



## **Editorial**

Wahoo!!! Happy Easter, 2016. We hope you have had an Easter weekend full of love, sunshine, fluffy bunnies and lots of chocolate!

Our prediction of 2016 being a very, very busy year is coming to fruition. We have just finished a successful season of "Sweeney Todd, The Demon Barber of Fleet Street", we are full on into rehearsals for "HAIR" and auditions have just been held for "CATS". In addition, our end of year production has been confirmed as "DUSTY". So if you think you're a lot busier this year than you have been in other years ... it's probably right!!! We know we are!

Have you been to the new Costume Hire facility in the auditorium part of the Abbey complex as yet? As advised in the last newsletter, you should check it out. The team that facilitated the change/move did a FANTASTIC job with limited resources and the Costume Hire facility looks amazing.

The Abbey Office is now located at the front of the Abbey complex, right beside the Costume Hire. The office is open from 12.00 – 4.00 p.m., Monday to Friday, and you are still able to book tickets for our shows at The Auditorium there (if you don't want to book on line). Alternatively, you can ring the Abbey Booking Office on (06) 355 0499 to book tickets.

We finally think we have had enough security put onto our website – [www.abbeymusicaltheatre.co.nz](http://www.abbeymusicaltheatre.co.nz) – to stop those pesky hackers. So if you haven't already checked it out, have a tour around the AMT website ... you may find it interesting.



## Thank You – “Sweeney Todd”



What a fantastic show “Sweeney Todd” was!!! Sondheim has quite a unique style when it comes to writing shows but the company of this production carried it off with aplomb. They mastered the tricky rhythms and intricate styles of Mr Stephen Sondheim to critical acclaim. One audience member was even heard to say, “Even though I don’t like this particular show, I really quite enjoyed it.” As one reviewer stated, there were times when cast and audience alike were mesmerised as the story unfolded. Congratulations to all those involved with this production – you should be immensely proud of your achievements.



## AMT Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Abbey Musical Theatre will be held on Tuesday, **26 April 2016** at The Auditorium. Information regarding the AGM and positions available on the Board will be sent to members prior to this date.



## AMT Membership

It’s that time again – your current membership expired on 31 January 2016. We have kept the fees at a very low \$30.00 per annum for adults – where else can you get the fun and enjoyment of participating in live theatre at this price? Please forward your payment to the Abbey Office, noting it is for ‘Membership’. If you wish to make payment direct to the Abbey’s bank account, the account number is **06-0729-0024947-00**. Don’t forget to put your name in the ‘Reference’ field.

Please note that if you don’t renew your membership, this will be the last newsletter you receive until you do so.



## Working Bee

We are having one final Working Bee at the Abbey complex. This will be to clean out all the rubbish that has been left from our shift and a general tidy of the complex for the new owners. The new owners have been amazing with letting us ‘linger’ in their premises for this length of time – but it is now time for us to fully vacate what is no longer ours. In order for us to do this, we need you!!! Many hands make light work and if there is a good turnout at the working bee, it shouldn’t take too long. We hope also to be able to start a tidy up of our current ‘lock up’ facility and the more people who can help, the shorter time it will take us all. If you have a trailer we could use, it would be appreciated if you could bring this with you.

**Saturday, 2 April 2016 – at 9.00 a.m.**

(Abbey Complex, Church Street, Palmerston North)





**Director** – Damian Thorne  
**Musical Director** – Roger Buchanan  
**Choreographer** – Nicola Morrison

“HAIR” is a rock musical – a product of the hippie counterculture and sexual revolution of the 1960s. Several of its songs became anthems of the anti-Vietnam War peace movement. The musical's profanity, its depiction of the use of drugs, its treatment of sexuality and its irreverence for the American flag caused much comment and controversy. The musical broke new ground in musical theatre by defining the genre of "rock musical". “HAIR” tells the story of the "tribe", a group of politically active hippies of the "Age of Aquarius" living a bohemian life in New York City and fighting against conscription into the Vietnam War. Claude, his good friend Berger, their roommate Sheila and their friends struggle to balance their young lives, loves and the sexual revolution with their rebellion against the war and their conservative parents and society. Ultimately, Claude must decide whether to resist the draft as his friends have done, or to succumb to the pressures of his parents (and conservative America) to serve in Vietnam, compromising his pacifistic principles and risking his life. *(Please note that in AMT's production of “HAIR”, there will not be a nude scene.)*

