

Biography

I was brought up in a home with a crooning dad and Tony Bennett and Sinatra LP's played on the stereogram – It could have pushed me towards or away from the jazz/swing musical genre – I am glad to say it pushed me towards it!! Just where the acting gene came from, mind you, I am not quite sure. I do remember having had the bug since a very young age though. My best friend's mum asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up and I answered unequivocally – “An actress”. I was 5 at the time!

After years of amateur dramatics (some good, some bad), I decided to branch out into the professional arena. In order to get the coveted equity card I researched, wrote and produced a one-woman show and then toured it around the country. The show was called ‘Saving Time’ and was the story of a 1950's frustrated housewife in the first half linked to a modern day career woman in the second. I played about 6 different characters including a man!!! I am very versatile!

The show was a success and inspired me to carry on producing my own shows.

I also had the pleasure of working with a talented and lovely pianist on a series of shows including a number of Joyce Grenfell shows and a Noel and Gertie show – fabulous stuff!!

I have played in Pinter to Panto and in village hall to full scale theatres and loved it all – even when it was painful!! Like, for instance, a short season at the Battersea Arts Centre in London which cost me a lot but taught me a great deal too!! Playing a one woman show based on the Industrial Revolution to an audience of two, mid week in London, can be hard going!!

As time progressed I found myself incorporating singing into the shows more and more – why? Because I love singing and I love music – simple! A natural development was to discover other outlets for singing - jazz cabaret seemed to fit the bill! I am therefore in the wonderful position of having a sort of multi layered performance life – 40's and 50's style jazz singer to comedy actress to revue performer!

Since my first commissioned piece in 2002 I have been writing and performing my own short shows in residential homes and day centres around Hampshire and more recently in Bournemouth – they have been a tremendous success and give a huge amount of satisfaction on many levels – not least of which being the smiling faces of the audiences! I have become passionate about providing activities for the elderly and particularly those with a dementia. Through HCC I have developed reminiscence sessions on a variety of good trigger themes. I have trained with Age Exchange and HCC (Jackie Pool) in Dementia and Reminiscence in Dementia and become a trainer for HCC. I am also a member of NAPA - national association of providers of activities.

I have 3 kids - well very big kids really - all of whom have had to learn to live with the embarrassment of having a mum performing and dressing up and all that stuff! I also have a lovey partner who has supported me in a good quiet calm way!! This support was particularly welcome when I became a 'mature student' between 2002-5 and took a full time degree at Bournemouth University in Communication – that means I really know how to communicate now!!!! Seriously – a fascinating degree which has taught me a whole load of stuff about the way people tick – so excuse me if I stare and make notes!!

Actually this one isn't me!!