



cymdeithas ddrama cymru
drama association of wales

Drama Association of Wales
NEWSLETTER - October 2011

Welcome to your new look DAW Newsletter. We've dropped the quarterly magazine and will, from here on in, be issuing a more frequent newsletter to keep you updated with what's happening in the amateur theatre world.

LAUNCH OF THE DRAMA ASSOCIATION OF WALES' ONE ACT PLAYWRITING COMPETITION 2012
In partnership with Tŷ Newydd – The National Writers' Centre for Wales



Canolfan
Ysgrifennu
Tŷ Newydd
Writers' Centre

On Monday 17th October, we shall be launching DAW's One Act Playwriting Competition for 2012. We shall be asking for plays in three categories; an Open section; Plays suitable for performance by a cast of 16 - 25 year olds, and the Best Play in the Welsh language.

Winners of each category will receive awards of £250 and WILL BE PUBLISHED by DAW Publications.

A script-in-hand performance of one selected play will also be produced at the Wales One Act Final at the Congress Theatre, Cwmbran on Saturday 9th June 2012

Previous prize-winners have been published and performed as a result of promotion through our New Writing Schemes. An Adjudicating Panel appointed by DAW will read and consider the plays entered into the Competition.

This year, we are again delighted to announce that thanks to Sally Baker at Tŷ Newydd, the National Writers' Centre for Wales, a bursary is to be awarded for a week's residential course at Tŷ Newydd, Llanystumdwy, Criccieth to the winning author of a separate category, 'Best Play by a Wales based Playwright'.

Only one-act plays with a running time of 20 to 50 minutes written for theatre in English or Welsh will be accepted. Scripts with a minimum cast of two actors will be considered. No monologues will be accepted. You may enter as many plays as you wish for any category subject to a £17.50 application fee for each hard copy of a script received through the post; £15.00

per script emailed to: teresa@dramawales.org.uk

If you would like to make use of DAW's Script Reading Service whilst your play is with us, please remit £37.50 as the combined price of both competition entry - £17.50 and Script Reading Service - £20.00; £35.00 for a combined online entry - £15.00 & £20.00.

The rules and conditions are the same as previous years, apart from, of course, the closing date which this year is 31st January 2012. The entry form will be available to download from the [Playwriting Competition page](#) on our website.

We look forward to receiving your work!

TELL US WHAT TRAINING YOU WANT

DAW is looking to develop a training programme for the amateur theatre sector and we would appreciate your co-operation. This will help us to provide the theatre training which is relevant to you and your group.

Please complete our [Training Needs Questionnaire](#) and email it back to me at gary@dramawales.org.uk.

Alternatively, if you'd like to feed into what workshops and courses that we offer in the future please call Gary on 029 2045 2200 and we'll happily post a questionnaire to you.

We're looking for feedback from everyone in the amateur theatre sector so please don't feel that we're not interested in your opinions if you live outside Wales. We want to hear from you!

Do let us know - we want to provide the training that **YOU** want, not what we think you want and we can't do that unless you tell us.

Please return completed questionnaires by email to gary@dramawales.org.uk or through the post to Gary Thomas, DAW, Unit 2, The Maltings, East Tyndall Street, Cardiff CF24 5EA

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further please feel free to contact Gary Thomas on 029 2045 2200 or by email at gary@dramawales.org.uk



DAW THEATRE SUMMER SCHOOL 2011

DAW offered a choice of two courses at this year's Theatre Summer School. We asked one attendee from each course to tell us about their experiences on the course...

What Do I Do Next? Tutored by Ken Caswell

In the Spring it seemed like a good idea to use some of my pension to fund a week's attendance at Summer School as a day-student on the DAW's annual event: I could still enjoy the comforts of home whilst spending time, learning about acting and theatre, at the feet of a very experienced West End director!

As the date grew nearer, however, the "doubts" made their entrance. I hadn't participated in any drama training for about thirty years. What if I was too old? What if the others had amazing skills already? The words "old dog" and "new tricks" were never far from my thoughts! I need not have worried. A very amiable group of course participants, who varied widely in age, skills and experience, hailing from all parts of the UK and further afield, were soon indulging in all things dramatic. Even the "new tricks" were enjoyable!



Photo by James Ellis

There is a danger that we can become very insular in our own societies. This course offered the opportunity to open our minds and to share new and alternative approaches to the interpretation of theatrical texts and to the skills of dramatic direction.

The content of the course introduced us to a variety of production styles which should benefit all the participants on their return home. We were absorbed in turn by the sweeping historical pageant of *Vivat Vivat Regina*, the melodramatic humour of *Sweeney Todd*, and the intimate, delicate tensions of *Separate Tables*. And all this in the space of a week!

It may be regarded in some quarters as a heresy to say this, but I am not convinced that it is possible to actually teach someone to be a good director, but the opportunity, given by this course, to watch, and to experience the direction of a true expert was invaluable,

if only to become aware of the intricate attention to detail which is necessary to undertake the director's role. This was a master class of the highest order and yet it never lost its personal touch in addressing the needs of each individual.

