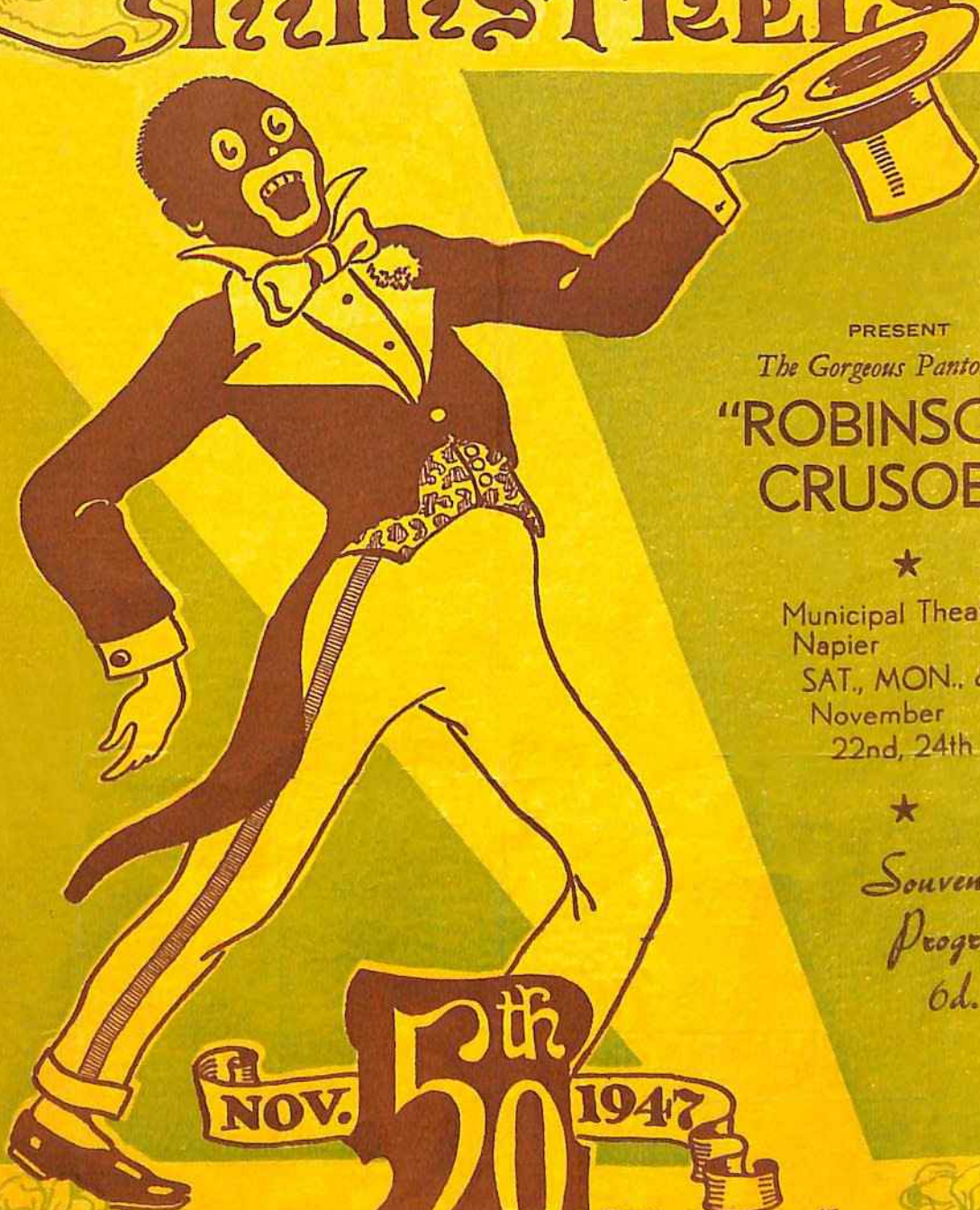


# NAPIER FRIVOLITY MINSTRELS



PRESENT

*The Gorgeous Pantomime*

**"ROBINSON  
CRUSOE."**



Municipal Theatre  
Napier  
SAT., MON., & TUES.  
November  
22nd, 24th & 25th



*Souvenir  
Programme  
6d.*

NOV. **50<sup>th</sup>** 1947

EDGAR MAYLETT - 47.

