

The Vic is anticipating a bumper summer with some big films scheduled for release in the following months.

We are looking forward to this boost as it has been a hard year for the Vic and the cinema business generally.

This was mainly due to the 2023 strike by Hollywood writers and actors which has had a long-term effect of subduing the supply of top-quality movies.

When combined with the recession and Covid effects it has meant the box office is 22 percent below 2019 figures this year.

So like businesses everywhere Vic is still rebuilding its audience numbers.

Philipp Jaser and his team at the Vic Ltd are in good heart and continue to work hard to bring in audiences. They have successfully run the Italian, Lithuanian and German film festivals, the Show Me Shorts festival and single events like The Big Bike Night. As well private hires and performing arts continue to create a buzz at the Vic.

Ice cream and confectionary sales are an important source of income especially the Yaza gelato which regularly draws queues of people on the footpath outside the Vic.

## **Finances**

The audited accounts to end Oct 2023 are available on the Charities Commission website. Operating revenue for the Oct 2023 year was \$97k plus another \$10k from grants. \$71k was spent on maintenance and minor enhancements (\$23k) and depreciation of existing assets (\$48k), and after other costs left a break-even operating position.

In addition we invested \$112k on the Foyer Extension and Refurbishment Project, including the new carpet, with a further cost of \$23k to complete the project in the 2024 year. There has also been additional capital expenditure of \$37k on projector and sound equipment in the 2023 year, with a further \$34k on additional equipment in the 2024 year.

Indicative numbers for the financial year just completed show operating revenue of \$81k, with the reduction from 2023 due to lower cinema attendances.

This capital expenditure on the Foyer project and projector and sound equipment has come both from generous grants received, particularly towards the Foyer project and carpet, but also the funds that we have built up generally, and specifically towards the Project. Currently this leaves us with funds of \$60k. These funds will allow us to continue the current and ongoing maintenance and enhancement expenditure of the theatre.

In the 14 years of operations since The Vic re-opening there has been \$1,200,000 in operational income and \$500,000 in grants. All has gone back into the building and business.

## **Grants**

Grant success has become more difficult because of a huge increase in competition. We applied for six grants over the last year and have been successful in only one so far – a \$3000 grant from the

Devonport/Takapuna Local Board. We are still awaiting the decision on funding for hard of hearing equipment for Cinema 1.

We cancelled this year's Play Reading series because our grant applications were unsuccessful.

### **Maintenance and Enhancement**

Much time and significant cost this and previous years has been spent fixing persistent leaks in the roof and guttering. These are approaching their physical end date and the lack of insulation and a moisture barrier is a detriment to our customer comfort who experience cold drafts and rain noise.

*Notwithstanding that it is of note that during the Auckland heavy rainstorm two years ago the Vic was the only one of the four north shore cinemas that continued operating without missing a beat. Our 95 year old brick lined stormwater soak pit at the north side of our building did not overflow. This building has good bones.*

We are in the process of preparing a major grant application to cover the cost of a new roof and guttering.

Another need is the replacement of our *blue* seats that are at the end of their working life. They have served us well over 14 years and were recycled from another theatre after 5 years of life there. Our immediate priorities are to improve seating in cinema 2 the Benwell and new and more spacious seats for the upper circle in cinema 3 the Albert upstairs.

In line with the historical significance of the theatre we now have on display an original 35mm film projector in cinema 3. We will also be installing an original film platter to show how film reels were handled.

### **Live Performance and Community**

Performing arts and community use is still averaging 15 percent of tickets sold.

The monthly Thursday Open Mic nights continue to very popular with emerging artists.

There have been 60 community and live events throughout this year including concerts by Dave Walker and Mel Parsons as well as the ever popular Hot and Flustered Rocky Horror Show.

The Vic continues to be a very popular venue for movie fund-raising nights by local community groups and schools as well as for private screenings and birthday parties.

For the 112<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Vic's 1912 opening we screened a free film for children and the young at heart – the classic film *The Wizard Of Oz* with Judy Garland – and this was booked out.

### **Future projects**

The trust held a community brainstorming event earlier this year involving staff, trustees and local community leaders. Following on from this we will be updating our governance manual and strategic plan and helping the Vic Ltd with a marketing initiative and survey.

We are increasingly aware of the interest in the Vic from visitors to Devonport and we have begun filming a short video about the Vic for screening to interested locals and tourists.

We envisage combining this with short tours of the Vic in the future.

Just this month pupils from Bayswater School asked for a tour of the Vic and a talk about the Art Deco transformation.

## **Trustees**

Trustee Hamish Grotrian resigned from the trust this year as he has moved north and we thank him for his work over many years.

We are delighted that Kelly Ann Maxwell has recently joined the trust. She has huge experience in commercial strategy and governance.

Mark Sigglekow and Margot McRae will continue as co chairs, David Harrop as treasurer, Libby Boyd as secretary, Irene Chapple on grants and marketing and Graham Chapman taking care of equipment and assets.

We thank all the people who have supported us this year, including the Devonport/Takapuna Local Board, the Devonport Flagstaff and the Arts Depot. We look forward to working with the Devonport Business Association next year. Most of all we want to thank our audiences!

It is a continuing pleasure for us to see this wonderful community asset surviving, thriving and contributing so much to Devonport life at this end of town and as a destination for both our young and creative audiences.

Margot McRae and Mark Sigglekow  
Co chairs  
Victoria Theatre Trust