



International Dance Teachers' Association

DI newsletter August 2019

Celebrating the Life of Rosalyn Wicks 25 years on

Rosalyn dedicated her life to the word of dance, holding Fellowships of the International Dance Teachers' Association also known as the IDTA. She was an examiner, lecturer, and adjudicator as well as teaching both children and professionals. To reach their full potential students were given specialist training in Ballet, Modern, Tap, Jazz, Gymnastics and Drama at her dance academy.

She co-ordinated the Miss Dance of Great Britain held at the City Hall, Sheffield for many years, now held at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool. A bursary in her memory is now awarded annually and presented by her family.

A true professional in all aspects, Miss Wicks inspired hundreds of students progressing their talent and excellence in their careers. Many continued to perform professionally throughout the world.

Rosalyn organised and choreographed hundreds of productions. All showcasing the discipline of dance and stimulating their love of theatrical excellence. Throughout the years she raised funds for several charities. Many were held at the Civic Hall in Barnsley, amongst many other venues.

Barnsley born and bred a true friend and colleague, a very special lady.

If you would like to attend this special evening or make a donation in memory of Rosalyn Wicks, all proceeds will go to Barnsley Hospice, please contact her daughter Eleanor.

A LIFE OF DANCE REMEMBERED

Celebrating the life of Rosalyn Wicks

25 years on



*Sunday 20th October 5pm till late
at the Bluebell Suite, Dodworth S75 4LS*

*Early Bird Tickets - £20 adults £10 children
(If purchased before 15th August)*

£25 adults £15 children (If purchased after 15th August)

All tickets includes buffet and a complementary drink



**A CHARITY EVENT
PROCEEDS TO BARNSELY HOSPICE**

Tickets available from:

*The Dance Depot
Barnsley Hospice*

Dancerama

*Take 2 Academy
or contact Eleanor Hill
on 07775 678312*

Congress 2019 additional report

Monday 6 July 2019

Ballroom morning lectures.

We were greeted in Southport by a busy and bustling town and beautiful sunshine. As the doors to the floral hall opened at 9.00am there was a slow and steady arrival of members and students all keen to find their favourite seats and get ready for a busy day ahead. Anna Jones formally opened the 2019 congress and hoped everyone would find lots of useful information to take home and enjoy meeting each other and making new IDTA friends.

9.30am - Latin Development for Medallist to Competitor. Damian Evans from Dance Options in Cheam, gave us ideas to help pupils develop from a non competitive social dancer to a competitor. He felt it important to start everyone on their road to dancing in a fun and socially interactive way and then pin point people that have the passion to take their dancing further. Starting by using the Medal Test system and then progressing through more technique to develop each person within their own capability. With the help of demonstrators Alfie and Olivia he used simple variations in both Cha Cha Cha and Rumba and showed how they could then be developed into routines for the competitive dance floor.

10.15 am - Freestyle. Samantha Williams took on the job of showing everyone a useful routine that could be adapted for use at a variety of levels. She was assisted by her young demonstrator Ellie and joined on the floor by a few brave delegates who successfully proved how useful the routine could be. Samantha used interesting choreography, with jumps leaps and spins, all of which she showed alternatives for if you were using the routine at a more basic level.

11.00 am - Jive Swing for Adults. Mark Webb, assisted by Lisa, started by saying he was going to show us a mix of moves for adult social dancers to stop them being scared off by the Jive! This was a brilliantly executed routine which I am sure people will find so useful for a social introduction to Jive or Swing. The routine could also be used as a Rock and Roll Medallist routine or even changed into a ballroom Jive style. There was a very enthusiastic response from the audience with many people joining Mark on the floor to learn the routine.

11.45 am - Ballroom Waltz and Quickstep with Marek Kosaty and Paulina Glozik. Marek took a very different approach to this lecture starting with an excellent demonstration of basic waltz figures; he continued to talk about creating the right connection through your own body and with your partner. He got people to join him on the floor to try some exercises for getting the lower part and the upper part of the body correctly centred. He talked about the idea of the man keeping his left side towards the lady 'closing the door' on the left side, and when taking a step creating a triangle shape with the legs on each step. He used the same ideas in the quickstep and pointed out that due to the speed of the music it is important to allow the legs to swing under the body.

This rounded off a vary varied and enjoyable morning of lectures with plenty of new ideas to take away and work on.

Julie Sawyer

Dance Beat Weekend



In June of this year we were invited by Market Rasen Town Council to take part in the nationwide Dance Beat Weekend which was being run by, and at, Tesco stores across the country to raise money for charity.

