



## Behind the Curtain

*Keeping the  
stage alive  
since 1955*

### President's Report

2025 has proven to be a busy and fulfilling year for the Club. We have welcomed new members to the club, new faces to the stage and have enjoyed and appreciated the work of old friends. The 70th anniversary gathering, in June, saw many past members and friends return to the Old Gazette Theatre. I really enjoyed hearing the tales of how the Club has grown over the 70 years and the community's experiences of different productions. There were many friends of the theatre in attendance but I could not help but take a moment to reflect and appreciate many of the people that were not able to attend, to reflect upon the enduring legacy that they have helped to shape. In September, it was a great joy to see the Director, cast and crew of Romeo and Juliet work together to bring one

of Shakespeare's most famous plays to our stage. The young people that led the cast as Romeo and Juliet gave a strong and moving performance and reinforced why Dorrigo is so fortunate to have the Dorrigo Dramatic Club and Old Gazette Theatre. A place where such talent can be shared with the community. A big thank you to the membership and community for the 70 years of support. I am so very grateful to all those that have contributed to the Dorrigo Dramatic Club through the years and I look forward to working with the committee and the members to get our next productions up in 2026.



*Jonathan Billing  
Club President*



## A Big Thank You

In March this year, Dorrigo, and all along the east coast, experienced a flooding event at a damaging scale. Unfortunately the Old Gazette Theatre flooded in the backstage area. We would like to acknowledge and say a big thank you to Dina and all the volunteers who gave their time to assess and clean the mess. A few items and carpet had to be thrown away but the Old Gazette theatre and Club made it through with the support and time of the quick acting members.

## South Facing Wall

After the flood event, Club member, Dene Cotter, assessed the wall facing the RSL Club. The assessment found many cracks between bricks where the mortar was missing and could be the cause of not only flooding but water damage to the bricks and internal wall paint. When the rain finally stopped, Dene and Ken Gardiner committed many hours to filling the gaps with a sealant and painted the wall to prevent further damage from occurring. Protecting our valuable asset and important community venue is an important part of the work that members do.

## Our Latest Project

A working group has been established to revise the Dorrigo Dramatic Club constitution. We observed that we currently work under the model constitution put out by the State Government. However there are many community groups like ours that have written their own constitution, that is purpose built rather than generic. We believed this could be a positive step for the Club and so have begun to build a constitution for the DDC. The working group has had two meetings to discuss changes, and the new constitution will be put forward to members at a Special General Meeting of the Association which will be announced in due course.

# 70th Anniversary Wrap Up



On Saturday 14th of June, the Dorrigo Dramatic Club proudly celebrated 70 years of community theatre, creativity, and connection. Members past and present gathered at the Old Gazette Theatre to reminisce, share stories, and honour the club's remarkable legacy. Guests included founding committee members Pat James and Nita McKnight, along with David and Bronwyn Wood and Di Judd, who travelled long distances to join the celebration.

Attendees enjoyed morning tea, browsed decades of production photos, and reflected on the club's early days - when a small group of teachers and community members performed melodramas and musicals in borrowed halls. Their dedication eventually led to purchasing and transforming the Old Gazette building into a beloved local theatre.

Over the years, DDC has presented an incredible variety of productions - from Shakespeare and musicals to farces, radio plays, and the ever-popular Young Drama and Kids on Stage programs. The club's longevity is a testament to the passion and creativity of its members and volunteers, past and present. Together, they've built more than a theatre; they've created a vibrant space where imagination thrives, stories are shared, and the community continues to shine.



**Pat James and Ruth Holmes**



**Michael Vlasto, Ken Hartley, Di Judd and Lynn Burke share memories**



**The 70th Birthday Cake made & iced by Dorrigo Bakery**



**Pat James & Nita McKnight - original members**



**Jonathan Billing - President**



**Julie Ward & Jacky Williams the Secretary, welcomed guests with a smile.**



**Members share food and stories**



**Past production posters**

# Romeo and Juliet Wrap Up



**The cast of Romeo and Juliet - Photography by Dorrigo Photographic Services**

After 22 years, Shakespeare returned to the stage at the Old Gazette Theatre as part of the Dorrigo Dramatic Club's 70th anniversary celebrations. To honour a period in the club's history when a Shakespeare play was performed annually, life member and director Michael Vlasto chose Romeo and Juliet - the first time this classic has been staged by the club.

Auditions were held in February, with rehearsals beginning in March. While cast changes occurred along the way, the core ensemble remained steadfast, bringing tenacity, resilience, and passion to the project. Under Michael's creative direction, the production wove key scenes from Romeo and Juliet together through storytelling, offering audiences a beautifully adapted version of Shakespeare's timeless tragedy. The show also celebrated emerging local talent, with three young performers delivering standout performances that brought fresh energy and insight to the stage.

The Dorrigo Dramatic Club extends heartfelt thanks to Michael for his dedication, to the cast and crew for their hard work, and to our wonderful volunteers for everything from crafting Juliet's balcony to baking for intermission. Special thanks also to the Dorrigo Bluegrass Festival for lending staging and to Dorrigo Photographic Services for capturing the magic. And finally, thank you to our dear community for getting behind this production, coming to performances and supporting us.

