

NANDA Newsletter



NANDA NEWSLETTER
Http://www.nanda.org.uk

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January 2006

Gurd Award

The members of the Nanda Council are concerned that the Gurd Award falls into disuse.

This distinctive and prestigious award commemorates the contributions of Pat and Maurice Gurd who held office in the fifties and sixties. A sum of money from their estate was lodged with Nanda and is payable to the award winner.

The winner is not selected by an external adjudicator but by a number of council members on the basis of nominations from member groups. These nominees (who should not be aware of their nomination) should be of individuals who have made a significant contribution without thought of personal reward, i.e. In the true spirit of amateur theatre.

So, it is you, the members, who must identify those worthy of recognition, it is you who

must send a "citation" explaining why the nomination is being made and it is you who must therefore put forward one or more worthy people for the Nanda subcommittee to consider.

Inevitably if more than one nomination is received, some worthy people may not be acknowledged immediately although the subcommittee may hold over the names for consideration in subsequent years. You will almost certainly have people whose contributions should be recognised. If you wish to put their names forward please consult either Mike Stewart, or Joan Wildgust or indeed any of the council members who will explain the procedures.

We hope you will let us have your nominations no later than the end of May if we are to make the award at the dinner in June.

Not With a Bang! Written by Mike Harding

This was a comedy set in the 1980's when some people went on protest marches and the women of Greenham Common set up camp to warn us all of the dangers of nuclear weapons. Here the conflict is within three families—the men part of a local TA unit bonded by weekly meetings and annual camp while their women are more concerned with domestic duties and the issue that "peace not war" should prevail. This provided humorous situations with serious undertones and good earthy type humour, the play reached a "climax" when the women



withdrew their "bedroom" pleasures to their partners. This creates frustration for both sexes and it was quite funny seeing Paula lovingly stroking her ripe yellow banana! Eventually peace is restored and family life continued in sweet harmony. I really enjoyed the production and all the cast were excellent...it would be unfair to highlight any individual performance so well done to Gerry Parkin, Bill Todd, Lynda Simmons, Linda Ahern, Janet Howard, Judith Todd and Adrian Bacon plus baby Lucy who behaved

Snow at Christmas, OK it was a few days late (like the newsletter), but better late than never and didn't it make it all so festive and warm! So, with warm greetings for such a cold January, welcome to a New Year of thespian activities. What a great opportunity to fill those crisp and new diaries with some important dates for your social calendars. I'd like to thank all the people who contributed to our newsletter for 2005 and welcome any new penned pieces for 2006, this is your local news, so MAKE YOURSELF HEARD!
When I was in the hard world of corporate selling, training courses happened every year, new angles, new

ideas or just back to basics—which was easily forgotten. So it's fantastic to see that NANDA have now started training courses. No matter how experienced you think you are, learning new techniques or going back to basics can help to improve many aspects of amateur theatre and these courses don't exist anywhere else. We're keen to hear from any individuals that would be happy to run a course and share their valuable knowledge. If you would like to see a course in a particular area then don't hesitate to share your views and ideas with us. We're looking forward to growing and developing this year more than ever! **Happy 2006 Everyone! Ed x**

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Dates for the diary
January 25th 2006
NANDA AGM
March 23rd—25th 2006
One Act Festival
Robin Hood Theatre
Averham
April 29th 2006
2nd Round One Act
Festival
Robin Hood Theatre
May 4th—6th
Youth Festival
Dukeries Theatre

For postal contributions, please forward to:
Hayley Masom,
17 Towson Field, East Leake,
Leics, LE12 6RY (all photos returned).
newsletter@nanda.org.uk



NANDA News from the County

The Happiest days of your Life

For those with long memories the film version of this comedy was shown back in 1950 with Alistair Sim and Margaret Rutherford as the opposing heads of school.

As you will have surmised this is about school days in post war England and the plot is fairly simple. A mix up at the Ministry of Education causes the girls of St Swithins to be sent to the Hillary Hall school for boys with predictably disastrous consequences with the respective principals eventually uniting forces to conceal these facts to visiting parents etc.

This provides many comic situations and after a sluggish start the play begins to be lively and entertaining with good performances from most of the very large cast.



I liked Jack Gavin and Gwen Murray as rival heads supported by fellow teachers Samuel Williams and Trevor Pole. Steve Broadbent portrayed Rainbow as a rather laconic eccentric porter while Debbie Blake was a delightful Miss Gossage affectionately known as "sausage".

