



York School of Dance & Drama

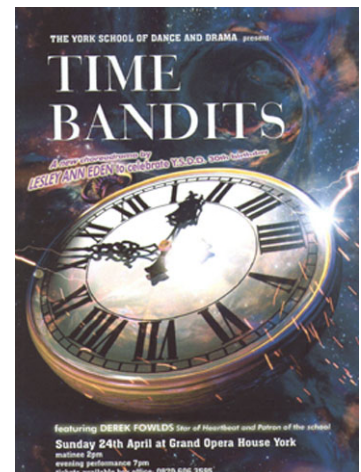
Spring 2005 Newsletter

Welcome to this, the first of our newsletters, sponsored by the Friends group. It's a great time to launch, in this, the school's 30th year and we hope you'll find it interesting and informative.

As well as dates for the diary and news of events there will be a regular column from Lesley Ann and comment from pupils and supporters. We would like contributions from as many people as possible so have a think about what you'd like to say.

Spring Edition Content:

- Lesley Ann – Y.S.D.D. Thirty Years On...
- A fishy tale
- How many dancers does it take to change a light bulb?
- School Soap Box
- Did you know...?
- Know your 'Friends'
- School Stuff – classes, contacts & dates for your diary.



Have you got your tickets yet?

For Y.S.D.D. information you can also click on to our website:

www.yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk

“Nullos Limos”

When three small children knocked at my door, begging me to teach them dancing and acting, I couldn't refuse! It was not what I had envisaged or planned, having just returned from India with my new, tiny baby and a stage career pending, but their fresh, expectant faces full of excitement and wonder, made me accept their unexpected challenge.

This was how the York School of Dance and Drama began thirty years ago and is a thriving community today, having nurtured hundreds of children in their thirst for knowledge in the performing arts. The school now has the pleasure and pride of teaching the children of children who were the founder pupils and in some cases their Grandchildren!



Many children have passed through our portals, some to further their career in the stage, television and film, others to teach in higher education, some to teach in schools of their own.

The School is privileged to encompass families who have always supported our cause and our sincere desire to ensure that our students experience the "best" in Performance standards and to these people I offer my gratitude and thanks and hope they continue with their wonderful help.

Our own "Quest for the Best" and standards of excellence are unparalleled in the field of introducing new dance techniques and skills to children of all ages. Our emphasis on embracing "the whole person" within the family atmosphere of the school is of utmost importance, whilst nurturing the individual's creative skills and talent.

My own success in choreography, internationally, has inspired and encouraged students to expand, explore and develop their own choreographic flare. This facet, I hope will be further enriched and expanded by our new **Jorvik Arts Academy**, for the older students who wish to explore art, dance, drama and music within the expressive arts arena. Once again, the Academy has sprung into being, not through my own initiation but that of the students, who I first taught in Spain and wish to have a centre in this country where they can be allowed to follow their artistic interests. Where better than here in York, to follow on the great tradition of Y.S.D.D.

I am humbled and overwhelmingly proud of all our students, as I am of my National Kidscape Award, given for my teaching work within the school. Similarly, for being the first person in this country to be invited to choreograph the Church's history at Walsingham and it's healing aspects, using a group of Senior Dancers from the school. The piece, "Dum Spiro Spero" (while I breathe I hope) contains part of the philosophy of our school. We will always strive to do our best and to give ourselves up to the glorious rapture of pure performance.

Now, thirty years on we have a wonderful Patron, Derek Fowlds, who helps to champion our cause and encourage our students in their quest for the best. We also have a new set of mums and dads working in the background to provide new funds for the children to enable better performance standards. My heart-felt thanks to everyone.

The school's motto, "**Nullos Limos**" (no limits) echoes my own philosophy that in our dreams our skills and performance talents are limitless, and if we can make our dreams reality our own joy will be limitless as will that of others who share our dreams.

Please keep on dreaming everyone and thank you for sharing mine.

Lesley Ann Eden

A Fishy tale...

Val Hart is the School's secretary; a mine of information, you'll find Val working with pupils in many of the classes and supporting Lesley Ann with School business, but along with Christine Parkinson and Helen Templeman, Val also works hard making props and costumes for the shows. Daughter, Elise, who dances with the school, tracked Mum down across the tea table to get the low down for you.

E: Where do you get your ideas for different props and costumes?

V: *...from the Internet or books, but sometimes Lesley Ann gives me a description of what she wants and I do extra research.*

E: How long does it take you to make something?

V: *A few hours for one item, but if there's about 10 costumes, it could take days and nights...I am often up until midnight working on them.*

E: Out of all the costumes you have made for the upcoming show 'Time Bandits', which is your favourite and why?

V: *Probably the condor wings because although they took a long time to make they look really effective and they flutter like real feathers.*

E: What would be your favourite prop and why?

V: *I don't have a favourite prop...I like them all, because I enjoy designing and making single items.*

E: Which do you prefer making, costumes or props?

V: *Tough question. Probably props because I find them more fun and you usually are only making one - you can really go to town on them.*

E: Do you have fun making them?

