Here we are in our 90th anniversary year at our AGM. When I sat down to write this, I said I wouldn't spend too long talking, however we have done so much this year it's hard to keep it concise! I shall do my best!

**Shows**

We have had 5 fantastic shows performed at the Georgian theatre this year, *Macbeth*; *Whisky* *Galore* and then our short stories which encompassed, *Cracker's Christmas, The Break Room* and *Bride* *Before a Fall*. All 5 performances received rave reviews from NODA, Richmondshire Today and of course most importantly, our audience members.

Once again RADS members are showing their skills in tackling a wealth of plays in a variety of settings and staging. It's great to keep things fresh for our audiences, try out new things but above all be successful in providing great entertainment. Every one of our performances at the Georgian Theatre Royal this year turned a healthy profit and although we don't select shows of course by how much money they will make us, it's great to be adding to our bank balance to ensure the future of the society.

As well as our Georgian Theatre performances we of course also had our one act entries in the Sedgefield Festival, *The Form* directed by the late Roger Ordish and *Little Grimley Presents Strictly Sex Factor (on Ice)* directed by Max Walker. Both got great feedback from the adjudicator and again audience members. It was also great to see so many members travel up to Sedgefield to support the directors and casts.

Once again RADS got involved in this year's Mayfest, performing *Robin Hood and the Poor Knight*, directed by Gill Page. It's lovely to be involved in a local festival such as Mayfest and the show was very well received, even if the second audience got rained on a bit! Having performed at Mayfest for a few years now I hope that we are starting to establish a new RADS tradition going forward. The challenge of performing outdoors is not an easy one but once again our members rose to the demands of the show and did a fantastic job.

**Awards**

What a year it's been for RADS when it comes to awards! First off at the Sedgefield One Act Festival we walked away with 4 awards, Adjudicator Chris Baglin awarded Scott Fenney the Best Actor award for *The Form*; Rachel Hall was Best Actress jointly for her roles in *The Form* and *Little Grimley*; Mike Walker was Best Supporting Actor for *Little Grimley* and we won the Adjudicator’s Award for Coral Lincoln braving the roller skates in *Little Grimley*.

Following on from that at the annual NODA awards in October we walked away with 2 awards from 4 nominations. *Swive [Elizabeth]* won best drama for District 6 and Jodie Martin won best supporting actress also in District 6. Our nominations were certainly not to be sniffed at with Charlotte Finn being nominated for Best Actress in the Youth awards for our district and *Stepping Out* being nominated for best drama not just for our district but for the entire region.

We also received the news at the NODA awards that our production of *Swive [Elizabeth]* won the presidents cup for the year, which was presented to us in November during *Whisky Galore's* run. This award is selected by the President of NODA for their choice of best performance out of all the shows they have seen nationwide in that year, so massive congratulations to Gregan and the cast.

Finally, just a few weeks ago we received word that we had won best Basic Programme for 2023-24 for the programme for *Whisky Galore*, well done Mike!

**Members/EX-Members lost**

Although it has been a fantastic year for RADS we have also lost several ex-members this year who were absolute stalwarts in the work that they did for the society throughout the years. Mike Collingburn and Caroline Cunningham both gave so much time to the society and I'm sure members who spent time with them will remember them fondly.

We also lost current member Roger Ordish this year, and although only a society member for a short time we appreciate his impact and the work he created with us. I'd like to spend a few moments just remembering these members.

**Clubnights/Social Trips**

Once again we've had a varied year of clubnights, from play read-throughs to National Theatre Showings, from a quiz night to our annual Christmas meal, from Choral Speaking to Radio Comedy. We also had a fun trip to Newcastle Theatre Royal to see *Noises Off* that I'm sure everyone who attended would agree was a fantastically chaotic performance. Thank you to every member who ran a clubnight for us, and thank you to everyone that came along to them. These social nights are a great way for us to catch up outside of rehearsals and for potential new members to get a taste of the society, as well as broadening our horizons! If anyone has ideas for future clubnights please let our Social Secretary know.

**Building Work**

This year Gregan was successful in obtaining the society a grant which we put towards refreshing the tools the society own, so we have some lovely new equipment that will be essential in future years for set building. Upgrading our equipment along with the purchase of the Mac and accessories last year helps us to enhance our shows in new ways with technology we might not otherwise have access to. These purchases would not have been possible without grants from Richmondshire District Council so we are of course grateful to them for the funding.

This year the committee have drawn close attention to the clubrooms and remedial work that needs to be done on the building to keep it in the best state it can be going forward. Last Summer we made changes to the space on this level of the clubrooms, getting rid of the bar to create more seating and storage space. We also commissioned a building survey that highlighted to us where essential work needed to take place, and as you have probably seen from the scaffolding at the back of the clubrooms, we have wasted no time in getting some of the more urgent repair work started. Without spoiling Alex's Treasurer report too much you will see that the society has made a small loss this year, but part of the money we have spent has been invested in the future of the building, work that will cost us much less to complete now than it would if we left it for the future. Big thank you to Warnock for heading up the co-ordination of this building work along with Brian as Clubroom Manager.

We've done so much this year, I am so proud to say I am Chair of this wonderful society and having waffled on for a while now I shall hand over to Alex to go through her Treasurer's report.