

A Message From the Napier Operatic Society President



Hi All,
Well another month and half the year gone, so quickly. The rehearsals for both Dreamgirls and Mamma Mia are in full swing and both sounding and looking great. Dreamgirls tickets are selling fast now so get in and get yours before it opens in a couple of weeks. What a fantastic cast and under the direction of Sonya, James and Nathan the show has a great wow factor all round.

Wendy and her team have the cast of Mamma Mia rehearsing around at Port school till Dreamgirls finishes and they are doing workouts before they start rehearsing to get fit for the dancing. The singing is sounding great and I am looking forward to seeing the cast progression during the rehearsal period to final staging this fantastic fun musical.

Sadly we farewelled another great member of our society this month, Chris Green, and our thoughts are with Karen and the rest of Chris's family. I and a few others were privileged to spend some time earlier this year with him passing on to us some of his great set painting talent. Even though he was not feeling the best he managed to entertain us with his great sense of humour and wit while teaching us how to make sets look good, a special day I won't forget.

Don't forget the club night this month, Friday 13th monster quiz night.

Cheers,
Marc



DREAMGIRLS

The musical opened on December 20th, 1981 at the Imperial Theatre, and was nominated for 13 Tony Awards, including the Tony Award for Best Musical. The show won 6 of its nominations.

It was later adapted into a movie in 2006 starring Oscar Award winners Jennifer Hudson, Beyoncé, Jamie Foxx and Eddie Murphy.

Golden Globe Awards - Best Motion Picture
Academy Awards - Sound
Tony Awards - Best Musical, Best Choreography

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Eulogy of Chris Green



4th of January, 1953 - 25th of May, 2014

Life began for me on the 4th of January 1953. I was born at Lower Hutt Hospital at 5.20pm to parents Jim and Joyce Green. I had a very quick lesson into the harsh realities of life when the Maternity Nurse took me into my mothers room, lay me down on the bed and said "Quite frankly Mrs Green, that really is the most ugliest baby that I've seen..." Well she got that wrong!

From there it was off to the family home in Te Whiti Grove, Korokoro to join my two older siblings, Siobhan and Richard. But this was only the beginning as I was soon to be joined by Colin, Rory, Kerry, Keiron and Rian. With one sister and six brothers there was never a dull moment. On the whole, we all got on reasonably well, but when we didn't... she was all on. We were an intrepid bunch, we would try anything, succeed in most things and get the blame for everything!! It was very easy to solve incidents of petty crime or the occasional lapse of acceptable social behaviour back then, just blame the "Green boys". Mind you, they weren't always wrong. All in all, we were just normal country boys finding our way in life. Despite Dick accidentally shooting Colin in the bum, Rory accidentally stabbing me through the hand and Colin accidentally nicking the old man's truck and writing it off... we were just normal country boys! You have probably noticed that I don't appear on the family offenders list, well I guess I was just a quiet country boy... who never got caught!

Well she got that wrong! From there it was off to the family home in Te Whiti Grove, Korokoro, to join my two other older siblings. Siobhan and Richard. But this was only the beginning as I was soon to be joined by Colin, Rory, Kerry, Kieron and Rian. With one sister and six brothers there was never a dull moment. On the whole, we all got on reasonably well, but when we didn't... she was all on. We were an intrepid bunch, we would try anything, succeed in most things and get the blame for everything!! It was very easy to solve incidents of petty crime or the occasional lapse of acceptable social behaviour back then, just blame the "Green boys". Mind you, they weren't always wrong. All in all, we were just normal country boys finding our way in life. Despite Dick accidentally shooting Colin in the bum, Rory accidentally stabbing me through the hand and Colin accidentally nicking the old man's truck and writing it off... just normal country boys! You have probably noticed that I don't appear on the family offenders list, well I guess I was just a quiet country boy... who never got caught.

I began my schooling in 1958 at Petone Central School and continued there until transferring to Korokoro School where I was taught by some of the finest teachers I have known - Ben Findlay, George Nicholson, Miss McFarland and Joan McDougal.