V: *Sometimes they can drive you up the wall but we do have fun because we keep trying them out!*

E: What is the budget for costumes and props?

V: *No comment...it's very tight!*

E: How do you cope with the budget when making props and costumes?

V: *We look for cheap materials, sale items and nothing gets wasted. Props are often made from things I find round the house...*

E: How do you feel when you see your creations on stage?

V: *It's great, I get a real sense of achievement, and you sometimes wonder just how you ever managed to produce something like that in the first place!*

Elise Hart

A big **thank you** goes to Val, Christine and Helen from the school for all their hard work!

How many dancers

does it take to change a light bulb?..

Well none actually - it's Stage Management's job, but do you know how to behave back stage? The Grand Opera House in Cumberland Street is Yorkshire's largest, fully operational theatre and regularly plays host to top entertainers. With our show, 'Time Bandits' coming up shortly it is important to know what you can expect and what is expected of you. Performing in a real theatre space is great fun and great experience, so make the most of it and to help you here are some top tips:

ALWAYS arrive promptly, so that dress runs, technical rehearsals or the show (!) aren't held up, give your self plenty of time, especially on the day of performance. Performers are traditionally '**called**' to be at the theatre **35 minutes before the curtain rises**, however, *as dancers you should be there earlier to warm up properly and get into costume.*

The **Stage Door** is the performers entrance and this is located at the side of the theatre building. *When you arrive find out the security code, you'll need to this to enter the building if the door is unmanned.*

The **dressing rooms** are arranged on several floors – Val will allocate dressing rooms before you arrive. *Keep all your belongings in your dressing room, except props and costume that you will need by the side of the stage. Speakers relay what is happening on stage to the dressing rooms – think about your cues.*

Look after your costumes – don't leave them on the floor or in the loo - hang them up in the dressing rooms or where you're shown – it shows respect for yourself as a performer and the person who spent time making the costumes for you.

Light snacks are great to keep energy levels up. **Do** eat bananas. **Don't** eat chocolate – *it's messy and stains costumes. Bottled water is better than fizzy drinks – no blackcurrant or orange juice please!*

Stage access is through double doors that lead from the first corridor of dressing rooms. You can only access on side of the stage (stage right). *To get to the other side of the stage (stage left) you will need to cross behind curtains at the very back of the stage.*

This traditional theatre has '**wings**' at each side of the stage. The space in the wings is unseen by the audience and you'll wait here before going on. *No one, apart from performers and back stage assistants, can be in the wings at any time for safety reasons.*

Silence should be observed at all times in the wings. *This is so performers who are on stage and/or preparing for an entrance are not distracted. You should also be as quiet as possible in the dressing room corridors.*

Be aware of the front of the stage, directly below this is the orchestra pit, and it is quite a drop! **Listen** to all the safety advice that you are given.

There are some weird and wonderful **theatre superstitions**.

- It is considered bad luck to whistle on stage. *This comes from the time when sailors used to man the fly floors, flying stage scenery in and out on ropes. The sailors used whistles as their signals, so if a performer inadvertently whistled they might get a large piece of scenery on their heads!*

- A greater crime than whistling is saying 'Macbeth' in a theatre building. *Years ago if a theatre was doing badly they would be forced to stage a performance of 'Macbeth' as it was the only play sure to pull in audiences. Ever since it has been REALLY bad luck to say it, not sure why you'd want to but if you do feel the urge to discuss Shakespeare, say 'the Scottish play' instead...*
- If you want to wish someone good luck, say 'break a leg' – probably to ensure they won't!

Be focussed and attentive, learn a lot and have a great time!

If you have any queries about the show please check with Lesley Ann or Val.

Please note: Performances require standard dress for all pupils: **Black** socks, dance Shoes and leotards (footless tights if required). Hair should be off the face in a low ponytail or plait.

Can you or do you know a mum/dad or carer who may be free to help with chaperoning the younger dancers for part of the dress rehearsals and main performances? The little ones need the extra support and assistance - please can you let **Val Hart** know so we can ensure there are enough adults to help with make-up, costume and loo runs! Thank you.

School Soap Box **Have your say...**

Ten-year old Hannah Shields tells us why she loves dancing with the school and her hopes for the future.

"I started dancing with Lesley Ann when I was 2 ½ years old. Dance is a wonderful discipline, and has given me a focus, good posture and increased my confidence, which has helped me at school. I have met new people of all ages, taken part in workshops and danced with dancers and artists from other countries. Even though I can't understand what they are saying, we can still teach other dance. I really enjoy dancing to different kinds of music and recognising which country it comes from. Everyone at dancing is my friend, and I feel safe and can trust them.

I have taken dance exams and seen the school take part in competitions; I love to watch the seniors in their shows and the different buildings they dance in. One highlight of the school is Lesley's famous Summer School, filled with fun activities and another chance to meet up with my friends.

