After 12 years, Russ has reluctantly, vacated his position on the Trust.
In 2011, the Trust was formed by local thespian Russ Standing. The theatre had lacked regular performances and patronage and parts of the facility were starting to look a bit tired and worn. Russ thought that a group of passionate locals could take on the challenge to bring the theatre complex back to life. And that he did.

The name Russ Standing is synonymous with theatre throughout Taranaki either in an acting capacity or as a director. He has been involved in some of the most successful shows and musicals produced by the Hawera Repertory Society over many decades. An amazing record and it was a fitting honour when, in 1987, he was awarded Life Membership to that Society.

Russ was the instigator and the driver of getting this Trust up and running. The initial work done and the consultation with the then South Taranaki District Council was an amazing feat, and it has, in Russ' own words, “exceeded my wildest dreams”.
Russ' services to the district were justifiably recognised by the South Taranaki District Council when, in 2010 he was awarded a Community Services Award.

The work that has been done by the Trust over the past 12 years has been phenomenal for a small rural town such as Hawera and it is thanks to Russ' forethought, planning and enthusiasm that this has been achieved. The Hawera Memorial Theatre is one of the best small, rural town theatres in the country. Thank you, Russ.