



Family Circle July 2008

Farewell Campion

- The Laramie Project □ reviewed by Alastair Priestley
- Mates & Lovers -- reviewed by Bob Scott
- Coming events --- Retreat



On a rather cold Saturday there was one happy crowd to say goodbye to a beloved board member, and onetime firebrand preacher, Campion Read. There were memories to share of the time Campion has lifted up our life. Peter referred to his role on the board of □ keeping us on our toes □. Others recalled his talents as a singer, and his generous hospitality to see films and the Saving Jesus discussions. Campion recalled a service he enjoyed for Serge & Bacchus with 2 gorgeous saints on the altar. Thanks CR □ and every blessing for your work in Dunedin.

The Laramie Project □ reviewed by Alastair Priestley

'The Laramie Project' is a play about the abduction and murder of gay student Matthew Shepard in 1998, and its impact on the townspeople of Laramie, Wyoming. A group from ACC watched its final showing by the Ellerslie Theatrical Society on June 14th.



The play was written by Mois□s Kaufman, who with his colleagues, interviewed townsfolk after the murder, and during the trials the two killers. I was ignorant of these events at the time they occurred, so before I went to see it, I checked the internet!

Many of the townsfolk (other than the local Baptist pastor) have no problem with Matthew Shepherd, and are rightly disgusted by the murder. There is no love lost for Fred Phelps, whose bigoted protests are screened out by angels with suitably massive wings. Yet there is a tension in Laramie. Both Zubaida Ula, a Muslim, and out lesbian Catherine Connolly, point out that the town is typical of socially conservative America, where prejudices against minorities are common.

People who I spoke with were glad to have seen the play, despite some distressing moments during it. It was tough to pick a standout performance (over sixty parts were played by eight actors), but Michael Donovan's portrayal of Doc O□Conner was memorable for me:

□□*Laramie sparkles. With the low-lying clouds, it's the blue lights that bounce off the clouds. And it goes over the whole city. I mean, I mean, it blows you away. And Matt was right there in that spot. And I can just picture - in his eyes - what he was seeing. And the last thing that he saw on this Earth was the sparkling lights of Laramie, Wyoming.* □

I am not experienced with the attitudes and politics rural towns, so it was particularly insightful to me, to hear some of these perspectives (not always sympathetically). This also brought to mind the importance of talking with those with different beliefs from ourselves.

Thanks to Liz Nicholson for organising this memorable night out.

Alastair Priestley

Mates & Lovers -- reviewed by Bob Scott



Mates and Lovers□ is a history of Gay New Zealand, and is extremely readable. It□s not one of those heavy prose, dense paragraphs and huge footnotes kind of history. But, as suits the gay world, it□s bright, light and amusing while treating the struggles and victories leading through to Homosexual Law Reform comprehensively and seriously. Lots of photographs (some good-looking guys from □way back when□) and

many intriguing stories.

Chris Brickell (he is on the staff of Otago University and it□s his first book) has not mourned his way through the time of oppression early this century. Rather the text had me feeling proud to be an inheritor of such a tenacious history. Almost every page carries a photograph (you might even see your father or



your grandfather if you look carefully) and my partner Frantisek (who knows these things) tells me it is a beautifully designed book.

Published by Random House, it sells for \$49.99. Well worth it.

Bob Scott

Coming Events - Retreat

Retreat weekend 4th -6th October at Mana Retreat Centre, Coromandel.

Please make sure you have this date circled in your calendars. It promises to be a really fulfilling time. It is quite a long way out of Auckland so there would be many advantages □ not least traffic □ to taking Friday off work to arrive there in a leisurely fashion and enjoy a spring lunchtime in a caf□ □ why not the Copper Kettle in Ngatea?

Quite apart from the retreat programme being planned the facilities are enticing:

Our facilities include a sauna, bush bath, library, massage room, tennis & volleyball courts, bushwalks, labyrinth and a Sanctuary/Chapel at the foot of Mt Pukewhakaratarata, a 20 minute bush walk from the Centre.

<http://www.manaretreat.com/index.htm>