As the event was due to take place outside the Tesco store in Market Rasen we decided that the Latin in Line would be best suited to this event. We mentioned this to our class and they were happy to come along and support us on Friday 19 July.

The day dawned, not with the clear, bright sunny skies we'd hoped for but with heavy rain filled clouds darkening the sky. However, the show must go on so consequently, tucked under a small canopy outside at the front of the store, we set up our music system and embarked upon putting on a show for all to see.

Heavy drizzle prevailed throughout but this did not dampen our enthusiasm. After well over an hour of Latin dancing the heavens really opened up which called a halt to the proceedings, finishing with a Rumba (Rumba in the Rain).

We were all rewarded, albeit outside, with light refreshments provided by the Tesco store. Following this we all had our photographs taken inside the store with the Mayor of Market Rasen.

Our Line Dancing group were simply amazing and we were very proud of them all for turning out on a miserable day to support us.'

Heather and Peter Davies

Bond School of Dance



Bond School Of Dance in Seaford are celebrating their second student being offered a place on The Royal Ballet Schools Junior Associates Programme (JA).

Kai Golovnirov (aged just 8) recently auditioned and has secured a place at The Royal Ballet School Covent Garden, London, where he will attend Saturday classes from September with other talented boys from around the country.

Nia Waite aged 9, who successfully auditioned last June 2018, has also been offered another year as an associate at the Royal Ballet centre in Eastleigh. Both Kai and Nia will continue their weekly dance lessons at Bond School alongside lessons with the Royal Ballet.

Ms Nicola Bond who is principal of Bond School says 'It is such an achievement in itself to be offered a place, thousands apply each year, with only a handful being successful, both students are naturally gifted & passionate about dance, showing huge potential in

their dance ability'. 'I am absolutely thrilled to now have two students on the programme, and very excited for their future to follow their dream into the professional dance world'.

Nikki Bond



Jane's Jewels

Members wherever you are in the World.

"Girls are less likely than boys to enjoy being active".

This information was revealed by Active Lives Children sportengland.org/cypattitudes
I wonder if a survey across the globe of children who dance would disprove that statement?



Following a paragraph in the last Jane's Jewels, look who is to replace Darcy Bussell on the Strictly Adjudicating panel; Motsi Mabuse, the lovely elder sister of Oti, one of the current professional dancers on the programme.

Tesco promoted Dance Beats from 18 to 20 July, to raise money for Cancer Research, British Heart Foundation and Diabetes UK. It would be interesting to know how many dance centres took part in this opportunity for free advertising.

I heard the other day that we should stop using plastic. Plastic is a wonderful invention; I don't think we could manage without it. We just need to use it responsibly.

Speaking of responsibility; all staff get holidays and are paid. Someone working on a casual basis accrues 1 hours holiday for every 8.3 hours worked. To calculate the pay, go back over the previous 12 weeks earnings.

The International Olympics committee voted to add break dancing to the Paris 2024 Olympics.

"One small step".....50 years

Steps, not moon walks, remind me of Daniel Wong from Hong Kong with his spectacular outfits and his delightfully extrovert mother.



Ali King, Operations Manager of the Tower Ballroom, said that maybe word got around that Daniel and his mother were going to do an impromptu demonstration of the Paso Doble at a tea dance in the Tower during the Blackpool Dance Festival.

This possibly resulted in producing one of the largest audiences of the season, by coincidence or otherwise and our friends produced a show that left nothing to the imagination. Flamboyant in costume and content, not too technical but full of life, energy, enthusiasm and highly entertaining. The video went viral.



Thank goodness we still have characters in our business.

Love at first sight.....

A man complained to the manager of a local supermarket when a cashier at the checkout called him "love". It was Yorkshire after all and could have been "pet" in Tyne Tees etc.



I had a chat with a retired Theatre Examiner who asked why, after 64 years' service to the IDTA, she did not receive a free Dance International Magazine. I did not have an answer but I think it would be a nice gesture at very little cost.

Perhaps Plato had the answer when he said, **"Dancing is a gift from God but it requires a lot of human effort to perfect it as an art form."**

Happy Dancing

Jane Tumelty

Hong Kong

On 21st July 2019 I was delighted to welcome Miss Sherry Kwon to support this Championship for adjudicating from the morning till evening.

Miss Sherry Kwon's husband Mr. Lee travelled with her from Seoul, South Korea to Hong Kong to support the event.

The competition started at 10:00am and the daytime competitions finished by 6:00pm.

