

Spring 2026

scene

Panto Season

the magazine of
Scottish Community Drama





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**Scottish Community
Drama Association**

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National Address

1st Floor, Argyll Court,
Castle Business Park, Stirling FK9 4TY

email: secretary@drama.scot

National Drama Advisor : Carole Williams,
email: nda@drama.scot

Website: drama.scot

Office Admin

An answering service is operating on 07407 387086
please leave a message and someone will get back
to you as soon as possible.

Library

1st Floor, Argyll Court,
Castle Business Park, Stirling FK9 4TY
email: library@drama.scot

Editorial Team

- Morna Barron
- Paula Gibson
- Stephen Lambert
- Media team

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Cover picture

Killin Drama Group's pantomime 'Jack and the
Beanstalk'.

Photo by **Ron Allner**



Chairman's chat

Hope everyone has made it through this rather dreich winter without too much discomfort! With panto season over, many clubs will be looking forward to Spring full-length productions and/or entries in the One-Act Festival. As usual for the Spring issue of Scene, the full Diary for the Festival is included. While overall numbers are disappointingly low, Youth entries remain healthy, which is encouraging. We'll see what can be done to pick things up across the board for 2027.

This year's Scottish Final is back at the delightful Pitlochry Festival Theatre in beautiful Highland Perthshire – always a popular venue. We are hoping to offer more than just our evening performances, with special events at the venue to broaden its appeal still further – look out for more announcements.

As you may have heard, our long-standing National Drama Advisor, Carole Williams, will be retiring next year – and is working reduced hours this year. Replacing Carole won't be easy, but thoughts and plans for a smooth handover are well in hand. Carole herself is providing plenty of help, advice and valuable contacts as we look at options for the future. We are determined that this key role continues to be at the heart of what SCDA offers our members.

Centenary planning continues to occupy our minds, and there's exciting news of events elsewhere in this issue. Please do whatever you can locally to get the word out there and maximise this rare opportunity to publicise our organisation.

Best wishes to all teams involved in the One-Act Festival – I'm hoping to get out and about to a few venues, and look forward to meeting some of you around the country.

Robin.

Welcome

to new Individual members

Gordon Jahn	Glasgow (Western)
Lynn Beaton	Glasgow (Western)
Bill Taylor (joint)	Glasgow (Western)
Anna Gribben (joint)	Glasgow (Western)
Evelyn Rudd	Moray Firth (Highland)
Mark Greenock	Fife (Eastern)
Rosa-Serafina Greenholm	Edinburgh (Eastern)

to new Life member

Liz Berg	Fife (Eastern)
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to new Club members

The Wee Perthshire Drama Club
Perthshire (Northern)

Thank you

for donations

Mrs Ann Witcomb
Simon Smith, Cresselles Publishing

Thanks also to our Patrons for their continued support.

The times they are a' changing

Our Drama Adviser, Carole Williams, will begin reduced hours in March 2026 ahead of her planned retirement in March 2027. During this period, SCDA will continue to provide the full drama support service.

Workshop requests should continue to be directed to Carole. She will deliver as many sessions as possible or arrange for a trusted tutor to visit you, ensuring the same high standard of support. Workshop fees remain unchanged, with the first workshop free of charge; only travel and subsistence costs apply. Further details are available on our website:

<https://drama.scot/membership/workshops/>

Carole will maintain her current level of email communication and aims to respond within 24 hours, except when unavailable. She will continue to share relevant opportunities through newsletters and social media and remains committed to supporting SCDA and community drama.



We are also exploring ways to enhance our service for members, including:

- Expanding our tutor pool to offer a wider range of workshops
- Building partnerships with theatre companies and other organisations to secure preferential rates for members
- Producing new general guidance to complement existing resources on our website

Carole said:

"It will be difficult to leave a job I love, but this transition offers SCDA an opportunity to review the drama service, retain what works well, and develop new ways to support our members. I hope to remain involved and will contribute to shaping the future of the service. If you have any suggestions or questions, please contact me at nda@drama.scot"



Lily Hothersall in conversation with Gill James

Which three changes for the better have you seen in your time with SCDA?

"The standard of adjudication and adjudicators has improved considerably with constructive criticism in general outweighing destructive criticism.

The new library what a great asset to have!! So much work was done to get where we are now, and I was delighted to get the opportunity to see round it. Many thanks to all involved.

Her final answer was Carole whom she described as an accessible and hard-working drama advisor, but said her role encompassed more than that mentioning the work done by Carole and Alan on safeguarding. She also felt that Carole was known to lots of clubs and was generally easy to contact and very helpful."

I asked Gill about her time with SCDA.

"Firstly, I have enjoyed every minute I didn't believe in fate until it brought me to Plockton in 1984. Which consequently led to the SCDA and the many lasting friendships I have today.

The first play I performed in with Plockton ADS was in 1989 when I was in Sue Townend's "*Woomerang*" which got to the Scottish final in Arbroath that was a life defining moment and felt like an auspicious start.

I have subsequently performed or directed every year since. We are fortunate in Plockton to have a really supportive stage crew without whom we wouldn't exist.

Administration wise I was on General council for years as well as the playwriting committee. I am still treasurer for South West Ross and am now honorary vice president of the highland committee."

What three plays have you most enjoyed?

"A) In 1999 I acted in "*Night Under Canvas*" by Lisa Hunt, playing the part of a woman who, with her friend, becomes inadvertently locked in a modern art gallery, which is an environment totally out of their comfort zone. A very funny but poignant play, a mixture of humour and pathos which has always been my favourite genre. Being on home ground at Eden Court for Scottish Finals was a bonus."

