

The Lion in Winter

a witty story of a dysfunctional royal family
by James Goldman directed by Karen Wakeham

23rd Feb – 10th March, 2012

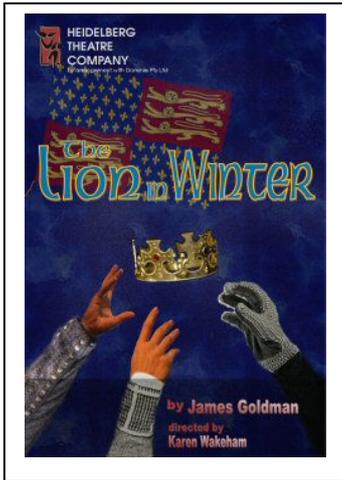
Evenings at 8.00pm

Matinees: Sundays 26th Feb & 4th March at 2pm

Subscribers requiring to alter their chosen night or reserve their booking are asked to call BEFORE Wednesday, 8th February, 2012.

PROMPTS

No. 1 February, 2012



So firmly is this well-loved play entrenched in the mythology of Broadway that it is sung about in the musical, *Fame*:

'.....The Lion in Winter,Brecht and Harold Pinter.'

A show to be in. A must-see! It is part of Heidelberg Theatre Company's history too, chosen to celebrate this 60th Anniversary year because of its success here in 1983. And of course everyone saw either Katharine Hepburn or Glenn Close in one or other of the famous films.

The story is familiar. *Henry II* of England has called to his castle at Chinon, his sons, *Richard Lionheart*, *Geoffrey of Brittany*, and that same *Prince John* - in this play a mere adolescent - who later persecuted Robin Hood. *Henry* has released his wife, *Eleanor of Aquitaine*, from her prison-castle to join them for Christmas court. He had put her there ten years ago as punishment for raising an army against him. *Philip*, King of France, is coming too, while his sister, *Alais*, needs no invitation. She lives with Henry as his mistress.

The business of the gathering is not merely festive, however. Henry is getting older, he needs to choose an heir. And this family is one in which political cleverness comes well before motherly love or brotherly loyalty.

Playwright James Goldman professed himself amazed that *'the play is still alive, {and} speaks as clearly as it does to younger audiences'*. So its longevity – it premiered in 1966 – comes from more than mere fame. Its story strikes at the heart of every dysfunctional family, at the hopes and disappointments of thwarted ambition and love. (It can be very funny too.)

The Company is delighted to welcome Karen Wakeham in her first directorial role at HTC. Karen has directed for many non-professional companies in Melbourne. The cast includes Juliet Hayday as *Eleanor of Aquitaine*, and Chris McLean as *Henry II*. As their sons, Tom Stammers is *Richard*, Timothy Camilleri *Geoffrey* and John Murphy *John*, while Kieran Tracey plays *Philip* and Julia Christensen, *Alais*.

Production Co-ordinator is Joan Moriarty and set design by George Tranter. It is being constructed by Owen Evans and the A-Team: Neville, Paddy, Doug, Des, Dennis and Mal. Lighting design Jennifer Jackson.

Costume design is in the capable hands of Wendy Drowley, assisted by Cathy Christensen. Wendy will be remembered for her costume work on Heidelberg's original production, in which she also played *Eleanor*. Some of the lovely things from that show will be returning to the stage for which they were created.

So don't miss **The Lion In Winter**, our first offering in our special celebratory year!!

Thanks to all our Subscribers who renewed their Subscriptions in this our 60th Anniversary Season and welcome to all our new Subscribers.

There is still time to get your subscription in for our 5 Play Season. Just complete the Order Form in the 2012 Playbill and send it to our P.O. Box address. If you don't have a Playbill handy, you can download a copy from our website, htc.org.au or call the Box Office on 9457 4117, please leave your name and address and we will post a Playbill out to you.

Our Online ticketing system for general ticket purchases, Gift Certificates and Group Bookings can be accessed via our website at htc.org.au or if you prefer call our Box Office on 9457 4117. Please call the Box Office if you need to exchange your tickets and to book seats if you have chosen our Flexibook Subscription option. If you have any queries please call the Box Office or email htc@htc.org.au.

