



# Matamata Dramatic Society Inc.

## ON-STAGE NEWSLETTER

April 2022

*'The theatre is a spiritual and social X-ray of its time'.*



### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A group of enthusiastic and supportive MDS members attended this year's AGM and

we had a successful election.

We are delighted to announce that our new patron is Elaine Fraser, and we look forward to Elaine attending our next committee meeting.

### Elaine Fraser JP

Many will remember that Ian and Elaine Fraser owned Fraser's bookshop which was the theatre's booking agents for over 30 years.

They were an indispensable asset to Matamata and to our theatre. Ian also printed our programs for many years. Ian and Elaine were always good PR people for our society as well as being supportive and regular patrons of our many productions.

Hilton Woodroffe recalls that *"as an actor, I always reassuringly knew when they were in the audience because I recognized Ian's distinctive laugh. Two better supporters of our society you wouldn't find."*

Sadly Ian is no longer with us but we are honoured to have Elaine accept the position of Patron of our Society.

Sandra Clark also recalls that when she first came to town Mrs. Fraser owned a beautiful shop in Arawa Street called 'The Moving Pen' and that was the place to book your tickets for the Dramatic Society performances.

In later years she and her late husband Ian had Fraser's Bookshop and always promoted our ticket sales for us. Nothing was too much trouble. If the person responsible forgot to pick up the seating plan before the shop shut they would drop it into someone or give the person in charge a call. Once when I went in to pick up the seating plan I witnessed Mr. Fraser taking a booking. It was not until this point that I realized how time consuming it could be for a person to choose the perfect seat. The Frasers always gave favourable comments about the performance to those booking which was wonderful PR for us.

### The 2022 – 2023 Executive Committee

**The following members were elected for the coming year.**

**President** – Julie Taylor

**Vice Presidents** – Yvonne Marshall & Ron van de Molen

**Secretary** – Robin Essex

**Treasurer** – Korstiaan Prins

**Committee members:**

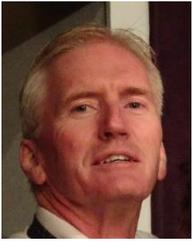
Lois Allen, Bob Blackwell, Wanda Brittain, Sandra Clark, Greg Dunn, Talbert de Jong, Colin Kempen, Eileen Weal and Hilton Woodroffe.

Special congratulations to Julie as our new president and to Korstiaan as our new treasurer. Colin was presented with a 'Thank You' gift for his term as treasurer which was gratefully received. It was also great to have Talbert back on the committee.

### MPDC Grant Application Successes

Our new treasurer, Korstiaan, was pleased to announce that he had made a number of application for funds for coming productions. If granted

these will help a great deal towards advertising and publicity costs for these productions.



## Theatre and Medicine

By Greg Dunn

In my humble opinion the artistry of theatre reflecting life is oft mirrored in the art of Medicine and vice versa.

Lady Macbeth was sorely troubled by a 'damn spot...' on her hand. Was it real?

Perhaps intensely itchy pustular psoriasis of her palm would cause her to rub away.

Maybe it was palmer erythema, being a diffuse redness, often associated with liver disease or excess alcohol the latter brought on with having to live with her troubled spouse.

Intense stress triggered by 'murder so foul' could have created disordered thinking to the point of paranoia, delusional thinking (a fixed false belief not amenable to reason) or a visual hallucination (abnormality in perception that something is there when it is not)

In the final scenes of King Lear, Shakespeare knowingly or unknowingly, introduced the concept of palliative care when Kent seeing the demise of his King exclaimed; "Vex not his ghost, O let him pass! He hates him that would upon the rack of this rough world stretch him out longer."

Drugs have always come with risks and benefits and the prescription of such is a blend of science, (pharmacology) and art (when not to prescribe and when to prescribe).

The Apothecary sold Romeo a significant poison, '...if you had the strength of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.' One would have to ask what scientific trial the Apothecary was basing his advice on, and even more would such a trial be considered ethical considering the significant mortality rate from the use of the poison.

Patient autonomy is a very important part of medicine and Romeo's autonomy and free

choice was maintained to use or not use the poison. However Romeo's conviction of love may have distorted his rational thinking when he spoke to the vial; 'Come, cordial, and not poison, go with me to Juliet's grave; for there I must use thee'.

Assessment and management of mental illness is deeply embedded in the art of medicine. The complex trifecta of 'madness, badness or sadness' is often blurred and the image of Rodin's sculpture 'The Thinker' strikes me as a useful image of reflection when faced with such uncertainty.

Ophelia's madness in Hamlet demonstrates that rarely is a diagnosis of mental illness straightforward... 'Poor Ophelia divided from herself and her fair judgement...'

In the doctor-patient consultation, theatre is apparent at every step. This is highlighted in the variable way that people enter 'the stage' with their kete of life experience, beliefs, convictions, education, ignorance, hopes, fears and uncertainties.

In listening to their soliloquy the doctor attempts to understand the person's story and experience and address the numerous questions raised. The process in acting out requires usually recognising and taking off masks (sometimes both doctor and patient) to uncover the real characters.

