



KAT CHAT

Khandallah Arts Theatre Newsletter

December 2016

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Welcome to the December edition of KAT Chat:

- ❖ Cinderella - 2017 play-in-the-park
- ❖ Thank you
- ❖ Antoinettes
- ❖ Sad News



2017 Play-in-the-Park Cinderella by Kaye Umansky directed by Marty Pilott 11-12 & 17-19 February

Director Marty Pilott has cast Cinderella and they are now deep into rehearsals. For the first time in quite a number of years, this Play-in-the-Park has almost as many pre-teens as teens and adults in the cast. The pre-teens, all new to KAT productions, are: Bella McHardy, Caitlin Duggan, Emily Bell, Jodie Kelly, Joseph Ramsbottom, Maya Johnstone and Yoshimi Doube. The others are almost all "veterans" of Play-in-The-Park performances. They are: Blair Mockett, Jacyntha Scurfield, Jessica Doube, Lennex Drummond, Lisa Duggan, Lynn Coory, Richard Christy-Jones and William Morgan.

Lucy Sinogeikina, whose first KAT activity was lighting operator for *Shakespeare in Hollywood*, has designed a lovely set, and Elisabeth Christy-Jones is in charge of creating the costumes - she too is a Play-in-the-Park "veteran".

The script, by English writer Kaye Umansky, is delightful, with quirky characters and lots of laughs. If you have friends or neighbours with young children, give them a copy of the attached flyer - and put one on your own fridge too, to remind you to come and see the show in February.

Publicity at the Parade

On the first Saturday in December we sauntered the Johnsonville circuit once again, the 35th of 36 entries in the Johnsonville Lion's Christmas Parade, with Father Christmas on the 36th float right behind us. Caitlin (Cinderella) and Lisa and Jess (her stepsisters Ravioli and Semolina) rode the truck, along with a couple of our youngest members; and about ten others, all costumed up, walked alongside it, chatting to the crowds lining the streets and handing out Cinderella flyers. Semolina and Ravioli kept everybody amused with their frequent shouts at us all to clean, sweep and get on with it, and with their invitations to a few of the parents and marshals to be their Prince Charming. The day was sunny but not too hot, all our flyers were distributed and everybody enjoyed themselves - what more could you want. Thank you to everybody who gave up their Saturday morning for this event, and a special thank you to Lynn's friend Brian who, once again, drove us in his ITM truck.



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FROM THE PRESIDENT THANK YOU JENNY

Jenny has been editing, and usually writing all the text for, this newsletter since at least 2003, with a little break in 2005-06 when her first daughter, Stephanie, was born. And now she is going to stop, and this is the last newsletter that she will sign off. The especially wonderful thing about this long run of newsletter production is that Jenny has done it even when she hasn't been on the committee - which is a particularly difficult feat because it relies so much on getting information second-hand through the committee minutes.

Things have changed since Jenny first started creating our newsletters. At that time they were still all being posted, and so as well as writing them she had to get them printed and then take them round to Margaret Easter, who put them in their envelopes. And now they are just one of at least four ways of keeping you all in touch with the doings of KAT - the others being the website (of course), our relatively recently introduced Facebook page, and that old standard, the telephone. Fortunately for us, Jenny says she will still have time to keep updating the Facebook page, so long as the committee and our publicity teams for each production keep sending her stuff to put on it. Thank you, Jenny, from the committee on behalf of all the members, for keeping us in touch and informed for so long.

CHRISTMAS PARTY Party Pleasures

Our last club-night of the year was a very enjoyable party. The rehearsed reading of *Marble Arch* by John Mortimer was a light and amusing start to the evening. Then we competed, in teams of 4 or 5, in a loose version of Pictionary - with a little bit of cheating and a lot of hilarity. This was followed by a mostly melodious and occasionally cacophonous (or perhaps it was the other way round - occasionally melodious and mostly cacophonous) set of Christmas carols, for which we accompanied ourselves on a range of schoolroom percussion instruments. The decorations were gorgeous, the refreshments were scrumptious, and a thoroughly good time was had by all. Many thanks to all who made the evening so delightful, especially Marj (who directed the play), Lynn (who organised the game) and Adelle (who collated the songs and instruments).



ANTOINETTES

This year we entered both our full-length productions in the Wellington District Theatre Federation Festival. Throughout the year, adjudicator Jon Pheloung watched 17 plays, produced by 8 clubs. He wrote an insightful and gently challenging report for the cast and crew of each production, and then he had the task of selecting the best in a range of categories for the annual Antoinettes Awards evening.