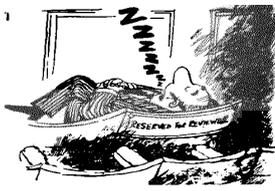
We hope you enjoy this great year of Theatre at HTC and join in the festivities organised to celebrate this landmark year in the Theatre's history. Details of our 60th Celebrations can be found on page 2 of this issue of Prompts. And please, do help spread the word. Bring your friends and neighbours along to a show; they will thank you!!

BOOKINGS – Online at www.htc.org.au or call 9457 4117

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P.O. Box 141, Rosanna VIC 3084

Enquiries 9455 3039
Email htc@htc.org.au

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Review

Under Milk Wood by Dylan Thomas
 Directed by Chris Baldock, Assisted by Helen Ellis
 Reviewed by Reviewed by Joan McGrory for VDL's
 Theatrecraft- December, 2011

This production was going to be a challenge for any company to undertake. Written in the 1950s by a poet and playwright, **Under Milk Wood** has a host of fans who also have high expectations as to its performance. Originally written as a play for voices there must have been some trepidation amongst the audiences of what they were to encounter.

This one member of the audience sat enthralled for the 90-minute-long performance and walked out of the theatre "surrounded by magic". I cannot remember when I last sat through a production that was such an excellent melding of creativity, technicality and production — a true ensemble production.

The play itself relates to the lives of the inhabitants of a small Welsh seaside town, Llareggub, for the cycle of one day. On a larger scale, it also reiterates the cycle of life and death, imaged by the references to those who have died and the births of many babies by the generous, loving and productive Polly Garter. It is a lovely play encompassing love, both requited and unrequited, bawdiness, sadness, simplicity, happiness and longing, repression — emotions of the human spirit and all wrapped up in the most beautiful language.

"To begin at the beginning"... the set was constructed on a platform accessed by steps and consisted of a series of tall rectangular boxes(?) creating an illusion of a panorama of buildings which, with its central opening, also provided a number of entrances/exits. The revolve also accentuated this. What I particularly liked were the two short lines of washing at either end of the set, tied diagonally to two lampposts on either side of the stage. This instantly created the domesticity of the play with its ordinarily extraordinary characters! Overall the setting was always defined by the characters and the excellent illumination. Nothing detracted from the spoken language.

The set design was by George Tranter, sound design by George Bisset with original music by Paul Karafillis, and the lighting design was by Deryk Hartwick. Costuming was by Wendy Drowley and Diane Brennan with props and decor by Maureen McInerney, and with the work of the HTC members the smooth operation of this extraordinary production was ensured; not forgetting, of course, the production crew and the stage manager, Melanie Belcher.

With a cast of 15, it is impossible to list the individuals. But this was true ensemble acting with each member of the cast undertaking multiple roles and showing an extraordinary versatility with each character. I particularly liked the pairing of opposites; dark voices against light, and the chorus role of the cast in various excerpts. One such instant was the chorus of "ticking clocks" all with different sounds and orchestrated to the speech of the rather nutty *Lord Cut-Glass* who collected clocks of all sorts. Wonderful stuff!

Sandy Green who was the dialect coach must have been very proud of her charges, as the dialogue was consistent throughout, all enhancing the poetry of the language. Well done. The elimination of the First and Second Voices of the original play and replacing them with the actual actors was inspirational and as the director mentioned in his notes, this was to keep the action visual and interesting. It certainly worked and I really have to mention some instances.

The schoolmaster, *Mr Pugh* and his domineering wife, played by Dan Hagan and Janine Evans, illustrated this beautifully.

To listen to *Mr Pugh's* ranting of what would happen to his wife when he poisoned her: "her ears fall off like figs..."and then the complete change to the actual dialogue, "You know best, dear" followed by *Mrs Pugh's*, "Mrs Pugh smiles. .."a smile which would strike fear into any heart! Similarly, *Mrs Ogmores-Pritchard* (Glenda May), a glass widow and hygienic harridan with her two ghostly husbands, *Mr Ogmores* and *Mr Pritchard*, played the small cameos with perfect timing, causing much hilarity in the audience. The simpleton *Bessie Bighead*, portrayed by Natasha Boyd, was another instance of the versatility of the actors. Completely unrecognisable in appearance and voice, this was a great performance. Barry Lockett played the *Reverend Eli Jenkins*, the poet and pastor of the village, and also the lovable drunkard *Cherry Owen* (amongst others). And, of course, blind *Captain Cat* portrayed by Paul Freeman, was the link between the present and the past with his dead comrades and loves.

