



Backchat

News from **Theatre New Zealand**
Fostering Community Theatre in Aotearoa



Hawera Repertory are profiled this month. Their production last year of *The Wizard of Oz* was a great success and actors lining up are Bergen Raikes (Tin Man), Jym Shaman (Scarecrow), Grayson Richards (Lion) and Rebecca Pratt (Dorothy). Read about them on p3 and if you live near Feilding there's a chance of seeing a Pahiatua Repertory production of *The Wizard Of Oz* at the beginning of June.

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Jennifer Cram (Magnolia, left) and Cole Bockman (Mr Mistofelees, above) in Theatre Whakatane's production of *Cats*. MAY 9-24.

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President



Organising for TheatreFest around the country is gaining pace. It is always such a stimulating time - new directors along with new playwrights and casts gather together in the spirit of Theatre to trial new works and pitch themselves against other teams within their locality, in

the hope of taking home an award.

The kudos comes of course when you progress to the Regional Finals and then get sent on to the Nationals. It is a time of year when we come together as practitioners and as audience to celebrate all that is good about theatre from the simple yet apposite set designs to tasteful costuming and complimentary lighting to the camaraderie and learning process that a festival of theatre brings.

Trialling yourself in TheatreFest is the ideal way to prove to your local committee and maybe to yourself even, that you may have the wherewithal to take the next step to a full length production or a play of more substance.

My personal hope for this TheatreFest is to see more productions using appropriate music to introduce, underscore or enhance your productions, an aspect so frequently overlooked.

What you learn from your adjudication is what you can take forward to your next production. So if you are sitting on the edge wondering what to do next, think TheatreFest and get an application in to your local organising committee. Updates on the festival p3. It's not too late.

Happy seasons

Bryan Aitken
National President

Subscriptions

Thank you to those who have paid their membership dues and a reminder to those of you who haven't yet. Invoices were posted in April together with our new TNZ brochures: participate-educate-innovate.

A warm welcome to Lindsay Nash who has rejoined our membership.

Awards for Service in September

Theatre New Zealand has two ways besides Life Membership of acknowledging outstanding service.

THE DAVID BROCKETT MEMORIAL AWARD FOR BACKSTAGE ACHIEVEMENT

This annual award goes to one person who has excelled backstage during the year, above and beyond the call of duty. Consult the criteria.



MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

Every society has people who deserve tangible recognition for their long service to theatre. You can nominate someone who has actively contributed for at least 25 years onstage, backstage, front of house or administratively.



Nomination forms for both awards are included here and can also be downloaded from the website. Fill them in and return to Box 2528 Christchurch 8140 by 15th August 2014. The awards will be announced at our National Conference in Wellington, Sept.13th

Merit awards were handed out at the Musical Theatre conference in Napier in March and we congratulate Sue Harris of Theatre Whakatane for 25 years of service to MTNZ, Barbara and Gary Hiatt of Papakura Theatre Company for 33 years and Theresa Savory for 40 years.

Profile: Hawera Repertory Society

President Deborah Clough tells us about her society

the Hawera Repertory Society was formed in 1946 and has produced well over 150 major productions, providing quality entertainment to the people of South Taranaki and beyond. With a proud history of high calibre productions, we generally produce two to three shows each year, either in our club rooms or at the Hawera Memorial Theatre.

We are an amateur society and offer all the usual opportunities for actors, singers and musicians as well as people interested in backstage craft including properties, costumes, lighting, sound, directing, set construction and stage crew, choreography and musical direction. We boast a membership of over 120 people and also have many more friends of the society.

Last year our productions included *Harriment*, a collection of three one act plays written by Richard Harris performed in our rooms over seven nights at the beginning of March. In June we produced the *Wizard of Oz* in the Memorial Theatre involving a large number of our society and volunteers including over 30 children and a live dog. In the middle of February this year we staged *Calendar Girls* at the Theatre which attracted an audience from all over the province. A cheque for \$1500 was presented to Hospice Taranaki.



Every year we run a Junior Play Festival in September which involves our local schools and junior members of our society performing over two nights in the Memorial Theatre. At present we are in rehearsals for *Four Flat Whites In Italy* which will also be performed at the Theatre June 21 - 28.

Theatre is alive and well in South Taranaki.

TheatreFest'14 Update

Deadline for entries is Saturday 5 July

Contacts for local festivals are listed on the website and were printed in February and April issues of Backchat.

Queries to Anne Corney, TheatreFest National Administrator

theatrefest@theatrenewzealand.co.nz

Note Regional Date Changes:

North Island dates have been swapped so
Upper North Island Regional is 15/16 August

Lower North Island Regional is 22/23 August

Upper South Island Regional is 16/17 August

Lower South Island Regional is 22/23 August

Isobel Andrews, Playwright

Playmarket is seeking information on descendants of playwright Isabella Smith Andrews (known as Isobel) 1905-1990.

