

House Dramatics 1950s

1951



The return of the Dramatic Competition has been greeted with widespread delight throughout the school. Each house produced "Goodnight Sweet Prince" by Ronald Gow, and we congratulate Price on their successful production.

Thelma Robinson, U6A.

1952

This year the Junior Dramatic Competition was won by Holgate with 86 points. Price came second with 75, followed close on the heels by Talbot with 74; Guest came fourth with 70 points. The adjudicator, Mr. Tyler, the West Riding Drama Organiser, remarked that all four houses gave excellent performances especially as the producers and stage-managers are only in their fourth year. The play, which was called "The Puppet Show", told of a group of puppets who wished to live their own lives without the Puppet Master, and how they found this task an impossibility. A very imaginative production was given by Holgate, and it was the only house which portrayed the very stiff effect of the puppets. The adjudicator commented on each individual production and he gave special mention to the costume which well distinguished the Court of the Orange Queen from that of the Lemon King. The play was saved from tragedy by the comic element introduced by the Lemon King and his Duchess and the Orange Queen and her cousin, the baron.

Extra

Groups of youngsters in Forms 1 – 4 have, for the past six weeks, been rehearsing an extract from Sidney Box's play, "The Puppet Show", in readiness for the annual House Dramatic Competition. They have provided their own producer, assistant producer, pianist, and behind-the-scenes officials, and have been responsible for costumes and properties. They displayed their talents before the whole school last Thursday, when the competition was held in the Main Hall. The adjudicator, Mr. Tyler, West Riding Drama Organiser, **awarded the first place to Holgate House with 86%, Price receiving 75%, Talbot 74%, and Guest 46%.** House points allocated on the basis of marks awarded by Mr. Tyler were: **Holgate 56.5, Price 49, Talbot 48.5 and Guest 46.**

The House teams were:

Holgate: Noreen Thomas, Jack Goodison, Anne Wood, Brian Ridgeway, Kathleen Corcoran, Vivienne Newton, Brian Broadhurst, A. Mills, Christopher Gascoigne, Pat Coope, P.A. Cooper (producer), Irene Doughty (assistant producer), F. Harper (stage manager), E. Cooksey (prompter), M. Lister and Jean Worbey (make-up), Margaret Draper (pianist).

Price: Jean Foreman, Peter Glasby, Anne Norrick, Roy Dyson, Alec Wall, Brenda Pawson, Valerie Manning, David Law, Victor Clark, Frank Wootton, Joan May (producer), Joan Taylor (assistant producer), Margaret Connolly (make-up), Addy & William Greasley (stage managers), Margaret Phillips (pianist).

Talbot: Brian Poole, Florence Gell. Anne Frobisher, Gamble, Margaret Christian, Peter Robinson, Barry Longden, Hawcroft, George Thompson, Arthur Tickle, Edwin Sanderson, Brenda Ackroyd (producer), Terry McCroakam (stage manager), Roy Gaskell (stage hand), J. Parker (wardrobe), Regson (violinist), Pat Harris (prompter).

Guest: Howard Peel, Madeleine Knapton, Humphries, Jean Davidson, John Riggott, Dorothy Nichols, Wendy Toone, Donald Maltby, Alan Parker, Ronald Tibble, Margaret Roberts (producer), Carol Sugden (assistant producer), George Howard and R. North (stage managers), Hazel Hall and Wendy Toone (make-up and properties).

1953



The play chosen for the House Dramatic Competition this year was written by our own Mr. Walker, who called it "Primitive Man". This fantasy showed us a scene which MIGHT have happened in a primitive household thousands of years ago. The family concerned were tired of having fish for every meal, but, unfortunately, the men folk hadn't the weapons to kill large animals in order to get meat. A conference was called to discuss the serious situation; this was suddenly interrupted by the arrival of the scientist from "Harwell Cave" with a new secret weapon he had just invented. He claimed that his secret weapon would not only help them to get more meat for their families, but also would end all wars. (The secret weapon was a bow and some arrows.) During a practical demonstration of this weapon, one innocent little first form boy nearly had his right ear pinned to the wall-bars. The competition this year was judged by Mr. J. Corben, the Area Youth Officer. He said that he had spent a very enjoyable afternoon and had had great difficulty in choosing the winning house. He commented on the four performances, showing the actors where they had gone wrong, praising their good points,

and giving general advice to the actors and to the audience. Mr. Corben expressed the hope that more people, on leaving school, would join Amateur Dramatic Societies; their experience gained in School Dramatics would be most valuable.

The positions of the Houses were as follows:-

1. Price 78 pts.
2. Holgate 76 pts.
3. Talbot 68 pts.
4. Guest 67 pts.

To all those concerned in the four productions, and especially the producers themselves, we extend our heartiest congratulations for a very amusing and enjoyable afternoon's entertainment.

