



**NEW HOME FOR MAY IVES LIBRARY**

**SQUARE EDGE,  
PALMERSTON NORTH**



# Performing in the Festival of Community Theatre

By Dinie Bevers

2007 was the second year I gave a group of my students the opportunity to take part in Theatre Federation's annual Festival of Community Theatre.

In 2006 we participated with the play *Juvie* by Jerome McDonough and we were extremely fortunate to go through to the South Island Regional in Christchurch after winning the District Festival in Westport.

It was exhilarating for the students, parents and for me as their teacher. They worked hard after that first 'round' and repeated the success in Christchurch where we won again to move on to the National Final in Palmerston North! It was unbelievable particularly as our cast were so very young compared to most of the other participants.

We had a terrific time leading up to the Nationals, had to do a lot of fundraising to get there and then had a lovely time watching the other plays, striking up new friendships with fellow actors and of course there was time for some shopping in the North Island.

In 2007 we entered again. Two boys remained from the year before's cast and we had five new actors who had not had the experience yet.

It was very hard to find a play that was of the same class as *Juvie*. I decided to write a play myself. It was an old idea that I had worked on before and I adapted it as well as I could ( Ed note: this play won the Olga Harding Playwriting Award !) to suit my, again, young cast of seven.

*The Third Floor* a black comedy/thriller/ theatre of the absurd on the madness of war was the result and it proved to be quite challenging for these actors. They worked hard and did very well indeed winning Award for Best Ensemble Play at the District Festival in Christchurch under the adjudication of Bryan Aitken.

Alas we didn't go forward this time but that was okay because we could all see why the other plays were better and we received an excellent adjudication with which we could be totally in agreement. There were some fantastic plays in the festival, in particular a play by the senior drama students of Aranui High School who performed a modern adaptation of Romeo and Juliet. They went right through to the National Final in Dunedin.

It has been an educational experience for my students and they can't wait to take part again this year.

*With thanks to Cue Magazine, Summer 2008 for permission to reprint this article.*

## Reminder for AGM Remits & Nominations

**THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NEW ZEALAND THEATRE FEDERATION INC. WILL BE HELD ON 28TH JUNE 2008 AT 11AM AT THE HORTICULTURAL HALL SUPPER ROOM, LOWER HUTT.**

**In accordance with the Constitution of the above incorporated society it is hereby announced that remits and nominations for consideration at the AGM should reach the National Administrator no later than 11th April 2008.**

***Nomination Forms are for President, Vice President & Treasurer and are included with this Newsletter***

**Postal Address: 3 Coates Street, Westport - Phone: 03 789 7122**

**Email Address: NZTFadmin@xtra.co.nz**

# NZTF May Ives Library Relocated

*(Article contributed by Sheridan Hickey)*

New Zealand Theatre Federation's May Ives Library has relocated to

**Room 110  
Square Edge Arts Centre  
52 – 56 The Square  
P O Box 329  
Palmerston North 4440**

The Square Edge Arts Centre is an art deco style building which was originally built as the Municipal Building for the Palmerston North City Council and, therefore, has a rich history. After Palmerston North's new Civic Complex was completed in the late seventies, Square Edge was opened as an Arts Centre in 1981. Last year the ground floor was renovated and there are a number of boutique art shops, exhibition and gallery spaces. Out the back, in what is described as the Courtyard area, the original stables have been renovated to accommodate businesses like Creative Journeys and the Arts Recycling Centre.

The first floor, where New Zealand Theatre Federation's May Ives Library is situated, is mainly office space and small studios for visual artists. The top floor has large studios that are used for dance, drama, yoga classes and the like.

On one side of the library is the former Council Chambers (now used as a performance space for a great variety of activities and events, including music, singing and drama exams. On the other side is the former Mayor's office, which now accommodates the Palmerston North Community Arts Council. Almost directly across the corridor from the May Ives Library is the National Office of the Speech Communication Association which is in the powder-room originally designed for the Mayoress of the city.

The actual room in which the May Ives Library is housed has been renovated over the last twenty five or so years. Part of it, though, which is still intact is the original vault. (This was probably where rates payments were kept.) It is in this vault that the reference books, archives and original scripts will be stored.

There is a very close link with this building and NZTF. The late Jannat Aitchison was the Manager of Square Edge for many years prior to her return to Christchurch to take up the position of NZTF Administrator and Librarian. In her role as Manager, she lived in the penthouse apartment at the top of the building.