This production was excellent, a true ensemble performance with the expertise of all involved bringing to life one of the classics of modern literature. Highest praise must go to Chris Baldock as the director and to Helen Ellis as his assistant. Bravo!!

Congratulations to the Heidelberg Theatre Company for a truly memorable and magical production.

HTC's 60th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

BIG BANG AT THE 2012 AGM ON SUNDAY 16TH DEC

The Business will be brief and the Celebration long!

All Subscribers, Members and Friends of the Company are invited to this very special AGM!

And that's not all ...REMINISCENT SUPPERS will be held after **Opening Nights** and at the **First Sunday Matinees** during our 60th. We'll be inviting cast and crew from the original productions and if you were among the audience of the original production we'd like to see you there too, along with all our regular patrons and subscribers.

So if you would like to join us for these special events, book now. We're happy to exchange your tickets so you can join in the fun at the Reminiscent Suppers!!



VALE George Bugge

We have received the sad news that George Bugge passed away peacefully in his sleep on Thursday 8th December, 2011.

George first became involved with the Heidelberg Repertory Group in 1961 operating the sound for **Orpheus Descending**. Alice, his girlfriend, was in the cast and from then on he was apparently hooked because he returned in 1962 to do the sound for **Unexpected Guest** and from then on looked after sound for many years.

George and Alice married in November 1969 and continued their close involvement with the Company. George was an enthusiastic supporter of the new theatre at Rosanna and served on the Committee from the early years representing lighting and sound.

George directed **The Caretaker** in 1974 and **Enter Laughing** in 1977. He assisted Alice with her pantomimes, worked on the sound for **Nicolas Nickleby** and travelled to New Zealand with the cast in 1989. He was responsible for both lighting and sound for the Company's 1981 production of **Under Milk Wood**. Of the 205 plays that the Company staged from 1961 to 1993 George worked on 158 of those.

After Alice's passing in 2007 George retired to Tasmania to be with his daughter, Barbara and grandchildren.

He returned to the Theatre in 2010 with his grandson Cameron to attend the dedication ceremony of *Alice's Garden* and this would have been the last occasion that most of the HTC Family would have seen George.

George Bugge will be fondly remembered by members of the Heidelberg Theatre Company and we extend our condolences to Barbara and family.



left: *HTC Members & Friends mingle at the Christmas Party.*
 right: *Pres. John Gilbert with June Cherrey and Bill Cherrey Award winner Owen Evans (centre).*
 far right: *In House Adjudicators (from left) Paul King, Gayle Poor & Doug Bennett do their stuff for the audience at the Awards.*



Highlights from the President's Report at the 2011 Heidelberg Theatre Company AGM held 11th December 2011

- * Very strong occupancy rates for the Season.
- * 461 Subscribers, 87 Members and 14 Life Members.
- * Turnover \$140,000 plus per annum with \$31,000 operating surplus compared with \$20,000 operating deficit last year. The Company maintained a conservative control on general expenditure with \$108,000 of expenses, an amount similar to 2010.
- * Major capital expenditure; purchase of new Auditorium seats thanks to the substantial financial assistance from the Banyule Council, particularly the support for this project from Cr Tom Melican. And thanks to Life Member, Fern Matthews for her donation, provided earlier, towards the seats.
- * Important People thanked: – Committee, Administration Team, Set Building Team, Technical and Backstage Crews, In-House Awards Adjudicators,
- * Local and national charities and Banyule Council and many individuals named and thanked for their contribution to the Company during the year.
- * Thanks to Justin Stephens who took over direction of **The 39 Steps** and Chris Baldock who directed **Under Milk Wood** assisted by Helen Ellis when Sandy Green became ill.
- * Discontinued leasing of 1st Rosanna Scout Hall. HTC Youth took a break in 2011 and may not re-form..
- * Successful co-productions with Lilydale – **The 39 Steps** and with Williamstown – **The History Boys**.
- * We are still waiting for a draft lease from the Banyule Council which will extend our term for a further 10 years with a 10 year option. We exercised our further option term on 14th January 2003 and the term is due to expire on 8th March, 2013.
- * The Company has lodged objections to the Rezoning of land adjacent to the Theatre on the grounds that it will potentially destroy the community zone that currently exists and adversely affect the Theatre.
- * Local and national charities and profit organisations were supported.

