

Editor's Point of Cue - Welcome to 2010 and our first Newsletter for the year....

What is a newsletter for?

It's the communication tool of any society to reach out to members and the community at large to inform, entertain and elucidate on how we are fulfilling our core obligations as set out in the constitution.

One primary objective of Cue Theatre is to perform plays which appeal to an audience who in return pay good money to attend .. They come in droves, we make money and pay the bills and all is well – or is it? The theatre is also a business – It owns a piece of expensive real estate that must be serviced, maintained, developed and supported by its members – and a vital cog in this machine is our newsletter. Selina Mackie has organised and run the newsletter for the past 3 years and done a superb job and has decided that it is time for other projects – and so – now a new Editor.

2010 – ten years in the new theatre building and 54 years old as an amateur theatre group with everyone working for the belief in what they are doing and for the sheer love of it.

In my opinion (and I am now officially entitled to one as the Editor) TET Cue theatre is one of the best equipped 100 seat theatre's in New Zealand. From the Foyer and front of house facilities, air conditioned auditorium, back stage facilities and workshop, the lighting rig and its associated equipment – we are the envy of many a society. The construction and opening of this current building has been well chronicled in

various publications . Over the decade and with the enormous support of TET improvements to every area have been undertaken and these have been developed with the foresight and passion provided by the various committee's who have been in place since the beginnings of the theatre back in 1975 – when in June, Ava Somerfield was elected the society's first president. To stand on the darkened stage of this outstanding building and absorb the atmosphere is something every member should do to pay homage to all the remarkable men and women who have created a legacy that is currently the TET Cue theatre and the Inglewood Dramatic Society. For the internet savvy Google 'cue theatre' and there we are – in an international media forum – an amateur theatre in Inglewood with enormous mana and prestige – This is the society which you and I are now members of and also custodians for future generations. So it is with a sense of humbleness and considerable pleasure I accepted the committee's challenge to pick up the pen where Selina left off, and with the help of David and Joan Ertel, who's ongoing love and passion for this society – have also penned in the gaps recently – I sit at the laptop and start thinking about what should be achieved with the monthly newsletter – how it can help as a marketing tool to any practitioner of the this particular form of the performing arts – the sensuous relationship between playwright, director, actor, backstage and front of house who form the intimate and immediate connection with every single audience through performance of the spoken word as the 'this is the moment' living piece of art – Every single performance is utterly unique, special – never to be repeated or seen again in

the current form – every night is different – intensity, energy, vocal intonation and connection. Performance theatre is about connection – and Cue provides the forum and opportunity for all it's members, in whatever capacity to form a connection with the paying public – our audience and raison d'être for being. Oral communication has been part of humanity since the beginning of time – For centuries - before the invention of the printed book – it was the only means of passing down history and events – and performance evolved as a part of this process and the history of live spoken theatre is a unique and fascinating part of this evolution – However this is not a history lesson but the first newsletter of 2010 for this particular society. So moving right along..

Just a note..

Many of the anecdotes quoted throughout the newsletters will be from the excellent 'Memories on Cue' that outstanding and informative book edited and compiled by team Selina, David and Joan for Cue's 50th Golden Jubilee celebration in 2006 – and I acknowledge and thank them in advance.

Hindsight.

'Summer Wonderland' and the mountain of Christmas lights have been unplugged. Ross Jordon and his team did a fabulous job on the production – everyone involved went the extra mile – The absolute **WOW** factor of Alan Stevenson and his amazing team in creating Dixon Court will become a Cue legend – Strong performances from all concerned ensured that this new Australian play was given a production that will be talked about for years to come. From all of us at Cue – a huge thank you and salute to everyone involved. Audience attendance was

great – a healthy profit ensued and so the treasurer is smiling ...

Christmas Party – Well enough said – a small but distinguished group gathered to celebrate the yuletide season and reflect back on what has been a challenging year for the society.

What's next at Cue ??

