

This is the first issue of *Prompts* as an eNewsletter.

Prompts will now be distributed by email, it will no longer be available in a paper version, however it will still be available to read on our website, www.htc.org.au. We hope you continue to enjoy keeping up with HTC's news in its new format. Your Editor wants to thank Chris McLean for the posters and David Belton for the photographs in *Prompts*.

NEWS FOR OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Thanks to all our Subscribers who renewed their Subscriptions this year and welcome to all our new Subscribers. There is still time to get your subscription in for our Five Play Season. To subscribe either complete the Order Form in the 2014 Playbill or call the Box Office, leave your name and contact number, and we will get back to you and organise your subscription over the phone. Subscriptions can't be completed by you online. If you don't have a Playbill handy, you can download a copy from our website - or call the Box Office, leave your name and address, and we will post one out to you.

IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TICKETS HAVEN'T ARRIVED IN POST - please let us know. We have had, to quote our Queen, if not an 'annus horribilis' at least a month of horribilis, when the ticket printer was no longer compatible with the ticketing system! A new ticket machine has been bought, but if you mailed your application around Christmas/New Year and haven't received your subscription tickets, please call the Box Office and let us know.

ONLINE TICKET PURCHASES - Our online ticketing system is now open for general ticket purchases and Group Bookings or if you prefer you can book through the Box Office.

If you have chosen our Flexibook Subscription option and you need to exchange your tickets or book seats, then please call the Box Office or send an email. This procedure also applies to any ticketing query.

We hope you enjoy this great year of Theatre at HTC which includes three very popular plays never before produced at HTC. After many years, it's forty years since **The Glass Menagerie**, with Alice Bugge and Doug Cole in the roles of *Amanda* and *Tom*, was produced by HTC in the Rechabite Hall in Ivanhoe. More recently, but still it's been 24 years, we are delighted to be bringing back to our HTC audiences, **Amadeus**, to be directed by Bruce Akers who played *Joseph II, Emperor of Austria*, in our production in 1990.

So please, do help spread the word. Bring your friends and neighbours along to a show; they will thank you!!

Online - htc.org.au Box Office - 9457 4117 Email- htc@htc.org.au

**MEDAL (OAM) OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA IN THE
GENERAL DIVISION - Mrs Wendy Margaret DROWLEY, for
service to the performing arts.**



We were delighted to read on Australia Day that our Vice president and life member Wendy Drowley has been recognised for her services to the performing arts. Wendy has been an active member of the Heidelberg Theatre Company since 1953 and a member of the committee for over 40 years.

In addition to her many appearances on stage as an actor, she is also an accomplished director, set designer and production coordinator. During this time Wendy has also served as Secretary, Liaison Officer, Fundraiser, Project Manager, Ticket Secretary and Artistic Director for HTC.

Wendy has a passion for designing and making costumes and for more than 30 years and 112 productions she has owned the role of Wardrobe Mistress, resulting in HTC amassing a wardrobe collection that is second to none amongst the Melbourne amateur theatre community.

On behalf of the Committee and the Members of the Heidelberg Theatre Company I extend our congratulations to Wendy for receiving the OAM, an award that is certainly well deserved and wonderful recognition for her commitment to HTC.

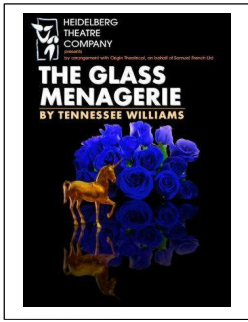
John Gilbert, President, Heidelberg Theatre Company

**WORKING BEES for GLASS MENAGERIE HELP NEEDED Saturdays - 8th & 15th February
from 10.00am**

Lunch is provided. So 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 on 9455 3039



The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams

directed by Karen Wakeham

"A delicate, moving and beautifully written play.

The Glass Menagerie is truly a seminal classic of enduring appeal. "

20th February to 8th March - Evenings at 8.00pm.

