

# TTT President's Report - 2021

Our 2020 AGM was held on Feb 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Even though we were a year into the pandemic and without a formal place to start rehearsing and performing, our plans were still optimistic.

After many years of campaigning, feasibility studies, representation on Committees and forward planning, the handover of keys to the MAC finally happened on 1st March. Our arrangement with the MAC is to be the Management group for Shoestring Gallery, attracting users to the Shoestring, encouraging artists and promoting performance art in Torquay and surrounds.

The Surf Coast Shire is seeking funding (1.4 million dollars) from a State Government department to upgrade the basketball court area, so that it is a workable theatre and gallery space until a new Arts Centre is built, possibly about 2030. This will mean a great deal of disruption to our potential operations in 2022 and into 2023 according to the architect's plan. Council plans to construct a new library, Information Centre and Surf Museum between 2024 and 2026. TTT's performances as well as its plans to attract new users will be challenged by the ongoing building works.

Zina and George Carman did a terrific job organising the MAC Open Day on Mar 27 with a lot of help and input from the Committee, supporters and the arts community. There were more than 700 people who came through the doors to see the basketball court, smell the old creche room and look at plans and designs for the MAC theatre-gallery. The visitors loved seeing the performances, classes, exhibitions and artwork.

In April 2021 TTT ran a working bee to create a theatre space - it involved a lot of cleaning out, cleaning up, superficial maintenance and repair work. In order to create a separate space around the stage area, we had designed and ordered 16 new portable and height-adjustable curtaining screens through the industrious gentlemen in the Torquay Men's Shed. It was a good arrangement and the curtains were installed in time for the Bench Plays.

The Bench Plays were 3 one-act plays in April 2021 which included several new actors (Ben, Lauren, Gregorio) some regulars (Carleen, Kevin, Ethan) and some returns (Frankie, Anita, Robert and Sindi). Each play was based around a park bench but they were a wonderfully different and eclectic collection.

In June we ran a very popular Backstage Information Day with a dozen presenters giving short talks about sound, lighting, producing, stage management and front of house to about 30 people during the day.

Because of lockdowns, we had 3 attempts to stage the one-act play season (Introverts Outing and The Knock on the Door) at various times between July and November. We managed to get one performance in before lockdown and a 4 further performances in mid-November. The plays were again very different and attracted 7 actors new to TTT (Annie, Rosey, Mia, Colleen, Jodie, Janelle and Charlotte), some of whom had not acted before, and a new Director (Katrina Eadie). As usual, we welcomed the opportunity to encourage new talent and support aspiring performers.

After the One Act Play Season, TTT had a massive working bee to clear the basketball space for floor-polishing and electrical installation works. A good response from our willing volunteers meant that the task was completed in a timely manner.

With funding from Regional Development Victoria and the Shire, a professional lighting grid and cabling has been installed over the stage area, two dimmer racks are now in the tech room, the curtain dividing Shoestring Playhouse and Hoop Gallery is due to be installed next

week and TTT has committed to buying an Elevated Work Platform, mainly because the Shire couldn't organise one by the time we needed to install our lights for The Kitchen Sink. Retractable, raked, collapsible seating is expected to arrive mid-year.

Once again, our performance plans for 2022 are very optimistic, especially given the continuing pandemic, but we are always keen to grow performance art in Torquay and offer newcomers new opportunities to get involved in creative arts. We have plans for our first year of three full-length plays and two one-acters. It will be a very busy year.

As we start a new year with a new plan, I would like to thank all the members of the Committee who have worked tirelessly under difficult conditions during 2021. I'd particularly like to thank the Committee Members who are standing down this year, and who have contributed in many ways to the smooth running of TTT. My thanks go to Ethan who has served on Committee for almost 2 years and Sindi, who came on to assist us last year. We will miss you both, but we won't be strangers and we will happily welcome you back on Committee at any time. As for Maryanne who has been a Committee member since day one, I will have more to say later.

We look forward to the work of the new Committee and the prospect of attracting new supporters, new and renewing paid Members, active directors, producers, state-managers, publicity officers, props managers, costume and hair crew, set designers and builders and audio and visual technicians in future.

Michael Baker  
February 2022