

Waipukurau Little Theatre Inc.

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January 2023 NEWSLETTER

A Message from the President – Hilary Blamires

“President’s Shout.” An acknowledgement to 2022 and a welcome to 2023

2022 had a shaky start undermined by Covid, but we produced a diverse selection of plays of different genres: A hilarious comedy and sell out: *The Old People Are Revolting*. A lovely, thoughtful ghost story, *Spirit Level* with elements of mischievousness. Finally, *Blood Of The Lamb*. A serious, cleverly presented play with moments of humour and moments that made us re-examine our values and beliefs. The directors Sarah Rogers and Lindsey Bishop both deserve medals for their tenacity in jumping through hoops, over barriers, and under the constant threat of Covid to bring these worthy plays to our stage. We were also blessed with enthusiastic supportive audiences who recognised the amount of work that had gone into these.

Last year the renovations and refurbishments turning the auditorium into an ambient environment for our beloved audiences. Thanks to Bish for getting these plans off the ground, to Rob for his dedication to raising the much-needed funds to back up our ambitious plans, and to the volunteers who put in the hard work!

Our 2022/23 Committee members deserve a thank you. Debby, our marketing manager excelled in getting our productions out there. Bruce, Bish, Rob and George built stage sets and managed repairs and maintenance. Eva, climbed up and down ladders, designed lighting for shows, and at times ran the technical lighting sessions single-handed. Hopefully this year we can find additional support to share the interesting workload! Sarah produced amazing platters with thumbs up from the audience. In addition, she brought with her, hair, and makeup talents. Leanne, our bar manager, and wardrobe mistress had been dropped in the deep end and surfaced with determination and a front of house bar facility to be proud of. It is easy to underestimate how important a secretary is in keeping us functioning as a Society. Donna is also our front of house manager and Preview Night (local charities) coordinator, both tasks so important for the survival of our Society. There are several special mentions and thanks for this year.

- Jan and Alan Beeden, not only for supporting props and wardrobe with Leanne, but in addition their vision for the wardrobe space and the grand sorting out they initiated in 2022.
- Ash. The astounding murals and artwork for stage sets last year that left us struggling afterwards to paint over for the next production as they were so amazing!
- Chappy. In between his full-time employment and many nights away from home and he still managed to come in and set build when available.
- The Short N Sweet team. Every third Friday, between five and twelve people – committee, members and volunteers turned up and did whatever was needed to keep on top of all that unromantic stuff behind the scenes: the cleaning, repair, maintenance, and disposing of rubbish.

And now to 2023. This year promises to be an even better year. Our first offering is the acclaimed *The Drowning Girls* directed by Madeleine Howard. (<https://www.littletheatre.net.nz/>). The next productions are directed by Rob Blamires, *Last Tango At The Little Theatre* and *Last Panto At The Little Theatre*. In August we have at our Little Theatre, the first ever Lower North Island Regional Theatre Fest competition, coordinated by Lindsey Bishop, that leads into the National TheatreFest (Further details later in newsletter). This is an opportunity for our region to showcase Central Hawkes Bay’s Waipukurau and locality and present our CHB talent to a wider audience. Finally, we will be celebrating the 130th anniversary of the formation of the Waipukurau Drama Club, the original predecessors of Waipukurau Little Theatre Inc. (Further details in newsletter).

An exciting year to look forward to.

Hilary Blamires



The Drowning Girls

Written by: Beth Graham, Charlie Tomlinson, Daniela Vlaskalic

Directed by:
Madeleine Howard

Our Talented Cast:



Ash
McCormick



Helen Griffin



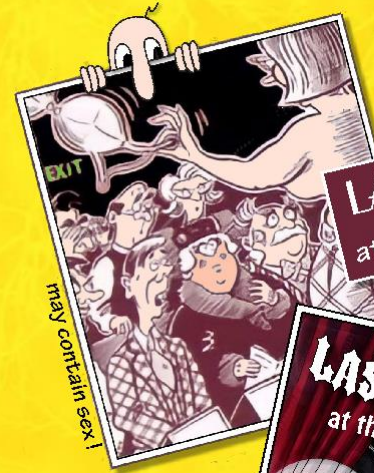
Kylie Vanston

Thursday 23 March to Saturday 1 April

THE LAST

The Little Theatre is in trouble. The membership has dwindled to four - the audiences aren't much bigger - and if they don't come up with some rent money soon, they're going to be thrown out. "There's only one thing that sells tickets these days" argues Gordon the Chairman. "Sex!". Thus begins the chaotic and hilarious build-up to an evening of extraordinary home-grown drama - '**Last Tango at the Little Theatre**' - an evening the locals will never forget!

