

Autumn 2021

scene

*The love of drama
never did run
smooth*



The magazine of
Scottish Community Drama

Previous festival winners

(more pictures on back cover)



2014

Fintry ADS
'Victor's Dung'

Gordon & Co

Insurance for Amateur Dramatic and Operatic Societies

A specialist insurance package underwritten by a leading UK insurer

Modern, easy to understand policy wording including:

- o Material Damage All Risks (minimum £7,500)
- o Public and Products Liability with Indemnity Limit of £5,000,000
- o Personal Accident cover
- o Cancellation cover

For more information please contact:

Robert Israel, Gordon & Co.

2 Sekforde Court, 217 St John Street, London, EC1V 4LY

Tel: 020 7251 1001

Email: firstnight@gordonandco.co.uk

Website: www.firstnightinsurance.co.uk

***Don't let your First Night be your last night...
We've got you covered!***

Israel, Gordon & Co. Ltd. Are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority,
Registered in England and Wales, Registered Office as above. Registration number 1003646.





SCENE No.169

The magazine of the
**Scottish Community
Drama Association**

Scottish Charity No. 021397

National Office

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

National Administrator : Brenda Jane Williams,
email: headquarters@scda.org.uk

National Drama Advisor : Carole Williams,
email: nda@scda.org.uk

Website : scda.org.uk

Office opening hours

Due to the coronavirus the office is currently closed. Brenda is working from home. Anything sent to the office by post will be collected weekly. An answering service is operating on 07407 387086 please leave a message and Brenda will get back to you as soon as possible.

Editorial Team

- Morna Barron
- Angela Binnie
- Paula Gibson
- Walter Hampson
- Stephen Lambert
- Sue Pannell
- Isabella Rae

Scene magazine

Copy date for next edition : 4th December 2021

Retail price for non-members : £4

Editorial Statement:

The editorial committee reserve the right to edit or not print items submitted to Scene.

We always welcome news or opinions, please email letters or articles to the Scene Editor at scene@scda.org.uk

*Printed by Monument Press,
42 Abbey Road, Stirling FK8 1LP
01786 474763 info@monumentpress.co.uk*

Cover

Orkney's Ad Hoc Players' production of
Midsummer Night's Dream in the Park.

Chairman's chat



This has been the year of the 'staycation' and we've all enjoyed the lovely long summer and warm evenings in sunny Scotland! It has been fantastic to see things gradually open up again with freedom we could never have imagined a year ago. What has inspired me most is the sheer determination and adaptability of businesses and sectors such as hospitality, leisure and culture to overcome challenges. Live theatre has also made an extremely welcome return with outdoor performances at venues like Pitlochry Festival Theatre and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

We have kept busy in SCDA circles while we were awaiting our own opportunity to bring the curtain up. Following on the back of our highly successful Monologue Competition, some of our members have spent the last few months reading and judging the entries of our Play on Words Competition. With many writers participating for the first time, I know the readers have been very impressed and highly entertained by these original scripts. Please take the opportunity to read the variety of synopsis in our feature as it would be fantastic to see these new pieces of drama entering our Festival circuits in the coming months.

I know that as groups and clubs are getting back together and planning rehearsals many questions have been raised regarding protocols and safety. Along with other SCDA members and groups such as NODA, Project Theatre and PACE, I attended a 'Swap Shop – Back in the Room Special' run by Youth Theatre Arts Scotland. Everyone shared their experiences, challenges and advice for reopening and the general feeling was one of real positivity with great feedback from groups who had returned in whatever capacity. There was a suggestion that being back in the room was far less overwhelming than reading the guidelines! Realistically we may still face some challenges as we all return but we have waited a long time for this so above all else please relish and enjoy it!

Carolyn

Welcome

To new Individual members

Beth Harrison . . . Angus - Northern
Nora Smyth . . . Glasgow - Western
David Gray . . . Fife - Eastern
Jean Thewlis . . . Stirling - Eastern
Jane Campbell . . . Fife - Eastern

To new Life Member

Sally North . . . Fife - Eastern

Thank you

For your kind donations

Peter Franklin
Alan Henry
Kirkton Players

Thank you also for the continued support from our Patrons, which is much appreciated.

Divisional AGMs

Western Division

The Park Hotel, Kilmarnock. Saturday 23rd October at 2pm. For option to attend by zoom, contact jackws@live.co.uk for link.

Highland Division

Saturday, 30th October at 2pm. Meeting by zoom only, contact agerr@aol.com for link.

Northern Division

Inn at the Park, Aberdeen. Saturday 16th October, lunch at 12.30, AGM at 2pm. For option to attend by zoom, contact lee.dunn@gmail.com for link.

Eastern Division

Saturday, 23rd October at 11am. Meeting by zoom only, contact dianewhite3@gmail.com for link.

National AGM weekend

Station Hotel, Perth. Fun social evening and dinner, Friday 12th November at 7pm. To book contact secretary@scda.org.uk by 1st November.

AGM on Saturday 13th November at 1pm. For option to attend by zoom, contact secretary@scda.org.uk for link.

The One Act Festival is back

With venues reopening around the country and groups making plans for the coming year, we are very excited to be looking forward to our One Act Festival in 2022. Districts and Divisions already have dates and venues booked within the normal timetable and plans are in progress for our Scottish Final in the fabulous theatre in Kirkwall, Orkney.

We want next year's Festival to be a great celebration of the return of amateur community drama and it would be fantastic to see a large number of entries. Please spread the word and encourage all local groups to take part in District Festivals and let's make it a year to remember!



make 2022 special!

MONOLOGUE COMPETITION

When we first launched the national monologue competition we had no idea how it would be received. We knew there was interest in it but would that interest turn into entries. It turns out that it did, we had 109 entries across both competitions (performance and writing). Looking at all those entries a few things stood out:

- There is such a great deal of talent within the SCDA, so many performers and writers rose to the occasion and embraced the different mediums.
- The judges had their work cut out for them, there was such a high standard of entries across both competitions.
- The entries did come from all over the country, it was particularly nice to see entries from clubs that aren't regular entrants in our festivals.
- The entries came from a great mix of experienced and first-timers, particularly in the writing competition where some of the entrants were entering their writing into a competition for the first time.
- And finally, lockdown/covid influenced a lot of our entries this year - let's hope that isn't the case in the future...



Liz McLardy



Jane Orr

Those were just a few stray thoughts as we look back on the competition but perhaps the main thing that stood out was the interest in the competition once the deadline for entries had passed. We had no idea how many people would want to see all the performances in the end, we thought maybe only the other entrants and a few diehards. Well, we were way off the mark there, the videos of the performances have been viewed over 5000 times! That is an audience most of us could only dream of and it was so good to see all the hard work getting that level of recognition.

It is still a competition of course and we did have winners. The winner of the writing competition was Jane Orr of The Byre Writers for her script 'Swansong'. The winner of the performance competition was Liz McLardy of Dingwall Players for her performance of 'Perfect Pitch' (which she also wrote). We have 2 beautiful new trophies that we are looking forward to presenting to the winners, hopefully at our national AGM later this year.

So what is the future of the monologue competition? We always intended that this become an annual competition and we now have a successful first competition to build on. We also knew that we would learn a lot from this first competition and that has been the case. We have looked at feedback from judges, entrants, non-entrants, and organisers. There will be small changes that help improve it and hopefully allow more entries in the future. All we can say at the moment is, watch this space....