BILL CHERREY AWARD 2011

(text of President's address)

This Award is given each year to an individual member of the Heidelberg Theatre Company as recognition of their outstanding contribution and service to the Company.

This year's recipient is a great example of a member who has contributed his talents into several facets of the Company with enthusiasm, skill, integrity and commitment, embracing the spirit that drives Heidelberg Theatre Company.

He first became involved with HTC in 2001 working on *The Ham Funeral* and has been involved with HTC primarily in roles behind the scenes, as production coordinator, sound and lighting operator and more recently as a regular set builder, set building coordinator and set designer, committee member, coordinator of technical requirements, working bee coordinator and *Capers* performer.

In a theatre environment that can at times be overpowered by talented egos, this year's winner has always been able to objectively address many challenges and cooperatively work with the many talented members to always strive for the best results for our productions and the most beneficial outcomes for our Theatre.

I would now like to call on June Cherrey to come to the stage to present this year's Bill Cherrey Award to Owen Evans.

(J. Gilbert/J. Cherrey)

President's Report Highlights ctd.

* Vale. It was noted with regret the passing during the year of George Bugge and Michael Walker.

2011 has been a successful and rewarding one for HTC. We are always looking for talent and skills both on stage and behind the scenes. There will always be a need for people with administration, hospitality, accounting, marketing and handy man skills. Regardless of what level of experience you hold we will be able to make use of your offer. If you have ever considered or are thinking of becoming more involved, make your interest known to the Company so that we can organise a suitable introduction for you.

John Gilbert, President, 2011

(a full transcript of the President's Report is available on the HTC website)

HTC 2011 In House Awards

Adjudicators, Gayle Poor, Paul King and Doug Bennett presented the Annual HTC In House Awards for the 2011 Season under the following headings:

WINNERS OF AWARDS in Non-Performance Areas –

Sound Design: **Justin Stephens** – *The 39 Steps*.

Costumes: **Wendy Drowley & Diane Brennan** – *Under Milk Wood*.

Stage Management: **Margaret Hassall** – *The 39 Steps*

Lighting Design: **Deryk Hartwick** – *The 39 Steps & Under Milk Wood*.

Set Design: **Merinda Backway** – *The 39 Steps* and **George Tranter** – *Under Milk Wood*.

Performance in a Supporting Role:

Adrian Carr in *The 39 Steps*

Tim Constantine in *The History Boys*

Juliet Hayday in *The History Boys*

Stephen Shinkfield in *Under Milk Wood*.

Performance in a Leading Role:

Peter Maver in *The History Boys*

Chris McLean in *The 39 Steps*.

Direction:

Justin Stephens – *The 39 Steps*.

Adjudicators Award:

Sarina Cassino in *Enchanted April*.

Victorian Drama League Awards

Our VDL-nominated play for 2011 was **The History Boys**.

The Production received Nominations for Lighting, Costume, Best Actor in a Minor Role, Two Best Actor in a Comedy Supporting role, Best Director and Best Play and **Neil Williamson** won a **Silver Award for Sound Design**.

We congratulate our VDL Award winner and the Cast and Crew of **The History Boys**.