B) In 2014 another memorable production, among many, was Directing an abridged version of "*Two*" by Jim Cartwright with an excellent cast of 8 reaching Scottish Finals at East Kilbride."

C) Co-Directing '*Subcontract*', Bob Davidson's very relevant and witty play about a novel way of ridding Scotland of Trident has been an absolute pleasure. The bonus of having a new first time, young, enthusiastic Director and Bob Davidson's input and attendance at the Highland Finals was more than welcome. I have always found contact with the playwright really interesting and rewarding."

What three things could SCDA improve on?

"I would like to see more input for those who are new to directing I really enjoyed taking part in the workshops at last years AGM and wish it had been longer.

I would like to see more emphasis on the technical side of shows there is a lot of collective knowledge out there perhaps we should have a list of people who are happy to discuss tech problems by email. We really don't need another committee!

Every year the SCDA holds playwriting competitions, and I have always been disappointed that more of the entries have not been performed by SCDA clubs. We wondered if perhaps so many plays being self published was perhaps causing them to be missed by groups."

Final question - What advice would you give to someone new to directing?

"As they say you are never too old to learn, so my first comment would be something I have only recently done, sound record your rehearsal. The feedback for both you and the cast are amazing you pick up on tone of voice, loudness levels, and pauses. Encourage your actors to get to know their character why are they saying that line?

Positive feedback, cover the basics, projection and movement remember it may well be their first time on stage. Your job is to encourage the actor to be the best they can and the joy of getting it right is immense.

The hardest part of directing is when it is out of your hands and on the stage!"

Summing up, Gill said, "SCDA has been a major part of my life for the last 37 years for which I will always be grateful. I am looking forward to our centenary celebrations this year."

Finding the right play

Finding the right play is often a challenge for any director, and selecting one suitable for a youth cast can be even more demanding. When I first read *'My Brother's Gift'* by Claudia Haas, I knew immediately that the play resonated with me. I also recognised that it would be a difficult undertaking: it tells the true story of a Jewish family who went into hiding in Amsterdam during the Second World War, only to be discovered, arrested, and deported to Auschwitz. This world was far removed from the experience and knowledge of our young people, and the emotional depth required would be difficult for them to portray authentically.

Early in the rehearsal process, it became clear that we needed to help the cast understand the historical context in order for them to develop their characters meaningfully. How could they convey the terror and uncertainty of being locked in a cattle truck bound for an unknown destination without first learning what those conditions were like, how the soldiers treated people, and the fear families felt about what awaited them? How could they portray the contrasting personalities of the siblings, or their different ways of coping with life in hiding, without understanding the constant need for silence to avoid discovery?

'My Brother's Gift' is a memory play, told through the reflections of Eva as she looks back on her family's life before the Nazi occupation of Amsterdam, their time in hiding, their arrest, and their deportation to Auschwitz. The story centres on her memories of her brother Heinz, a gifted musician who, while in hiding, discovered an extraordinary talent for art. Heinz and their father did not survive the war, but Eva and her mother did. After liberation, they returned to the house where Heinz and his father had been arrested and recovered the paintings Heinz had hidden in the attic.

Through online research, we were able to learn a great deal about Eva and Heinz, and a video interview on the publisher's website—featuring both the playwright and the real Eva—offered an invaluable insight.

The back page of the play included information about Eva and her mother's lives after the war. Eva's mother later married Otto Frank, making Eva the stepsister of Anne Frank. Heinz's paintings were eventually donated to the Holocaust Museum in Amsterdam. Eva herself moved to London to study photography, married Zvi Schloss, and became a British citizen. She did not speak publicly about her wartime experiences until after Otto Frank's death, but witnessing his dedication to

preserving Anne's memory inspired her to continue his work. She went on to share her family's story with schools and universities and wrote several books about her life.

It felt like a genuine privilege to share Eva and Heinz's story with audiences throughout the competition. We were deeply saddened to learn that Eva Schloss passed away on 3rd January 2026 at the age of 96. In our own small way, we hope we helped bring her family's story to people who may not have known it, and that we honoured their courage and resilience.

Lorna Campbell



The Scottish Final Experience

After getting through the Western division I was so pleased, I couldn't wait for the finals. Being able to represent the West of Scotland and Kirkintilloch Players at the SCDA Scottish Finals is something that not everyone can do, which made me feel very proud of myself and the rest of the *'My Brother's Gift'* team. Getting the chance to perform our one act play in front of so many people is a very special thing to me, especially because of how many people said that they loved our performance and said how impressed they were when they saw it.

On the morning of the Scottish final, I met with the rest of the *'My Brothers Gift'* team at the Turret Theatre ready for heading to St. Andrews. Everyone was pretty tired since we had to meet up early in the morning so there wasn't a lot of chat and thankfully we had packed most of our set the night before so we didn't have to pack a lot in the morning. When everyone arrived we split into three cars and started our journey to the Byre Theatre.

for a Scottish Final experience

I was very happy with the car I was in because we were all singing along to songs in the car which I love doing and we created a playlist so we could listen to what we wanted to. We had a conversation about what the finals would be like half way through the journey. We weren't exactly sure what to expect but it helped to have a bit of an idea of what might happen than being completely clueless. When we started to get close to our destination we realised we'd set the sat-nav to near St. Andrews instead of the Byre Theatre and we had a good laugh about it after changing it before we got lost.