Lee Dunn

Play on words

RESULTS

It had been quite a few years since we had organised a Playwriting competition. Taking the opportunity that most people due to covid-19 would be housebound we thought it an ideal time to launch a new POW competition. We did this on 7th November 2020 and by the 31st March 2021 deadline we were delighted to have 49 entries.

We were lucky to get Guy Hollands ex artistic Director of the Citizens Glasgow to be the final judge and to mentor the winners improving their scripts and making them ready for publication and performance.



Guy Hollands

Guy has been active in the Scottish theatre community for over thirty years. As a director, community drama leader, teacher, and arts manager, he has worked in a myriad of settings on every possible scale. For twenty years he dedicated his time to the Glasgow Citizens Theatre in a variety of roles including Artistic Director, Gorbals Drama Worker, Associate Director leading the company's community, outreach and participation programmes, and Artistic Director of TAG making and touring work for children and young people.

In addition to over 40 shows for the Citizens Theatre and TAG, Guy has directed numerous productions for many other Scottish companies including The Lyceum Edinburgh, 7:84 and the for the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Now freelance, Guy is enjoying being able to deepen his links with RCS and the SCDA whilst developing new projects of his own for future production.

The POW promotional videos made by Lisa Nicoll of 'In Motion', shown on facebook at various intervals during November and December had obviously proved very successful. Our 18 readers were divided into various groups of three so each script was read and assessed six times. They were marked and written feedback was given on each script. All unsuccessful authors were given written feedback on their work to hopefully help them with future writing.

The standard this time was extremely high and it was with difficulty we came to our final decisions. The under 30s years of age group was decided first with four scripts being sent to final judge Guy Hollands, to study and make his decision. The three runners-up, **Isla Cowan** with '**Bleeding**', the play follows three different women at very different stages in their lives, and challenges contemporary taboos surrounding menstrual bleeding. **Blair Harrison** with '**On the Sea**', at the height of the age of sail, a merchant ship is struck with disaster, two survivors are left clinging to a rowboat, forced to confront the reality of what it means to be set adrift. **Cameron Forbes** with '**A Short play about Love, Death Parties and Balloons**' which is a memory play about the death of Daryl. They all had excellent written feedback from Guy and hopefully will improve their scripts so we will eventually see them performed perhaps in our festivals.

Congratulations go to **Aaron Kirkwood** from Dennistoun, Glasgow our under 30s winner with '**A Dream Called Vienna**'. The play follows one day in the life of three working Scottish women. It is about aspirations and what happens when dreams are either followed or abandoned. Like most of us during the Second Lockdown earlier this year, Aaron found himself with more free time thanks to the temporary end to all hobbies and most socialising. One hobby he could continue easily from home however was writing, which is normally side-lined by his work- as a principal teacher in a primary school, there is little creative energy left of an evening to sit down and write!



He has always enjoyed writing scripts and performing them- he led and directed a drama group for teenagers, wrote and starred in Aladdin (forced to de-costume at the interval to console a terrified child) and has written this year's upcoming pantomime by Riverside drama group.

Aaron said "Seeing my writing come alive on stage gives a great sense of achievement and so the Play on Words competition was a good motivator to get a piece of writing completed and, after watching the video about what the judges were looking for, I felt I had an idea that would be worth entering. Nothing to lose and, as it turned out, everything to gain!" Aaron is now working with Guy to develop his script for performance and publication. It is hoped that we can get Aaron's play performed at some point next year.

Once again the standard in the open section was very high and it was again with difficulty we came to the top 12. They were read, assessed yet again by three new judges to find the top four to go to Guy who would decide on the eventual winner. Commiserations go to those who were unsuccessful in reaching the top four, but hopefully the feedback they received will assist them in future and we will see some of their plays in our festivals.

The top four were sent to Guy to make his final decision and many congratulations go to runners-up **Mike Tibbets** with '**On the Twelfth Day Of Christmas**', a quiet piece offering a slice of the lives of three people during a difficult then surprising and ultimately uplifting evening together. **Drew Young** with '**A Human Condition**' an abstract piece exploring the theme of waiting and each character brings a slightly different perspective. **Gerry McCartan** with the comedy '**Mnfpee**' Bernard is becoming more and more confused with the melodramatic behaviour of his wife and live in in-laws whose three month stay has lengthened into three years.

Three completely different plays all well worth being performed in our One Act Festival.

However many congratulations to **Heloise Thual, Glasgow** with '**Teen Horror Love**' two teenager fans of horror movies meet after a horror movie at the cinema. They share secrets and origins of their love for monsters. Maybe monsters are real after all! Heloise is French but has been living in Glasgow for almost a decade now. She still feels really in sync with her teenage self and wanted for some time to write for a teenage audience. Heloise says "teenagers being smarter and more critical than we give them credit for, I found the task a bit daunting. Teen horror Love is my first attempt to write a teenage play and I entered the competition hoping to get some feedback. I am delighted I will receive some guidance to rework it and hopefully help it find its way to a teenage audience."

Heloise is also now working with Guy to develop her script for performance and publication and along with Aaron hopefully have it performed next year.



This has been one of the most successful playwriting competitions we have organised for some time and proved we have much writing talent in our organisation.

Guy told me "Working on the POW competition has been great fun so far. I've enjoyed hugely the opportunity to read such a wide variety of new plays – it is only a shame that there can be just the one winner in each of the age categories. Having said that, the two winning plays each have something really distinctive and original about them and I'm looking forward greatly to working with the playwrights as they develop their work towards a final draft that is ready for the rehearsal room"

Let's hope when clubs are looking for their Festival play for 2022 they give a thought to some of the POW entries.

Morna Barron

Peter Arnott

For those of you who have not heard of the powerhouse that is Peter Arnott I thought you might be interested in a bit of back history and also my personal professional involvement with him. I will start with the here and now and work backwards.

Peter has written many plays for National Theatre of Scotland and has in fact been commissioned in his career to write 50 scripts for the professional theatre. In his own words he was lucky enough to be commissioned by NTS for number 50 after lockdown started. An adaptation of an epic and award winning novel by James Robertson published in 2010 titled "*And the Land Lay Still*". In true NTS style and ethos it showcases an alternative history of Scotland in the latter part of the 20th century told by its everyday people instead of its movers and shakers.

It was within that context that I first met Peter and instantly identified a kindred spirit in a mutual desire to spread a wide net into the community to capture local writing and performing talent. In 2017 he had been contracted by NTS to develop the script and story of one of our key exports, not oil, not whisky but granite. Creative Scotland had part funded the project in partnership with Aberdeen Arts Centre, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen Performing Arts and other key stakeholders and businesses.

So the media bandwagon got rolling and we soon had a dedicated group of local writers and performers who met with Peter at the Arts Centre twice a month to develop not just the main script but their not inconsiderable writing talents.

The end result was the stunning production of '*Granite*' set within the spectacular backdrop of Marischal College quad telling the story of the famous grey and glittering stone through the Scottish diaspora and taking it on a journey through several key periods to the granite mile of Union Street in the 20th century. It was an award winning spectacle of gargantuan ambition and proportion and everyone involved was truly grateful to have been part of it.

As is ever the case where funding comes legacy follows and our granite writers continued to produce work culminating in a unique anthology of prose/ verse and script aptly titled "The Granite Mile" plus the Arts Centre staged 3 community performances by our Granite Drama Group.

A phenomenal output and when asking Peter how and when his new piece of work will be staged his response was as you might expect; "No- one has any idea what might happen when. Let alone a big show like this one... (it has 14 key actors which bodes well for our

creatives)...it needs a big audience to make any kind of financial sense. As for the show itself...2023 or 4 probably".

