

Spring 2023

scene

PANTO
SEASON



the magazine of
Scottish Community Drama





'Puss in Boots'
at Killin

Members of Killin Drama Club presented their annual pantomime, *'Puss in Boots'*, at Killin's McLaren Hall in January. As always, large supportive audiences made full houses on two of the three evenings. A cast of almost forty club members, aged from 8 to over 70, performed dances and comedy routines aplenty.

The club takes a pride in its technical skills with dozens of lighting and sound cues accompanied by some pyrotechnic effects. We are also lucky to have in-house artists to paint every back-cloth we use.

Stars of the show? - the junior chorus of course, for their enormous energy and enthusiasm throughout !

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Cover

Clare Rudd as 'Ogre Grimgrab' in Killin Drama
Club's pantomime 'Puss in Boots'.

Photo by **Ron Allner**



It seems to have been a long winter despite the fact we haven't had too much snow this year although perhaps I shouldn't speak too soon! I know that some clubs are holding their pantomimes in January and I hope that you have all had a very successful run. For some groups it may have been the first larger scale production for a few years but I'm sure you all relished the experience.

Our thoughts and efforts at this time of the year in SCDA primarily turn to our One Act Play Festival and it is fabulous to see that entries to our competition have increased this year. Particularly encouraging is the significant boost to Festival entries in Western Division and also in our Youth category. We have some way to go to return to numbers prior to Covid but we're definitely heading in the right direction. I'm looking forward to getting around the Festivals again this year with our Scottish Final taking place in beautiful Stirling in May.

As a society it seems that we perhaps have become more accustomed and comfortable staying in and doing less in recent times. While chatting to professional theatres and similar organisations it's clear we are all having to work that bit harder to get our groups and audiences back. Let SCDA help promote your show by making full use of free advertising in our monthly Newsletter and Facebook with photos and reviews in SCENE. We really want to know what you are doing so we can share around our drama community. Break a leg everyone!

Carolyn

Welcome

To new Individual members

Inga Gilmour

Orkney / Northern

To new Clubs

Stornoway Youth Club

Highland

Dalintober Drama Club

Western

Thank you

For your kind donations

Riverside Drama Club

Gordon Hibbert

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

New website and logo

SCDA's new website was rolled-out at the National AGM last November. As part of this, our



'corporate image' has been refreshed and the familiar circular logo has been retired.

The new design, on the right, gives a fresh look to the 'masks and thistle' which has represented the Association in various guises for around seventy years.

As part of the updates, the @scda.org.uk addresses used for our website and emails have been replaced by @drama.scot.



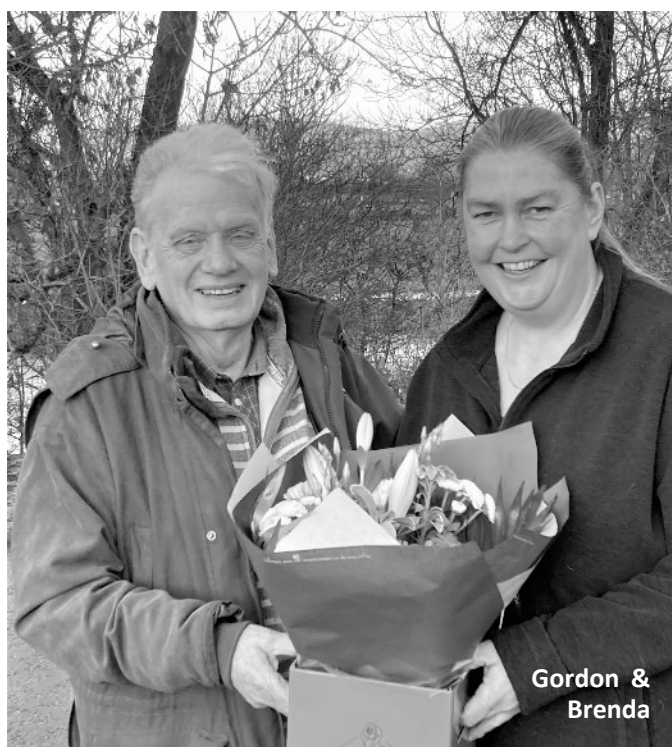
Changes at the office

After 13 years as the SCDA's National Office Administrator, Brenda Williams has decided to move on and take up a new job opportunity.

Brenda started working for us when the Association was going through a major funding crisis and supported us in the changes to our organisation. We send Brenda our sincere thanks and very best wishes in her new position.

In the meantime we have ensured that HQ email, post and enquiries will be handled by a small team of volunteers. Please bear with us whilst we get this up and running. We will continue to respond to all queries as soon as possible.

Alan Gerrard
Vice Chairman



**Gordon &
Brenda**

Escaped Alone

Stephen Lambert's script review of Caryl Churchill's play 'Escaped Alone' in the Autumn 2022 issue of Scene has prompted me to write something about Aberdour Players' production of the play, which we performed at three venues last spring. Churchill's plays tend to be challenging and original, and this one certainly fits that description!

On the page it's a daunting mix of apparently mundane conversation between four mature women (the author suggests that they are at least 70), interrupted by a series of bizarre monologues describing a dystopian past (or future?). I'd seen a one-off professional 'rehearsed reading' at the Edinburgh Lyceum a few years ago and found it fascinating, and it suited our available cast when selecting a one-act. The staging also allowed for socially-distanced rehearsals (we started in autumn 2021), sometimes with a self-isolating cast member appearing remotely on a strategically placed laptop.

With the script comprising largely of unfinished sentences and no stage directions or punctuation, it's a tough but rewarding challenge. I believe ours was the first amateur performance of the play in Scotland, and it's one I would recommend to any club with a group of experienced female actors ready to tackle something a bit different.

With the Fife District festival cancelled last year, we put on a one-off performance in the village hall, followed by an audience discussion of the play. The response was amazing – tickets sold out and our local audience were intrigued, totally engaging with the play and all staying on for the after-show chat.

Our first competitive performance was in the Eastern Divisional festival at the Lochgelly Centre. Here, in a large auditorium with plenty of empty seats, it was harder to tell what the audience thought! We were pleased to take third place – but disappointed to narrowly miss out on a trip to Orkney. The cast and crew were keen to take the play elsewhere, which is where the idea of going to Oban for the Lorne Festival came about.

Lorne Drama Festival takes place each year at the Corran Halls, Oban. In previous years, entries from Argyll and Bute have provided a 'full' festival, but post-Covid, the organisers opened invitations more widely.

We were one of three 'travelling' clubs, the others being from Aberdeen and Arran. There were also eight local productions – including youth plays – competing over four nights.



While the competition is not affiliated to the SCDA, the rules and guidance are very similar, and the marking scheme is the same, with the adjudicator awarding a similar array of prizes.

Our cast of four and crew of three made the 2.5-hour journey over on the Friday of our performance. We were warmly welcomed and soon it was time for our technical rehearsal. Our lighting requirements meant a bit of a re-rig and we were cutting it fine, but we finally programmed in the 40+ lighting cues with seconds to spare.

In the event, a few technical glitches and a slightly under par performance 'on the night' meant we didn't bring home any awards, but again, the audience seemed entertained and intrigued. A lively social evening and a free 'spread' afterwards was enjoyed by all, and we left on the Sunday with fond memories of a very friendly and welcoming 'non-SCDA' event. This year's Lorne Drama Festival, to be held in May, is also accepting entries from across the country.

Robin Smith



Looking back . . .

With preparations well underway for this year's Stewartry Drama Festival, Jill Fullarton looks back at some of the highlights over the years.

