



BACKCHAT



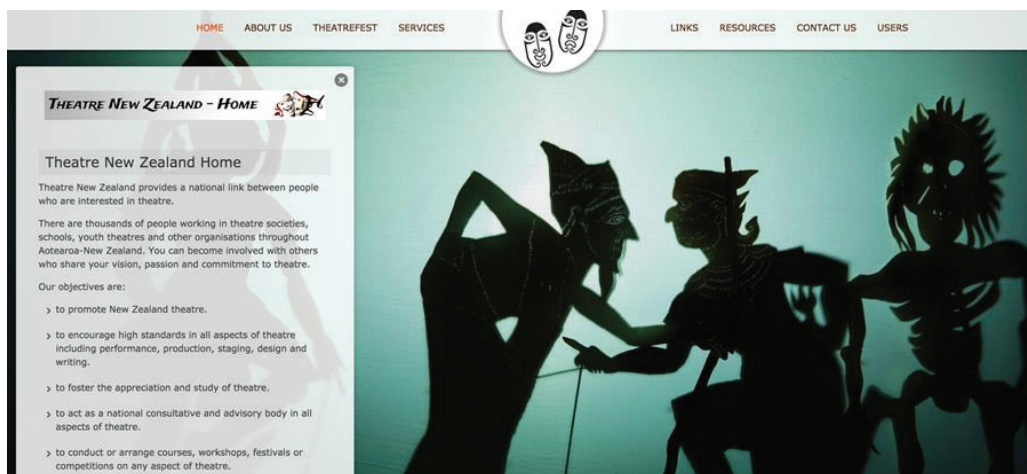
News from THEATRE NEW ZEALAND, *Fostering Community Theatre in Aotearoa*

April 2015 Vol 38 Issue 2



A scene from Porirua Little Theatre's sold out production of 'Voices From The Front' by Amanda Stone. **ON NOW UNTIL MAY 2**

Our New Website



We are delighted with our new website, a fresh and user-friendly design by Mark Perry. You can even enter TheatreFest via the website now, as well as finding out about how we can help you with your theatrical endeavours. Check it out: www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz

President's Report

....and suddenly it's April! We've had a great summer here in the South Island. Lots of outdoor park performances where people have sat under the stars, reclined with a wine or two, picnicking and sharing general bonhomie.

Theatrical activity is well underway, with many productions across the country into their seasons and many more about to open.

Your Executive is already coordinating the *2015 TheatreFest* (more information elsewhere - and is your team entering?) plus adding the final touches to our new *Theatre New Zealand Website*, expected to go on-line around the time this *Backchat* goes to press. The easier-access more informational and stimulating website is another step in the upgrading of our National and International creative image.

With the year getting underway, are you considering organising a workshop? Remember we can help source tutors and subsidise costs to make it more financially viable for your members. Send applications to our Secretary Margaret, contact details on the website.

New OSH laws come into effect in September, they are before a select committee now so we will keep you in the loop here - these new laws will affect you and your society/membership/theatres. We are planning to have a seminar about it at the AGM/Conference in conjunction with the National Finals of *TheatreFest* in Hamilton September 11/12. Send a representative. Other important and creative workshops are in the planning stages. If not before - see you in Hamilton!

BRYAN AITKEN, President

Theatre New Zealand



Hilarious New Zealand Comedies!

By Devon Williamson www.plays.co.nz

Over Paid, Over Sexed and Over Here!
Cast: 4 Female, 5 Male Length: Two Acts
The outrageous comedy about the Yanks 1942 invasion of NZ! As our men fight overseas, a sleepy seaside kiwi town is about to experience an invasion by the Americans. The arrival of the Yanks brings much needed excitement for the ladies, but for the local lads there are three big problems with the visitors... they're over paid, they're over sexed, and they're over here!

