



25 February 2018

Presidents Report

Welcome to you all to our 2018 AGM; thank you for taking the time to be here. Before I start my report, I ask that you take a minutes silence for those in the local theatre scene who have left us in the last 12 months, in particular Renee Hart, who passed away earlier this month. Renee was one of the founding members of Elmwood Players, and also a former Patron.

From last year's minutes, the following people were present for the 2017 AGM: Garry Thomas, Susan Cameron, Sam Primrose, Sarah Coursey, Jon Amesbury, Craig Woolgar, Marilyn Ollett, Doug Clarke, and Sonya Cameron-Moss

Apologies were received from Sam McKinnon, Peter Clark, Samantha Creed and Emma Gordon

2017 was yet another busy and successful year for Elmwood Players. Productions had reasonable audience numbers on the whole, and positive feedback. We staged 3 full length adult productions and a season of one act plays, plus another venture into Theatre NZ's short play festival. At the beginning of 2017 the auditorium had a makeover, with a colour scheme and lack of curtains that did us no favours. This was brought to the attention of ENSchool, but to no avail. The floor of the auditorium was also replaced, due to significant damage caused by an external hirer.

Our elected committee for 2017 was Susan Cameron, Sonya Cameron, Samantha Creed, Sam Primrose, Craig Woolgar, Jon Amesbury and myself. Susan was re-elected Treasurer and I was re-elected President. Nicky Wagner remained as our patron. Sonya became our secretary following our first committee meeting of the year. Within that committee, Samantha managed our membership portfolio, Craig Woolgar our tech specialist and I picked up editing the newsletter. Late in 2017 Sam Primrose took over, and revamped our website. I need to formally acknowledge the committees thanks to Brian Sullivan, our previous webmaster. I also want to acknowledge Glen Clark for his poster and programme designs. During the year, due to work circumstances, Craig Woolgar stepped down from the committee, and we also lost Jon Amesbury when he moved to Australia.

Productions:

Due to the refurbishment of the auditorium, and therefore its unavailability at the beginning of 2017 we did not stage a Kidz Theatre production in January. Therefore, our first presentation for 2017 was the Doug Clarke directed adult comedy, *All This Intimacy*. This production had good attendance and was well received.

Our second major production for last year was the June season of *The Thrill Of Love* which I was fortunate enough to direct. This had reasonable patronage, and saw some newbies gracing the Elmwood stage.

Come August and a season of one act plays was next on our bill, under the banner of *Mix 'n Match*. Three one act plays were offered: *The Death Of Ellen Moore* written and directed by Jon Amesbury, *Top This* written by

Emilia Marriott and co-directed by Emilia with Sam Primrose, and *The Real Problem*, directed by Sonya Cameron. We also invited our friends at Riccarton Players on board with their one act play, *Value Added Plus*. Attendance was excellent, with two shows virtually sold out and much positive feedback. We entered our three plays in the Theatre NZ play festival, with mixed results. On a personal note, I do question the value of participating in this festival, with its rising costs and the logistical demands it creates – something for the incoming committee to think about.

Our final adult production for the year was the NZ comedy, *Heaven Help Us!*, in October and directed by Phil Dean. This too was a well received production, and a nice mix of old and new actors on the stage.

Licensed Venue:

We continued to have a liquor licence for our major, adult productions last year, and will do so again this year, subject to obtaining the necessary liquor licence.

Marketing/Sponsorship:

A big challenge for the incoming committee will be marketing and sponsorship. Last year we did receive some financial support from Merivale Retirement Village, which was very much appreciated. However, while the committee had a number of ideas on the topic of marketing, we didn't have the skill set to progress it further. We must address this, this coming year. We do need to increase our audience numbers – an auditorium that can seat 90, or if we use all three sections, 140 patrons and only attracts an average of around 35 is not good business. We should not have to rely on money generated from external hires to keep us afloat.

Advertising:

With the changing face of media, we cut back our Press advertising in 2017, and we have also ended our use of Metropolis magazine. To compensate, there was a greater use of social media. The Christchurch Mail was very supportive of Elmwood Players during 2017, and it is sad to note its demise this year.

In summary:

The last year has been another successful one for Elmwood Players and I'd like thank the current committee for their continued support, and obviously, my thanks go to all who supported Elmwood Players over the past 12 months, both on and off stage

2018 is our 70th anniversary, and we have a cracking line up of productions to grace the stage. So, an exciting year ahead.

Cheers

Garry Thomas
President
Elmwood Players