Gordon, Joyce, Margaret and Bernard are once again struggling to put together a production on a minimal budget. This time it's the annual Christmas pantomime, once again written by the Chairperson, Gordon. The predictably hilarious results involve a pantomime horse, a cat with no tail, some dodgy stage lights and a lot of bananas! The future of the beleaguered society depends on the success of the '**Last Panto at the Little Theatre**'.



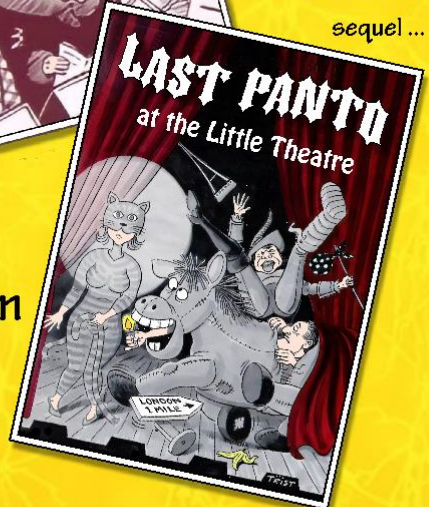
Presenting a comedy
Double Bill

LAST TANGO
at the Little Theatre

... and
the riotous
sequel ...

Written by
**David
Tristram**

Directed by
**Rob
Blamires**



Thu 19th to Sat 29th July 2023

Waipukurau Little Theatre

Lower North Island TheatreFest Regional Finals - August 26th and 27th

Theatre New Zealand
Te Pūtoi Whakaari o Aotearoa



Waipukurau Little Theatre is pleased to announce that the lower North Island TheatreFest Regional Finals will be held at Waipukurau Little Theatre in the last weekend of August this year.

This festival brings together the best theatre groups from around the lower North Island to compete for the right to represent the region in the National Finals in September. All groups presenting will already have been successful in their local competitions from Gisborne to Taranaki, from Hawke's Bay to Wellington, from Taupo to Manawatu and Wairarapa. Teams will travel to CHB on the Friday to set up and prepare, and then compete on the Saturday and Sunday.

This will be a significant community event with teams and their supporters here for three days requiring accommodating and feeding, providing opportunity for local businesses to get behind the event.

We anticipate between six and eight groups providing two sessions on each of the two competition days. Details will not be known until the groups have been selected at the Local events. But what we can guarantee is that you will see some of the best theatre in the country.

Watch this space for further details.

130th Year Anniversary Production

This year is the 130th Anniversary of the formation and first production of the Waipukurau Drama Club in 1893. We are excited to announce that our plan to mark this milestone is to reproduce that first production as our end-of-year show for 2023. The entertainment will consist of two, one-act 'comediettas' or farces.

The first one, '**Done On Both Sides**', was written by John Maddison Morton, a popular playwright of the Victorian era.

The second, '**Box And Cox, Married And Settled**' was written by J. Stirling Coyne and was itself produced as a sequel to an earlier work of Morton's.

In addition to the two plays, the 1893 production at the Waipukurau Town Hall included two short musical pieces by instrumentalists of the drama club. We hope to be able to present the same pieces performed by members of the CHB orchestra.

Other ideas for the production include a Victorian theme throughout, an optional period costume competition and a black-tie Gala Opening Night with additional music and treats. More details as the year progresses.

Ladies, dig out your great-grandma's bustles; Gents, start growing those 'mutton chops'. This should be a fun evening!

Rob Blamires

1880s

In the 1880s and beyond men were letting their mutton chops grow to luxurious lengths. It was not an uncommon sight to see flowing sideburn hair sprouting from each side of the face.



Short and Sweet:

Every third Friday of the month. Next Meeting Friday 20 January at 6pm.

A short working bee followed by a shared meal and a quiet drink.

All welcome. Contact: Hilary Blamires 021 906 032