At 7:30pm we started our dinner dance with four Open Championship Events. All adjudicators worked very hard to select every couple for their positioning. We are very proud of this high level of competitors joining this championship.

Daniel YK Yan



Open Amateur Ballroom



Open Professional Ballroom



Open Amateur Latin



Open Professional Latin

Ireland

I was very pleased to be going to examine in Ireland once again. I was met at the airport by Sviesa Joha, Principle of The Dancing Jewels Ballet School. Sviesa took me straight to Portlaoise and after a late lunch, I examined for about 4 hours before going to the hotel.

The following day we drove to Cork which was a 2 hour drive to examine at her other school which she took over from Aruba Coghlan who was retiring.

After the exam session the school had arranged a get together for Aruba. Some of the children also performed a ballet dance they had performed at a recent festival. It was enjoyable to watch and lovely to see the appreciation all the parents and children had for Aruba.

After this Sviesa took me to my next teacher Liz Shannon which was in Doolin about a 3 hour drive.

After settling in at the guest house we had dinner at the very quaint local along with many other family members. It was a very pleasant evening.

I examined at Liz's school Broadway Dance. After the exam Liz took me to the coach station to go back to Cork where I stayed the evening.

I wasn't examining the following day so I did a little retail therapy prior to going to the airport for my flight home. It was lovely meeting lots of enthusiastic children and very dedicated teachers. I hope to see you both again in the not too distant future.

Mariyka Bolubasz





Portugal

I was very pleased to be asked to examine once again in Portugal. I was examining at 3 different schools which consisted of a lot of travelling.

I set off Thursday morning and was kindly met by Márcia Ferreira whom I'd met the previous year and also Ines's Mum who drove me to the exam venue after a quick lunch at the airport.

Despite this being her first exam session, the children had been very well prepared in both exam procedure and also technique.

It was another 1 hour 30 minutes drive back to Oporto to meet up with Márcia again. We went for a meal at the local shopping centre where I was later met by Giselle Brites, the teacher I would be examining for next. Again it was another long drive to Viseu. We arrived very late in the evening and went straight to the hotel.

The following morning I had exams followed by some coaching. I was free in the afternoon so caught up on some paperwork and enjoyed a pleasant walk around Viseu.

I examined all day the following day and the third day I took workshops in Ballet, Tap, Modern Jazz and Theatre-Craft. After lunch I was met by Clara Tavares who took me to her school for a short exam session prior to going back to the airport.

Despite all the travelling it was very enjoyable as always.

Thank you all the teachers involved for making my stay a very pleasant one and hope to see you all again.

Mariyka Bolubasz

IDTA Overseas Reception

Every year during the world famous British Ballroom and Latin American Dance Championships held in Blackpool, IDTA hosts a luncheon for its members who are visiting Blackpool for the Championships.

Prior to the luncheon, IDTA Examiners from around the world attended a training course at the Winter Gardens, lead by the Ballroom Quality Assurance Panel, with the President, Chief Executive and Operations Manager.

This year the Reception was once again supported by IDTA members from around the world who were joined by UK guests.

As the guests arrived they were greeted by the IDTA President, Phil Winston and IDTA Directors to a pre-luncheon drinks reception. At the start of the luncheon, the President welcomed all the guests and the Managing Director of Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Amanda Thompson, thanked everyone for attending and supporting Blackpool as the home of dance.

The President then brought the proceedings to a close and thanked the guests for attending, with particular thanks to everyone concerned in the organisation of the day's event, with special thanks to the staff at the White Tower Restaurant for the excellent service received.







Greatest Showman

South West Area (Theatre)

Sunday 28th April 2019 at Broadclyst Victory Hall, Nr Exeter

What a fabulous day the South West Area (Theatre) had with their invited lecturers Steven Luke Walker and Elissa Clare Hicken; both of whom are industry professionals, and with “first-hand experience”; (Steven actually worked as the vocal coach on the film) lectured on “The Greatest Showman” – “Beyond the Curtain”.

Indeed, both Steven, also known as “The Voice Whisperer” and Elissa, have impressive CV’s with much experience working within the West End, on Broadway and on the Silver Screen: Steven, director of the “Vocal Sanctuary”, wrote and produced his own musical (an historical fairy tale) *Blaze*; wrote and produced “Stars of the West End – Sing the Songs of Steven Luke Walker” at the Charing Cross Theatre; worked as the vocal coach on the film “The Greatest Showman” and also worked with Oscar winning actor Rami Malek on the film “Bohemian Rhapsody”. Steven also worked as vocal coach on the stage musical “Bat out of Hell – The Musical” – and recently did the vocal overdubs on the film “Rocket Man” (the Elton John Movie) and is currently working on a new stage musical “Waitress”.

