

Arsenic & Old Lace

by **Joseph Kesselring** directed by **Bruce Akers**

22nd Nov – 8th December, 2012

Evenings at 8.00pm

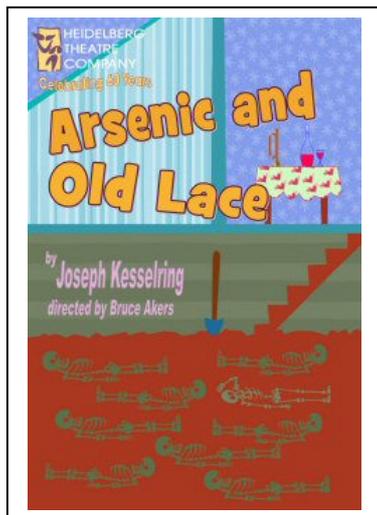
Matinees: Sundays - 25th Nov. & 2nd Dec. at 2pm

extra performance: Saturday 8th Dec. at 2pm

PROMPTS

No. 5. November, 2012

Subscribers requiring to alter their chosen night or reserve their booking are asked to call BEFORE Wednesday 7th November, 2012.



There's something strange about the *Brewsters*.

Mortimer, recently betrothed and therefore facing the end of his bachelorhood, finds himself working as a reluctant theatre critic, and *Teddy* simply believes that he's President Theodore Roosevelt. The only normal ones in the family appear to be the sweet, charitable spinster Aunts, *Martha* and *Abby*. But, appearances can be deceiving!

Joseph Kesselring's hilarious black comedy first opened to rave reviews in 1941 and went on to enjoy highly successful runs in New York and London. The 1944 film adaptation starring Cary Grant was a box office smash. Audiences and critics alike praised the play's dark comedy and intricate storyline, with one New York Evening Post reviewer writing: 'The evening is at once so side-splitting and terrific that it can be guaranteed to make even dramatic critics care about the Theatre'. Since then, *Arsenic & Old Lace* has continued to keep audiences in stitches with its zany characters and outrageous plot.

The Company is excited to bring you this wonderful production for the first time since 1989, and we have rounded up a top-notch cast to ensure this will be an unforgettable night of theatre. Bringing the *Brewsters* to life will be Andrew Pennycuik as *Mortimer*, Chris Baldock as *Teddy*, Andrew van de Gumster as *Jonathan*, Sandy Green as *Abby* and Wendy Drowley as *Martha*.

Adding to the hilarity will be Theodora Neeve as *Elaine Harper*, Mick Poor as *Rev. Dr. Harper*, Alastair Rice as *Dr. Einstein*, Andrew McNess as *Officer O'Hara*, Colm Carthy as *Officer Brophy*, Jim Thomson as *Lieutenant Rooney*, Ryan Purdey as *Officer Klein*, David Dodd as *Mr. Gibbs* and David Small as *Mr. Witherspoon*.

Under the direction of Bruce Akers and with David Dodd as Production Assistant, the show is shaping up to be a sure-fire hit. Production Coordinator Maureen McInerney, Stage Manager Melanie Belcher and stage crew Bobbie Parish, Sally Ockenden and Sheelagh Belton will be lending their expertise to the production, while set designer George Tranter and lighting designer Craig Pearcey will work their magic to conjure the spooky atmosphere of the *Brewster's* Brooklyn home. Owen Evans again leads our team of Set Builders; Paddy Moriarty, Des Harris, Neville Wilkie, Doug McNaughton, Sam Gilbert, Mal Cother, Ian McCabe and Christian Dell'Olio. Dianne Brennan is in charge of costumes for the show.

This production of *Arsenic and Old Lace* is sure to be a cracker so book early to avoid disappointment and join us for a night of hilarious high farce as we bring this brilliant black comedy to life!

Tickets have been selling fast, the first night and the first matinee are a sell-out already and sales for the rest of the season were so strong that there will be an additional performance on **SATURDAY 8th DECEMBER at 2pm**. If you have your 'favourite spot' in the Theatre then your best chance of getting those seats is to look at booking for either performance on Saturday 8th.

