



York School of Dance & Drama

Winter 2006 Newsletter

Welcome to our **BIG** winter edition, sponsored by the Friends.

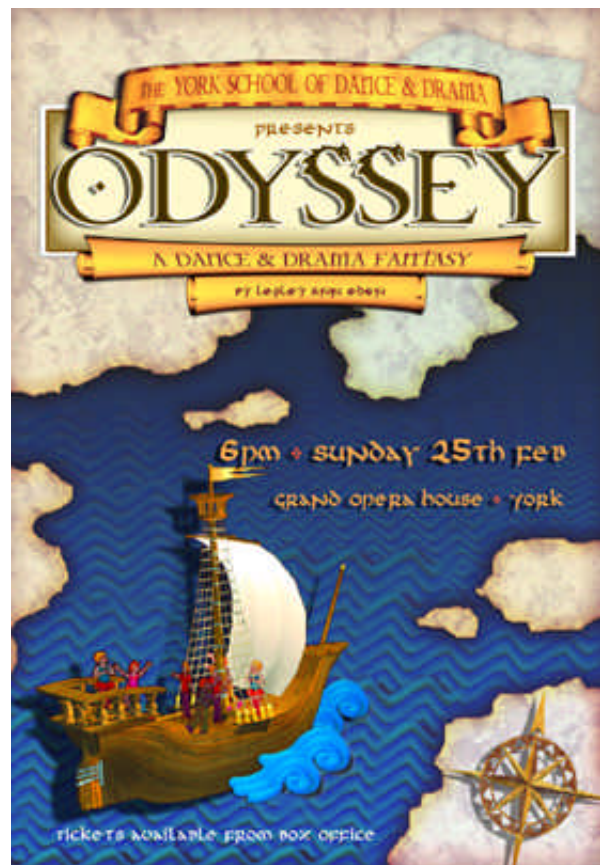
Summer memories seem a bit hazy now as we welcome the damp and frosty days to come but we're here to remind you of a little summer madness at the YSD Summer School and bring you some sunshine with our Achievement Award winners from July.

All this and more so read on!

- *Lesley Ann's bit...*
- *Friends' Achievement Awards 2006*
- *Christine's got it all sewn up*
- *Did you know – what's with Irish dancing?*
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www.yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk

"Nullos Limos"



Lesley Ann's bit...



Welcome back everyone! It was wonderful to begin the term again and be back to our usual routine after my long trek to Mexico, Belize, Antigua, Guatemala and the tiny Caribbean Island of Kaye Calke.

My expedition to "Chase The Dance" was amazing and as usual I have come back with lots of ideas to pass on to the School but amongst my many wonderful memories some are tinged with sadness.

In the mountain villages and rainforest jungle I witnessed a daily struggle for survival by many families, their children living in dire poverty with the women and mothers struggling to provide some form of education for their children. In one village there were nine women who had begun a kind of co-op to build a school.



A small group of us trekked through banana plantations and coffee bushes to reach a swamp where the women felt able to discuss their project without antagonism from their men folk and older women. We heard how they had laboured to build a school and that they were gaining more and more support. It would be fantastic to be able to take them some equipment – just £10 would provide them with enough paper, pens and pencils for a year! Later this year I would like to from a plan to make this dream come true and I would welcome any ideas you might have.

My expedition also made me face some tough personal challenges. Trudging through the jungle at night I was terrified in the pitch black (I have to confess I hate the dark!) every footstep took me into the unknown - I detest snakes, insects and was petrified that at any moment I would feel a snake at my feet, a leech attaching itself to me, or I'd be bitten by the mass of mosquitoes hovering everywhere. The horrific yowls of the howler monkeys screeching their indignation as the group moved through the dense jungle. We were not well equipped. With no torch I clung to a young German boy's jacket who had one of the only torches in the team!

At one point I was so terrified that I struggled to breathe as my heart pounding out of control. I wanted to stop - I just felt I couldn't go on... As I focused on each footstep I thought of all the children in the School - what would they think? What would they say when I've always told them that no matter what happens you carry on even if your knickers fall down!

The thought of them made me smile, I began to forget my fears and, like a scene from Raiders Of The Lost Ark, the Mayan Temples suddenly loomed high through the jungle brush and I was faced with a vertical climb up the side of the Temple at Tical in the dead of night. Again I thought of the children and the way we seek excellence, striving to become better dancers, never giving up, remembering our motto – “no limits”, so how could I show fear?

