

2005



53rd Season
The Newsletter of the
Heidelberg Theatre
Company Inc.
Inc. No. A0008432X

PROMPTS

No.1.
February, 2005

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EMAIL PROMPTS CAMPAIGN

Like to join HTC's email list and receive *Prompts* in soft copy? Just send an email to htcprompts@hotmail.com and include your name, address and phone number in the email.

born yesterday

by Garson Kanin

directed by John Keogh

by arrangement with Hal Leonard Aust.

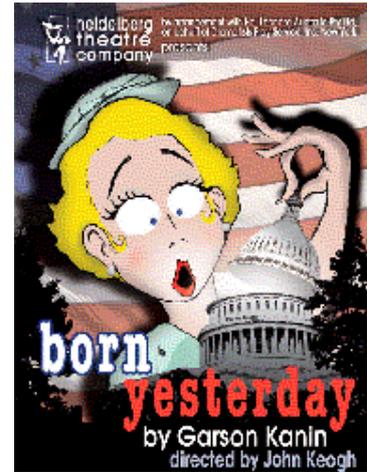
16th Feb – 5th March, 2005

Wednesday to Saturday at 8.15pm

Matinee Sunday 27th Feb. at 3pm

BOOKINGS – 9457 4117

Subscribers requiring to alter their chosen night or reserve their booking are asked to call BEFORE Monday, 31st January, 2005.



This world famous 1940's comedy tells the story of the vulgar junkman, Harry Brock, who comes to Washington to make crooked deals with government big-wigs. He brings with him the charming but dumb ex-chorus girl Billie Dawn whose lack of social graces embarrasses even Harry. Billie is soon smitten by an idealistic journalist, named Paul, who becomes Billie's mentor and Harry's nemesis. A delightful comedy with a strong social message, **Born Yesterday** enjoyed one of the longest runs in Broadway history.

The Company is pleased to welcome John Keogh as director of **Born Yesterday**. This is John's first directorial role at HTC, although he will be well known to our audiences, having played in **Rough Crossing** and **The Iceman Cometh** last season.

The cast includes faces well known at HTC; Elena Ladd, Monica Bruce, Peter Prenga, Paul Dineen, Tim Wade, Josh Parnell and Luke Dixon and the Company is pleased to welcome Lena Minto, Margaret Rawlinson, Simon Dowling, Adrian Valenta, Sam Chappell and Vladimir Tysgano to its stage.

The Production Team is shaping up well with Joan Moriarty as Production Coordinator & Props, David Hunt is Assistant to Director, the Designer is Marie Mackrell, Stelios Karagiannis is the Lighting Designer, Simon Dixon the Lighting Operator, Tania Cossich is Stage Manager with Anthea Gregoriou Assistant Stage Manager, George Bissett is the Sound Designer with Struan McGregor the Sound Operator and Lois Connor and Wendy Drowley creating the Costumes.

Don't miss **Born Yesterday**, the opening production in HTC's 2005 Season.

DENNIS PAIN, WINNER OF THE 2004 BILL CHERREY AWARD

This Award was presented at the AGM and is given each year to an individual member of the Heidelberg Theatre Company as recognition of their outstanding contribution and service to the Company during the year

This year's winner is Committee Member, Dennis Pain, who is also one of the most active members in the Theatre Company. His skills and involvement have seen his talents cover the areas of set construction, where he has been involved with at least 24 plays since 2001, photography, for foyer publicity and cast presentations and work in the technical areas including the video recording system.

Congratulations Dennis from all your friends at HTC.

A NOTE TO SUBSCRIBERS

Again there has been a great response for our Subscription series with many requests for seating in Rows A & B.

The Company's policy is to handle requests in order of receipt, and June, our Ticket Secretary, asks that our patrons understand that the seats they request may have already been allocated

June is making every effort to meet requests, and she asks for your understanding if you are not allocated your preferred seats.

WINNER OF THE CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

Now this really is front page news! The Company is delighted to report that the winner of the 2004 Christmas Raffle, drawn at the AGM, was none other than our hard working Ticket Secretary, June Cherrey!