The NZTF May Ives Library is an extremely valuable national resource. It is a true taonga, unique in New Zealand. Not only are there valuable reference books that cover stage management, lighting, costume, make-up, acting, voice, theatre practitioners, playwrights, theatre history and much, much more, but many of these books have been donated by theatre luminaries or their families. There is quite a collection of books from the library of the late Joey Mountjoy. (He was married at one stage to Zenocrate Graham who was instrumental in the growth of Khandallah Arts Theatre – Ed's note) Some of the historical material goes back as far as the beginnings of the British Drama League, the New Zealand Drama Council and, more recently, the formation of New Zealand Theatre Federation.

When the many boxes arrived late last year, it seemed that it would be a simple task to physically stack the scripts straight onto the shelves. However, as each box was opened it became evident that the packers had not removed the books from the shelves in an obvious alphabetical order. Not only did the books require stacking, but they had to be sorted first. We were very fortunate, though, to have volunteers assist with this process. Peter Doherty put up the shelving, Alan Cox assisted putting the scripts on the shelves as his wife Ann Cox assisted with cataloguing.



The shelving forwarded from Christchurch was insufficient for the numerous scripts held by the library. There are 1679 titles in the catalogue. Multiply this number by the number in the cast of each play to provide a production set, and many scripts have more than one production set, and this will give you some idea of the numbers of scripts that have been handled. This excludes the reference texts, the cassettes, programmes, and booklets celebrating New Zealand's theatre anniversaries and international theatre events.

Until further notice Sheridan Hickey is the Library Manager (in a voluntary capacity) and will be supervising a team of volunteers who will assist with tasks like restacking returned scripts, repairing and mending scripts among various other required duties.

It is serendipitous that the space now occupied by the NZTF May Ives Library became vacant at the time it did. I am sure that NZTF's long time former Administrator and Librarian, arranged this in her indomitable manner for the benefit of all NZTF members and the wider theatre going community.

Currently a marketing strategy to promote the services and new location of the library is planned and the first public thrust will occur at this year's Manawatu District's Globe Awards to be held at the Globe Theatre, Palmerston North, Friday 29<sup>th</sup> February.

The mission of the NZTF May Ives Library is :

To focus on providing script hireage of plays (one act and full length); musicals and pantomimes written and created by New Zealanders.

To assist develop a wide network of users through schools, theatre groups, and individuals

To operate the library using best practice in a professional manner

Although initially the official open hours will be limited, requests and orders can be placed any time via email, fax, or voice mail.

### **NZTF May Ives Library Hours**

**10am – 1.00pm Wednesday and Friday**

Contact details are :

**Phone/Fax : 06 356 5565**

**Email : [nztflibrary@xtra.co.nz](mailto:nztflibrary@xtra.co.nz)**



# AMNESTY CONTINUES....

There are still many gaps in the May Ives Library stock—you may have scripts in your possession, languishing in a box somewhere or on a bookshelf—  
**PLEASE CHECK**

We need these in order to continue to supply scripts to our members and customers.

SEND THEM BACK TO:

**Room 110  
Square Edge Arts Centre  
52 – 56 The Square  
P O Box 329  
Palmerston North 4440**



## Festival of Community Theatre '08

Wellington District is looking forward to hosting you at the NATIONAL FINAL, a weekend of theatre June 27 – 28. You will enjoy two evenings of great performances (a ticket for both nights will cost only \$30 or \$18 for one). On Saturday afternoon you will be able to attend not one but three different hour long illustrated lectures starting at 1.30pm (all for \$15) in the Horticultural Hall Supper Room next door to the theatre.

The weekend is based in the Hutt Civic Centre so if you have any spare time you will be able to visit the New Dowse just across the way, walk in the gardens or visit the Hutt library. But remember to schedule in attendance at the Saturday AGM at 11am!

There are three motels in Pharazyn St across the bridge a 10 – 15 minute walk away and there are other types of accommodation in the vicinity. So make some plans to have a cultural weekend away before winter gets too dire.

There will be more details in the April Backchat but you can register your interest now with Margaret Robertson [mrps@ihug.co.nz](mailto:mrps@ihug.co.nz) or Ph 04 479 2436.

# MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD 2008

This award was established six years ago and it will soon be time to make nominations to honour deserving members.