Upon arriving at the Byre Theatre we couldn't find anyone else from the *'My Brothers Gift'* team but luckily a member of staff saw us and directed us to where they were for the start of our tech rehearsal. The tech rehearsal was very calm but more stressful than the Western tech because working out our staging on such a big stage was quite hard because of the small stage we'd been performing on. But by the end of our tech we felt ready for the finals, meaning we could relax for a couple of hours. We headed to somewhere just outside of St. Andrews to enjoy a delicious lunch. While we were eating we heard about the team that was delayed for hours on a boat, we all felt terrible for them since they would have to perform after such a tiring, long trip. Once everyone had finished eating we headed to our accommodation so we could unpack our things for our overnight stay in St. Andrews.

When we were in the accommodation I had a good time relaxing and talking to everyone in the team about everything that would happen during the finals so I knew what to expect.

During our time at the accommodation we had some fun chasing after each other and we had a nice minute of down time before the competition. While we were there we heard news that the team that were stuck on a boat were having a really hard time getting to St. Andrews so we would be going on first instead. We all hoped they would make it in time to perform in the competition so they wouldn't miss out.

When we got to the Byre ready for the final I was feeling a bit nervous but I couldn't wait to perform. We had a motivational speech about how it was amazing that we'd made it to the final and how if we gave the performance our all, we should be proud of ourselves no matter the outcome, which got everyone feeling

ready to take to the stage. When we were standing back stage I was nervous about going on but after coming off stage from the first scene my nerves had calmed and I enjoyed performing the rest of the show. Once the play was over and we were back in our changing room I was over the moon with our performance and we hurriedly packed up our things and got changed in time to watch the other two outstanding performances in the theatre.

It was great to watch the other plays and so much fun especially seeing all the hard work that had been put into each show. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing the other plays, though I was nervous about who would win the competition because I thought our performance went well but the other plays were incredible too. When the winner was being announced I was so tense but when I



heard them say we'd won I practically jumped out my seat with joy. I was ecstatic and couldn't stop smiling I was so proud of all of us. There was a lot of hugging and some tears and everyone's emotions were running high. After we took some pictures together with the trophy and had had our private adjudication we headed to the second floor of the Byre where the other two teams were already. We all had a great time talking to the other teams about their experience of the finals and there was a wonderful atmosphere as we talked and ate celebratory pizza for everyone's amazing performance.

In conclusion throughout my time in the competition I found it to be an amazing new experience and I hope everyone else in the competition felt the same. Being able to share this fun event with friends truly made it just wonderful and I would love to participate in such an enjoyable event again.

Eloise O'Donnell

AGM Workshops

Following a really positive response to workshops at the 2024 AGM we decided to continue with them in 2025.

Pete and Andy, our previous Acting and Directing tutors were unable to join us again due to work commitments - good for them but not for us. However, this also gave us the chance to work with new people. Enter stage left, Eve Nicol for directing and Oat Jenner for acting. Neal Clark was able to work some magic with his own busy schedule to offer technical skills again for us. In addition, I offered two workshops - more of that later on.

In preparing a brief for each of the tutors, the first stop was the evaluation from the previous year to try to incorporate the common themes that emerged. For directing this led us to 2 topics - how to work with text and how to work with actors. For acting we settled on character work and some voice and movement skills. Everyone agreed that if we were to offer lighting again we really needed to be in a more suitable venue so that was set aside this time. However Neal and I had been talking about the increased use of projection in performance for some time and he was keen to offer that in addition to the next level of sound design.

Other things that we took on board from the previous year were that we adjusted the timings slightly to make it easier for people to get there for the Friday evening

and to make the most of the time available on Saturday afternoon. We also kept the fee the same.

As requested I ran an introduction to directing but the response was very low. It was lovely to be able to spend some dedicated time with one new director, but it would also be interesting to know why the people were unable to come along and what would need to change to make this work better?

Finally, I offered a free workshop in the library on Sunday morning giving people, including myself, a first look at this amazing space and also a chance to meet the brilliant volunteers who run it. The challenge for me was to put something together for a group without knowing who was going to be there and what they were interested in. I chose to do an introduction to the work of Mike Leigh that was accessible to everyone. My only regret is that we didn't have the whole day - it was so much fun and introduced a completely new way of writing and devising characters to the group.

What next? Well, that really depends on you. Some of the suggestions we have had range from stage combat to special lighting effects, from set design and a 3D printer to improvisation for actors. We have also had a suggestion that the actors and directors work together on a script. All great suggestions but if there is nothing on this list that appeals to you please drop me a line on nda@drama.scot to have your say.



I am currently reviewing the whole workshop programme and would love you to hear what you want out of it.

One thing we are sure of is that we want these workshops to continue. Not only were people enthusiastic about the workshops, they also continued to enjoy social time with people from other clubs - it reminds us all that we are part of a larger community of enthusiasts across Scotland.

If you are still unsure whether these workshops are for you, here is some participant feedback to hopefully encourage you to come along next time

"As a new member I felt very welcomed and amongst peers."

"I felt very enthused and more confident afterwards."

"The workshop on Sunday was excellent and very thought provoking as a writing exercise - could happily have spent hours more on that!"

"Our tutor was animated and her enthusiasm was infectious."

Hope to see you at a future event.

Carole Williams

SCDA National Drama Advisor



Hands-on learning at SCDA Technical Workshop

Following the success of the workshops at the 2024 AGM, the National Executive offered the sessions again for 2025, with a few small refinements. Opportunities like these continue to be a real benefit of SCDA membership, whether individually or through a club.

I took part in both technical workshops: Projection on Friday evening and Sound on Saturday. Using a couple of basic office-style projectors connected to MacBooks, we split into two groups and, under Neal's expert guidance, quickly began exploring what's possible with projection in a theatre setting.

