

# Backchat

*News from The New Zealand Theatre Federation Inc*

*October 2012* Volume 35 Issue 5

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## *Insert:*

Playmarket Scripts

DDT Terms & Conditions



Multiple award winning FAHS Feilding High School in action in *Coaltown Blues* by Mervyn Thompson, directed by Karla Crofts. Read about their success at The Festival of Community Theatre on page 4.

## President

Festival time is over for another year and while there will always be winners and losers with the competitive format of our Festival system, the underlying philosophy behind why we run Festivals each year is the taking part, learning, meeting and sharing, as well as the constructive adjudications of presentations. It's pleasing to see groups embrace these ideals.

The National Final in Hastings, organised by the Hawke's Bay Festival Theatre Committee, was a wonderful culmination of this year's Festivals and deemed by everyone attending a great success. The six presentations, the range of subject matter and styles of presentations were as diverse as in any National Final seen previously and the standard this year was exceptionally high.

Congratulations to all 6 teams, whether or not you came away with an award, and especially to those who travelled from the South Island. The requirements of travelling to Festivals is becoming a big hurdle and is a major factor for many groups on whether or not to enter the Festival. Although we had a generous grant from the Drama Development Trust this year to assist teams to travel, the National Executive is mindful that further work is needed on looking at ways to assist groups travelling to Festivals.

We were also fortunate this year to have an overseas adjudicator, Larry McCluskey, whose erudite and knowledgeable adjudications impressed everyone. Both participants and audiences went away in awe at his ability to sum up a production so quickly and succinctly.

His masterclasses never eventuated because of lack of numbers, but he held open forums on Irish Theatre in Christchurch and Wellington which were again most enlightening to all those who attended.

And so as the end of the year looms large many groups are involved in their end of year productions and planning for next year, boding well for the future of NZ recreational theatre.

*Ewen D Coleman*  
*National President*

## 42nd Annual General Meeting

### *Reelected for another year:*

- President:** Ewen Coleman (Wellington)
- VP:** Bryan Aitken (Christchurch)
- Treasurer:** Gregg Perkins (Pahiatua)
- Secretary:** Margaret Robertson (Wellington)
- National Executive:** Lynn Bushell (Carterton), Anne Corney (Napier), Jade Gillies (Invercargill), Anne McAuley (Blenheim), Sue Miller (Porirua) and new member John Charlton (Auckland).

### *Introducing John Charlton*



John has been involved in Wellington and Auckland community theatre for many years, mainly in a technical capacity. He has designed the lighting for many Ellerslie Theatrical Society productions, plus some

for both Dolphin and Mairangi theatres. He won a Best Lighting Design Award in both 2009 and 2010. Currently he's in his 6th year as President of Ellerslie Theatrical Society.

John has spent over forty years in the broadcast, professional theatre, and commercial audiovisual industries in New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, including several years as a sound engineer at Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. During the day he now works as a self-employed audiovisual design consultant.

The AGM was followed by a talk by Rick Behague an Insurance Broker of Hastings. He gave a very informative talk on insurance which we hope will have many benefits for NZTF members. Details of proposed plans regarding insurance will be notified to members in due course.

## Festival of Community Theatre 2013

You are invited to attend the NZTF Annual Conference featuring the national finals, the AGM, a keynote speaker and workshops on **September 13-14, 2013** at Te Whaea, 11 Hutchison Rd. Newtown, Wellington

*Regional dates in both islands*

**August 16-17 and August 23-24**

Dates have been pushed back so that there is three and four weeks separation from national finals. This should make it easier to arrange travel and allow for fundraising. Venues will be announced in the next Backchat.

Local festivals can take place in early August or late July. Will your group organise one?

## Shakespeare Globe Centre New Zealand 21st National University of Otago Sheila Winn Shakespeare Festival

The final of this festival was held as usual over Queen's Birthday weekend in Wellington and the winner this year of the NZTF Award for Innovative Interpretation of a Student Directed Piece was Lucy Connell of the Diocesan School for Girls, Auckland. Congratulations.