## **Cast List**

**SHEILA** – Ashleigh Blummont  
**JEANIE** – Kate Petherick  
**CHRISSEY** – Laura Signal  
**DIONNE** – Tia Rongokea  
**CLAUDE** – Tyrell Beck  
**BERGER** – Bex Palmer  
**HUD** – Nikora Lewis  
**WOOF** – Drew Pouniu

## **Ensemble**

Ashleigh Bond, Candace McGrath, Jess Linsley,  
 Leila Ennia, Paula Fredericks, Robyn Chamberlain,  
 Sarah Leishman, Nick Ross, Solomon Gray,  
 Jason Ngarimu

**DON'T DELAY – BOOK TODAY!!!**

Bookings available at;  
[www.abbeymusicaltheatre.co.nz](http://www.abbeymusicaltheatre.co.nz) or  
 Telephone: (06) 355 0499 or  
 Abbey Office, 397 Church Street, Palmerston North



## **Wanted ...**

We are wanting people to help out with this production backstage or front of house. If you are interested in helping, please contact Linda Warren on 021 216 5170.



## **MTNZ National Conference & Volunteer Training Weekend 2016**

This was held last weekend in Rotorua and was attended by a massive 329 theatrical persons from around New Zealand and a good time was had by all. Ten AMT members attended and the highlight of the weekend was Barry Jones receiving a Merit Award for outstanding service to Musical Theatre. Barry's reaction to this award follows ...



*Barry Jones first became involved with New Plymouth Operatic Society in 1985, in his early 20's, when he played the piano for the Societies production of "Oklahoma", but his interest in theatre had been well ensconced several years before this when Barry would sneak into the back of NPOS rehearsals to watch, under the pretense of picking up his sister Alison, who was a regular dancer in NPOS productions. Since then Barry has amassed over 70 productions as Musical Director and countless more as rehearsal/production pianist.*

*From 1985 through to 1997 Barry was involved as Musical Director or pianist for every one of the 26 productions staged by New Plymouth Operatic in that time, under the mentorship of NPOS Patron Shirley Murphy. In early 1998 a career change saw Barry move from New Plymouth to Palmerston North to study teaching. While based in Palmerston North, Barry has still maintained his close connections with New Plymouth, returning to support the major production each year, as well as returning to New Plymouth in 2004 and 2006 to musically direct productions of "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" staged at the TSB Bowl of Brooklands.*

*Since becoming a member of Abbey Musical Theatre in 1998, Barry has musically directed many more productions for them, including almost all of their major productions staged at the Regent Theatre. This includes such blockbuster shows as "The Phantom of the Opera", "MAMMA MIA!", "CATS", "Miss Saigon" and "Les Misérables".*

*Barry's love of theatre continues today through both his continuing involvement with Abbey Musical Theatre and his 'day job' at Palmerston North Intermediate Normal School (PNINS). Barry is the music specialist at PNINS who have been an education member of MTNZ for quite some time. Barry's "dream job" sees him developing the next generation of local talent, including staging school productions from the 'Junior' catalogue with his students every second year, with great success. Under Barry's guidance, PNINS produced the first school's version of "CATS" in New Zealand.*

*After more than 30 years of dedicated commitment to the theatre, it is an honour for New Plymouth Operatic and Abbey Musical Theatre to jointly nominate Barry Jones for an MTNZ Merit Award.*

It was fitting that a close friend of Barry's and AMT's, Grant Meese, also received a Merit Award at the Conference. Congratulations are extended to both Barry and Grant.



# **MTNZ National Conference & Volunteer Training Weekend 2016: Election of Officers**

The MTNZ Officers for the 2016/17 year are as follows;

<b>President</b>	Lesley Carthew	<b>Vice President</b>	Daniel Pepperell
<b>General Manager</b>	Kate Ghent	<b>MTNZ Zone 3 Representative</b>	Sharron Pardoe

Both Kate and Sharron were happy to congratulate Barry on receiving his Merit Award.



## **2015 Globe Theatre Awards**

The annual Globe Theatre Awards were held on Friday, 26 February 2016, at the Globe Theatre and the following awards were presented.