KAT was there in force, with 18 people at the two KAT tables, and others who had been involved in our productions scattered around the room at the tables of the clubs of their "primary allegiance". Excerpts of several productions were performed, including both of ours, and then it was time for the awards. *Shakespeare in Hollywood* won Best Comedy and Marcus won Best Male Actor for his performance of Oberon. Adelle was short-listed for Best Supporting Female Actor for her

performance of Puck, and Simon was awarded a "comedic performance" certificate for his portrayal of Will Hayes.

A Skull in Connemara was short-listed for Best Drama, and awarded a "magic moments" certificate for the smashing of the skulls episode.

Of course, the main reasons we put on plays are the entertainment of our audiences and the pleasure of doing something creative together, and the Antoinettes are just the icing on the cake - but nevertheless it's great when we win, or nearly win one of the awards, especially when, as Jon kept reiterating, the standard of "Am-Dram" in Wellington is so high. Congratulations to everybody involved. Congratulations also to Wellington Repertory whose production *Ladies in Lavender* won best overall play.

A performance gift for a long-time member

Peter Clemerson, a long-time member of KAT (he joined in 1985) has for the last 7 years been much occupied with a research project on an aspect of Cognitive Dissonance for his PhD. He recently finished it, so his family threw him a party. They invited KAT to provide a bit of entertainment and so Margaret Robertson, with a cast of Marj and Marcus Lawson, Michelle and Dave Soper, Jessica Doube and Kevin Brown, put on a short excerpt from Alan Ayckbourn's *Time of my Life* - which KAT had produced, with Peter as one of the actors in 2003. It was very well received, and a good time was had by all.

We mourn the death of Life Member Margaret Easterher



One of KAT's longest standing members, Margaret Easterher, passed away on 28 November aged 94. This tribute was written by Margaret Robertson, who has probably known her the longest of all of us:

Margaret was an active member of our society from 1962 and served on the committee almost every year until 2002. She became the backbone of the theatre, doing whatever was needed to steer and nurture club members onwards and upwards.

She was vice president for 15 years but never sought the top position as she preferred to help in the background. For the next 13 years she managed the wardrobe, stuffed, as it then was, into two tiny rooms in our old "home", the Cashmere Community Centre.

Over and above these official roles she supported many, many productions as prompt, which involved attendance at every rehearsal and often every performance. She also took charge of props and did make-up for lots of productions. She baked endlessly for casts and working bees. She was in charge of supper at club nights for more than 20 years and used to clean and sweep and arrange the chairs in preparation for club nights and public performances.

Margaret's lifetime contribution to Khandallah Arts Theatre was one of selfless and tireless devotion. Over the years we recognised her massive contribution by making her a Life Member and successfully nominating her for a Northern Suburbs Community Volunteer Award and later a New Zealand Theatre Federation Meritorious Service Award. Margaret also received a QSM for Service to the Girl Guides.

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Post-script



Just before going to print we learned of the death of another celebrated Wellington thespian, Marie Thomson. Marie's "home" club was New Players but she has performed with many other clubs, including KAT. For us her most memorable character was probably the gingerbread girl in our first production of Sarah Delahunty's *The Gingerbread Man* in 2005. Marie was a legendary comic actor, and a warm and generous friend to many. She will be missed.



2017 Programme

11-12 & 17-19 February	<i>Cinderella</i> by Kaye Umansky directed by Marty Pilott
17 March	AGM and a showcase of newish Australasian plays
7 April	Rehearsed reading performance
4-6 May	Season of short plays
Saturday 10 June	Workshops in sound, lighting, set design and set painting
21-24 & 27-29 July	<i>Wind in the Willows</i> adapted by Alan Bennett from the book by Kenneth Grahame, directed by Shannon Tubman
18 August	Evening of plays performed by children, selected & directed by Lisa Duggan
Saturday 16 September	Workshops in acting tricks for voice and body
12-15 & 19-20 October	<i>August in Osage County</i> by Tracy Letts directed by Joy Hellyer and Paul Kay
17 November	Party time, plus a rehearsed reading performance of a short play
December	date to be advised, a KAT float in the Johnsonville Lions Christmas Parade

And that's just the tip of the iceberg of course - all of these activities involve a little or a lot of pre-event participation - there's something for everyone to do.

Club nights are held on a Friday evening unless stated at Cochran Hall, Cashmere Avenue School, 110 Cashmere Avenue, Khandallah



We wish you all a safe and Merry Christmas

Jenny



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