Heartiest congratulations too to NZTF member schools who won awards:

**Aranui High School** Christchurch *King Lear*  
(2 awards)

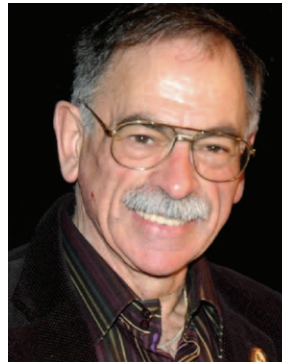
**Feilding High School** *Macbeth* (2 awards)

**James Hargest College** Invercargill *Much Ado About Nothing*

**John Paul College** Rotorua *Much Ado About Nothing*  
(3 awards)

**Rangi Ruru College** Christchurch *Julius Caesar*  
plus one of the team, Olivia Abbott as Casca, won a Museum Art Hotel Scholarship Alumni Award.

## A Profile



### NZTF President Ewen Coleman

Theatre has always been a passion of Ewen's, right from when he was a young child growing up in Taranaki taking speech and drama lessons from Nan Russell.

Ewen arrived in Wellington in the mid 70s after working overseas and soon became involved with local theatre groups Wellington Repertory Theatre, Stagecraft and New Theatre. He has remained actively involved with both Stagecraft and Wellington Repertory Theatre, having served two terms as President for the latter as well as Secretary for the past 12 years.

Having worked both on stage and back stage for some time he decided his theatre "niche" was directing and so with the support of a number of experienced theatre practitioners and theatre groups he was given many opportunities to direct. Over 80 productions later, Ewen is a well established theatre director, not only in Wellington city but around the Wellington region.

His directing experience has also put him in good stead as an adjudicator since accreditation in the mid 1980's. He has adjudicated at all levels of the Festival of Community Theatre as well as numerous other Festivals both in NZ and overseas.

Theatre administration has always been a big part of his life not only with local groups but with Wellington District Theatre Federation for most of his time in Wellington and New Zealand Theatre Federation, currently serving his second term as President.

Through his involvement with theatre he has been associated with numerous other arts organisations such as Community Arts Councils, NZ Arts Assembly and Arts Participation Aotearoa Trust, all of which have made the "arts" a major part of Ewen's working life.

.....  
: **WELCOME! Fine Thyme Theatre Company** :  
: **of Cromwell have joined our theatre family** :  
: **and we welcome them. You can read about** :  
: **their origins and activities at [www.fttc.co.nz](http://www.fttc.co.nz)** :  
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# 2012 Festival of Community Theatre

## *Congratulations to the Winners!*

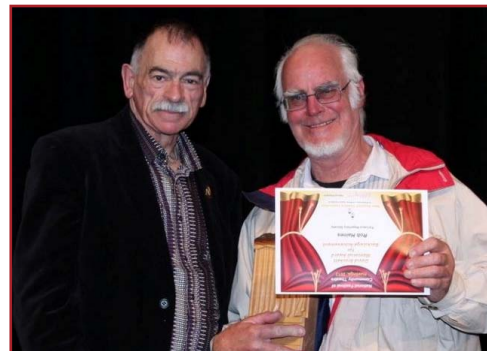
Winner of the **Book of Honour - FAHS Feilding High School** extracts from *Coaltown Blues* by Mervyn Thompson directed by Karla Crofts, plus winner of **Bryan Aitken Best Youth Production, Denise Walsh Award for Best Production of a New Zealand Play** and the **Selecon Design/Technical Award for Best Technical Production**



The *Coaltown Blues* cast with adjudicator Larry McCluskey



**Ewen Coleman Award for Best Production of an Adult Play - Elmwood Players** with *A Galway Girl* by Geraldine Aron directed by Susan Cameron