Having become accustomed over the last few years to the normally mundane pace of a retiree's existence, it was quite a shock to the system to experience the levels of concentration that were required during all our very busy sessions. I certainly slept well on my nightly return home!

The theme of our course was "What do I do next?", and my personal answer to that question is "Tackle my next production with the new vigour, energy and enthusiasm that I have gleaned from the fellow students and the tutors on the Summer School". Oh yes... and I am certain that my precious pension was well spent! - J.S.



Photo by James Ellis

Theatre Mezze tutored by Judy Clover (Alexander Technique), Rebecca Gould (RSC practitioner), George Richmond Scott (RSC practitioner), Emma Stevens Johnson (Accents) and Tom Jordan (Stage Combat)

I strangled someone last night and she barely felt it. There's no way I could have done it, of course, without having done the Summer School at DAW. Strangling people, running them through with a sword (admittedly a wooden one) and punching them in the face with an American accent whilst reciting Shakespeare was all part of the course and coming home I've been keen to demonstrate my skills to anyone who'll let me.



Photo by James Ellis

My one week in August was action packed to say the least. I still can't believe how much we fitted in:



Alexander Technique; two days with the RSC brushing up my Shakespeare and improving my voice; working on accents; and stage combat.

It was my first experience of the DAW Summer School and I decided on Theatre Mezze because of the range of skills on offer throughout the week. All the tutors were amazing!

The evenings weren't dull either. OK so I didn't win the quiz but I'm not bitter (well not much!). I got the chance to read a poem I'd specially written for the week; tried some fantastic Indian food; and even guessed that the person whose name was stuck to my forehead was Edvard Munch.

The staff, Gary and Sarah, were brilliant in answering all my (many) questions before the course started and even those I asked during the week. I have only one question left: What's on for next year?

Fabulous fun and fantastic value for money!

Debbie Waldon



Photo by James Ellis

LED THEATRE LIGHTING SHOOT OUT

The ALD and the ABTT assisted by Stage Electrics are holding a shoot out of LED theatre lanterns at the Royal Northern College of Music Opera Theatre, 124 Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9RD on 28 October 2011. The intention is to see what an average theatre might expect from LED lanterns. Manufacturers have been invited to provide examples of LED lanterns falling into the categories of – Profile Spots, Acting Area Wash Lights, Scenery/Cyclorama Wash Lights and Beam Lights – PAR equivalents etc. To limit the field moving lights will not be included.

There will be two sessions, at 10am and 2pm. Lanterns will be demonstrated alongside the Theatre's own stock of conventional lanterns all running on the house board, a Strand Lighting 530i. There will be opportunities to compare and contrast different lanterns and manufacturers' representatives will be available to answer questions and to discuss lanterns included and not included in the shoot out.

Light refreshments will be available all day and further catering facilities and a bar will be also be available.

Anyone interested in lighting is welcome to attend, the shoot-out is not limited to ALD and ABTT members but you must let us know in advance which sessions you wish to attend. Email philip@plethltg.demon.co.uk or write to Philip L. Edwards, 5 Highwood Close, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 6PH

A GRAND LADY OF THE AMATEUR THEATRE

Claire Jones (Gwent) 90 years young.



Photo by Teresa Hennessy

Having known Claire for numerous years we have together enjoyed all aspects of Theatre, both amateur and professional, although I should say at this point that Claire is not as big a fan of Musical Theatre as I am, Straight and comedy drama are more Claire's forte.

I first met Claire when going along to the then Cwmbran Theatre Club to audition for the part of Teddy in *Ghost Train*. It was from there on that we became firm friends, visiting many festivals, productions and meetings and at one time we both served on the Board of the Drama Association of Wales as Executive Members.

Thinking back I don't think we have ever had a cross word, many a difference of opinion I know, especially over the "winner" at festivals. All the festivals up and down the country were mostly filled with laughter, snippets of which we often reminisce about today.

Claire's recent "Big Birthday" celebrations have spanned over a few weeks, firstly with a joint party with her niece Sara's 40th, at a hotel in Cirencester, followed by a surprise afternoon party at the Congress Theatre Cwmbran, attended by as many of her Thespian friends that could make it, I can say that I believe that Claire was truly lost for words. Unusual I know... Sorry Claire.

On a final note, I didn't know until recently that Claire attended school at St Alma's in Penarth, She was in the ATS Signals Corps and attained the rank of Captain, I did know that she worked for Barclays Bank and served in several branches in Cardiff and Newport at a Senior level, and a final snippet that must be read and swallowed immediately... don't ask her about the spell she had at the highly secret goings on at Bletchley Park!

Richard Williams



THE CCTA AWARDS NIGHT

Sunday 18th September 2011, The Beaufort Park Hotel in Mold was the venue for the Clwyd Community Theatre Association's Final's Night for their 2010/2011 Festival of Full Length Plays. In his final engagement as an adjudicator, Garth Jones had the tough task of judging a small, but varied festival that served up everything from pantos to *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* to *High School Musical 2*!

Before announcing the overall winners in the two main categories he choose to reward the things that make amateur/community theatre in Clwyd great, with awards for Outstanding Work with Youth for TiC - Theatre in the Community, for Theatrical Adventure to Mold Players for their choice of play and Hawarden Players for Outstanding Endeavour in Community Theatre for always appreciating their audience and making the theatre-going experience memorable.

