



21 February 2016

Presidents Report

A warm welcome to you all to our 2016 AGM; thank you for taking the time to be here.

2015 was an interesting year for Elmwood Players, and the last 12 months provided a mix of success and a couple of mis-fires. Once again we staged 3 full length adult productions, a season of NZ one act plays, another successful venture into NZTF short play festival and three workshops. Our mis-fires were the proposed music revue scheduled for last November, and our January Kidz Theatre production.

Our elected committee for 2015 was Klaus Hermanspahn, Susan Cameron, Barry Tomkinson, Sarah Coursey, Samantha Creed, Sam Primrose, Phil Dean, Rebecca Sandys, Peter Clark and myself. Susan was re-elected Treasurer, Barry as our secretary and I was re-elected President. Within that committee, Sarah took on the membership portfolio and Phil the technical portfolio. Outside of the committee, Brian Sullivan once again was our communications person – looking after our website and the newsletter, and Glen Clark has been responsible for our posters and programme designs. During the course of last year Barry took leave of absence with Samantha taking over the secretary role. Peter Clark resigned from committee and late last year Rebecca also resigned from the committee as she relocated to Auckland.

Productions: - remembering our production year ran March 2015 to February 2016

Our 2015 year began with the all-women comedy drama, *"The Hen Night Epiphany"*, which I was fortunate enough to direct. This production had strong audience numbers, was well received and made a profit.

Our second major production for last year was the June season of *"Proof"*, which provided Sam Primrose the opportunity to try out his directing skills. This was a difficult play to promote due to its content, but while it made a small loss, it was a quality production and a credit to the cast and director. We were also fortunate to have Bryan Aitken, President of Theatre NZ available to mentor both director and cast with this production.

A season of one act plays was next on our bill, under the banner of *"Some Like It Short"*. Three NZ short plays were offered: *"Instinct"* directed by Fiona Bennetts, *"Carol & Nev"* directed by Steve Millar, and *"The Death Of Katie Myers"*, written and directed by David Mitchell. All three productions were entered in Theatre NZ's festival of short plays, and picked up numerous awards along the way:

Districts:

Excellence In Acting Awards: Noam Wegner (*"The Death Of Katie Myers"*), Geoff Kendall (*"Carol & Nev"*) and Anna Willows (*"Instinct"*)

Bes Production Design And Technical: *"Instinct"*

Best NZ Play: *"Instinct"*

Best Overall Production: *"Instinct"*

All three Elmwood plays will progress on to the Regional Finals in Blenheim later in August.

Regionals:

Excellence In Acting: Anna Willows (*"Instinct"*)

Excellence In Acting: Noam Wegner (*"The Death Of Katie Myers"*)

No plays progressed to the Nationals

Our final adult production for the year was another comedy, “*Sex Cells*”, in October and directed by long time Elmwood stalwart, Marilyn Ollett. This was another well received production.

Also in October we staged “*Pirates Pandemonium!*” under our Kidz Theatre banner. This was performed during the day time on the weekends that “*Sex Cells*” was being performed, to maximise usage of the auditorium. While this presented some logistical problems, mainly with rehearsals, the production (Dir: Sarah Coursey and Susan Cameron) was well received.

The music revue, “*Time After Time*” was not staged due to problems relating to a suitable Musical Director, which was a great shame as a stellar group of individuals had been cast and it was sounding very good at their initial rehearsals. Our January Kidz Theatre production was not staged as it was unable to be cast. This highlights the need to be particularly careful with the selection of plays – on reflection, a cast of between 7 and 9 rehearsing pre and post Xmas for a January season was not particularly wise.

Workshops

Three workshops were held during 2015 – directing, acting and play writing. These were well received. A big thank you to Bryan Aitken and Susan Cameron for ensuring these workshops happened.

Licensed Venue:

We continued to have a liquor licence for our major, adult productions last year, and I see no reason not to continue to do so this coming year.

Elmwood Auditorium:

The Deed Of Licence To Occupy agreement with Elmwood Normal School was successfully re-negotiated last year, with both Phil Dean and I being involved in negotiations with Elmwood Normal School Board of Trustees. The new agreement, in short, allows for an initial term of 5 years (from 12 December 2015), with two further renewable five year terms, with a possible expiry date of 12 December, 2030.

The new agreement included an increase to the support of auditorium running costs (rates, power, cleaning etc) from no more than \$3000 per year to no more than \$5,500 per year.

Richard Oswin, Deputy Principal at Elmwood Normal School retired at the end of last year – he was our contact with regards to auditorium usage, and he will be very much missed as he was very supportive and accommodating to our needs.

Phil Dean has worked through our sound and more importantly lighting equipment, and our contract for their use has been up dated accordingly, and the hire of our sound and lighting equipment was increased slightly. Thanks to Phil for his work on that.

In summary:

The last year has been another successful one for Elmwood Players – one we can all be extremely proud of. Our wheels did fall off, or at least get the wobbles, towards the end of last year and I think the lesson learned is not to over commit ourselves.

For the 2016 calendar year we have once again been fortunate to gain significant sponsorship from Peter Diver Plumbers who supported us throughout last year as well; their financial support will greatly assist us in mounting our upcoming productions.

Finally, I’d like thank the current committee for their continued support, it’s been greatly appreciated. And obviously, my thanks go to all who supporter Elmwood Players over the past 12 months, both on and off stage.

Cheers

Garry Thomas
President
Elmwood Players