**David Brockett Award for Backstage Achievement - Rob Haines** from Pahiatua Repertory Society



**NZTF Award for Best Actor Male**  
**Sam Rewiri-Thorsen**, 'Henry' in *The Extraordinary Revelations of Orca the Goldfish* for Feilding Little Theatre dir Peter Doherty



**NZTF Award for Best Actor Female**  
**Mallory MacKenzie**, 'Mother' in *Coal Town Blues* for FAHS, Feilding High School dir Karla Crofts

# 2012 Festival of Community Theatre

## Jannat Aitchison Memorial Awards for Distinctive Emerging Talent

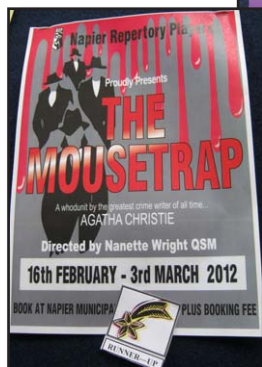
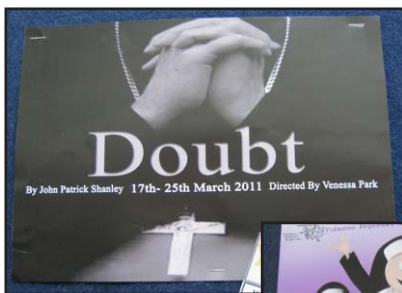


Nanette Wright QSM presented this award to **Simon Boyle** for **lighting design** for Feilding Little Theatre (left), to **Ivan Siemonek** for **acting** in *The Dreaming* Wanganui High School (middle) and **Caleb O'Fee** for **acting** in *Coaltown Blues* for Feilding High School (on the right).

**The Olga E Harding New NZ Playwriting Award** went to **Denise Walsh** for *A Different Sort of Love Story* presented by Park Players in the Lower South Island Regional Festival.

**NZTF Best New Director Award for First Time Directing** chosen by Regional adjudicators **Alexandra Le Cocq** who directed *The Imaginary Friend* by Neil Troost for Elmwood Players.

## FOUR SUCCESSFUL WORKSHOPS WERE HELD:



Stuart Mitchell's Lighting class



Lisa-Jane Hay,  
Voice



Rory Cook after  
SPFX Makeup



Margaret Robertson and  
FAHS friend at Improv

**Poster Competition winners:** first equal *Doubt* Hutt Repertory Theatre and *Nunsense* Pahiataua Repertory Society. Runner up *The Mousetrap* Napier Repertory Players.



# 2012 Festival of Community Theatre



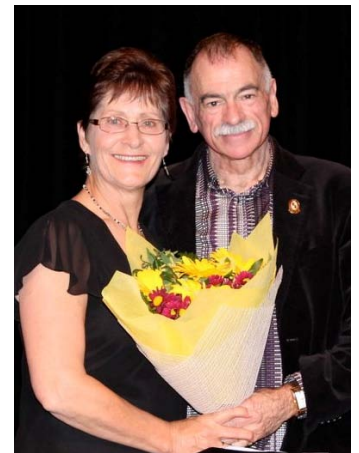
Drama Development Trust Chairman Jim Barr being thanked by President Ewen Coleman for the gift of \$1000 to NZTF. Ewen had already expressed the Federation's deep gratitude for the funding received towards this year's festival put towards travel costs. Teams appearing at the final also received a cheque for \$100 each from the Drama Development Trust. The terms and conditions for application to DDT are to be put on the federation's website and are included on an insert in this Backchat.

Ewen also expressed his thanks to Anne Corney organiser of a most successful festival. Everyone had been made most

welcome and all the weekend's activities flowed seamlessly. Anne paid tribute to her huge team of helpers drawn from Aubyn Live Theatre, Napier Repertory Players and Theatre Hawke's Bay.

Adjudicator Larry McCluskey was thanked too and he thanked NZTF for the privilege of adjudicating and thanked the actors for sharing their vision and skill. He was very impressed with the high standard of the presentations and said they would win internationally. Larry then offered answers to the question "Why do we do what we do?".