**ANNIVERSARY**

---

*Not Quite Fifty Years . . .*

*But*

"FOR TWENTY AND THIRTY AND FORTY YEARS"

*The name of* **BURT**

HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED IN NAPIER WITH  
ALL THAT IS BEST IN HIGH QUALITY FURNISHINGS AND FURNITURE.



*BURTS FURNISHERS LTD.*

HASTINGS STREET, — NAPIER.

BOX 45.

PHONE 2069.

---

---

Hardware

AT YOUR  
SERVICE.

FOR THE . . .

- \* FARM
- \* HOME
- \* SHOP
- OR
- \* FACTORY.

Specify Quality Hardware.

---

HENRY WILLIAMS and SONS Ltd.

HASTINGS STREET — — — — — NAPIER.

---

ORIGINAL FRIVS.



Back Row: Charlie Wilson, Jack Fraser, J. H. Edmundson, Billy Robinson, Jim Gillespie, W. A. Wilkie, Percy Spiller.  
Middle Row: Bert Wilkie, Wattie Allan, Ted Taylor, Peter Drummond, Harry Bull. Front Row: Jim Holmes, Lou Freedman.

*Travel*

TO —

**AUCKLAND**

**ROTORUA**

**TAUPO Etc.**

*By Service Car.*

DEPART NAPIER 8 A.M. — ARRIVE AUCKLAND 8.45 P.M.

OUR FLEET OF MODERN SERVICE COACHES ASSURES PASSENGERS OF A COMFORTABLE AND ENJOYABLE TRIP OVER ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING HIGHWAYS IN THE NORTH ISLAND.

**HAWKE'S BAY MOTOR COMPANY LTD.**

DICKENS STREET

NAPIER.

---

---

# The Frivolity Minstrels

PRESENT

The Gorgeous Pantomime

## ROBINSON CRUSOE

A SPARKLING MUSICAL PRESENTATION IN ONE ACT.

President: C. H. WILKIE.

House Manager: HECTOR CHAPMAN.

Stage Manager: L. HARDGRAVE.

Ballets and Dances arranged by CONSTANCE MACDONALD.

Musical Orchestration by CECILE BROMLEY HILL.

### An All-Star Cast of Popular Players.

Bones:

PERCY SPILLER  
CON RANALD

Interlocutor:

BILL QUARRIE

Tambos:

RUSSELL SPENCER  
IVENA POTHAN

STELLA CHAMBERS, JOYCE PLAYER, VALERIE PRESLING, MARCIA NICOL, DORIS MCKENZIE, EVELYN MCKENZIE, MARY HARRIS, NGAIRE ARTHUR, MERRIE BOWLAND, JUNE POTHAN, NOLA SKITTRUP, GRETA START.

WALLY IRELAND, BEN FULLER, ROY GIRLING, CECIL NEAL, ROBERT WRIGHT, JACK MCGHEE, RONALD SANG, KEITH GRAHAM, KEN TREVOR.

### Frivs Grand Orchestra.

Piano: CECILE BROMLEY HILL (Musical Directress).

Violins: W. P. MITCHELL, E. COLLIER, G. STUART. Flute: ALAN CLARKE. Saxophone: CEDRIC WHITE. Clarinet: H. BARLOW. Bass: J. MADIGAN. Cornet: BERT BOSTON. Trombone: P. J. S. GEORGE. Drums and Effects: VIC VIGGERS.

This well-known orchestra, ably directed by Cecile Bromley Hill, is an ensemble of popular musicians whose perfect orchestral arrangement, mastery in technique and an individuality of style, are among the features that have contributed to their many triumphs.

Now in its 50th Consecutive Season, the Frivolity Minstrels are constantly being improved and enlarged by the addition of new features that it may continue its unique position as the foremost organisation of its kind.

---

---



Back Row: Bert Wilkie, Roy Girding, Ken Trevor, Keith Graham, Ronald Sang, Cecil Neal, Russell Spencer, Tom Skittrup.  
 Second Row: Lou Hardgrave, Doris McKenzie, Merrie Bowland, Ben Fuller, Robert Wright, Wally Ireland, Jack McGhee,  
 Evelyn McKenzie, Nola Skittrup, George Stuart, John Macgivan, Ted Sollier, Harry Barlow, Percy George.  
 Third Row: Percy Spiller, Constance Macdonald, Valerie Presling, Bill Quarrie, Ngaire Arthur, Ivena Pothan, Vernon McCutcheon,  
 William Mitchell, Bert Boston, Cecile Bromley Hill.  
 Front Row: June Berry, Joyce Player, Pat Portas, Stella Chambers, Greta Start, Marcia Nicol, June Pothan, Mary Harris, Vic Viggers.