Those early halcyon days on the "Hill" were incredible. We lived in the ultimate nature's playground. Tremendous memories spring to mind with the involvement of Cubs and Scouts, because we all loved the bush and we were taught to be confident in that environment from a very early age. One incident that comes to mind is when our mate Gordie Hirtzel had a bad fall up in the Mill Stream. He had injured his knee badly. We made a makeshift stretcher, trussed him up and carried him out. The real challenge was getting him up the cliff face to safety. We sent a scout on ahead to raise the alarm and started climbing. This we did without too much trouble and by the time we had reached the top, parents had gathered and all was good. Gordie was off to the hospital to get stitched up and we were home for tea! We were actually given some sort of commissioners award which was quite a big deal at the time.

From the "Hill" it was off to Hutt Intermediate which gave me two thoroughly enjoyable years. Then to Hutt Valley High which I didn't enjoy one bit and couldn't wait to leave the place, and give my backside a chance to return to its natural colour!

Leave I did and began working at a local shoe factory. I was 15 years of age. Not the flashiest job, but it was money in my pocket and away from school. It was at this shoe factory that I met a man who was to have a huge influence on my life. We were told one morning that some very important dignitaries were visiting the factory. Under no circumstances were we to approach or try to talk to them. I was shunted off to a remote corner of the factory and told to keep my head down and don't even fart without permission if I wanted to keep my job. I could see the main entrance from out of the corner of my eye. Through they came - a lot of very well dressed people in very clean white coats. They were being given the grand tour by the factory manager who seemed to be only showing them what only he wanted them to see. Suddenly one of the party, an enormous man, broke ranks. He climbed up and over the workbench barricades and headed towards me.

This huge hand extended towards me and in a voice so deep it could have come from middle earth he introduced himself and said "What's your name son and how old are you?". I had seen this man on TV - he was as close to a celebrity as we got in those days. He chatted to me for a while and asked me if this was what I wanted to be doing for the rest of my life. "No" I explained, "I want to be a commercial artist, but that means going to school and passing my Art Prelim". I hung off his every word. "What are you doing here then," he said. "You go back to school and pass your art prelim". He shook my hand and this giant among men quietly turned around and re-joined his tour party. His name was Norman Kirk and he emerged as one of our country's greatest and most respected leaders. His wise words changed the direction my life would take.

I did go back to school and gained my art prelim and then started working as a display artist in Wellington followed by a short stint in Australia, working in the Myers Department store in Adelaide. I gained considerable experience in the field of Commercial Art.

It was then back home to NZ where I was looking for something totally different - a job outside in the fresh air. I ended up working for my Dad. He needed a labourer to join his solid plastering team. Years went by and I learnt the trade. It was at this time that I met my first wife, Elizabeth Elliott. Her dad was a Anglican Vicar who had been assigned to St Andrews Church on the hill.

They were an amazing family, kind and caring, and we all got on well. Elizabeth and I were married in 1973. We had four amazing children, James, Scott, Leah and Gemma. It has been a joy to watch those kids grow into fine adults. As a hands on Dad you soon learnt that you had to wear many caps - rugby coach, camp father, art teacher, cricket coach, bicycle mechanic, personal taxi..... but above all you are Dad. There to prepare them for what lies ahead, to pick them up when they fall and to praise and encourage when they do well. I always tried to be a friend to my children, but I was always focused on being a parent first. To Liz, I thank you for being the Mum that you were and still are. We can be so proud of our children.

It was in the early 70's that my career path would take a dramatic turn. I had been a volunteer Firefighter with the Petone Fire Brigade along with Gordie, Doc and Jack Dempsey. We were all very young and enthusiastic, as we had been told that a one pump Fire Station was to be built at the Quarry in Korokoro. It never happened unfortunately. Gordie had finished his apprenticeship and had joined the permanent staff of the Lower Hutt Fire Brigade and suggested that I considered applying for a job. This sounded pretty good to me. The chance of regular money coming into the house, as compared to working for yourself where the income arrived in dribs and drabs. Well, Uncle John Osborne gave me a job and the rest, as they say, is history.

It was as a firefighter that I was to meet some of the finest men ever. I soon learned that I was now part of a very respected brotherhood, whose very foundation was based on loyalty, respect, trust and personal courage. Friendships were forged, many spanning a life time. I learnt so much in those early years. Guided by excellent officers such as Morrie Reynolds, Herbie Carberry and Tom Glegg who all took the time to teach and encourage, all of them leading by example.

