

Backchat

News from The New Zealand Theatre Federation Inc



April 2012 Volume 35 Issue 2

In The Spotlight...

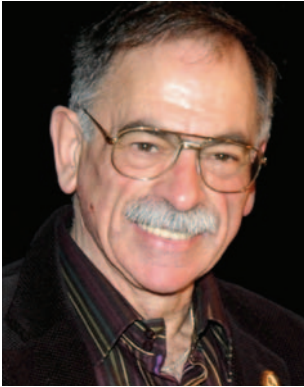
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A scene from 'Passchendaele' by TJ Ramsay, an ANZAC Day musical drama presented by the Dramatix Theatre Development Trust. Read about this year's interactive event on page 3.



Editorial



Most theatre groups around the country are well into their first production of the year. There's a great variety of plays from the standard fare of comedies to not so well known plays being performed. It's pleasing too to see a sprinkling of New Zealand plays.

A proven crowd pleaser at the moment is Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* released for just 18 months to amateurs as part of the 60th Anniversary of the first ever production.

Along with major productions hopefully groups are planning for this year's Festival of Community Theatre (closing date 30 June) and have or will be about to be contacted by their local Festival Organiser. There are eight festivals at local level planned this year with Te Kuiti organising a festival in Waikato, the first in this area for some time. See details p 4 & 5.

A reminder that we have travel assistance available to teams from the South Island to get to Hastings for the national final weekend and that we have an overseas adjudicator, Larry McCluskey from Ireland for the National Final. While Larry is here he will also run acting master classes in Christchurch 8/9 September and Wellington 22/23 September and he will possibly visit other centres to give seminars.

It is very encouraging to note the success of the regional Directors' Workshop held in Rotorua in February. Sixteen people from 6 different theatre groups took part over two days. Other groups are challenged to take up NZTF's offer of sponsoring tutors and organise workshops in their area.

And finally may I say a very big thank you to Matthew Norrish of Dunedin who since 2008, has prepared the layout of each of our issues of Backchat. The professional look of Backchat is in no small part due to his work. Matt is no longer available to do this for us.

Ewen D Coleman
National President

New Members

We welcome Rangī Ruru Girls School and St Margaret's College, both of Christchurch to our membership.

Subscription Renewal 2012/2013

- Forms for renewing your subs will be posted out shortly together with a short survey seeking your opinion on our organisation. Please also check your entry on the website for accuracy under 'About Us/Members' and 'Links'.
- We look forward to hearing back from you.

Register of Tutors Can you help?

We need to pool our resources to establish a nationwide register of tutors. This is Lynn Bushell's task, see p3. Please help her by providing the names of successful tutors you have had running workshops in acting, directing, lighting, makeup or anything else theatrical. info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz

*A tutor who tooted the flute
Tried to tutor two tutors to toot
Said the two to the tutor,
"Is it harder to toot,
Or to tutor two tutors to toot?"
- Thanks to Cue Magazine, SCA*



Dramatix Theatre Trust, Nelson, 'Lest We Forget' *April 21, 22 & 25*

In the four years since Dramatix dreamt up the annual two-day *Lest We Forget Anzac Event* and its associated week-long School Education programme it has grown into a stunningly educational, action-packed, completely interactive and often poignantly challenging happening.

Every year Founders Heritage Park in Nelson steps back in time with music, gun-fire, explosions and drama for all the tastes, sights and sounds of wartime history in a unique, educational and enjoyable way with over 10 different activities, displays and experiences.

TJ Ramsay, the inspiration behind the event says "I thought about the increasing numbers of people for whom Anzac Day resonates so strongly. I felt there was a need for people to connect their own personal histories with our shared collective histories and I wanted a way we could use as many different educational and performance mediums to express them.

Every year we've performed original theatre pieces. This year I've done monologues instead and these will be delivered by our theatre family in character throughout the three full days."

