



# 'ON-STAGE MATAMATA' Matamata Dramatic Society Inc. NEWSLETTER December 2020

## OUR PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

Well, this year is quickly drawing to a close and what a year it's been. COVID 19 certainly dented the momentum of our rehearsals for 'Gasping' and the later production date certainly made a second major production this year unachievable. However, we still managed to fit in our 'Short and Sweet' ten minute plays, a one night performance of Michael Hurst in 'The Daylight Atheist,' plus the monthly Friday Flicks as well as the new improv evenings.

This is an incredible achievement, and a testimony to the vibrancy of our theatre as well as the dedication of our members. Thank you to all who have contributed to this especially, Korstiaan and Robin, Colin, Janine, Julie and Hilton for making these things happen.

We already have our two major productions planned for next year and I sincerely hope that 2021 will be a slightly less challenging one and a successful one for all of us. Wishing you a happy and relaxing Christmas and New Year.

Cheers everyone *Ron*

**What a year!** From Robin  
Essex



Despite Covid19 temporarily closing the Little Theatre, Matamata Dramatic Society has maintained strong support from the community and ongoing dedication from committee members.

Monthly Friday Flicks screenings were forced to be put on hold from March to August however September, October and November brought us "Their Finest", "Trumbo" and "Bellbird". Next year will continue to bring the kind of interesting films you don't normally see at big cinema complexes.

Being involved in the production "Gasping" during July, by job-sharing Props, was indeed a thrill for me and another wonderful learning opportunity.

Coordinating the Community Op Shop fundraiser in September was also a great learning

experience, and the practical support freely given to us by the Op Shop committee was amazing.

Stage managing for the Short and Sweet 10-Minute Play Festival proved to be a "doddle" as the cast members and directors looked after their own personal props and set furniture for each performance.

I thoroughly enjoy attending the monthly Improvisation Club evenings where it seems I have permission to play like a child again, casting inhibitions to the wind and having the freedom to just be silly and make fun. Even when I'm feeling a little flat and tired, these nights energise me and lift my spirits.

Since relocation to Matamata from Auckland in 2017, my husband Korstiaan and I have gained so much from joining Matamata Dramatic Society. We have made so many new friends which has led to us feeling that we really belong to this lovely community.

## Our Lighting Man Korstiaan in Action



Another opening, another show means a new lighting plan for our dedicated light and sound man and VP Korstiaan Prins and that is only two of the things he does for our society!



**3D entertainment has  
been around for thousands of years.  
It's called THEATRE !**

# 2021 Calendar Update

The play 'At the Sign of the Crippled Harlequin' by Norman Robbins to be directed by Glenn Rosewell is confirmed for 6-13 Nov 2021



## FRIDAY FLICKS

A loyal band of movie fans attended the final Friday Flicks of this challenging year on November 20<sup>th</sup> to watch the delightful Kiwi production of 'Bellbird'. Written and directed by Hamish Bennett and starring Marshall Napier, Annie Whittle and Cohen Holloway. This film was a joy to watch - a warm, humorous, heartfelt film filled with loss, love and hope that had us laughing out loud one moment, and crying the next. In the wake of his wife's sudden death, a rural community rallies around a local farmer to try and help him deal with his grief.

A film like this makes one proud to be a Kiwi as it is a real 'slice' of New Zealand life. It's slow, deliberate pace echoed the laconic, stoic farmer of few words endeavouring to come to terms with his loss. Young actor Kahukura Retimana was a real delight to watch as Marley the young lad needing a father figure.

Friday Flicks will be trialling a delightful family movie on the evening of January 15<sup>th</sup> -

**'Paddington' -Adults \$10, Child \$5.**  
**Children must be accompanied by an adult.**

## "THE IMPROV-ABLES"



"The improvisation - theatre sports club NOW has a name. They are the **"Improv-ables"**. Everyone is

really keen so we're full steam ahead", reports tutor Julie Taylor. "I should really look at the theatre calendar and come up with a couple of performance nights for next year" Julie also told On-Stage. The club meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month at the Little Theatre and the December meeting is on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Contact Julie for more information phone: **022 0608 669**

***"With theatre, you have to be ready for anything."*** – Willem Dafoe



## Some Memories of 2020

'Gasping' was cast and rehearsals underway when the world-wide pandemic COVID hit us but Julie and her cast continue rehearsing once a week on Zoom. Now that is dedication for you!



However, Julie's Workshop prior to Lockdown was a real success



## COVID 19 LOCKDOWN Humour



**BREAKING NEWS**  
 Wearing a mask 🤧  
 inside your home is now  
 highly recommended.  
 Not so much to prevent  
 Covid-19 but to stop eating.

This morning at the post  
 office, while I was in line,  
 two people with masks  
 entered.  
**TOTAL PANIC!**  
 Then they said: "This is a  
 robbery" ... and we all  
 calmed down ...

**Post Lockdown Renovations**



The new carpet, which was laid  
 in the theatre, courtesy of  
 Waterson Furniture & Carpet  
 Court, has made a real  
 difference.



And the kitchen  
 renovations are  
 nearly complete  
 thanks to our great  
 team of workers  
 under Ron and Korstiaan's leadership.



