

Sam Cope's drama memories could "fill a book"

by Kerry Wells

Drama and music teacher Sam Cope enters his 18th year at Brevard College this year, with the play "Cabaret" as his 31st major production.

"I've been thinking about "Cabaret" for at least a couple of years," he says, and adds that it is "very difficult" to choose a play for production, two of which are done each year. "I probably average reading 45 to 50 new plays every summer," he says.

Of the 31 plays, he has done here he has difficulty choosing a favorite. "I have wonderful moments from all of them," he says. "They'd fill a book." One of the best parts of the production of a play he says is when it's over. "You have a wonderful feeling that together with a lot of other people you have accomplished something worth while."

According to Cope, the most difficult thing about producing a play is that it's "very, very time consuming." He is also involved in all areas of production which include building the sets, making the costumes, and rehearsals. "For eight to ten weeks I am totally immersed in

whatever show we're doing," he says.

Cope says his love of music and of drama stems from his solitary childhood. He grew up on a farm in Davie County near Mocksville, N.C. "Where I'm from really doesn't have a name," he says adding that only one other house could be seen from the house where he spent his childhood.

"When I was growing up I became rather self-reliant to entertain myself," he says. "I did a lot of reading; I devoured book after book." Of the piano, he says, "it became my companion, my friend."

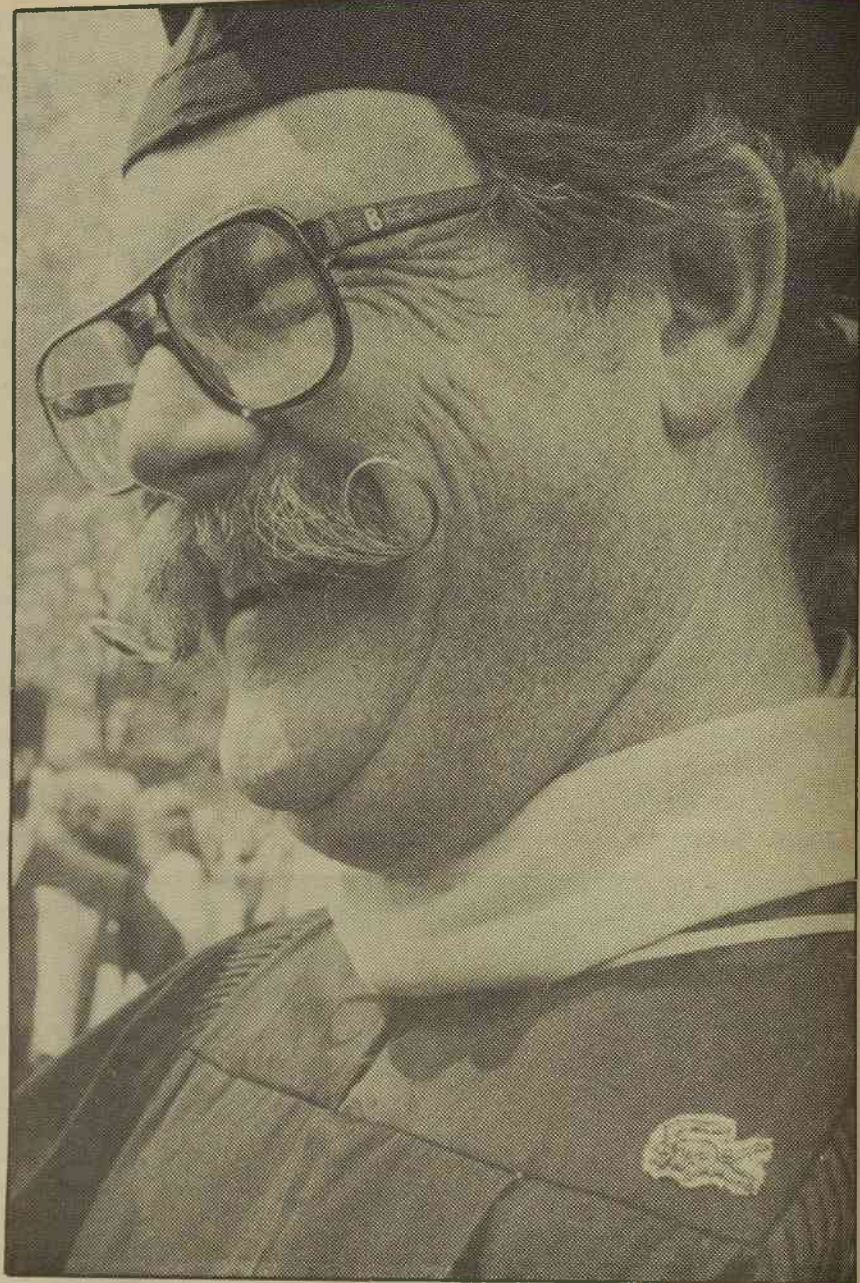
Music was Cope's first interest. He obtained his master's degree in music from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and had completed half of his course work for a doctorate at Indiana University when he "became interested in doing something a little different." As a result he ventured into drama and eventually obtained a master's degree in speech and theatre from the University of Tennessee.

Cope was teaching at Reinhardt College in Georgia when he decided that he wanted to make a change and came to Brevard. "I like it up here, the town, the climate. The College has been very good to me."

He now lives on Becky Mountain a few miles outside of Brevard with his wife, Claire. "I've always liked the mountains," he says, "I love to hike up through the forest." He has named his home Beinn Bregh, a Gaelic word meaning "beautiful mountain", and a stream with a 15-foot waterfall runs across the back of his property. Cope has four children, all of whom are grown-up.

When not teaching or producing a play, Cope says listening to music is a favorite pastime. "I love music. Whenever I put on music it's something I really want to concentrate on." However this is not his only past-time. He says, "I have hobbies galore." He particularly likes the location of his home because of the peace and quiet. "To me there's something so wonderful about this vast kind of silence."

Plays he would like to do in the future include "A Mid-Summer Night's Dream," "Man of LaMoncha," and "Inherit the Wind."



Sam Cope in his personalized regalia

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