Something truly great to look forward to without a doubt.

Peter has kindly written a piece for SCENE about his involvement and engagement with SCDA since his early days as one of the Milngavie Players. He was also part of a focus group some years back with our NDA Carole Williams and the current CEO of the Federation of Scottish Theatre, Fiona Sturgeon also as part of that think-tank to discuss how to develop a National Theatre of Scotland.

His views then as now were that SCDA played and continue to play a huge part in our national culture. I read his article with interest and asked him how he could envisage a meeting of minds.

His response; "I think we could arrange some kind of meeting between the Playwrights Studio, the Scottish Society of Playwrights and the SCDA to discuss potential collaboration on points of common interest"

Thank you , Peter, we look forward to more joined up thinking of all interested parties.

Paula Gibson



A Lesson Learned

If I think about the Scottish Community Drama Association, three immediate things occur to me. The first is an essence of our cultural history as a theatre making nation in the 20th century, the second is my personal history as somebody who works professionally in Scotland, and the third is a sense of a wasted opportunity that demands some joined up thinking in the 21st Century.

Let me start in the middle, go back to the beginning and finish at the end. In 1979, aged seventeen, I was one of the Milngavie Players, and we did a show made up of little vignettes by well known theatre writers on the subject of love. I don't remember much about it, except that at my age some of the content of what I said on stage may have seemed startlingly inappropriate given that who I was saying it to was a few years older than me.

It was also the first time, I think, that I'd appeared on a stage, in Eastwood, with a properly public audience ie out of school and church...and that we won a competition, which was judged by the journalist Kenneth Roy, who was such a stalwart supporter of the work of local amateur drama groups.

It was later that I got to realise that it was these same local drama groups which had put the Scottish into Scottish theatre by performing a specifically Scots repertoire, often of variable quality but sometimes, as in the work of Joe Corrie and the Bowhill Players, of historical and cultural significance that reached into the "professional" theatre I aspired to be a part of. I'm thinking of the "Clydebuilt" season in Glasgow in 1982 which saw Corrie's wonderful Scots language play on the 1926 Miner's Strike, "In Time Of Strife", produced with success and acclaim, having, incidentally, an enormous influence on me as a writer.

Theatre could do anything and stay Scottish...that was the lesson I learned, that was what I took into the first thing I ever wrote for paid actors, and I've clung to that mantra ever since.

As for now and into the future, I have never seen anything but snobbery in the disconnect between amateur and professional theatre in Scotland. I see no good reason at all why it is simply not standard practice for the wealth of Scottish plays that have emerged especially since the 1970s, very often commissioned expensively, on for three weeks in one place and then never seen or heard of again... not being available as texts for reading, discussion and production by SCDA member groups. Playwrights and performers could both benefit.

Likewise, in the archives of the SCDA too, in the new library in Summerhall in particular, there is an unexplored treasure trove for historians as well as theatre types. I know there must be another "Time of Strife" in there...or something like Benedick Scott's "Lambs of God" written for Glasgow Unity, a play that dealt with issues of homosexuality decades before such a thing fell within the wildest dreams of professional producers and broadcasters. There will be gold lurking on the shelves of the SCDA's perennially peripatetic...and now established... library.

Why not take advantage of the pandemic to start a conversation between the playwrights and the performers, via the good offices of the Scottish Society of Playwrights and the SCDA? There are funding streams and interest groups out there who could benefit hugely from a little joined up thinking!

Peter Arnott



Peter Arnott's 'Tay Bridge' at Dundee Rep.

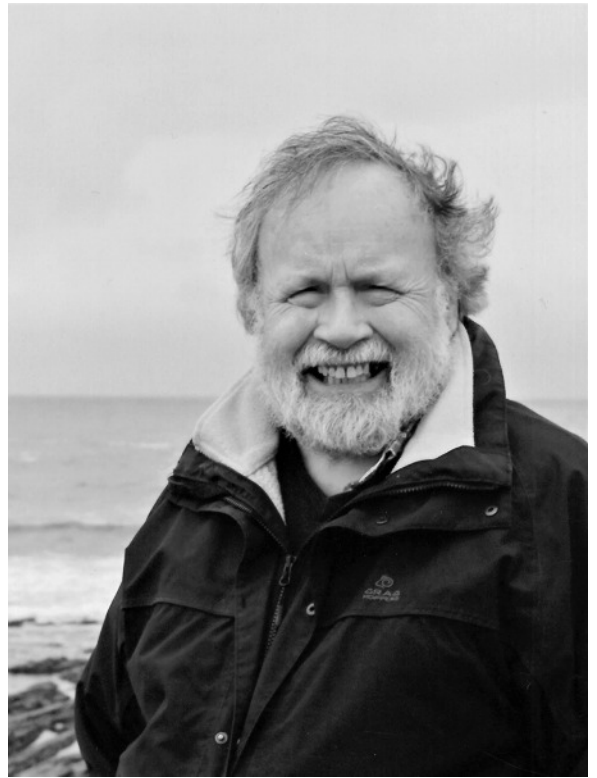
Fraser Dixon

The drama community in Orkney, and Stromness in particular, was saddened to hear of the death of Fraser Dixon in November last year. Fraser was a founding member, along with his wife Allison, of the present Stromness Drama Club in 1989, but before that was involved with productions with Stromness SWRI, Stromness Drama Group and Stromness Academy, as well as Palace Players.

Fraser and Allison moved to Orkney in 1969, when Fraser took up the post of Head of Biology at Stromness Academy, and they soon became involved in many aspects of the community, particularly drama. Although Allison was the first to become involved on stage (in the first full production of George Mackay Brown's *'Stormwatchers'*, directed by Jean 'Queenie' Campbell, which went on to win the SCDA Orkney district in 1971), Fraser soon followed her.

An early acting role for Fraser in the 70s was as the Art teacher Teddy Lloyd in *'The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie'* directed by Ernie Donaldson, where Allison played Sandy, the pupil who was his nude model. Other roles followed, mainly with Stromness WRI, before Fraser took up the director's baton and entered plays into the one-act festival under Stromness Drama Group.

Largely due to the enthusiasm of Fraser, Allison and John Broom, Stromness Drama Club was established in 1989. There were regular monthly get-togethers in the early



days, for play readings, drama games or guest speakers. This led to the revival of revues and panto in Stromness, alongside regular one-act festival plays.

In the first SDC pantomime *'Frankenstein, the panto'* by David Swan, Fraser's role was Stage Manager, but when the lead character succumbed to a severe stomach upset on the last night, Fraser stepped in and played the role wonderfully (albeit with a costume that was a bit tight!). This just showed his versatility and adaptability, and the audience soon did not notice that he was actually carrying a script,

Fraser continued to direct festival plays and revues into the 80s and 90s but took more of a back seat in the new millennium as work, family and other interests took over.

After Allison's death, although Fraser became more active in the community and was a keen attender at all SDC drama events, his own health gradually deteriorated, and he died at home on November 15th 2020.

He is missed and fondly remembered by all who knew him, especially in Stromness Drama Club.

Phyllis McLaughlin



Scottish Final 2022 - Orkney, 21st -23rd April



Youth leaders network launched

At the beginning of March 2021 the new Youth Leaders Network held their first meeting. With 14 people across 9 clubs, it was difficult to find 1 day and time so we ended up with a 50/50 split across 2 sessions.