Review

THE CASTLE

Adapted from the screenplay with kind permission from Working Dog Productions. Reviewed Sat 20th November, 2004 3pm Matinee by **Carolyn Gunn** for 3CR's **CURTAIN UP** – Sundays at One (855 AM)

Heidelberg Theatre Company's Season Brochure originally listed the director as Scott Ramsay but I understand the production was taken over at a later stage by resident director Maureen McInerney. Heidelberg's latest production **The Castle** is derived from the Working Dog Productions' screenplay of their very popular working class comedy movie about Dad and his fight with bureaucracy when his modest Aussie home is about to be compulsorily acquired.

Transferring a movie script that usually comprises very short scenes to the stage where texts of a much longer duration (Act 1, Act 2 etc, etc.) are more the norm presents some difficulties. In re-working a film script for the stage where the scene may be only a matter of minutes, the actors have to be energetic, alert and in character for every switch in scene, dialogue must deliver every nuance instantaneously and no word or action can be wasted – its go, go, go...whereas in film there is time out for changing the many sets or costumes and you only do short bits at a time.

Whilst I didn't have a problem with the "idea" of adapting this film script for the stage, just how does one decide which theatrical concept to focus on; for the story to flow freely and the production to have pace, the long/short scenes with so many physical changes do appear to be an unwieldy format or style.

Most leading Community Theatres have the luxury of being able to mount multiple settings, both physically and financially – whereas fringe theatres on the other hand usually have neither and have to get multi scene plays across just by creative suggestion, i.e. simply using the medium of the 'actor' strongly backed by quality sound and lighting.

In the instance of **The Castle** perhaps a point somewhere between the two may have worked much better. This is not to criticise the excellent quality of the many settings in Heidelberg's presentation but for fluidity I think these could have been reduced in number thereby tightening up the sprawling use of the large stage and confining action to a smaller acting area.

Although not familiar with the adapted script, I did wonder if the perimeter placed 'Bonnie Doon holiday house', 'Gaul Cell' and 'Billiard/trophy Room' settings were really necessary and could not the latter have been incorporated into the Kitchen, the cell (containing bed, stainless steel toilet etc) could have been just a chair lit by a spot (suggesting a grille) which may have released the actor to double in another role.

In these instances I lean towards more pared down staging where apart from the main fixed set (i.e. the kitchen) several chairs do the lot thereby not over producing the work and simply leaving the actors to get on with it. A good example is the play **Six Weeks with the Queen** – originally staged professionally with only gates (to suggest Buckingham Palace) set at the rear of the stage with a small cast of actors mainly using chairs to represent a half dozen

scenes or so; yet every Community Theatre production I have seen since endeavours to fully reproduce every single scene. Why? Minimalisation can often be a very effective tool.

As I remember the movie, the story line (for me) held up well and the text still made me laugh, however relationships between the various characters could have been more firmly established and the Oz style of being naive/dumb/deadpan did defeat some of the less experienced actors; the characters and the 'ocker' dialogue overlay have to be set up, our often sloppy 'aussie' vocals still have to be clear, well placed and delivered with stage know-how and energy to realise the inherent comedy.

Three actors who came close to meeting the requirements were Jim Thomson as *Darryl Kerrigan*, Timothy Huf – *Dale Kerrigan* and Peter Prenga as the local solicitor *Dennis Denuto*.

Costumes (particularly Court regalia), sound and lighting were satisfactory although perhaps a little more rehearsal time was needed for some of the actors to learn how to 'feel' their spots as some did act just out of the spot-lit acting area resulting in some faces being in semi-darkness, also more cross-fading may have assisted the flow of scenes.

Sorry I can't be more enthusiastic on this occasion but I feel the presentation of **The Castle** didn't quite come off and needed more expertise in the casting and cutting back in the staging concept. However, I sincerely commend Heidelberg Theatre Company for bringing us a new work AND it's *Australian made*.

