

Te Aroha Dramatic Society

AWARD FOR BARBARA



Barbara Handford was completely surprised at the Te Aroha Dramatic Society's recent committee meeting when it was announced she had been made the recipient of a New Zealand Theatre Federation Meritorious Service Award. The awards are only made to members of New Zealand theatre groups who have at least 25 years of service and have been active either on stage, backstage, front of house or in administration.

Although husband Ron is president of the Te Aroha society, Barbara said she had no idea she had been nominated and was stunned when secretary Jocelyn Legg read out the citation. Since the 1970s she has been battling with a hearing impediment but has managed to continue her theatre activities with great success. "I had cochlear implants more recently and that took a bit of getting used to," she said. "When I was prompting I was having to learn everybody's lines and just hope I got it right."

Barbara seemed destined to be spending a great deal of her time on stage when it became apparent while she was still a schoolgirl in the UK that she had a beautiful singing voice with perfect pitch. "Often I was called out of class to show other pupils how to sing," she said

From such a start it seemed logical that she would be spending a great deal of her time singing to other people and between 1950 and 1964 she found herself giving concerts and recitals at a variety of venues with the highlight being a recital at the Royal Palace Pavilion in Brighton in 1959.

She joined the Henfield Operatic Society in Sussex in 1964 and had lead roles in four musicals as well as being soloist in a variety of concerts and oratorios

In 1969 she became a member of the East Grinstead Operatic Society taking the leading role in seven musical productions. She was given the opportunity to go to Glyndebourne to train as an opera singer but surprisingly turned it down.

In 1972 she and Ron came to New Zealand and, typically, provided some of the onboard entertainment during the voyage. In the following year she became a member of the Torbay Dramatic Society and during the next 28 years took lead roles in well over 50 plays and musicals not only at Torbay but also with the United Players at Orewa and the Peninsula Players. She served on committees of all those groups as well regularly performed duties as prompt, props, front of house or publicity. A highlight of the period was starring in 21 performances of Fiddler on the Roof at Orewa.

Between 1977 and 1979 she was a member of the New Zealand Theatre Federation Auckland area committee.

She joined the Te Aroha Dramatic Society in 2008 and has had roles in six plays, served on the committee and carries out prompt, props and front of house duties. In addition to being a committee member Barbara is also currently prompt for the society's latest production Cash on Delivery which opens on November 5.

CONGRATULATIONS BARBARA, WE ARE ALL SO VERY PROUD OF YOU !!



Come along to our latest production ...

CASH ON DELIVERY

*it is guaranteed to make you laugh
till you cry!!*

*Make sure you book early
as tickets are selling fast*

and you wouldn't want to miss out.

AUDITIONS:

The new year brings a complete change of pace with Ian Harrop directing the play QUARTET by Ron Harwood. Quartet had a sell-out season in London's West End in 1999. Set in a retirement home for Opera singers, three friends live their lives as best they can, when a newcomer comes along to rock the boat. The play ends with a musical twist that celebrates the triumph of life and art over old age and bitterness.

Doesn't that sound great!!! Want to be part of this production ???

Auditions for two men and two women, 60ish, will be held at the theatre at 2:00pm on Saturday 22nd of November.