Our first get together provided an opportunity to introduce ourselves to each other and talk about pre-Covid and post-Covid activity. It was also a chance to talk about what the network could become. Initial discussions threw up these priorities and some questions

- Recovery – how do we safely return to activity. Can we work with other umbrella organisations to have a Scotland-wide approach?
- We would like to share challenges and successes with each other
- We would like to share resources – funding, recommendations etc
- We would like Masterclasses to help develop more workshop skills and ideas (online and in person)
- We would like to increase the presence/visibility of young people within SCDA

What did I learn?

There are lots of different types of groups. Some provide year-round activity and see themselves as a drama club. Some groups hold open castings and although many young people will return, they only meet during rehearsals and productions. Some clubs have crossover

with their adults for plays/pantos and some are completely separate. Although this means that the needs of clubs can be very different, there are plenty of common areas for us to explore together.

What has happened since?

I have opened a shared dropbox and there is a document with an overview of the clubs so that smaller conversations can take place on specific subjects without me being involved. There is also a resources document that we can all add things to.

I have convened a meeting with NODA and Youth Theatre Arts for us to focus on the way forward and hopefully provide the same clarity to all drama groups in Scotland.

What Next?

Our 2nd meeting has been scheduled and we will use that to hone down our priorities and schedule our first activity.

Anything we create can be offered to any youth group leader within SCDA, but we would like to encourage as many of you as we can to join the network so that we can try to better meet the needs of as many young people as possible

Get in touch with me on nda@scda.org.uk for more information or to sign up. It is a really supportive open space and we would love to see you.

Carole Williams
National Drama Advisor

Make a fresh start with Carole's help

As we head out of lockdown it's a good time to explore how we approach performance and rehearsal and adapt to new ways of working.

Carole Williams is SCDA's National Drama Advisor. She offers a wide range of challenging and fun workshops to develop your performance and directing skills.

Workshops are supported by SCDA and can be tailored to your individual needs.



Players Dare to Dream . . .

Fresh on the heels of last year's *Hamlet*, a group of local players from Orkney have produced their second summer Shakespeare, in the face of adversity presented by the year of COVID-19.

Orkney's Ad Hoc Players' successfully staged *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, one of Shakespeare's most accessible and popular comedies, where mischievous spirits and fairy squabbles collide with young lovers in the mortal realm, leading to all-round farce involving magical love potions and all-out transformations.

Director Vivia Leslie was inspired to choose this play due to the setting of the play itself, the Finstown Firth Park. The bountiful public park served as the perfect backdrop for the forest near Athens, where cast members could physically emerge from thick overgrown shrubs, duck under branches, and even pluck a flower when the script demanded it. After performing *Hamlet* there last year, director Vivia Leslie knew immediately how well it would suit *Midsummer's*, and leapt at the opportunity to do so when summer came round once more. Last year, the players overcame huge odds to perform *Hamlet*, as the uncertainty presented by the first lock down loomed over the show's future. The pandemic had not only halted the entire arts industry with multiple restrictions, but had prevented the players hosting the performance at Orkney's Earl's Palace, a significant local landmark offering the perfect staging for Elsinore Castle. And, to paraphrase Hamlet's mother, one woe did tread upon another's heels, as world-renowned voice and acting coach Kristin Linklater – who was due to assist with the production – passed away that summer.

It was a gut-wrenching time for all, as we wondered if the play were to be, or not to be.



However, after some weeks, Ad Hoc navigated all these obstacles in style, utilising Zoom rehearsals to combat social distancing, abridging the play when cast members sadly had to step away, and staging the play at a local community garden in the great outdoors to combat theatre closures.

So what was it like for me, a cast member, to be involved in this? Well, as a soon-to-be actor-in-training, who saw their time with the National Youth Theatre cut short by COVID-19, and watched many friends in the industry see their livelihoods cut out from under them – I cannot explain just how fortunate I felt to be part of this production. At a time when professional theatre was at standstill, to be able to take part in a community project for the sheer joy of it was a true privilege.

Rehearsals for *Midsummer's* began over Zoom in April 2021, but with the county in a much better position restriction-wise – often ahead of the whole UK – these quickly were replaced with in-person sessions at the Firth Park.

The ensuing weeks were truly a dream indeed. Rehearsing lines and staging with the sun beating down (when it cared to rear its head), finding new ways to interact with the set and improvising moments with other cast members. Spending time with a group of misfits with a shared passion lifted us out of the doom and gloom of the pandemic, and reminded us why people love the arts.

Dave Grieve's slight-of-hand magic made you ponder whether he truly was Fairy King Oberon, as he plucked flowers out of thin air, sent them through the air to Puck, and even sent a muse of fire ascending from his hand.



Orkney's Shakespeare in the Park

The cast of the mechanicals stole the show, with Graham MacDonald's performance of the loveable fool Nick Bottom, sending laughs up high, playing the ass quite literally when donkey's ears are placed on him by Puck.

During the final scene (with the play within a play), Audun Towrie's squeaky-voiced Flute as Thisbe; Harry Siderfin's cheerful Snout holding a mere brick to play the Wall; and of course the friendly Lion herself Laura Grieve, had the rest of the cast finding it hard *not* to laugh.

With myself as Lysander, I grew more energised and happy each day working with Rajmund Olah (Demetrius), Mary Grieve (Hermia), and Thrym Howe (Helena), as we blocked the chaotic squabbles between the lovers, and the comedy of errors that resulted from the love-potion effects.

As show time came, during Orkney's renowned St Magnus International Festival, we enjoyed three full performances in the open-air, with a socially-gathered crowd in great numbers.

As the figurative curtain fell on the show, we the cast felt the usual post-show blues, knowing full-well that it would be the last stint with the Ad Hoc Players that some of us would undertake.

However, the stars aligned, and the Kristin Linklater Voice Centre happened to reopen its live-outdoor amphitheatre, Bragi's Circle, for the first time since lockdown (first opened by none other than Bill Murray in 2019). Many of us, such as Audun, Harry, myself and Vivia had either taken courses with Kristin or had come to know her more closely, and so we had no hesitation in taking up the offer from the Centre's staff to do one final hurrah there.

The wide grassy amphitheatre offers one of Orkney's finest panoramic views, set only with four standing stones as scenery and that which we brought with us. On Thursday, July 1, we took to Quoyloo, where the Centre



stands, and performed an ever-further abridged version of the play. Due to the last-minute nature of this performance, we saw ourselves with no Theseus or Hippolyta – as well as our original Demetrius – and an entirely new staging to work with. If this wasn't tricky enough, a friendly local farmer had decided to rather noisily cut silage in the adjacent field with his tractor and trailer, and gave no indication of stopping. Despite these rather steep hurdles, the play went off popping with ad-hoc energy, improvised movements, extra projection and laughs on stage and off.

In true Orkney style – as this is a community like no other – various groups came to assist us in our production throughout. Palace Players and Kirkwall Arts Club provided props and costumes, with Kirkwall Grammar School's drama department lending the beautiful flower-decorated bower for fairy queen Titania.

This little community production – 58 degrees North in a local park – proved that all the world's a stage indeed. It gave me and many others a much-needed well being boost during one of the hardest years on record – and I have faith that even in the darkest winters of discontent, that arts can survive and endure, as constant as the northern star. All's well that ends well.

Adam Johnston



Dear Editor,

Recently I had a pleasant, informative and thought-provoking phone call with Paula Gibson. Thought-provoking? Yes, it made me think, not back to the past, but forward to the future of the SCDA in particular and Theatre in general. For the past year I have been bemoaning no theatre, no “drama”, no getting together, and ignoring what can be achieved in days to come. I have eventually been impressed with ZOOM and other E-ways of communicating with like minded theatre enthusiasts, but it has taken me a great deal of persuading to join the 21st Century! Surely these new techniques will be developed and improved?

