



Top Hat Chat

All the latest news and views from Top Hat Theatre School

Message from the Principle

"Welcome back!

This year is going to be a good one! I can feel it in my bones!!! Already we've clocked up another qualifier in The All England Qualifying rounds for our junior modern group at Rugby Festival, and so many new students taking part in their first ever festival.... We are competing against other schools in Northamptonshire, and proving that we are capable, we are a force to be reckoned with and we have the talent... Top Hat Has Talent!!! We have ruffled the feathers in the region quite a bit now... and they are sitting up and taking notice....

Please encourage your children to practise their songs/ Drama pieces/ flexibility at home..... just working for a few minutes a day can make all the difference....

It's onwards and upwards from here.... "

Miss Julie xxx

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What's Happening this term?

Term Starts:	Monday 8 th September
Rugby Festival of Dance	13/14 & 21/22 & 26/27 Sept
Twirling Team and Troupe competition :	Saturday 27 th September
Bingo Night:	Saturday 4 th October
Twirlers leave for Camp:	Friday 23 th October
Term Ends:	Saturday 24 th October
Twirl Fest:	25 th to 31 st October

Welcome!



A big welcome to Emma who has joined the Top Hat team!
She has a wealth of experience that she is looking forward to sharing with you and I know you are looking forward to working with her. Keep an eye out for next editions **Top Hat People** feature to get to know Emma better!



Classes held at:

St Albans the Martyr Church Halls,
Broadmead Avenue,
Northampton
NN3 2RA



Private lessons available:

Miss Emma:

Tuesday: 4.00 – 7.15
Wednesday: 4.15 – 5.45
Saturday: from 2.30

Miss Julie:

Friday: 4.00 – 8.00

Private lessons are recommended for students wishing to take part in festivals and competitions.



Time Table 2014 – 2015

Tuesday

4.15 – 5.15 Musical Theatre Juniors
5.15 – 6pm Drama
6.00 – 6.45 Singing
6.45 – 7.30 Jazz
7.30 – 8.30 Musical Theatre Seniors

Wednesday

4.15 – 5.00 Grade 3 Tap
5.00 – 5.45 Grade 4 Modern
5.45 – 6.30 Grade 4 Tap
6.30 – 7.15 Grade 5 Modern
7.15 – 8.00 Grade 6 modern
8.00 – 8.45 Advance 1 Tap

Thursday

4.00 – 5.00 Pre Primary Broadway Babies (Ballet, Tap, Modern) 3 – 4 y/o
5.00 – 5.30 Musical Theatre 3 – 6 year olds (Miss Julie)
5.30 – 6.30 Primary West End Wendy's (Ballet, Tap, Modern) 5 – 6 y/o
6.30 – 7.15 Grade 5 Ballet
7.15 – 8.00 Grade 6 Ballet
8.00 – 8.30 Pointe

Friday

4.15 – 5.00 Grade 1 Ballet
5.00 – 5.30 Primary Exam Tap
5.30 – 6.00 Primary Ballet
6.00 – 6.30 Grade 1 Modern
6.30 – 7.15 Grade 2 Ballet
7.15 -8.00 Grade 3 Ballet

Saturday

9.00 – 9.45 Grade 1 Tap
9.45 – 10.30 Grade 2 Modern
10.30 – 11.15 Primary Exam Ballet
11.15 – 12.00 Singing
12.00 – 1.00 Beginner Baton Twirling (back hall)
12.00 – 12.45 Drama
12.45 – 1.30 Grade 2 Tap
1.30 – 2.15 Grade 3 Modern
2.00 – 5.00 Baton Twirling with Miss Tracey and Miss Julie

Baton Twirling will be at Benham Sports Arena, Moulton Park from 2-5pm.

Miss Julie

Musical Theatre Juniors
Drama
Singing
Jazz
Musical Theatre Seniors

Miss Julie

Grade 3 Tap
Grade 4 Modern
Grade 4 Tap
Grade 5 Modern
Grade 6 modern
Advance 1 Tap

Miss Emma

Pre Primary Broadway Babies (Ballet, Tap, Modern) 3 – 4 y/o
Musical Theatre 3 – 6 year olds (Miss Julie)
Primary West End Wendy's (Ballet, Tap, Modern) 5 – 6 y/o
Grade 5 Ballet
Grade 6 Ballet
Pointe

Miss Emma

Grade 1 Ballet
Primary Exam Tap
Primary Ballet
Grade 1 Modern
Grade 2 Ballet
Grade 3 Ballet

Miss Julie

Grade 1 Tap
Grade 2 Modern
Primary Exam Ballet
Singing
Beginner Baton Twirling (back hall)
Drama
Grade 2 Tap
Grade 3 Modern
Baton Twirling with Miss Tracey and Miss Julie



Uniform

As it's the start of a new term, it seems right to give a reminder about Top Hat uniform! It is expected that all students turn up to class looking the part and representing the school. This includes a red leotard or t-shirt and black leggings/ trousers with appropriate footwear for the class and hair tied back neatly. Not only does this project this image of this school, it is also practical!.

