

Olive Andow

The Art of Coarse Acting: *"Any play is produced by the wardrobe mistress"*.

OLIVE ANDOW, who died recently at the age of 92, spent much of her early life as a schoolteacher - and some of her former pupils have kept in touch with her through the years since her retirement. In addition she was an examiner for Diving and Swimming activities.

Involved for many years in amateur drama - she received the Noda Long Service for Amateur Drama some years ago. She had in earlier years been a tireless worker for the Children's Theatre Group, and held their extensive wardrobe.

In 1976 she was invited to join the pan-Bristol group which went to the Minack Theatre in Cornwall - and remained with the evolving Players for 15 years, in a newer role as Props Manager. Anyone who ever worked with Olive will know just how good she was, and how inventive in this area of drama.

Olive was also an integral part of the Tudor Players - later known as the YMCA Tudor Players - where she was looking after props and wardrobe, and also on occasion took a part in one of their many and varied productions. When the YMCA in Trenchard Street was sold, the Players lost their theatre and members took up other interests or joined other groups. Olive's flat on the top floor of a Clifton house was choc full of costumes and props, as was her workshop where she put Blue Peter to shame with her remarkable ability to make or modify items for use in plays and (latterly) films.

She loved acting - and even late in life would still welcome any opportunity to develop a new character in a play.

Olive also brought a great wealth of experience and expertise to BFVS productions. She was a perfectionist who paid great attention to detail and all the props she made were near perfect and correct for the period. She could be relied upon to work tirelessly in the background and was a source of historical information for the relevant period of any production we asked her to help with.

But Olive had two sides to her character. When an opinion was required, Olive was always direct, honest and able to back her views with facts. This made some who did not know her well think that she was stern. However, once you knew Olive as a friend, she was warm-hearted, caring, and willing to do whatever she could to help others.

Steve Andrews
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