have assembled a brilliant cast including Ross Hope who clearly wasn't put off by his first flirtation with the One Acts with me. And we're particularly pleased to have local photographer Judith Fieldhouse involved as creator of the multimedia element of the show.

Claire Wood



## Tryst's "Travels with My Aunt" a Raucous Romp

Four middle-aged men, dressed in boring grey suits with matching grey pullovers, sit facing the audience simultaneously sipping tea as Elgar's "Salut d'amour" plays quietly.

It's the low-key start to Tryst Theatre's sell-out "Travels with my Aunt" in Alloa's Coach House Theatre.... which then zanily bursts into life like a match carelessly thrown into a box of fireworks.

This rip-roaring, anarchic comedy tells the story of retired bank manager Henry Pulling and his exciting adventures with his eccentric Aunt Augusta. In their madcap travels – from London and Brighton to Paris, Italy, Istanbul and South America - Aunt Augusta pulls Henry away from his dull and safe existence into an exotic world of international intrigue, travel, crime and romance.

The four actors – Jim Allan, Alan Clark, Brian Paterson and Brian Tripney – displayed their versatility

by all playing Henry plus 25 other larger-than-life characters, changing identities, nationalities, sexes and even species at the drop of a hat.

Mild-mannered Henry meets his Aunt Augusta at a funeral. Played brilliantly by Carol Clark, like Maggie Smith in overdrive, flamboyant, flame-haired 70-plus Augusta is both the black sheep of the family and a colourful bird of paradise who lives life to the full. In the play she slowly sets about corrupting Henry. Augusta becomes a bossy mother figure, drawing him into her shady world of smuggling, drugs, hippies, war criminals, CIA operatives and military dictatorships!

The Alloa audiences loved all the jokes and business, especially when Augusta was talking about how, in one of the countries she visits, "it

was only recently that they assassinated the prime minister - we dream of it, but they act!"

"It's a wonderfully wacky and riotous play," says Director Jim Allan. "And just by moving tables and chairs around the stage plus subtle changes in lighting and sound, we were able to create different locations such as a London taxi, a French railway station and a South American prison. It was a fun run that we and our audiences thoroughly enjoyed."

Alan Clark



# Alexander (Sandy) Glass OBE



**1932-2015**

Sandy arrived in Dingwall in the late summer of 1977 to take up the post of Rector of Dingwall Academy. His reputation as a drama enthusiast in previous incarnations in Fochabers, Nairn, Oban, Perth and Montrose preceded him and it was no surprise when, despite the responsibility of leading the (then) largest school in Highland Region, he was soon heavily involved dramatically with both the Dingwall Players and the youngsters of the Academy. His credentials as a director were locally established in the Players Christmas show of 1978 when his sold out production of "A Christmas Carol" took to the town hall stage to universal acclaim. His ability to involve and inspire a large cast comprising a wide age range in a genuinely community project was a feature of his success as a director over many years--"The Wizard of Oz", "Our Town", The Wind In The

Willows" and the Christmas panto being just a few examples. When not involved as director of the panto he would invariably pop up on stage (usually playing the villain!).

Sandy's commitment to the SCDA's annual One Act and Youth Festivals was prodigious. Between 1979 and his last productions in 2010 he would normally each year be involved in directing one play for the Inverness/Moray Firth District Festival and 2/3 (and occasionally 4!) for the Highland Division Youth Festival, all at the same time. Such was his enthusiasm and determination that on the one occasion that the Players Committee in their wisdom (or lack of it!) declined to approve his choice of play for the District Festival he temporarily embraced an Inverness club to ensure the play went ahead anyway! Two of his One Act productions made it to the Scottish Final and his youth plays regularly featured in the National Youth Final and invariably toured to the Moray Arts Festival in Elgin.

### **SCDA Dedication**

Sandy's SCDA dedication was no less on the administrative side. He was a committed and effective Chair of the Inverness/Moray Firth District for many years and a hard working and efficient Highland Division Secretary/Festival Organiser until retiral in 2011. He also acted as the Highland representative on the James Scotland Trust Fund and Chaired the meetings of the Organising Committee of the Scottish/British One Act Final when Eden Court Theatre was the venue. Further afield he will be remembered as a supportive Convener of the Playwriting Committee and as a member of the National Committee. In all of these roles his organisational skill and ability to liaise effectively with a wide circle of contacts were much valued.

It may be said that patience was not one of Sandy's greatest attributes and he certainly did not suffer fools gladly, but those who got to know him soon realised that his bark was worse than his bite. He certainly inspired great loyalty and affection in his casts both adult and youth, and he was quick to show his caring side to those coping with illness or personal problems. Many will remember his Chairman's ability to tease and charm a Festival audience or Committee into co-operation. Sandy enjoyed recounting the story of his first experience of amateur drama when as a young lad in Dunbar he was drafted in to a WRI team at a festival, where he received an adjudication which was couthy but uncomplimentary. Despite this he went on to become a great stalwart for amateur drama both locally and nationally. In 2009 Sandy celebrated 50 years of involvement in youth drama and many hundreds of youngsters must have benefited from exposure to the art under his guidance. Sandy had a wide circle of acquaintances within and without the drama world and took great pleasure in reconnecting with former colleagues and pupils over the years.