In many ways when we battle through our fears we are well rewarded and as I reached the top of the temple my joy was indescribable. Along with fellow travellers from all over the world I sat in awe and wonder as the sun rose over the jungle and the temples emerged out of the inky darkness; the jungle, with a breath of its own, rising and falling like a deep green sea – a sight I will never forget.



Now back from a world I found difficult to leave behind we are heavily involved in working on *Odyssey*, a dance drama fantasy about dream states and altered reality. The story centres on a boy who finds himself lost in a dream but all he can do is moan and be negative. It's not until he learns to alter his way of thinking that he and all his friends can find their way back home.



When I was amongst children who had very little, witnessing their daily fight to survive, I marvelled at their ability to laugh, play, joke and above all feel the joy of dance. We are so lucky to share this gift together and I thank you all for your support in helping to provide the gift of dance for all our children.

Lesley Ann

Summer School 2006



The Summer School held at Archbishop Holgate's School was a great success – with was lots of fun, frolics, water fights and great work from everyone!

Friends' Achievement Awards 2006

At the end of the summer a handful of pupils were rewarded for their special effort and achievements with our **Achievement Awards**. It was a real delight - not just to see the happy faces of the recipients but also the support and excitement of all the pupils. Take a look at our gallery of winners and thanks to everyone for their hard work. And so in no particular order congratulations go to...



Edward Hooper: Drama



Sophie Millago-Dures: Tue. 1



Leah Grace: Pre-beginner



Rachel Templeman: Tue. 2



**Frances Smith and Phoebe Frere
Sat. 1**



Nicole Paskauskas: Thur. 1



Hannah Shields: Sat. 2



Imogen Cole: across all classes



Georgia Sherwood Reid: Rising Senior

Who will be in the spotlight next year? With so much talent in the school who can tell...

Watch this space!

**If you would like a copy of your prize winning photograph (5" x 7") please get in touch via the feedback form on the website, or see Jacky Frere (Senior Performer).
Price: £1.50 each – monies will go to Friends' Fund.**

Christine's got it sewn up!

The colourful and inventive costumes that our performers wear for each show are the result of care and dedication by a busy team of committed volunteers...



My name is **Christine Parkinson** and I make costumes and do backstage work with YSDD. I first became involved with the School 10 years ago when my eldest daughter Bethany started dancing. Eventually my second daughter Jeanna was dancing as well and I found myself backstage at shows and running the tuck shop at the summer school.

Christine with Senior Performer, Tia Hancy

Gradually I also began helping to make costumes, only simple stuff at first but it has grown from there. Now I dance in the adults' class on a Thursday evening along side Bethany, who despite "A" level pressures stills loves to join the classes when she can.

I mainly make costumes for the senior performers and I also get to make some of the more unusual items, my favourite being the dragon from the *Time Bandits*. My costume skills are a lot better now than they were and Lesley Ann lets me design some pieces myself. Inspiration for ideas can come from images in magazines, shop windows or the Internet. I mix ideas, shapes and colours to come up with designs that I can show to Lesley. I also watch the senior performers work in class to ensure I understand the nature of the dance and music, which all feeds into the design mix. Sometimes my ideas are not what Lesley is looking for or she has definite designs in mind, otherwise I get to create my designs.

We're now all working hard to pull everything together for *Odyssey* and inventiveness comes in very handy with our tiny budget! I really enjoy making costumes although it has rather taken over my life and, much to my husband's bemusement, my house!

Did you know?

Undeterred by age, cellulite and Lycra, six mums will be dancing on stage alongside their children in February.

Senior Performer **Mairianna MacKinnon** (33) has been dancing with Lesley Ann since the age of 7.

The current issue burning us up is "Why don't Irish dancers move their arms?"

Well... restricting the arms makes it easier for the dancers to execute the fast and intricate footwork. Some historians suggest that the absence of arm movement may also be the result of influence from parish priests, who thought that keeping the arms stiff was less "provocative"...!



*If you've got something you want to know ask us... we can't promise but we'll try!
Contact us via the website.*

Surfing around – here's an interesting site: <http://www.actingatoz.com/>



Missed a newsletter?

*If you've missed a newsletter check out the YSDD website where you will find all past editions on our **Archive Page**.*

"How many dancers does it take to change a light bulb?"

Top tips on performing and preparation at the Grand Opera House York Check out the website for our useful download.

www.yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk

Don't forget - Val has a stock of used shoes and leotards - if you have any you have out grown, please pass them on to Val.

School Soap Box... **COMPETITION**

What would you like to call our newsletter?