My Inlaws are Outlaws!
Cast: 5 Female, 2 Male Length: Two Acts
Annie discovers her in-laws are outlaws... and her mother in-law has hired a mad group of assassins to kill her! How will Annie, a mild mannered Librarian, outwit the best of the Italian, Russian and Irish contract killers? This is outrageous, laugh out loud comedy at its best.

The Old People Are Revolting
Cast: 5 Female, 2 Male Length: Two Acts
An hilarious comedy about seniors seeking revenge! The residents of the Sunshine Retirement Village have had enough: they're revolting! Bursting with eccentric characters and crazy shenanigans the play is great fun to stage and a huge audience pleaser.

Other plays include: My Husband's Nuts, Menopause Made Me Do It, Crazy Ladies, Understanding Women, and Lost For Words.



For perusal scripts and information contact The Play Bureau
Phone: 03 455 9959
Email: info@playbureau.com

Over 60 productions staged by theatres across NZ and Australia!

Regional Round-up

Wellington District

With ANZAC day upon us, there is lively interest in special anniversary performances: Wellington Repertory are producing *Soldier's Song* by Campbell Smith followed in the second half by a selection of songs popular at the time set in a London pub in 1916, where ANZAC troops on leave have gathered to tell their stories and enjoy a sing-along with friends. Mana Little Theatre are producing *Once on Chunuck Bar* by Maurice Shadbolt and Porirua Little Theatre 's contribution is called *Voices from the Front*. Levin Little Theatre's *'Allo, 'Allo* by Jeremy Lloyd and David Croft preceded these shows in March but continued the war theme.

The District Full Length Festival is under way and has been extended a further 2 moths so will now finish at the end of October, meaning there is the opportunity for groups to enter their third production for the year. Our Local TheatreFest will be held 31 July 1st August at the Gryphon Theatre in Wellington with Sandra Bartlam as adjudicator.

Checkout:

wellington.theatrenewzealand.co.nz

Top Of The South

Picton Little Theatre is holding a Theatre Director's Workshop for aspiring and experienced directors on 25/26 April. Tutor is director Pam Logan, from Blenheim. Cost \$30 (includes lunch each day). Contact Don McDonald 03 573 6442 email swaggie2@gmail.com For more details visit pictonlittletheatre.com

Marlborough Repertory's April production is the World War 1 play *King and Country* by Dave Armstrong and directed by Duncan Whiting.

Amateur theatre is the "life blood" of stage drama, says Dave who is delighted his play will be brought to life in Blenheim. He wrote *King and Country* to bring music and actors together on stage. Dave and his wife Caroline, a producer, took *King and Country* on its first tour several years ago, performing at different centres and using bands from each town to play the music. *King and Country* was also performed in the 2006 NZ International Festival of the Arts.

Marlborough Repertory held auditions end of March for its forthcoming winter production - *Peninsula* by Auckland playwright Gary Henderson. Pam Logan is directing this classic NZ play which is set in Akaroa Harbour, Banks Peninsula, Canterbury, during the 1960s.

Canterbury/West Coast

A hectic couple of months, with a number of productions either on stage or in rehearsal mode.

Riccarton Players lost the use of their beloved Mill Theatre in the Christchurch earthquakes, but continue their positive approach, staging *Ladies For Hire* in March and two April productions - *Knickers* and *Playbox: Going On A Bear Hunt*.

Elmwood Players are currently staging the Irish comedy/drama *The Hen Night Epiphany* and heading into rehearsals for *Proof*, that will be staged in June. Elmwood are also working with Bryan Atiken towards hosting three workshops in mid-year for directors, actors and writers.

Christchurch Repertory have just concluded their season of *Richard III*, and our now busy strategising their future with regards to a replacement venue, following the loss of their theatre, also due to the 2011/12 earthquakes.



RICCARTON PLAYERS

A Riccartonian Palace of Varieties

An extravaganza
of Singing, Dancing &
Melodrama in the style of the
Old Time Music Hall.