IN REHEARSAL NOW

"LEADING LADIES"

Cue Theatre is proud to bring to Taranaki this NZ Premiere of the new outrageous BRITISH comedy by Ken

Ludwig (*'Lend Me a Tenor'*)

and directed by Margi Arthur

Tuesday 23rd March - Saturday 3rd April 2010 See performance dates below for times and dates.

No 'Contents may offend' label needed for this fabulous forthcoming production.

'Leading Ladies' has been described as a combination of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* meets Billy Wilder's *Some Like It Hot*. Mix in a huge range of salutes to other great classics and you get the idea - Not bad company! These are two of the most profoundly beautiful—and hysterically funny stories ever told. In the hands of Ken Ludwig, this tale of mistaken identities, human foibles, and loves lost and found (not to mention cross-dressing) comes alive in a hilarious romp that has had great success in regional theatres overseas.

Delightfully sexy, *'Leading Ladies'* follows the adventures of Jack and Leo, two down-on-their-luck Shakespearean actors, who hope to scam their way out of the Moose Lodge circuit where they are reduced to playing

scene's from the works of one William Shakespeare by posing as the long-lost nephews of Florence, an elderly and apparently dying heiress. When our heroes learn that Florence's missing relatives are in fact nieces, not nephews, they ransack their imaginations and costume trunks, don women's clothing and the mayhem starts — but their successful masquerade proves problematic when Leo falls head-over-heels for Florence's winsome niece, Meg and when Doc and Butch both 'press their suits' for the passions of the hapless 'Leading Ladies'.

Will Jack and Leo inherit millions and spend the rest of their lives in the lap of luxury? Will Meg marry her stuffy, fortune-hunting fiancé or follow her dream of seeing the big, wide world? Slapstick goofiness, scrambled Shakespeare, and good-natured laughs make *Leading Ladies* an irresistible treat not to be missed.

Margi Arthur has put together a hugely talented cast for the New Zealand Premiere Production.

Meet the company

Director: Margi Arthur

In 1978, Margi made her first foray into the adult world of amateur theatre in the Roger Hall play *Middle Age Spread* (NP Repertory). Since then, Margi has appeared in no less than twenty local theatre productions, among these notably Rachel in *My Cousin Rachel* (1984); Anastasia in *The Anastasia Files* (1988); Stephanie in *Duet For One* (1990); M'Lyn in *Steel Magnolias* (1992); Laura in *Time of My Life* (1997); Ruth in *Play Memory* (1998); Annabel in *Snake in the Grass* (2007) – all New Plymouth Repertory; Jane in *Benefactors* (1989 Best Actress); *Noises Off* (1995) - New Plymouth Little Theatre; Fruma-Sarah in *Fiddler on the Roof* (1984); Baroness Elsa Schrader in *The Sound of Music* (1985) - New Plymouth Operatic Society. Her last stage role was as the Fairy Godmother in the December 2007 Taranaki Hospice Production of *Cinderella*. Margi made her debut as a Director at New Plymouth Little Theatre in 2002 with the

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outstandingly successful "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest". She followed this in 2003 with the widely acclaimed Cue production "The Rise and Fall of Little Voice" ; and then directed another memorable production, this time for New Plymouth Repertory – "Dancing at Lughnasa" in 2004.

Better known these days as the owner of Judd Opticians and as a Councillor Andrew Judd (LEO) also has enormous versatility as an actor/singer/dancer, appearing in no less than seventeen productions for local theatre groups since 1997. Originally from the Wairarapa, where he was also involved in amateur theatre, Andrew's first Taranaki theatre role was Andy in New Plymouth Operatic Society's 1997 production of *42nd Street*. Andrew counts that show as one of his favourites, the others being *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Little Theatre 2002); *Slice of Saturday Night* (Little Theatre 2003); and *Unoriginal Sin* (NP Repertory 2003). Andrew performed in the 2005 Cue production of *Beyond the Blue Horizon*, and last appeared as Buttons in the 2007 Taranaki Hospice Production of *Cinderella*. Andrew is delighted to be back on the stage once more, and his versatility in all theatrical skills will be showcased in his portrayal of Leo in this production of *Leading Ladies*.

