



3 Cargill Street, Mosgiel 9024
Telephone: 027 589 3088
Email: firestationtheatre@gmail.com

Summer Newsletter 2019/2020

It is hard to believe that another year has passed and we are already speeding our way through Leap Year 2020.

On a sad note, we acknowledge the passing of Brenda Jones. Brenda performed in a number of plays for the Society including the play reading of Geoff Smith's, *Bangers 'n' Mash*. She was well known in both theatrical and music circles.

Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer - 2019

DCC Lighting of the Christmas Tree Performance - Octagon - 30 November 2019

Prior to presenting our Christmas production at the Theatre last year we were invited to perform and preview *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer* at the DCC Lighting of the Christmas Tree. This performance proved extremely successful with cast and the backstage, support and technical crews all adapting to unfamiliar surroundings and providing a stellar performance. The actors were able to hold the interest of the large crowd for the entire show with many young children in the audience calling out and warning Rudolph (Jasmine Rixon) about the naughty Elves, Elvis (Ben McArthur) and Ringo (Cody Masters) and Polar Bear (Zac Henry). It was the first time some of our actors had appeared on stage and the show was performed without a rehearsal on the outdoor Octagon stage. Well done!!!

Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer - Fire Station Theatre

Our Christmas Production was a tremendous success with sell out performances. We staged an extra show which was sold out within two days with further enquiries about the extra performance, indicating that we could have had a further sell out show. The Play was directed by TDS member, Matt Brennan, with Assistant Director, Heidi Rixon.



Huge thanks to all our members who attended this production, your support was greatly appreciated. We had a very talented cast of young actors who all had a very professional approach which was evident in their stage performance. The backstage and front of house teams were brilliant. The costumes were amazing and Brian McCormack's set once again created the '**wow**' factor. Special thanks to everyone who helped whether it was Front of House or Backstage, we could not have succeeded without your support and expertise.

Special thanks to Emma Holloway for her continued support of TDS by allowing her pupil, Libby Bloem to help us with our choreography. Also to Jasmine Rixon who choreographed the penguins song in the Show.

We had so many compliments on the high standard of the production. People were also most impressed that the technical team was younger members of the Taiari Dramatic Society - Sound: Rachel Wilson. Lighting: Oliver Rixon. (Assisted by Rosemary Chalmers).

Jan-Maree and David Anderson at Plain Health and Wendy and Alan Carey at Aurora Cafe once again, gave us their generous support. Also many thanks to the Salvation Army for their continued support of the Theatre.

Thank you too, to Life Member Margaret Young, for her excellent letter to the ODT Editor, 19.12.19.

This year some '**Rudolph**' tickets were given to the Mosgiel Food Bank to give to those families who needed a special treat. Our show ticket prices - \$5 Adults, \$2 Children and under 5's free, were set in the hope that all families would be able to afford to attend the Show no matter what their financial situation was. Our Christmas Production is an opportunity for our Theatre to give back to the Community as a way of thanking them for their support of our productions during the year.

The Otago Daily Times

The ODT has a new procedure for booking a Reviewer to write Community Theatre Reviews. Previously we dealt with the very efficient and lovely Cushla Turner who made booking a Reviewer easy. The new procedure is more difficult to negotiate and means that even if the Society advertise the production in the ODT, there is no guarantee that a Reviewer will attend and review it. The final decision is made by the Editor.

This year for 'Rudolph', far more advertising was done on social media and the success of this seems to be reflected in the excellent Show bookings.

Luckily we did received an excellent private review, from Elizabeth Bouman who posted a comment on our Website. Regan Horrell and Brenda Harwood also wrote very good Reviews.

Writers' Room

During the School holidays the Theatre has been extremely busy with the **Writers' Room** meeting regularly. The group meets on a Monday after School between 3pm - 5pm. Please remember that everyone is welcome to attend and use this time to write or discuss their work.

48 Hour Theatre Challenge

Our inaugural **48 Hour Theatre Challenge** was organised and hosted by the Taieri Dramatic Society and this proved to be a great success! For those of you who don't know how a Theatre Challenge works, I have included a report of the event.



REPORT ON 48 HOUR THEATRE CHALLENGE

Taieri Dramatic Society - Inaugural 48 Hour Theatre Challenge 18-19 January 2020.

The 48 Hour Theatre Challenge proved to be a fun and successful weekend attracting 19 attendees from as far away as Lawrence and Kaitangata. It was exciting to see so many new faces as well as our Society members participating. Our Theatre Ambassador (Zac Henry) was able to move between the groups to help as necessary.