Marketing Manager, Kat Bailey says they've had a night time trench system, German and Japanese POW camps, an underground railway station bomb shelter, and a concentration camp processing area. Actors have been child evacuees, spies, patrolling Nazi's checking ID papers, war time singers, wounded soldiers, escaping Jews, nurses in air raids and many more.



A patrolling Nazi checking IDs in 2011.

Another Member of National Executive

Introducing Lynn Bushell



A full time student and confessed "chocaholic" a condition for which she refuses to seek therapy, Lynn is currently completing a BA focusing on drama, public speaking and creative writing.

She has competed and won awards at both regional and national

level with NZTF and in 2012 is the organiser of the Wairarapa Festival of Community Theatre 27 - 29 July in Carterton.

Lynn is also a nationally accomplished public speaker winning the 2011 NZ Toastmasters International competition "Most Humorous Speech" and placing 3rd in the overall International competition.

With thirty years experience in theatre governance, production, acting and directing Lynn is a passionate supporter of community theatre with a particular interest in developing ways in which theatre clubs can increase member participation and encourage greater community involvement. Her role with NZTF in 2012 is works in progress collating a national database of professional tutors able to assist NZTF members improve their skill base.

Currently Vice President of Limelight Theatre in Carterton, Wairarapa Lynn has just finished directing a sell out season of *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* and is looking forward to directing *Blood Brothers* later this year.

Local Festivals of Community Theatre

1. Bay of Plenty

Dates - 3rd & 4th August
Venue - Te Puke Intermediate Performing Arts Centre
Contact - Diane Leach, 07 573 8346 dandbleach@gmail.com
Adjudicator - Claire Marsh ANZDA Accred

2. Waikato

Dates - 10 & 11 August
Venue - On-Stage Te Kuiti at Little Theatre, West Street West, Te Kuiti
Contact - Hilary Blamires, 07 878 5078 hilary@blamires.net
Adjudicator: Lindsay Nash ANZDA Accred

4. Manawatu

Dates - 26, 27, 28 July
Venue - Feilding Little Theatre
Contact - Joan Ford 06 328 7890 mtd.mj.ford@actrix.co.nz
Adjudicator - Adjudicator Claire Marsh ANZDA Accred

5. Wairarapa, including Wellington

Dates - 27, 28, 29 July
Venue - Carterton Events Centre Holloway St Carterton
Contact - Lynn Bushell - 027 5402 280 limelighttheatreco@gmail.com
Adjudicator - Ewen Coleman ANZDA Accred

6. Top of The South

Dates - 10 & 11 August
Venue - Boathouse Theatre, Blenheim
Contact - Anne McAuley 03 578 6470, 027 037 897 mattmc@xtra.ac.nz
Adjudicator - TBA

7. Canterbury West Coast

Dates - 10 & 11 August
Venue - Aranui High School Performing Arts Theatre, Christchurch
Contact - Lyn Doncliff 03 789 7122 nztfc.canwest@xtra.co.nz
Adjudicator- Ewen Coleman ANZDA Accred

3. Hawkes Bay

Dates - 10 & 11 August
Venue - The Playhouse Theatre Hastings
Contact - Anne Corney,
 06 843 9197, 021 0237 6397
 theatreworld@clear.net.nz
Adjudicator - Nanette Wright
 ANZDA Accred



8. Southland / Otago

Dates - 10 & 11 August
Venue: Repertory House,
 Invercargill
Contact - Grace Campbell,
 022 653 0470
 oneactfest@gmail.com
Adjudicator - Dale Hendry
 ANZDA Accred

