



TWYFORD HALL INC  
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## **MEDIA RELEASE - TWYFORD PLANS FOR 2021**

As the new Theatre Twyford takes shape in Merimbula, managing organisation Twyford Hall Inc (THI) is making plans for the opening of the complex in 2021.

At its Annual General Meeting on 7 October 2020, Bill Deveril, Charles Cooper, John Beever, Lucas Scarpin, Frankie J Holden, Roslyn Thompson were returned to the committee for the coming year. Previous members Greg Whitby, Chris Ball and Bill deJong, who stood down this year, were thanked for their sterling service on the committee.

THI's knowledge base has been broadened and invigorated with the addition of three new committee members who bring to the table some of the skills and experience that will be needed to fulfil THI's vision for The Twyford - incorporating the new Theatre Twyford and existing Twyford Hall - as a vibrant and vital part of cultural and community life in Merimbula and the Bega Valley Shire.

Helen O'Neil has a wealth of experience in arts management and policy development, is currently Chair of NSW regional cultural development organisation South East Arts and Chair of Performing Arts Connections Australia (PACA). Helen was a senior adviser to the Australian Minister for the Arts, Executive Director of the Australian Major Performing Arts Group and the Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences and is now living in the Bega Valley.

Merimbula-born Christine Kaine is CEO of Business Angels Pty Ltd which matches angel investors to entrepreneurial businesses. She is a founding member of the UNstoppables - a movement dedicated to igniting entrepreneurial spirit - and set up funding matching service CrowdEntrepreneurs. She has been an adviser on Government policy and is an accomplished public speaker as well as a registered civil and marriage celebrant.

Prior to moving to the Bega Valley, Greg Brackenreg was a special counsel and partner with lawyers Meyer Vandenberg, specialising in commercial litigation, building and construction and administrative law. Formerly the independent Chair of the Master Builders Association Appeals and Disciplinary Board, a lecturer at ANU and the University of Canberra, and Vice President of the ACT Law Society, Greg was also Chair of Hartley Lifecare in Canberra.

At the subsequent Special General Meeting, members of THI voted unanimously in favour of applying to transfer the association to a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) in 2021. This will not affect any obligations or agreements currently held by THI, as it will effectively be the same legal entity. However, THI believes a CLG will be a more appropriate and effective body to manage the increased asset base and expanded operations with the addition of the new \$7.4 million theatre.

The Twyford Operations team met with Spectrum Theatre Group and the Merimbula Jazz Festival recently to review progress on the new Theatre and discuss when live performances can return to the venue.

Like many other artists and organisations, due to COVID-19, the Jazz Festival was unable to go ahead this year and Spectrum had to postpone their planned productions.

Twyford Ambassador Frankie J Holden said that COVID-19 restrictions were starting to ease for entertainment venues and it is hoped that The Twyford will once again be able to host live performances in 2021. "We have a COVID Safe plan in place for when we reopen the Hall and open the new theatre. When the number of people allowed into venues makes shows viable again, we'll do our utmost to make them a success."

Kevin Walsh and Paul Dion from the Jazz Festival were optimistic that their 2021 event would go ahead and delighted with the progress that the theatre building has made since construction began in February 2020. "We should have a better idea by the end of this year where we stand in terms of COVID. We want to hear live jazz again in Merimbula and, when complete, the new theatre will give us another option for staging special performances."

Sam Roberts, President of Spectrum Theatre Group said the group is looking forward to staging productions in the new theatre.

The walls and roof beams of the new theatre are now in place which will allow roofing to proceed in October. It is expected that the theatre building will be completed by April 2021 with theatre fitout and commissioning finalised by mid 2021.

The theatre's construction is being funded thanks to Twyford Hall Inc's fundraising efforts over many years, including a \$7.4 million grant from the NSW government's Regional Communities Development Fund.

Venue hire enquiries for the Hall or Theatre can be made on The Twyford's website at [thetwyford.com.au/venue-hire](http://thetwyford.com.au/venue-hire).

*Photos: see below for images and captions - full size photos attached to email.*

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Walls in place for the new theatre (left) and loading dock (right, behind hall)  
(Photo: Chris Ball)



Sneak peek into what will be the new theatre foyer on the first floor.  
(Photo: Chris Ball)



View from the future theatre stage towards the loading dock (left) and auditorium (right). Raked seating will be built in to the theatre.  
(Photo: The Twyford)



Future stage with rigging catwalk above.  
(Photo: The Twyford)



Future ground floor dressing room and bathroom.  
(Photo: The Twyford)