Elissa is a performance coach and vocal coach (as well as being a dancer, choreographer and actress) who has worked across the West End; in TV and film. Elissa’s stage credits include “The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe” and the UK tour of “Fame”. Elissa also enjoys choreographing for Motor Neurone Disease and the British Heart Foundation’s charity campaigns.

The focus of the day’s lectures was on vocal technique (singing whilst dancing/a dancer’s breathing) and performance through integration of skills.

The morning session was for ages 7-10 years and the afternoon was for 11+ years, both were well attended, and it was lovely to see all the students thoroughly enjoying themselves on the floor. Both sessions took a similar format (the afternoon session was taken to a higher level suitable for the older students) and started with a very thorough and fun warm up taken by Elissa to music from *The Greatest Showman*.

After the fun warm up with Elissa; Steven took over - explaining that, first we warm the body up and then the voice. Steven then encouraged the students to stretch up, then give themselves a hug, breath in and out saying “I am the best”! This brought smiles to everyone’s faces and I swear the students all grew taller by at least an inch!

The vocal coaching then began with Steven explaining the need for correct posture in order to “release” the voice, taking the students from; feet apart, loose knees, awareness of fingers, “butt” back then pull the tail in, to; long back and lifted head at which point he asked them to breath in for 4 counts and out for 8 counts making a “ssssshh” sound. All the students were focussed and it was evident that this exercise was relaxing them beautifully, ready for their next instruction.

Steven and Elissa worked together as a team as the students were taken through more exercises. Steven made the point that if you tense the abdominals its harder for the voice to “get out” and together Steven and Elissa took them through the following: Find your bottom ribs (obliques) with your fingers; breath in and push the fingers away; release then make fist and do “Super Hero” pose; then with the breath “huv huv” up the scales! Other exercises included the “Lip Brill” making sure the air comes out the front of the mouth (not out the side like a horse!) and also the “Magic Raspberry” exercise which demonstrated the “recoil” breath – which worked like “magic” “hey

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where did that breath come from"! All of the exercises were great fun and everyone was entertained by them (including the teachers watching who just couldn't resist having a go!).

Finally, to complete the integration of skills and move to the performance of the iconic song of the film "This Is Me" – Steven and Elissa spoke firstly about the emotion required to make the song believable, and here, Steven made the point that "when the emotion is so high we cannot speak anymore and we have to sing". He went on to explain that the song "This Is Me" is about rejection and hope, and encouraged the students to show both of these emotions with their bodies as well as their voices in order to give a convincing performance. Also, from a performance point of view, Steven and Elissa explained the different "levels of head" required to perform and project to all the levels of audience to whom a cast would be performing in a big theatre ie stalls, circle, balcony etc.

After learning the number, the students had the opportunity to perform this several times to the audience of teachers and returning parents, everyone "loved" it, and we were all truly entertained.

The South West Area (Theatre) are extremely grateful to Steven and Elissa for the fabulous and fun day of lectures they gave to all those present, together with all the helpful "hints and tips" they gave to the teachers and students on the floor. And we look forward to perhaps seeing them again, in the not too distant future, for a "Rocket Man" day! "Awesome"!

Ps Our next lecture is on Sunday, 6th October with Carl Walker on the New Jazz Grades – you won't want to miss this! Also, if there are any teachers within the South West Area who would like to receive emails on regular events then please email: jodancesexton@yahoo.com or telephone 01395 279169

Jo Sexton





Let's Dance

Two weeks after being invited to a Dance show at the Cast theatre in Doncaster, I was back once again, this time to see "Let's Dance" by the Marilyn Baker School of Dance.

This is a large and prestigious school in Doncaster with many achievements and awards to its name, mainly due to the two Principals, Marilyn Baker and Gemma Grayson, a Grandma and Granddaughter combination

who, together, have produced a school with an excellent reputation and some outstanding talent.

As with most dancing school shows, there was a variety of genres, mainly groups, but with several solo acts included. Strong and creatively arranged routines performed by well rehearsed and talented students and adults.

As well as dancing there was some excellent acrobatic work, singing and musical theatre. Added to the production numbers were special effects and visual backcloths which gave meaning and dimension to the various numbers.