Copies of ANZDA criteria are available on request:
bryanaitken@paradise.net.nz

Regional Festivals

Upper North Island Regional Final

Date(s): 24-25 August

Venue: Theatre Whakatane

Contact - Ritchie Tidd 022 021 6487 traceritchie@yahoo.com.au

Adjudicator: David Chambers, Christchurch ANZDA Accred

Lower North Island Regional Final

Date(s): 31 August - 1 September

Venue: Regent Theatre Pahiataua

Contact - Lesley Courtney contactlesley@vodafone.co.nz

Adjudicator: David Chambers, Christchurch ANZDA Accred

Upper South Island Regional Final

Date(s): 24-25 August

Venue: Aranui Performing Arts Theatre, Christchurch

Contact - Lyn Doncliff 03 789 7122 nztf.canwest@xtra.co.nz

Adjudicator: Deborah Davids, Christchurch ANZDA Accred

Lower South Island Regional Final

Date(s): 31 August - 1 September

Venue: Centrestage Theatre, Invercargill

Contact - Jade Gillies 03 218 3073, 021 079 9676 oneactfest@gmail.com

Adjudicator: Deborah Davids, Christchurch ANZDA Accred

National Final

Date(s): 14-15 September

Venue: Lowe Family Performing Arts Centre, Lindisfarne College, Hastings

Contact - Anne Corney, 06 843 9197, 021 0237 6397 theatreworld@clear.net.nz

Adjudicator: Larry McCluskey, Dublin, Ireland GIDA

From the annals of theatrical and literary anecdotes:

“Rehearsals for *Oedipus* at the National Theatre were going badly,” Michael Aspel once recalled. “The Director, Peter Hall, called the cast to him and told them he wasn’t getting enough fire and passion from them. ‘I want you all, one by one, to come on

stage and say something, anything, that will really terrify me.’ Each member of the cast stepped forward and roared obscenities and threats into the darkness. Finally Sir John Gielgud sauntered to the front of the stage, took a languid draw from his cigarette and said ‘We open in two weeks’.”

Thanks to Marlborough Repertory Society

If any of these plays interest you we can email you the script, FREE - and if you have any particular requirements we can

also make other suggestions - please contact scripts@playmarket.org.nz with your queries.

The Engine Room

By Ralph McCubbin Howell (2w 2m, 16+ characters)

WINNER - OUTSTANDING NEW PLAYWRIGHT, CHAPMAN TRIPP THEATRE AWARDS 2011

It weaves together three major events coinciding in New Zealand in 2011: our 50th general election, the Rugby World Cup, and, significantly, the 30th anniversary of the controversial 1981 Springbok Tour. Tackles this well-known and divisive period of our history without sermonizing, and with a sense of irreverence.

Slouching Towards Bethlehem

By Dean Parker (17 – 40 characters)

WINNER - OUTSTANDING NEW PLAY, CHAPMAN TRIPP THEATRE AWARDS 2011

“Life is ugly, brutish and short. Like me.”

Slouching toward Bethlehem is the story of Robert Muldoon, New Zealand’s populist National Prime Minister during the tumultuous years 1975-84, when the generation that suffered a depression and a world war desperately tried to hold on to a New Zealand of conservative, regulated values.

This is a large-scale play with 50 scenes and over 40 speaking parts. But while there are public addresses and public occasions, this isn’t a pageant play—it consists largely of a series of intimate, revealing moments.

Objection Overruled

By Carolyn Burns (2w 4m)

About the source of adult inadequacies in the upbringing of children whose natural emotional life is repressed and distorted, and who in turn repress and distort the next generation. The dramatic form the playwright has invented for this material - a courtroom in which relevant moments from the past are quickly acted out as required - brilliantly provides for swift changes of mood as the play swings from farce to pathos and from the emotionally tender to the intellectually stimulating.

Stuff: A Play on Words

By Patrick Evans (2w 3m)

When Carol and Alan arrive for a Saturday night suburban dinner and the lights are out and nobody appears to be home, their comfortable and unthinking routine is thrown into complete disarray. They are joined by other couples and together find that language is running their lives.

Joseph and Mahina

By Tom Sainsbury (1-5w 1-6m)

NOMINATED: OUTSTANDING NEW PLAY, CHAPMAN TRIPP THEATRE AWARDS 2011

Mihi was once a thriving dairy factory town. Yet since the factory’s closure unemployment has soared, and the embittered populace has become directionless. Enter Joseph Nordhoy, an enthusiastic Christian Youth Group leader. Joseph is determined to put the pep and religious fervour back into the local teenagers. As his efforts continually fail he meets kindred spirit, Mahina, an angry teenager looking for an escape from her depressing hometown . . .

