

Ryedale Youth Theatre

Ryedale Youth Theatre was formed in 1991 in memory of Mrs June Veysey, whose dream was to create a local youth theatre. Barbara Wood, the Chairman, has been involved with the group for all of this time.

The group encourages and instructs young people from Ryedale, York and Scarborough between 8-18, in all aspects of the performing arts. There are 80 volunteers and performance audiences are typically around 200 people.

The Theatre provides a wonderful out of school facility in a rural area, in which anti-social behaviour due to boredom can be a real problem. Participation in the performances arranged by the Theatre boosts young people's confidence and self-esteem and provides a positive outlet for excess energy, whilst developing talent and transferable skills.

Many families in rural areas find it difficult or impossible to pay for leisure activities. However, the annual membership and rehearsal fees for Ryedale Youth Theatre are kept to an absolute minimum to make the activity accessible to as many young people as possible.

Performances include major west-end musicals (for example *Singin' in the Rain* last April) and the area is fortunate to have such a talented young amateur theatre company on our doorstep. The director and choreographer, Angela Kirkham, works tirelessly to ensure each year's production is successful; in 2014 Angela was nominated for the Henry Wood Outstanding Leadership Award.

In each year of their existence the group has increased their number of patrons and has enjoyed increased support from the community as a result of the accomplishments of their young performers. From a modest start the group has grown to become one of the most well respected Youth Theatre's in the country. Some of their alumni have gone on to attend top performing arts colleges, universities and further education training, using the skills gained at RYT. The group have won a number of awards including the Duke of York Community Initiative and we are delighted that they have now achieved this Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. To celebrate this award the Group will be hosting a party on Friday week (30th September), for all members past and present and their families, at the Kirkham Henry Performing Arts Centre in Malton.