Send us your ideas for a title and you could win this **Body Talk retro shoulder bag!**



Send your title idea with your name and class via the feedback form on the website at www.yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk or give it to Jacky Frere (Senior Performer), entries close on February 30th 2007. The winner will be chosen by a unanimous decision of the Friends' group from all entries submitted before closing date.

Congratulations - a summer wedding for Senior Performer **Lynsey Taylor**, (right).

New hubby Steve is keen to find out what she gets up to on a Tuesday night – well he won't have long to wait... get your reggae hat on Lynsey!

Street dance... drama... singing... hot jazz, classical ballet or Shakespeare, what's your passion?

Tell us about your thoughts, achievements, gripes or interests. Email them to us c/o the feedback form, which you'll find on our website.



Know your Friends...

Welcome to all the Friends of the school and thank you so much for your support. Alison Mitten has recently joined the Friends' group but isn't new to the YSDD family...

"I've known Lesley Ann for nearly seven years, since our eldest daughter Xanthe started dancing with YSDD on her third birthday. Xanthe danced with the School for three years before we all emigrated to Australia in 2003. We didn't settle so returned home at the end of last year. I wanted our youngest daughter Francesca to have the same opportunity as Xanthe so brought the Tiny One along to the scrummy new setting of Park Grove School. No more church/railway halls!



Edward with little sister Francesca

At home as Francesca was practising in the kitchen, our son Edward started to attempt spring points! I am rather ashamed to say that because he was, a) a boy and b) has special educational needs, I hadn't even thought about Edward learning to dance! But he really wanted to, even abandoning his beloved computer club for a chance to dance with Lesley Ann.

In class he is completely at ease and comfortable in a way I've not seen before. Maybe he is remembering Lesley Ann's voice and face from the years he was a baby and toddler soaking up the sounds and movement of her classes, rehearsals and shows! I remember Lesley Ann holding Edward, back at a time when we weren't sure what the future held for him. He has defied expectations and, despite his difficulties, is a smashing little boy with lots going for him - including being a pupil of YSDD!

When I spoke to Lesley Ann recently I was both humbled and inspired by her wonderful attitude to Edward and children like him. I know she will make a special place within the School for Edward, just like she does for every one of the children who dance under her care and tutelage. I joined the Friends because it's a way for me to give something back."

Alison Mitten

Thanks to all our Friends – aunts, uncles, grandparents, godparents, carers, mums, dads and industry professionals...

Supporting achievement

Become a Friend! For just £20 a year you'll receive our regular newsletter and invitations to exclusive events as well as supporting and furthering the work of the school. Contact Jacky Tel: (01904) 622 326 for details or email us via the website.

School Stuff...



Dates for your diary...

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

School Principal:	Lesley Ann Eden Tel: 07971 230 716	<i>Kidscape Champion B.Ed. Dance Drama B.Ed. Music M.A. Choreography</i>	
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 – 8.45pm	Senior Performers
	Thursday	5.00 – 6.00pm	Beginner Youth Dance 10-13yrs
	Thursday	6.00 – 7.00pm	Adult beginners - Tap
	Thursday	7.00 – 8.00pm	Adult beginners – Jazz
	Saturday	9.15 – 10.15am	Beginner Elementary Dance
	Saturday	10.15 – 11.15am	Drama Group
	Saturday	11.15 – 12.30pm	Intermediate Dance

**Check term dates with Lesley Ann Eden or Val Hart.*

Class Fees:

Children:	£ 5.50 per class	
Adult:	£ 6.00 per class	
Senior Performer:	£10.00 per class	<i>Discounts are available for children/adults attending more than one class.</i>

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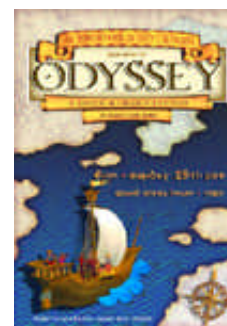
For 1 day only - Sunday 25th February 2007, 6pm at the Grand Opera House, York.

Let's fill the theatre and raise the roof!!

Get booking on Tel: 0870 606 3595

www.ticketmaster.co.uk

www.livenation.co.uk



**The Opera House does not provide helpers back stage – we will need assistance getting your little ones ready/made up and changed during the show.
Please speak to Val - this help is invaluable and great fun!**

Academy News

The Jorvik Arts Academy is open for business to give students, 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.

Courses are open to all, contact **Tel: 07971 230 716**
www.jorvikartsacademy.co.uk

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Ask for your 10% discount

Contributions welcomed, please contact Jacky Frere C/o feedback form on:
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