Originally from a little village in Wales called Beddau (just 12 miles north of Cardiff), Antony Jones (JACK) has immersed himself in the performing arts since arriving in Taranaki in October 2003 as a physiotherapist for Hawera Hospital. Now owner of New Plymouth's Physioood Physiotherapy, He first joined Hawera Repertory, for whom he played a Welsh character in their 2004 production of *Merry Wives*, As *Macbeth* in *Macbeth* in 2008 and was able to use his Welsh accent as Welsh gigolo Gerry Evans in *Dancing at Lughnasa* (NP Repertory 2004), in which he played opposite Nicci Smith and again played opposite Nicci as her love interest in New Plymouth Operatic's 2004 production of *Brassed Off*. Antony has also performed twice at Cue Theatre, playing Richard the Lionheart in *The Lion in Winter* (2005); and in Cue's 2005 production of *Beyond the Blue Horizon*.

Nicci Smith (MEG) is another British ex-pat, having moved to New Plymouth from Aberdeen, Scotland in 2002. Credits include Christina in NP Repertory's 2004 production of *Dancing at Lughnasa*, Gloria in New Plymouth Operatic's 2004 production, *Brassed Off*; Emma in *Betrayal* (Little Theatre 2006); Miriam in NP Repertory's *Snake in the Grass* (opposite Margi Arthur); and most recently appeared in Little Theatre's *Good Things* (2009).

Well-known New Plymouth thespian, raconteur and general performance factotum, Morris West (DUNCAN), has appeared in no less than fifty-five productions since returning to New Plymouth in 1984 from overseas. Morris played opposite Margi in NP Repertory's 1984 production of *My Cousin Rachel* (Directed by Dorne Arthur). He was cast as Randall P McMurphy in NP Little Theatre's 2002 production of "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" (directed by Margi Arthur). Morris has played a wide range of roles in his quarter century of stage appearances, including major roles in *The Woman in Black* (Cue 2007); *The Woman Who Cooked Her Husband* (Little Theatre 2001); *Conjugal Rites* (Cue 2007); *Inspector Drake and the Black Widow* (Little Theatre 2009).

A new face to Cue is Kristen Devine (AUDREY). Kristen studied drama as part of her university studies, and in 2001 took part in university productions during this time. She previously appeared in high school productions, playing Brutus/Calpurnia (2000); in *Brigadoon* (1990); *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1997); and most recently appeared as Miss Sally in *Waiting for the Big Fat One* (2007).

Another Cue newcomer is Tom Crehan (DOC) who resides in New Plymouth where he and his wife Amanda have a dental business. Tom last appeared in the major role of Jesus Christ in the New Plymouth Operatic Society's 2006 production of *Godspell*. His theatrical experience prior to this has been primarily in Gilbert and Sullivan musicals. Playing Doc in this production of *Leading Ladies* will be his first non-musical role.

Also new to Cue - Justin Lowcay (BUTCH), who by day works as an ambulance officer for Taranaki Base Hospital, is having a ball playing this endearing character. Justin, who hasn't been on stage since high school in Texas, USA in 2000, is originally from New Zealand. He attended Carroll High in Texas where he was in the 2000 productions of *The Wizard of Oz* and *Love of the Nightingale*

FLORENCE - Lea Michaels – Yet another new comer to Cue and returning to the stage after a 12 year hiatus professionally growing yellow cucumbers for the export market in Brazil. Holder of an ATCL in speech and drama – she originally performed as a musical artiste in an arts improvement programme to the hard of hearing. She was also a celebrated Wagnerian soprano (until the vibrato got the

better of her) and when a struggling thespian training in London spent time as a live model to Art students in Basingstoke. Her husband says he is delighted to have her onstage again and out of the house.