The youngest members Joe Cook and Rachel Murray were excellent as the very interactive pupils. Well directed by Barbara Barton with a simple and effective set by Samuel Williams and Steve Vinue. The Beeston Players have been performing theatre for thirty years and there was a genuine feel good factor after seeing this production...the audience went home with smiles on their

NANDA AGM
7:30pm
Wednesday
25th January 2006
At
West Bridgford Commu-
nity Hall, Church Drive,
West Bridgford
(opposite St Giles Church)

Don't forget all Newsletter profiles, letters and contributions should be sent to:
nanda@newsletter.org.uk

Play of the Year Update

This years annual dinner and awards ceremony will be held on Friday 16th June 2006 at Cotgrave Place Golf Club. Full details will of course be circulated later. Meanwhile do make a note in your diaries (personal and collective). As we go to press we have received 5 entries for the Play of the Year they are:

Robin Hood Theatre—Youth Group, Bonington Players, Keyworth Dramatic Society, Greasley Players Dramatic Society and Edwinstowe Theatre Group.

Youth Festival Update

The Youth Festival dates have been moved to 4th—6th of May 2006 due to the One Act Festival and Easter! As this event was so popular in 2005, the need for more seats and a growing audience means we have a venue change to the Dukeries. The Dukeries caters for 200 and has some great facilities. There is an interest from more groups this year so the event may run on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday. For further information on the event please contact Jean Lebeter on 01623 863614

Those Radio Days

A glimpse of life in the 1950's when in front of an open fire and crackling receiver our days and nights were spent glued to the radio. Our daily visitors included Archie Andrews, Arthur Askey, George Formby, Joyce Grenfell, Albert Modley, Wilfred Pickles, Ted Ray, Al Read, Rob Wilton and a host of others.

This illustrated talk recreates those great radio days and provides an illuminating insight into the social life and values that prevailed in England of the 1950's and 1960's. It will be given by Bob Wildgust who over a

lifetime has been involved with local music and drama both as a director, actor and freelance broadcaster.

It is felt that this talk will make a fine contribution to your programme of events and you may care to contact Bob or Joan Wildgust for bookings. (01159 291077) All donations and modest lecture fee will be donated to the "Raise the Roof" fund established to repair the roof of the Nottingham Arts Theatre in George Street, Nottingham.



Training School— Stage Direction Workshops

Twelve People attended Bob Wildgust's training school for Directors of plays. We were taken through the whole range of play selection, review of sources of information, help and guidance; the policies of auditions, cast selection, advance planning of set design, costume, lighting and rehearsal schedules; "blocking" creation of stage pictures, movement and positioning; a range of "trade secrets" and, in the final session, three groups each presented a short piece for critical analysis. All in all an enjoyable and instructive course which we may well repeat, given that we had at least four people who were unable to attend on the dates selected. We chose to use the Aspley Community Training Centre which, in addition to the smaller rooms were used for the first two sessions, had a "theatre" room which we used for the third session.

The staff at the centre were extremely helpful, efficient and courteous and we recommend that others in need of accommodation for meetings, rehearsals and performances might well explore the possibility of using it. The hire charges are very reasonable.

We are grateful to Bob Wildgust for his contribution to an enjoyable and instructive school. Strong bonds were established amongst the participants. **Roy Ainscough**

My main interest is in stage costume, where it is important to empathise with and understand the roles of actors and other members of the production team, and I signed up for the Play Direction course because I felt it would give me a wider appreciation of this particular—and crucial aspect of stage craft.

Bob Wildgust's tool kit provided a wealth of detailed information, from the application of basic management skills, communication,

leadership, negotiation, to specific techniques such as blocking, pace, delivery, use of props, and "dealing with high emotion on and off stage". On the third evening we all had the chance to put into practice some of our new-found knowledge and face up (without crying!) to the critics.

As a total novice in this area, it all helped me to understand much more clearly how a successful production is put together. But so much information to be absorbed in three evenings! A follow-up series of workshops to develop some of these concepts would be very welcome. **Madeline Lord (ELAPs)**

From a rookie actors point of view I found the Director's course very useful. It was crammed full of useful tips from the Essential Toolkit for Directors—dispelling some of the mystique and, in short, divulging many of the Directors "trade secrets".