For a detailed list of uniform, please see www.tophattheatreschool.co.uk Where you can also purchase t-shirts hoodies and rucksacks, or drop into A Dancer's World on Wellingborough Road.

Fundraising News

Summer Fete!



Unfortunately, the typical British weather decided to be very unreliable on the day of the fete and after setting up in the rain like a real bunch of troopers, the committee made the decision to move the fete from its original location at the Spinney Hill pub, back down to the Church Hall. It did not however dampen the spirits of the event and managed to raise an amazing **£869.50** for the Top Hat Costume fund. Thank you so much to everyone who came to support the event despite the rain! And a huge thank you to everyone who contributed their time, amazing selection of cakes, and other contributions.

What do Two Little Ducks and Heinz Beans have in common?.....You guessed it! Its Bingo time again!!

Let's give a big welcome back to our fabulous bingo caller, Tracey, and see who is going to go home a little richer!! Always a popular night and not a blue rinse in sight! Get your dabbers ready for our first FUNdraiser of the new term!

First person to message the editor with the two numbers referred to in the title above will get a free cupcake of their choice on the night! WooHoo!!

Looking forward to seeing you on the 4th October!



General Reminder



Thank you to everyone who has sent in their bags of unwanted clothes! This continues to be a good source of income for the costume fund, and is much appreciated! Please continue to bring stuff in when you are having a good clear out!! This all helps to keep our expenses as low as possible.



**WE NEED
YOU
TO
JOIN OUR
CREW**

Top Hat Fundraising Committee Need You!

Fundraising is a big part of the Top Hat Support Group's work, but as we all know... many hands make light work! We are always looking for extra parent helpers to take on as much or as little as they fancy!

It is lovely being a part of the Top Hat committee and everyone is welcome to join in! Not only is it a social occasion, but more members = more ideas = more variety! All Parents and Guardians are welcome to come to our Annual General Meeting in October and find out more about the work of the committee and find out ways they can get involved. No contribution too small! Keep an eye on your messages and the noticeboard for the date and time of the AGM! No Obligation!!

Contact us

Top Hat Committee

<u>Principle:</u>	Julie McKenna
<u>Secretary:</u>	Faye Burton
<u>Chairperson:</u>	Tracey Clarke
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Lyn Firman

Members

Kirsty McNee	Tracy McMorro
Caroline Karabin	Hayley Rowles
Emma Mumford	Leanne Naylor
Katie Wright	Hayley Hendrickson
Lesley Crouch	Deb Jilbert

Festivals and Competitions

Area 5 Regional Team and Troupe Baton Twirling Competition –Lowestoft

Our twirlers are heading over to Norfolk for the team and troupe competition on the 27th September. Fourteen twirlers will be representing Top Hat, taking part in Freestyle Solos, Freestyle Duo's, Team Twirl Challenge, Fancy Poms and Pom Pom Team. Good luck!



Rugby Festival of Dance

Many of our students are also taking part in the Rugby Festival of Dance, which takes place over the three consecutive weekends 13/14th 20/21st and 26/27th of September. Best of luck to all those competing in both team and individual events!



Skipsea Sands: Baton Camp – training and competition

This year sees Top Hat Twirlers attending Baton Camp for the fourth time. This week consists of 4 full days of training with coaches from all over the world in things such as baton technique, dance, and gymnastics. With further private training available upon request. The week concludes with two days of competition and awards.



Leicester Competitive festival of Music and Dramatic Art

This Festival will be held at Beauchamp College, Ridgeway, Oadby, Leicester over two weekends in November. On Saturday 9th November classes will include Drama, Adult Vocals and Choirs. On Saturday 16th November it is the turn of Instrumentals and Junior Vocals. The winners of certain classes take part in the Final Competitions held on Saturday 9th & 16th November at Beauchamp College at the end of classes for that day.