**AS OLD AS THE FRIVS!**

*McGlashans Ltd.*

. . LIKE THE FRIVS, HAVE SERVED THE PUBLIC WITH SUCCESS  
 FOR 50 YEARS AS . .

Auctioneers, Ins., & Land Agents, Valuers  
*and*  
 Fruit & Produce Brokers

**McGLASHANS LTD.**

TENNYSON STREET

NAPIER.

---

---

## PART ONE.

---

EPISODE 1—OVERTURE: "A FRANGESA"	- - - - -	The Friv. Orchestra
EPISODE 2—OPENING CHORUS: "I WANT TO SING"	- - - - -	The Company
EPISODE 3—MILITARY: "ARE YOU DREAMING, TOMMY ATKINS"	- - - - -	Ngairé Arthur
EPISODE 4—BALLAD: "LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY"	- - - - -	Evelyn McKenzie
EPISODE 5—SAUSAGE SONG: "TURN ME OVER"	- - - - -	Nola Skittrup
EPISODE 6—SEXTETTE: "GIMME CRACK CORN"	- - - - -	The Glamour Girls
EPISODE 7—BALLAD: "THE SWEETEST SONG IN THE WORLD"	- - - - -	Doris McKenzie
EPISODE 8—PIANO ACCORDIONS: "SCOTCH MEDLEY"	- - - Cecil Neal, Ben Fuller, Jack McGhee, Ron Sang, Ken Trevor	
EPISODE 9—BALLAD: "APRIL SHOWERS"	- - - - -	Stella Chambers
EPISODE 10—COMIC SONG: "I WAS MUCH BETTER OFF IN THE ARMY"	- - - - -	Robert Wright
EPISODE 11—AMERICAN SUCCESS: "MISSOURI"	- - - - -	Roy Girling
EPISODE 12—TAP SOLO: "SWANEE"	- - - - -	Keith Graham
EPISODE 13—SPIRITUAL: "I AINT A GONNA GRIEVE"	- - Doris McKenzie and her	Melody Maids
EPISODE 14—WESTERN: "THE SINGING HILLS"	- - - - -	Bill Quarrie
EPISODE 15—COON SONG: "ARE YOU FROM DIXIE?"	- - - - -	Ivena Pothan
EPISODE 16—DAME'S COMIC SONG: "BIG HEARTED LILY"	- - - - -	Wally Ireland
EPISODE 17—FINALE:	- - - - -	The Company

---

---

---

---

PART 2

*The Frivolity Minstrels*

TAKE PRIDE IN PRESENTING THE GORGEOUS PANTOMIME

“Robinson Crusoe”

A Revised and Up-to-Date Adaptation. — A Sparkling Musical Presentation in One Act.

Cast of CHARACTERS.

(In order of their first appearance).

The Producer	- -	Robert Wright	Mrs Crusoe	- -	Wally Ireland
Ballet Mistress	- -	Joyce Player	Polly	- -	Ivena Pothan
Robinson Crusoe	- -	Doris McKenzie	Will Atkins	- -	Bill Quarrie
Man Friday	- -	Roy Girling			

LADIES OF THE ZENITH FILM COMPANY:

Stella Chambers, Valerie Presling, Marcia Nicol, Nola Skittrup, Ngaire Arthur, Merrie Bowland,  
June Pothan, Greta Start, Evelyn McKenzie, Mary Harris.

MEN:

Cecil Neal, Ben Fuller, Jack McGhee, Ron Sang, Ken Trevor, Keith Graham, Russell Spencer.

