

Take a room full of members, some who can tap some who can't, teach the non tappers to dance and the tappers to dance badly (well pretend anyway) and then perform two finales. Add to this more words than most of them had ever had to learn before and you had Stepping Out.

From the start I had the idea of using the stalls area of the Brook for most of the performing with the audience being behind the dance mirrors therefore the first couple of meetings gave us some laughs as people pretended to preen themselves in the imaginary mirrors.

Once auditions came Nikki myself and the rest of the panel were pleased to see a mix of old and new members taking part. Every single person gave a great performance and we found it very difficult to make our decisions (a very nice position to be in).

Along with the staging another other way that this production was different was that apart from the two finale costumes the cast provided all their own costumes. The cast pulled together and we were able to mix and match so everyone had just the right look, although we do have to ask why people kept their shell suits (surely they won't come back in fashion). Prize for most colourful must go to Chloe – some of the audience were waiting in anticipation for her entrances to see what she was doing to have on.

For me as director the problem was that you had all your cast 'on' all the time (theoretically) . Blocking the scenes seemed to run fairly well and there were times I had to tell people they were dancing too well in places. However when we came to start to run the Acts the volume of words and scene content (it seemed that every music cue in the entire play was Mavis saying '...and its five six seven eight.') caused major worries. I can be honest and say that there were times when I didn't think we would make it. Once again the cast worked as a team, extra rehearsals and superhuman effort to learn words meant that come the Sunday before get in we had a show.

Opening night – it was said I was like an expectant father pacing up and down (I was so nervous) about 40 minutes went passed and it sounded as if they were nearing the end of Act 1. I panicked – we had never run under an hour in rehearsals – I need not have, the audience were loving it and the pace was flowing because of it.

We knew it was a funny show, however in front of an audience and with the performances all the cast gave, it became a hilarious one.

I want to take the opportunity to say the following thanks

To the Committee – for giving me the opportunity – Would I do it again? Probably if you'd have me but maybe not just yet.

Backstage – Lousie and Jo – making sense of my ramblings and working blind most of the time

Staff at the Brook – Verne, Mark and Dave – as always very professional

Chris – for making Diane look as if she could play and helping pull this one off without a band

Ryan and Derek – for your patience as they wasn't a huge amount for you to spot.

Ruth and Lucy – programme sellers extraordinaire – there were times people couldn't get out of the lift without buying one!

But special thanks to –

Nikki – the routines looked amazing. Thanks for all your moral support even when you weren't feeling 100% yourself.

And the cast, the award for

The most repetitive lines – to Carole for "...and its five six seven eight'

Different Song Every Night – to Ka'ren for 'Brown Girl' and others

Curtains – to Diane, we all knew what was happening but still we laughed

Maintaining the Gold Standard – to Gwinne, I understand you dazzled the first five rows when you came on in your 'not too bold' costume

NHS Recovery – to Chloe, time and again in rehearsal and show week reminding us just what bit comes next without the audience knowing

Kleenex Tissue Personality of the Year – to Sharon, we never knew you could wear them as a hat

Most inappropriate line – to Nicola, exactly how tall do you need to be to be a professional

Don't You Just Want to Mother Him – to Bill 'awwwwwwwwwwwww' and those legs

New School of Acting 1 – to Sam for 'when it seems to be going pear shaped – get off quick'

New School of Acting 2 – to Sarah for 'when it seems to be going pear shaped – don't come on at all'

Best Brian May impression – to Johnwell the wig at least

Pickfords Removal Man of the Year – to Dermot even if you were fed up and it wasn't your job

Silent Movie awards for the cast members who maybe didn't have anything to say but still gave great performances – Debbie Karen and Dawn. Dawn probably over the course of the rehearsal period read more words than anyone.

The feedback we have had gives the Company the credit it deserves and the money in the bank a bonus