Participants came with a wide range of experience — some, like me, had experimented with projection before, while others were complete newcomers. Our main tool was QLab, "a cue-based multimedia playback software designed for macOS, used widely in theatre and live entertainment for sound, video, lighting, and show-control cues."

Saturday's session focused on sound. We were challenged to interpret the opening lines of a piece of prose and create our own soundscapes. It was a hands-on, creative exercise that encouraged experimentation and collaboration.

Both workshops were excellent. My only complaint was that the time flew by — I could easily have continued for several more hours. The practical, try-it-yourself approach suited me perfectly, and Neal did a fantastic job of keeping us moving while still allowing space to explore.

Although many people are familiar with QLab, I had only ever known it as a sound tool and had never actually used it. I left the weekend so inspired that I asked Santa for a MacBook... and now I have a new toy to learn with.

If technical workshops are included in the 2026 centenary AGM weekend, I would highly recommend signing up.

Chris Hewett



A year to celebrate

In 2026, the Scottish Community Drama Association reaches a remarkable milestone: 100 years of championing community theatre across Scotland.

A full century of local stages, volunteer passion, late-night get-ins, nervous first nights, big laughs, unexpected tears, and the kind of camaraderie you only find when a group of people decide to make something together, simply because they love it.



The SCDA story is, at its heart, a story of communities. From village halls to civic theatres, from youth groups taking their first steps under the lights to seasoned performers still learning something new every show, our members have kept theatre thriving in every corner of the country. Over the decades, the Association has supported clubs through festivals, training, adjudication, script resources, and the sharing of knowledge, always with the same aim: to help community drama be the very best it can be.

A centenary is a chance to look back with pride, but it's also an opportunity to look forward with confidence.



The strength of community theatre has never just been in the final performance, it's in the people who make it happen: the directors and stage managers, the costume makers and set builders, the lighting and sound teams, the prompt corner, the front-of-house volunteers, the committee members, and everyone who turns up, time after time, to keep their club alive and welcoming. That spirit, generous, creative, determined, is what we'll be celebrating throughout our centenary year.

A Year of Celebration

Across 2026, we'll be marking 100 years of SCDA in ways that reflect what we do best: bringing people together. Our festivals and events will carry a special centenary flavour, and we'll be sharing moments from our history alongside the brilliant work being created right now by member clubs.

The year will culminate with a Centenary Weekend to recognise the people and clubs who have shaped SCDA's journey and to set our sights on the next hundred years of Scottish community drama.



Stay in the Loop

We'll be publishing centenary updates through our usual channels. Please keep an eye on **drama.scot** and SCDA communications for the latest announcements.

2026 is our chance to celebrate not just an organisation, but a movement: community theatre in Scotland, made by volunteers, powered by creativity, and rooted in friendship. Whether you've been involved for decades or you're brand new to your club, the centenary year belongs to you.

Here's to 100 years of SCDA, and to the stories still to come.

with a Centenary Gala Weekend

In November 2026, we gather not simply for a meeting and dinner, but for a defining moment in the life of the Scottish Community Drama Association.

The SCDA turns 100 — and our Centenary Gala Weekend promises to be a landmark celebration of 100 years of community drama in Scotland.

Set within the magnificent surroundings of the Atholl Palace Hotel in Pitlochry, this special weekend (20–21 November 2026) will bring members together from across the country to honour our shared past and look boldly toward our future.

Friday: Returning to Our Roots

The weekend begins on Friday evening in the Bow Lounge with a dinner and a very special theatrical reflection.

We are exploring the possibility of staging “*Campbell of Kilmhor*” — the first Festival-winning play in SCDA history. To see that play again, a century after it first marked the beginning of our competitive festival journey, would be a powerful tribute to the vision and ambition of those who founded our Association.

This opening evening will be about connection — members gathering, stories being shared, and theatre taking centre stage where it belongs. It will remind us where we began.

Saturday: Our Present, Our Gala

Saturday will begin with the National AGM — a fitting reminder that even as we celebrate 100 years, the work of the Association continues. SCDA remains active, evolving and forward-looking.

In the afternoon, we hope to showcase extracts from Festival-winning plays across the decades. A celebration of the writing, directing and performance that has shaped Scottish community theatre through generations.

Then, on Saturday evening, the weekend reaches its centrepiece: the Centenary Gala Dinner.

This will be our flagship celebration. An opportunity to come together in style and honour a century of commitment, creativity and community. We are working towards welcoming guest speakers who can reflect on the impact of SCDA — not only within amateur theatre, but across Scottish cultural life.

The evening will recognise the volunteers who built stages in village halls, the committees who kept festivals alive, the actors who found confidence in the spotlight, and the technicians who lit, soundtracked and supported every production.

It will be a celebration of 100 Years of Community Drama in Scotland.

Generations have stepped onto SCDA stages for the very first time — discovering confidence, connection and creativity. Many have gone on to professional careers. Many more have remained at the heart of their local clubs, sustaining the grassroots theatre movement that defines us.

That legacy deserves more than a passing mention. It deserves a celebration worthy of its impact.

The Gala Weekend will be open to all members. Final details regarding ticket pricing and booking arrangements will be announced in due course.

For now, save the date 20–21 November 2026.

Speak about it at rehearsals. Mention it at committee meetings. Share it across Divisions. Build the anticipation within your clubs.



The magnificent Atholl Palace Hotel

SCDA's centenary merchandise



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£22.50 + £3.95 carriage

JH050 Full-zip Hoodie

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Digital Lavender. Sizes : S to 3XL+

£25.00 + £3.95 carriage

BB10 Baseball Caps

Multiple colours. £10.00 + carriage

BR001 Shopper

Multiple colours. £6.00 + carriage



Birth of Magic Mouse

2025 brought great things for many of us. For me, at the tender age of twenty-five, I finally took the plunge and launched my pantomime scripts available for hire.