---

EPISODE 1—OVERTURE: “COTTON BLOSSOMS” - - - - The Friv. Orchestra  
EPISODE 2—ENSEMBLE: “JOLLY GOOD COMPANY” - - - - The Zenith Film Company  
EPISODE 3—SOLO: “I WANT YOU TO KNOW” - - - - Crusoe  
EPISODE 4—PIANO ACCORDIONS: “AMERICAN MEDLEY”  
Ken Trevor Cecil Neal, Ben Fuller, Jack McGhee, Ron Sang,  
EPISODE 5—DUET:  
“MOONLIGHT ON THE COLORADO” - - - - Evelyn McKenzie and Mary Harris  
EPISODE 6—COMIC SONG: “I GOT ABOARD A GREAT BIG BOAT” - - - - Mrs Crusoe  
EPISODE 7—TAP DANCE: - - - - Keith Graham  
EPISODE 8—TRIO: “THAT’S MADE WE THREE HAPPY” - - - - Crusoe, Polly, Mrs Crusoe  
EPISODE 9—DANCE SCENA:  
“MARY” - - - - The Zenith Film Company  
“TWO LITTLE GIRLS IN BLUE” - - - - Marcia Nicol  
“SALOME” - - - - Merrie Bowland, June Pothan  
“THREE LITTLE SISTERS” - - - - Nola Skittrup  
Ngaire Arthur, Evelyn McKenzie,  
Stella Chambers  
“LILY OF LAGUNA” - - - - Con Ranald  
“PRETTY KITTY BLUE EYES” - - - - Valerie Presling  
“TEN PRETTY GIRLS” - - - - Ensemble  
EPISODE 10—SOLO: “ON THE PROM PROM PROMENADE” - - - - Polly  
EPISODE 11—DUET: “SOME SUNDAY MORNING” - - - - Crusoe and Polly  
EPISODE 12—DUET AND DANCE: “BOOMPS-A-DAISY” - - - - Mrs Crusoe and Will Atkins  
EPISODE 13—FINALE: “JOLLY GOOD COMPANY” - - - - Everybody

---

---



# THE NAPIER FRIVOLITY MINSTRELS.

## *A Brief History of the Organisation.*

Fifty years ago in Napier, there were no radios, very few if any of the old fashioned phonographs with the circular wax records, and no picture shows. We had two theatres, the Theatre Royal, where the Central Fire Station now stands, and the Gaiety Theatre, now the site of the Stewart Greer Garage. Shows good, and some very good, bad and indifferent were seen periodically mostly in the Theatre Royal.

1898, As far as the general public were concerned, was the time of concerts, parties, and the latest innovation, surprise parties. Anyone who could sing, play or entertain in any way was in great demand at these functions. Many young fellows, some from places outside of Hawke's Bay who were in business in Napier, were either in lodgings or rented a house and did for themselves. The need for a piano for practises was great, and several fellows met and decided to rent the Oddfellows' Hall in Milton Road and practise new songs, etc., on one night in every week. Each of the fellows contributed one shilling per night to pay for the rent of the hall. This was the way that the Napier Frivolity Minstrels came into being. After practising for some time it was suggested that a public appearance would be a good idea, and on the 27th September, 1898, in the Eskdale Hall, the "Frivs" made their debut. On August 23rd, 1899, the "Frivs" gave their second performance at the same place, and also at Havelock North. It was then decided to enlarge the Company, and after many rehearsals the first Napier show was presented in 1900. So successful was this that the performance was repeated at Port Ahuriri, Havelock North, Wairoa etc.. At this time the late Lou Freedman offered the loan of one of his back rooms in his business premises in Emerson Street, and a piano was hired, this room being the scene of activities for some time.

It is safe to assume that not one of the members at this time ever thought that the Company would continue with an unbroken list of performances for fifty years. Members of the Company fought in the Boer War, the 1914-18 War, and the recent World War. Honours were earned in the field by several, and we mourn the loss of several gallant "Frivs."

The Company had always been an all-man show until 1914-18, when the membership was so depleted that several young ladies were recruited and kept the Show going. After the end of the war these ladies left, and men only prevailed until the recent World War, when all but three members of the Company had joined up with the Armed Forces. The ladies were again appealed to and kept the Show from going into recess. So popular has the mixed show become that it seems likely that this form of entertainment will continue. The ladies possess charm, talent, and artistry of no mean order and are considered to be a great acquisition to the "Frivs."

**Musical Directors.**—These have been many, from the late Charlie Wilson, the first one, a born musician, who used to arrange and even compose numbers for the orchestra. Then followed Sam. Storkey, the late Charlie Eagar, and then the late John A. Stevens. During the years that John was director and Mrs. Stevens was pianiste the orchestra reached a very high standard, being larger than ever in its history. This was brought about largely through the Sunday nights spent at the Stevens' home when the orchestra would play from 7 p.m. until midnight. Percy Briaseo then presided at the piano for some time and was followed by Jack Colbert who played until he went off to the War. Bert Knox also played for a time. After his return Jack Colbert continued for many years right up to 1927. Miss Winifred Payne



(now Mrs. W. Quarrie) acted from 1928 to 1934. Ted Palmer and the late Doug. Plank took the piano for us on a few occasions. Our present directress, Mrs. Cecile Bromley Hill, joined the Show in 1935 and is still with us, so that she has had the longest unbroken association with the Company.

