



# Octagon Theatre

## NEWSLETTER October 2024

Hi everyone,

Wow... what a success **Little Women** was... extra nights... full houses.... Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who made it such a success. The long hours you all put in and the extra performances were certainly appreciated by your audiences.

No... it's not going to be a quiet, "catch your breath" time. The Octagon is going to be a very busy place over the next few weeks.

### **The Fringe Festival**

is in town and the Octagon is a venue for 23 artists, from 27<sup>th</sup> September to 12<sup>th</sup> October. We are but one of several exciting venues where theatre magic will occur... check it out at <https://whangareifringe.co.nz/>

### OUR NEXT ATTRACTION...

## Whangarei Starz!

As we announced in the last newsletter...more than 18 talented singers and dancers... a Kapa Haka group and lots more will be on our stage for this fun filled musical treat. Rehearsals have started and work is underway to make this one special for young and old.

Get organised... get out the glitter and the feather boas the hats and long dresses...be prepared for a great night of laughter and music. Dress up... yes there are prizes for the best dressed... the most glitter and so on. We have even got a sparkly Red Carpet!

**22 November to 7 December...**

### 2025 Season Plans

- ❖ **The Spider's Web (Agatha Christie)**
- ❖ **12 Angry Jurors**
- ❖ **Disenchanted**
- ❖ **Allo Allo... Chapter Two**

Watch the web site for audition notices and the call out for cast, crew and helpers. We need you!

Remember that we now do online booking only from the web site

<https://www.octagontheatre.nz>

### Booking Tickets Online

Remember... if you experience challenges, our treasurer Allison Healey is there to help

**021 463 733**

### Why can't I get a seat???

The demand for tickets for Little Women, resulted in two additional performances. Adding extra performances requires consultation with the cast and crew (most of whom have day jobs) our caterer and volunteers for the other roles.

Careful (time-consuming) monitoring of the pattern of sales is required as capacity reaches the critical point before adding extra performances is considered.

For a performance to go ahead, the minimum audience number is 15. Once this is passed, all is well. Below that number means a lot of work re-booking folks to make sure that each performance has a reasonable audience.

Our usual pattern is ten performances... eight evenings and two matinees... this means that a total of 500 seats are available unless additional performances are offered. To secure a booking... getting in as early as practical is the key to a great night out.

### The First Question

"Good evening (afternoon) welcome to The Octagon... what name are you booked under?"

"Um...."

Because we seat folks in groups, (the little white labels on your table) knowing who made the booking is helpful to our Front of House team so that they can seat you with your friends (or maybe someone new!).

### Did You know?

Yes, we have a Greenroom (but it's not green) so...

#### Why is it called a "Greenroom"?

The origin is rather mysterious, and there are many theories. One points to two historic London theatres—the Blackfriars Theatre and Cockpit-at-Court—that reportedly pioneered "green" rooms backstage.

The term itself may have evolved from "greengage," which was Cockney slang used to refer to the stage. A room off the stage, then, may have been called the "greengage room," which later became just "greenroom."

Another idea is that older theatres had rooms dedicated to protecting costumes where the walls were covered in red or green baize (a felted fabric used to cover gaming tables). This could explain why some early greenrooms were red.

Yet another guess suggests that the term comes from "scene room"—the space where actors could prepare before going onstage—which transformed over time to "greenroom." Other sources suggest that it was associated with makeup which in earlier times (1600s – 1700s) required a period of "curing" after it was applied. The makeup was said to be "green" until it was set enough for the actor to

go on stage, so they sat in a room close to the stage as the makeup set on their faces

Another speculation is that early theatres painted waiting rooms green to soothe actors' eyes away from the harsh stage lights.

Even deeper in history, performances of plays were often held "on the village green" by travelling players and in Greek and Roman times it is said that there was a quiet vine enclosed area near a stage for players to relax and prepare before appearing in their roles

The Octagon "green room" is a multi-functional room at the rear of the site where our casts get dressed... apply makeup... go over their lines and support each other.

It's a social space as well as a working / store space.

A cast and crew of a production are together for many weeks... from auditions... to weeks and weeks of rehearsal... to first night... to last night... it's a very important space.... (but it's not green).

### The President's Corner

As you can see... we are busy, busy at the Octagon with lots going on and lots about to happen.

In the last newsletter I thanked those volunteers who man the dining room, the kitchen, the bar, the front of house ... without these willing hands we would not be what we are.

Adding to this I am also thankful of the work that goes unseen by many. Committee members who make sure we are compliant with building standards; the accounts are paid. the licenses are current, that applications for grants are made, the rosters are filled, and especially those that go that extra mile to make sure our audiences are well cared for and safe.

So... again, thank you all.

Wendy Berridge  
President