



# HARLEQUIN

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## MUSICAL THEATRE

It seems quite apt to be presenting this report in National Volunteers Week. More on our wonderful volunteers further in my report.

2017 was a difficult year for the club with a small committee, some big shows being performed in Auckland that meant a lack of available creatives, technical teams and cast plus some pressing demands in terms of maintenance required at the theatre. As such, it was agreed by the committee at the time that there would not be an end of year show and instead we would close the theatre and concentrate on some much needed maintenance.

This meant only one show for 2017, being Bonnie & Clyde. As a committee we were very excited about this show – it's a well-known story with a wonderful collection of music. Dan Chasemore did a fantastic job of directing this show and the club received two Napta nominations- Katrina McConnell as Blanche for Best Leading Actress and Charlotte Curry and Annie Curtis for Best Hair and Makeup. Unfortunately marketing the show proved to be difficult and low ticket sales resulted in the show making a loss – a disappointing outcome but something that we have learnt some important lessons from for future shows.

Towards the end of 2017 we managed to tick a number of maintenance issues off our list. A wall in the women's toilets was rebuilt and the bathroom area was given a makeover, roof leaks and the subsequent damage to the ceiling in the foyer and auditorium were repaired and a number of other maintenance issues were addressed. A big thank you to John Rossiter for the time put into assisting us with these issues and for the big savings that we were able to achieve by having John carry out some of this maintenance work rather than needing to pay someone to do it for us.

Funding to enable us to get plans drawn for the theatre rebuild are still proving to be elusive but the project remains in the committee's sights going forward.

In March, I had the privilege of representing the theatre along with Dayle Hall at the Musical Theatre New Zealand conference in Nelson. We attended some excellent, informative workshops and made some new friends. It was a fantastic opportunity for me to learn a lot more about musical theatre and I took a lot away from the conference. It did however also highlight to me a number of areas that as a club we need to work on, including our health and safety programme, governance, applications for funding grants and communication with our members and the community. These are all areas that I believe need to be focused on by the incoming committee over the next 12 months.

Our agreements for hire with HCYT and CMTS continued throughout 2017 and contribute greatly to the ever increasing costs of upkeep and running of the theatre. We were also very proud to see some of the CMTS children receive Napta nominations and one of their young performers take out Best Youth Performer – Male at the awards. Congratulations to the CMTS team on this success.

The current year sees the rehearsals for Nunsense The Mega Musical well underway with a fantastic cast, creative team and production team working hard to deliver a wonderfully entertaining and funny show. Please support the theatre and the cast by promoting the show where possible and

making sure you get in early to purchase tickets. We will be releasing details of a special members only offer for Nonsense tickets in the next week.

A further show is scheduled and being worked on for the November time slot this year and 3 shows are scheduled for 2019. Details will be released as soon as possible of those shows.

As mentioned previously, the committee for 2017 was very small, with only 7 members. This creates a lot of work and stretches committee resources immensely. It also makes meetings difficult as just one committee member away can mean we need to reschedule meetings to order to achieve quorum. Members of the committee are often faced with carrying out the tasks that would be better suited to being split across two people. All the members of the committee have given what time and energy they can to the theatre and in this day and age, where life is so busy we must be very thankful for whatever time people can give. Attracting and keeping volunteers was one of the workshops covered at the MTNZ conference and it is a shared problem across community theatre throughout the country and undoubtedly all community organisations that rely on volunteers.

I would like to say a big thank you to all the committee members for the time and effort they have contributed since the last AGM. No matter how big or small the contribution, it all matters and it is greatly appreciated.

I am delighted to see some new faces putting their names forward for the committee for the current year and I know the extra people will be greatly appreciated by all on the committee to help spread the work load and bring some new energy to the committee and the theatre.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank those non-committee volunteers that have given time to the theatre. This includes front of house volunteers, back stage crew, production crews, set builders and cast members. And we can't forget the families of all the volunteers and committee members who often become widows, widowers or orphans for the time that their loved ones are immersed in the theatre.

Without all these people we simply could not continue to run the theatre.

And finally, a thank you to our members, life members and patron. To those of you that have made the effort to be here tonight to support the committee and the AGM - I send a very special thank you. And to those that couldn't be here but that continue to support the theatre in so many ways.

Dale Smith  
President