**Orchestra.**—Many of the orchestra members have had long service. Mr. John Madigan has been a member since about 1905, except when he has for a time been out of Napier. His name can be seen in a programme of the Napier Amateur Dramatic Company as long ago as 1883. William Mitchell, E. Collier, Bert Boston, Percy George and Cedric White have all had very long association with the Company. Other fine members include Alan Clarke, Maurice Daily and Norman Etheridge.

**Performers.**—With the exception of one of the original members, Wally Ireland takes pride of place for the longest membership in the show. He has played the Dame in every pantomime the "Frics" have put on. Roy Girling, too, has been many a long year in the Company.

**Interlocutors.**—The first was Ted Taylor and an excellent centre man. There have been many since, including Charlie Engar, W. A. Wilkie, J. E. Macassey, Harold Edwards, Charlie Prebble (who reigned for many years), Harry Sutton, Ken Winks, Pat Murphy, Bert Ziegler, Will Keen, Charlie Tidy, George Bullivant and Bill Quarrie our present "Mr. Interlocutor," one of the best, and who travels miles every week to rehearsals.

**Cornermen.**—Many members have acted as cornermen, but good ones are rare. Looking back over the years it can be said that one of the very best was an original one, Wattie Allan, who was also an excellent character comedian. Other names that come to mind are Harry Andrews, Bert Wilkie, Percy Spiller, Herb Bear, Arthur Renouf, Percy Amner, George and Harry Tankard, Oscar Cook, Don Mearns, Jack Biss, Bert Knox, Frank Peat, Eric Amner, Vic. Gaffaney, Bill Wilkie, Jack Hawke, Jack O'Donoghue, Jim Hamilton, Vernon McCutcheon, Len Dadson and others. During the war four of the lady members blacked up and took their seats "On the Corner."

**Vocalists.**—Some fine singers have appeared in the ranks of the "Frics." Bill

Mathieson, Bill Robinson, Herb. King, Harold Edwards, Frank Newcombe Hall, Laurie Kendall, Bert Ziegler, Arthur Edwards, Herbert Marshall, Bill Clothier, George Tudehope, Frank O'Shanassy, Eric Poynter, Robert Wright. Others, although not possessed of such good voices, have been able, through their artistry to put their items over with almost equal success. Among the lady singers must be mentioned Eileen Quinn, June Berry, Stella Chambers, Doris McKenzie, Bernice Mooney and others. As a character performer, of course Ivena Potan is in a class on her own.

Looking back over the years it can be said that the most outstanding turn ever presented in our programmes was "The Three Apollos" (Geoff Walker, and the late Gordon Bailey and Dermot Kavanagh). After Dermot's death his place was ably filled by Lionel Harris. The "Three Apollos" were acrobats and balancers, and their turn used to bring the house down. It is generally agreed that Monte Peterson's female impersonation was a very fine act. Tom Skittrup, with his whistling, yodelling and falsetto singing, was another very versatile artist. It really is not fair to discriminate, because there have been many good performers, who all strove to do their bit. Of recent years the introduction of the Piano Accordion Band, under the direction of Cecil Neal, has been a great acquisition.

**Tours.**—The "Frics" have been very enterprising and have made many trips away from Napier. Barring a visit to Wairoa and Gisborne, the first tour was to Palmerston and Masterton in 1906. Later on, Easter tours were made, including trips to Waipukurau and Dannevirke, Greytown and Martinborough, Taupo, etc.. Then in 1915 the Show went away for a week to Rotorua, Hamilton, Cambridge, Taumarunui and Taihape. This was really the first of the weekly tours. In 1929 the tour was made in two big service cars and included Taupo, Rotorua, Tauranga, Whakatane, Opoitiki and Gisborne. Coming through the Motu Gorge one of the cars left the road and went 140ft. over the bank and down a gully. All the passengers were thrown clear but five had to be taken to hospital including Reg. Abbott, very seriously injured. After about twelve months off work he made a good recovery. It is

pleasing to record that the Company maintained the best traditions of the stage and staged the performance the same night in Gisborne with performers with arms in slings and heads and faces bandaged up. In 1930 the tour embraced Eltham, New Plymouth, Stratford, Wanganui, Feilding and Dannevirke. Recent tours have included the same itinerary as the 1929 and 1930 ones.