Isobel married Ernest Stanhope Andrews and the couple had two sons, Robin and Stuart. They lived in Strathmore Park, Wellington later moving to Auckland. Stanhope and Isobel both worked as film critics for the Dominion newspaper at the time of their marriage.

Around 1940 Isobel founded an amateur dramatic society in Wellington called the Strathmore Players, and effectively became the group's resident playwright for a number of years. She also acted in several of the group's productions. In 1941 Stanhope became a founding director of the National Film Unit and he used to involve Isobel in his work writing scripts and commentaries. She had four of her plays published in single volumes between 1943 and 1962. The first was *The Willing Horse*. Unity Theatre, Wellington, later produced *The Bride from the Hills* directed by Nola Millar. Isobel was a member of the New Zealand Drama Council.

If you have any knowledge of the family and how to contact them please email:

director@playmarket.org.nz

If any of these plays interest you we can email you the script, FREE, unless otherwise noted. If you have any particular requirements we can also make other suggestions - please contact clientpromotion@playmarket.org.nz with your queries.

MOTHER GOOSE by Michele Amas. Lyrics by Paul Jenden. Music by Gareth Farr (6 or expandable to large cast)

Mother Goose hits the jackpot when Lucy the goose starts laying golden eggs. But it's not enough for her to just feather her own nest – she wants youth, beauty and a total makeover as well. Meanwhile news of the goose and its golden gifts has travelled, and from far away an evil plot is hatching... Wicked and witty. Look out behind you!!! **“...a superb night out for the whole family... if you have no children to take go anyway.”**
 THEATREVIEW

SEX DRIVE by Lorae Parry and Pinky Agnew (5w 2m)

Life, love, lust and Lotto. A fast-paced comedy which tells the story of Chrissy, Sylvie and Dawn who work together in a chicken factory. The three women's Lucky Clucky Chicken Plucking Syndicate wins a second-division Lotto prize of ten thousand dollars. After a tiddly night at the pub celebrating their win, they brainstorm some ideas. Sex sells. Especially when it comes on wheels. And so Sex Drive is born. A mobile sex shop created by women, for women. Sexy, not sleazy. Glamorous for the amorous. And most of all, fun.

KINGS OF THE GYM by Dave Armstrong (2w 2m)

Politically correct principal Viv Cleaver is transforming low-decile Hautapu High School. The only thorn in her side is the Phys-Ed department. Unfit Laurie Connor spends his days in the gym watching TV and gambling with his talented yet unambitious sidekick Pat Kennedy. But then student-teacher Annie Tupua arrives. Could this star netballer and born-again Christian prove to be the game-changer that Viv needs? Sparks fly as different players joust for position and battle for each other's souls in this big-hearted and comedy set in that most romantic of places – a school gym.

ONCE WE BUILT A TOWER by Dean Parker (large cast)

A pageant-play with songs describing how the building of the 1930s Waitaki hydro dam became the blueprint for Labour's 1938 Social Security Act – one of NZ's most important pieces of legislation. A fascinating glimpse at NZ's social and political environment of the 30s.

HOME LAND by Gary Henderson (3w 3m)

Ken Taylor knows this land intimately. Every stream and gully; every smell; every mood. He's farmed it for 40 years. He coaxed a living out of it and raised a family here. Now Ken is 80, a widower and ailing. His children think it's time for a new kind of home. Drowsy afternoons and smiling caregivers. They gather to help shift the old man...but Ken is not going gently. This is a story about home - why we need it, why we have to leave, and why we always return.

A SHORTCUT TO HAPPINESS by Roger Hall (5w 3m)

The beautiful Natasha, a recent immigrant from Russia, teaches folk dancing in order to supplement her income, meet Kiwis, and improve her English. Those who turn up to learn are the desperately-seeking Coral, golfing friends Laura and Janet, U3A know-it-all Bev, and her hen-pecked husband Ray. There's also the recently widowed Ned, a favourable catch for the ladies, and at whose house, after each class, they all gather for coffee. Everyone learns a great deal more than dance moves in this kiwi comedy filled with Hall's usual trademarks of acute observation, compassion, and plenty of humour.

PENINSULA by Gary Henderson (2w 3m)

Ten year old Michael lives at the edge of the ancient flooded crater now known as Akaroa Harbour on Banks Peninsula. Inspired by a new year and a new teacher, Michael sets out to map his home ground, charting his own history in the sheltering hills and bush. But not all volcanoes are extinct. Not everything is above ground. Rumbings in the adult world encroach into Michael's life, erupting, and throwing his universe into a chaos that will change him forever. **“Destined to become a classic.”** NATIONAL BUSINESS REVIEW

THE BOY WHO CAUSED 9/11 by Ken Mizusawa (large cast)

Kevin believes he is responsible for the universe. Having worked out mathematically how it actually functions, he ensures the stability of the universe by performing a series of carefully calculated morning rituals that nullify the damaging effects of the any careless, random everyday things people get up to around the world that have the potential to upset the cosmic balance. When he fails to complete his rituals on the morning of September 11th 2001, he is convinced that he is personally at fault for causing the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York City on the other side of the world. **Suitable for youth companies.**