Matinees: Sundays 23rd February & 2nd March, 2014

Ticket Prices: Adults: \$25 Concession Card Holders & Members \$22 (*Senior's Cards not included*)

Groups of 10+ - \$20 per ticket

Preview Night & First Night Specials - Groups 50+ - \$10 per ticket

(Subscribers requiring to alter their chosen night or reserve their booking are asked to call BEFORE Wednesday 5th February, 2014.)

The Glass Menagerie, considered by many critics to be the best play by Tennessee Williams, is also his most autobiographical. Though set in 1937, as a 'memory play', it also invokes the ways in which the past plays its tricks to haunt us all.

Its well-known plot deals with the author, represented by Tom Wingfield, a writer and dutiful son to his deserted mother, Amanda. He lives with her and his sister Laura, in claustrophobic genteel poverty. Tom stifles his creative instincts, working in a shoe factory to support them all, seeking escape at night in the bars and movie-houses of St. Louis. Laura, fragile as her collection of tiny glass animals, seems to her mother to be on the way to a humiliating life as an old maid; so Amanda asks Tom to bring home a gentleman caller for her.



This he does. Into their home comes Jim O'Connor, a handsome stranger, after that, nothing is as before.

The cast is a small ensemble of very accomplished performers. Marianne Collopy (*Amanda*), Clare Hayes (*Laura*), and Ian McGregor (*Tom*) are all familiar figures on the Heidelberg stage, and we welcome Warren Logan as (*Jim - the gentleman caller*). John Cheshire is the Musician.

The Glass Menagerie surely challenges the imaginations of the creative team, and so we are fortunate to have Marie Mackrell as set designer, Wendy Drowley (and Team) for costumes, Deryk Hartwick and Emma Fox in charge of lighting, and Bruce Moorhouse for sound. Gavin Baker will design projections. Original music has been composed for this production by David Cheshire.

Our wonderful set-building team, Owen, Paddy, Neville, Mal, Doug, Des, Christian and others, are working hard to realise the set design. The Incomparable Mel will be SM, Bobbie will keep order from behind the prompt book, and all will be overseen by Joan Moriarty, Master Production Manager.

This is director Karen Wakeham's third production for HTC after **The Dresser** last year and **The Lion in Winter** in 2012. **The Glass Menagerie** is an enduring and beloved theatre classic, both in America and across the globe. It is haunting, delicate, poetic – and exquisitely written. Don't miss it.

photo: Clare Hayes as Laura - The Glass Menagerie



AUDITION NOTICE - The Dixie Swim Club by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope

and Jamie Wooten. directed by **Gayle Poor**

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

Sunday 23rd & Monday 24th February from 7.00pm

Play Season: 1st – 17th May, 2014. Weeknights and Saturdays at 8.00pm, Sundays at 2.00pm

OPEN AUDITIONS Enquiries: Gayle Poor, gaylepoor@hotmail.com

The Dixie Swim Club is a light-hearted look at the friendship of five Southern women over the course of several decades. Having bonded as members of a college swim team, they reconnect every August at a beachfront house in North Carolina's Outer Banks, free from husbands, kids and jobs, where they spend their days and nights sharing hopes, concerns, apprehensions, doubts, disappointments and regrets.

*In many ways a companion piece to **Steel Magnolias**, this all-female production celebrates the best of women's relationships and the best aspects of Southern culture, with disarmingly self-deprecating humour.*

The play is set in the living room of a beach front cottage and focuses on four weekends, spanning a period of thirty-three years. Quick mathematic calculations puts the age range from approx 44 - 77. Gayle is looking to cast 50ish women who can play the range from 40-70. For those interested in auditioning the roles are as follows:

Sheree - is the team captain - and all American mom, who has spent her life raising her family in Raleigh, North Carolina. A health nut, with boundless energy.

Dinah - a lawyer with a prestigious law firm in Atlanta - a career driven, overachiever who excels at most things, except romance.

