

Winter 2020

The Official CTC newsletter
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Last Headliner I began with a few words about the new decade and the bushfires. I never expected that this would be only the beginning of the wild ride that has been 2020. Castlemaine Theatre Company wishes all our community safety and good health in the coming months. We are opposed to racism in all its forms and stand by those in our community who have borne the brunt of this emotional and challenging time, those People of Colour and First Nations across the Globe.



Illustration: Kate Stones

CTC: COVID PROOF & BEYOND!

No! We have not been sitting on the couch watching Netflix, picking the fluff out of our belly buttons and watching the sourdough rise! Well, not much anyway. Mostly we have been planning and strategizing to bring you all kinds of innovative stuff, and rise, Phoenix-like, stronger in 2021, or even 2020! Yes! That's right. Firstly, here's an update on our show plans.

Sadly *Peter Panto* had to be postponed, as Covid struck just as we were about to start rehearsals, but the Panto will be back! Most likely in the second half of 2021, third time lucky! We were hoping to be able to go ahead with *Dancing at Lughnasa*, but then the second wave struck and we had to postpone that as well. We are still intending to bring you *Romeo and Juliet* in early 2021, but it will be a very Covid-safe version. Meanwhile what have we been doing? And what are we doing for the rest of the year??? Read on to find out...

OUR COVID PROOF ACTIVITIES: *SUPER DISCOUNT MEMBERSHIP PRICES!*

10

Can't believe your eyes? Yes it's true. We have slashed our membership price to a paltry **\$10!** Down from the usual \$25. We know everyone is doing it tough at the moment, so we want to make sure membership is accessible to everyone during Covid. We also want to encourage as many people as possible to join up and help keep the CTC afloat. Not only will you be getting an amazing deal on membership, but you will be helping to keep us alive too! All our income comes from ticket sales, as guess what? No ticket sales this year. Membership allows you to vote at our AGM, and you can also promote your theatre related activities to our mailing list and socials. If you're so inclined you can vote at our AGM.

We've been having fun recording audio clips of previous 'Blast from the Past' a series of audio excerpts from previous CTC shows, broadcast on 94.9MAINfm by Suzanne Donisthorpe on ArtSwank . We may show up on another show as well, so stay tuned. The first excerpt we made was from our 2018 production of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, featuring Clare Shamier, Gabe Lillington and Stephen Mitchell delivering his incredible 'all the world's a stage' speech. The production was directed by Rob Jorritsma. Our second offering is very different. Tim Ratcliffe has recorded

BROADCASTING ON MAINFM!



his 'Stan' speech from our 2013 production of *Aftershocks* by Paul Brown and the Newcastle Workers Committee, directed by Trisha O'Hara. In this moving and intimate recording Stan describes how he was rescued from the rubble, and the ongoing struggles he has with his mental and physical health in the aftermath of the disaster. Terrence Jaensch reviewed the production, and commented favourably on

Tim's performance: "...standouts are Tim Ratcliffe as Stan...Ratcliffe has a very natural, almost improvisational manner on stage, which is a perfect for the piece." 3's A Crowd member Lyn Grehg commented "I think *Aftershocks* is one of the best CTC production I have seen...". You can hear Tim on ArtSwank today! at 10.30am. If you miss it, don't worry, you can listen to in on our website on our 'screen and sound' page.



Tim Ratcliffe as 'Stan' during the 2013 CTC production of Aftershocks.

WORKSHOPS

We've been working on a workshop or two. I'm putting together a Production Management Workshop to share all the knowledge I've gained over the last ten years of producing for the CTC, plus other professional production work I've done. Resident Tech Guy, Seamus Curtain Magee is helping us design the workshop to be delivered covid safe online. It will be as entertaining as I can possibly make it! With costume changes! And a stock whip! Hopefully we will be able to stream the workshop on Mount Alexander Shire's new Get Lost website. The workshop will be ticketed at a super value price and we'll throw in a free membership! Amazing! The workshop will take place in November (we hope!).

Website upgrade and NEW PAGES!!!!

Our website has a snazzy new look and feel, thanks to the wonderful boys at Green Graphics. It's easier to navigate and find the information that you need in a super streamlined way. I've been cleaning out the cobwebs and I've made a special COVID SAFE page, AND a new page that will go way beyond this Covid era. It's called Screen and Sound, and I'm going to use it to gather all our audio and video files in one place. You will be able to listen to our 'Blast from the Past' excerpts, view some excerpts from Frankenstein's Children, watch our CTC Documentary 'It's not the destination, but the journey' and all the covid-safe media we are working on over the next few months.

Check it out: <https://www.castlemainetheatrecompany.com/>

Covid proof page: <https://www.castlemainetheatrecompany.com/ctc-covid-proof-and-beyond/>

Screen and Sound: <https://www.castlemainetheatrecompany.com/whats-on/screen-and-sound/>

NESTING!

