



Tracy Quaife.

SOMETIMES you meet someone whose passion and enthusiasm for what they do totally sweeps over you like a tidal wave over a beach. Such a person is Tracy Quaife of Scarrington who has graduated from toddler to adulthood success in the world of entertainment to run her own theatre dance school in Nottinghamshire.

Steps to success

London-born Tracy comes from athletic stock: her mum was a dance teacher and her dad a gymnastics coach. And it wasn't long – at the age of three to be precise – that Tracy began to follow in her mum's footsteps on a path that was to lead her to a highly successful career as a professional singer and dancer. She not only appeared in a number of big corporate shows, supporting many leading artists, all over the world, but was also part of the historic entertainment team that travelled to the Falklands in 1982 and 1983 to cheer up our troops and the local islanders after the islands had been recaptured from the Argentineans. The party included several top comedians of the time, Jim Davidson, Don Maclean and Roger De Corsey.

"That was an incredible experience to meet these people who had been in the thick of a world conflict and to visit this tiny place which had been so much in the news and yet no one knew very much about the place."

At the end of the 1980s Tracy left her native Peckham and came up to Nottingham. It was to be a life-changing move. For it's not only where she met her husband and settled to raise a family but - after a period as an aerobics tutor for the council - she also began her own stage school to satisfy a lifelong interest in teaching dance and giving other young people the chance to enjoy the entertainment profession just as much as I have."

The Tracy Quaife Theatre Dance School began in 1990 at Plumtree Street in the Lace Market and, as the area was redeveloped for flats and apartments, Tracy found another venue in Nottingham centre at Castle Boulevard,

opposite Wilford Road and the Nottingham Evening Post building.

And from those humble beginnings with only a handful of pupils, the theatre school now has some 350 members aged from three to fifty-three. And, as well as Castle Boulevard, Tracy now runs very successful classes at Gamston and Car Colston (her newest venture). Pupils of the school are trained in tap, ballet, jazz, disco, modern, theatrecraft, singing and drama.

Tracy puts a huge emphasis on fun. Just as she has always done, she wants her pupils to be bursting with excitement about the prospect of coming to their classes.

"Children are a joy to teach," says Tracy, "you get so much back from them and they are so full of ideas and expression and that keeps me on my toes too."

Throughout the year, pupils are involved in and reap many rewards in International Dance Teachers Association exams and regularly participate in festivals and competitions as well as earning for themselves dance slots in many leading productions in the area. Indeed, their recent credits alone include performances at Her Majesty's Theatre in London, appearances in *Joseph*, *Dr Dolittle* with Tommy Steele, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* and *Oliver* at the Theatre Royal Nottingham, in the pantomime at the Nottingham Playhouse and appearances in productions at Nottingham Arts Theatre.

With her wealth of experience in TV, cabaret and theatre, Tracy encourages and guides her pupils to enter the world of professional entertainment. It needn't be just a dream: one girl is currently performing on an 11 month cruise, one other pupil – a Miss England competitor – has also appeared in *Boogie Nights* and the *Spirit of the Dance*, another is running her own dance school and one pupil has moved to France to begin a school there.

In October the Tracy Quaife Theatre School even staged its own production, *Dance Express 2008*, at Nottingham Theatre Royal where pupils were able to showcase their talent before a packed audience.

cabaret performers of the year



For Tracy too the success just goes on and on. She revels in the success of her pupils and the happiness they derive from their dancing and for the last four years she has also been Anglian area chairman for the IDTA, a role which she has greatly enjoyed, meeting new teachers and examiners, arranging lectures and fun days and generally encouraging and supporting new members in the area.

"I'm so lucky," she told *New One*. "I have never wanted to do anything else but dance, entertain and teach and my life has been full of all of these. Yes, it's exhausting, but not many other people in life get to see as many happy faces everyday as I do. It's just brilliant!"

Dance Express 2008 Reviews

- *Great show, we all enjoyed it.*
- *Great show on Saturday.*
- *The show was brilliant on Saturday, everyone did so well, so full of energy. My parents and friends loved it.*
- *Wow, fantastic show really enjoyed it.*
- *I hope you enjoyed the show as much as we all did.*
- *The show was amazing. Thank you.*
- *Wow, what an amazing show. Loved it.*
- *Tracy, just wanted to say what a fantastic show. We all enjoyed it and the finale was the best we have ever seen.*
- *Absolutely fabulous show.*
- *The show was truly amazing and the best dance school show I've seen in a long time.*
- *Fantastic show. I really enjoyed the ballet numbers.*