FEBRUARY

Saturday 11th 10.30am **Working Bee** with Lunch

Saturday 18th 10.30am **Working Bee** with Lunch

Thursday 23rd 8.00pm **FIRST NIGHT – The Lion In Winter**

Sunday 26th 6.30pm **Audition** – An Inspector Calls

Monday 27th 7.30pm **Audition** – An Inspector Calls

Tuesday 28th 7.30pm Heidelberg Film Society

MARCH

Saturday 10th 8.00pm **FINAL NIGHT – The Lion In Winter**

Tuesday 27th 7.30pm Heidelberg Film Society

AUDITION NOTICE

Heidelberg Theatre Company's production of

AN INSPECTOR CALLS

by **J.B. Priestley**

directed by **John Jenkins**

Auditions will be held at the Theatre

36 Turnham Avenue Rosanna (Melways ref: 31 A1)

**Sunday 26th Feb from 6:30pm &
Monday 27th Feb. from 7.30pm.**

Play Season: 3rd – 19th May 2012

Weeknights and Saturdays at 8:00pm

Sundays at 2:00pm

A family engagement celebration is interrupted by the arrival of an inspector of police who informs the family that his visit is due to a young woman's apparent suicide. When questioned as to how this was relevant to any person here, the inspector shows the man of the house a photograph of the dead woman. From that point on a mystery begins to unfold. Accusations fly back and forth.

Involvements become apparent and guilt begins to take control as the inspector systematically brings down the walls of each of those present. With a story built on morals and an ending that those who have watched still talk about today, **An Inspector Calls** is a classic in every sense of the word. A gripping drama with lessons learned and one never forgotten.

Characters

Arthur Birling - 50's - Head of the Birling household and owner of his own manufacturing company. He is your definitive 1920s, white collar, head of the house. His opinion is the only opinion. Pompous and arrogant.

Sybil Birling - 50's - Wife of Arthur and woman of the house. Your typical wife of a prominent business man. Very self assured and protective of her family. Holds high positions in a few philanthropic organisations, not so much to help the needy, but more to feel the power of her status over the ones she has the ultimate decision to help or not.

Sheila Birling - Early 20's - Young Daughter of Arthur and Sybil. Like many young ladies of that era, the most important thing to Sheila is getting married to a wealthy man. Maintaining her status is important. She has a kind heart, but can sometimes emulate her mother in her arrogance and self importance.

Eric Birling - 20's - Young son of the Birlings. Trouble follows this man. He loves a drink, loves the girls and loves finding any way possible to do things the quick way, which is not always the right way. A kind hearted rogue, who usually finds himself in trouble because of the fact that he acts before he considers the consequences of his actions.

Gerald Croft - 30's - Engaged to Sheila Birling. The son of a wealthy business man (who is a competitor of Arthur). Has finally proposed to Sheila after he virtually disappeared for a few months without any contact. Believes himself to be an upright man, but has a skeleton in the closet, which could ruin his future.

Inspector Goole - Late 50's - An inspector of police who arrives at the Birling household to ask questions regarding the suicide of a young lady earlier in the evening. He commands respect without being overbearing. Mysterious and thorough. Bit by bit he begins to break down the walls of each of the household through information he somehow gets each person to reveal themselves.

Edna (Maid) - any age 16 and up - Very few lines, but perfect for someone wanting a start in theatre and wants to be a part of a classic tale.

**Auditions are by appointment only.
Please email the Director to make an
appointment at johnthegonz@gmail.com**

LOOKING TO RAISE MONEY FOR YOUR CLUB OR CHARITY IN 2012?

Why not organise a
**Group Booking to HTC
BLOCK BOOKING
OPTIONS:**

**Preview & First Nighters'
Specials
Groups of 50
\$10 per ticket.**

(only available thru the Box Office)

or

**Groups of 10 or more
any performance
\$20 per ticket.**

**BOOK ONLINE at: htc.org.au
or call the HTC Box Office
9457 4117**

HTC'S XMAS HAMPER

The 2011 Winner of this coveted prize is HTC Subscribers, Sue and Allan Pinches of Kingsbury. Congratulations from all at HTC.

FM System Phonic Ear Headphones (no hearing aid needed) will be available for *all performances* during our 2012 Season. To make a reservation, please call the Box Office on 9457 4117. The System is being trialled with assistance from the Banyule City Council.

HELP!!!

needed at the

WORKING BEES

for **The Lion in Winter**

Saturdays

11th & 18th February

from 10.30am

lunch is provided

So do come along, it's a great experience and a fun time too!

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

Like to know more – call the Theatre on

9455 3039