### **Choreography**

Ian Harman for "British Invasion"

### **Female Supporting Actors**

Amy Hunt as *Tanya* in "MAMMA MIA!"

Katte Johnston as *Rosie* in "MAMMA MIA!"

### **Male Actor**

Bradford Meurk as *Che* in "EVITA"

### **Female Actor**

Val Andrew as *Donna Sheridan* in "MAMMA MIA!"

### **Musical Director**

Barry Jones for "MAMMA MIA!"

### **Wild Card Awards**

- **Outstanding Cameo Appearance**  
Madison Horman as *Mistress* in "EVITA"
- **Outstanding Cameo Appearance**  
Maria Merrick as *The Queen* in "British Invasion"
- **Magic Moments**  
The opening and closing scenes of "British Invasion"







“CATS” which will be staged in the Regent on Broadway, Palmerston North, from 12-27 August 2016.

**CO-DIRECTORS** – Barry Jones & Gillian Collett

**MUSICAL DIRECTOR** – Barry Jones

**CHOREOGRAPHER** – Teesh Szabo

Based on TS Eliot’s Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats, the show is set amongst a larger-than-life set and is alive with our favourite feline characters, including Rum Tum Tugger, Mr Mistoffelees, Macavity, Jennyanydots, Old Deuteronomy, Grizabella and Skimbleshanks. The Jellicle Cats come out to play on one special night of the year – the night of the Jellicle Ball. One by one they tell their stories for the amusement of Old Deuteronomy, their wise and benevolent leader, who must choose one of the cats to ascend to The Heaviside Layer and be reborn into a whole new Jellicle life.

Auditions were held recently and the cast list follows;

<b>GRIZABELLA</b>	Jo Sale
<b>MUNKUSTRAP</b>	Michael Doody
<b>OLD DEUTERONOMY</b>	David Lea
<b>RUM TUM TUGGER</b>	Andrew Jamieson
<b>SKIMBLESHANKS</b>	Tyrell Beck
<b>BUSTOPHER JONES</b>	Richard Brown
<b>JENNYANYDOTS</b>	Tayla Clark
<b>MUNGOJERRIE</b>	Nikora Lewis
<b>RUMPELTEAZER</b>	Cara Hesselin
<b>MR MISTOFFOLEES</b>	Connor Allen
<b>GUS/GROWLTIGER</b>	Steve Jenkins
<b>JELLYLORUM/GRIDDLEBONE</b>	Val Andrew
<b>BOMBALURINA</b>	Ashleigh Blummont
<b>DEMETER</b>	Rebecca Palmer
<b>MACAVITY/ALONSO</b>	Geordie Rogers
<b>VICTORIA</b>	Hannah McDowall
<b>JEMIMA</b>	Emma Carey
<b>CASSANDRA</b>	Paula Fredericks
<b>POUNCIVAL</b>	Ruby Jamieson
<b>TANTOMILE</b>	Marian Sun
<b>SILLABUB</b>	Alex Hughes
<b>NOUSHA</b>	Hannah Mills
<b>ETCETERA</b>	Tegan Hardy
<b>ELECTRA</b>	Madeline Bennett
<b>CORICOPAT</b>	Adam Shaw
<b>TUMBLEBRUTUS</b>	Tobyn Gregory
<b>ADMETUS</b>	Solomon Gray
<b>RUMPUS CAT/ALONSO</b>	Jason Harkett

Tickets for “CATS” will be on sale at the Regent on Broadway and TicketDirect from 9 April 2016.



## On stage at The Auditorium




BOOK AND LYRICS BY GEROME RAGNI & JAMES RADO  
MUSIC BY GALT MacDERMOT  
PRODUCED FOR THE BROADWAY STAGE BY MICHAEL BUTLER  
ORIGINALLY PRODUCED BY THE NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL THEATRE

# HAIR

THE AUDITORIUM, CENTENNIAL DRIVE, MAY 19-JUNE 4, 2016  
**BOOK ONLINE TODAY!** [www.abbeymusicaltheatre.co.nz](http://www.abbeymusicaltheatre.co.nz)

"Hair" is presented by permission of ORIGIN™ Theatrical. On behalf of Tamo-Witmark Music Library, Inc.



Abbey  
MUSICAL THEATRE

## On stage at The Regent on Broadway 12 – 27 August 2016



## On stage at The Auditorium 24 November – 10 December 2016