The new year has always brought with it the start of rehearsals for the much-loved one act play festival. My parents were both members of Unity Players Drama Club and as a child I spent many happy hours in the club's yellow painted theatre on Blackpark Road, often referred to as 'the hut'. Small but perfectly formed, it was a magical place with a dozen rows of proper red velvet theatre



Unity Players
in the 1970s

seats, a green-curtained stage and one dressing room crammed with costumes, hatboxes, and a vast collection of props. Along with Unity Players, many other local clubs performed in the festival: Mossdale, Auchencairn, Glenkens, Twynholm, Dalbeattie, Gatehouse and Crocketford all had their own clubs. Even Townhead, with its tiny population, had a hugely successful team who regularly won the local round and performed at the Western Division and Scottish finals.

The Stewartry festival has always taken place around the beginning of March. Usually lasting 3 or 4 nights, it was originally held in the town hall to packed houses. I'd always sit with my granny in the front row of the balcony, a different bag of sweets for each night chosen from one of the large jars in the Chocolate Box sweetshop below the town clock. Just before the first play started, the festival adjudicator would make his entrance. Dressed in an evening suit, he would take his seat just a few along from my own. I'd sneak a look at him whenever he switched his light on to make notes during the performances, desperate to know what he was writing. At the end of each evening, he would take to the stage and share his (sometimes controversial) thoughts on the plays; building up to the last night when the winners were announced.

The next round was regularly hosted in Castle Douglas with every hotel and B & B full and the town buzzing with actors, directors and supporters who would travel from as far as Campbeltown to compete. Gwen Middleton, a member of Unity Players in the seventies, recalls the fun of it all: 'I remember making the long journey to Nairn to support our production of Neil Simon's *'Plaza Suite'*, which had reached the Scottish final in 1972. Although we didn't win, the four cast members gave a wonderful performance with Maggie Coates playing the bride, who locks herself in the bathroom. I particularly enjoyed performing in the old Scottish comedies like the *'Friars of Berwick'* and *'Groom's Nicht'*. They were great fun.'

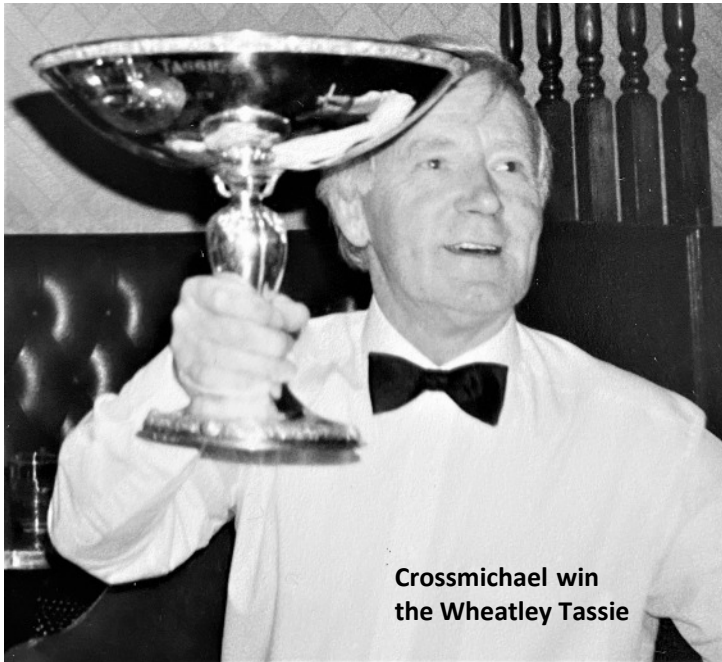
The eighties brought huge success for Crossmichael Drama club when they won the Scottish final with David Campton's *'Can You Hear the Music'* directed by Martin McColl. The large cast and support travelled to Enniskillen in northern island to represent Scotland in the British final and, although they didn't win, it was an amazing achievement for a village team. With his long commitment to community drama, and direction of so many memorable productions, it was a fitting tribute to Martin when the McColl Cup was commissioned as the new trophy for the best play at the local festival.

In the nineties the festival moved to the town's newly opened theatre, now known as the Fullarton. While some of the smaller clubs no longer took part, new clubs formed. One of these was the very popular Lochside Cranog Players: Actor and director Jacqueline Feenan recalls some of the funniest moments: 'In one play we performed, I was a rambler. The late Michael Emans was the adjudicator, and he joked about my costume (bright yellow fleece and panda hat). He was mortified when I told him they were my own clothes, which I wore regularly!



Crossmichael's *'A Respectable Wedding'*

Looking forward



**Crossmichael win
the Wheatley Tassie**

We made it to the Western divisional finals twice. One play was *'A Person of No Consequence'*, and one was *'The Orchestra'*, where a double bass fell on John Scott's head, and he had to go to hospital. That was indeed drama! A few of our plays won the audience choice trophy and were always full of fun.

Our most adventurous set was *'The Donahue Sisters'*. The set builders did a fantastic job of constructing the attic in the short time allowed. We had fun along the way, that is what it was all about – friendship and fun.'

Helen Fox, actor with Fox and Hound Theatre, has also taken part in many festivals: 'For amateur fun it's a great community activity to get involved in, carried by an army of volunteers. I hope that the amateur scene becomes braver, more experimental and finds a way out of old-fashioned rules and styles. I did lots of great plays and, if I discount any subsequently professional shows, I'd say up there are *'Mum's the Word'* and *'Nine'*.

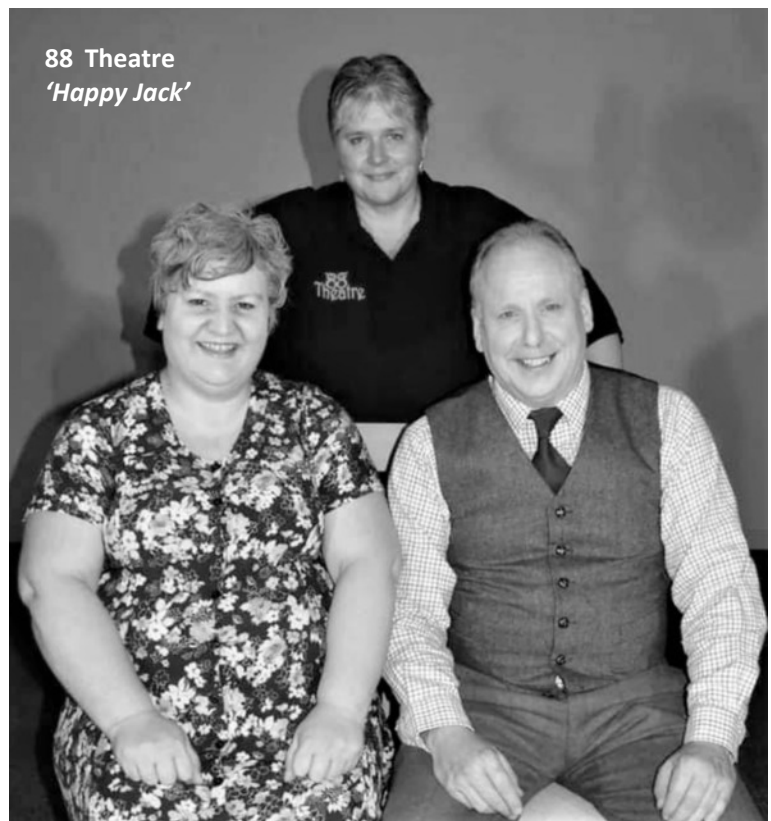
Over recent years, it has been wonderful to see so many youth teams taking part. Rose Benson performed in Castle Douglas High School's version of *'Romeo and Juliet'* which won the local youth trophy in 2018. She is looking forward to performing again this year in Catstrand Youth's production of *'Tell Me Another Story, Sing Me a Song'* by Jean Lenox Toddie.