What's On in June and July

(Consult society websites on www.theatrenewzealand.co.nz/links for more details)

Otamatea Repertory Theatre	<i>The Wizard of Oz</i> from L.Frank Baum's book	July 12 - 27
Dargaville Little Theatre	AUDITION <i>Footloose</i> by Dean Pitchford & Walter Bobbie	June 15 @2pm
Dolphin Theatre Onehunga	<i>The Fox on the Fairway</i> by Ken Ludwig	June 14 - July 5
Ellerslie Theatrical Society	<i>Motel</i> by April Phillips	June 5 - 14
	AUDITION <i>I Hate Hamlet</i> by Paul Rudnick	June 7 @1.30pm
Howick Little Theatre	<i>4000Miles</i> a dramatic comedy by Amy Herzog	July 12 - Aug. 2
Katikati Theatre	Dinner Theatre at Forta Leza Country Inn; 2 courses and 3 comedies	July 1-3, 8-10
16th Avenue Theatre, Tauranga	<i>Run for Your Wife</i> by Ray Cooney	June 4 - 21
Detour Theatre Tauranga	<i>Hayfever</i> by Noel Coward	June 18 - July 5
Hamilton Playbox Theatre	<i>Open All Hours</i> by Roy Clarke	July 5 - 18
HaBYT, Hastings	<i>DNA</i> by Dennis Kelly	June 19 - 21
Napier Repertory Players	<i>On Golden Pond</i> by Ernest Thompson	June 11 - 21
Hawera Repertory Society	<i>Four Flat Whites in Italy</i> by Roger Hall	June 21 - 28
Wanganui Repertory Theatre	<i>Crimes of the Heart</i> by Beth Henley	July 5 - Aug 2
Feilding Little Theatre	<i>Little Tommy Tucker</i> Pantomime	July 17 - 27
Pahiatua Repertory Society	<i>The Wizard of Oz</i> continues at Feilding Civic Centre	June 6 -7
Harlequin Theatre, Masterton	<i>Meet the Candidates</i> self devised murder mystery	July 16 - 18
Mana Little Theatre	AUDITION <i>Martha, Josie and the Chinese Elvis</i> by Charlotte Jones	June 18 @7.30pm
	<i>Secondary Cause of Death</i> by Peter Gordon	July 9 - 19
Porirua Little Theatre	<i>The Motor Camp</i> by Dave Armstrong	June 12 - 28
Khandallah Arts Theatre	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> by Oscar Wilde	July 17 - 26
Stagecraft Theatre	<i>Crumble (Lay Me Down, Justin Timberlake)</i> by Sheila Callaghan	June 4 - 14
Wellington Repertory	<i>The Addams Family</i> a New Musical by Brickman, Ellis and Lippa	June 24 - July 5
Butterfly Creek Theatre Troupe	<i>The Three Sisters</i> by Anton Chekhov	July 17 - 26
Hutt Repertory Theatre	<i>The Lady Pirates of Captain Bree</i> by Martin Follouse	July 7 - 12
Nelson Repertory	<i>Secret Bridesmaid's Business</i> by Elizabeth Coleman	June/July
Elmwood Players	<i>Thick As Thieves</i> by Tim Hambleton	June 11 - 21
Riccarton Players	<i>A Riccartonian Palace of Varieties 2014</i>	June 4 - 14
	<i>Snow White and the Seven Dwarves</i> traditional	July 3 - 13
SCDL Timaru Mill Theatre	<i>Remain Seated</i> by Cenarth Fox	June 19 - 23
	Theatre Royal	<i>Showstoppers</i> building fundraiser
		July 26
Invercargill Repertory	Youth Theatre 4 Short Plays	June 27 - 28

Do you send your newsletters by email? Please add Backchat editor info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz

If you send newsletters by post please change the label to Box 2585 Christchurch 8140

Norfolk Island Theatre Festival. Adjudicator Robert Gilbert, Christchurch

Norfolk Island Travel Centre are promoting a \$999 fare ex Auckland, accommodation and car package for this year's one act festival. Have you considered taking your TheatreFest production on to this festival to compete against local Island and Australian entries? Dates 28 Sept - 5 October.

Contact denise-r@travelcentre.nf

Facebook Snippets



Fiordland Players Theatre Group engaged in physical theatre at a week long workshop run by Trudy-Anne Rowe recently.

"It's a car!"
and that's a fly window splat crouched in front.



Gisborne Unity Theatre: a recent production "there's no loopholes in the plot of *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*"

Comment on the play from an audience member: "The play on Saturday was a good one, it was my first live show I've seen."

Editor - I checked websites and many were out of date. Looked on Facebook and it's hard to tell what's recent and what's not as there are no year dates.



Editor: Margaret Robertson

Designer: Jade Gillies

Deadline for August Backchat

July 10th 2014

Send Theatre New Zealand communications to

info@theatrenewzealand.co.nz

or

or PO Box 2585 Christchurch 8140