Spectators will be made most welcome to be part of the audience to witness what talent there is both dramatically and musically. I look forward to reporting the results in next terms edition of **Top Hat Chat!**

Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts 2015

Advance notice that Milton Keynes festival will be taking place over two weekends early next year: the drama section over the weekend of 21/22 February and the Music section over the weekend of 28 February/ 1 March. Entries must be in by Saturday 6th December. Please see Caroline Karabin for further details.

Results and Successes

Breaking News!!

First results from Rugby dance festival just in! Our fantastic team achieved an amazing 86 points and came second place performing **Jai Ho!** This qualifies them again for the All England Final.

Gabi McMorrow achieved a fantastic 81 points for her Song and Dance, with great comments from the judges.

Excellent results so far! Full coverage and results from the next two weekends in next edition of **Top Hat Chat!**



End of Year Show

End of Year Show Saturday 12th July

Lights, Camera, Action! What an amazing day of performances! However, as a picture paints a thousand words, (and saves a lot of paper), here are some of the highlights captured on film. Pictures reprinted with kind permission of **Mango Photography Studios**.



Behind the scenes ☺



Special awards went to: Sophia Lane (most promising student), Ellie Jade Wilson-Harris, Gabriella McMorrow, Alice Lane, Milly McNee, Molly Entwistle and Alessia Macted.

Autism UK was chosen from the many worthy charities that had been nominated



Although the final amount has yet to be confirmed officially, over £400 was raised on the night. Final figure will follow in next edition of **Top Hat Chat!**

Pictures reproduced with kind permission from Mango Pictures. If you wish to purchase photographs from the show, please contact Adele from Mango at www.mango-pictures.co.uk or visit their facebook page.

Also DVD's are still available so you can re-live your favourite highlights! Please contact Miss Julie.

Branching Out



"What a fantastic day out for all the family!!"

Those of you who made it down to London for West End Live in Trafalgar Square in June had an amazing time!

"It was a great day out, especially for a free event with lots of different musical bits. There was also lots of free stalls to keep the little ones entertained. The day was obviously made better with seeing Oliver on stage!"

Milly



WORLD BATON TWIRLING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2014



Nottingham played host to the 32nd world championships this August where 19 countries fought for the prestigious title of World Champion. Several of our twirlers attended as spectators (and helpers) and were inspired by the standard of these international athletes.

They also witnessed a "perfect 10" by Japanese twirler, and world mens solo champion, Keisuke Komada. A first in the history of the championships!



Our Miss Julie impressed us all with her queens English and her fluent French as one of the Comperes of the event!

Features Section

Star Pupil



Caitlin Jilbert

Star Pupil goes to Caitlin Jilbert who has trained all over Scotland over the summer holidays in Baton twirling, working extremely hard over the break when classes have been on holiday..... she has not!!!! Her improvement in the summer break has been immense... well Done Caitlin. x

Perfect practise makes perfect

Spotlight on.....



Baton Twirling

What is it: Baton twirling is an amazingly diverse sport. It combines athletic ability with dexterity and grace. It is often confused with majorettes or cheerleading, but it is so much more. An incredible sport to watch it combines control of the baton, whilst performing dance moves and gymnastic ability.

What are the prospects: Although unfortunately not yet recognised as an Olympic sport, there are many competitions throughout the world. Students can compete at local, national, European and international levels if they are determined enough!

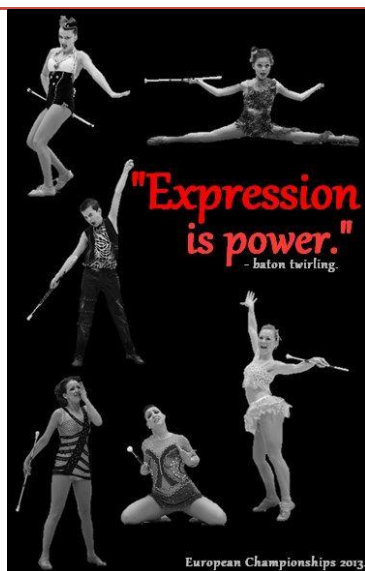
Competitions: If students wish to take on board the competitive side of twirling, area competitions are held in February. If placed 1-10 in their sections, they then qualify for Nationals. National Championships takes place over the Easter weekend in Crawley. Some students also take part in the Open competitions in May. Team and freestyle competitions also take place in September and October.