'Taking part in the one act play festival was brilliant fun as well as an excellent experience in acting. My group used the play *'Romeo and Juliet'*, which is five acts long and compressed it in to one

act – a great challenge that allowed all of us to experiment with how we should approach our characters. We often had to play more than one character, hopping into Tybalt and then changing into Friar Lawrence,' said Rose.

This year's festival sees the amalgamation of Stranraer and Stewartry districts with 8 plays competing. Local club 88 Theatre will perform *'Happy Jack'*, a play which the company toured in 2015. Director Anne McIntyre said: 'It is the 10th anniversary of our club, so we decided to look back and choose one of our favourite plays. It was a difficult choice, but we are looking forward to staging *'Happy Jack'* again. It's a poignant and hilarious tale of a Yorkshire miner and his wife by the talented playwright John Godber. This year's festival offers a rich variety of plays and is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy live drama in our local theatre.'

With decades of history, there are so many local folk who have been involved in staging and enjoying festival plays. We would love to hear more memories, more dramatic tales. Perhaps one of the funniest is from the long-ago performance of a Scottish play which started with the line: 'Are ye there Kirpaytrick?' Not realising the play had begun, the late Jim Kirkpatrick, stage technician, had the audience roaring with laughter when he shouted from the light box. 'Aye, ah'm up here!'



**88 Theatre
'Happy Jack'**

A Dream Job

Some of you may know that before I retired 5 years ago, I used to be Artistic Director at Aberdeen Arts Centre. I have kept a real and abiding interest in the venue all my adult life and when a new Director was appointed last October, I was eager to meet her.

Amy Liptrott came to Aberdeen fresh from an Associate Director's post at Pitlochry Festival Theatre having just directed *'Private Lives'*.

Her journey to that point had been nothing if not varied and fairly impressive, giving her a very broad knowledge of the creative industry.



Starting from a very early age in Bolton, Amy was encouraged to pursue her musical ability by a family who weren't especially musical. She admits that she was very fortunate to have their support both practically and financially. Through a chance meeting between her father and Carl Davis, conductor of the Hallé Orchestra, a harp was procured, and lessons began when she was 10. After a rocky start, Amy soon realised that only with practise could art be improved and by the age of 14 she was playing in an orchestra and feeling that sense of achievement that only performing well can bring.

Whilst still at school she joined Bolton Little Theatre, an amateur company, and her first role was as Estella in

'Great Expectations'. The rigour the company showed, the attention to detail and the teamwork demonstrated back then has stayed with her and shaped her professional life. At school, she played Frauline Schneider in *'Cabaret'* and Nerissa in *'The Merchant of Venice'*. Onwards to a degree in English and Medieval Literature at the University of Sheffield where she joined SUTCO, Sheffield University Theatre Company and delved into Beckett and the obscure world of the theatre of the absurd alongside classics like *'A View from the Bridge'* and musicals like *'A Little Night Music'*.

Next steps took her to the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester followed by a couple of years as a professional musician. No stopping this woman's hunger for learning, she then went on to gain a secondary teaching qualification and was soon head of drama at a school in Bolton where her first production was *Les Mis*. Nothing like starting big! She found working with the young people hugely inspiring and seeing the creativity around her wasn't limited to age, experience, gender or background and was there to be harnessed was a revelation.

In 2011, Amy came to watershed in her career and decided to change direction, do what she felt drawn to and embarked on a postgraduate directing course at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts, one of the best theatre schools in London.

Since then, she has worked at Bolton Octagon Theatre where she embraced the creative engagement that opportunity gave her with characteristic enthusiasm, had forays to the Fringe, another spell teaching at a sixth form college and penultimate stop on the journey so far... to Pitlochry Festival Theatre.

I asked her what had learnt from her career to that point. Big question!

Her reply was thus "There has always been a consistency and passion for learning in my life and I love problem solving and figuring things out. We always have the toolkit to solve any problem – it's just a question of finding the right tool. Never say something is wrong and never limit yourself."

Next big question with all that going on was what drew her to applying for the post in Aberdeen?

Her response took me by surprise.

She said, "I've had a dream of running an Arts Centre for many years... I had such a rounded background in the arts and saw this as a dream job. There are so many challenges to running an Arts Centre and with challenges come creativity – and the chance to use my toolkit!"

at Aberdeen's Arts Centre

In regard to that response, I asked what her views are on community theatre and how important it is.

"Without it there would not be a supported professional sector," she said. "As the brilliant Artistic Director Elizabeth Newman says, they are two halves of the one art and I believe without one the other would make less sense and have less relevance.

At Bolton Little Theatre I realised how important my learning was in the wider aspects of theatre, lighting, sound, costume, production and set building and all the rest; this is not just about what the audience sees, collaboration is so important and is as valuable as learning in a professional environment.

Having said that we need to find ways of helping people move into the profession if they want to. We need to cultivate opportunities. What I see in Aberdeen is an incredible creative life, but the professional opportunities in theatre are limited and people move away to create work. We need to get them back! Amazing work is being brought to us but how fantastic would it be if that work was made in Aberdeen and went out to the rest of the world? It does take time to build and that's about risk. We need to start small and watch it grow."

I asked how she saw the Arts Centre feeding into the cultural picture of the city and with its 60th anniversary coming along and what were the plans for that celebration.

"The Arts Centre already contributes an awful lot to the cultural offering and discovering the amount of people who love this place is brilliantly overwhelming. It's a place where people have intergenerational ties and fond memories of creative learning classes and panto. I'd like to see the legacy of that learning have more cohesion. It's about changing the perception and inviting the community to change the offer and tell us what they want. The next 12 months are going to be big and for me, more than anything, it's about the people who love the place, and we want to hear their stories, thoughts and dreams for the future. It would be wrong of me to come in and change everything but equally that's why I am here. Without change there is no development but it's about making the right changes so the Arts Centre becomes a community focussed organisation that artists can also enjoy. It's about aspirations. We have a partnership with the Playwright's Studio Scotland and funding to support writers with a warm free creative space called 'Coorie In'. We are also partnering with Pitlochry Festival Theatre with the

production of a new play, *'The Maggie Wall'*, by Martin McCormick. Working with others, I have learnt that collaborations and partnerships are so important."

What did she think about retaining and growing our audiences in the current economic climate?

"We need to look at things differently. How do we change the offering, how to make it vital is by putting on really high-quality stuff, making it accessible at point of sale, and taking barriers down. We take the audience by the hand, provide snippets on social media, we let them know what to expect, make it an hour, get their feedback, have meet the cast conversations in the bar, go into schools and get maximum audience engagement. It is a challenge for the industry as a whole – we are back to the 2 halves of the one art. The amateur and community groups are as much a part of the industry as the professional theatre"

Well said, that woman!!!

As a division and as Aberdeen District we have many, many happy memories of using the Arts Centre as the perfect community venue for our festivals, workshops and fundraisers and as we are ever on the hunt for affordable spaces to continue our work Peter, our national treasurer, and I met with Amy before Christmas to discuss the possibility of hiring the centre for our divisional festival in 2024.

She was full of enthusiasm for our plans, amazed that our venerable association was reaching its centenary in 2026 and had some quite radical ideas on how to run a successful festival so more of that to come.

In the meantime I am delighted to report that the future of the Arts Centre is looking very, very bright.

Paula Gibson



The Play that....

Once upon a time- well February 2020 to be precise, Carnoustie Theatre Club embarked on its next play in our 3-year rolling programme. It was the much-anticipated 'Vicar of Dibley' - performing rights were obtained for late May 2020 and the auditions took place – very sought-after parts and an extremely competitive process! Backstage roles were defined, and the cast and producer looked forward to the first rehearsals. And then.....the world, as we knew it, came crashing down around us. The Pandemic happened.