On many occasions the 'patient' may adopt another part and act out a scene in the hope the doctor may recognise the character. And throughout, underpinning the many parts, is the eternal why question. Just as there are many different ways to express and find meaning in Hamlet's 'To be or not to be...that is the question...', the why question is often left hanging with no easy answer.

NZ Poet and Medical Practitioner, Glenn Colquhoun encapsulates nicely the theatre of a consultation in his poem 'Today I don't want to be a Doctor' ...

*'...No one is getting any better.*

*Those who are well are sick again*

*And those who were sick are sicker'.*

*Editor's note:* Thank you to Greg for his

fascinating article blending theatre and medicine so beautifully together through the medium of the immortal words of the Bard himself. In 'A Winter's Tale' Shakespeare writes – '*There is a sickness*

*Which puts some of us in distemper, but I cannot name the disease; and it is caught of you that yet are well.' (Perhaps it's COVID!)*

## DID YOU KNOW THAT

Greg has also been busy creating a two-act play from his winning ten minute play entitled 'The Wake'. There will be a reading of this play later this year on **Tues 16 August at 7.30pm**. More details in future On-Stage newsletters.



### NOTES TO MYSELF

A poem by Robin,  
MDS secretary

*Don't forget your spectacles and have a pen that works,  
then listen very carefully for every word that lurks.*

*Try to keep the pace up when the meeting picks up speed,  
hope that when tomorrow comes your own words you can read.*

*Don't let too much time lapse before you send out minutes,  
in case your memory fails and you leave out little bits.*

*And watch your punctuation so everything is right,  
then do a real good spellcheck so no errors are in sight.*

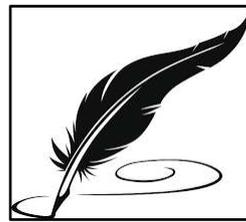


### The Improv-ables

Now have their own Facebook Page – **Matamata Improv-ables**, so make sure you check it out and 'like' it. Their next one night on-stage performance will be on

**Friday May 20<sup>th</sup>** with lots more fun and laughter guaranteed.

With so many wanting to join the group Julie is looking to have a waiting list as it's getting hard to teach new members as well as keep the experienced ones challenged.



## CALLING ALL PLAYWRIGHTS

In 2023 we will be holding the ever-popular 'Short & Sweet Festival Competition' so get those creative juices flowing as you put pen to paper, so to speak!

Each play should be between eight to ten minutes long and should not have been staged anywhere or entered before. The cast should be from 2 to 6 actors and playwrights must be residents of Matamata-Piako or South Waikato districts.

Entries are to be submitted anonymously by using a pseudonym. Six plays are chosen to be performed and there is a financial prize for each winning entry.

More detailed information will be forthcoming later in the year, so watch this space.

## FRIDAY FLICKS



Due to May's live Improv-ables performance being on the third Friday of the month, the next Friday Flicks showing will be on **Friday May 27**, and the movie to be shown will be announced in the May edition.

### In the Spotlight this Month



### Our Front-of-House Top Team

Lois and Graham Allen, who have been involved in Matamata Dramatic Society "forever", quietly go about their FOH duties at events - ensuring a smooth operation in the reception area.

Lois is always at the ready with a welcoming smile, and Graham has systems in place in the Box Office that make for an easy process. Once the ticket counter duties are done, their focus turns to preparing for the half-time hot cuppa and bickies on offer - together with our loyal rostered volunteers organised by Sandra Clark.

Many a time, Graham has been seen patiently reading a book in the foyer as he awaits the rush at interval. Then there's the clean-up of course!

Lois is a current committee member, with a wealth of knowledge of past shows, which is interesting and helpful for newer members. We say a big thank you to this very special couple and all the band of FOH volunteers.

### Our Sign-writing Artist



For every MDS production our lovely sign-writer Wendy Dalrymple (seen at work above) creates a promotional masterpiece. Greg was passing by the other day as Wendy was working on the latest sign. During the chat they had Wendy told Greg that she started sign-writing at age 18 and been doing the work for 40 years. So a big shout out to Wendy for promoting our many productions so successfully across the years!



### HAMILTON'S BOLD THEATRE

The cast for their exciting new rock musical later in the year has been chosen and we are delighted to see that Greg's daughter, Helen Drysdale-Dunn, is in this exciting production about Kate Shephard and those feisty New Zealand

suffragettes who fought for women to get the vote.

### Congratulations Helen!

#### It's Time To Renew Your Subs or Join Up

#### Full Membership

Single \$25.00 - Double \$40  
Student - \$10.00

All involved with a production – on stage or back-stage - are required to join either as a full member or just for the production \$10.00

NAME/s.....

Contact details: Phone.....

Mobile.....Email:.....

Address:.....

Internet banking only to: MATAMATA  
DRAMATIC SOCIETY

Account: 01 0362 0008333 00.

Please include your name and SUBS as reference.

Also – Please advise us of any change in your contact details

YOU CAN ALSO GO TO THE WEBSITE –  
MDS.ORG.NZ – TO PAY YOUR SUBS!



Yours Theatrically  
Wanda