Sandy became an auxiliary kirk minister in 1993 and in the same year was awarded his OBE for services to child welfare. He spent his last years in a care home in Dingwall surrounded by books and visited by many friends and acquaintances. He died peacefully on Christmas Day 2015 and his funeral attracted a full house to the church where he had for many years been session clerk. He is survived by his wife Edith, daughters Eleanor, Muriel and Louise (all of whom appeared in some of Sandy's productions) and three grandchildren, to whom sympathy is extended.

Ron Singleton



### **Accuracy**

The Editor is not able to authenticate all details in every article. If you submit an article to us we expect you to have checked the facts.

TAKE

### **Photos**

We want your photos. Images must be 300 dpi and please don't let your email client make them smaller. If you are unsure please email us [scene@scda.org.uk](mailto:scene@scda.org.uk) and we will advise you.

NOTE

Clubs please note you can get 4 copies of Scene for £10.00 plus postage just send your request to HQ

## Charlie Gallacher



Charlie and Alice

Brought up in Alexandria near Loch Lomond in 1931, he broke into "the arts" early as a boy soprano, giving his all to "The Holy City". Later he joined Dumbarton's People's Theatre. Green Room and Pantheon

(Glasgow). Taking drama much more seriously than many of us, he attended summer school in St Andrews under the tutelage of the late James Scotland (the author of the hilarious "Cambusdonald" monastery comedies). A fellow student was our own greatly admired librarian, Douglas Currie.

A work move to Edinburgh found Charlie writing and directing community productions in Currie. Later Fife drew him into the musical scene and he "guested" for Glenrothes AMA and Kirkcaldy AOS, where his repartee and fund of jokes made him a popular member of the "boys" dressing room.

Charlie was particularly delighted to be invited to take part in "Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estates" outdoor (mostly) in Cupar (where it was first performed in 1552). He represented Religion (Spiritualitie) with appropriate solemn

dignity and got as much pleasure as the audience from his de-frocking to reveal his LARGE figure in a scarlet, lace trimmed basque – cue for great hilarity.

A very keen Burns man, Charlie was often called on to give "The Immortal Memory", "Tam O'Shanter", and "The Toast To The Lassies". Fellow Burns enthusiasts looked forward to hearing the further antics of Charlie's mythical girlfriend "Big Senga" or her not so feminine mother "Wee Senga".

Though not in great health latterly, Charlie was always a great supporter of SCDA, to be seen at One Act Festivals at District, Divisional and National levels.

Charlie was a very talented and likeable man of great humour and easy sociability. We will all miss him.

Martin Butler

## Dalgety Players

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the club.

It all started when the minister of Dalgety Parish Church the rev Peter Elston was keen to start a drama club in the new town. I was invited to attend a meeting in the old church hall (now the Scout HQ) along with several interested parties. I was at that time producer and performer with Randolph Players Dunfermline. Matters proceeded and with assistance from Randolph Players the show was 'on the road'.

Early shows were on the small 'stage' in the old church hall and consisted of joint productions with Randolph of one-act plays, sketches etc. The stage was entered from the door at the back of the hall and the nearby church became the dressing room. This meant a quick dash along the outside of the hall to get to the back door. This route was open to the elements, often dark and wet. Part of the dash was along a narrow path bordered by a fence often lined by cattle with heads over the field fence attracted by music from the show.

The club's first play was the classic Scots comedy 'the Maisterfu' Wife'

The club's earliest pantomimes were held in Dalgety Bay primary school and then in the new church building with a, real stage'. The club programme until recently was a



drama production in autumn and a pantomime, as now, in January. This to be followed by entry to SCDA one act play festival in February. A variety show in spring or summer followed. In the autumn by productions which included such favourites as 'Wild goose Chase', 'Breath of Spring', 'Seeds of Doubt' etc. The autumn full length play has fallen out of the programme recently due to a variety of factors but hopefully will return.

The club has become known for its pantomime productions and this year presented its 36th annual pantomime. The club makes all its own scenery and has an extensive costume collection. The lighting department has recently upgraded to LED stage lighting units.

The club took part in several large productions such as the Masque of Dunfermline, (part of the Carnegie Centennial celebration), The historic play '800 years of Dalgety Parish' and the 25th anniversary 'Masque of Dalgety Bay'

Over the years the club has performed and has raised money for a variety of charities and causes including projects in Malawi

Several of our members have become full time actors or teachers and others have appeared on TV, film or radio over the years

The club is an open community club and welcomes anyone with an interest in all aspects of theatre

Peter Franklin



# Crieff Drama!

What does a tennis ball, a pedigree dog and a deaf aid have in common? - Well for those who supported the Crieff Drama Group's autumn production the answer was a thoroughly enjoyable and entertaining evening. Once again the Drama Group had put together a collection of one Act plays, combined that with an excellent supper and this recipe guaranteed a full house in the Academy Hall for three nights last week. It may sound easy enough but the selection of three comic plays is only achieved by reading a number of scripts and deciding which ones will make up a suitable programme and will combine the acting talents of the Group.