Everything was put on ice as lockdown hit- the Club went into a state of suspended animation and tried to keep interest going through Zoom quizzes and other distance-based activities. We shelved our plans for the play, postponing the date until lockdown ended- we were lucky to secure the performing rights on a rolling basis. And.....we waited..... and waited.

Despite optimism, we could not even entertain starting rehearsals until late 2021. By that time, we had dipped our toes into the theatre by putting on a restricted programme of small cast, one-act plays and sketches - played to somewhat smaller than usual, but just as enthusiastic as ever audiences. We didn't want to restart any full-length larger cast plays until we could see a safe period to rehearse and set a new date of September 2022.

In the intervening two-year period, three of the original cast had pulled out for a variety of reasons and these parts had to be recast I was called to play the part of Frank, the boring old minute taker- what a coincidence as I'm old, people say I'm boring and I take the minutes for CTC committee! Typecasting or what!? Muriel, our ever patient and enthusiastic producer, had done a lot of homework and had a detailed rehearsal plan for us to follow. We were ready to go!

Thursday 2nd June was a great day- first rehearsal night! The excitement was palpable as the cast read the play out loud for the first time. We had a hilarious time and we realised that if we could carry it off, we had a very funny play on our hands- brilliantly written with a chance for all cast members to shine at some point. As we moved on through June and July, the biggest issue, due to holidays, was getting all the cast together at the same time. This was particularly problematic for those with the major parts, as they invariably spent the evening talking to thin air as the prompt read other parts to them- very difficult, but great progress was being made!

The play, as written has a scene that needs school children who are only on stage for one scene. Four of our youth members were selected, came to their first rehearsal and NAILED IT!



... *nearly* wasn't



August arrived and the nerves really began to set in. At last, we were all able to get together at nearly all rehearsals and polishing performances was well underway. We got our first glimpse of the set. The play notes call for a set split into three areas- the Vicarage the Village Hall and the Vestry. Not easy with a relatively small stage as we have in our own little Dibble Tree Theatre, but stage manager Peter, theatre manager Brian and producer Muriel excelled themselves with a design that provided distinct acting areas for all scenes plus, with fast and instant fluid rearranging using extra flats, even allowed for a full stage set for the Village Hall. The plan was for the cast and backstage crew to do this live - quietly and quickly....Gulp!!

Ticket sales started and were amazing- the play sold out six performances within two weeks- even an extra performance sold out. This was amazing for us and a first for several years. It also brought home that the Club and the town was getting back its pre-pandemic mojo. All

departments- stage management, wardrobe, lighting, sound, props, front of house and of course us humble actors were now working flat out to make sure we could deliver a great show for all our paying audiences.

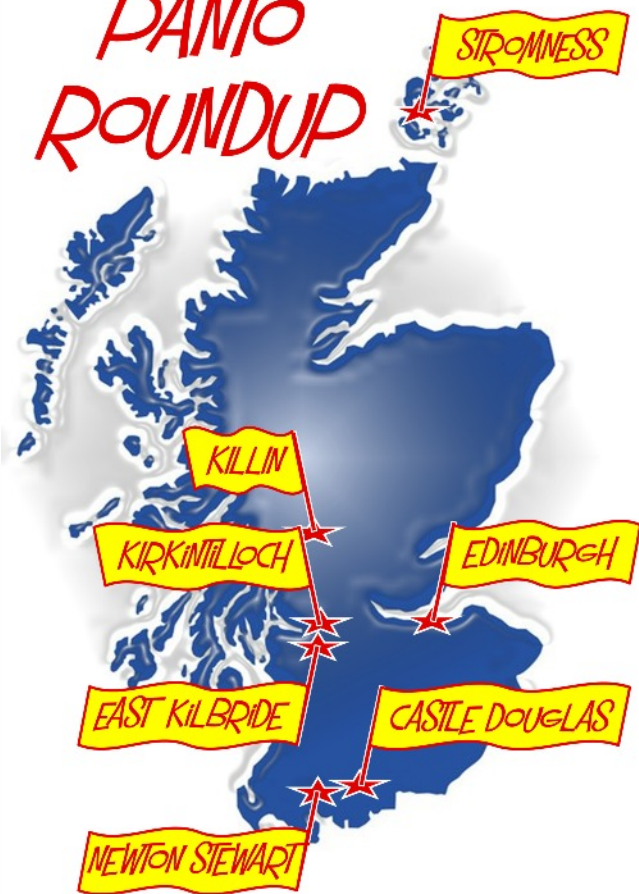
All of a sudden, it was the week before the show. The final polishing was exciting and very scary in equal amounts. Costumes were now worn with ease, and we "became" our characters (sometimes even off-stage!).

And then.....it was dress rehearsal and SHOWTIME!

So.....was it a success? You bet!! Full houses at every performance, gales of laughter throughout, a cast that had an absolute ball all week, a backstage and front of house set up that worked like clockwork. All in all, it was a fantastic week and easily one of the best shows we have ever done. Pandemic problems behind us.....WE WERE BACK!

Dave Ross
Carnoustie Theatre Club

PANTO ROUNDUP



CatStrand's laid-back
'Sinbad Sails Again'

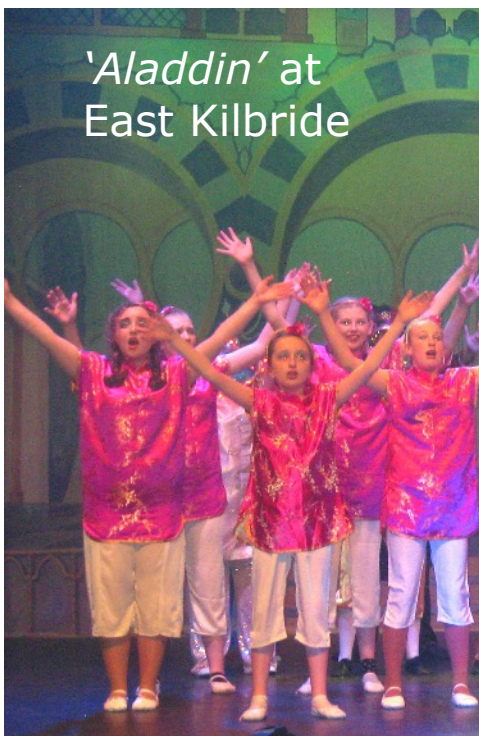
'Mother Goose' at Kirkintilloch





EPT's '*Babes in the Wood*'
in Edinburgh

Pantomimes around the country



'*Aladdin*' at
East Kilbride

Goodbye to old friends

Peter Stevens

Past National Chairman of SCDA, Peter Stevens, passed away peacefully in hospital last November.

Peter's first introduction to drama came in fourth year at school when asked by the physics master to do lighting for a school production. He did this for three years and had to wait until after National Service in the RAF, and training at University in Bristol, before he got to act in the church pantomime!

Peter and his wife Ruth moved to Montrose in 1956 where he worked for Glaxo as a chemist. In 1965, the Glaxo Sports and Social club were invited to take part in the Company's inter-factory one act play festival. Peter offered to assist and ended up producing their play. From this, he joined the Kaims Players, putting on plays to support local charities in Montrose. In 1970 the Montrose factory of Glaxo were hosts for the inter-factory drama festival. Friends in Stonehaven's Ury Players suggested that Kaims might benefit from taking part in the SCDA festival, which was on the week before. That was Peter's first involvement with SCDA and he never looked back.

In 1974 the SCDA Scottish Final came to Montrose, followed by the District festival in '75 and the Divisional in '76, a slightly unusual sequence. Peter was co-opted onto the then General Council in 1980 while being Northern Divisional Chairman.

