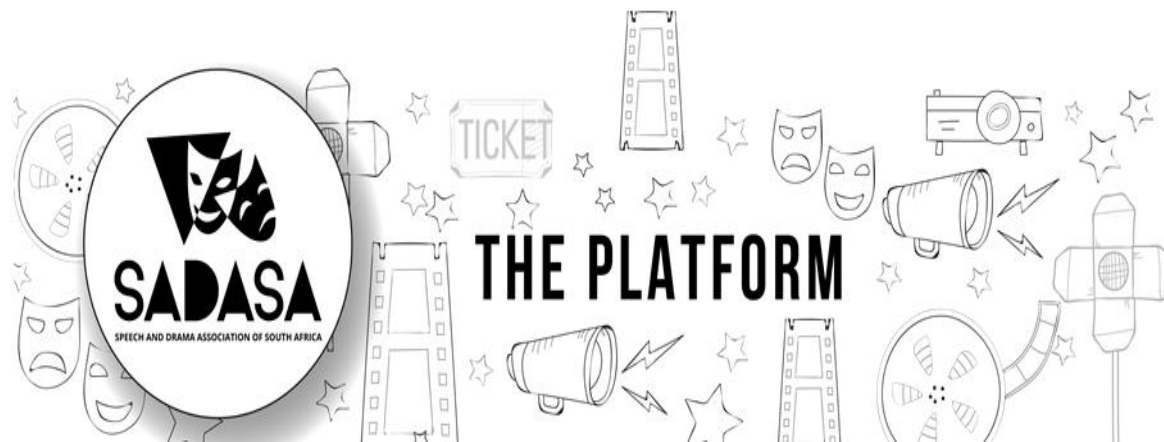




NEWSLETTER: VOLUME 29 ISSUE 1

APRIL

FROM THE EDITORS DESK 🧡



Our year at SADASA has begun amid much excitement, still enjoying the successes of our 2025 festivals, our diary has been filling up fast. 2026 promises to be another highly eventful year with the SADASA Primary School's 2nd Showcase now on the calendar once again. Our High School Monologue Competition is gaining interest and participation each year. We welcome new member schools, Clifton College, Durban, Reservoir Hills Primary, Clifton Nottingham Rd, Mtunzini Primary and Epworth School.

SADASA has so much to celebrate. In this issue we recall 'darker' days when our world leaders and WHO announced Covid lockdown in March 2020. SADASA took a serious knock during Covid but thanks to Vyvienne Ball's quick move to offer virtual festivals we endured the Covid tide. In this issue we read about three ladies, now in their 60s who remind us that our SADASA festivals continue to offer valuable life long skills for everyone irrespective of the career path followed.

Rosanne



AGM 2026

On Saturday, 7 March 2026, SADASA held its 83rd AGM at Burnside Office Park, Hillcrest.

In his fascinating and informative report, Dr McMurtry considered how Artificial Intelligence and AI tools were impacting on creativity and the Arts. The full report can be read on the SADASA website. [Read here.](#)

We congratulate the following members voted onto the executive committee. These members will remain in office until February 2028.

We extend our congratulations to:-

Dr Mervyn McMurtry (Chairman)

Mrs Margaret Marnewick (Vice-Chairman)

Mrs Lesley Coull

Mrs Irene Govender

Mrs Mbali Nguse

Ms Philippa Savage

Mrs Jean van Elden



SADASA Chairman, Dr Mervyn McMurtry with SADASA Vice Chairman, Mrs Margie Marnewick



COVID MEMORIES

In March 2020 schools closed at the end of the first term a few days early due to new Covid concerns by WHO and world leaders. Few of us anticipated the devastating affect the virus would have on personal lives and world economy. As schools closed, so too were our festivals cancelled. We congratulate many of our schools who sought out ways to keep the SADASA festival alive in their school, whether via virtual adjudication or continued to participate despite the many restrictions and challenges.

We live in uncertain times. However, SADASA's mission has remained constant for eighty-three years, to honour our founder, Elizabeth Sneddon's commitment to improve confidence and verbal communication skills in our young people.



SADASA adjudicator, Philippa Savage adjudicating the D.P.H.S. virtual festival in 2020.



Learners from Winston Park Primary School at their SADASA festival in 2021.