HTC IN-HOUSE AWARDS, 2004

John Gilbert, HTC President, in his Report, thanked the In House Adjudicators: Paul King, Gayle Poor, Cheryl Ballantine and Bruce Akers for their skill and diligence.

AWARD for EXCELLENCE IN A TECHNICAL AREA
STAGE MANAGEMENT - *The Castle*

AWARDS for EXCELLENCE IN DESIGN
AUDIO DESIGN - *The Castle*

SET DESIGN AND DÉCOR - *Uncle Vanya*
AWARDS for EXCELLENCE IN PERFORMANCE

EMMA DAWSON - Beth in *Dinner With Friends*

GEOFF HICKEY - Larry Slade in *The Iceman Cometh*

TIMOTHY HUF - Dale Kerrigan in *The Castle*

JOHN KEOGH - Harry Hope in *The Iceman Cometh*

JOSHUA PARNELL - Dvornichek in *Rough Crossing* and
Steve Kerrigan in *The Castle*

PETER PRENGA - Dennis Denuto in *The Castle*

TIM WADE - Tom in *Dinner With Friends*

AWARDS for EXCELLENCE IN DIRECTION

MAUREEN McINERNEY - *The Castle*

WAYNE PEARN - *The Iceman Cometh*

AWARD for BEST PRODUCTION - *The Iceman Cometh*

NOMINATIONS FOR EXCELLENCE IN A NON-PERFORMANCE AREA

The Castle - AUDIO DESIGN, STAGE MANAGEMENT

Uncle Vanya - SET DESIGN AND DÉCOR, WARDROBE.

Rough Crossing- SET DESIGN, PROPERTIES, WARDROBE

The Iceman Cometh - MULTI-MEDIA.

NOMINATIONS FOR EXCELLENCE IN PERFORMANCE

Dinner With Friends - EMMA DAWSON, TIM WADE

Rough Crossing - BARRY JAMES, CHRIS McLEAN, JOSHUA PARNELL

Uncle Vanya - ELENA LADD, LOIS CONNOR, CHRIS McLEAN, BARRY JAMES

The Iceman Cometh - LIBBY GOTT, SIMON FENN, GEOFF HICKEY, GLENN MACKIE, JOHN KEOGH

The Castle - JIM THOMPSON, TIMOTHY HUF, JOSHUA PARNELL, PETER PRENGA, XAVIER RYAN, KIM WATTY.

AUDITION NOTICE

**Sunday 20th February from 2pm &
Monday 21st February from 7.30pm**
at Heidelberg Theatre Company, 36 Turnham Avenue, Rosanna

The One Day Of The Year

By Alan Seymour

Directed by Paul King

Season: Wednesday 27th April – Saturday 14th May, 2005, Matinee - Sunday 8th May.

Written in 1960, **The One Day of The Year** is a compassionate, insightful and eerily topical examination of our attitudes to nationhood, war and glory on our most significant national day – Anzac Day, a day commemorating a campaign that was both a tactical fiasco and a defeat, when comradeship, courage in battle and the horrors of war are crystallised into painful remembrance.

But this modern classic of Australian theatre does more than ask pointed questions of the Anzac legend; it also presents a powerful portrait of conflict within a working class family and with its relationship to society.

CHARACTERS

- Alf Cook** - mid/late 40s. A working class father, WW II veteran, belligerent, uneducated
- Dot (Mum) Cook** - mid 40s. His wife, arbitrator and keeper of the peace.
- Hughie Cook** - early 20s. Their son, Uni student and hot-headed would-be activist.
- Jan Castle** - early 20s. His sophisticated North Shore girlfriend.
- Wacka Dawson** - late 50s/early 60s. Alf's best mate, a stoic Gallipoli veteran.

By Appointment Only

Please ring the Director on **9646 3226**.

every
OPENING NIGHT
at **HTC** is a *great night!*

Stay on after the show and mingle in the foyer, meet the actors and crew, enjoy a light supper, all with the compliments of the Company.

A great night to choose for your social club or charity group fundraiser.