He was honoured to be appointed Chairman of the association in their jubilee year of 1986 and had a busy

first year with Scottish Finals in Dundee, British Finals in Inverness and culminating in hosting the jubilee dinner in Glasgow in June.

Peter remained involved in SCDA festivals with both Glaxo and Kaims Drama Clubs until they folded. He kept up his interest with all SCDA activities, attending the summer schools, encouraging new writing and was always looking for new ways to encourage membership.

He remained deeply involved in various community projects in Montrose, from preserving a sculpture studio and gallery, to researching the history of the local Air Station during the First World War.

Both Peter and his wife Ruth were regular supporters of all the local and National Festivals until ill health took its toll. We send our sincere condolences to Ruth and the family.



Morna Barron

Dates for your diary

Scottish Final at the Macrobert Theatre, Stirling,
4th to 6th May, including a Coronation party on
Saturday afternoon.

Scottish Youth Final at Nairn Community & Arts Centre,
Saturday, 17th June.

British Final at the MAC Theatre, Belfast,
30th June & 1st July.

**Killin
Komedey Festival
12th & 13th May**

Jane (Dolly) Nicol

In November last year Jane Nicol, known to us all as Dolly, passed away peacefully in Rosewell nursing home in Aberdeen.

She had the fullest of lives and lived every moment with an enviable generosity of spirit.

She was so interesting to be with, her stories fascinating and her views on theatre both individual and inciteful. Her interest in what was going on in the world of theatre both locally and nationally was forensic and she wanted to know every detail of every play in every festival when she became unable to



attend theatre and that was only in last few years of her extraordinary life. I think her last visit was to the Arts Centre to see Studio Theatre Groups 50th anniversary production of *'The Merchant'* written by Charles Barron, another northern luminary.

I have written before about her love of performance which started, as with most of us, at a very early age and of her marriage to Alan Nicol, that most memorable and flamboyant of adjudicators.

Closer to home Dolly's unstinting support of SCDA has been formidable. In recognition of that Northern Division granted her a lifetime honorary membership and one of her last and most joyous festival memories was when we asked her to present the trophies at a divisional final in Brechin in 2019. What a party we had!

Speaking of parties Dolly and her chums would quite often have lunch in The Holburn Bar on a Friday, (always a Friday). and she used to joke with us that her mother would be turning in her grave if she knew she had set foot inside a bar!

After the splendid spread laid on at Dolly and Alan's church in Ferryhill at Dolly's funeral some of her SCDA friends went to that very hostelry to toast her memory. She most certainly would have approved.!

Over the last few years the Aberdeen committee would regularly take Dolly out for lunch to keep the tradition going. We absolutely loved being in her company. She truly did live her life to the full and her stories many and varied.

Here's to you, Dolly, thank you for your friendship and enriching our lives, you will be missed!

Paula Gibson

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

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Scottish Community Drama One-Act Festival 2023

Notes: (*) = original play,
(Y) = youth team
(NC) = non-competitive

Eastern Division

Divisional Final

Regal Theatre, Bathgate

10th-11th March, 7pm

Adjudicator: Dave Bennet

Tickets: £12, Youth £6.

Divisional Youth Final

Regal Theatre, Bathgate

12th March, 2.30pm

Adjudicator: Dave Bennet

Tickets: £12, Youth £6.

EDINBURGH DISTRICT

**Church Hill Theatre,
Morningside Rd.**

24th & 25th Feb. 7pm

Adjudicator: Kate Stephenson

St Kentigern's Youth (Y): *'Everybody's Dying to meet you'*,
(*) by Alan Richardson

Leittheatre (Kirkgate): *'The Infernal Serpent'*, By David Gerow

Edinburgh Graduate Theatre group: *'Tunnel Vision'*, by
Sheila Hodgson

Edinburgh Theatre Arts: *'It Takes Two'*, by Iain Robertson

St Serfs Players: *'Socks'* by Rosemary Frisino Toohey

Leittheatre (Sunnyside): *'Tickless Time'*, by Susan Glaspell

Edinburgh People's Theatre: *'The Book Club of Little
Witterington'*, by Joan Greening

Tickets: £11, (£9 Youth). £20 (£16) for two-night season from
secretary@scdaedinburgh.org.uk or
www.ticketsource.co.uk/scda-edinburgh-district

FALKIRK DISTRICT

Unfortunately, there will not
be a festival in Falkirk this year.

FIFE DISTRICT

Philp Hall, Kirkcaldy

23rd-25th Feb. 7.30pm

Adjudicator: Brian Marjoribanks

Leslie ADC (C): *'The Last Nickel'*, by Jane Shepard

Auld Kirk Players (F): *'Cupboard Love'*, by Jean McConnell

Leslie ADC (M): *'Lockdown in Leslie'*, by David Tristram

Auld Kirk Players (G): *'The Ledger'*, by Graeme Ferguson

Beath High School North (Y): *'The Lunatic View'*, by David
Campton

Aberdour Players: *'Play for Yesterday or The Little Hut of
Enmity'* by James Saunders

Beath High School South (Y): *'How to spot an Alien'*, by
Georgia Christou

Dalgety Players (Y): *'The Weaver's Tale'*, (*) by Peter K
Franklin

Beath High School East (Y): *'Brick by Brick'*, (*) by Cameron
Forbes

Beath High School West (Y): *'At First I was Afraid (I was
Petrified)'*, by Douglas Maxwell

Auld Kirk Players (D): *'Something in the Genes'*, by Don
Woods

Leslie ADC (N): *'Close to Croydon'*, by Gillian Plowman

Tickets: £10 (£5 Youth), £35 for season

STIRLING DISTRICT

Menzies Hall, Fintry

25th Feb., 7.00pm

Adjudicator: Sue Doherty

Fintry Amateur Dramatic Society: *'Losers'*, by Brian Friel

Killin Drama Club (Y): *'Round the World with Class Six'*, by
Nick Warburton

Bowhouse Drama: *'The Sociable Plover'*, by Tim Whitnall

Tickets: £10 per night.
Contact Gordon Hibbert gordonkillin@gmail.com

Highland Division

Divisional Final

Thurso High School, Ormlie Rd.

24th - 25th March, 7pm

Adjudicator: Ben Humphrey

Tickets £10 or £15 for two nights.

Children, 16 and under, £8 or £14 for two nights from Nairn Community & Arts Centre

CAITHNESS DISTRICT

Wick Assembly Rooms

25th Feb., 7pm

Adjudicator: Dave Bennet

Wick Players: 'Spring Cleaning', from the late Ian Matheson's collection

Thurso Players: 'Hidden in her Smile', (*) by Faye Sutherland

Thurso Junior Players (Y) (NC): 'Mr Artigiano's Puppet Show', by Faye Sutherland

Tickets: £10 (Aged 16 & under £8)

Flower Patch, Wick / MacBeath Jewellers, Thurso

MORAY FIRTH DISTRICT

Nairn Community & Arts Centre,

24th & 25th Feb, 7pm

Adjudicator: Alasdair Hawthorn

Lochness Luvvies: 'Just the Two of Us', by Damian Woods

Buccaneer Theatre Club: 'Cracking the Whip', by Bruce Kane

LADS (Elgin): 'Costa Del Packet!', by Anthony Booth

LADS (Elgin): 'Kitten Heels', by Catriona Yule

Buccaneer Theatre Club: 'Window Pain', by Patricia Gay

The Florians: 'Super Seniors Keep Fit Class', by Fiona Black

Tickets at the door

SKYE DISTRICT

Unfortunately there will be no festival in Skye this year.