My earliest memory of panto was as a seven-year old, watching *Snow White and the Seven*, written by the late, great Lesley Syme, who (as many of you will know) was absolutely central to Killin Drama Club for many years. I was utterly captivated – I still remember some of the lines and songs. One of the many interesting side-effects of growing up with panto is that the subversions of the classic fairytales feel as normal as the originals themselves (for example, having Flash Gordon save Snow White, or having the three witches from *Macbeth* egging on Abanazer!)

Aged nine (finally old enough to be in my first KDC panto – yes!) I started telling people I was going to write my own pantomime script. Over the nine years that followed, I had the utter joy of competing in the One-Act Play Festival several times, playing piano in the Killin Comedy Festival, and learning just about every annual panto script off by heart. When the annual bout of laryngitis hit KDC every January, I regularly stood in for various other principals, often foregoing a copy of the script. The odd thing was, it was never a conscious effort to learn everybody's words, I think it just came from fascination with the whole experience.

I was accepted to study English Literature at the University of Glasgow in 2018. Perhaps it was pining for panto that led me to write my first script in the winter of that year (when I really should have been working on

my final essays.) While many of my peers spent their free time scrolling or socialising, I was drafting my first few full-length titles, regularly sending excerpts to friends for approval.

As I progressed through to Honours level, there was a firm presence of panto through the work I chose to produce. I'm sure it must have come as a surprise to one Ben Crocker when he received an email from a student up in Scotland asking his location so she could correctly reference him in an academic work about audience participation!

But the culmination of my academic effort was my dissertation comparing portrayals of villainy, morality, age and disability in *Treasure Island*, *Peter Pan*, *A Christmas Carol* and *The Secret Garden*. Not only was it incredibly well-received, it felt important. Disability is under-represented in theatre and in literature in general, and when it does appear, potent metaphors are liberally applied, whether intentional or not. The irony is, I wouldn't have classed myself as part of the disabled community when writing the thing, but now I very much would. But back to panto scripts! All the while as I was doing my undergraduate and my PGDE in Primary Education, I kept writing, studying and watching panto.



It took years of revisions to build up the courage (and the skill) to send out some of my more recent scripts to some old friends, many from KDC, others from the theatre industry in general.

Fast-forward to today, seven years since I started my first script, and I'm proud to say I recently launched Magic Mouse Pantomimes. Mice are another special interest of mine, and it felt fitting to name my brand-new business after an unassuming creature which often observes from the shadows, working hard out of sight.

To date I've made three scripts available for hire (*Aladdin*, *The Pied Piper* and *Robinson Crusoe & the Pirates*) with a fourth (*The Little Mermaid*) currently going out to beta readers, and plenty more in the works. There are traditional routines, gags and storylines in each of my scripts, as well as unusual elements like a female comic in *The Pied Piper*, a loveable skin role called 'The Peking Duck' in *Aladdin*, and in *Robinson Crusoe*, I've replaced the typical cannibals with a commune of vegans! As for future scripts, you may see

some characters who've walked straight out of a Shakespeare play and into a fairytale, or a witch who lures children not just with sweets, but with Robux! (As a primary school teacher, all I can say is 'ask the kids!')

I'm aware I don't fit the standard profile for a pantomime script writer. I mean, my year of birth starts with a '2!' But I've made myself a scholar of panto both new and old, and have endless enthusiasm for the artform. I've watched plenty of footage of the old greats, while having an awareness of how to make pantos fresh, fun and seamlessly inclusive for modern audiences.

As for Magic Mouse Pantomimes, this is just the very beginning of the 'tail', and I can't wait for you to see where we go from here!

To find out more, visit my website at www.magicmousepantomimes.co.uk, email magicmousepantomimes@gmail.com or find me on Facebook and Instagram.

Hazel Lafferty

That's panto over for another year

'Oh yes it is, Oh no it isn't'. And, as the fairy dust settles it might be a good time to take stock.

Last year there were some quite big changes to the PVG Scheme and as a result Carole created some new materials for the website, sent out various updates via Scene, e-news and social media and also ran an online forum with Volunteer Scotland. It would be useful to find out what helped you the most to prepare for pantos involving young people.

- Did you remember to make sure that everyone in a regulated role was a member of the PVG Scheme?
- Did you remember to remove your club from the records of anyone no longer in a regulated role?
- Did you remember to attach your club to the scheme record of anyone in a regulated role with another organisation (you cannot rely on someone having a record with a school for instance)?

These are probably 3 of the main questions to ask yourselves.

We are here to help you meet all of your legal obligations so that you can focus on having fun and entertaining your community. We would love it if you could let us know about any issues that arose so that we improve the support we offer. Would it, for instance, be useful to organise another online forum with Volunteer Scotland for you to ask them any questions now that you have tried to navigate the system? Some of you may have been including young people in your activity for the first time since the changes as you don't run a regular youth group and it may have been a little confusing?. Please contact Carole on nda@drama.scot with your feedback, questions and requests.

Let's avoid the custard pie or the banna skin and put it all 'behind you' - ok we really will stop the panto gags now.

