



# War bride's courage

CARALISE TRAYES

Last updated 05:00 25/06/2013
Like 41 Tweet 1 +1 Share



REAL LIFE: Gloria Stanford's war-time experience has been turned into a theatre production by her granddaughter Amy Weller.

The story of a war bride whose last minute change of heart made newspaper headlines in 1946 is now back in the public eye.

Gloria Stanford made a dramatic last minute dash from an American-bound ship after realising she didn't want to leave friends and family in New Zealand.

Her tale, first reported in the Auckland Star, has been turned into a stage show being performed at the Centrestage Theatre in Orewa.

Gloria was 21 and living at Epsom with her 18 month-old son when she joined a contingent of women who'd married American servicemen during World War II and boarded a ship headed for the US. But she changed her mind and, under cover of darkness, slipped out of her cabin and back to shore before the boat left port.

Her story intrigued readers and, many years later, captured the imaginations of her granddaughters Amy and Catherine Waller who turned it into a theatrical production.

Amy, 29, spent several years living in Orewa with boyfriend Nathan Bland after graduating from Wellington's Toi Whakaari Drama School.

She put a script together with information gathered from several days of interviewing Gloria who is now 90 and living in Avondale.

"I wanted to make a show, not an autobiography, and make it a bit more magical," Amy says.

"Gloria loved it. She said I should make it as dramatic as I wanted.

"I was also really interested in looking at memory and perspective, how I heard and interpreted the story as a child. I've created moments like that in the show. It explores how stories can warp and beautify through the lens of memory."

Amy says her grandmother is headstrong, vivacious, brave and stubborn - an attribute needed in the creative arts world.

"I admire that," Amy says.

"We were given skills at drama school to survive when we are out of work. How to create your own work. I've been thinking about doing this show for a long time."

Amy co-wrote the script with help from younger sister Catherine who lives in Los Angeles. This is the second show she has co-written, the first being Death By Cheerleader, a comedy produced in 2011.

Amy applied for funding from the Auckland Council to support the production's release in Orewa.

"The council wants to get more theatre up and around Hibiscus Coast and this story is really relevant for a lot of residents. Even though it is a war story it is still interesting for my generation as well. It's fast-paced and there's a lot of swing music and dance."

Amy is the sole performer and Gloria plans to attend the first show. What happened to Gloria's marriage is part of the play but she did later visit the US.

Gloria premieres on Saturday at 7.30pm and runs until July 4.

Contact Centrestage Theatre on 09 426 7282 or visit iTicket.co.nz for information and tickets.

- © Fairfax NZ News

Ad Feedback
COWS. DISCUSS.
Submit

Like 41 Tweet +1 Save | Saved Stories

Next Rodney Times story: Crazy weather wreaks havoc Auckland Homepage

Ads by Google
Fly Hawaiian Airlines www.HawaiianAirlines.com
Now Flying to Hawaii, West Coast & New York. Fares from only \$1275\*RT.
Affordable Dentistry www.whitecrossdental.com
\$99 New Patient Exam and Clean! North Shore Auckland
Military Records FamilyLink.com/Military+Records
Military Records Back To 1675! Free Trial- Start Searching Now.

- Rodney Times Headlines
Bigger, modern library checks out
Mice infest homes
Ring finds way back on to finger
Planting trees for a green future
Young pool players no match for PM
Groomer cuts with the best
War bride's courage
Crazy weather wreaks havoc
Wholesome Holst highly trustworthy
Fabulous birds' chorus greets island saviours
Life of wild song over
Change in wastewater charges suits ratepayers
Lightning fells tree
Wellsford scrape through

Ad Feedback
Click here to get started
Inland Revenue Te Tari Taake

- Local News Headlines
Hunt for info on Gwennie
Pools remain free of charge
Ring finds way back on to finger
Upset at plans to fell tree
Every girl feels like a princess

- Most popular
Viewed Shared Commented
Police officer used 'reasonable force' inquiry finds
Govt Auckland rail link u-turn
Empty HNZ house irks resident
SFO eyes \$48m prosecution
Teens face murder trial
Brakes go on bikes
Traps set on private land
Mice infest homes
Why Indian restaurants pay their chefs \$4 an hour
Govt Auckland rail loop u-turn

Opinion poll
Do you think the Government has just cause for the GCSB to spy on Kiwis?
Yes No Undecided
Vote Results

Download Outlook
real estate outlook
Your essential real estate guide

Advertising works
Advertising in Fairfax Suburban Newspapers works for The Mad Butcher

Hot deals
HOT DEALS available now with online vouchers

Local business directory
LOCAL BUSINESS Your guide to the best local businesses

- Latest Business Listings
International College of
Milford Eye Clinic, 181
Settlers Albany, 550 Albany
Ian Hunt Flooring, 8 Tawa
Dr Francis Pitsillis, Villag
Wellsford Dental, 163 Rodney
Browse all recent classifieds »

Breaking news?
Send us your photos, videos and tip-offs:
Email newstips@stuff.co.nz
Phone 0800 697 8833