The juveniles and juniors, of course, stole the show, but besides these and the excellent inters and seniors, the adults and dads demonstrated to everyone where the children originally gained their talent. Several solo artists performed routines to a very high standard, which allowed the audience to see what can be achieved by hard work and dedication.

Congratulations to the unseen heroes also.... The back stage crew, costume and prop makers, chaperones and all who helped make this a successful show. To the Teachers and Assistant Teachers a big 'Well Done' and to Marilyn and Gemma my respect and admiration for everything you have done and continue to do for your school and students.

Jennifer McCrow



‘Magic To Do’

The Amanda Restell Academy of Dance in Leigh on Sea, Essex, is currently celebrating 25 years of excellence – and it’s easy to see why!

Their school motto ‘giving every little star the chance to shine’ has never been more true, as each and every student in their recent production absolutely shone on the stage of the beautiful Towngate Theatre in Basildon.

The aptly titled ‘Magic To Do’ was exactly that. Magical from start to finish. Featuring a cast of 150 talented IDTA Musical Theatre and singing students aged from 4 to 18, the show moved seamlessly through solos, duets, and group numbers, to extracts from many well known musicals – Calamity Jane, Mary Poppins, Beauty and the Beast, A Chorus Line, and Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat. The singing, acting, and group harmonies were superb throughout. Many congratulations to all the soloists and featured performers for their amazing confidence and stage presence.

Creatively staged and cleverly choreographed, the energy and enthusiasm from every member of the cast never failed to excite the audience, bringing a tear to the eye of many a proud parent! Huge congratulations to the School Principal and IDTA Theatre Examiner, Amanda Restell, and her dedicated team. Amanda is a keen and knowledgeable musical theatre enthusiast who goes to see everything the West End has to offer, making her the perfect ambassador for our wonderful IDTA Musical Theatre syllabus, nurturing the next generation of performers with her passion.

Lisa Lee



‘Light Up The Magical Stage’

It was a great privilege to be invited to see ‘Light up the Magical Stage’, a production by the Jennifer Riley School of Dance at the Cast in Doncaster. The Cast is a beautiful, council funded theatre in an amazing glass building which seats 620 and is therefore an intimate, friendly and welcoming venue.

The production was made up of performances from musicals, films, stage and television, and the proceeds, as previous years, was to go to various charities.

A lot of thought and preparation had gone into producing, directing and choreographing the show as well as creating a multitude of costumes, spectacular sound and lighting, pyrotechnics and back cloth projections.

Every performer on the stage worked with enthusiasm and boundless energy, from the very young to the more mature!!

There were some outstanding individual performances throughout the show, not only in Dance, but also in Singing and Drama. Invited guests, who had returned or were about to embark on a professional career, thrilled the audience with their professional performances.

The actual show itself ran effortlessly, with slick exits and entrances, well rehearsed routines, expertise handling of props by both the performers and the stage hands, and well organised sound, lighting, projections and pyrotechnics.

There are so many people to acknowledge who helped make this a successful show, but my congratulations must go to the teachers Julie Riley, Jennifer Riley, Emma Riley and Joanne Newton for their outstanding organization and dedication. Well done ladies!



Jennifer McCrow



Chantry School of Contemporary and Balletic Arts Annual Showcase

On Saturday 8th June I had the pleasure of going to the Guildhall Theatre in Grantham to watch the Chantry School of Contemporary and Balletic Arts Annual Showcase.

Although I had not been involved in the choreography for the performance, I do train the young vocational students for their IDTA Intermediate Ballet, Anatomy Diploma, Pre Associate Ballet and Level 4 Diploma at this excellent college.

The accredited course is headed by Rae Piper and Paul Chantry who definitely lead by example and display dedication and love for their passion - dance.

The evening was a joy, presenting so much talent, well controlled technique and beautiful artistry. Numbers to note were-

I Put A Spell On You - choreographed by Graeme Pickering

Forgiveness - choreographed by Elizabeth Haslam

Out of our Heads - choreographed by Elizabeth Haslam

Fighter - choreographed by Rae Piper

One Brick at a Time - choreographed by Rae Piper and Gail Gordon

Indecision - choreographed by David Beer

With You - choreographed by Shannon Parker

The Smiling Boots - choreographed by Paul Chantry

The showcase also featured works by guest choreographers - Jenny Logan and Alexandra Harris (both successful international performers and choreographers in a variety of genres).

As a member of the teaching faculty I am particularly impressed and heartened by the gentle nurturing the students receive, a course on which talent is cared for and enjoyed and celebrated. An environment where emotional and physical wellness go hand in hand with discipline and respect for others and for themselves.