We must accept that viruses of differing types and severity will be with us for the long- term future. We have had to live for years with the various flu viruses; I remember being given at school during WW2 an inoculation against smallpox, when a seaman carrier came ashore down South. Where is smallpox now?

Let us plan the future, accepting that viruses will be with us. This means that we should embrace modern technology where it can help us to restore theatre, amateur and professional, to - or nearly to - our fondly remembered past days in the Theatre. Choose plays which allow for “socially distanced” rules; having only previously

booked seats in the auditorium, which allows for leaving appropriate spaces; somehow arrange for members of the audience to leave the auditorium safely; have modern technology linking theatres with audiences at home, who could still pay for their tickets! These are some ideas already adopted by clubs.

Gatherings at meetings – socially and/or admin. – should be a mixture of folks in the hall / committee room and links with folks at home. This demands that skilled operators of the equipment need to be present in the hall. I am sure that there are nowadays many such experts in the “drama” field? I assume that this is being discussed and planned for our AGM in November - (I missed last year there being no gathering – possibly my lowest point of lock down until January.) Will it be possible to have the ZOOM equipment (or something similar) at the meetings which are usually held over the special weekend in November – the Friday evening party, the Saturday AGM and the follow-up?

This would enable more members from distant parts of Scotland and of the U.K. (or even further afield) to take part in those proceedings. Numbers involved might “shoot up” from our present low attendance at these gatherings. SCDA would once again be truly Community based.

Douglas Currie

The Byre Writers

The Byre Writers was established in 1990 with a focus on script writing. In recent years, members joined who have an interest in short stories/ poetry/ memoirs, etc. To reflect our broader membership base, we are running online workshops and speaker events on a variety of writing styles. More details can be found on Facebook.com/byrewriters or on our website www.byrewriters.co.uk

We are based in St Andrews but membership is open to all and is currently free until 30th April 2022.

In addition, we will be working with Lisa Nicoll of In Motion Theatre as she will be delivering a series of workshops (August to October) with the aim of writing one act plays in time for the SCDA festival.

Representatives from SCDA Fife District groups have been invited to the workshops.

The workshops have been funded by a legacy from Carole Tricker, a former member who was a successful playwright.





driving on

in production. We thought we'd have a few rehearsals, then record each episode 'live' in the Menzies Hall over a few Sunday afternoons. Then lock down and social distancing happened.

Determined to carry on, we've been using Zoom for read-through's and rehearsals and managed to record most of Episode One last autumn in special studio premises with separate rooms for the production team and cast, which allowed us to accommodate one or two actors at a time (restrictions permitting). The last bit of dialogue had to be captured via online means – trial and error in itself! And then our very talented sound engineer, Sam Yoffe, has had to spend a huge amount of time stitching it all together afterwards.

The first episode was published in early December, two short specials were recorded remotely over the festive season and now we're just working out the best way to get Episode 2 down. Although it's a MUCH longer and more painstaking process than any of us anticipated, we are getting there, slowly - just like the buses at Roaches Coaches.

It's been a tricky old time for Keith Roache and his mildly effective team of staff at the depot. It's also been, shall we say, an 'interesting' learning curve for the production team behind 'Roaches Coaches', the first ever FADS podcast, which made its debut on Spotify and Anchor early last December.

What's it about?

Written and directed by Ian Kidd, 'Roaches Coaches' is set in a small-town bus depot, in a magical time before COVID-19 was invented. The business is going through hard times and the hapless staff have to get the buses out despite vandalism, terrorism, extreme feminism and a lack of optimism. Owner/Manager Keith Roache does his best, but he's always one step behind lazy Jimmy, hopeless Carol, desperate Mags, womaniser Kenny, naïve William and camp Laurence.

Listen to the podcast

Episode One and our two short specials are available now on Spotify, Anchor and a number of other podcast platforms, and you can find out all about Keith and his team on the dedicated Roaches pages of our website at www.fintrydrama.org.uk

The production process

The original plan was to record and publish the podcast during the summer of 2020, while no other shows were



Seven new plays from Cressrelles Publishing

Rumpus in Regalia

by Geoffrey Thornber, is a two-act pantomime.

Cast 8M 9F extras and chorus.

Suitors for the Princess's hand must kill the Giant, who is terrorising the country. Our Principal Boy, Robin, exposes the Giant as a ruse to eliminate all competition for the throne, dreamt up by the evil Count Boris and his son, Claude! True love prevails, and brave Robin wins Princess Mariella's heart.

The usual panto characters, and some unexpected ones, are met in this two-act funniment. The audience, as citizens of Regalia, are involved most of the time.

The running time 100 minutes

The Little Red Riding Hood

by Pat Santer – a two-act pantomime.

Cast 3M, 6F plus extras and chorus

Mother Hubbard's despair of her lodger, Simple Simon, is tempered by her designs on his friend, the Pieman. The wicked Witch Craft lures her daughter, Red Riding Hood, to Granny's cottage where the Wolf lies in wait. The Fairy Queen causes the Prince to intervene. He and Red Riding Hood fall in love and the story ends with a ball to celebrate their engagement.

For 6m, 7w + Chorus and extras. The running time 80 minutes.

Quick Return

by Kathleen Giddins is One-act comedy, cast 6F.

Whilst Lady Store and her husband are away travelling for two years, three sisters take advantage of their hospitality and turn their country home in to a guest house. Business is booming until the owners return sooner than expected! As the sisters struggle to evict their guests before they are caught in the act, the ensuing chaos is in the best traditions of farce, but all ends well - for some! Delightful characters.

Running time 40 minutes.

Romance

by John Reason.

One Act Comedy Cast 3F

The skilful writing weaves together the three ages of an anonymous woman with sensitivity, beauty and a true sense of theatre. A lyrical play which is compelling and highly recommended.

The Girl is 19 and on the eve of her wedding; the Woman is in her 50s and has just buried her husband; the Old Woman is in her 70s and nearing the end of her life. Should the Girl marry or run away to follow her dreams?

Running time 35 minutes.

Runaway

by Norman Holland.

One Act drama Cast 3M

A violent robber has broken out of prison, killing a guard in the process. He takes refuge in a country house, thinking the aristocratic owner will be rich and easy pickings. As the police net draws closer, he discovers that his hostage is insane, having bludgeoned

his nurse to death and the corpse is still in the house! As he flees, the hostage incriminates the convict.

Running time 40 minutes.

Red Box

by Peter Mercer is as One Act moral comedy.

Cast 3M 6F plus extras

Loco the Clown encounters a plain, red box. He tries to pick it up, but it moves away! He tries to befriend it, but to no avail. An hilarious series of misunderstandings and blatant prejudice lead to his arrest by PC Ivor Flatfoot. The ensuing trial continues the theme of his isolation and despair at remaining an individual in a society where conformity is the rule.

Running time 40-45 minutes.

South For The Winter

by Joe Graham is a Two-Act Comedy Cast 3M 5F

Michael Finch has spent the last fifteen years wasting his serious acting ambitions on his local drama group. He wants to stretch himself and branches out to set up his own group, holding open auditions for Shakespeare's Richard III. The response is not what he hoped for, as many of the usual suspects from his usual society turn up.

The sudden and unwelcome arrival of his father, Birdy, and his personal issues, throws the group into a chaotic spiral as skeletons and real feelings are exposed. A comic but hard look at a world that appears to be Care Bear Land, but often hides secrets and desires.