Fix *By Jess Sayer (3w 4m)*

WINNER – B4 25 COMPETITION 2011

Families aren’t always what they seem. Grace thought hers was perfect, but they have been hiding something. Something that’s going to ruin everything. Then her son asks her to fix it – a plea she can’t ignore. Grace knows she has to fix everything ... no matter the cost.

A passionate, tragic story about one family’s breakdown.

Meet the Churchills

By Paul Baker (2w 3m)

NOMINATED : OUTSTANDING NEW PLAY, AND OUTSTANDING NEW PLAYWRIGHT, CHAPMAN TRIPP THEATRE AWARDS 2011

Very funny family comedy. Randolph Churchill holds a luncheon party to celebrate the 88th birthday of his father, Sir Winston, who is expected shortly to die, and there is unfinished business in his loving but deeply dysfunctional family. He wants the truth about his father’s role in the break up of his wartime marriage, and hopes simultaneously to affect a rapprochement with Winston. Randolph’s sister, the alcoholic Sarah, arrives determined to broadcast her entirely unsuitable new relationship with a much younger black man. Lady Clementine wants Winston not to stand again at the next election. The temperature rises...

Scott of the Antarctic

By Stuart Hoar (3w 2m)

This very funny one act play explores drama versus exploitation versus audience expectations against the backdrop of a feminist treatment of Scott’s heroics.

The 53rd Victim

By Pip Hall (4w 3m, up to 30 characters)

London is in chaos. Muslim terrorists bomb morning commuters on their way to work. Death and destruction abound. This startling play is based on the true story of the New Zealand megalomaniac who was actually present at the London bombings. The play takes an in depth look at this fascinating character, from her early beginnings in Gisborne to her lonely unglamorous death in a tiny flat in Shepherd’s Bush.

What's On April / May

Papakura Theatre Company
Howick Little Theatre
Tauranga Repertory
Gisborne Unity Theatre

Rotorua Little Theatre
Napier Repertory Players
Feilding Little Theatre
Pahiatua Repertory
Hawera Rep Society
Foxton Little Theatre
Levin Little Theatre
Kapiti Playhouse
Tawa Little Theatre
New Players
Khandallah Arts Theatre
Stagecraft Theatre
Wellington Repertory

Hutt Repertory Theatre
Butterfly Creek Theatre
Dramatix Theatre Trust
Elmwood Players
Christ's College/Rangi Ruru
Princess Margaret Hospital Players
South Canterbury Drama League

South Otago Theatrical Society

Footrot Flats by Roger Hall, Philip Norman and AK Grant
As You Like It by William Shakespeare
Four Brothers by Liam Hagan
AUDITION: *Blackadder - The Tudor Years* by Richard Curtis, Rowan Atkinson, Ben Elton & John Lloyd
Steel Magnolias by Robert Harling
A Trick of the Light by Ken Duncum
A Month of Sundays by Bob Larbey
Nunsense by Dan Groggin
AUDITION: *Dirty Dusting* by Ed Waugh & Trevor Wood
It's On It's Off by Ray Lawrence
Unoriginal Sin by David Tristram
Arsenic and Old Lace by Joseph Kesselring
Twist and Shout by Val Bolter, Martin Carr, Kevin Monk
Escargot by Peter MacKenzie
The Constant Wife by Somerset Maugham
Ladies for Hire by Alison Quigan
Blackadder III by Richard Curtis & Ben Elton
AUDITION: *Private Lives* by Noel Coward
Wednesday to Come by Renee
AUDITION: *John Gabriel Borkman* by Ibsen
Lest We Forget interactive, living history
What Katy Did by Lucy O'Brien (South Island Premiere)
Jesus Christ Superstar by Lloyd Weber & Rice
Hold on Tight by MacMartin & Coleman
JUNIOR SECTION: *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* by Damian Trasler, David Lovesy and Steve Clark
LITTLE THEATRE: Selection of One Act Plays
Are You Being Served? by Lloyd & Croft