The criteria are:

- That the nominee has been an active member of one or more of the Federation's member societies for at least 25 years.
- That the nominee has been active in society productions either on stage, backstage, front of house or administratively.
- That only one nomination may be made by a society in any one year.
- That the nomination be accompanied by a brief CV supporting suitability for the award.
- That the nomination form and CV be received by the Federation's Administrator at 3 Coates St Westport by April 11<sup>th</sup> 2008 for consideration by Standing Committee in consultation with Districts prior to the Annual General Meeting

**NOMINATION FORM ENCLOSED**

## "What's On"

<b>Porirua Little Theatre</b>	<i>Oliver</i> by Lionel Bart	12 March to 5 April 2008
<b>Mana Little Theatre</b>	<i>Taking Off</i> by Roger Hall	2 to 12 April 2008
<b>Stagecraft</b>	<i>Summer End</i> by Eric Chappell	19 to 29 March 2008
<b>Hutt Repertory</b>	<i>Nunsense</i> by Dan Groggin	9 to 19 April 2008
<b>New Players</b>	<i>The Memory of Water</i> by Shelagh Stephenson	9 to 19 April 2008
<b>Tawa Community Theatre</b>	<i>See You Tonight</i> by Dave Smith	10 to 19 April 2008

**Looking for a New Zealand Play for 2008?**

**Order a Perusal Script Now!**

"Brilliant fast moving script.... Fun to stage, hilarious to watch..."  
Toni Henderson  
Director for Tauranga Musical Theatre"

"Looking for a NZ play that will pull in the crowds? This is it!"  
Phil Ormsby  
Artistic Director Flaxworks Theatre

"Ideal comedy for the Repertory Theatre!"  
Gregory Brownless  
Past President Tauranga Repertory Theatre"

"Hilarious, dramatic, insightful. Williamson's plays are winners for the audience and producer alike."  
Stuart Gunn  
Artistic Director Absolute Theatre

**Outrageous NZ Comedy!**

"Another winner from the writer of Crazy Ladies!"

**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 girlie magazines and a holy book they are going to "understand women". What they discover is not quite what they expected.

**By Devon Williamson**

**Hilarious NZ Comedy!**

**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.

**By Devon Williamson**

For perusal scripts and information contact: | Email: info@plays.co.nz | Ph: 07 5710752

**www.plays.co.nz**

## Success After Festivals

Last year's winner of the NZTF Best Actor Female, Anri Kang, has auditioned for a New York Performing Arts University. Anri is Korean, the third generation of her family to live in Japan and no doubt her exposure to kiwi culture at Logan Park High School expanded her horizons.

Another member of the Park Players team, Sibbi Foster has been accepted into the Young Shakespeare Company. She also auditioned for Toi Whakaari but was considered too young as yet.

### ADVERTISING IN BACKCHAT

Advertising rates for this publication are:  
\$50 +GST per 1/2 page (advert supplied)  
- other sizes negotiable.

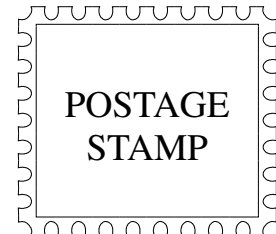
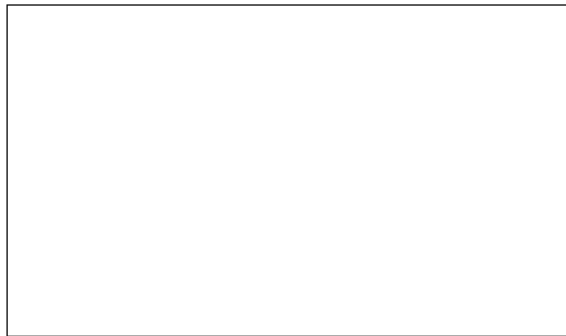
Contact: [NZTFnat@xtra.co.nz](mailto:NZTFnat@xtra.co.nz)

George Bernard Shaw wrote to Winston Churchill:

“ I am enclosing two tickets to the opening night of my new play. Bring a friend.....if you have one”

Winston Churchill replied “Can't possibly attend the first night. Will attend the second ....if there is one”

*Thanks to Harlequin Theatre, Masterton August '07*



Deadline for next issue of Backchat

**April 13, 2008**

Contributions please to New Zealand Theatre Federation  
email [NZTFadmin@xtra.co.nz](mailto:NZTFadmin@xtra.co.nz) [www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz](http://www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz)

Fax 03 789 7122

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WESTPORT**