The running time 90 minutes.

Scripts can be obtained through the discount scheme for SCDA Members - please contact Brenda Williams at our National Office for details. Geoffrey Whitworth and Scott Salver scripts can be borrowed from our SCDA National Library at Summerhall Arts Centre.

Alex Paterson and the Byre

In 1930s St Andrews there were several drama groups attached to local churches competing in drama festivals. Alex Paterson was involved with the Hope Park Church Bible Class Drama Group – no catchy titles then! This group were lucky in that Alex Paterson - a young local journalist - also wrote plays for them. On walks after church on a Sunday there were always conversations about all the plays they could do if they had their own theatre.



In 1933 someone mentioned that the Town Council was seeking to let the old cow byre in Abbey Street. They applied to the Council and acquired it £10 annual rent. The St Andrews Play Club was established and members started to create their theatre. It was cleaned, painted and a stage and raked

auditorium created. Old cinema seats were donated. They started rehearsing there, but the Town Council insisted on a fire escape ladder from the upstairs dressing rooms and fire doors for the audience. The ladder was acquired from the ship breakers yard in Inverkeithing and installed by a local blacksmith. In 1937 they got their licence put on the first public performance of *The Foreigner* - a one act play by Alex Paterson (still available from the SCDA library). The first performance was attended by Dr Gordon Bottomley, the President of the SCDA. He later wrote "This is an important advancement of the Community idea: and if your fellow citizens realise it is important that they, too, in the role of audience, should do their part, I believe something memorable can come of it."

The 1939-45 war changed everything. With men called up, the Byre might have closed but a London director – Charles Marford – offered to run it each summer with a troupe of 'older' actors. So, like the Windmill, the Byre never closed although it did offer a rather different repertoire of Shakespeare and classics. When the locals returned, amateur drama was restarted, but professional actors performing over the summer months became the norm for the next 50 years. The Play Club performed a play for three weeks in the spring – usually a local play by Alex Paterson – and the takings from this funded the start of the professional season. Local plays performed included *Re-union in St Andrews*, and *The Witching Women of St Andrews*

After 30 years the Town Council decided that they wanted the site for new council houses, but they offered a new site a bit further up Abbey Street. Fundraising was started and the Scottish Arts Council, the Town Council and the Play Club each contributed a third of the total cost (£35k)

of the new 140 seat theatre. It was opened in April 1970 by the actor Andrew Cruickshank (of Dr Finlay's Casebook fame). The opening play was *Weir of Hermiston* by Alex Paterson. The annual pattern of a Play Club production, a summer professional season, an autumn amateur season and pantomime continued in the new theatre.

In total Alex Paterson wrote 19 full-length and numerous one-act plays. The play revived most often by the Play Club is *The Open* - usually in the years the golf championship visits St Andrews. It is a heart-warming and nostalgic look at the Open 70 years ago, when there were no sponsors, limited prize money and a talented amateur could still get through to the last few.

The Play Club has always encouraged new writing. Member Carole Tricker wrote 6 full length plays and 7 musicals for children and they were all premiered at the Byre Theatre. Annually



the Byre Writers hold a series of rehearsed readings and the Play Club co-produce this with them.

Unfortunately, Alex died in 1989 – he had been the driving force behind the Play Club and the Byre Theatre since 1933. At that time the theatre was in discussion to improve the facilities of the second Byre Theatre, but with encouragement from the Scottish Arts Council the second theatre was demolished and replaced by the current Byre Theatre in 2001. Later funding issues meant it was taken over by the University of St Andrews, so it is no longer a community-led theatre, but it is still operational, and it does provide opportunities for local amateur groups to perform there. The St Andrews Play Club that founded the Byre Theatre is still operating and planning their next play at the Byre - the theatre legacy of Alex Paterson lives on.

Alan Tricker



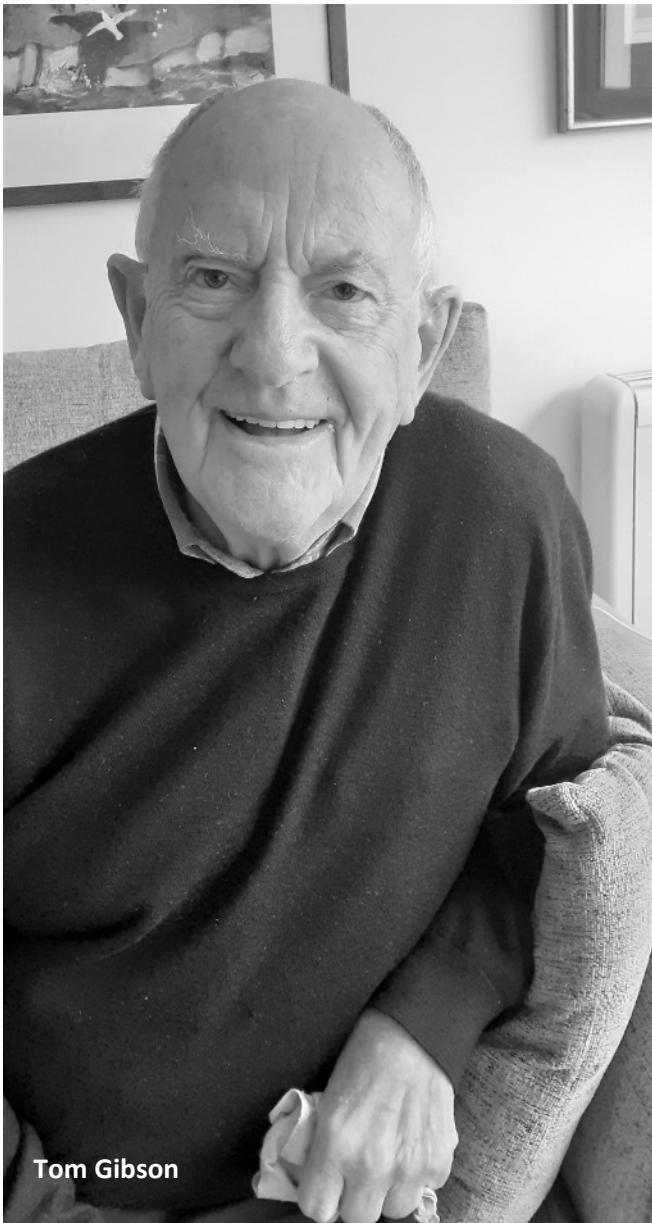
The original Byre Theatre, compare it to the recent picture on p.12

The Blitz Spirit

It is with huge thanks to Alison McCallum and the SCDA library service that I have been able to pen this piece about the impact both WW2 and the current Covid crisis has had on drama nationally. I use the word in connection with theatre as the "drama" was there in abundance with both these events.

It has actually been utterly fascinating and some of the similarities of intention, problems of delivery and passion for performance striking and unchanged for coming up for 100 years. Not sure if that is hugely worrying or strangely reassuring!!

Let's start with the foundation of the British Drama League way back in 1917. Geoffrey Whitworth (yes the man of the trophy), was so affected by hearing a play reading performed in a munitions work the seeds of the



Tom Gibson

value of this particular brand of recreational engagement were planted and with the support from professional theatre people by 1939 the league boasted 3500 affiliated societies over the UK and about 1000 individual members. The library had 3600 volumes with annual borrowings of 4500.

