

Musical Theatre New Zealand Administrator's Report for year ended 31 December 2009

Library - The use of the library is pretty much on par with the last few years. A number of Societies and schools are now doing compilation type shows rather than the annual full scale musicals and when they are doing the large musicals, they are doing the new shows (ie High School Musical, CATS etc.) and perusal material for these new shows are not available from the MTNZ library at this stage. So the library is ticking over but hires have certainly declined over the past five years.

Capital Assistance Fund - The Fund is a great asset for Musical Theatre NZ and for all the societies, who contribute to it. Repayments during 2009 amounted to approximately \$50,000. We have over \$165,000 presently available to apply for with a qualifying project. CAF contributions (please refer to the contribution schedule with the CAF accounts were the highest in the last ten years, which is fantastic and thank you – just over \$7K - \$2K up on last year. We also had three loans granted to Porirua Little Theatre, Abbey Musical Theatre and Hutt City Musical Theatre varying from \$20K to \$5K. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the others members of the CAF Management Committee – President – Ian Reid, Vice President – Lesley Reid and Financial Advisor – Kevin Murphy, for their assistance; and Len Speir for auditing the accounts.

Website www.musical.org.nz

The website statistics are phenomenal this year with the hit counter for 2009 registering – (this is the number of times a page, image or file was viewed or downloaded by someone) – 987,269 – didn't quite make the million!!

Make the most of the MTNZ website and get your information on there.. The webpage - Show Calendar – has the highest hit count on the MTNZ website, second only to the Miss Saigon pages that we run off the MTNZ website.

<http://www.musical.org.nz/show%20calander.htm> If your show, ticketing and audition information is not on the MTNZ website, you are missing out on FREE publicity and with nearly a million hits on the website, this marketing opportunity should not be wasted.

We also offer to advertise your show on the What's On page -

<http://www.musical.org.nz/whats%20on.htm> You need to email me through a JPEG of your poster and depending on space at the time, I will put your poster onto the website on this page.

Communication and Profile - Spotlight has an email circulation of approximately 1,000 email addresses, as well as a printed copy going to all members approximately three times a year, as the cost of sending it out each month is prohibitive along with the tree wastage!! I know a number of societies and zone reps forward it onto their membership databases and encourage you all to do the same and get the musical theatre word out there. Remember this is your newsletter, so if you want to put anything in there, please contact me. If you would like to receive a personal copy by email, please email me at kate@musical.org.nz and I will put you on the database. Please also let your members know about the website and Spotlight – thanks to those societies who already do.

Speaking of newsletters, I am now on the “membership” list of a number of societies from Whangarei to Invercargill. Please include me on your newsletter database. The newsletters I receive from all over New Zealand, I then send onto the rest of the MTNZ Executive and our Patron, so they too know what is happening around New Zealand. Our industry is all about communication.

We also now have a Facebook page with 540 fans which I set up in April – another way of communicating what we are doing etc. Having a Facebook page has generated a lot of traffic into the MTNZ website, which is great, more profile and networking especially with the younger community theatre members who use social networking sites as their main means of communication. I would also appreciate it if you could fill in the contact details form (or just send me an email) with your “contact person” and their details for your Society. This is ever changing with committees etc., so can be hard to keep up with for both me and the Zone Representatives – or just email me and your Zone Rep through the information. It was suggested at a zone meeting that a society has a “generic” email address, you can use any of the free gmail, yahoo etc. providers So when the contact person is no longer, the email address is still the same. Ie katetheatre@gmail.com and it can be accessed from any computer. Just ask someone on your committee who has a bit of internet knowledge to set it up for your theatre.

We have also continued building our relationships with our copyright holders and at Auckland conference all the companies from both Australia and New Zealand will be represented and we have Mr Steve Spiegel from Theatrical Rights Worldwide also coming from New York. I would like to thank the copyright holders for their prompt replies to enquiries and sharing their knowledge with me and their continued support of MTNZ. And also their sponsorship at conference time and friendship – it is very much appreciated.