Group bookings for 10 or more is \$12 per ticket on ANY Wednesday night in the Season
(that's \$6 off the normal single price).
contact June on **9457 4117**

HTC YOUTH GEARING UP FOR ANOTHER GREAT YEAR

Caught up with Luke this week and he confirmed the first HTC Youth production in 2005 will be **The Crucible** by Arthur Miller, directed by Carolyn Walsh. The season is May 19th – 21st. If you would like more details about the production, including audition dates, then give Luke a call on 0417 996 108.

The Group's members are in the 15 to 25 year age group, so if this means you, and you'd like to find out more, then get in touch with Luke, he will be happy to fill you in.

HELP!!! needed at the

WORKING BEES for

born yesterday

Saturdays
5th & 12th February
from 10.30am - Lunch is provided

A great chance to begin, resume or continue YOUR involvement with HTC and have lots of enjoyment into the bargain!

or

Working Bees not your style?
How about assisting backstage or foh

Like to know more – call Maureen on
9455 3039

FEBRUARY

Saturday 5th 10.30am
Saturday 12th 10.30am
Wednesday 16th 8.15pm
Sunday 20th 2.00pm
Monday 21st 7.30pm
Tuesday 22nd 7.30pm

MARCH

Saturday 5th 8.15pm
Tuesday 15th 7.30pm

Working Bee with Lunch

Working Bee with Lunch

FIRST NIGHT – Born Yesterday

AUDITION: The One Day Of The Year

AUDITION: The One Day Of The Year

Heidelberg Film Society – *Newsfront* (AUST)

FINAL NIGHT – Born Yesterday

Heidelberg Film Society – *The Italian Job* (USA)

2004 PRESIDENT'S REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Playbill - As we come to the close of 2004 we complete our 52nd year as a theatre company. The year has once again been very successful following the staging of 5 plays and 2 youth theatre productions. We have achieved good occupancy rates and favourable audience comment, whilst our membership and subscription base remains strong, reflecting the appreciation that our audiences have for the level of excellence that is delivered both on and off stage. The plays of the 2004 season were once again a diverse and entertaining selection of theatre. During 2004, HTC Youth performed **X Stacy** and **Take A Bow**. We acknowledge the positive driving force of Luke Dixon, Simon Dixon, Anne Smith and the dedicated team that make up HTC Youth. We are also proud to highlight that Luke Dixon wrote **Take a Bow**. He has shown a level of talent and skill enjoyed and appreciated by audiences and HTC Youth members. Anne Smith delivered a full report of this year's productions in the 2004 Playbill Report. The rights for the 2005 season plays have been paid in advance to ensure their availability. In addition there will be two HTC Youth productions during 2005.

VDL Awards - Nominations at this year's awards were from **The Iceman Cometh**. Best Actor – John Keogh, Best Supporting Actor - Simon Fenn, Best Actor in a Minor Role – John Gilbert, Costumes - Wendy Drowley, Lois Connor and Maureen Mc Inerny. Winner – Silver Award Lighting – Stelios Karagiannis. Winner - Gold Award Best Actor – Geoff Hickey.

We also congratulate Geoff Hickey who won Best Director for Peridot's **Our Town** and Bronwyn King for Costumes in the same production.

Bookings - Our team taking care of bookings and tickets continue to perform this important role with great skill and reliability. The work and effort of June Cherrey, Julie Hall, Rose Capuano and Trevor McAllister ensures that the box office runs without any hassles right through the season.

Website - Our thanks to James Hutson for his continuing work on the HTC web site and poster designs. James is also working on the formatting of the HTC styleguide, encompassing all elements for HTC poster, advertising and publication presentation, this project is due to be completed in 2005.

Prompts via email - Doug McNaughton and Julie Hall have successfully delivered *Prompts* via email to a large number of our members and subscribers again this year. As always, working with great style and reliability behind the scenes, Toni Tyers ensures that *Prompts* is put together and ready for printing 6 times a year. This was a major task well done.

We also recognise Julie Hall's work and coordination to move the printing and mailing of *Prompts* to Australia Post. Unfortunately Julie has tendered her resignation as Membership Secretary after more than 20 years of service and we will miss her contribution both in this role and as a Committee Member. We extend to Julie a very big thank you from the Committee.