The Challenge was open to people aged 11 to 99 years and six teams registered including one solo performer. Each team had to select three prompts - these were placed in three hats and teams had to draw out a prompt from each hat. This was the framework that their sketch had to be written around. The prompts were -

1. **A convention** - Rules by which play is performed e.g. slow motion, split focus, flashback/flash forward, narration, freeze frame, soliloquy or spoken thought etc.
2. **A prop** (e.g. A piggy bank, hat, knife, flowers, trophy, walking stick etc)
3. **A quote** (e.g. 'back in my day'. 'Is it a bird? Is it a plane?' etc).

A fourth hat for junior's with different quotes was also provided.

Each group then disappeared to a corner of the Theatre or out into ANZAC Park to create their scripts. Writing the sketches from the prompts drawn out of the hats proved to be both taxing and hilarious. There was certainly lots of laughter as possible story lines were explored, then plot's finalised and characters established. Rehearsals were mainly top secret and the Sunday concert was the first time that many attendees were able to see what the other teams had created. The standard was very high, with some very fine acting and incredibly varied story lines. Everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy the weekend with the Concert on Sunday evening drawing an audience of approximately 30 supporters.

The weekend cost \$10.00 per person.

Paper and pens, morning and afternoon teas and lunch for those who wanted it were provided.

The 48 hour Theatre Challenge has proved to be a very popular and positive way of bringing together like minded people to create, rehearse and perform original works. Many requests were received to stage this event again.

We are delighted to welcome three new members.



presents

48 hour THEATRE CHALLENGE

CREATE | REHEARSE | PERFORM

18-19 January 2020

Fire Station Theatre, 3 Cargill Street, Mosgiel

Special thanks to

Zac Henry - Theatre Ambassador
 Heidi Rixon - Co-ordinator
 Rosemary Chalmers - Sound & Lighting
 Bernadette Hay - IT & Advertising
 Logan Hay - Usher

Baby's First Stabs

presented by **Cult of Curtains**

Casey Griffiths, Ben Irvine
 & Robert Hannaford

The Magic Cow with a Pink Piggy Bank

presented by **Cows! With A K**

April Kerr & Lucy Irvine

Bad Crochet

presented by **We Tried Comedy but
It Didn't Work**

Sara Hall, Thomas Dodson,
 Caitlyn McMillan, Tabitha Littlejohn
 & Jasmine Rixon

Consideratum Non Ascenda

presented by **South Otago Theatrical Society
plus one**

Kirsty Garner, Denise Dent,
 Grace Stevenson & Layla Hehir

Monologue

presented by **Miguel Nitis**

Bridge to Nowhere

presented by **Generation**

Bernadette Hay, Josh Finnie,
 Hetti Engelen & Shirley George

Guest Speaker - Writers' Room - 10 February 2020

We recently had Miguel Nitis, who is the 48 Film Festival Co-ordinator, speak to us about his experience in Marketing and Networking and different aspects of the Theatre. It was an extremely interesting and informative talk and has given us many ideas and pathways to explore.

Party in the Park - Mosgiel - Sunday, 23 February 2020

Party in the Park returned to the Memorial Gardens this year after being held at Peter Johnstone Park for the previous two years. The weather was beautiful and the day was very well supported and proved to be a great success. Ian and Rosemary provided a gazebo, tables, chairs etc and Heidi supplied fruit to give away to people who visited the T.D.S. stall. A selection of advertising signs from passed productions were placed on display as well as posters for upcoming productions. The object of the stall was to showcase The Fire Station Theatre, promote our upcoming shows, gain new membership and/or collect an audience data base. We also handed out flyers promoting our Wardrobe Hire. We had a number of volunteers dressed in costume and they looked stunning. This year we held a competition for people to guess who the characters were dressed as. Wal's kindly donated a Family Mini Golf pass as the prize for this competition and this was won by Nikki.

Grateful thanks to everyone who supported our Stall!

The Fifteen Minute Hamlet by Tom Stoppard

The Youth Crew were honoured to be asked to perform this play for a private function held at the Fire Station Theatre on the 29 February. Their performance was excellent.

Scripted Banter

It was decided to also stage *The Fifteen Minute Hamlet* and some of the Writers' Room sketches in a public production titled '*Nobody Stopped Us*' on the

27 and 28 February at 7.30 pm
Matinee on Sunday, 1 March at 2 pm.
Fire Station Theatre
Tickets \$5.00.

After the success of their ***Loose Connection*** production, the Youth Crew decided to rename themselves - ***Scripted Banter***. Their new show, '***Nobody Stopped Us***' was well received and supported and brought an audience of all ages into the Theatre.

Otago Southland Theatre Awards

Congratulations to Anne-Marie Amende for her success in winning **Best Supporting Female in a Play** for her role as Alice in ***The Vicar of Dibley***.