In 1975 the family moved into our new home in Stokes Valley. Great days, but always broke as the interest rates on mortgages had sky-rocketed up to 18%. There was always a project on the go. Me and my good mate JR spent many hours working together on each others homes. We did everything from building, plastering and block laying - that's when we weren't out running policemen!!!

Running became our passion. Most of us were extremely fit in those days and would often be seen competing in local events around the Wellington area. We formed a marathon relay team and along with the outstanding support of the community we raised funds for the Te Omanga Hospice. This was a relationship that would span for many years.

There were highs and lows in the job. Every day was different, offering new challenges and putting you in situations that clearly you would rather not be in. Caltex Oil Refinery fire comes to mind. Quite a spectacular burn. JR and myself were working off a foam branch between two huge stacks of 44 gallon drums - these drums were full of break fluid. There was a tap on my shoulder from JR and he was pointing upwards toward the top of the stacks. Bloody Hell those drums were glowing red and ready to blow at any time! A cautious but hasty retreat was made - that was one of many situations that one could find himself in.

1983 saw the family sell up and move to Hawke's Bay. My friend Gus Duthie, assistant Fire Commander in Hastings, had offered me a job in the Hastings Brigade. This was something I had been waiting for for some years. What a fantastic brigade it was. A brand new station with equipment galore. I was welcomed like a long lost brother and I really focused on putting into that brigade as much as I could - as much as they had given me and my family. I retired in 1990 and it was such an honour to be made an Honorary Member of the Brigade. That my service is being held here today means the world to me.

This move to Hastings opened many doors for me - live theatre being one. This was to become a true passion that would see me devote over 30 years of my life to it and I loved every single one of those years. The amazing Playhouse Theatre was like a second home and a second family to me and functioned so well under the ever creative and artistic Peter Hill. I felt so humbled when our theatrical stalwart Lionel Priest nominated me for life membership of the society.

1994 saw Liz and I walk through different doors. We had achieved much in our early years - had four great kids and built 2 homes together, but it was time to move on. We have both found happiness with our new partners and have remained friendly.

In true theatrical fashion.....enter into my life the ever vivacious Karen Wright. I had known Karen through the theatrical arena for some years. I used to refer to her as "the voice" as she sang beautifully.

Karen had recently returned from Britain having spent 5 years working over there. We soon found that we had a lot in common, with our mutual love of music and theatre. If there was ever a prize for finding the most lovable, perfect woman.....I had just won it. Karen and I married in 1997, a special year as it marked the beginning of an 20 year love story that has never waned, only strengthened as each day passed. We seldom had a cross word toward each other - we enjoyed each others company immensely and endlessly talked and laughed with each other. We have done so much together, travelled and grown together. What a lucky man I've been to have Karen in my life. The last few years have been a trying time for us both. I found not being able to work frustrating, and it meant Karen had to shoulder the financial responsibility of running our home. Never once did Karen complain, she just got on with things, as she does, always looking on the bright side of life, forever positive.

To my friends - I really don't know where to start. I have been so lucky to have been surrounded by true and loyal people. To have had friendships that have spanned some 55 years plus is something that I'm hugely proud of. To JR, a true brother, and all the lads of the New Zealand Fire Service, thank you for everything that you have done for me and my family.

To my wonderful theatre people, what an amazingly creative journey we have all had. The shows, the music and the sets all coming together as they do, to create the magic of theatre. It's been a blast - a thirty year blast. For you to honour me the way that you did with Life Membership and a New Zealand Merit Award. They were true highlights in my life - thank you.

To my children, James, Scott, Leah and Gemma. Thank you for allowing me to be your Dad. It's been so rewarding to see you all grow into fine adults, which isn't surprising as you were all great kids. To my son-in-law Glenn, a mighty man, a true friend - thanks for being there when the chips were down. Most importantly thank you for my wonderful grandchildren - they have been such a joy to me. Although I won't be there to see what your future holds, know that I walk the path with you and I will always be proud.

Finally to my Karen..... I say thank you so much for being such an amazing part of my life. Thank you for all the laughter and the fun. Thank you for allowing me to sample retirement, even if only briefly. Thank you for your love, strength and care, and most of all, the respect that you have shown me by taking the time to truly know me, and not wanting to change who I am. We were always meant to be together and I'm sad that we haven't been able to not grow old together.