So please book early; online at htc.org.au or give the Box Office a call on 9457 4117 to secure your seats.

And Subscribers, please call the Box Office early if you need to exchange your tickets. Flexibook Subscribers, please make your booking early so we can ensure your preferred option.

*We keep on reminding you,
because we want you to be there!
at the -*

Very Special 60th Anniversary Party
following the Annual General Meeting on

SUNDAY 16th December from 3pm

*the Business will be brief and the
Celebration long!*

All Subscribers, Members and Friends
of the Company are invited!

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

36 Turnham Avenue, Rosanna
P.O Box 141, Rosanna VIC 3084

Enquiries 9455 3039
Email htc@htc.org.au

web: htc.org.au
Inc. No. A008432X

HTC YOUTH presents

SNOW WHITE the Untold Story

by Karl B. Peterson directed by Christian Dell'Olio

Wednesday 19th – Saturday 22nd

December at 8pm

Tickets: \$10 Adult

\$5 Children



A fractured fairytale version of Snow White.

The laughs never end with the evil Queen, magic mirror, sassy Snow White, a dim-witted Hunter, a handsome Prince Charming, and four not-so-dwarfish Dwarfs.

You will laugh your way through this zany retelling of this tale

Audience: Families including children from 7 years

(running time: approx 70 minutes)

Venue: The Heidelberg Theatre Company 36 Turnham Ave, Rosanna

Summer of the Seventeenth Doll

by Ray Lawler

Directed by Paul King

Reviewed by Ken Barnes for Theatrecraft.

September 17, 2012.

Ray Lawler's celebrated **Summer of the Seventeenth Doll** was first staged 57 years ago so it seemed an appropriate play to perform in Heidelberg's 60th anniversary year. It is a yarn that has stood the test of time partly because of its incisive yet subtle revelations of the Australian character and aspects of Australian life that could never be described as clichéd. To bring home its humour and poignancy requires careful casting and skilful direction. Thankfully, both were evident in Heidelberg's comfortable theatre on the evening I attended.

All seven actors were proficient enough to represent their characters accurately and convincingly, providing the audience with the feeling that we were right there with them in that Carlton living room. This was Olive's home and she was host to the two cane-cutters who had spent their summer layoff there for the past sixteen years. Jodie Symes was totally believable in the demanding role of *Olive*, whether bouncing around in an upbeat fashion, defending her position in the face of criticism or dissolving in tears when her world disintegrated toward the end. Olive's friend Pearl was a reserved and reflective character. While Tina Bono delivered her lines with precision and good timing her interpretation was a little too subdued until she became more assertive in Act 2. I felt intrigued by the character and wanted to know more about her; but perhaps this was the writer's intention.

The two male leads were played with great panache by Dan Haberfield (as *Barney*) and Gavin Williams (as *Roo*). The role of *Barney* gave Dan an ideal opportunity to display his engaging talent as his character interacted in various ways with all the others. Whether swaggering around the stage, sparring with Emma and Olive, arguing violently with Roo, cajoling Kathie or wheedling Pearl, he brought credibility to the role and extracted the best laughs from the audience. As the more controlled and serious-minded *Roo*, Gavin's interactions were equally convincing, especially in his often tender though emotionally explosive relationship with Olive which resulted in perhaps the most poignant scene in the play.



from left: Jodie Symes as *Olive*, Gavin Williams as *Roo*, Joan Moriarty as *Emma*, Tina Bono as *Pearl* and Dan Haberfield as *Barney*.