Lexie - southern belle from Chapel Hill, North Carolina - an Event Planner for a large hotel chain, who enjoys being married, over and over, and is determined to retain her youth.

Vernadette - A public school teacher from Spivey's Corner, North Carolina. Married straight out of college life has dealt Vernadette a difficult hand, but her problematic home life and lack of finances have not dampened her sense of humour.

Jeri Neal recently relocated to Charlottesville, Virginia, is the naive member of the group. Leading a very sheltered life, thus far, but has some surprises to reveal to her friends. American accents are required.

REVIEWS

Steel Magnolias by **Robert Harling**, directed by **Brett Turner**.

Reviewed by **Jill Scott**,
2013 In-House Appraisal Presenter for HTC.

The final production for 2013 **Steel Magnolias** certainly did not disappoint the near capacity audiences. The ensemble cast of strong actors carried this modern tragi-drama with great conviction. The casting was excellent, supported by strong directorial choices by Brett Turner.

Each role was well-developed and played with total integrity. The skilful casting enabled a strong sense of ensemble to develop throughout the play. There was a convincing feeling of genuine female friendship as the actors established a believable bond between them in the intimate setting of the local beauty salon. Quote *'There are no secrets here.'*

The director kept the pace and tension moving from earlier, hopeful days through to the sad but heroic ending creating empathy between the characters and also from the audience to the cast. In a highly talented ensemble, *M'Lynn* played by Marianne Collopy, gave an outstanding performance.

The set, designed by George Tranter, was a remarkable reproduction of a home-run hair salon. All the actors managed the hairdressing minutiae convincingly, cutting, teasing and curling the clients as the small-town story unfolded.

This was a very busy production with lots of entrances and exits and the stage manager did an efficient job in keeping things running smoothly.

The costumes depicted the period accurately - they were well sourced as well as flattering for each actor in a play which was concerned with personal presentation. There were times when the actors found difficulty in sustaining momentum in what is a very wordy text, unfolding over an extended period of time.

The production was supported by an excellent soundscape, which, together with the careful attention to detail from all involved, created a highly entertaining and moving production. *photo: The Cast & Crew of Steel Magnolias*



ROBIN HOOD & MAID MARIAN by **Karl B. Peterson**

directed by Christian Dell'Olio

Reviewed on Wed. 18th December, 2013 by Joan Moriarty,
Convenor, HTC's Play Selection Committee.

This year's HTC's Youth Production was a clever spoof on the legendary tale of Robin Hood and his love for Maid Marian. This version casts the nasty Sheriff of Nottingham as the villain who is determined to win Maid Marian by fair means or foul. Initially the former but mostly the latter. There are plenty of twists and turns and misunderstandings until things are finally resolved, in a surprise ending.

Director Christian Dell'Olio must be congratulated for providing a very enjoyable evening. Though not really suitable for little folk, there was enough sword fighting and rushing around to keep them attentive.

I felt that Nick Brown, as our hero, *Robin Hood*, could have done with a bit more oomph and swagger. *Maid Marian* (Ella Di Marco) was suitably demure and winsome. For me, the acting honours go to *Marian's Nurse* (Jess Cook) and her *Mother* (Roisin O'Neill). The rest of the cast were all very believable and full of energy.

Christian had no Sherwood Forest, as he had to make do with the Steel Magnolia's set with a few minor changes but he used the space effectively. Perhaps his *Merry Men* might have carried a little greenery just to remind us of the setting, but this is a minor quibble. Lighting and sound were very appropriate and cast and audience certainly enjoyed themselves. Well done!
photo: Cast & Crew of Robin Hood



HTC's Annual General Meeting

15th December 2013 - Highlights from the President's Report

As we complete our 61st year we can once again look back at a year that has been both successful and rewarding. At the close of 2013 we will have produced 398 plays. Financially we are in a sound position with adequate cash reserves to cover 10 months normal expenditure. This is a great position compared to 3 years ago when we only held the coverage equivalent of three months.



