

About the Festival



In February 1944 a Youth Conference was held in WGC, and a local "Youth Committee" was formed to co-ordinate youth activities. The first event sponsored by the Committee was a Youth Drama Festival. The first Festival was held at the Woodhall Community Centre, WGC in May 1944. A local resident adjudicated, but no awards were made, as it was non-competitive.

The success of the first Festival encouraged the Committee to commission a silver cup to be awarded for the best performance in 1945 and subsequent festivals.

The Festival moved to the Barn Theatre in 1947 following the Barn's return from wartime use as an army salvage depot.

In 1949, the Festival was divided into two sections, Senior and Junior, and for the first time a professional Adjudicator was employed.

This became the pattern for all later years, since when, thousands of young actors from Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, London and elsewhere have participated in the annual Festival.

The Junior Section is for casts of School Year 10 and under, at the time of the Festival, and the Senior Section for those under 22. All performers must be amateurs. Entries may consist of a one-act play, or an extract from a longer play, lasting between 20 and 50 minutes. An independent Adjudicator, who comments on the plays at the end of each evening, judges the Festival.

The Festival receives no grants or subsidies, and depends on audience support (through the sale of tickets and programmes) to cover operating costs. The Committee, stage crew and front-of-house staff are all unpaid volunteers, without whose dedication the Festival could not continue.

Further information, rules and entry forms are available from the Hon. Secretary:

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