1. through theatre we experience the lives of others.
2. through theatre we broaden our understanding of life, ours and others.
3. through theatre we experience more of life.
4. through theatre we entertain ourselves and others.
5. through theatre we sustain and improve the cultural lives of ourselves and the nation



## News from Timaru

### *Material supplied by Kevin Foley*

**The South Canterbury Drama League** was this year nominated for the Art and Culture category of the Trustpower Community Awards. Awards are held in 25 regions around New Zealand to recognise and reward the outstanding contribution voluntary groups and organisations make to their communities. The League won its section and also the overall award in their region.

As all involved in amateur drama know countless hours of volunteer work are expended on productions and in keeping theatre groups running. As part of the response to the nomination Kevin Foley said they were asked to give the number of volunteer hours each month and each year that are worked in the league

- "An almost impossible task!" he said. "Perhaps unique for New Zealand, the South Canterbury Drama League encompasses five sections or committees that stage eight productions a year. We produce four plays in our Playhouse theatre, two in the "Mill Theatre" our theatre restaurant and hold "big" productions by the Musical Theatre and Juniors Committees in Timaru's Theatre Royal. The best guess number of hours was probably an underestimate in the application for the Awards and the application did mention the "social capital" that amateur drama groups contribute to the overall well being of a community. "

One group mounting eight productions a year in a place the size of Timaru (pop 28,000) is absolutely phenomenal. As a regional winner the South Canterbury Drama League now goes forward to the national awards to be held in March next year. We wish them every success.

# What's On in October & November

• Otamatea Repertory Theatre	<i>Allen Adair</i> by George Skelton	Oct 18 - 21
• Titirangi Theatre	<i>The Mousetrap</i> by Agatha Christie	Nov 27 - Dec 8
• Papakura Theatre Company	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i> by Gilbert and Sullivan	Oct 20 - Nov 3
• Howick Little Theatre	<i>Ladies for Hire</i> by Alison Quigan	Nov 10 - Dec
• Waihi Drama	<i>The Red and Gold</i> and <i>The Miners of Waihi</i> by Campbell Smith	Nov 1 - 10
• Rotorua Little Theatre	<i>Understanding Women</i> by Devon Williamson	Nov 2 - 16
• Detour Theatre	TAURANGA: <i>Blackadder: The Tudor Years</i> by Richard Curtis, Ben Elton, Rowan Atkinson and John Lloyd	Nov 14 - Dec 1
• Tauranga Repertory	<i>Teechers</i> by John Godber	Oct 3 - 13
• Te Puke Repertory Society	<i>Lipstick Dreams</i> by Helen O'Connor & Simon Hopkinson	Nov 28 - Dec 15
• Theatre Whakatane	<i>Only an Orphan Girl</i> by Henning Nelms	Nov 21 - Dec 1
• Napier Repertory Players	<i>Cinderella</i> by Stuart Arden & Bob Heather	Nov 8 - 17
• Pahiatua Repertory Society	<i>The 39 Steps</i> by Patrick Barlow	Nov 14 - 24
• Limelight Theatre Company	<i>Kiwimusicana</i> - Mike Harding	Oct 26
• Cue Theatre	<i>Christmas Cracker</i> - variety show	Nov 30 - Dec 1
• Hawera Repertory Society	<i>Blood Brothers</i> by Willy Russell	Oct 31 - Nov 10
• Wanganui Repertory Theatre	INGLEWOOD: <i>Entertaining Angels</i> by Richard Everett	Oct 6 - 20
• Foxton Little Theatre	<i>Little Shop of Horrors</i> by Alan Menken & Howard Ashman	Nov 1 - 10
• Levin Little Theatre	<i>Summer Wonderland</i> by Matthew Ryan	Nov 16 - 25
• Kapiti Playhouse	<i>Loose Ends</i> by Frank Vickery	Nov 23 - Dec 8
• Mana Little Theatre	<i>Dick Whittington</i> by John Morley	Nov 22 - Dec 1
• Porirua Little Theatre	<i>Season's Greetings</i> by Alan Ayckbourn	Nov 15 - 24
• Khandallah Arts Theatre	<i>The Haunted ...Farndale Castle</i> by David Tristram	Oct 31 - Nov 10
• New Players Theatre Company	<i>Disco Inferno the Musical</i> by Jai Sepple	Nov 7 - Dec 1
• Stagecraft Theatre	<i>The Mousetrap</i> by Agatha Christie	Oct 10 - 20
• Wellington Repertory Theatre	NEWLANDS: <i>I've Got a Dragon in My Backyard</i> by Kath Bee & Gaelynne Pound	Oct 4 - 13
• Hutt Repertory Theatre	<i>As You Like It</i> by William Shakespeare	Nov 21 - Dec 2
• Butterfly Creek	<i>The Boyfriend</i> by Sandy Wilson	Oct 23 - Nov 3
• Heretaunga Players	<i>Cinderella</i> by Jack Perry & Robert Neil Porter	Oct 1 - 6
• Marlborough Repertory Society	<i>Bloody Murder</i> by Ed Sala	Nov 28 - Dec 8
• Elmwood Players	EASTBOURNE: <i>Communicating Doors</i> by Alan Ayckbourn	Oct 18 - 27
• Keeping Good Company	<i>Wild Goose Chase</i> by Derek Benfield	Nov 21 - Dec 1
• South Canterbury Drama League	<i>The Twits</i> by Roald Dahl	Nov 28 - Dec 8
• South Otago Theatrical Society	<i>Jeffrey Bernard is Unwell</i> by Keith Waterhouse	Oct 3 - 13
• Invercargill Repertory Society	<i>Telling Tales 4</i> by David Winfield	Oct 1 - 5
	PLAYHOUSE: <i>Are You Being Served?</i> by Jeremy Lloyd & David Croft	Oct 12 - 20
	MILL THEATRE: <i>Fawlty Towers</i> by John Cleese & Connie Booth	Nov 22 - Dec 1
	<i>Death and Taxes</i> by April Phillips	Nov 15 - 24
	<i>Ripper Revue 2</i>	Nov 10 - 17