Financial - We welcome back Life Member Bruce Akers to the Committee and thank him for accepting to take over the role as HTC Treasurer. Many members would recall that Bruce has held the position of treasurer previously and his return will ensure that our finances remain in responsible hands. Members and subscribers will have noticed that the adult ticket price for the 2005 season has increased by \$1 from \$17 to \$18. Concession prices remain unchanged. This is the first price rise since the introduction of GST. The decision to raise adult prices has been a balance of managing the impact of rising operating expense versus our commitment to deliver good quality theatre at a value for money price. Our financial position remains strong and must remain so that we can continue to upgrade the theatre facilities and provide the resources to deliver the high standard of production quality that our audiences have come to expect. Bruce Akers provided a full report later in the meeting.

Capital Expenditure - The Committee has undertaken a number of major works in 2004 to improve the theatre facility and services. Following the completion of the termite eradication by the Council, we replaced the toilet hardware and refurbished all of the foyer toilets. In addition we recarpeted the foyer and repainted the foyer/kitchen area and replaced the fridge and microwave oven. Behind the scenes, new audio visual equipment was purchased including computer controlled projectors, which were first seen in operation during **The Iceman Cometh**. Upgrading of the lighting control system is now underway to improve the operational safety and reliability of our bio box facilities.

HTC Committee - There were still four Committee positions not filled following the 2003 elections. During the year we accepted with regret resignations from Dianne Dixon, Secretary, Treasurer Jan Hodge and Julie Hall. We thank them for their contributions and hope that one day they will choose to return. Following the mid year resignations, the Committee coopted Bruce Akers as Treasurer, Brett Hunt as Secretary and the Committee invited Tim McLaughlin, Luke Dixon and Wayne Pearn to join the Committee.

Important People - Our talented team of Set Builders includes Paddy Moriarty, Ron Young, Jim Thompson, Dennis Pain and Ted Drowley. Our technical and back stage crews include the talented Simon Dixon, Luke Dixon, Struan McGregor, George Bissett, Tim McLaughlin, Stelios Karagiannis and Chris Boek and many more whom the audience will never see. Thanks to Lena Minto and Alice Bugge for their work in organising publicity and advertising during the year. The Company would also like to express its thanks to Jan Howe for coordinating the various displays by local artists in the theatre foyer during the year. We have enjoyed seeing many interesting and diverse works during each play season and we look forward to what lies ahead for next year.

Vale - We note the passing of Betty Pybus in Snug, Tasmania. Betty acted with Heidelberg Rep in the 1970's, first starring in *Come Back Little Sheba* winning Best Actress Award for her first acting role at the Ballarat Competitions.

Lease - There has been no urgency from the Council to formalise our occupation at Turnham Avenue. Our occupation is currently on hold over as per the terms of the expired lease. The Banyule City Council confirmed in writing on 24th November 2003 that the Heidelberg Theatre Company will be offered a new lease for a 10-year term with a 10-year option. In addition the Council has also confirmed that terms will not be commercial and will recognise the contribution that HTC has made to the facility over the years to allow us to operate in our current mode. This is good news for our long term occupation of the Theatre and confirms the Councils understanding of the importance of this community asset. The commencement date of the new lease and the draft lease are yet to be finalised.

Community involvement - We continue to make the theatre available to various community and performing groups when our season allows. This includes groups such as the Heidelberg Film Society and The Banyule City Council. HTC was a participant in the Banyule Festival this year with HTC Youth representing the Company at the Sill's Bend Display. For the Banyule Winter Festival HTC staged a play reading of **The Castle** at the theatre. There have also been several occasions during the year when HTC have loaned costumes to schools and to students for VCE drama.

Close - I am pleased to report that whilst 2004 has been an eventful and challenging year we can certainly claim that it has also been a very successful one. As we prepare to enter 2005 we can safely report that the Heidelberg Theatre Company is in a sound position and ready to accept the challenges ahead and deliver a great season again. John Gilbert, President, HTC.