Jim Ainge, L6A



Jean Lumby



Joan May



Jean Tyrrell



Brian Poole

Seeing four performances of the same play can be rather tiring and the wooden floor seems to get harder as the afternoon progresses! But such trivial discomfort was forgotten on the 18th February. All four houses presented delightful productions of "The King Who Limped". The costumes were good, though sometimes modern clothes came face to face with their predecessors of several centuries ago. Guest did very well to win, after an unfortunate start. While congratulating them, we must not forget the good performances given by Holgate (2nd), Price (3rd) and Talbot (4th). Guest were not the only house who suffered from the poor manipulation of the curtains. People sitting near the wall-bars, on both sides of the Hall, saw little more than half the stage. This rather marred the enjoyment of four very good productions. Noreen Thomas of Holgate, gave an excellent portrayal of a lady-in-waiting. The adjudicator, Mrs. Roche, said that it was the best individual performance of the afternoon. Very good performances were also given by Susan Lindley and Brian Moore, as the Kings for Holgate and Guest, respectively. The quarrelsome neighbours were well played in all four houses. Mrs. Roche said that the productions would have been much better but for two mistakes; talking through the laughter of the audience and players laughing at themselves. She said that it was obvious that all four houses had put a great deal of work into their productions which were very colourful and she congratulated them all. We echo her words and hope that future productions will be equally enjoyable.

The Editors, assisted by:

Jean Lumby, Joan May, Jean Tyrrell and Brian Poole. All of L6A.

1955



Even though the Dramatic Competition had to be adjudicated, the enjoyment which we had already had from the rehearsals could not be spoiled. At first, our budding young actors were either too lazy or too shy to come forward. That was soon altered. We press-ganged most of them into coming and, after some gentle persuasion, they turned up quite regularly. From the first, the rehearsals went with a bang and, on numerous occasions one of the teachers having put his head round the door, narrowly missed being "swiped" with the board-rubber by a too ardent supporter who supposed the teacher to be a spy from another House. We had many supporters from the lower part of the school who will be good material for future producers to use. Among these were Morris who played "Puck", Toon who played "Lion", Deeley who played "Moonshine", Guest who played "Thisbe", Sheila Tully who played "Oberon" and Margaret Shaw who played "Titania". As we thought that it would be too much to expect one

person to cope with all the designing and the sewing of costumes, we all pulled together and each of us brought what we could - begged, borrowed, or otherwise - and spent nearly a fortnight fitting them together. As you can see, our success in the Dramatic Competition was achieved mainly by teamwork, not by a few individuals seeking recognition, and by all the other work which is necessary in a competition.

Sheila Farmer, 4A Guest

February 19th. 1955

Mr. Patrick Campbell, of B.B.C. acting and producing fame, adjudicated at the annual House Dramatic competition at Hemsworth Grammar School on Wednesday. The four House teams each presented an excerpt from the last act of William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream", and were drawn from all parts and age groups in the school. Points were awarded for general presentation, entrances, exits, audibility, movement, costume, positioning, clarity of diction, facial expressions, "side-acting" and knowledge of lines.

The winning House was Guest (cast Gloria Farnsworth, Margaret Duprey, Kenneth Waterhouse, Geoffrey Lockett, Winnie Taylor, John Guest, Susan Butcher, Terence Deeley, Paul Toone, Roger Bacon, North, Pamela Peel, Joan Hayward, Sheila Tully, John Morrissey, Margaret Brown, Julia Street, and Eunice Bolton). Producer: Sheila Farmer; stage hands, Toone and Fleet.

Other placings were:

2) Price (cast Melvyn Snookes, Colin Nye, Malcolm Waring, Edgar Matthews, Michael Goodliffe, Margaret Phillips, Janet Newton, Norman Brook, Jean Mathers, Jacqueline Toft, Mabel Toft, Anne Adamson, Judith Atkinson, Maureen Mott, Ellen Toulson, Elaine Taylor, Ann Kelly, Kay Park, and John Stevens). Producers: Eileen Hurst and Tony Pickering.

3) Holgate (cast John Cooper, Neil Spruce, Malcolm Halstead, Peter Smith, Peter Jordan, Noreen Thomas, Barrie White, Ruth Orange, Peter Whitehead, Roy Goodinson, Sylvia Ward, Sandra Thornton, Jennifer Lindley, Diana Wood, Sylvia Gaskell, Pamela Rushworth, and Janet Noble). Producer: Kathleen Cooper; stage manager, Kenneth Bramham.

4) Talbot (cast Peter Sell, Anthony Foster, Geoffrey Boycott, Alan Vest, Patricia Foster, Alan Allsopp, Geoffrey Jennings, Bernard Cole, Peter Hardy, Janet Hindmarsh, Marlene Bateman, Jennifer Lindley, Shirley Challender, Betty Harratt, Margaret Curran, Velice Martin, and June Crofts). Producer, Roland Hawcroft; stage managers, Jordan and Swaine.

Article submitted by Geoff Govier. Thank you.