The session on blocking the play was particularly enlightening since I was completely ignorant of such techniques. I especially enjoyed the floor exercises and the opportunity to put into practice what we'd learned in the final session. Each group enacted a short scripted piece allowing one fledgling director the chance to consolidate all the expertise and knowledge which had been imparted to us. The course was very well thought out and delivered, culminating in a short extract from Julius Caesar in which we were given instruction on how to cope with a large chorus. It was extremely powerful—even now I find myself very closely observing the crowd scenes in BBC2's production of "Rome" and quelling the urge to bellow "Read the Will" over and over again!!! More courses like this please. **Gerry Wilson (ELAPs)**

One Act Festival

Here is a published list of the Festival Rounds and dates in the All England One Act Festival:

March 23—25th
Robin Hood Theatre
April 29th
Robin Hood Theatre
Area Final—May 13th
Mill Theatre, Sedgley
English Final—June 10th
The Courtyard Theatre, Hereford
British Final—June 30th/
July 1st
Perth Theatre, Perth
Scotland

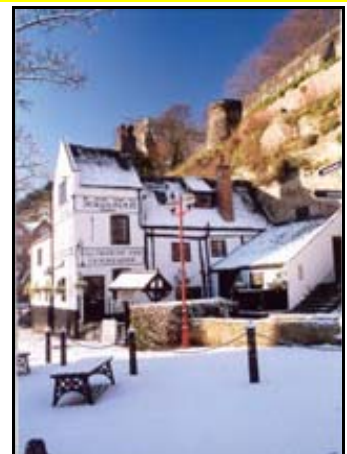
Contact: Peter Stimson
01623 882760
Website:
www.aetf.org.uk

Playwriting Competition

Nanda will be hosting the Playwriting Competition in July 2007—this may seem ages away but I thought I would let you have advance notification of this. The cut off date will be December 31st 2006—so that gives you a year to write a play/sketch for entry. This will coincide with NANDA's 60th Anniversary (they were formed in July 1947). I will be looking for members to perform these. The play "The Man with the Christmas Socks" was entered for the NANDA one act play competition and the author Audrey Ringrose was highly commended by the judges in the AEFT. Maggie Andrew Co-ordinator Playwriting Competition.

Storytellers of Nottingham

The Storytellers of Nottingham are proud to present their next seasons activity:
January 26th "Winter Tales" a night to warm your cockles and listen to some damn good yarns
February 23rd "Tales from the trip" A night of stories that illuminate the strange and varied history of the trip to Jerusalem, Englands Oldest Pub.
March 30th "Nottingham Characters" The Storytellers version of meet the ancestors and a right bunch they are too!
 Throughout 2006, the Storytellers will be raising money to build a school classroom in Africa, anyone who wishes to have them perform for their group or event can do so for a contribution to their charity appeal. All enquiries are welcome, for contact and information, call Pete Davis on 0115 9558054





NANDA PROFILE—Howard Whitehurst

Howard has been delving into amateur theatre for 35 years and currently directs with the Bonington Players of Arnold. He estimates that he has directed over 70 productions over the years. Although he used to regularly tread the boards he hasn't seriously done so for several years.

What brought you into the world of amateur theatre? I was encouraged to join Bonington Players by my wife Linda. **How old were you then, and what was your debut role?** I was 26 and played an Italian speaking film producer in Derek Royle's farce "Flat Spin". **So, your first role was playing a producer, what would be your most memorable?** Probably Thomas Cromwell in a "Man for All Seasons". There have been many productions that have given me a lot of pleasure and satisfaction as director, most recently "The importance of being Earnest", "Noises off", "Ring Round the Moon" and "All my Sons". **And looking back what makes you cringe?** I once played the lead, a vicar, in a thriller by Philip King called "Dark Lucy". I thought it turned out a pretty dire production and just into rehearsal I had to turn down a part offered in "Hello Dolly". I have always wanted to appear in a musical but I am totally tone deaf. The part was the only non singing one! **Don't you hate it when that happens!** **If you had access to anyone in the UK for a play of your choice who would you cast?** I am a great admirer of Francesca Annis, Martin Shaw and Michael Kitchen. (I once sat next to Michael at a wedding reception just after he left RADA but I doubt he would remember me!). I also believe we have some great younger actors in the UK at present like Damien Lewis, Mark Strong, Hugh Bonneville and Helen McCrory. **I understand your wife is also well known on the amateur circuit, how did you meet?** We lived four doors away from each other but never met till we were introduced by a mutual friend. **So, you did marry the girl next door!** **What does Mr Whitehurst get up to during the day?** I have recently retired as a financial adviser and I spend about a day a week sitting as a magistrate. **Great to see you're helping the community in more ways than one!** **What advice can you give to aspiring directors?** Talk to other directors and then go for it. **What would be the best thing an actor can do for his director?** Study their role and try and bring something new to each rehearsal, which is the encouragement I try and give to all my actors.