Anna Rodway was another audience favourite. She came across as a slightly naive, entirely sweet and somewhat unsophisticated *Kathie* (aka "*Bubba*") enjoying the protection of the two older men and the interest of the younger *Johnnie*. The latter was played well by Joel Evans, another actor who delivered his lines accurately and with good projection. My only reservation was the every-present smile and the rather less-than-convincing demeanour when facing up to *Roo*; after all, it was *Johnnie* who had de-throned *Roo* as top dog. Although mentioned last, one of my favourites was Joan Moriarty as *Emma*, Olive's gravel-voiced, acerbic and sometimes grouchy mother. Joan played the role for all its worth and could not have failed to be a hit with any audience. The community singing interlude — where she displayed excellent timing — was a highlight.

Director and cast were backed by an equally proficient production team headed by Karen Wakeham and Anne Smith, with Bruce Moorhouse and Melanie Belcher as stage managers. The first rate set was designed by the director and included well-chosen furniture and seemingly authentic properties organised by Bronwyn Parker. The dolls were provided by Bobbie Parish. Deryk Hardwick did a great job with the lighting and George Bissett designed the sound effects including realistic New Year's Eve celebrations, car horns and shouting from outside the house. Chris McLean produced a high-quality program guide. This was a most enjoyable performance, made more so by Heidelberg's excellent display of costumes, archival posters, photographs and articles celebrating 60 years of theatre.

AUDITION NOTICE

Heidelberg Theatre Company's production of

THE DRESSER

by Ronald Harwood

directed by Karen Wakeham

Auditions will be held at the Theatre
36 Turnham Avenue Rosanna (Melway ref: 32 A1)

**Sunday November 25th at 6.30 – 8.30pm
& Monday November 26th at 7.30 – 9.30pm**

Season Dates: 21st February 9th March, 2013

Weeknights and Saturdays at 8:00pm Sundays at 2:00pm

This play presents a wonderful challenge to actors. English accents are necessary; also all the characters have at some time in their lives performed in a successful repertory troupe.

Characters:

Sir.... Age 50s, 60s, older. In spite of Harwood's disclaimer Sir Donald Wolfit is a good starting-point. A monumental talent, a great actor in the grand manner whose greatest role is Lear, he is also company manager, risking all in serving the art of interpreting the Shakespeare he loves. He has been very successful and has saved enough money to retire, but 'can't' leave the stage although so exhausted that for him the line between role and reality has blurred.

Norman....Age flexible, but was briefly an actor and has worked as a dresser seventeen years. Devoted to Sir and to the theatre, also very efficient at his job, which requires him to be sensitive, forward-thinking and sometimes ruthless. Vulnerable to hurts from Sir, he can also be very funny. Norman avoids pain; he enjoys chocolate, brandy, and things being 'lovely'.

Her Ladyship....Born into a theatrical family, and younger than Sir, with whom she has been living for many years. She is nevertheless well past the first flush of youth (and the role of Cordelia.). Years of cold digs and indifferent reviews have quashed her interest in performing and she longs for the comfort of retirement.

Irene....Young. Attractive, romantic and slender woman who worships the theatre and believes proximity to Sir to be a spiritual experience. She plays Lear's map-bearer in the Shakespeare play.

Madge....Middle-aged, Stage Manager. Has worked for Sir for twenty years; is covertly in love with him. Like all good SMs she organizes every aspect of the running of the play with effortless efficiency. Decisive, sincere, indispensable to Sir and Her Ladyship, thoroughly responsible and capable, but described by Norman as 'Cold, businesslike, boring'.

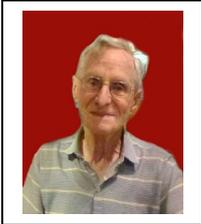
The other two characters are actors in King Lear:-

Thornton....'toothless as the Fool'...capable actor, not young.

Oxenb....'limping as Edmund'. Does his job but not particularly amenable. Wounded in war, cynical.

For more details contact the Director Karen Wakeman
email:- karenwakeham@y7mail.com or mobile:- 0439 552043

VALE - DENNIS PAIN by Owen Evans, HTC Set Building Leader and Committee



Dennis and I started at HTC on the same play – The Ham Funeral. The difference is that he stayed and went on to have an increasing role in participating in, and later organising, set-building, while I continued a peripheral association with the theatre.