- Chris Green

QUOTE

" Amid all the applause for a life well lived, the conductor has quietly placed his baton down upon a weary music stand. The last scene of my final act is now finished.....over. My manuscript has been put to one side making way for a wonderfully new and vibrant script, a wonderful new life to begin - as it should be. It is my time".

Oh what a great life I have had I love you all.



From the Archives



During the 60's the young members of the society ran many events to raise money for the society (wine and cheese nights, fashion parades, gambling nights, disco, etc.) to mention a few. When the society bought the 2nd shed in 1970, all the props, flats, costumes that were stored above the dressing rooms backstage were transferred to the new (old) shed. (Perhaps I should explain the Tabard was much smaller then. It is now about 2-3 metres wider and the old stage was about the size of the Rep stage. Behind the stage was a small kitchen, dressing rooms and toilets). This left the loft as such empty. What a wonderful space for a clubroom. The Social Club was born. Plans were drawn and a model made. The concept was of an old English Inn. All in a Camelot theme. A small dance floor and a great bar (of course). Tables and furnishings were made. Carpet was acquired from the Masonic Hotel (they just happened to be refurbishing). They had the basics. Time to party.

At this time you had to be a member of the society to be involved with a show but also had to become a member of the Social Club to enter the clubrooms. Any non club member who wanted to enter could only enter once at a small charge but if wanting to go again had to apply to become a member. In the "minutes" I read how 5 people had applied for membership and only 2 were deemed suitable!!!

Even though 6 o'clock closing had finished in 1967 there still weren't many hotels or bars opening that young girls/women could go to so the Social Club thrived. They had many events such as "Car Rallies" "Mystery Trips" as well as games nights etc. to raise money for improvements and such necessary things like bar stools. As John (Collier) had a portable record player (that had already seen many parties) this was used and members brought their own records. Slowly but surely they saved enough to put in windows (a must as everyone smoked and with the heat in the summer it was like a sauna). The next big project was to get a small kitchen upstairs, more tables and chairs, cassettes came in and a player was bought, speakers installed. All this time the Social Club was giving money to the main society to help with the upkeep and improvements to the hall.



I have included 2 photos Doug Ramsay forwarded to me. I first thought it was the opening as John was President and officially opened the clubrooms but on taking a better look the window is in and the door in that position was much later. Doug thought it may be 10yr. Celebration that could be right as we celebrated most things! If there is anyone out there who can date the photos that would be great or if you have any more photos of that first Camelot lounge that too would be great as very little exists.

- Sue Collier



SOCIAL CLUB

QUIZ NIGHT

FRIDAY THE 13TH

Come around to the Tabard Theatre for a horror themed quiz night! Round up your friends and form a team, testing your vast general knowledge and dabbling in the supernatural!

\$5 per person

Proceeds go towards party lights for the Camelot Lounge!

June, Friday the 13th, 7:30PM
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PUZZLE PAGE

Dreamgirls Word Search

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MOTOWN

BEYONCE

CURTIS

SOUL

QUINCY JONES

HITSVILLE

DIANAROSS

DREAM GIRLS

MARVIN GAYE

SURPREMES

FOXX

STEVIE WONDER

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HITOPS

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LIONEL

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LORRELL

COMMODORES

Sudoku

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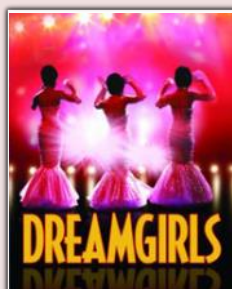
Theatre Sports Workshops / Competition

Hi all!

In July I'm interested in hosting some Theatre Sports workshops for the Theatre School on a weekly basis, with a competition on the 4th week. Aimed at high school students, it would be a good opportunity to refine your impromptu acting skills, with workshops focussing on establishing character, setting, and plot effectively within the restraints of a 3 - 4 minute scene.

Please email me at antdcollier@gmail.com if interested, and let me know of anyone who might want to potentially get involved! :)

Cheers,
Anthony Collier



Help Needed!

Props Manager wanted for:

Dream Girls!

Please contact Sonya Aifai if interested in any of these stage managing roles.

nossec@xtra.co.nz or 0273896903

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