We are fortunate that the Heidelberg Theatre Company has a strong, dedicated and talented team to drive the artistic and administrative needs, whilst also managing to attract some of the best theatre people available in Melbourne to join with us and build on our established talent base.

Every year there is always an unexpected change or two and this year was no exception. Due to the unavailability of Tess Maurici Ryan, Wendy Drowley stepped in to successfully direct **Blithe Spirit**. Regrettably due to an injury suffered by Tim Constantine, the last 2 performances of **One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest** had to be cancelled. We are pleased to report that Tim made a recovery and was married to Pauline Snell at the theatre on 14th October

The HTC Youth group, under the coordination of Christian Dell'Olio and, with mentor assistance provided by Chris McLean and Karen Wakeham will stage a production of **Robin Hood & Maid Marian**.

Very strong occupancy rates for the Season. Ranging from 82% to 99%. 526 Subscribers compared to 461 in 2011, 82 Members and 13 Life Members. Turnover \$145,00 compared with \$154,000 in 2012 with \$24,000 operating surplus compared with \$40,000 in 2012 and cash reserves in the order of \$101,00 plus compared to \$73,000 in 2012. Expenses in 2013 \$120K an amount similar to the previous year \$114K. There has not been any major capital expenditure items this year.

The President thanked the Committee, Administration Team, Play Selection Committee, Front of House Team, Set Building Team, Technical and Backstage Crews, In-House Appraisal Presenters of the five plays in the 2013 season - Anne Holt and Jill Scott. The Company thanks Ann and Jill for their interesting, perceptive and entertaining review of the season. The Banyule Council for the loan of the phonic ear and many individuals were named and thanked for their contribution to the Company during the year. Local and national charities and non-profit organisations were supported.

On the 22 March this year following the expiry of our option term on 9 March 2013, the Committee wrote to the Banyule Council requesting another 10 year Lease which would place our expiry at 9 March 2023. The Banyule City Council responded on 6 May and 11 July stating a new lease had to be prepared consistent with other community based agreements for council owned facilities. They advised that we would receive a response shortly. Seven months later we are waiting for the new lease documentation.

MODEL RULES - We have elected to engross our current Model Rules into the new Model Rules format and this document has been submitted to Consumer Affairs Victoria for registration. Accordingly there are no changes to our current operating rules and therefore no amendments need to be tabled

Vale. We said goodbye to the following Heidelberg Theatre Company family members this year, Joyce Sharp Life Member, Aileen Weinberg Life Member, Tim McLaughlan, Bruce McBrien OAM, Bruce Skeggs and Bob Crawford.

The Committee is pleased to report that the 2013 year has been another successful and rewarding one for the Heidelberg Theatre Company. As our 61st year draws to a close we can safely state that the Theatre Company is in a sound financial position and is artistically ready to accept the challenges ahead. We should all be proud to reflect on the dedicated members who willingly volunteer their talent and time to this thriving community asset. Proud of what has been achieved not only for the people of Banyule, but also for the greater theatre community of Melbourne. We have continued to deliver productions of high quality live theatre accessible and affordable to a broad audience base with a playbill that continues to offer both cultural diversity and value for money entertainment.

The Heidelberg Theatre Company provides wonderful opportunities for involvement at all levels and ages, both on and offstage. Whether you are an actor, or a back stage person, someone who loves costumes or a technical person looking for a challenge, there is a role or two here for you. We are always ready to welcome new members to join our Theatre so that we can continue to deliver great shows. On behalf of the Committee we thank all of those who have contributed to ensure that 2013 has been another successful year.

(a full transcript of the President's Report is available on the HT website, www.htc.org.au)

Photo from left, Hon. Sec Brett Hunt, Hon. President John Gilbert, Hon. Treasurer Bruce Akers.

