



## Sheer magic from start to the end

**WORKINGTON** Playgoers are certainly Stepping Out on a high at the end of another acclaimed season!

The amateur group has chosen a superbly crafted play with which to bring down the curtain on their 1992/93 performances.

They carry off the warm and funny tale with great aplomb and it is a wonderful vehicle for their talents.

Stepping Out, by Irish film actor Richard Harris, is a sharply observed story about the lives, laughs, loves and problems of a group of women and a solitary man attending a weekly tap-dancing class in a church hall.

Apart from the usual production difficulties, the play posed a few extra

problems when it was found dancing skills were rusty or non-existent among most of the cast.

But help was at hand in the shape of Carol Jamieson, a keen dance student, who choreographed the play, took on the role of tutor to get the cast's skills up to scratch and still found found time to learn the part of Mavis, the teacher.

Stepping Out, at the Theatre Royal, Workington, is a stunning directorial debut by Keith Beattie, who praised the cast for their hard work during rehearsals, which started in mid-February.

"They have done a marvellous job. They had to start from nothing, acquire dancing skills and then work back to make the mistakes you see on stage," he said.

The play involves a fascinating collection of characters each with a relationship to grapple with, a story to tell and laughs to share.

They bring to life the problems, relationships and

humour probably encountered by most people throughout their everyday lives.

The 10-strong cast is, without exception, superb. Special mention however must go to Connie Watson (piano player Mrs Fraser), Muriel Armstrong (wise-cracking, gum-chewing Scouser Sylvia) and Jenni Rushton (snobbish, lonely busybody Vera) who each deliver brilliant comic performances.

And experienced actress Pat Brincombe makes a good attempt at tackling possibly the play's toughest role, that of Rose, a West Indian.

Stepping Out is sheer magic from start to end. The laughs keep on coming and the dance sequences are fun and very well done. It swings effortlessly from comedy to serious set-pieces and never falters.

The play runs until May 11, except Sunday.

● Pictured above: Two of the ladies arrive for class — Lynne (Tania Simpson) and Dorothy (Lola Foster).

IAN BROGDEN