There are many different sections that the twirlers can compete in, such as **Solo Twirl** which puts the emphasis on twirling technique and ambidexterity; **Dance Twirl** which is choreographed to a set piece of music and as such is also judged on the interpretation of the music along with the baton technique; **Fancy Strut** is a combination of body and baton in continuous motion; **Poise & Personality** puts more emphasis on the dance element; and **2 Baton** has the athlete performing a routine with their two batons simultaneously; **Duo** has two twirlers performing a synchronised routine as one.

Athletes competing in these sections progress within their age groups **Tiny Tots** (0-7), **Juvenile** 1&2 (8-9 and 10-11), **Junior** 1&2 (12-13 and 14-15) and **Senior** 1&2 (16-17 and 18-19). Athletes start at **Beginner** level and after being placed in the National Competition, move up to **Novice**, then **Intermediate** and finally to **Advanced** levels.

Some twirlers also go on to perform **Freestyle Solo** and **Freestyle Pairs**. These are individually choreographed routines set to a piece of music which is chosen by the student and trainer. Age divisions are slightly different in this discipline with **Juvenile** being up to age 10, **Pre-Junior** 11-13; **Junior** 14-16 and **Senior** 17+



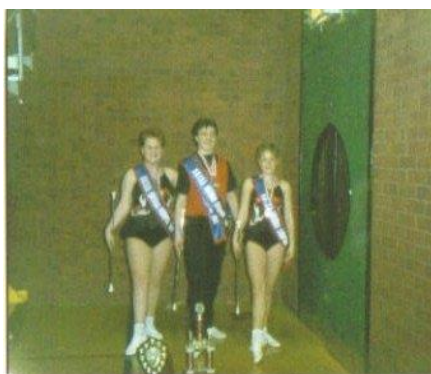


Lastly, some of our twirlers compete in team events such as **Dance Twirl Team** which consists of between 4 and 9 members. The routine is to a set piece of music with all team members working together; and **Twirl Challenge** which consists of 5 team members performing different elements: Solo, Fancy Strut, 2 Baton and Duo, with their total points being combined for the end score.

Baton camp: Usually takes place during the October half term week. It consists of a residential week where twirlers spend their time training with experts from all over the world, some competitions as well as grading and a social aspect. Training is heavily subsidised and it is a fantastic opportunity for all levels of twirlers.

Grades: If students wish to enter National competitions, graded exams are required. Beginner (bronze, silver and gold), Novice (Bronze, silver and gold), Intermediate (gold) and Advanced (gold).

Trainers: This class is taken by Miss Julie and Miss Tracey who have both been multiple National Champions, and Julie has represented her country several times at Worlds. Tracey is also a qualified judge at World and European levels. Dave Cole also regularly trains the twirlers. Dave was a National champion for 10 years running and was European Junior Mens Champion in 1984. The twirlers also benefit from various other coaches who come from time to time. If this highly sought after dream team can't make champions I don't know who can!!



Our trainers with some of their awards! Tracey, Dave and Julie.

Cold metal spinning just inches above your face, rotating, so fast you can hear it cut through the air.

Timing is everything...

**Twirling.
This Sport Takes Guts!**

Benefits from doing Baton include:

- Increased dexterity
- improved co-ordination, concentration and control

Tips for Success in Baton

- Practice, practice, practice!
- Success in Baton Twirling depends on so many things as well as being able to twirl. Try to get as much dance and gymnastic practice in too.

Classes are held on:

Saturday -

Beginners 12-1
(St Albans Church Hall)

Novice 2-4

Advanced 2-5
(Benham Sports Centre)

All students are encouraged to take on extra private lessons in preparation for solo competitions.

Baton twirling



What my friends think I do.



What my mom thinks I do.



What society thinks I do.



What my coach thinks I do.



What I think I do.



What I actually do.

Top Hat People:

Anthony Foreman

Welcome to this new segment in which each issue THC gives a thorough grilling to one of the key people involved with Top Hat.



Anthony is a full time session, rehearsal and performance musician based in Wellingborough running the successful A-Teck. A graduate from the University of Salford, ex-deputy head teacher, cat and sheep enthusiast, football club administrator!



THC: What inspired you to follow this career path?

Ant: I grew up in an environment where my parents cared for young people from difficult backgrounds as foster parents... it is probably this that has driven me to become a teacher at heart who only wants to see young people enjoy music and work with inspirational people as both adults and children. My father had a big old triple keyboard home organ that one day after school (at 5 years old), I used to play Somewhere Over The Rainbow on by ear. I very soon was bought a piano and began lessons.