President's Award 2013 - FERN MATTHEWS

This award, which the Committee decided to establish in 2007, is not necessarily an annual award. The President's Award is awarded to a member of the Company where recognition is due for a life time of service, achievement and involvement with the Company.

This year's recipient has a history with the Heidelberg Theatre Company that dates back to 1952 when she played a *servant girl* in the play **Lilium** which was a CAE production to initiate the support for the Heidelberg Repertory Group, now known

as the Heidelberg Theatre Company. She worked with founding members Joyce Whitfield, Bruce McBrien and Elaine Robinson to help establish the 'Rep' as it was known then, contributing in both acting and back stage roles.

She was on the first adjudicator's panel for the HTC In-House Awards in 1998 and was also a supporter and assisted Alice Bugge with the annual children's pantos. In 1998 she was made a Life Member of the Heidelberg Theatre Company and today stands as our longest serving member. Whilst in recent years she has not had the capacity to be as physically involved at HTC, she has been a generous financial supporter on several occasions

This year's winner of the President's Award is a Life Member with over 50 year's contribution to the fabric and character of the Heidelberg Theatre Company. It is my pleasure to announce that Fern Matthews is the recipient of the President's Award in 2013.

photo: John & Fern with the President's Award



2013 BILL CHERREY AWARD - MELANIE BELCHER

This Award is named after one of the Heidelberg Theatre Company's long serving past Presidents, the late Bill Cherrey. This Award is given each year to an individual meaning contribution and service to the Company.

This year's recipient joined the Heidelberg Theatre Company in 2011 for the production of **The 39 Steps** as part of the backstage crew. Since then she has worked on 12 successive productions and has become our stage manager of choice.

This year she expanded her skills to include the role of assistant production coordinator. Always calm, always happy with a generous smile and always reliable, this year's recipient has become one of the Company's most valuable members.

When a member contributes their talents and skills willingly and enthusiastically to the Company we are all the richer for their valuable contribution, as they add to the spirit that drives the Heidelberg Theatre Company.

President John Gilbert called on June Cherrey to present this year's Bill Cherrey Award to Melanie Belcher.

photo: June Cherrey presents the Award to Melanie.



OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - CHRISTIAN DELL'OLIO

This year the Committee has decided to recognise a member of the Heidelberg Theatre Company for their hard work and effort over the past 2 years and their enthusiasm which has contributed to the success of HTC Youth.

In addition they have been a member of the HTC Committee and a regular contributor both behind the scenes and on stage in acting roles. As recognition for Outstanding Achievement to Youth Theatre by a HTC member the Committee would like to recognise Christian Dell Ólio. *photo: Our President presents the Award to Christian*

VALE - TIM MCLAUGHLAN

A group of friends gathered on Saturday 23rd November to share their memories of Tim McLaughlan who sadly passed away at too early an age.

Tim joined HTC in 1998 and was involved in over 40 productions, including 6 HTC Youth productions for which he was a keen supporter. His expertise was operating and designing sound, so it was usual to find Tim comfortably situated in the bio box. He served on the committee from 2004 to 2010 and was considered by many to part of the engine that operated our company. His eccentric sense of humour will be fondly remembered by all of us who benefited from his help and his many years of active contribution to HTC is gratefully acknowledged.

2013 Victorian Drama League Awards

Our VDL-nominated play for 2012 was **August Osage County**

by Tracey Letts directed by Joan Moriarty.

We are proud to have received the following Nominations:

Reeni Ekanayake and **Stephanie Gonelli** both received a nomination for **Best Actress in Minor role**.

Gavin Baker received a nomination for **Best Actor in a Minor Role**.

Louise Whiteman received a nomination for **Best Actress in a Leading Role**.

We congratulate our VDL Award nominees and the Cast and Crew of **August: Osage County** for their success. *photo: Cast & Crew of August Osage County*



HTC'S XMAS HAMPER The 2013 Winner of this coveted prize was **Sally Hanns**.
Congratulations from all at HTC.