Directed by Doug Clarke,
Donna Buchanan and Karyn Gibson

3rd to 13th June 2015
7.30pm Wednesday to Friday
Plus 2.00pm Saturday 6th
4.00pm Sunday 7th
2.00pm Saturday 13th

Cash sales and EFTPOS available - No Credit Cards

Christchurch South Intermediate School,
204 Selwyn Street, Christchurch
For bookings phone 338 4699 or book online at
www.riccartonplayers.co.nz

Southland

Invercargill Repertory Society has enjoyed a short but successful season performing Maurice Shadbolt's *Once on Chunuk Bair*. The play, popular throughout NZ at the moment, highlights the futile efforts made by the Wellington Infantry Battalion on August 8, 1915.

Rehearsals for Invercargill Musical Theatre's *Phantom of the Opera* begin next week. Many of the cast and crew were lucky enough to see the show in Christchurch last week and can't wait to get stuck in!

The Southland/Otago *TheatreFest* heat will be held at Repertory House in Invercargill on August 1, with Lara McGregor confirmed to adjudicate.

Obituary for Frank Hartley 1934-2015

Life Member of NZTF



Frank Hartley was National Treasurer of The New Zealand Theatre Federation 1978 - 1990. This was a position he was probably persuaded to take up by incoming National President Olga Harding as they'd met at the Karori Drama Club. Past President Pam Logan remembers him as one of those quiet people who fly below the radar but one with a warm and ready smile. She says he really had his finger on the pulse and kept a tight rein on finances. If some additional funding was genuinely needed he often seemed to have a little 'pocket' from which to find it - or knew of an avenue that could be pursued to get it.

When he retired from the treasurer's position in 1990

he then had to be persuaded to accept Life Membership. The minutes record that "there was long and loud applause" for his service.

Frank continued his interest in theatre with 24 years as treasurer of The Drama Development Trust, the small independent charity that helps amateur theatre and particularly members of Theatre New Zealand.

Frank was meticulous in everything he did and even when he had retired from the position of National Treasurer he continued to make a contribution. He spent a lot of time upgrading the Federation constitution. He was the one who made sure that the terminology was consistent, capitals were in the right place and all the full stops were there. A few years ago to help the National Executive he put together a survey aimed at finding out the numbers involved in amateur theatre - onstage, backstage and in the audience. He presented a succinct summary of the facts he'd collected. His reputation for detail was well known and when Gregg Perkins took over the role of National Treasurer some years back he remembers being nervous

that Frank was in attendance at the AGM. He was worried that Frank would come up with a curly question and sure enough he did. Gregg says he thinks he managed to bluff his way out of it with Ewen Coleman's assistance.

Frank always thought deeply about plans of action and often came up with new ideas that would bring benefit to others. He loved instrumental music, opera, reading and crosswords. He was a keen traveller; as well as travelling extensively overseas, he used to make an annual summer pilgrimage to Auckland for the tennis championships and having a life time commitment to NZTF he also used to include Regional and Nationals where ever they were, on his travel agenda.

He was a kind, loyal, gentle man with a dry wit and he will be missed.

MARGARET ROBERTSON,
Secretary of Theatre New Zealand and the Drama Development Trust

Whats On

- Dargaville Little Theatre *One Act Plays* (Auditions) END OF MAY
- Dargaville Little Theatre *The Murder Room* (Jack Sharkey) 24 APR - 2 MAY
- Cue Theatre Inglewood *Last Tango In Little Grimley* DATE TBC
- Wellington Repertory *Carpe Jugulum* (Terry Pratchett/Stephen Briggs) 27 MAY - 6 JUN
- Hawera Repertory Society *Cinderella* 4 - 11 JUL
- Howick Little Theatre *Sitting Pretty* (Amy Rosenthal) 9 - 30 JUL
- Howick Little Theatre *Solo Women* (Fiona Samuel/Pete Malicki) 3 - 6 JUN
- Phoenix Theatre *Off The Hook* (Derek Benfield) 14 - 23 MAY
- Phoenix Theatre *Blackadder - The Tudor Years* (Auditions) 7 JUN
- Detour Theatre *Steel Magnolias* (Robert Harling) 17 JUN - 4 JUL
- Napier Repertory Players *Swansong* (David Moore) 10 - 20 JUN
- Elmwood Players *Proof* (David Auburn) 10 - 20 JUN
- Elmwood Players *Some Like It Short - A Season Of NZ One Acts* (Auditions) 15 JUN
- Riccarton Players *A Riccartonian Palace Of Varieties* 3 - 13 JUN