SOUTH WEST ROSS DISTRICT

Unfortunately there will be no festival in South West Ross this year.

Youth teams 20 (14 in 2022)

Original plays 5 (4 in 2022)

Northern Division

Divisional Final

Orkney Theatre, Kirkwall

23rd - 25th March, 7pm

Adjudicator: David Price

Divisional Youth Final

Birnam Arts Theatre

11th March, 5pm

Adjudicator: Stuart Aitken

ABERDEEN DISTRICT

Culter Village Hall

24th-25th Feb. 7pm

Adjudicator: Sheila Gilmore

Shazam Theatre Co. (Y): 'Comedy in the times of Covid', by the company

Ury Players: 'Finding Goddard', by Deborah Hughill

Amici: 'The Open Door', by Alfred Suto

Shazam Theatre Co.: 'Tracks', by Peter Tarsi

Bon Accord Players: 'The Zoo Story', by Edward Albee

Banchory Theatre Club: 'The Box' (*), by Drew Young

Tickets: £12 /£10, £20 season
www.ticketsource.co.uk/aberdeen-scda

ANGUS DISTRICT

Unfortunately there will be no festival in Angus this year.

ORKNEY DISTRICT

Orkney Theatre, Kirkwall

22 - 24th Feb., 7.30pm

Adjudicator: Alan Haslett

Birsay Drama Group: 'That's a bit of Sheer Luck!', by Emily & Beth Rennie

Kirkwall Arts Club: 'After the Flags and Bands', by Allan Williams

Kirkwall Arts Club: 'The Wireless Set', by Morag MacInnes

Palace Players: 'Sequence of Events', by George MacEwan Green

Palace Players: 'Anxiety is Orange', by Lindsay Price

St Andrews Drama Club: 'Camp Confidence', by Diana Raffle

Stromness Academy Players (Y): 'A Tale of two Balconies', by Kate Cosette

Stromness Academy Players (Y): 'Friends and Family', by Pearson R Kunz

Stromness Drama Club: 'Tay Bridge', by Peter Arnott

Tickets £8, season £20
contact alistairmorton01@btinternet.com

PERTSHIRE DISTRICT

**Birnam Arts Centre,
2nd - 4th March, 7pm**

Adjudicator: Jan Palmer Sayer

Blairgowrie Players (Y): *'Macbeth'*, by Geoff Bamber

Blairgowrie Players : *'Peas'*, by David Tristram

Blairgowrie Players: *'Little Bro Morning, Big Sis Afternoon'*,
by Mike Tibbetts

Blairgowrie Players : *'Dreamjobs'*, by Graham Jones

B.A.D. (Y): *'Two'*, by Jim Cartwright

Aberfeldy Drama Club: *'The Bear'*, by Anton Chekhov

Aberfeldy Drama Club: *'The Appraisal'*, by Tim Marriot

Tickets: £10 & £8, birnamarts.com

New Victory Players (Edwards): *'Art of Remembering'*, by
Adina L Ruskin

Kirkton Players: *'The Guilt Card'*, by Jean McConnell

New Victory Players (Glenn): *'All by Myself'*, by Robert Scott

Kirkintilloch Players (Y): *'Teechers'*, (abridged), by John
Godber

Stardust Theatre Co: *'Roots of Spain'*, by Keith Simpson

**Tickets £10, season £24
from <https://lanternhousearts.org/>**

INVERCLYDE DISTRICT

**Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock
24th Feb. 7pm**

Adjudicator: TBA

Dumbarton Peoples' Theatre: *'Two Rooms'*, by Lee Blessing

Greenock Players: *'The Duck Variations'*, by David Marmet

Greenock Players: *'Party'*, by Tom Basen

Beacon Box office 01475 723723

Western Division

Open & Youth Divisional Finals

Queens Hall, Dunoon

16th – 18th March, 7pm,

Adjudicator: TBA

Tickets from : ents24.com

ARGYLL KINTYRE

**Victoria Hall, Campbeltown
23rd Feb. 7pm**

Adjudicator: Bruce Adam

Dalintober Drama Club (Y): *'Back to Summer'*, by Wade
Bradford

Accent Players: *'Simply the Best'*, by John H Newmeir

Benderloch & North Connel DC: *'A Flock of Tigers'*, by John
Finnemore

**Tickets £8 (£4 primary age)
from AP Taylor, Main St., Campbeltown**

AYRSHIRE DISTRICT

Unfortunately there will be no
festival in Ayrshire this year.

GLASGOW DISTRICT

**Cumbernauld Theatre,
3rd March., 7pm &
4th Mar. 1.30pm & 7pm**

Adjudicator: Dave Bennet

Kirkintilloch Players, *'Beaches of St Valery'*, by Stuart
Hepburn

Kilmardinny Players, (Y): *'A Dog's Life'*, by Pam Valentine

Rutherglen Rep: *'Hidden Meanings'*, by Michael Snelgrove

STEWARTRY DISTRICT

**The Fullerton, Castle Douglas
2nd - 4th March, 7.30pm**

Adjudicator: Bruce Adam

88 Theatre: *'Happy Jack'*, (abridged) by John Godber

Catstrand Players: *'Feeding the Ducks'*, by Michael Park

Catstrand Youth Players (Kells) (Y): *'Tell me another story,
sing me a song'*, by Jean Lennox Toddie

Catstrand Youth Players (Clachan) (Y): *'Rabbit'*, by David
Foxton

Newton Stewart Players: *'Curses Foiled Again'*, by Evelyn
Hood

Newton Stewart Players Juniors (Y): *'Bad Reception'*, by Paul
Vincent

Stranraer Drama Club: *'Nursery Crimes'*, by Emma Akiens

Stranraer Drama Club (Y): *'Mmmbeth'*, by Alison Williams

Tickets £8 from The Fullerton 01556 504506

WIGTOWN DISTRICT

Unfortunately there will be no
festival in Wigtown this year.

Entries	75	(61 in 2022)
Eastern	22	(17)
Highland	9	(8)
Northern	22	(23)
Western	22	(13)

new plays review

by Stephen Lambert

Methuen Drama

'Quiz' by James Graham

Full Length Drama in Two Acts with Prologue

Cast: 9 Male 5 Female playing multiple roles

Based on the book "Bad Show: The Quiz, The Cough, The Millionaire Major" by Bob Woffinden and James Plaskett, the play is a fictional imagination based on real events which took place in 2001 following an episode of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?"

It was premiered at Chichester Festival Theatre in November 2017 before transferring to London's West End in Spring 2018.

Olivier Award Winner James Graham is the country's political playwright par excellence and his writing produces a thrilling blend of entertainment, politics and an analysis of the course of British justice.

In April 2003 Army Major Charles Ingram with his wife Diana and coughing accomplice Tecwen Whittock are convicted for cheating on the famous quiz show. The nation became gripped by the sheer audacity of their plot to snatch the Million Pound Jackpot but were they really guilty?

It's time for your audience to decide as they assess the evidence in this provocative script peppered with wry humorous touches.

Multiple settings as the action progresses ranging from TV Studio to Criminal Court.

Nick Hern Books

'Trestle' by Stewart Pringle

Drama in twenty one scenes

Cast: 1 Male 1 Female

ISBN 9781848427013

"None of us is here forever and we've got to take a chance from time to time - sometimes you've got to see something you like, grab hold and don't let it go"

Harry feels that life is beginning to tick down, his autumn years spent quietly caring for the community he loves while Denise thinks that life is only just beginning in retirement and she's dancing like she's still at high school.

When their paths cross on weekly meetings at the village hall, their understanding of the time both have left changes irrevocably as they ponder the meaning of community, growing old and falling in love.