The Theatre was proud to receive nominations for ***Home Invasion*** - directed by David Thomson

- Best Supporting Female in a Play - Phyll Esplin
- Best Supporting Female in a Play - Emerald Ottley

Also for ***The Vicar of Dibley*** -

co-directed by Gloria Reid & Geoff Smith

- Best Supporting Male in a Play - Keith Richardson
- Best Leading Female in a Play - Alison Ayers

OSTA's iTICKET BEST UPCOMING TALENT SCHOLARSHIP

This year, the Taieri Dramatic Society nominated Jasmine Rixon for this Scholarship. Jasmine has either performed or worked front of house for every show since she first auditioned for '***Badjelly The Witch***' in 2017. Jasmine is a willing and generous supporter of the Society, she is an emerging talent as an actor, writer and choreographer and was recommended as very deserving and worthy candidate for this scholarship. Although unsuccessful this year, Jasmine was honoured to be nominated.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

The Taieri Dramatic Society Annual General Meeting was held on 13 February 2020. It was very well attended. Thank you all for your support.

We welcome our new Secretary, Treasurer and Committee members to the team.

New Committee

President - Ian Chalmers | **Vice-President** - Geoff Smith
Secretary - Debbie Rowe | **Treasurer** - Bernadette Hay

Matt Brennan | Rosemary Chalmers | Zac Henry | Hans Van Leeuwen
 Tabitha Littlejohn | Tim Pettengell | Heidi Rixon | Judy Spillane | Christine Wilson
 Martin van Raalte | Jasmine Rixon | Casey Griffiths | Josh Finnie

- Gloria Harris has resigned from the Committee and we thank her for all her work and support. Gloria has now taken up the role of Membership Co-ordinator.
- Special thanks to Tim Pettengell for stepping into the role of Secretary as required prior to AGM, your work is greatly appreciated.
- Also grateful thanks to Judy Spillane our Wardrobe Manager and her amazing team for all their work and dedication.

Life Membership

The Taieri Dramatic Society has voted to confer Brian McCormack the honour of Life Membership in recognition for his generous contribution to the Society over the years.

Brian has recently generously donated a number of beautiful books to add to our growing Reference Library collection.

We welcome new members - Annual Membership \$10.00.

Membership Invoices:

Bernadette Hay, Rosemary Chalmers and Gloria Harris met in January to go through the Membership Register which to date has been manually recorded. Bernadette has created a new Membership data base from the names and addresses listed and Gloria Harris has kindly offered to be our Membership Co-ordinator.

Your membership fee is extremely important to the success of the Taieri Dramatic Society and the Fire Station Theatre. We greatly appreciate your support and apologise for any unintentional mistakes made. If you have not received your Invoice, please contact the Theatre. Please note a membership card will not be issued unless requested.

Telephone: 027 589 3088 or Ian's mobile: 021 501 861

Email: firestationtheatre@gmail.com

Please ensure you use our **new** bank account number and your name as reference so we can identify your payment

ASB 12-3485-0013558-00

Please note - new members who performed in the Christmas Production, *Rudolph*, are members through to 31 December 2020.

Marriage

Our congratulations to Matt and Rebecca Brennan on their marriage on the 29 February. We wish them love, health and happiness for the years ahead.

Mitchell Hay

Taieri Dramatic Society Member, Mitchell Hay leaves on the 29 February to volunteer for nine months for a group called Latitude Global Volunteering which is an international youth development charity. Mitchell will be based in Calgary, Alberta, Canada and will work as an Outdoor Camp Assistant, helping to make a positive difference to the lives of others. We wish Mitchell safe travels and look forward to his return.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone for the invisible work that just happens that keeps the Theatre clean, tidy and running efficiently.

A big thank you too, to Heidi Rixon for leveling the weeds in the Theatre back yard. Heidi will also be spraying weeds with weed killer to discourage them further. Some time ago a working bee was held to clear the area and Murray Harris kindly sprayed it with weed killer but the weeds regrouped. This area is the Theatre's emergency exit and must be kept clear. It is also getting use on these sunny days when the Theatre is in use as an area to eat lunch. It is the Committee's intention to maintain and develop this area further.

Plays

The play reading committee has recommended a number of plays to be staged this year including:

Gone to Seed by local playwright - Tim Hambleton

Christmas Production - ***Santa's Last Stand*** - Judi Billcliff

Sewers Group

We are looking for people interested in becoming part of a sewers group to meet at the Theatre to sew costumes or make props for our 2020 productions. If you would like to become part of this group please ring Ian - 021 501 861.

Finally, once again many thanks to everyone who has supported the Theatre, your help is invaluable and very much appreciated.

Best wishes,

Rosemary Chalmers

on behalf of the **Taieri Dramatic Society Committee**