FLASHBACK TO THE 1960S, 1970S AND 1980S

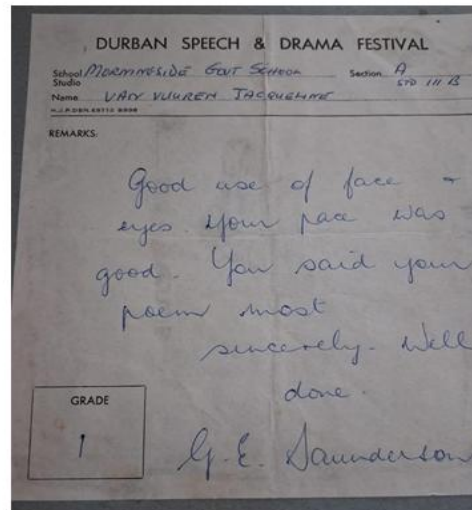
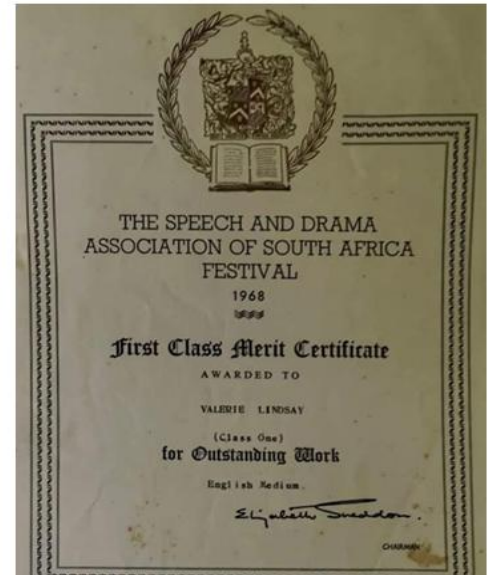
Meet three ladies, now in their early 60s who have followed different career paths. All three entered SADASA festivals and attribute their career success to the communication skills learnt at school and the opportunity each gained when entering items at SADASA festivals.

At our recent AGM Dr McMurtry spoke about SADASA's founder Elizabeth Sneddon's discussions with him about the benefits of speech and drama. Here is an extract from his speech.

As proof of the benefits of speech and drama, she was fond of retelling an anecdote: "One of the most charming tributes I have received came from a clergyman, who in presenting a token of his appreciation (for helping him overcome his fears of being able to speak in public) inscribed in the book the following: 'I asked her to teach me to speak. She taught me to think, to feel, to live,' and concluded with an extract from Ecclesiastes - 'Judge no man before you hear him speak. For speech is the trial of man.'"

Those benefits have been implicit within the mission of our eighty-three-year-old Association: speech and drama are the means to communicate meaning and feeling, and that, as importantly, the physical control of one's power to communicate is vital to life in terms of health, in terms of creativity and in terms of the acquisition of knowledge.

If the word drama means - from Greek - "to do", "action", then we can all be actors, in our careers, in our daily lives. Drama is for everyone, not just those with a talent in performance. Studying drama empowers us with the skills to "do" and "act" in the fullest sense of the words, to speak, yes, but to also think, to feel and to live.



VALERIE LINDSAY CULLEN

Valerie Cullen has worked as an English teacher at Ogwini Comprehensive School in Umlazi, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal for 38 years. As a teacher, Valerie says the confidence gained from entering SADASA festivals at Manor Gardens Primary has been invaluable.

Val writes:-

When I started at Manor Gardens Primary School, I was five years old. But, let me tell you, that five year old me, remembers clearly participating in the Speech and Drama festival. I was a bundle of trembling nerves and knocking knees. But, after having participated, introvert me started a new journey of confidence.



Valerie Lindsay Cullen



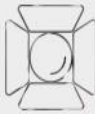
JACQUELINE GOODWILL

Jackie Goodwill is owner of "Hair 63", a hair salon in Waterfall, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. As a 'lady boss' managing staff and dealing with clients each day, excellent communication skills are so important. Jackie recently discovered some of the SADASA reports and certificates she received at Glenwood Infants School (Now Glenwood Junior Primary) and Morningside Primary School in the early 1970s. Jackie looks back on her school days.

My mother and teachers encouraged me to participate in Speech and Drama festivals at Glenwood Infants School and then later at Morningside Primary School. I was an extremely nervous, shy child. Performing in front of my classmates was scary at first but slowly it gave me the confidence I needed as I got older, helping me interact confidently with my clients from different walks of life and with varied interests at my hair salon.



Jacqueline Goodwill (nee van Vuuren)



THERESE HURLY

Therese Hurly has been as a nursing sister for 40 years. She's a few years away from retiring from her position as an Occupational Health Sister. She chats about how Speech and Drama has impacted her life's journey:

I was a shy child growing up in the 1970s in Stanger, Kwa-Zulu-Natal. Fortunately, my parents heard about the local Speech and Drama teacher, Brenda Perry, and thought lessons would help me. Soon my shyness was forgotten and I was reciting poems for the school and parents. I was excited when I received a tuition bursary from SADASA for entering the festival at Stanger Primary School (now North Coast Primary). When Mrs Perry retired, I began attending classes with Mrs Milligan until my family moved to Durban. At Durban Girls' High School, I once again received a tuition bursary from SADASA and encouraged by the opportunity, attended private classes with Patricia Grady.



Therese Hurly

Speech and Drama classes gave me the confidence to stand up and speak in front of groups of strangers, which assists me in my job as an Occupational Health Nursing Sister addressing groups doing health promotional talks.



UPCOMING EVENTS

SADASA'S 2nd Primary School Showcase will be held on Saturday, 10 October at Westville Senior Primary. Learners who show outstanding ability will be nominated by SADASA adjudicators for  The annual Bruce Piper Award Monologue Competition date will be set later in the year after the Matric examination timetables have been released.



BEST WISHES

'Break-a-leg' wishes to 2nd and 3rd term SADASA festivals. We are looking forward to working with you to discover the hidden potential in every child who enters our festival 2026. They are all future stars!



The word theatre comes from the Greeks.
It means the seeing place. It is the place
people come to see the truth about life
and the social situation. The theatre is
a spiritual and social X-ray of its time.
The theatre was created to tell people
the truth about life and the social situation.

Stella Adler



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