We also continue networking with the wider entertainment industry which is great for MTNZ’s profile. This year I went to the APRA Silver Scrolls in Christchurch, where I met Kristin Bowman from PPNZ. Meeting Kristin at the Silver Scrolls enabled us to develop a relationship with PPNZ and gain a better understanding of how PPNZ work in the industry, this has helped a number of our members who own their own premises understand the difference between APRA and PPNZ. Kristin came to our Executive meeting in Auckland in October and also gave Dale Henderson, the President of EVANZ, an opportunity to meet her and discuss their issues as well. I am also meeting with Kristin and other EINZ members at the end of February in Wellington to hear about more developments with PPNZ.

I also met Richard Thorn who is involved with WUNZ at the Silver Scrolls. Through our MTNZ societies and education members, Richard obtained “grass roots” information for the submission WUNZ were making to the Government.

But alas, it’s all just not music awards 😊

I also attended the Charities Commission AGM which was very informative and once again, gave me the opportunity to gather important information for our society members and give you feedback. Attending the Charities AGM has also enabled us to engage Craig Fisher from Hayes Knight as a guest speaker for the 2010 AGM – well worth attending just to hear him speak about funding applications. I also met with the EINZ team in Wellington and attended the ETNZ conference in Auckland with John Antony (some seminars at our 50th anniversary conference and other industry contacts came out of our attendance at the ETNZ conference).

There has been a need identified by the South Island societies in particular about a lack of directors as the “grass roots” level. Ian and I had two very successful meetings with CNZ this year and the outcome of those meetings is, I am currently working with Creative NZ to gain some funding for a director’s school. We will keep you updated with progress and it is just fantastic to be back in discussion with CNZ once again.

Thank you to Hilary Finnie and her team in Queenstown for hosting conference this year and thank you to all our wonderful seminar presenters and forum panellists for giving up their time and supporting the conference – it is really appreciated. Remember this is the members' conference, not the Executive and we can only be guided by your feedback to make the changes you would like.

A huge thank you to our corporate members who are always willing to give advice and assistance when I need it on matters, especially ones relating to the technical and health and safety side of our industry. Our corporate members are also very supportive with sponsorship at conference time from pre dinner drinks to lighting and sound design and supply; so please return the support when you need to buy or hire lighting and sound gear, if you need a tutor for a workshop etc. A special thank you to John Herber and New Zealand Fire Shield who continue as our major sponsors – your support and friendship is greatly valued and most appreciated.

A big thank you to Lyn, Andrew, Michael and all the Zone One societies for all the work going on behind the scenes – it's going to be a great conference. I would like to thank Glen Ruske from BOUNCE NZ and Chris McKenzie from Kenderdine as well for their major sponsorship at conference of the sound and lighting design and supply. And thank you to all the MTNZ members contributing with either sponsorship or time – it is greatly appreciated. So please come along and celebrate and be part of the occasion and gain some valuable knowledge at the same time.

I would also like to extend a big thank you to the Societies who have asked me to their productions. Unfortunately the out of town ones are sometimes hard to get too, but I managed to see some wonderful productions around the country this year from Miss Saigon (all the productions – fantastic) to Thoroughly Modern Millie in Ashburton, Cats at the Civic, a number of well known Kiwi musical theatre performers in Billy Elliott in Melbourne and Starlight Express, Toi Cabaret in Wellington, to name a few.

Our Executive meetings in 2009 were held in Napier in July and Auckland in October. Many thanks to Napier Operatic Society for hosting us to Miss Saigon.

I would like to thank the Executive team – Ian, Ngaire, John, Lesley, Allan, Delwyn, Helen and Ross for all their support, friendship and work over the past year. And Kevin Murphy our Business Advisor, Markham Lee our Hon Solicitor, and Auditor Len Speir for their assistance and advice. Also Dame Donna Philpott who is the MTNZ Patron and still contributes to the MTNZ Executive and our other Life Members, especially Ray Spence and John MacGibbon, for their assistance and advice when we have needed it.

All the very best for 2010 and see you in Auckland in March to celebrate our very special milestone 50 years of Musical Theatre NZ.

Kate Ghent
Administrator