

## **The Armidale Playhouse**

**In the 1960s the Department of Education decided it was going to build a new Drummond School. The then Armidale Theatre Club consequently arranged with the Department to secure an old classroom building and relocate it on a block of Crown land – the Theatre’s current site today.**

**'The successful purchase took place, building plans were approved in October 1967 and the building was gradually transformed from an old schoolroom into a theatre which was named ‘The Armidale Playhouse’ in 1968. The official opening on March 29, 1969, saw a gala performance of Sheridan's “The Rivals” directed by Gwen Foggon.**

**The addition of a dressing room, kitchen and improvements to front of house occurred in 1976. Meanwhile, the Armidale Theatre Club became incorporated in 1986 renaming itself The Armidale Playhouse.**

**The theatre continued to function until 2006 after which it was delicensed as an artistic venue due to building fire and safety issues.**

**In 2010 the Armidale District Music Society amalgamated with the Playhouse to form the Armidale Drama and Musical Society (ADMS). ADMS assumed responsibility for maintaining The Playhouse and initially, the building was used for meetings, workshops and rehearsals.**

**In 2014 the ADMS decided to undertake action to identify the building work needed to regain a performance license and create a modern and fully functioning small public theatre for Armidale. This action also instigated efforts to source funds to cover the costs of building work with this estimated at approximately \$500,000.**

**By 2017, ADMS had established subcommittees to support fund raising and building renovation planning. The APH executive were also active in the submission of grant applications (local, state, national) to seek funds to support this major work.**

**Two successful grant applications with Crown Reserves Improvement Fund and Building Better Communities in NSW, together with accumulated funds and fundraising returns allowed for Stage 1 work to be completed at the APH in 2018.**

**Two further grants in 2019 from Crown Reserves Improvement and NSW My Community Project plus sizeable donations from ADMS, Armidale Regional Performing Arts Centre Committee (ARPAC) and the New England Armidillos allowed Stages 2 and 3 to be completed in 2020.**

**Again active after 14 years in limbo The Armidale Playhouse looks forward to hosting high quality performance to Armidale audiences.**