Spring Calendar

Jan 13-21	Cinderella by Norman Robbins	Bonington Players, Bonington Theatre, Arnold, 0115 9531165
Jan 19-21	Spotlight	Dales Music & Drama Grp, Dales Church Hall, 0115 9401618
Jan 23-28	Role Play by Alan Ayckbourn	Robin Hood Theatre, Averham, 01636 706097
Jan 25-28	Babes in the Wood by Bob Heather & Rodger Lamb	Burton Joyce Players, Burton Joyce Village Hall, 0115 9312399
Jan 25-28	Madame Bovary-Breakfast with Emma by Gustave Flaubert	Lace Market Theatre Trust Ltd, Lacemarket Theatre, 0115 9507201
Jan 26	Winter Tales	Storytellers of Nottingham, Ye Olde trip to Jerusalem, 0115 9558054
Jan 26-28	Red Riding Hood by Paul Reakes	Ravenshead Theatre Grp, Ravenshead Village Hall, 01623 432798
Feb 2-4	Jack and the Beanstalk by Pam Gardner	Edwalton Church Drama Grp, Edwalton Vill. Hall 0115 9145535
Feb 6-11	The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui by Bertold Brecht	Lace Market Theatre Trust Ltd, Lacemarket Theatre, 0115 9507201
Feb 9-11	There Goes the Bride by R Cooney & J Chapman	Arcade Players, St Johns Church Hall, Long Eaton, 0115 9397059
Feb 15-18	Old Woman who lived in a shoe by N Robbins	Muskham Players, North Muskham Village Hall, 01636 671197
Feb 22-25	Bare Foot in the Park by Neil Simon	Prospect Players, Bonington Theatre, Arnold, 0115 9533523
Feb 23	"Tales from the Trip"	Storytellers of Nottingham, Ye Olde trip to Jerusalem, 0115 9558054
Feb 28-Mar 4	After Dinner by Andrew Bovell	West Bridgford Dramatic Soc, The Studio, W. Bridgford, 01159813354
Feb 28—Mar 4	Strictly the Last Tango in Little Grimley by David Tristram	Radcliffe on Trent Drama Grp, Grange Hall, R-O-T, 0115 9332568
Mar 8-11	Cider with Rosie by Laurie Lee	Lace Market Theatre Trust Ltd, Lacemarket Theatre, 0115 9507201
Mar 9-11	Outside Edge by Richard Harris	Kegworth Players, Kegworth Village Hall, 01509 672886
Mar 13-19	Dolly West's Kitchen by Frank McGuiness	Robin Hood Theatre, Averham, 01636 706097
Mar 16-18	Farndale Comedy	Wollaton Drama Group, Sheila Russell Comm. Centre, 0115 9280189
Mar 22-24	Two By Jim Cartwright	Edwinstowe Theatre Grp, Dukeries Complex, Ollerton, 01623 490793
Mar 30—Apr 1	Take Away the Lady by Jimmy Chinn	Keyworth Dramatic Soc., Grange Hall, Radcliffe on Trent, 0115 9372796
Mar 30-Apr 1	TBA	Southwell Drama Group, 01636 812363
Mar 30	"Nottingham Characters"	Storytellers of Nottingham, Ye Olde trip to Jerusalem, 0115 9558054
Apr 3-8	Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy	Lace Market Theatre Trust Ltd, Lacemarket Theatre, 0115 9507201
Apr 25-29	TBA	East Bridgford Drama Group, East Bridgford Village Hall, 01949 20682
Apr 26-29	Home is where your clothes are by A Marriot & B Grant	Bonington Players, Bonington Theatre, Arnold, 0115 9531165
Apr 26-29	Kiss of the Spicer Woman by Manuel Puig	Lace Market Theatre Trust Ltd, Lacemarket Theatre, 0115 9507201
Apr 27-29	Day of Reckoning by Pam Valentine	Arcade Players, St John's Church Hall, Long Eaton, 01159397059
Apr 27-29	Allo Allo by Jeremy Lloyd & David Croft	Blaby Drama Grp, Blaby Social Club, Blaby, 01162 771157
Apr 27-29	The Deep Blue Sea by Terence Rattigan	Greasley Players Drama Soc., St Mary's Church Hall, 01159389705
Apr 27-29	TBA	Burton Joyce Players, Burton Joyce Village Hall, 0115 9312399