# What's On and What's Next at DDC

## Young Drama

Young Drama resumed in Term 3, with around 20 enthusiastic participants from Kindergarten to Year 6 meeting weekly to build confidence on stage and performance skills through fun drama games and activities. The students were eager to engage onstage and enjoyed every opportunity to perform and work together. This program continues in Term 4.

Introducing Dorrigo Dramatic Club's

## YOUNG DRAMA PROGRAM

Starting in Term 3, 2025 for primary school aged children, the DDC Young Drama Program will help your child develop skills for the stage through a variety of activities and games. Great for building confidence, developing team work skills and making friends and memories!



Register your interest by completing the form on <https://tinyurl.com/49skrmn8> or by scanning the QR code on this poster.



## Teen Drama

Teen Drama has launched in Term 4, offering students in Years 7-12 the chance to develop their acting skills, explore stagecraft, and work collaboratively in a creative and supportive space. They will be learning about styles of theatre and how we use theatre as a lens to better understand and explore the world we live in. If you are, or if you know a teen that would like to join - get in touch!

Introducing Dorrigo Dramatic Club's

## TEEN DRAMA PROGRAM

Starting in Term 4 2025 for high school aged students, the DDC Teen Drama Program will help your child develop skills for the stage through a variety of activities and games. Great for building confidence, developing team work skills and making friends and memories!



Register your interest by completing the form on <https://forms.gle/DNjso7cBdVTbzJy85> or by scanning the QR code on this poster.



# What's On and What's Next at DDC

## DDC fundraiser for air conditioning

Recognising our special 70th year anniversary and the need to upgrade the Old Gazette Theatre auditorium experience we are launching a fundraiser to purchase and install an air-conditioning system to keep us warm in winter and cool in summer!

We need to raise \$7,000 .....and what better way to do this in our 70th year!

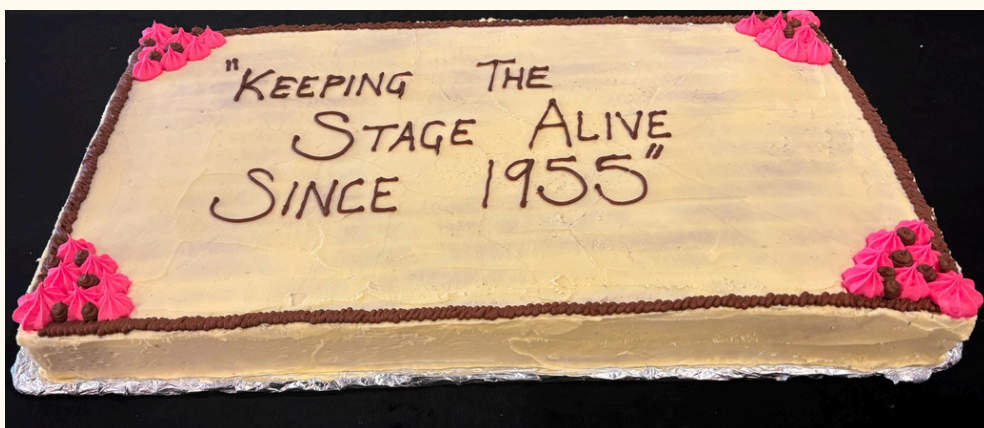
**If 70 people donate \$100 each we could have air-conditioning in the auditorium before Xmas!**

For contributions towards the air-conditioning of the theatre payments can be made by internet banking:

BSB 533-000  
Account number 32811041

(Please include your family surname followed by "70" in the reference line).

**Here's to celebrating our 70th year !**



# What's On and What's Next at DDC

## Upcoming Play Readings

For our adult members we will be holding a series of play readings to explore potential plays for our 2026 program.

The first will be a great comedy, **Dario Fo's 'Accidental Death of an Anarchist'** - held on the **2nd November, 1pm** at the theatre.

*Prepare for a wild ride of political farce and razor-sharp wit in Dario Fo's Accidental Death of an Anarchist. Inspired by true events in 1970s Italy, this darkly hilarious satire follows a quick-thinking, manic "Madman" who impersonates a judge to investigate the suspicious death of an anarchist in police custody. As the Madman unravels a web of lies, cover-ups, and bureaucratic absurdity, the truth becomes as elusive as sanity itself.*

*Fast-paced, thought-provoking, and wickedly funny, Fo's classic play skewers corruption and state power with biting humor and theatrical flair. Whether you're a fan of political comedy or just love a clever, chaotic whodunit, this reading promises laughter, outrage - and maybe even a little revolution.*

The second reading will be an epic theatre tale - **Bertolt Brecht's 'The Caucasian Chalk Circle'** on the **23rd November, 1pm** at the theatre.

*What makes someone the true parent of a child - blood or love? In Bertolt Brecht's The Caucasian Chalk Circle, a humble servant girl, Grusha, risks everything to protect an abandoned child during a time of war and chaos. Years later, she must face a dramatic trial to prove her right to raise the boy, leading to a gripping test of justice and humanity inspired by ancient legend. Told with Brecht's signature flair - songs, storytelling, and a play-within-a-play - this epic, moving, and often humorous tale explores themes of sacrifice, justice, and who truly deserves power and responsibility. Join us for a reading of this timeless parable that's as relevant and thought-provoking today as ever.*