April 14 - 28
May 12 - June 2
April 11 - 21

April 18
April 20 - May 5
May 10 - 19
May 4 - 19
May 3 - 12
April 1st 7.30
April 28 - May 12
April 13 - 28
April 11 - 21
May 17 - 26
May 17 - 26
April 19 - 28
May 30 - June 9
May 1 - 12
April 15
April 11 - 21
April 21 & 22
April 21, 22, 25
April 11 - 21
May 14 - 19
April 18 - 28

April 19 - 21
May 11 - 19
May 10 - 19

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

Looking for a New Zealand Play for your Theatre?

new release!

How to Train Your Husband

Training your husband? Sound impossible? Not when you have a legendary husband trainer living right next door! Three generations of women in the Smith family attempt to turn their men into fully trained members of the opposite sex. The result is an hilarious comedy.

Lost for Words

Can a BBC announcer, a mute receptionist, a heel clicking German and a white guy who's convinced he's Jamaican, convert their Auckland classical music station to reggae?

Menopause Made Me Do It!

Five menopausal women are lured to a motel by a kidnapper who has seriously underestimated his prey. A weekend of madness and mayhem ensues as the women seize control and marry the kidnapper off to one of their group.

Crazy Ladies!

An outrageous comedy! Five school friends stage their own reunion after 25 years apart. Friendships are rekindled, secrets are revealed, a janitor is kidnapped! Hilarious and uplifting.

My Husband's Nuts!

Barbara's husband is missing on the family farm. When Jack finally returns he's convinced that he is a Japanese soldier holding out on an island after World War Two.

Two. Barbara's husband is nuts. The only people she can trust with this information is the new vet and the village idiot. How will they restore Jack's mind without the help of the medical profession... or common sense?

"Looking for a NZ play that will pull in the crowds? This is it!"

Phil Ormsby, Artistic Director
Flaxworks Theatre

Understanding Women

Mike, Dave and Julian spend a weekend in a garden shed determined to break an age-old mystery. Armed with a case of beer, a box of girly magazines and a holy book they are going to "understand women". What they discover is not quite what they expected. Understanding Women is a comedy play for both sexes!

"Hilarious, dramatic, insightful. Williamson's plays are winners for the audience and producer alike"

Stuart Gunn, Artistic Director
Absolute Theatre



"Quick, witty dialogue... fast-moving... real Kiwi comedy that is sure to appeal and entertain"

Whakatane Beacon

"Brilliant fast moving script... Fun to stage, hilarious to watch..."

Toni Henderson,
Tauranga Theatre
Director

Productions staged in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Tauranga, Waikato, Taranaki...
it's time to stage one at your theatre!

By Devon Williamson Order perusal scripts at Play Bureau!

For perusal scripts and information contact: The Play Bureau Phone: (06) 757-3103 E Mail: play.bureau.nz@xtra.co.nz

Al Williamson



Al Williamson, longest serving committee member of Hamilton Playbox passed away at the beginning of March. He had been a member for more than 60 years and was heavily involved in the entertainment

industry for as many years. He was still active in the Playbox committee and its productions. His passion was theatre and he spent many thousand of hours volunteering his time. He will be missed.

Charities Commission

Check up on changes to the Charities Act. First all registered charities must now tell the Commission if a certified officer becomes disqualified (eg becomes bankrupt) and secondly the definition of 'officers' has been widened to include both members of your highest governing body AND anyone in a 'position to have significant influence' over your management or administration. They must become 'certified'. See www.charities.govt.nz

Norfolk Island Festival
October 2 - 6

Adjudicator Robert Gilbert, Christchurch



POSTAGE
STAMP

Editor: Margaret Robertson

Designer: Jade Gillies

Deadline for next issue of Backchat

May 16 2012

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