An epoch in our history was the appearance of the "Frivs" at the N.Z. Centennial Exhibition in Wellington in 1940, when the Company was greeted with two audiences which packed the Exhibition Hall to overflowing.

**Thanks.**—It is impossible, of course, to single out everyone who has assisted, because over the years they run into very many. Since the Pantomimes were introduced into the second half, Miss May Macdonald has coached members in the dialogue, which made a wonderful improvement. Miss Constance Macdonald has not only taught all the dancing, but has designed the frocks, dyed costumes and done no end of work for us. Mrs. Presling and Mr. D. McKenzie have also helped us in many ways with the dressing problems. The late Neil Gray made us our marvellous cow "Raspberry," which caused shrieks of laughter every time she appeared. Jim Baker was a wizard at making all kinds of animals, and Charlie Poynter constructed a magnificent archway and other valuable props. Ron. Doig created a wonderful thermometer for one of our shows, but the 1931 fire was too much for it.

One of our keenest members is Lou Hardgrave who works unseen, being responsible for the stage settings, and is always busy backstage.

The H.B. Motor Co. Ltd. and their splendid drivers deserve our best thanks for services rendered. Nothing has ever been a trouble to them. The proprietors of the hotels at Taupo, viz.—The Bungalow, The Lake, The Spa and the Terraces, for their hospitality during the Labour Day week-ends when the Show has been put on for the Taupo School funds. Numerous supporters have made us presents of uniforms, costumes, hats, music, etc., and we record our best thanks to them.

To our good friend George Pleased, custodian of the Napier Municipal Theatre, who has helped us on every occasion and seems to enjoy it.

The Theatre staff, both back and front for their assistance whenever we want it, and we must place on record the services of the late Charles Dine and Arthur Hillson, who took their places on the doors for over twenty-five years.

Messrs. A. Simmonds & Co. Ltd., for bouquets provided each year for the Musical Directress.

The Napier Fire Brigade who give their duties to us free on every occasion.

Hector Chapman, our front of house manager, and Vic Wallis, who took over the duties on the last tour, to everyone's satisfaction.

Messrs. C. E. Rogers and Co., Mr. Kendall, and The Old Curiosity Shoppe for furniture loaned at various times.

In short, our best thanks to all who have in any way helped us over this last half century.

The Napier Borough Council, for giving us the honour of the official opening of our theatre on June 4th, 1938.

The Thirty Thousand Club for a rehearsal room with lighting and piano for the last thirty years, and to Mr. and Mrs. E. B. McKechnie for the use of their home for rehearsals following the fire of 1931.

The "Daily Telegraph" for the publicity freely given to reports of our many shows.

In 1898, the first year, the "Frivs" played one public performance; in the season just closed, from October, 1946, to June, 1947, no less than 36 appearances were made by the Company.

The "Frivs" are known far and wide as will be seen from the list of places they have appeared in, which is printed in another portion of the programme.

Finally our best thanks to the public of Napier and Hawke's Bay for their generous support. As a result of this, the "Frivs" have been able to hand over thousands of pounds to the Children's Homes, and the various school and hall funds. The combination of fun without vulgarity and entertainment without waits is evidently to the liking of the people.

We wish to place on record our appreciation of the kindly interest taken in the "Frivs" by R. J. Kerridge, Esq., Auckland, who made possible the several trips to Gisborne, and the last tour of the East Coast, Bay of Plenty and Rotorua. In

all these places the Company played in the theatres under the direction of Mr. Kerridge.

Any reference to the "Frivs" would be incomplete without mentioning "Colonel" John Benson, Mrs. Benson and the members of the family. In the early days the "Frivs" always gathered at the "Colonel's" residence on Barrack Hill and celebrated New Year's Eve in the traditional Scottish style. We started at mid-night and continued with the celebrations until the sun was high in the heavens. Those of us who were privileged to be present on these occasions will never forget the kindness and hospitality showered on us. It is interesting to note that

"The Colonel" (John Benson), who had a very fine voice, was a performing member of the "Frivs" as was his son-in-law W. A. Wilkie, and his grandson Bill Wilkie.

And now for the last word. The "Frivs" take pride in the fact that no member of the orchestra, performer or official of any description receives any fee or reward for his or her services in the show. Everything is done free of charge, and we doubt if there is another organisation in the Dominion with a similar record. Long may the members continue with the good work!