Do you send your newsletters by email? Include Backchat Editor info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz

## Obituaries

NZTF records the passing of Eileen Richards Life Member, Brian Staniland and Edna Newnham, both Individual Members. Brian was involved with the national body for 6 years from the late 70s, was a founding member of ANZDA and adjudicated for NZTF many times. Edna was an influential president of the Wellington area in the seventies.

## A Playwriting seminar

Te Aroha Easter weekend 2013

Sat/Sunday 30/31 March

\$160 for two full days & dinner

All enquiries to PANZ Secretary before 17 Nov

June Allen, (09) 443 4451 june.all@xtra.co.nz

# Waihi Drama Society and *Nana's Naughty Knickers*

*By Katherine DiSavino*

Waihi had great success with this hilarious comedy chosen to highlight the talents of its more mature actors. It was also a chance for the wardrobe team to let their imagination run wild as the play revolves around Nana Sylvia illegally selling lingerie to senior citizens from her Manhattan apartment. A revolving bookcase, false fireplace insert and trick closet hide the unmentionables from prying eyes. Val Ferguson and Linda Haines spent literally hundreds of hours creating the items that would be revealed when the apartment transformed into a boutique.



The lingerie has been lovingly boxed up and is available for hire to other groups. Hire items also include blinged up geriatric slippers, “Saucy Slip” swing tags and hot pink flyers as required by the script. More information is on the website [www.waihidramasociety.co.nz](http://www.waihidramasociety.co.nz) or ring Val 027 286 0565



Editor: Margaret Robertson

Designer: Jade Gillies

Deadline for next issue of Backchat

**November 4, 2012**

Send NZTF communications to

**[info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz](mailto:info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz)**

or PO Box 329 Palmerston North 4440