THC: did you always want to be a musician?

Ant: I grew up wanting to be a rock star; I even tried to be one on a few occasions!!! Becoming a qualified teacher felt like an inevitability as music

and helping people improve is all I know, instinctual, and part of my make-up.

THC: Did you have any major setbacks? If so, how did you overcome them?

Ant: Many, but setbacks are needed to make you work harder to achieve your goals and really want them. If you want to succeed at something, you will fight for it



without even realising this. There is no magic answer to dealing with it... simply it is a case of be strong, be brave, work hard, swallow pride and ask for help from possibly a competitor and perceived enemy, and practice. I remember playing scales and practicing tiny sections of music for hours on end until perfect.

THC: Were you family supportive of your chosen career?

Ant: Unquestionably. I have the most supportive and wonderful family ever who continue to support me in every venture. I have a fantastic partner, Hannah, and family in Ellie (8) and Harrison (3) who sit and listen to me practice, caterwaul, make mistakes, teach people, and always with interest, smiles, love and understanding of the demands on my time and how it impacts their lives.

THC: Is there anything you would have done differently?

Ant: I would never change a single thing as I believe every experience is incredibly important and the journey that has led me this far, directly makes me who I am: and I am happy with it all. There are many people who “work to live” and “hate Monday mornings” – I have always felt I am the luckiest person ever to have music as my work, and to be able to share that with all people, but especially the younger people.

THC: What classes are you involved in?

Ant: I look after Senior Musical Theatre, Junior Musical Theatre, Senior Singing and Junior Singing. I also do a few private tuition sessions every week.

THC: How did you get involved with Top Hat?

Ant: Well, she won't thank me for saying this, but Miss Julie and I went to school together and remained friends. I playing piano and directed school shows that she performed in, and later I went to see her perform in shows in professional theatres. Happily for me, when she needed a musician and musical director, the call came to me for which I am grateful as I now get to

work with her and all the wonderful young people at Top Hat!

THC: What do you do when you are not Top Hatting?

Ant: Mainly when not Top Hatting, I am playing or performing musically, or playing or acting out with my fantastic family. Unless it's running my football club (hence the football kit I am often seen in on a Saturday) or doing my trustee work for Niamh's Next Step, (visit www.niamhsnextstep.org for details).

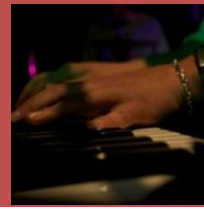
THC: What do you look for in a perfect student?

Ant: Every student is perfectly individual. I look for the students to embrace that and be themselves and never compare themselves. I am always excited at the uniqueness of every voice and every musical personality in every single person I have the honour of working for.

THC: What is your most embarrassing moment

Ant: Coming third in a talent show...there were three entrants! I even took my own keyboard set up and

bought a new tracksuit for the occasion. If the video ever materialises I will move continents!!!



Anthony's Tips for success

- Work hard always, even if it feels like it isn't worth it or if no-one is paying attention. Be proud.
- Never give in as perseverance rewards those that have it.
- Keep going, your musical happiness will find you.
- Listen to everything from everyone, but once you have done that, do whatever you want.

Find Anthony on [facebook.com/A.TeckMusic31](https://www.facebook.com/A.TeckMusic31), or email ant.ctech@hotmail.co.uk

Other Stuff!!

"Dear Top Hat Chat"

Thank you to everyone who has been using the diary... please do keep on jotting down your thoughts..... every entry is valued!



Special thanks for this issue:

- Caroline Karabin for keeping me organised and correct when it comes to all things dance festival related!
- Adele from Mango Photography for permission for using her photographs from the show and also for the exclusive offer to Top Hat Students
- Anthony Forman for responding to my gruelling questioning for the Top Hat People feature
- All members of the committee for answering my queries at all hours of the day!

Coming Next issue: Due out: November 2014

Spotlight on: **Drama**

Feature Article: **Top Hat People: Emma Banham**

Get involved with your Newsletter

For any inclusions into next term's newsletter, please contact Deb Jilbert via facebook or on deborah.jilbert@hotmail.co.uk before 1st November 2014, or use the Dear Top Hat Journal.

*This newsletter is only possible with your input...
if there is anything you want included, please let me know. Thanks! ☺*

This is Your Newsletter! If you have any suggestions for features or other inclusions, please contact me on the above details. Many thanks. And hope you have an exciting term!