The wonderful thing across the board during wartime was the conviction and knowledge that theatre had a "A vital and inalienable duty to perform both in war and peacetime," A direct quote from the BDL newsletter on the eve of war is as follows;

"The Ministry of Information has intimated its desire that the work of the British Drama League should continue, not only for the sake of its existing members but even more importantly - from the Ministry's point of view- as a potential influence of benefit to the country as a whole."

In the SCDA Bulletin no. 3 (the Bulletin was the precursor to SCENE and a fairly influential publication back in the day) a similar desire and indeed instruction came from the self-same source.

The Ministry of Information has indicated its agreement with our association's basic tenets saying; *"We think it would be a very great pity if the work of the Scottish Community Drama Movement were to cease because of the present emergency. Indeed, we feel that the Movement has been presented with a great opportunity to demonstrate that it represents a standard of values which the 'incident' of war cannot alter. Your members can do work of national importance by keeping the Movement in being, and indeed developing in spite of obstacles."*

So not so different to today and so insightful and pretty much on the button, I say!!!! Plus ça change; plus la meme chose!!

In true SCDA style the Association set to and produced a formidable amount of work nationally, filling the substantial gap left by ENSA in entertaining the troops with concert parties, reviews, performances and play readings, promoting community activities and festivals continued as did the summer school in St. Andrews I believe.

The annual report of 1938/ 39 reported membership numbers of 342 clubs and 439 individual members and instead of a subscription a donation of 2/6 was suggested with the codicil as follows " If affluent members transmit donations of more than 2/6 however, they will not be subjected to the indignity of having the excess returned to them"!!!!

And what opportunities has the 'incident' of Covid presented to us in the last 18 months?

Very much the same dogged determination to carry on was more than evident from the get go at lockdown last March. Diversification became the name of the game and lateral and creative thinking abounded.

Festivals may have come to a temporary halt but not so the work of the Association – The highlights undoubtedly have been the monologue competition with more than 70 entries, a newly remodelled Play on Words, and a spanking update on website delivery both from our NDA Carole on cultural conversations and a raft of other professionals sharing their knowledge. Carole has forged new highly techy pathways, most noticeably in Braemar to deliver a 45 minute piece with participants from all over the UK. We have all adapted to zoom meetings, taken part in webinars, pantos, play readings and quizzes. A new national drama group is being formed and New Voices- a platform for youth engagement launched.

And so – we look forward to the next challenge as we approach our centenary!! What's next I wonder?

Having looked back with wonder at the work achieved in wartime I checked in with some of our dare I say - elder statesmen and women - to ask what their lived experience of theatre was like back then. Some of my interviews are loosely of the era as although the memories are clear as a bell the exact chronology is a bit blurry.

Douglas Currie fondly remembers raising money for a spitfire by performing panto whilst a schoolboy at George Watson's. His parents loved theatre and he remembers attending summer concerts and Ivor Novello plays. Galsworthy and Shakespeare were performed at school and memorably he played Lady Mary in The Admirable Crichton to much cheering/ jeering at the 'kiss' scene. So as we saw in the last SCENE, theatre is in Douglas's blood.

He too has embraced technology and engaged in club play readings and even joined an autocue night. His thoughts on how to keep the youth engagement are very much along those lines. As he says they all disappear to University and with the marvellous strides that have been made with skilled technicians to facilitate better delivery that might be the way to keep them interested. How to keep in touch with those that can't get together, then, by screen as the answer. When I spoke to Douglas last month he and Rosemary were off to Orkney to celebrate a big birthday. "We might have missed a Scottish final but not missing a trip to Orkney" he said!! Well said that man!!

Closer to home I happen to have access to someone else who lived through the war and whose family were closer then closely involved with theatre. Tom's grandfather and uncles were assistant stage manager and flymen at the Tivoli in Aberdeen and he has some very vivid

memories of being up there on the rickety wooded fly gallery being allowed to watch the variety shows but not the fan dancers or the magicians lest he saw what she should not!! He would also be sent over to the Lorne Bar to get half time drinks for the performers and his aunties ran a theatrical boarding house not far from the Tiv. They had some very colourful characters stay including one of the very first professional drag acts, Percy Ford by name, who used to sit and knit and chat with Tom's aunties. His favoured tippie was port and lemon.

As I said previously some of these memories may not be bang on through the war but they were 'of the time'. In fact the boarding house was requisitioned by the government during the war for high ranking naval officers.

Tom also got paid the princely sum of 2/6 every fortnight for pulling a cart with the props and costume hampers from the Tivoli to the railway station over the granite sets and picking up the next load to take back for the following week's show. He delivered posters to all the pubs along the harbour and for that he got another 6d.

His grandmother was a huge fan of opera, ballet and Shakespeare so he would be taken across to HMT to the gods to watch and listen and learn.



... and a spinning wheel

Tom lived in what was recently described in the local press as “The most notorious slum in Aberdeen”; namely Black’s Buildings and his second floor bedroom overlooked HMT’s stage door so he had a bird’s eye view of all sorts of goings on. The last of these granite built tenements were demolished in 1956 when the residents were introduced to the absolute luxury of prefab life. A two bed-roomed detached bungalow complete with fridge, central heating and indoor toilet! No longer a slumdog then!!

He too has embraced technology but a lot less willingly than most. However he quite sees the need and recognises the amazing lengths we have come over the last year and a half, we could not have achieved without it!

My final trip down memory lane is with our very own Dolly Nicol, widow of our late lamented past SCDA

Administrator and flamboyant adjudicator, Alan. I think I reported in a previous piece that Dolly had a talent for playwriting, initially recognised when she was at school and her play about Elizabeth 1st was so good it was performed by the children and the whole school attended the performance. It was that experience that proved to be the catalyst for much more engagement with the arts and that she truly had, to quote her, “A feel for the acting world”

Her grandmother was a huge fan of theatre, opera and G and S like so many of that generation. As is the case with most young people Dolly’s first memory of theatre was of being taken to the panto with her doting granny. Her main and abiding memory was of a spinning wheel, not the panto, not the cast, the music or the costumes, just the spinning wheel and she wanted it! And a spinning wheel she got! It is still pride of place in Dolly’s home, (see photo).

During the war there was a young local man called Robert Milne, a professional actor, who auditioned young people to be part of his drama group and Dolly became a member of that in her early teens. She had also been a member of an after school drama club. She learnt her considerable stagecraft from both those experiences.

I asked her what she remembered most about the war and two things stood out. One was being picked up by her mother and carried down to the Anderson shelter in their garden when the sirens went. The other was that, although there was rationing, coming from a farming family there was never any shortage of chickens and eggs.

Dolly is a huge and loyal fan of the work of the association and a very generous benefactor. She is an avid follower of everything the SCDA does and also recognises the importance of technology in these strange times and can zoom like the best of them. In spite of being confined to her home and having spent quite a lot of the last 18 months in hospital after a fall she is an example to us all. She is totally engaged and looks forward to hearing what our next steps towards ‘normal’ will be.

As for me, I have been lucky enough to set foot inside Aberdeen Arts Centre with my 4 year-old granddaughter, not to see a panto, not yet, but yes to see a live show, the first in Scotland since lock down has been lifted, I believe, totally safely in a transformed auditorium with another 98 people watching Arty’s Singing Kettle.

Covid may have changed the direction of our activities but not our enthusiasm, and, to quote the man with the cigar, our determination to ‘keep bugging on’

Paula Gibson



Weekend of virtual theatre

The ever inventive and wonderfully creative Carole Williams, the NDA for SCDA, led 9 members of the Braemar Drama Group through 7 hours of amazing, devising and improvising activities which left us all, both fulfilled and very sad! Why sad? Let me explain what we did and perhaps you'll understand why we are all in mourning.

