

# Mana Little Theatre



Newsletter, September 2016

*President's  
Letter*

## Hi folks

At last spring seems to have arrived and Mana Little Theatre is on the final run for the last play of the year. The set for “Blue Remembered Hills” has already been taken down and the new one for “Death by Fatal Murder” put up – how’s that for speed!

Thank you to all those who came to see “Blue Remembered Hills” – your support was much appreciated, especially in the second week when sadly the wife of one of our cast members died suddenly. Understandably Jeff Osborne had to pull out and for a moment it looked like the show would be cancelled. But in the great tradition of the theatre – the show must go on. I was away in Sydney at the time but Bill Robinson, Bruce Cannell and Sally Ratchford sprang into action and Jacob Cannell (Bruce and Jaydee’s son) courageously offered to take on the role. Cast members came to the theatre earlier on the Wednesday night, the fight scene was learnt, the moves were gone over, and lines were pasted into a Boy’s Annual. Sally Ratchford spent hours ringing the Wednesday night audience to try and move them to another night but a group from Wellington Rep / Stagecraft couldn’t change so the show went on in front of eight very experienced actors ... and the adjudicator! (Fingers crossed for the adjudication) They were a wonderful audience – just what we needed to lift our spirits.

Then on the Friday night we had a power cut! Jacob to the rescue again – in his costume, toolkit in hand, trying to get our power back then bringing in a local electrician. The audience waited like refugees in the Blitz while electricians ran around like headless chooks to find the fault. Unfortunately it was in the power line outside the theatre so Tanisha Wardle came to the rescue with extension leads ... we got sound, the video and house lights but no stage lights. Young Chloe on lights had the easy job that night. Again the audience was very patient and supportive. Amazingly our cast kept calm and carried on! They were total professionals throughout. Even Jeff came along on the final night to watch his “understudy” do his role.

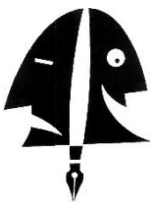
So we are shaken but not stirred, supported by wonderful audiences and fellow thespians. It was disappointing not to have more people come to what turned out to be a wonderfully entertaining show, but that’s theatre. Despite the awful circumstances, the adjudicator was impressed with what he saw. The set looked magnificent and I couldn’t have wished for a better cast who, despite the sadness, were able to lift their performances and support Jacob – who did a magnificent job! I had an absolute blast directing them. It’s encouraging to see more of our young people taking on leading roles within the theatre – they are our future – thank you Jacob, Ben and Chloe.

So the new set for our next play is up and ready for painting! Rehearsals have begun and my house has been emptied of furniture again! This will be the final play of the year and is another in the hilarious Inspector Pratt series. See below for details. In the meantime enjoy some sun and warmer weather and don’t forget to book your tickets.

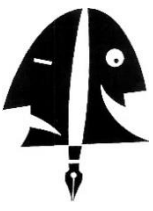
## Kim Smith

Our sincere condolences to Jeff Osborne and his family on the sudden death of his wife, Kim Smith last week. Kim was well known in theatrical and pub quiz circles. I had the pleasure of appearing in a production with both Kim and Jeff a few years ago in Newlands. She was a vibrant, colourful personality and will be greatly missed by her family, friends and fellow thespians. Kia kaha Jeff.

*Sue*



# Next Production



## Death by Fatal Murder

By Peter Gordon. Director Bruce Cannell.

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> – Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November at 8.00 p.m.

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November matinee at 3.00 p.m.

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> – Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November at 8.00 p.m.

Inspector Pratt's record of crime detection at Bagshot House is not enviable. A police constable is missing, and the bumbling, incompetent Inspector Pratt is back to investigate the mysteriously mysterious mystery in this Agatha Christie spoof.

Aided and abetted by local amateur sleuth Miss Maple, he meets up with the new owner of Bagshot House, Nancy Allwright, and his sidekick, Constable Thomkins, who adds fluency to Pratt's "brainpower".

The upper-crust Virginia (Ginny) Farquhar and Italian Enzo Garibaldi assist with enquiries, but danger soon looms with the unexpected arrival of Nancy's missing husband, Squadron Leader 'Stiffy' Allwright. Welsh busybody and clairvoyant Blodwyn Morgan proceeds to create further mayhem with her somewhat suspect séance.

The cast line up features Craig Haywood reprising the role of Inspector Pratt, Marion Rosner as Blodwyn Morgan, Paulette McIndoe as Miss Maple, Jacob Cannell as Police Constable Thomkins, Susannah Donovan as Nancy Allwright, Piri Te Rure as Ginny Farquhar, Chris Davidson as Squadron Leader Allwright, and Laurence Greig as Enzo Garibaldi.

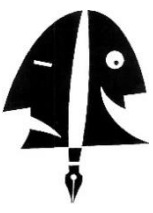
Tickets go on sale on October 9<sup>th</sup>, from [mlttickets@gmail.com](mailto:mlttickets@gmail.com) or 021 025 77648.

L -> R: Craig Haywood as Inspector Pratt, Marion Rosner as Blodwyn Morgan, Paulette McIndoe as Miss Maple

Blodwyn's ghostly Scottish visitor takes a dislike to Pratt.



Inspector Pratt (Craig Haywood) is as clueless as ever



## Blue Remembered Hills – Jacob Cannell – thank you again!



Back row, L -> R: Tony Hogan (Raymond), Jacob Cannell (Peter),  
Deanne Graham (Angela), Hayden Rogers (Donald)  
Front row, L -> R: Neil Rusling (Willie), Nigel Parry (John), Meredith  
Dooley (Audrey)

## Upcoming Auditions

The first production for 2017 will be the romantic comedy, “Pride and Prejudice”, based on the novel by Jane Austen and adapted by Jon Jory.

The play, set in the early 1800s, follows the day to day lives of the Bennet family - the mother and father, five daughters, their friends, various suitors for different daughters, love and romance, escapades, and elopement.

Auditions will be held at Mana Little Theatre Studio at Plimmerton, on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November, at 7.00 pm, with callbacks possible for later in the week.

There are at least 14 characters – 8 women, 6 men, but this can be extended if plenty of people audition. There are roles for 5 young women (the Bennets sisters) several young men including Mr Darcy, Mr Bingham and George Wickham, as well as parts for older men and women.

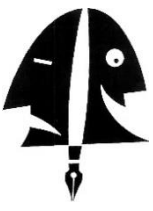
The play is being directed by Sue Miller, who has directed a number of plays for Mana Little Theatre and Wellington Repertory, over the years.

Production dates are early April 2017, and rehearsals will start in late January.

For more information, contact Sue on [kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz), 04 233 1842, or 027 451 0339.



## *Other News, continued*



### **Party for MLT Members – Save the date!**

We've decided to have a little gathering for Members of Mana Little Theatre this year, on the evening of Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November, at the theatre, to look back and celebrate the end of the year. More details to come later.

### **Construction Work at MLT**

On Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November, our stage is going to be ripped up and replaced. If anyone is willing to help out, your assistance is very gratefully appreciated. We'll let you know nearer the time who to contact about volunteering for this.

### **Props needed – can you help?**

For “Death by Fatal Murder,” we are in need of a large rug for the stage, and also a two-seater sofa, 1940's style. If you have either or both of these, and are willing to lend them to us until November 20<sup>th</sup>, please can you contact Sue Miller, Production Manager for the show, on on [kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz), 04 233 1842, or 027 451 0339. Thank you!