Valda Hinz, Peter Meikle, Anne Holloway and Stephen Rose are creating the wardrobe and promises the total visual symphony expected from this creative team

Tickets: On sale at The Inglewood Book Centre from 7th February 2010 @ \$22.00 per person or \$20.00 per person for pre-paid group bookings of 10 or more. Please phone 06 756 7032.

Performance Dates

NZ PREMIERE GALA OPENING NIGHT:

Tuesday 23rd March from 7.15pm – performance 8.00 pm

Wednesday 24th March – 8.00 pm

Thursday 25th March – 8.00 pm

Friday 26th March – 8.00 pm

Saturday 27th March – 8.00 pm

Sunday 28th March - matinee only – 4.00 pm

Monday 29th March – 8.00 pm

Tuesday 30th March – 8.00 pm

Wednesday 31st March – 8.00 pm

Thursday 1st April – 8.00 pm

Friday 2nd April - Good Friday - no performance scheduled

Saturday 3rd April – 8.00 pm

And to follow..

'The Cemetery Club'

An outstanding and heartwarming comedy by Ivan Menchell

PETER MEIKLE RETURNS TO CUE TO DIRECT THIS WONDERFUL AMERICAN PLAY AT TET CUE THEATRE FROM 16TH - 27TH JUNE 2010

This popular and highly successful play is fabulously funny and heart wrenchingly poignant. Three Jewish widows meet once a month to visit their husbands' graves. Each widow has her own humorous eccentricities, expectations

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and modes of survival. Sweet-tempered Ida is ready to begin a new life, feisty and flashy Lucille just wants to have fun, and proper Doris is fully committed to widowhood. Sam the butcher meets the widows while visiting his wife's grave and becomes smitten with Ida. The Cemetery Club is a poignant and playful tribute to the art of living and laughing, and facing the challenges of growing older. This funny, sweet and moving comedy will make you glad that you went to the theatre. Tickets on sale at Inglewood Book Centre from 1st May 2010.

Auditions will be outlined in next month's newsletter.

Learning curves at Cue..

Men learning to shave legs and wear pantyhose – someone forgot to tell them the you have to firstly remove your pants to put on tights – the sight of a well known actor in the cast with walk shorts on and then the crutch of pantyhose jammed at knee height – resulting in said actor on his back – with legs in the air – priceless

'Leading Ladies' insight #1

Calendar of events

- February (date to be confirmed) - auditions for 'The Cemetery Club' in the Cue Foyer.
- 7 February – Bookings open for 'Leading Ladies' at Inglewood Book Centre.
- 15th February – Committee Meeting
- 24th February – Americana in Inglewood – 3.30 pm – Matai Street closed off and party until 7.00 pm.
- March 4 – 10 Stratford's of the World festival in Stratford.
- March 23 – April 3 'Leading ladies' by Ken Ludwig, directed by Margi Arthur.



May – Annual General Meeting – Date to be advised

June 16 – Opening night 'The Cemetery Club' by Ivan Menchell, directed by Peter Meikle.

In other news

Cue life member Derek Treeby is directing the powerful American classic 'Cat on a hot tin roof' by Tennessee Williams for New Plymouth Little Theatre – season on stage 15 – 24 April.

Club Nights – Many members have expressed interest in club nights and we are pleased to announce that during winter 2010 we will be running a series of 'play readings' Every fortnight a script will be selected and any member, or friends of same sit around the heaters and read scripts – It's a great way to hear plays read out loud, to discover new scripts or to rediscover old classics that for various reason's would never be given a full production – it's a safe and friendly environment for absolute beginners to join in and gain experience of 'live performance' – watch the newsletter for further details.

New Members

ARE always welcome – email us at backstage@cuetheatre.co.nz for a membership pack.

Contact us at Cue

President: Valda Hinz 7568747

V/Pres: Denise Fitzsimons 7575151

Secretary: Michelle Chainey 7522564

Treasurer: Sheryl Hamilton 7568242

Committee:

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