The dialogue tenderly but truthfully explores the themes of love and ageing asking how we all choose to live in the face of soaring life expectancies.

Writer and Arts Journalist Stewart Pringle is Associate Dramaturg of London's Bush Theatre and the play won the Papatango New Writing Prize being premiered at Southwark Playhouse in 2017.

With judicious cutting this delightful two hander set in a small Yorkshire village Temperance Hall could prove ideal festival material.

Faber and Faber

'Handbagged' by Moira Buffini

Full Length Drama in fifteen scenes

Cast: 2 Male 4 Female

Opening the clasp on the antipathy between two giants of the twentieth century - The Monarch Queen Elizabeth and her most powerful subject Margaret Thatcher British PM 1979 -1990. One believing there is no such thing as society and the other vowing to serve it.

Originating as a one act play in a Women, Power and Politics Festival the title derives from the verb coined early in Thatcher's term to evoke the effects emanating from her personal handbag as it became an emphatic political prop and visible symbol of power for both ladies.

The play originally premiered in 2014 received a revival last year and it remains a cleverly written, funny and charming political comedy. The jokes are mainly on the PM with the monarch often resembling a campaigner for social inequality with Thatcher having to remind Her Majesty of the tax free existence she enjoys as head of state.

The script provides an opportunity to educate a younger generation about Thatcher's legacy.

Four actresses depict the older and younger adversaries with the male actors portraying a challenging variety of British and International figureheads of the period.

Scripts can be obtained through our discount scheme for SCDA members - please contact our National Office for details. Scripts entered into the Geoffrey Whitworth and Scott Salver competitions can be borrowed from SCDA's National Library at Summerhall Arts Centre.

In Reserve

Jill Fullarton asked Charlotte Taylor, what it feels like to experience the festival as reserve adjudicator.

How did you come to take on the role of Reserve Adjudicator?

The opportunity to become a Reserve Adjudicator at the Festival of One Act Plays came in 2017. Anne McIntyre, Secretary of the Scottish Community Drama Association approached me as there was a vacancy. I studied drama at university, have a great interest in the theatre and was pleased to be able to support our vibrant and hardworking community drama groups in this way. In 2018 I was invited to participate in the SCDA Western Division's Workshop for Reserve Adjudicators which was very helpful.

What does it involve?

A few weeks before the festival I am required to attend, I receive the scripts of the One Act Play entries to read. I also have the Adjudicators' marking sheets to use on the evenings of performances. When reading through the plays, I note potential areas of interest which might influence marking in the areas of Acting, Direction and Staging etc. On the evening, I am assigned a seat towards the back of the theatre. No communication with the Adjudicator is allowed at any time. I am required to adjudicate the plays, so that the Festival can progress should the Adjudicator be unable to attend or fall ill. Whilst the plays are being performed, I make notes and score them, keeping the marking sheets until the final results are announced.

How many times have you done it and where?

My duties as a Reserve Adjudicator have been carried out at the Fullarton Theatre, Castle Douglas. Usually I am required annually for the District Final, although I reserve adjudicated for a Divisional Final when the Western Division hosted at the Fullarton Theatre, Castle Douglas. The District Final, at the Fullarton Theatre in February 2023, will be the sixth time I have carried out Reserve Adjudicator duties.

Have you ever had to step in yet?

No, thankfully the Adjudicators have always attended and been in good health! I have to ensure I complete the task however, so that I would be in a good position to take over if necessary.

Do you always agree with the adjudicators results?

I generally agree with the adjudicators and find their comments enlightening. I learn considerably from their expertise and experience. There may be aspects of the play, from time to time, I have noticed that are not mentioned in the Adjudicator's comments. Occasionally, I

would have awarded slightly more or less points but there are no major discrepancies on the whole.

What do you enjoy about it?

I enjoy the theatre and the plays are of a very good standard. Every time the interpretation of the script on to the stage is intriguing and often impressive. I enjoy the performances and appreciate the talent, effort and commitment that has gone into presenting their entries each year. It is a pleasure to support the Scottish Community Drama community and meet with many interesting and colourful characters through my role. The participants are very sociable and have a loyal and enthusiastic following of supporters.



Any interesting observations?

I am very impressed by how passionate the Community Drama community are about their productions. They plan, rehearse and commit many hours to the good standard plays they bring to the Festivals. The evenings often exceed expectations and are always enjoyable and interesting! As Reserve Adjudicator I can enjoy them all in addition to contributing in a small way to the success of the events.

What has your favourite play been?

I particularly liked 'Kissing Sid James' by Robert Farquhar which was performed by 88 Theatre a few years ago. I thought Scott Fingland and Madeline Reid were so good as the two funny but lonely characters. The nod to 'Carry On' humour together with the poignancy made for a very memorable and entertaining performance. The nightclub scene made me smile.