Then we were  
 finally able to  
 get back to  
 'Gasping'  
 rehearsals and  
 hold our AGM  
 and elect a New  
 Committee

**AT LAST! THE SUCCESSFUL PRODUCTION OF**

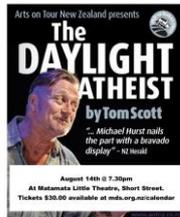


Which played to large and  
 appreciative audiences so helped to fill the  
 depleted coffers



The 'Improv-ables' were  
 formed under Julie's  
 awesome tutelage with  
 everyone having lots of fun  
 every second Monday of  
 the month!

**ARTS ON TOUR WITH MICHAEL HURST**



Was a raw, confronting yet  
 hilarious production about a man  
 so typical of his times. Danny  
 Moffatt who was based on the  
 playwright, Tom Scott's father.  
 Michael was Danny Moffatt. It was  
 a real privilege to see such a brilliant portrayal of  
 this complex character. "Bravo, Bravo" to a true  
 master craftsman of the act of acting.

**FRIDAY FLICKS BEGAN AGAIN**

With the war-time movie 'Their Finest' in  
 September followed by 'Trumbo' in October and  
 this month with 'Bellbird'.

**OP SHOP WEEK WAS A ROARING  
 SUCCESS**

Thanks to Robin & Korstiaan who were the  
 coordinators and to everyone who did their bit to  
 help with this annual fundraiser which meant a  
 real boost to the funds.



**THE RECENT 'SHORT & SWEET'  
 FESTIVAL WAS ANOTHER SMASH  
 HIT BRINGING NEW ACTORS,  
 PLAYWRIGHTS, STAGE CREW  
 AND DIRECTORS PLUS MEMBERS  
 - BRILLIANT!**



**BUT WAIT - - -THERE'S MORE!**



Committee member, Greg Dunn,  
 raised the idea of a trophy for the  
 'Short & Sweet' plays which received  
 unanimous acceptance so he is going  
 to hunt for a suitably appropriate one – it will  
 obviously have to be short and delightfully sweet  
 of course! We will also have a heat pump in the  
 foyer soon which should provide a welcome  
 warmth in winter and cool down those hot  
 summer nights the Met office is predicting.

**'THE PINK HAMMER' by Michele Amas  
THE PLAY IS CAST!**



Auditions were certainly well attended with 9 women showing keen interest for the four female cast members, from Te Aroha to Hamilton, which was wonderful and much appreciated. However it was rather daunting for me as director! Only one brave man turned up for the part of Woody, the out of work builder, the sole male cast member, Alan Williscroft who hails from the UK but has lived in New Zealand for some years. Alan moved to Matamata with his partner over a year ago. He has previously worked with 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre in Tauranga and is looking forward to joining our merry band of thespians. As a bonus, Alan actually is a builder by trade!

The other cast members are:

Annabel	Julie Taylor
Helen	Lizzie Atherton
Louise	Eileen Weal
Siobhan	Lizzie Atton

So, we are truly in the **PINK!** We have a great play and an exciting cast. Production dates are April 10 – 17, 2021. We will be needing a production crew of course so do think about joining the **Pink Hammer Team** and get in touch with me (Wanda 027 486 0049) if you are keen. The entire set is a Bloke's Work Shed - no set changes but lots of props and some exciting lighting changes. The play will be set in modern day Matamata.



Did you know that our resident playwright Maestro, Richard Prevett is now famous in Fielding where his play (that our theatre premiered) was on recently at the Fielding Little Theatre?

Where next Richard? London or Broadway perhaps?

**Following Our Rising Young Star Helen Drysdale-Dunn**

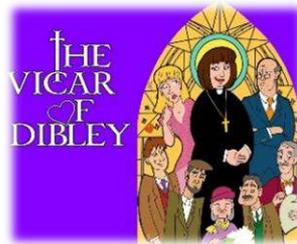


Here is Helen doing her final assessment performance. Students had to construct a 15 minute monologue and include at least 3 songs which they could adapt. Helen wrote

a script about the Broadway actress Ethel Merman calling her Bethel Ermann. She got 14.5/15 for her performance. Part of her report was: "You keep going from strength to strength. Your ability to understand the craft as well as take direction have made you a very well rounded performer with a bright future. If this is the progress you can make in one year, what you can achieve by the end of this course is limitless".

Thank you to Helen's enormously proud Dad, Greg, for sharing his talented daughter's progress with us all. Congratulations to you, Helen, on a wonderful year as you follow your dreams!

**COMING to Te Aroha Theatre in March 2021**



Rex Staniford who was in our production of 'Biggles Flies Undone' as Reggie, has been cast in one of the lead roles as David Horton. Congratulations Rex. We look forward to

seeing this much loved play next year.

**Coming to the Baycourt Theatre, Tauranga  
in March 12 at 7.30pm 2021, March 13 at  
2.00pm & then at 7.30pm**



Fresh from its 2019 world premiere in London, this fiendishly fashionable tour de force pits **Jennifer Ward-Lealand CNZM** against **Anna Jullienne** and features **Rena Owen** (*Once Were Warriors*) in a rare stage appearance as the American First Lady's tough-talking press secretary.



*Yours Theatrically  
Wanda*