While I don't have memories of Dennis from that first encounter, we came together on other projects – one that I remember specially was preparing the foundation for the erection of what is now the paint shed (prior to its erection, paint and painting equipment was stored even more haphazardly than it is now). Dennis was central to the achievement of many of the sets that we have enjoyed over recent years. He was inventive and committed, and never absent when needed.

While we know Dennis from his set building

activities, he has skills in many other areas. Metal work was his forte, but he also worked in plastic, and was an accomplished wood-carver. In his lounge room was an organ, and I understand that he was also a singer. Those were aspects of Dennis' accomplishments that I regret that I didn't experience.

Before his association with HTC, Dennis was active with TADVic – Technical Aid to the Disabled (Victoria) – a voluntary group which links people with technical skills with people with special needs to devise equipment which can help with their everyday lives.

Dennis not only participated actively in set-building, he also contributed in areas of photography and theatre maintenance, he served on the Committee and in 2004 he received the Bill Cherrey Award for exceptional service to the Company. He will be sorely missed by his colleagues.

THE COMMITTEE IS DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THE PLAYS FOR ITS 2013 SEASON

- PLAY 1 **The Dresser - 21 February – 9 March.**
by Ronald Harwood, directed by Karen Wakeham
- PLAY 2 **August: Osage County - 2 – 18 May.**
by Tracy Letts, directed by Joan Moriarty
- PLAY 3 **Blithe Spirit - 11 – 28 July.**
by Noel Coward, directed by Tess Maurici Ryan
- PLAY 4 **One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest
12 – 27 September.**
from the Ken Kesey novel adapted by Dale Wasserman
directed by Chris Baldock
- PLAY 5 **Steel Magnolias - 21 November – 7 December**
by Robert Harling, directed by Brett Turner

More information on the plays will feature in the 2013 Playbill. A copy of the Playbill will be included with the final issue of Prompts coming to you in a couple of weeks from now.

Details of Subscription Renewal, New Subscriptions, Gift Subscriptions, Gift Vouchers and Company Membership will be in the Playbill.

All patrons of the Company are invited to become active members. Your participation will be greatly welcomed. Try something new or bring your well-practised talents to our theatre. There are plenty of opportunities to hone and use your skills, make new friends and have fun.

NOVEMBER

Saturday 10 th	10.30am	Working Bee with Lunch.
Saturday 17 th	10.30am	Working Bee with Lunch.
Thursday 22 nd	8.00pm	FIRST NIGHT – Arsenic & Old Lace
Sunday 25 th	6.30pm	Audition – The Dresser
Monday 26 th	7.00pm	Audition – The Dresser
Tuesday 27 th	7.30pm	Heidelberg Film Society – Good Old Summertime.

DECEMBER

Saturday 8 th	8.00pm	FINAL NIGHT – Arsenic & Old Lace
Sunday 16 th	3pm	Annual General Meeting, In House Awards & 60th Anniversary Celebration
Wednesday 19 th – Saturday 22 nd	8pm	HTC Youth present SNOW WHITE the Untold Story.

WHO, WHAT, WHERE ...

Chris Baldock, Chris is playing Teddy in Arsenic & Old Lace, and Stephen Hall, two great supporters of our Company, are also working at Chapel off Chapel in two very different shows.

Chris is directing the intensely moving play, The **Laramie Project** by Moises Kaufman for the Mockingbird Theatre. It runs from 26 Oct – 11 Nov., while Stephen is appearing in **Bond-A-Rama!** which runs from 17th Oct – 9 Nov. Stephen co-wrote the show which features 4 actors hilariously recreating all 22 Bond films.

It is a return season for both shows which previously played to sold out audiences. All the best to you both. Booking online for both shows at www.chapeloffchapel.com.au or call **8290 7000**

HELP!!!

Needed at the
WORKING BEES

for

Arsenic & Old Lace

Saturdays

10th & 17th

November

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 front of house.

Like to know more – call the
Theatre on **9455 3039**