Our Finances

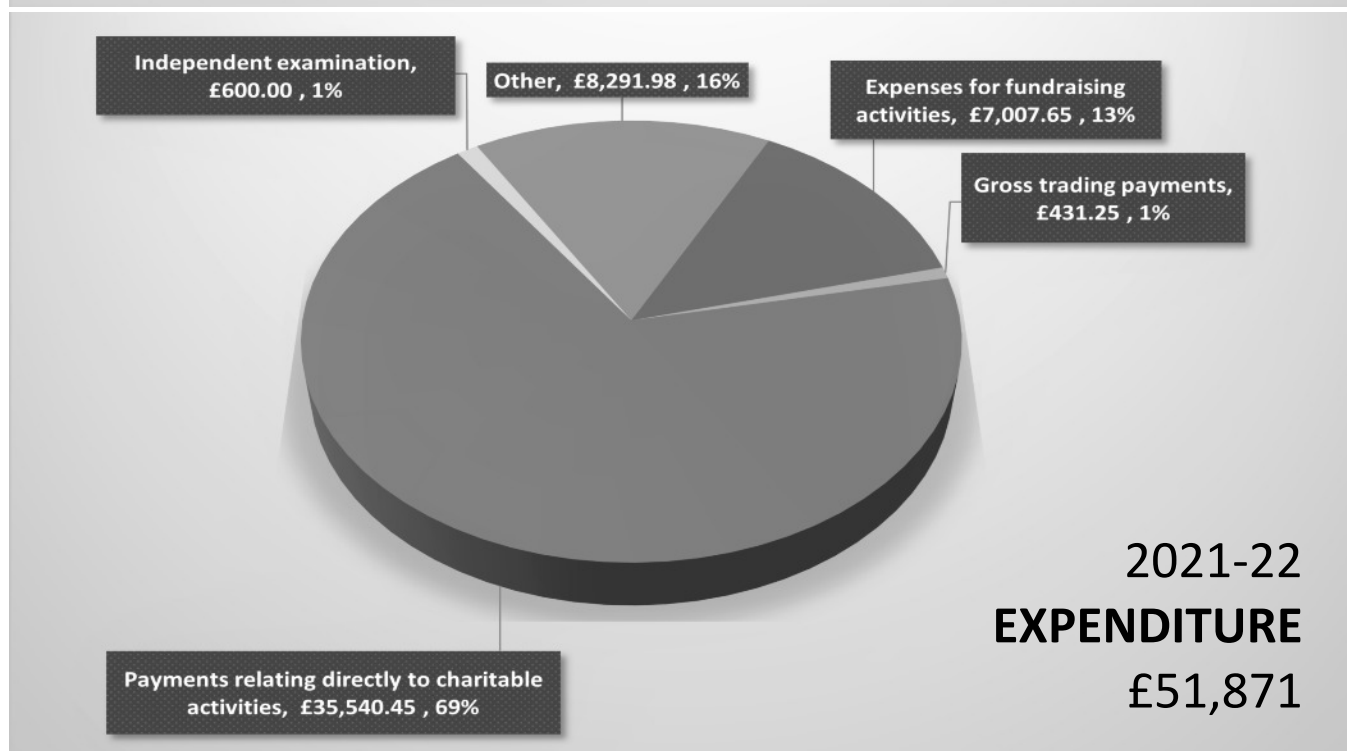
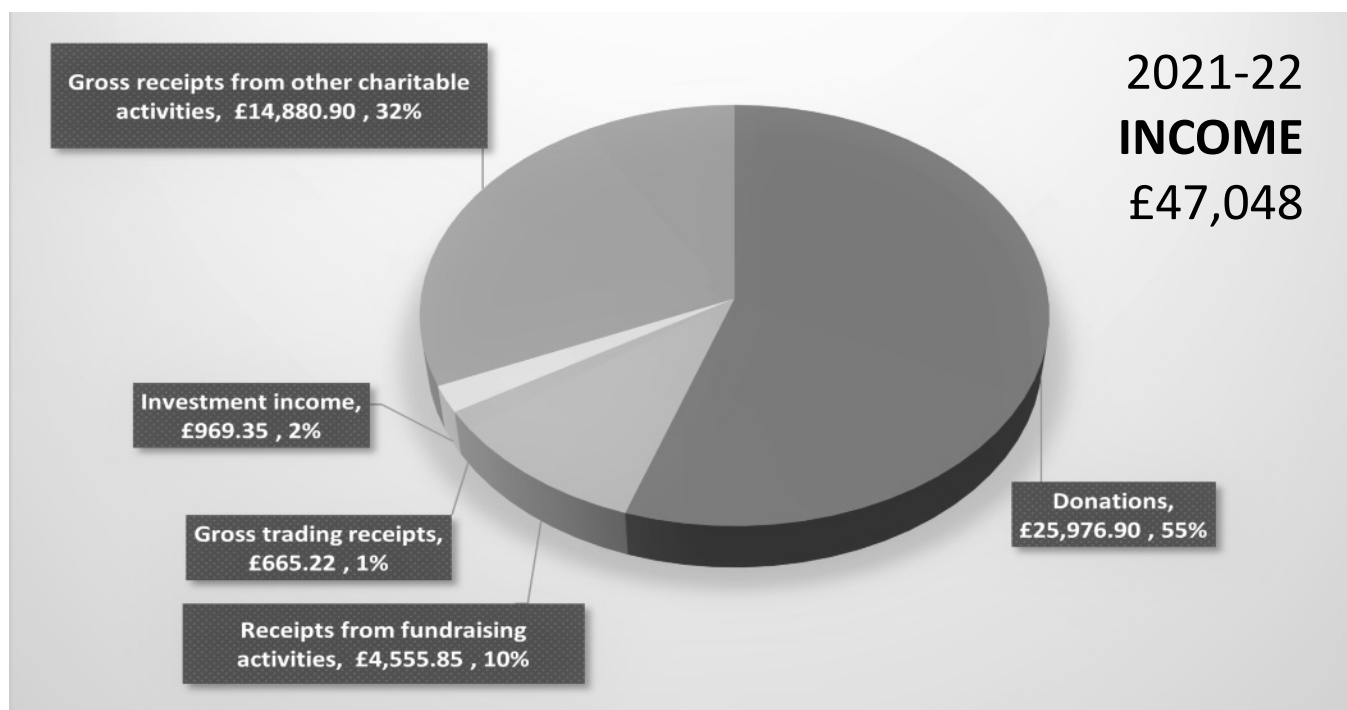
Our accounts for 2021-2022 show an overall deficit of £4,823 across all funds. As disappointing as this deficit is, it would have been significantly greater if it wasn't for a legacy from Lesley Syme, a very successful Killin Komedie Festival and the fantastic support from across the board at the Scottish Finals in Orkney.

Overall, given that we emerged from a global pandemic and were attempting to restart Scottish community drama, the results should not be seen as too disappointing.

Our budget for 2022-2023 shows a significant deficit of £14,689. This is in part due to website costs being deferred from last year. This scale of deficit is not sustainable in the medium to long term and the Executive is committed to looking at how to increase income to pre-pandemic levels, whilst at the same time reducing expenditure.

Peter Esson

National Treasurer



National AGM weekend

Once again it was time to arrange our AGM and social weekend in November. The dates of 4th & 5th was agreed and the Station Hotel, Perth was once again the chosen venue. It had been suggested that we would have a dinner on the Friday followed by a rehearsed reading of one of the winning Play on Words plays 'A Dream Called Vienna' by Aaron Kirwood. The National Committee and various friends were called in to take part in this delightful new comedy. It is set in a Glasgow Cafe and tells of the trials and tribulations of three Scottish women.

The Saturday would hold the National AGM of the association followed by performances of the two winning monologue competitions, Dierdre Eadie with 'Boxes' and Liz Drewitt with 'Leave the Light on'. They would be followed by the other Play on Words rehearsed reading of 'Teen Horror Love' by Heloise Thual performed by Blairgowrie Players.



Aaron Kirwood
and Guy Hollands

That all sounded easy, 30 or so rooms were booked for the Friday evening, and it looked as though we would have a good turnout for the weekend. I could relax – well no actually I couldn't! An embarrassed manager of the Station Hotel phoned me ten days before the event to say he had to cancel all the room bookings! The government had taken over the hotel, but he would try to find us other accommodation.

After a weekend of frantic phone calls in the end we went to the Mercure Hotel in centre of Perth for our accommodation, dinner and play on the Friday. We had a lovely dinner and the rehearsed reading was really very well received. The author Aaron was delighted with the

performances, in particular our Chair, Carolyn and the 88 Theatre's Anne McIntyre. He felt the parts could have been written specially for them. Guy Hollands, ex-artistic director of the Citizens, Glasgow had helped Aaron with several re-writes and was also pleased with the result. Let us hope the word will pass round that this is a great new Scottish comedy just perfect for some of our clubs. Aaron was presented with a commemorative certificate.

After breakfast those of us who had stayed gathered our belongs and headed off to the Station Hotel for the AGM and the rest of the day.

The National Committee met in the morning to elect the office-bearers, and once again the same excellent team was kept in place.

Then it was on to the AGM itself. There was a particularly good turn out this year which was encouraging. As last year, instead of just expecting everyone to read the annual report the various authors of it got up and spoke about their sections. Then there was the opportunity for those attending to ask each person questions. It meant that all the different activities of the association got to be highlighted, instead of skimmed over by everyone reading the annual report. One of the main topics was of course the festivals and the demise of some districts due to lack of committee members. There was quite a long discussion on the only one team rule from a club going through to the various rounds of the festival.

This had been brought up by Western Division. Both sides of the argument were thoroughly thrashed out and the room was equally divided. It was agreed to ask Districts to get the feelings of their clubs and pass the info back to Divisions and the National Committee for the Festival committee to discuss further.

Business over it was time for entertainment.

The two monologues went down well and both authors were presented with their trophies, Liz with the Sandy Glass trophy for performance and Diedre with the Glenboag trophy for original writing. We then headed off to watch the rehearsed reading of *Teen Horror Love*. Blairgowrie Players had been helped with this by Guy and it proved yet another success. Let's hope we will soon see it in our One Act Festival. Heloise was presented with her commemorative certificate by Guy.

As we all went away to our various destinations it was agreed it had proved to be yet again despite the various hassles another successful social weekend.

Morna Barron



Deirdre Eadie
with Tony Flisch



Liz Drewitt



Anne and Carolyn perform
'A Dream Called Vienna'

Newton Stewart's 50th annual pantomime
'Snow White and the Seven Dwarves'



'Robin Hood' in Stromness

