

ABERGAVENNY EISTEDDFOD - YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMPETITIONS

The Young Dimensions disco dancers from Brynmawr were just one of the highlights of last Saturday's Abergavenny Eisteddfod held at King Henry V111 School. Dressed in eye-catching black outfits with sparkling lime green tunics and make-up, the group lit up the stage and had feet tapping throughout the large audience.

Other highlights of the day included Gilwern School's Recorder ensemble, the Barrel Organ, where the talented youngsters not only played a number of lively tunes, but also managed to pop up and down in time to the music, providing a very entertaining act.

Llantilio Pertholey's Unison Group tied in first place in the junior competitions with Nidus Theatre Arts from Cwmbrân. The groups contained a number of individual winners, who also came from Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni, Our Lady & St Michael, Cantref and Govilon Schools.

The adjudicators selected their four favourite acts from the afternoon's secondary school competitions to receive special prizes and perform on stage in the evening at the Borough Theatre, as a prelude to the adult competitions-cum-concert. The first to be chosen was KHS pupil Elis Reed, with an inspirational piano rendition of the jazz classic "Georgia on my Mind."

The three others were violinist Christian Jenkins from Nidus Theatre Arts, who played the last movement from Vivaldi's A Minor Concerto, Samuel Lloyd Williams, who sang If Ever I Would Leave You from the musical Camelot and Hannah Burch, Mari Davies and Elen Newcombe, with their own keyboard, flute, violin and voice arrangement of Peggy Lee's "You Give Me Fever".

Adjudicators for the day were Penny Dixon (disco), Huw Williams (folk dance), Terry Gilmore-James and Dilwyn Byles (instrumental and vocal), and Delyth McCaffery (recitation). Judith Pendrous was the accompanist.

Bronwen Green, former head teacher of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni, made a welcome return to Abergavenny as Guest of Honour in the morning, and April Griffith, the school's current head, conducted proceedings. In the Afternoon, the Guest of Honour and Conductor respectively were Graham Nemes of King Henry V111 School and Val Burch, both great supporters of the Eisteddfod.

ABERGAVENNY EISTEDDFOD - ADULT COMPETITIONS

Billed as "Abergavenny's Performers of the Year," the evening Eisteddfod concert at the Borough Theatre in fact attracted competitors from a variety of locations near and far.

They included promising young students from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff, seasoned Eisteddfod winners from Brecon, Swansea and Cardigan, and the glamorous Gayathrie Patrick from Northampton, star of this year's publicity material.

The winner of the evening's main competition, the Abergavenny Rotary Club's Champion Solo, was Elin Elias, a mezzo soprano from Bridgend, who sang *La Luce Languie*, an aria from Verdi's *Macbeth*. Gwyn Morris from Cardigan was second, with *Prince Igor's Aria* by Borodin, and Gayathrie Patrick was third, singing *Non Piu Mesta* from *La Cenerentola* by Rossini.

Other competitions included *Song from a Musical*, *Under 25 Solo* and *Instrumental Solo*, and the *Champion Recitation* competition. This was won by Ross Leadbeter from Abertillery with a confident presentation of Idris Davies' dramatic poem *Gwalia Deserta*, about the hardship suffered in South Wales' mining communities.

Local fundraiser Trevor Turner gave a short address as President of the Evening. He reminded members of the audience of the heyday of Abergavenny Eisteddfod in the mid 19th century, led by Augusta Hall, Lady Llanover, when competitors would come to Abergavenny from all over Europe for the honour of competing - and for the glittering prizes.

The modern day Abergavenny Eisteddfod was a bilingual affair, offering an insight into Welsh tradition allied with first rate musical performances which could be enjoyed by Welsh and English speakers alike.

Musical adjudicators for the evening were the renowned soprano Rosamund Shelley and Terence Gilmore James, a well-known local musician, native of Abergavenny and former organist and Choirmaster of St Mary's Church. Retired Head Teacher Glenville Powell was the adjudicator for the literature and recitation competitions.

Jeanette Massocchi and James Joseph from Abergavenny Music were the accompanists for the evening, and Ceri Thomas and Jeanette Massocchi introduced the performers. Councillor Martin Hickman,

Mayor of Abergavenny, accompanied by Mayoress Mrs Hickman, presented prizes on behalf of Abergavenny Town Council and said a few words in support of the Eisteddfod.

Ceri Thomas paid tribute to the Town Council, and to all the sponsors and helpers who had helped to make the evening a success. "Without the continued support of The Rotary Club, Abergavenny Music and Newyddion Gwent, it would be impossible to stage the Eisteddfod" she said. "This year Abergavenny History Society have also given us a generous contribution, and we are very grateful to them."

The evening ended in the most positive way possible - with the presentation by Clive Howells on behalf of the Rotary Club of a cheque for £500 towards next year's Eisteddfod, followed by a roof-raising "Hen Wlad fy Nhadau" enjoyed by singers and listeners alike!

LITERATURE WINNERS (ADULTS)

Prose: What does it mean to be Welsh?

1. Ena Bissell, Abergavenny
2. Shirley K Shirley, Abergavenny
3. Ruth Grant, Abergavenny and Daphne Robertson, Victoria, Australia

Welsh Prose: Ystyr Cymreictod Heddiw

1. John Meurig Edwards, Brecon
2. J Williams, Fishguard
3. T Graham Williams, Swansea and Carys Briddon, Ceredigion

Poem on the Theme of Dragons

1. Bryn Seabourne, Abergavenny
2. Shirley K Shirley, Abergavenny
3. Maria Davies, Ebbw Vale and W R Newrick, Gilwern

Limerick "A frantic young farmer from Gwent"

1. John Meurig Edwards, Brecon
2. Glenys Moses, Sennybridge
3. D Brancher and P Brancher, Abergavenny

Welsh Limerick "Hen glebren fusneslyd o'r Fenni"

1. John Meurig Edwards, Brecon and J Williams, Fishguard
3. T Graham Williams, Swansea

Poem for Welsh Learners "Byw yng Nghymru"

1. and 2. Margaret Jones Robinson, Gilwern

Note for editors

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