Carole Williams



Festival Diary 2026

Notes: (*) = original play,
(Y) = youth team
(NC) = Non Competitive

Eastern Division

Divisional Final

Leslie Town Hall

2-4 April, 7pm

Adjudicator: Sue Doherty

Divisional Youth Final

McLaren Hall, Killin

21 March, 5pm

Adjudicator: Morna Barron

EDINBURGH DISTRICT Church Hill Theatre,
Morningside Rd., Edin.
19-21 Feb., 7pm

Adjudicator: Kate Stephenson

Edinburgh People's Theatre: *Bull*, by Mike Bartlett

Broadsword Theatre: *I Dream before I take the stand*, by Arlene Hutton

Leitheatre: *The Psychic* (*), by Bob Allan

QMU Drama Society (A): *Got to Ghost* (*), by Jo McCartney

Edinburgh Grads Theatre Group: *Medea* by Euripides (translated by Ian Johnston)

St Serfs Players: *All by Myself*, by Robert Scott

QMU Drama Society (B): *There's something here* (*), by George Scott

St Kentigern's DS: *Little Box of Oblivion*, by Stephen Bean

St Kentigern's DS (Y): *Thank You For Protesting*, by Paul Adam Levy (*As the only youth team, this will go straight through to the Divisional Youth Final*)

FIFE DISTRICT

Leslie Town Hall

6 & 7 March

2.30pm & 7.30pm

Adjudicator: Stuart Aitken

Aberdour Players: *doyouwishtocontinue*, by Christine Entwisle

Auld Kirk Players: *In by the Half*, by Jimmy Chinn

Auld Kirk Players: *The Box* (*) by Eliz Berg

Beath High School West (Y): *Antigone*, by Sophocles, adapted by Kerry Frampton

Beath High School West (Y): *Ms Campbell's Class fifth period*, by Leyla Josephine

Dalgety Players (Y): *Too Many Detectives at the Murder Mansion*, by Ian McWethy.

Leslie ADC: *Commencing*, by Jane Shepherd

Leslie ADC: *I bring you Flowers*, by William Lang

Leslie ADC: *The Bear*, by Anton Chekhov, adapted by Bernard Lawrence

STIRLING DISTRICT Thornhill Community Hall
7 March, 7.00pm

Adjudicator: Keith Robinson

Killin Drama Club: (Y) *The Press Gang?*, by Ellen Dryden

Riverside DC: *Mary Mary*, by Bruce Adam

Entries	69	(86 in 2025)
Eastern	20	(25)
Highland	6	(9)
Northern	18	(22)
Western	25	(30)

Original plays **9** (9 in 2025)

Youth teams **16** (23 in 2025)

Highland Division

Divisional Final

Wick Theatre

21 March.

Adjudicator: Ben Humphrey

CAITHNESS DISTRICT

Unfortunately there will be no Caithness festival this year.

MORAY FIRTH DISTRICT

Unfortunately there will be no Moray Firth festival this year but:

Bucaneer Theatre: *Breaking and Entering*, by Mark Davenport will appear at the divisional final

SOUTH WEST ROSS DISTRICT

Plockton High School

27 & 28 Feb., 7pm

Adjudicator: Kate Stephenson

Lochcarron AD (B): *Worst Day of my Life*, by Alan Richardson

Plockton ADS, *Mission Impossible*, by David Muncaster

Phoenix Theatre: *Remember Me*, by Ian Hornby

Lochcarron AD (A): *The Allotment*, by Gillian Plowman

PT Top Dereks (Y): *'Sweep Under the Rug'* by Lindsay Price

ABERDEEN DISTRICT

Culter Village Hall

28 Feb., 7pm

Adjudicator: Sue Doherty

Bon Accord Players: *Metamorphoses*, by Sami Ibrahim, Laura Lomas & Sabrina Mahfouz

Banchory Drama Club: *Dialogue*, by Stewart Boston

Culter Theatre Club: *Right on Cue*, By Barry Lambert

ORKNEY DISTRICT

Orkney Theatre, Kirkwall

25 - 27 Feb., 7.30pm

Adjudicator: Ben Humphrey

St Andrews Drama Club (Dingieshowe): *Dead True*, by Geoff Rose-Michael

Stromness Drama Club: *Bondagers (Act1)*, by Sue Glover

Palace Players : *The Ghost Crib*, by Bev Clark

Birsay Drama Group (Palace): *The Case of the Disappearing Dame*, by Kate Fennel

St Andrews Drama Club (Rerwick): *Gallows Ha*, by Vera Butler

Birsay Drama Group Youth (Y): *Wannabes*, by Emilia O'Donoghue

Stromness Academy Players (Y): *How to get away with a Murder Mystery*, by Don Zolidis

PERTHSHIRE DISTRICT

Blairgowrie Town Hall,

26-28 Feb., 7pm

Adjudicator: Keith Robinson

Curtains Up: (Y) *King Henry VIII*, by Geoff Bamber

Aberfeldy Drama Club: *Listen to the Walls*, by Anna Price & Sandra Batty

Perth Drama Club: *Fish Fingers*, by Susan Corbett

Aberfeldy Drama Club (Y): *Received 45 (*)*, by Alan Brown

Wee Perthshire Drama Company: *A Thousand Invisible Choices (*)*, by Keith Mackenzie

Blairgowrie Players: *Murder in Little Grimley*, by David Tristram

Blairgowrie Players: *Answer*, by Adam Colcough

Aberfeldy Drama Club: *McLean (*)*, by Bob Davidson

Northern Division

Divisional Final

Orkney Theatre, Kirkwall

2-4 April, 7pm

Adjudicator: Imelda McDonagh

Divisional Youth Final

Blairgowrie Town Hall

14 March, 6pm

Adjudicator: Stuart Aitken

Western Division

Open Divisional Finals

East Kilbride Arts Centre
26–28 April, 7pm,
Adjudicator: Russell Boyce
Tickets : £14 season £39.00

Youth Divisional Final

East Kilbride Arts Centre
29 March
Adjudicator: Jennifer Scott-Reid
Tickets : £10, £5 for participants.

