

I remember when my mother first suggested that my brother and I attend a drama club after school on Fridays. "Guhh...do I have to?" I said. Little did I know it would become a huge part of my life for the next 10 years, introduce me to some lifelong friends and introduce me to my future wife! Not bad, I hear you say.

I started at Wardie Church with such greats as Ben McKinstrie, Sean Adams and that guy who pretended to be a dog and fell off the stage through the curtain during a show. The shows ranged from 'Joseph', to 'The Rice Girls', to 'Hook', to 'The Baffie Shuffle' (a classic). It was around this time I met my future wife Louisa for the first time, but I didn't get to know her for many years... Gradually I moved up the ranks and acquired my first main role as Tam O'Shanter. With main roles came a life of excess and debauchery. The parties were wild, the girls numerous, the champagne lifestyle suited me to a tee. And all of this at the tender age of 9.

Shortly after, Julie invited a few of us to join a Saturday morning drama group for some of the more experienced members. The mornings spent there were among the greatest Saturdays of my life, certainly a vast improvement on my previous Saturday morning commitment of playing for the worst football team in Edinburgh.

Some highlights for me included Peer Gynt, Mr Mump 1 and 2 and best of all...FRANKENTONGS! There was a definite great energy for these shows and everyone knew that they were surrounded by a lot of talented young folk. Some names that stick out in my memory- Keith, Amy, Steven, Andrew, Patrick, Struan, Michael Goodwin, Cristian, Kate, David and of course, John Cooper. Oh and Rebecca, Alex, Michaela, Daisy, Dayna, Joanna, Jess, Louise, Natalie x2, Anna....gah too many, I'm sure I've forgotten loads...

And of course- the geniuses behind the shows- writers, directors, producers, costume designers, set designers, sound and lighting engineers...the ever-brilliant Julie and Louise. Congratulations on a brilliant 20 year reign and long may it continue. You've inspired a generation of young people. If you ever need any help whatsoever, give me a shout!

Congratulations again and thank you!

Craig Hughes

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