Thank you Chantry for a wonderful showcase and a solid and safe step for dancers of the future!

Philippa Chloe Lewis FIDTA and Theatre Examiner





Mamma Mia

“Mamma Mia... here we go again!”

Or should I say “Success... here IDTA goes again!” and these stories are what inspire pupils and teachers alike.

Let’s do this as a team, as that’s exactly how this success story has happened. Beth Gourlay, originally from Redditch in Worcester, started her performing training with IDTA theatre Examiner Sue Latham at the Latham School of Dance in Redditch. Sue was imperative in Beth’s training, as she laid the foundations, gave her the love, and inspired her to train and take IDTA examinations as an all round dancer. When I spoke to Sue at the recent IDTA event, she was delighted with Beth’s recent exciting news. Theatre Examiner Carl Walker, who assisted Sue at the time, helped Beth with private lessons in Modern Jazz and IDTA competition work. Sue then requested that Beth start to work on her singing, that’s where I came in.

Beth always had a talent, but she really respected further technical training, and focusing on the variety of styles which are in the Theatre Craft and Musical Theatre syllabus. She saw this as inspiration for a possible future career as a professional performer. When this was her serious intention, we decided to train her up for college auditions. She was really interested in going to Phil Winston’s Theatreworks College, as she knew its reputation for training glamorous professionals, and respected that both Carl and I had worked there. She soon collated all her songs and an audition dance together. More importantly, her 6 inch Kurt Geiger heels, which we knew, with his eye for detail, that Mr Winston would be impressed with in her interview!

Following the audition, singing and dancing all day, and Mr Winston quite rightly complimenting the shoes(!), Beth was offered a place at the college. Whilst enjoying college training, and the challenge of working with the other great students, her life had a terrible blip. After a short term of illness, her long term boyfriend lost his battle with Cancer. Beth needed time, her family and the college were extremely supportive while she had a break from her performing work. She left college and amongst other jobs worked in a Nursing Home for a while, and knowing Beth, she probably still wore those Kurt Geiger heels with her nursing outfit! A while later her passion for performing forced her to pick herself up, and she went off and performed in a variety of jobs, including Thomas Land at Drayton Manor theme park, performing in a hotel in Cyprus, corporate work, and as singer dancer for P&O cruises. It was then that Beth came back to visit Carl Walker and said, ‘I want to try out for musical theatre’. ‘Ok...’ I said, ‘it’s a big shift from what you’ve been doing, but anything is possible. You need to re-live all your college training, change your singing style, divert your singing repertoire, change the way you perform your songs, learn script work and think about varied monologues for auditions, go to see some musicals, neaten up your dance style, learn to adapt your image constantly, make some videos, and get an agent! Otherwise, it’ll be easy!’ With no time to lose we started training in singing, monologues, and reshaping Beth’s style for her to be taken seriously in the musical theatre industry. After several attempts at various videos to send to agents, Beth was offered a place with Ride Personal Management. Her first audition was for Royal Caribbeans Musical Mamma Mia. Mamma Mia has followed several West End musicals, all which have successfully sailed the Oceans delighting audiences on holiday. Cats, We Will Rock You, Chicago, and Grease. One of Beth’s friends from our school was appearing in Grease at the time, and she was determined to follow suit. ‘If he can do it, so can I’, she said with a determined glint in her eye, and donning another high heel. Her agent said, ‘go to the Mamma Mia audition for experience, you probably won’t do very well this time, as it’s your first audition’. After a full day, singing the songs from the show, doing script work with others, and an intense dance call, oh, and up against ‘600’ auditionees, Beth found herself in the final two. She was delighted, and

extremely shocked. However, just to drop a bombshell, she was then told that the casting directors were going to New York to repeat the same thing the next week! Oh..... Back to the drawing board, back in the studio, vocal warm-ups, a few adult dance classes, and I even suggested that she start to teach our children's classes, to see if we could inspire her in the teaching profession as a backup plan. Two weeks went by, and the phone call arrived, Beth was not only offered Mamma Mia, but the 'leading role' of Sophie! Beth's words were, 'I think they liked my head shot photo?' It just goes to show that with hard work, determination, inspiring teachers, and the IDTA, you can achieve anything. So if you're ever in the Caribbean this year, call her a visit. Beth is delighted to be involved with this magazine article, and is eternally grateful for her IDTA training, Sue Latham, Phil Winston and his team, Carl Walker and apparently me. This is just one story from the amazing IDTA Association. Let's hear some more.

Ian Meeson