A few weeks before the end of the Christmas Term, the houses 'elect' their producers for the Dramatic Competition. This done, they report to the Senior English Master who instructs them in the rudiments of production. They leave, a little wiser, and much sadder, with muddled ideas of lighting, make-up and character-casting hammering at their brains with dogged persistence. The auditions tend to leave grey patches on youthful temples. If one should enter at the start of the auditions, one sees a furious producer making frantic attempts to quell the magpie chatter of the juniors and, at the same time, turn the boredom of the seniors into something like enthusiasm. An idea suddenly enters his troubled mind and he calmly announces that the competition this year is to be an excerpt from "Quality Street" by J. M. Barrie. The producer smiles at the success of his attempt

to gain silence and assures the bewildered juniors and the sceptical seniors that it is a delightful excerpt and that the parts in it are just right for them. The auditions then really start and, one after another, the budding Oliviers proceed to mutilate a perfectly good speech while muffled cheers from comrades lolling on window sills greet their feeble efforts. The producer's worried frown darkens until, like a bright light shining in the midst of the ocean, he hears the voice of an "actor" (i.e. someone who can read properly). He, the producer, with a happy smile, tells the fortunate youngster that "He's in" and will he learn his part during the holidays? The answer is, "Of course", and the actor departs hugging seven large sheets of manuscript. The producer's frown returns as he goes back to his ordeal. At the rehearsals, yelling and humping reign as blows are dealt out by the producer but, after many beatings, insubordination is quelled and the rehearsal starts in earnest. The finding of costumes and the planning of movements are somehow accomplished by a now swift-balding producer (if, at the beginning of the Easter Term, anyone saw four boys walking round bald and haggard with a cruel twist to their mouths, he shouldn't have laughed). On the day of judgment, the producer's heart is pounding against his ribs like a sledgehammer. His knees beat a tattoo as he stands in front of the audience and makes his introductory speech. Then he quickly (!) runs off the stage and winds open the curtains with what strength he has left. He stands in the wings, making sure of entries at the right time, hoping that he has left nothing important out of the set.

This year, the productions were judged by Mrs. Lee of Ackworth and the placings were :-

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|------------|---------|
| 1. Guest | 82 pts. |
| 2. Price | 79 pts. |
| 3. Talbot | 75 pts. |
| 4. Holgate | 65 pts. |

Terry Deeley, 4.A. Guest (Photo above left)
Robert Vickers, 4.A. Holgate (Photo above right)



The Dramatic Competition was held this year on Wednesday, 20th February, and was judged by Mr. Tyler.

The placings were:-

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|------------|-----|
| 1. Talbot | 83% |
| 2. Holgate | 67% |
| 3. Guest | 66% |
| 4. Price | 56% |

Mr. Tyler said that all performances were good, but did not complement any individual actor. He stressed the need for a good "set" and, whilst criticising our weakest points, praised us for our best.

We value his advice very much and hope it will be noted and remembered by the juniors, amongst whom are the future producers. All Houses, I think, would like to thank Mr. Leonard, Mr. Boyd, and Mr. Farrar for helping with make-up, music and lighting respectively. We should like to extend our thanks too to Mr. Walker, who has left the school now, for his valuable advice on production.

Shirley Challender 4A Talbot

1958



The House Dramatic Competition was judged this year by Mr. A. Broadhurst of Doncaster Technical College Drama Department. The placings were:-

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|------------|-----|
| 1. Talbot | 81% |
| 2. Price | 80% |
| 3. Guest | 80% |
| 4. Holgate | 69% |

Francis Dillon's play, "The Shirt" was adapted by Mr. Reed for the performance and provided plenty of scope for variety entertainment. Briefly, it was about an unhappy king who could not be cured of his melancholy. Entertainers were brought from neighbouring lands but all failed to amuse him. It was at last suggested that the king should wear the shirt of a happy man for seven days. A beggar, the only

truly happy man in the land, was found and brought to the palace. When the king discovered that this happy man had no shirt, he laughed, and was cured. We are grateful to Mr. Broadhurst who made interesting comments on the productions and distributed praise and blame where they were due. He also gave us many valuable tips on stage-craft which we hope will help future producers.

Michael Cuthbert 4A Price

1959

The play chosen for this year's competition was an adaptation by Mr. Reed of Nora Ratcliff's "The Wooden Horse," which deals with the famous Greek ruse in the Trojan War. Sinon, the Greek, persuades the Trojans to bring in the gigantic wooden horse which the Greeks had left outside the walls of Troy. He leads them to believe that if they are able to do this, the Gods will once more look favourably upon them. In spite of the warnings of Cassandra and Laocoon, the Trojans breach their walls and drag in the horse - thus bringing about their own destruction, for the hollow body conceals Greek soldiers. The acting and production were creditable in view of the difficulties inherent in the play. The dramatic tension depends on the words and reactions of the onlookers who comment on the Trojan effort: this demands convincing grouping, gesture and movement and this is where the winning House (Price) scored. As an experiment, members of the Lower Sixth were allowed to produce the plays this year, though the casts were still limited to Forms I - IV. The plays were adjudicated by Mrs. W. Hughes, of Wakefield, who gave us much valuable advice about the techniques of the drama and the problems of production.

Points were awarded as follows:

1. Price	77%
2. Holgate	67%
3. Guest	64%
4. Talbot	50%