I would like to be a dance teacher when I am older and dance for as long as I can. It is so enjoyable, great for fitness, gives you lots of stamina, but most of all is great fun!"

Hannah Shields

Did you know?

Dance is part of the National Curriculum and can be studied at further education and degree level, including MA and PhD levels. **Lesley Ann** was the first of only five people in the country to achieve an MA in pure choreography.

Know your 'Friends'...

Welcome to all the Friends of the school and thank you so much for your support. But, who are the school's unsung heroes? You can find out as we introduce them to you in each newsletter.

"What a splendid idea! We so much enjoyed the years that our daughter Hermione was part of the YSDD...it will be great to have this means of receiving information and staying in touch!" **Jim, Sally & Hermione Spriggs**



Jim and Anna Semlyen's little girl, **Rosie**, has just begun dancing but Mum and Dad have been long standing supporters of Y.S.D.D. Jim and Anna will both be appearing in 'Time Bandits' performing a fantastic juggling routine – their company, **Cosmos Jugglers**, are one of the foremost black light and fire jugglers in the UK, visit their site at www.cosmosjugglers.co.uk for more details of their work.

We also owe Jim a great debt of thanks for the setting up and running of our website.

To all our Friends – Aunts, Uncles, Grandparents, Godparents, carers, mums, dads and industry professionals...

Thank you!

Please join us. For just **£20** per year you'll get our regular newsletter and invitations to exclusive events as well as supporting and furthering the work of the school. Contact Jacky Frere on Tel: (01904) 622 326 or email jacky.fitt@ukgateway.net for a membership form. **Friend's Group Committee:**

Chair:

Treasurer:

Secretary:

Y.S.D.D. Rep:

Jacky Frere

Wendy Davies

Val Hart

Lesley Ann Eden

School Stuff...

Dates for your diary...

Here's our handy 'rip out and stick on your wall' page!



School Principal: Lesley Ann Eden *Kidscape Champion*
Tel: 07971 230 716 *B.Ed Dance Drama*
B.Ed Music
M.A. Choreography

Secretary: Val Hart
Tel: 01347 824 719

Classes: Park Grove Community School, Park Grove, York.

Tuesday	4.15 – 5.00pm	Beginner Dance
Tuesday	5.00 – 6.00pm	Intermediate Dance
Tuesday	6.00 – 6.30pm	Invitation Performers
Tuesday	6.45 – 7.45pm	Adult Dance
Tuesday	7.45 – 8.45pm	Senior Dance
Saturday	9.15 – 10.15am	Beginner Elementary Dance
Saturday	10.15 – 11.15am	Drama Group
Saturday	11.15 – 12.30pm	Intermediate Dance

Term dates: Spring Term: Sat. 2nd April - last session Tue. 17th May
N.B. NO dancing Sat. 30th April
Summer Term: Tue. 7th June – last session Sat. 30th July

Sunday Rehearsals: 3rd April & 10th April 2 – 4pm at Park Grove School
17th April 10 – 6pm at Grand Opera House

This year's show is held at the Grand Opera House, York.

Grand Opera House York
Cumberland Street
York YO1 9SW

Matinee 2pm, Evening Performance 7pm
Booking line: Tel: 0870 606 3595
Group bookings: Tel: 01904 678705

Show Dates: Technical/dress rehearsals: Sunday 17th April 2005 10am – 6pm
Dress rehearsal/show: Sunday 24th April 2005 10am - end
Ticket: NOW BOOKING £10 - £12 Concessions available



Looking forward: Y.S.D.D. annual Summer School will be held at:
Archbishop Holgate School, Hull Road. York YO10
Monday 1st – Friday 5th August 2005
9.30am – 3pm *Tuck shop available. Pack lunch required.*
Half day session £ 15.00
Full day £ 30.00
Full week £125.00

For further information and to book your place please contact: Val Hart

*Summer Newsletter will be out in July – any editorial contributions to Jacky Frere
- see 'Friends' section for contact details.*

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Newsletter sponsored by Y.S.D.D. Friends Group www.yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk

Watch this space....!

" Thanks for a great weekend, we want to do it every week! You have inspired us all!"
Shepshed School

The Jorvik Arts Academy has recently opened to give students aged 14 upwards, the opportunity to explore excellence in the field of **ART, DANCE DRAMA AND MUSIC**, whilst giving them a unique opportunity to discover the historic delights of York – **England's second city**. Weekends, or longer stays are available together with any combination of Arts tuition, tailored to suit any needs. Other specialist courses can be devised such as history visits or language courses in Spanish or French.

The Academy caters for all standards also running Teachers' Courses and In-Service training for adults. Students enjoy wonderful accommodation at The Race Course Centre with home-cooked food and picnic lunches provided. North Leamington School, who are booking an Art and Architecture Course, have chosen the Academy not just for its reputation but because York has so much to offer their second year "A" level students.

Courses are open to all, for further information please contact **Tel: 07971 230 716**.

Coming soon: A great chance for students in the School to take part in an exclusive Expressive Arts weekend at the Academy. Details to be released later.

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