## Roll of Honour.

Gordon Bailey, Ron Crabtree, L. Beach

### FRIVS. WHO SERVED THE EMPIRE.

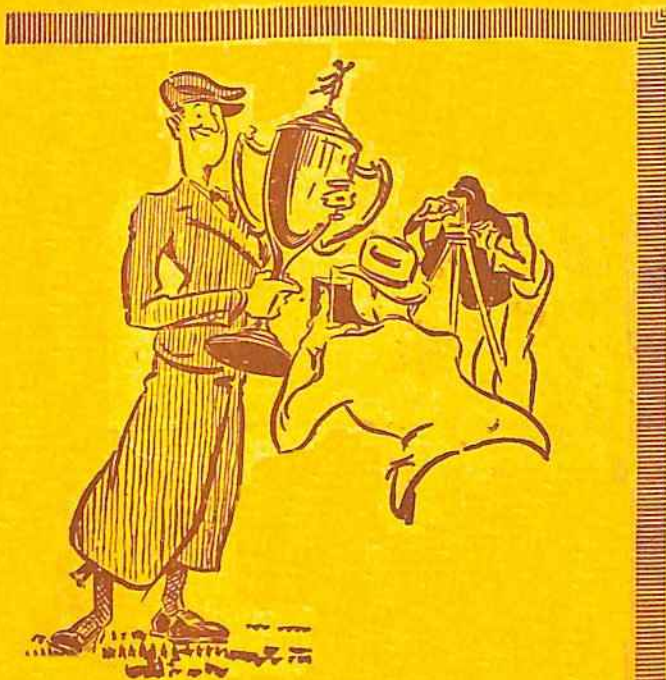
G. Amner, M. Buckley, W. Clothier, M. Daily, W. Dallimore,  
L. Hawke, L. Spiller, E. Medcalf, J. Hayes, J. Hamilton,  
W. Wilkie, S. Armstrong, E. Poynter, O. Pollock, R. Nalder,  
R. Vercoe, C. Williams, W. Rogers, D. McNab, D.C.M., L. Dadson,  
V. McCutcheon, G. Stuart, N. Etheridge, C. Neal, M. Venables,  
G. Bullivant, W. Alexander, T. Connolly, H. Archer,  
R. Longney, M. Crabbe, G. Walker, Ken Trevor.



### THE FRIVOLITY MINSTRELS,

DURING THE PAST 49 YEARS, HAVE GIVEN  
PERFORMANCES AT THE FOLLOWING PLACES:

Bay View	New Plymouth	Stratford
Cambridge	Omakere	Taihape
Clive	Onga Onga	Taradale
Dannevirke	Opotiki	Taumarunui
Elsthorpe	Otane	Taupo
Eltham	Opunake	Tauranga
Eskdale	Paki Paki	Te Aute
Featherston	Pakowhai	Te Haroto
Feilding	Palmerston North	Te Pohue
Fernhill	Papakura	Tikokino
Gisborne	Porangahau	Waikoau
Greenmeadows	Port Ahuriri	Waimarama
Greytown	Pukahu	Waipawa
Hamilton	Pukeora	Waipukurau
Hastings	Puketapu	Wairoa
Haumoana	Puketitiri	Wanganui
Havelock	Putorino	Wellington
Kaitawa	Rissington	Westshore
Martinborough	Rotorua	Whakatane
Masterton	Ruataniwha	Whakatu
Meeanee	Sherenden	
Napier		



\*

SPORTS SHIRTS . . .  
In a Variety Of Designs  
FROM 13s. 3d.

\*

WHITE TENNIS SHORTS . . .  
PLEATED With BEARER TOP  
FROM 15s. 3d.

\*

GENUINE PANAMA HATS . . .  
Made In Equador  
FROM 32s. 6d.



IF YOU WERE  
THE WINNER OF

The "Open."

. . . THEN YOU'D HAVE TO DRESS  
LIKE A CHAMPION, AND THAT  
WOULD MEAN AN EARLY TRIP TO  
JACK SNADDON'S WHERE THE BEST  
IN SPORTS WEAR COSTS THE LEAST.

. . . COME IN AND GET THAT  
CHAMPION FEELING

*right now.*

Largest Mens' and Boys' Store in Hawke's Bay.

**SNADDONS**

Emerson Street

Napier