TheatreFest 2015

Entries are now open for the 2015 TheatreFest. Entry Forms and General Information and Conditions of Entry are available from the Local TheatreFest Organisers or on-line at www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz

The TheatreFest is open to all theatre groups and schools. Performances may be any genre, ie. musical theatre, dance, mime, comedy, drama.

Performances must include two actors and be at least 15 minutes and no more than 50 minutes.

For more information, please contact:

Anne Corney - TheatreFest National Administrator

14 Corbett Place, Onekawa, NAPIER 4110

Email: theatrefest2015@gmail.com

Telephone: (06) 843-9197 (evenings) Mobile: (021) 0237-6397

Local TheatreFests

NORTHLAND

Dargaville Little Theatre

24th and 25th July

Adjudicator: Stephanie Cooke

Organiser: Deborah Steele

dargavillelittletheatre@gmail.com

WAIKATO

Riverlea Theatre, Hamilton

24th and 25th July

Adjudicator: Michael Switzer

Organiser: Lorna Ashton

theatrefest@playbox.org.nz

BAY OF PLENTY

Shambles Theatre, Rotorua

22nd and 23rd May

Adjudicator: Claire Marsh

Organiser: Robyn-Ann Rumney

lyall.ra@xtra.co.nz

CANTERBURY/WEST COAST

NASDA

31 July- 2 August (Dates TBC)

Adjudicator: TBC

Organiser: Michelle Histen

histenone@xtra.co.nz

BOTTOM OF THE SOUTH

Repertory House, Invercargill

1st August

Adjudicator: Lara Macgregor

Organiser: Jade Gillies

oneactfest@gmail.com

HAWKE'S BAY

Aubyn Live Theatre, Hastings

31st July and 1st August

Adjudicator: Ken Keys

Organiser: Anne Corney

theatreworld@clear.net.nz

WELLINGTON

Gryphon Theatre, Wellington

31st July and 1st August

Adjudicator: Sandra Bartlam

Organiser: Ross Foubister

ross.foubister@paradise.net.nz

TOP OF THE SOUTH

Havelock Town Hall, Havelock

25th July

Adjudicator: Ewen Coleman

Organiser: Anne McAuley

anne.mcauley@outlook.com

MANAWATU

Feilding Little Theatre

30th and 31st July and 1st August

Adjudicator: Steven Arnold

Organiser: Joan Ford

Mtd.mj.ford@actrix.gen.co.nz

National Final

Riverlea Theatre, Hamilton

11th and 12th September

Adjudicator: Lindsay Nash

Organiser: Lorna Ashton

theatrefest@playbox.org.nz

Regional Finals

UPPER NORTH ISLAND

Te Kuiti Little Theatre

14th and 15th August

Adjudicator: Deborah Davids

Organiser: Rob Blamires

info@on-stagetekuiti.org

LOWER NORTH ISLAND

Regent Theatre, Pahiatua

21st and 22nd August

Adjudicator: Deborah Davids

Organiser: Lesley Courtney

contactlesley@vodafone.co.nz

UPPER SOUTH ISLAND

The Boathouse Theatre, Blenheim

21st and 22nd August

Adjudicator: David Chambers

Organiser: Anne McAuley

anne.mcauley@outlook.com

LOWER SOUTH ISLAND

Wakatipu High School, Queenstown

15th August

Adjudicator: David Chambers

Organiser: Jade Gillies