ARGYLL KINTYRE Victoria Hall,
Campbeltown
5 & 6 March, 7pm
Adjudicator: Bruce Adam

Campbeltown Grammar School (**Y**): *15 Minutes of You tube Fame*, by Ian McWethy

Accent Players: *The new Patio*, by Barry Lambert

Fyne Acting Company: *Emoji (*)*, by V L Heathcote

Dalintober DC (**Y**): *The Spiriting of Burd Ellen* by Ron Nicol

Taynuilt & District: *The Canary Cage*, by Diana Raffle

ARRAN DISTRICT Arran High School,
26-28 Feb., 7.30pm
Adjudicator: Kevin Boland

Whiting Bay (1): *Kill Joy*, by Mile Rouse

Whiting Bay (2): *The Melting Sand*, by Jim Pinnock

Whiting Bay (3): *Remember When (*)*, by Andy McNamara

Shiskine Drama Club: *That Old Black Magic*, by Andrea MacPhail

Brodick Drama Club: *You See It All on the Radio*, by Jilly McNeil

Lamlash Drama Club: *Dirty Business*, by Derek Webb

Brodick Drama Group (**Y**): *Model Behaviour*, by Jon Brittain

AYRSHIRE DISTRICT Barrfields Theatre
7 March, 7pm
Adjudicator: Keith Phillips

Largs Players: *Ida Tamson*, by Denise Mina

Dunlop Players: *The Basement Flat*, by Rona Munro

Dunlop Players (**Y**) *Shop!*, by Geoff Bamber

GLASGOW DISTRICT

The Fort, Bishopbriggs
6 & 7 March, 7pm
Adjudicator: Jim Gibson

Kirkintilloch Players: *Epic Love and Pop Songs*, by Phoebe Éclair Powell

Antonine Theatre Group: *Bull*, by Mike Bartlett

Kirkintilloch Players Youth (**Y**): *Oz* by Don Zolidis

New Victory Players: *The Last Nickel*, by Jane Shepherd

INVERCLYDE DISTRICT

Unfortunately there will be no district festival this year.

STEWARTRY DISTRICT

The Fullerton,
Castle Douglas
27 & 28 Feb, 7pm
Adjudicator: Dave Bennett

Stranraer DC: *Jilted Lovers Helpline*, by Johnny Grimm

Stranraer DC :(Y) *The Wizard of Oz in 30 mins*, by

88 Theatre: *A Beginners Guide to Madness*, by Barry McKinley

Stranraer DC :(Y) *Big Bad*, by Alex Strum

Newton Stewart Players: *Charlie to the checkout Please*, by

Catstrand Youth Players (**Y**): *Dead Dad Dog* by John McKay

SCOTTISH FINAL

Pitlochry Festival Theatre
23 to 25 April, 7pm
Adjudicator: Walker Ewart

SCOTTISH YOUTH FINAL

Joan Knight Studio, Perth
13 June, 5pm
Adjudicator: Alasdair Hawthorn

BRITISH FINAL

Theatr Clwyd, Mold, North Wales
3 & 4 July, 7pm
Adjudicator: Jennifer Scott-Reid

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One Act Comedies

A Bird in the Bush Murder at the Cathedral
Scoundrels and Stratagems Thicker than Water
Three's a Crowd Too Many Brides for Dracula
Two Bodies and a Bottle of Sauce
Nearly All at Sea Nearly Up a Gum Tree
Nearly Pulls it Off Nearly Up the Pole
Pig Tale Wolf Tale

All Female One Act Comedies

Beggar Your Neighbour
Chairs Flushed
Flushed Again

One Act Dramas

Going Home
Waiting for the Whale
Accident of Circumstance

One Act Youth Dramas

Friends and Neighbours
Best of Enemies The Edge

All Female One Act Drama

Sisters and Their Secrets

One Act Fantasies

Molly Whuppie and the Double-Faced Ogre
The Spiriting of Burd Ellen

One Act Sherlock Holmes Adaptions

The Man who Collected Women The Mazarin Stone

Full Length Drama

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Monologue results

The Monologue Competition returned in 2025 with 20 entries in the performance category and 17 in the original script and we still had two very worthy monologues emerge as winners. Once again we are grateful to Ron Nicol for judging the original script and Dave Bennet for the performance.

The Sandy Glass Trophy (for performance) was won by Helen McIntyre from Auld Kirk Players with *'Innocent until proven guilty'*, by David Potter

Runner-up was Robin Smith from Aberdour Players with *'Fool for Love'*, by Sam Shepherd. Third was Mike Tibbetts with *'A Fella'*, written by himself.

The Glenboig Trophy (for original script) was won by Lynne Beaton from East Kilbride Rep Theatre Club with *'Thanks for the Mammaries'*.



Lynne Beaton with the Glenboig Trophy

Runner-up was Isabel Coventry from Auld Kirk Players with *'Pre-pill Motherhood'*. Third place equal, Off Script Drama with *'Reflections of Stephanie'* and Mike Tibbetts with *'A Fella'*.

Congratulations to the winners and all that entered. It would be great to think we could have more entries in 2026. The challenges the monologue competition presents are so different from the ones that we are used to performing on stage. It gives everyone a chance to really test themselves as a performer and seen by a much larger audience. If you have always wanted to try writing something, then the monologue competition is also a great way to start this. We all have stories that we would like to tell and the competition can let that happen. It just takes one idea! So what are you waiting for there are bound to be a few rainy days around so why not use them to be creative!



