



Q' n ' U
FEBRUARY 2011

THE GHOST TRAIN

On 16 January, about 20 people gathered at Cue for the auditions for "The Ghost Train". Most were trying out for parts but others were there to give support backstage. It was good to see new members and others who had not been involved for awhile – it was great to see you again.

Director, David Ertel is delighted to announce the following were cast: Cathy Morris, Katherine Whaley, Maree Spurdle, Kristen Devine, Valda Hinz, Kelly Butler, Kevin Koch, James Goodwin, Ross Jordan, Keith Carey-Smith.

"The Ghost Train" tells the story of a group of travelers who find themselves marooned at a lonely station deep in Cornwall. One couple would rather have their domestic differences aired in private, the newly-married young couple would rather spend the first night of their honeymoon in private, and the station master wants to keep private what really goes on at the station.

This comedy thriller, written by Arnold Ridley, is set in the 1920's and will appeal to all fans of Agatha Christie whom Ridley much admired.

PERFORMANCE DATES

Saturday April 2nd, 7.30pm - Gala Opening; Sunday, April 3rd, matinee; Tuesday 5th April to Saturday 9th April, evening performances; Sunday 10th April, matinee; Tuesday 12th April to Saturday April 16th evening performances with Final Performance on Saturday 16th April.

Bookings open March 1st with tickets available from the Inglewood Book Centre – Phone 06 7567032.

COMING UP

Helen Moulder is returning to Taranaki as the unforgettable Cynthia Fortitude, this time with the New Plymouth Orchestra, conductor Adam Jasinski, and Anthony Joines.

"A not-to-be missed event – Helen has created an unbeatable gem of a comic character " Dominion Post

- Theatre Royal, NP. Friday 25 February, 7.30pm
- Town Hall, Eltham. Saturday 26 February, 7.30pm
- High School, Opunake, Sunday, 27 February, 6.30pm

COMMITTEE DIRECTORY

President Valda Hinz Ph 756-8747 or 021 0110-5399

Vice President Ross Jordan Ph 756-7404

Secretary Joan Ertel Ph 756-7120

Treasurer Sheryl Hamilton Ph 756-8242 or 027 243-1718

Mary Gyde Ph 756-7078

Kristen Devine Ph 756-8747

Margaret Green Ph 756-6318 or 027 680-8388

Peter Haines Ph 756-9165

The Society gratefully acknowledges the assistance over the years from the Taranaki Electricity Trust, the New Plymouth District Council, the Taranaki Savings Bank, and the New Zealand Lottery Board

Author of Cue's next production, Mr Arnold Ridley, led a varied and interesting life. We would like to share with you some of the background information we have come across about this author and actor.

ARNOLD RIDLEY - From his son's memoirs

My father, Arnold Ridley, had been one of the brave young men who went 'over the top' at the Battle of the Somme. He ended up being wounded three times and suffered from shellshock, blackouts and haunting nightmares.

My father talked about his experiences of World War I only reluctantly, but I knew that the 'war to end wars', with its sucking mud, rats the size of cats and appalling death toll, had caused him untold anguish.

All those horrors had come flooding back when, in September 1939, he went to war once more, returning to France with the British Expeditionary Force - this time with the rank of major.

In an unpublished memoir written towards the end of his life, he recalled: 'Within hours of setting foot on the quay at Cherbourg, I was suffering from acute shell-shock again. It took the form of a mental suffering that can best be described as an "inverted" nightmare.

Always a keen amateur actor, after the war he took it up professionally playing numerous parts in repertory. But the roles petered out and he ended up working for four years in a shoe shop in Bath, scribbling plays in his spare time.

It was one of these, *The Ghost Train*, set in a railway waiting room, that made it to the West End, where it became an unexpected hit.

Within months, there were four tours of it on the road, productions in the U.S. and Australia and a German silent film.

My father was suddenly rich. For the first time in his life, he travelled first-class, ate in expensive restaurants and holidayed in fashionable French resorts (though he had no great liking for 'abroad' - his favourite places were British railway stations.)

Then he invested in a film. Big mistake: the distributor went bust.

Subsequent plays never repeated the success of the first, and he made the final mistake of selling the amateur rights of "The Ghost Train" for £200. Today, the play is still performed by amateur theatre companies all over world - it's said to be staged somewhere every night of the year - and the royalties would have transformed my parents' lives.

When "Dad's Army" came along in 1968, it gave him a degree of security (it would run for 80 episodes) that he hadn't known for decades; it also restored his faith in himself.


He'd almost missed landing his role, though. The producer David Croft had been worried that, at 72, my father might not live long enough to complete the first series.

Written By
Arnold Ridley

TET CUE Theatre
38 Matai Street
Inglewood

Tickets From
Inglewood Book Centre
P - 06 7567032

Sunday April 3rd to
Saturday April 16th
2011



the ghost train

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Directed By
David Ertel

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COMEDY THRILLER
NOT TO BE MISSED...***

With
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Whaley, Maree Spurdle,
Kristen Devine, Valda
Hinz, Kelly Butler, Kevin
Koch, James Goodwin,
Ross Jordan & Keith
Carey-Smith