The first appetiser of the evening was **"Score"** by Lyndon Brook - Sheila (Jane Drysdale) and Harry (Neil Combe) are doubles partners in a tennis match against a superior pairing. Tennis is not their forte but



a means by which Harry can improve his standing with his boss who forms part of the opposition. Desperate to impress Harry chides his partner for letting him down whilst Sheila is equally acerbic in her asides to



Harry. The energy put in by the losing couple certainly entertained the audience as did the pained expression on their faces as they are completely outplayed.!

The second course was a wonderfully funny sketch taken from Jean McConnell's collection of five short plays entitled "Deckchairs".



**"Doggies"** is the chance meeting of two dog walkers who sit down to rest on a sunny day on the esplanade of a seaside resort.

Thelma (Fiona Wellstood) the proud owner of her precious pedigree pekinese San San meets with Eric (Tom Inglis) the equally proud owner of a mongrel, Robbie. Fiona was excellent as the up market Thelma and berates Eric on the behaviour of his dog blaming the owner for

its antics and lack of training whilst Eric defends his dog whole-heartedly. Both dogs appear as oversized hand puppets on the laps of their owners, the timing and movement of the dogs during the conversations added brilliantly to the humour of the piece. For all the high and mighty attitude of the pedigree owner it turns out the mongrel has the last laugh as Robbie had taken advantage of San San whilst romping in the bushes! A first class supper was served to the audience following this play and a happy

buzz of conversation rang around the Hall, an obvious indication of the approval of the entertainment served so far.

The third and final offering for the night was **"Getting Along"** by Charles Mander, set in a dilapidated gîte in the French midi, the ageing travellers arrive wearily at their supposed destination. John Cummings as the agitated Henry, leader of the party kept everyone on their toes as he flitted around creating one drama after another whilst the seasoned Saga traveller Norman (Mike Owens) struggled with his deaf aid or was it just selective deafness as he chased poor highly strung Marcia (Helen Day) who was terrified by the thunderstorm which had just started. The only calm members of the party were Helen (Kate Beauchamp), long suffering wife of Henry and the recently bereaved John (Paul F Kelly) who decided to drive off and revisit the office in the Chateau to check



whether they had reached their correct destination - their departure raising the blood pressure of Henry who suspected them of running away together. Fortunately their return confirmed Henry had taken the wrong turning and they were in the wrong building. As seasoned members of the Group each portrayed their character to perfection and kept the pace of the sketch flowing from start to finish.!

Congratulations must go to Crieff Drama for a splendid evening of entertainment and dining.!

Mike Boxer

# Poster Winners

Once again we have had a great selection of posters for the 2015 competition. It could have been more if clubs would remember that to enter it's a simple rule – have the scda logo or say they are members of the association on it. (Are clubs not proud to say they are members of the association anyway?).

Our professional judge Douglas McBride had the following to say about this year's entries.

"Oops!, now what am I going to do....? It's finally happened, a batch of posters have been delivered to me



that all, yes! all are so clear and concise in their message that it's too hard to choose between them.

Graphics are great, imagery is fantastic, the designers are to be congratulated. Each have a wow!!! factor. I wish I could see all the productions now....

Treasure island evokes a great atmosphere, (third place). Someone who'll watch over me, such mystery, great photo too, (second place). Then there is Annie... There is so much information on the poster, however the group of waifs, call to me, bet that was a great show.

So, Annie is the winning poster...my congratulations to every company.

Morna Barron





Saughtonhall Drama - Geronimo



Pit Pony Productions - Cinderella



New Victory Players - Toad of Toad Hall



Ury Players - Dirty Dusting



Pathhead Players - Bluebeard



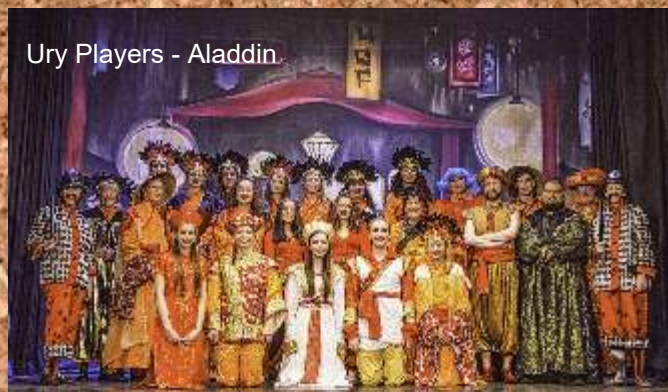
Leitheatre - Lovers: Winners & Losers



The Florians



Stewarton Drama Group - Calamity Jeannie



Ury Players - Aladdin



Riverside DC - Snow White



Riverside DC - Snow White



Auld Kirk Players Wild Goose Chase



Leitheatre - Lovers: Winners & Losers