Helen McIntyre with the Sandy Glass Trophy

SCDA's Archives

We were very pleased late last year to take up an offer from the Ballast Trust, an advisory organisation who carry-out professional archive audits on public bodies such as ourselves. As a charity, we were entitled to a free one-day inspection. It was amazing how much work Rachael, our auditor, was able to do in that time. Her detailed report makes very interesting reading. In short, SCDA has a wealth of historical material, well looked after, but there's a lot more we can do to make sure information isn't lost, and yet more to ensure it continues to grow and remain 'safe' in the largely paperless world in which we now live.

We are also aware that clubs, Districts and Divisions hold their own records, all forming an essential part of SCDA's rich history. We'll be following up during the year to make sure our records are as complete as possible in terms of knowing what exists, and where it is kept. Meanwhile, if you are the custodian of historical material we may not know about, please contact HQ. Even more importantly, please don't discard

100 plays for 100 years



One of our Centenary projects is to spotlight 100 plays throughout the year, as nominated by SCDA Club or individual members. It's taking a while to get going but we're persevering! We would love to hear from you if you have a favourite play, and we'll promote the script via the library. Choose any play that holds fond memories for you – any length, genre or era.

If it's not in the library, let us know and we'll add it to the wish list!

How to take part:

- Write down the details of your favourite play – title and author – along with a brief synopsis (around 40 words) and why (another 40 words). .
- Add a photo (optional) from a performance, with credit if known
- (The library team will sort out a photo of the script)

Send details to **100plays@drama.scot**

Submissions will be shared on Facebook and will be added to a bespoke page on the website, which we hope to grow during 2026.

We look forward to hearing from you!

National Script Library - Update

We've been pleased to welcome a few new visitors so far this year, as well as some regular faces and email borrowers. The '100 Plays' project (see above) is taking some time to get up and running, but do send us your favourite plays.

We're particularly pleased to announce that we'll shortly taking delivery of a large selection of brand-new scripts from Nick Hern Books, Methuen Drama (Bloomsbury) and Concord, all of whom have given us significant trade discount. This will be the library's first significant input of new material for several years, as we try and bring the collection a bit more up-to-date. We'll be listing the new titles in the Newsletter and in the next issue of Scene. If there's a script you think we should have on the shelves, drop us a line at **library@drama.scot** and we'll try and put it on our next shopping list.

Equally exciting to report is a large donation from Simon Smith, owner of Cressrelles Publishers. Simon has recently decided to retire, but has generously sent us LOTS of plays from his personal collection (we're still counting the books, but they weigh 38 kilos!). We'll be logging all the new material on the online database, which you can access from the Library page on the SCDA website. And if you're passing through Stirling during our opening hours, do pop in to say hello and have a browse!

Finally, as we move our HQ address to the Library premises (as announced elsewhere in *Scene*) we've been asked to change the official postcode for our office in Argyll Court, which has until recently been covered by two postcodes. The old one (FK9 4TT) will, however, still work for the foreseeable future. Hope to see some of you soon!

The SCDA Library Team

SCDA National Play Library, Argyll Court, Castle Business Park, Stirling FK9 4TY

General Enquiries: **library@drama.scot**

Loan Requests: **librarians@drama.scot** (or go to <https://drama.scot/library-script-ordering-form/>)

Opening hours: Tuesday and Wednesday: 10:30-14:30 Saturday 10:00-12.00

NEW VICTORY PLAYERS 80TH BIRTHDAY



For the New Victory Players, based in Glasgow, every year is usually a dramatic hive of activity, from taking part in the SCDA One Act Festival, staging two full length plays in May and November at the Arts Centre in East Kilbride, to numerous social events throughout the year ... but for 2025 one social event was very special to them ... the 'New Vic' to its members, celebrated its 80th year!

Now the 'New Vic' are normally a very merry band of players anyway and love to get up to high jinks, but to celebrate their anniversary, in June they held a special lunch at a very nice local restaurant.

Whilst a few club members couldn't make it and were sorely missed, those that did had a right good knees-up to celebrate this special occasion.

The bubbles flowed during lunch, a yummy birthday cake was dished out for dessert and a new fondness for Baby Guinness' was discovered by the club.

The lunch continued well into the night with much laughter, love and reminiscing.

Congratulations New Victory Players!



CLASS ADS

Playwright? small business? buying or selling? All kinds of small ads accepted. Have your ad read throughout SCDA land. Contact scene@drama.scot

Send your details to Scene Magazine's classified page. £15 - up to 30 words

CORDINER PRESS One-act plays and pantomimes by Isabella C. Rae – comedy, drama, fantasy!
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Phone 0141 641 1465

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

DAVID HUNTER PLAYS. *Clynelish*, A moving pub set drama about middle-age friendship and loss. Cast 2M 1F
Did You Know? A heartfelt, honest story of parenting a child with Down Syndrome. Cast 1 F 3 any gender.
For review copies, please contact davidhdmhunter@hotmail.co.uk

Fintry ADS's *Cinderella*
Photo Tony Flisch



FADS' *Cinderella*
Photo Tony Flisch



**Bucaneer's
*Alice in Wonderland***
Photo Tracey Woods



Killin's *Jack and the Beanstalk*
Photo Ron Allner



PANTO TIME

Palace Players' *Rumplestiltskin*
Photo Bryan Leslie



Stromness' *Wizard of Oz*
Photo Mike Partridge



Kirkintilloch's *Aladdin*
Photo Gordon



Phoenix Theatre's *Robin Hood*
Photo Esther Abrial