WE ARE HOME!!! I'm still pinching myself on this one, but we have finally found ourselves a home after 10 years as a wandering troop of thespians, we are moving in to the old Castlemaine Secondary College Drama Studio at ETTY Street. We now have dedicated space to meet, rehearse, and store our gear. We'll be sharing the space with 3's A Crowd, so it will be great to have more opportunities to share resources and compare notes. This lease has been over four years in the making, and a big thank you goes out to The Castlemaine Hotrods and Mount Alexander Shire Council, for helping to open up this great space to the community. This will be a game changer for the CTC.



Round the table with the Castlemaine Hotrods. Mark Penzak, Larry O'Toole, Clare Shamier and Kate Stones discuss the historic signing of the lease. A win win for all. Not sure who the other guy is, or the dog. We love dogs!



Down to the serious business of signing!



Stephen Mitchell, Toby Heydon and Gabriel Lillington use the new studio to record an excerpt from As You Like It.



Seamus!!! I think we need a new printer!

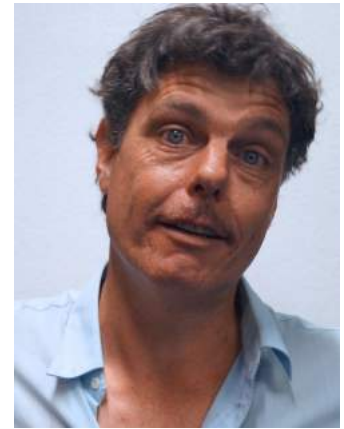
Meet a (Committee) Member!

TOBY HEYDON

How long have you lived in the Mount Alexander Shire area?

I was lucky to spend a good chunk of my childhood in the Castlemaine district. After matriculating from Castlemaine High School I moved away and only returned here to live in 2013. So I've been back for about seven years now.

Where are you from? Originally from Melbourne.



The gold wrestling outfit made for us by the brilliant Deb Hall, aka Miss Evie. Toby is with Simeon Roberts, Rob Jorritsma and Lindsay Matheson

How long have you been involved with the CTC?

I was involved with the CTC in the late 1980s as a high-school student, but it wasn't until the Company announced auditions for *As You Like It* in early 2018 that I leapt at the chance to reconnect. I was thrilled when director, Rob Jorritsma, contacted me to offer me acting and musical parts in that play, adding to my list of obscure Shakespeare characters I've played over the years. I was able to shock Rob in return when I came onstage for the premiere as Charles in a hitherto unseen (by him) skimpy gold Mexican wrestling costume.

Why did you decide to nominate for the Committee?

I've always been involved in one way or another with performing arts, whether on stage or screen. The wonderful community of volunteers and creatives around the CTC makes for a warm and collegiate environment and I thrive on team work and good vibes. So I wanted to be dealt in.

Have you always been interested in theatre? Or is it a new passion?

Yes, always. My siblings and I grew up with my Mum's ballet school and we were all regularly shoehorned into one role or another every year for the School's annual concert. Although in adulthood I've worked mostly as a writer, I have been most fortunate to work with many actors and performers and other creatives and this has kept me in touch with the stage and screen. My acting background has generally been in TV commercials – my Dial Before You Dig performance was really something! But however rewarding film and TV may be, there is nothing like the power and immediacy of the stage.

What other pass-times, vocations or passions do you have?

I'm a historian and a geographer, I love local history and place names and the weird stories behind them. I am also passionate about Shakespeare, currently working on a book on Shakespeare on the Victorian Goldfields. My guilty pleasure is test cricket – anywhere, any time – and I work assiduously to impart this passion on to my five-year-old daughter.

What special Toby things do you bring to the committee?

I'm good for a Bob Dylan quote or a Shakespeare analogy. Also I've got a ute.

'We love a ute here at the CTC Committee! Toby is also a talented sound technician, and has been taking the lead organising our audio recordings. Thanks Toby! We are so lucky to have you on the team!' xKate



AGM 2020 report

The 2020 Castlemaine Theatre Company AGM took place at 7pm on Thursday 12 March at Castlemaine Hospital Auditorium. Gayle McClure from the 3's A Crowd committee kindly acted as our Guest Chair. We were joined by Toby Heydon and Mark Penzak, who both put their hands up to join the committee. A big CTC welcome goes out to them. Delwyn Hopkins nominated for Secretary – a thousand thank yous Delwyn! The brilliant Elaine Matheson returned as Treasurer, Clare Shamier as Vice President, and Kate Stones is up for another year as President. It was lovely to be joined by CTC member and back stage gun Brody Clayton. We still have one spot available on the committee, if you'd like to nominate yourself send Delwyn an email at castlemainetheatreco@gmail.com

STAY TUNED!

We are still coming up with lots of schemes and ideas for future covid safe projects, including recording some full length audio plays, generating original material, collaborating with other artists, and designing more workshops. So look out for more news in our Spring Headliner.



New Committee Member Mark Penzak



New Secretary Delwyn Hopkins

**That's all for now...enjoy the rest of the Winter's snuggly pleasures. Stay safe, stay well, stay home. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram,
www.castlemainetheatrecompany.com**