Before we met we were tasked with creating a character for ourselves ...name, age, job, interests, family, friends and secrets. We also had to think of a memory of something we did with one other person at any point in our life. When we met on Zoom, we learned that someone we all knew, had died. At the beginning we didn't know who or how he/she had died and we didn't know in what way each of us was connected to the deceased.

During the first act, we got to know each other's characters using break out rooms, and then introduced one another to the others in the group. Some of our

'secrets' were revealed. At one point, one of the group suddenly interrupted via a phone call to say Derek had died! We all responded with shock and questions of how, why?

Another member of the group was tasked with organising a wake for Derek, where we learned how Derek died and we all shared our memory, that we had prepared earlier, into one about him, and revealed through conversations some of our other 'sometimes dreadful' secrets.

With the genius of Carole, weaving the devised and improvised play, it worked like clockwork on Zoom and was so powerful that everyone of us was in tears at the wake, because Derek had become real.

The Lock down has not been ALL bad when memorable weekends like this one can happen. Thank you SCDA and thank you Carole Williams.

Marilyn Baker

Braemar Creative Arts Festival



CLASS ADS

Playwright?; small business?; buying or selling?; All kinds of small ads accepted. Have your ad read throughout SCDA land. Contact scene@scda.org.uk

CORDINER PRESS One-act plays and pantomimes by Isabella C. Rae – comedy, drama, fantasy! For catalogue, see www.cordinerpress.co.uk or contact 36 Mansefield Avenue, Cambuslang, Glasgow G72 8NZ
Phone 0141 641 1465

PLAYS BY RON NICOL 50+ published one act dramas, comedies, youth plays, full-length plays and pantomimes. 450+ productions world-wide 130+ festival awards. Visit www.ronnicolplays.co.uk

NANCY MCPHERSON PLAYS For a selection of pantomimes and award winning One-Act plays including 'Fusion' (Scott Salver winner 2012) and 'Waste Management' (Geoffrey Whitworth runner-up 2011). Visit www.nancymcphersonplays.co.uk

MORAE SERVICES Bookkeeping and Payroll services for small to medium sized businesses, agent for HMRC for PAYE & VAT. Independent Examiner for Charity Accounts. Tel: 01738 446120 or email mo@moraeservices.co.uk

JOHN MORLEY'S PANTOMIMES

"The doyen of good pantomime writers" (The Times 1994)

CINDERELLA

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

PETER PAN

BABES IN THE WOOD

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

PUSS IN BOOTS

RED RIDING HOOD

HUMPTY DUMPTY

WIZARD OF OZ

MOTHER GOOSE

*"No-one knows more about
panto than John Morley"
(Sunday Times)*

From NODA Ltd.

58 - 60 Lincoln Road, Peterborough PE1 2RZ (01733 865790)

ALADDIN

ROBINSON CRUSOE

GOLDDILOCKS & THE THREE BEARS

PINOCCHIO

JACK & THE BEANSTALK

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

SINBAD THE SAILOR

DICK WHITTINGTON

*"Written by John Morley,
this is panto at its best"
(The Guardian)*

From SAMUEL FRENCH Ltd.

52 Fitzroy Street, London W1T 5JR (020 7387 9373)

Glasgow's Innovative year

Well, here at Glasgow District we haven't let the pandemic stop us entirely from enjoying our love of drama. Right from our first inexperienced Zoom meeting, we were determined to come up with some plans to keep the District as engaging as possible for our members. The two ideas we decided to go with were a District Monologue Competition and a series of Zoom Talks from people of all types of drama club expertise with a question-and-answer chat afterwards. Both have proved to be incredibly successful, enjoyable and engaging events helping to keep the District active and purposeful.

Right from the beginning, we knew that we wanted to incorporate something that could help people to continue to be actively dramatic and so the Monologue Competition was born. We decided on our rules for participation and writing and off we went. At first, we were a bit nerve wracked as we weren't sure how many would participate, but, in the end, we had a really encouraging number of both actors and writers. Some of the participants also decided to enter the National Competition when it was launched. Encouragingly, we had a wide variety of styles including personal reminiscences, two which were the two sides of a romance, comedy, tragedy and observations of life under lockdown.

For our Awards Ceremony we were incredibly lucky to have Maureen Carr with us to announce the winners. She began her acting life in Kirkintilloch Players many years ago and had an enjoyable catch up with a few who had trod the boards with her in the 1970s! She began the night with a very engaging question and answer session with those present and so our evening became "An Audience with Maureen Carr" ranging all across her career and her thoughts for the theatre at this difficult time. Naturally she was warm and funny but also thought provoking too. Needless to say, she was persuaded to give us her "Pint of Guinness" line from Still Game! She then ended the night by announcing our winners



Keith (in the hat) with Gunner

including Keith Robinson for artistic achievement and the audience award went to Claire Connor.

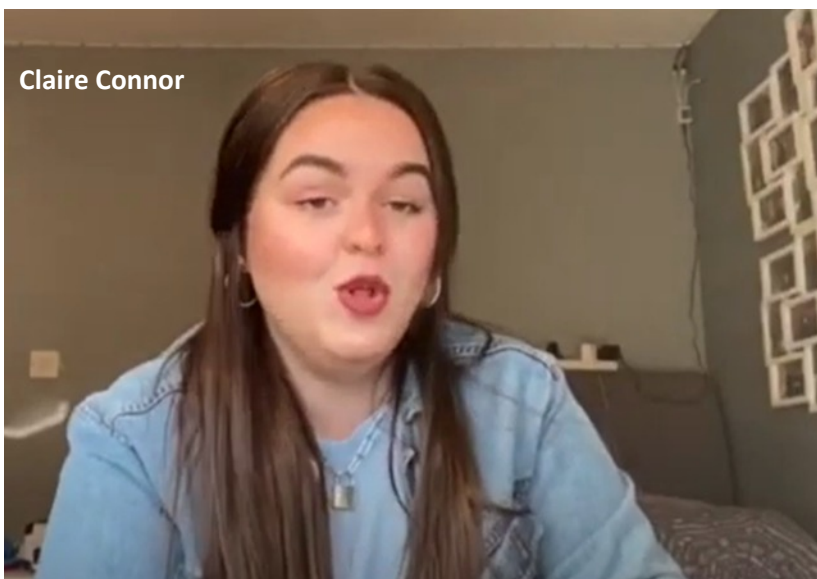
Our other adventure came in the guise of monthly talks given by people with expertise in a variety of aspects of life in drama. These proved to be fascinating, educational and enjoyable social events. Our audiences came from across the district clubs and also from people in other districts too and we, the District, are highly grateful to all of the people who gave their time providing them. They consisted of a roughly half hour presentation and then question and answer session afterwards.

So, as you can see, we have not been totally despondent in this highly difficult year. If anything, it has helped bring members of the committee and the district closer together.

Special thanks must go to our District Chair – Lorna Campbell – who has done a power of work keeping the whole show on the road.

Of course, like everyone else, we are all looking forward to actively participating in drama at club, district, divisional and national level again but here, at Glasgow District, our motto for the year 2020-2021 must surely have been 'Nil Desperandum'. See you all next session

Isabelle Henderson



Claire Connor

Past
Scottish
Winners



2017 Aberfeldy DC
'Ring Road'



2019 Stromness DC
'Shakers'



2018 Aberdour Players
'Red Cross'



2015 Kirkintilloch Players
'Her Slightest Touch'