Acting awards were again at both ends of the spectrum, with Peter Burke of BADG winning Outstanding Supporting Performance for Nurse Norah in *Robin Hood and the Babes In the Wood*, whilst Peter Thorne of Mold Players was awarded Outstanding Individual Performance for his portrayal of Guildenstern in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*.

The final two awards are the Robert Somerset Cup for Outstanding Drama Production, which was awarded to Mikrokosmos Theatre Company for *Daisy Pulls It Off*, a production that was praised by the author Denise Deegan herself. Not a bad job at all from first time director Deborah Thomas.

The George Whitworth Cup for Outstanding Musical Production was presented to Dee & Alyn Gilbert and Sullivan Society for their production of Essgee's *HMS Pinafore*, which Garth correctly commented that William S Gilbert would have been mortified by, (considering himself a serious playwright) but was good fun all the same.

And maybe that is the most important thing to remember into the next festival year; amateur theatre should always be good fun.



Deborah Thomas accepting
the Robert Somerset Cup
Photos by Debbie Dickinson



Ruth Roberts accepting
the George Whitworth Cup

PHANTOM & CATS RELEASED FOR SCHOOLS & COLLEGES



The Really Useful Group has released *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Cats* for performances in the UK and Eire by academic schools and colleges for the first time.

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of *The Phantom of the Opera*, The Really Useful Group announced the immediate availability of the show to be performed in academic schools and colleges in the UK and Eire. (Both titles, joined by other Lloyd Webber musicals, are already in selected release in North America, exclusively through R&H Theatricals.)

To find out more, please visit www.reallyuseful.com. Let us know of any future productions!

THEATRICAL AND VINTAGE COSTUME COLLECTION

Reeman Dansie Auctioneers are proud to announce their forthcoming auction. 3pm, Saturday 15th October 2011. Viewing on the day of sale from 9am.

To include stage costumes from 16th to 20th century for plays, musical theatre, opera and pantomime, plus genuine vintage clothing.

The sale will be listed and illustrated on the website: www.reemandansie.com approximately a week before the auction.

Online bidding is offered via the-saleroom.com

Please call 01206 754754 for further details and to reserve a catalogue.

No 8 Wyncolls Rd, Severalls Business Park, Colchester, Essex CO4 9HU

Phone: 01206 754754 Fax: 01206 754754

Email: auctions@reemandansie.com



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NEWSLETTER - **October 2011**

expo amateur stage

In association with
amdram.co.uk

AMATEUR STAGE EXPO: New Dates Announced

Unfortunately, due to unavoidable circumstances, the Amateur Theatre Expo is to be rescheduled. The new dates for the Expo will be: **31 March and 1 April 2012** and the event will take place at the Business Design Centre, Islington, London.

The Amateur Stage Expo will be the first time in the UK that amateur theatre groups, traders, industry professionals and amateur theatre audiences are assembled at one event.

With workshops, discussion groups, live performances, West End shows and exhibits from companies serving the amateur theatre industry, the Amateur Stage Expo will be a **MUST SEE EVENT**.

DAW will be exhibiting at the event so we hope to see you there.

Announcements will be coming thick and fast over the next few weeks so as we receive updates we'll be keeping you posted via email, Facebook, Twitter and our newsletter.

For full details: www.amateurstageexpo.co.uk

DAW STAFF & OFFICERS

The DAW staff and Committee are known to many of you but there may be some whom you have never met or are probably many more whom we have never met. Well, you can now put names to faces. We've now posted photos of our [Staff](#) and [Committee](#) members on the website.



DAW Officers (L to R): Chair, Sarah Hanley; Vice-Chair, Neil Maidman and Treasurer; John Hughes
Photos by James Ellis

A HELPING HAND FOR COTTON GIRLS



Photo by James Ellis

DAW was happy to award a small grant to the Unknown Theatre Company to cover some of the costs sustained in participating in the 2010 British Final of One Act Plays. The above photo shows DAW Chair, Sarah Hanley presenting two cast members; Ellis Morgan and Kimberley Littlechild and director of Cotton Girls; Lon David with the cheque.

ONE ACT FESTIVAL 2012 NEWS



If you're entering the one act festival in Wales in 2012, don't forget that if you enter with a piece adapted from, based on or inspired by the work of Shakespeare you are eligible to be considered for inclusion in the RSC Open Stages Festival which takes place in Stratford Upon Avon in the Summer of 2012.

When entering your regional festival just let us know if you wish to be considered for this.

To register for this contact Gary Thomas on 029 2045 2200 or by email at gary@dramawales.org.uk
Festival dates in Wales are as follows:

Glamorgan:	15-17 March
Conwy:	22-24 March
Anglesey:	29-31 March
Montgomeryshire:	13-14 April
Clwyd:	19-21 April
Gwent:	26-28 April
Pembrokeshire:	4-5 May
Wales Final:	8-9 June
British Final:	6-7 July

You can see more details on the [festival page](#) on our website.