

REPERTOIRE JUNE 2023

# The Winslow Boy



 THE  
PLAYHOUSE  
THEATRE  
106 Bathurst Street, Hobart

# President's Report June 2023

Hello again Hobart Repertory Society members and welcome to the eve of another Rep show for 2023, The Winslow Boy, opening this Friday 09/06/2023 and running until 24/06/2023.

The play was inspired by an actual event concerning a father's efforts to clear his son's name after he was expelled from the Royal Naval College.

Meredith and her team have worked hard to bring this classic play to light and I'm sure we will all support this production by coming along to see it.

Our first play this year, Anne of Green Gables was a great success and I extend our thanks again to Anne and her cast and crew for a great production with several sold out shows.

We have Let's Kill Agatha Christie opening on 12th August, followed by One fest on 25-26th August.

The Glass Menagerie has been cast and rehearsals start soon.

As I have mentioned in previous reports we have been actively looking to find a place to relocate our operations from Creek Road once our lease expires with the Salvation Army on 31/12/2023.

A lot of work has been done over the last 18 months in a very difficult real estate market.

What I am able to report that we are in an advanced stages or acquiring a new location.

We need certain approvals to be met before we can announce success in this pursuit finally.

I would like to thank everyone involved for their efforts so far and hopefully I can announce success in this pursuit.

Also there has been an application made to have Hobart Rep achieve Charity status and this too is in the final stages of success. This will make it more attractive for sponsorship and donations to be made to us.

I wish to apologise that I didn't mention in the last President's report that Ingrid Ganley was awarded Life Membership of Hobart Rep.

It was well deserved and a popular bestowment, given the great work Ingrid has done and is continuing to do for the society.

She has been on the Board, directed, production managed and is our Production Committee Convenor, just to name some of her roles, over many years.

Congratulations Ingrid.

Let us keep aware of the presence of Covid still lingering out there and take the necessary precautions as usual. We continue to be in a strong financial position.

I would like to thank all the members of the various Rep committees and the volunteers for their repeated hard work and dedication again.

Don't forget to register for volunteering for upcoming events.

Here's to continued success.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if your have any questions or suggestions moving forward.

*Yours in Theatre*

*David Clements*

President HRTS



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## THE WINSLOW BOY-SOME BACKGROUND AND AN ICELANDIC CONNECTION

Hobart Rep is reviving the timeless drama *The Winslow Boy* at The Playhouse Theatre in June 2023. This intriguing play is set in London around 1910. It is based on the true events surrounding the expulsion of a 13-year old naval cadet for stealing. The audience follows a two year battle of the boy's family to clear his name. The play cleverly weaves family life, politics, romance and the social media of the day into the gripping legal story.

The title role of Ronnie is being shared by local, talented actors Zac Forey and Stella Wesseldine – dubbed by the rest of the cast as “The Two Ronnies”.

Director Meredith McQueen has long held a desire to bring a production of *The Winslow Boy* to the Hobart stage. “The playwright Terence Rattigan was a master dramatist whose work has often been unfairly overlooked”, she says. “He had a great talent for bringing us diverse characters who generate a range of emotions in the onlooker. Basically, he told a rollickingly good story that is still very relevant and will engage audiences throughout”.

This particular production is also a fine example of true community theatre. A team of keen assistants have helped to construct an Edwardian drawing room set and sew the period costumes. The casting has called for a group of actors ranging in age from 13 to 72. And there is the bonus of a delightful cameo performance by Icelandic actor Sigrun Osk Johannesdottir!

We were intrigued by the appearance of an Icelandic actor at our auditions and decided to delve into her life story...

**Rep:** Sigrun, how on earth did you end up in Hobart?

**Sigrun:** Well my partner works in emergency medicine and he was looking for a placement in an English-speaking country. We were particularly interested in Australia or New Zealand. And somehow we ended up in Tasmania – that's about as far as you can go from Iceland! We moved here last year with our 2 young daughters.

**Rep:** Yes I must say that your English is extremely good and your sight reading of the script is spot on!

**Sigrun:** Thanks! In Iceland we all learn English at school from Grade 3 onwards. And let me tell you – English is a very different language from Icelandic!

**Rep:** And how does life in Hobart differ from your hometown of Reykjavik?

**Sigrun:** Do you know, they have a lot of similarities! They are both of a similar size with the same small-town feel. We have been made very welcome by our neighbours in particular.

**Rep:** Tell us about your life in the performing arts. (Continued next page)

THE WINSLOW BOY RUNS FROM JUNE 9 UNTIL JUNE 24

. **Sigrun:** I spent ten years from the age of thirteen singing contemporary Icelandic music in a church choir. This was a serious commitment – around 4 hours of practice a week.

**Rep:** And I hear it led to an exciting career!

**Sigrun:** Yes! At the age of 23, I was selected to be in a choir to accompany the Icelandic pop singer Bjork on tour. I toured with her for two years – all over America, South America, Japan etc. For example we spent 5 weeks in New York.

**Rep:** Wow – how exciting to work with Bjork! Hobart must seem pretty small after that!

**Sigrun:** Yes – but I still like it here though!

**Rep:** And you are also a swing dancer? Thanks for helping us with the choreography in *The Winslow Boy* by the way.

**Sigrun:** Yes – I actually met my partner at swing dancing classes.

**Rep:** And how did you end up in acting?

**Sigrun:** I was looking for something to get myself out of the house in the last year so I tried acting classes with *React Drama*.

**Rep:** And you decided to audition for *The Winslow Boy*!

**Sigrun:** Yes! I've found the rehearsal process really interesting and inspiring. I'm really looking forward to the season in the theatre!



**FROM BJORK TO  
WINSLOW BOY**

**Sigrun Osk  
Johannesdottir**

"The Winslow Boy" has visited The Playhouse stage once before - in 1949 - 74 years ago! On that occasion, the part of Ronnie was played by a young Tasmanian actor called Alan Hopgood. Alan grew up to become a professional playwright and actor. He died in 2022 - the last surviving member of the original cast. It is only fitting that Rep has revived "The Winslow Boy" in 2023.

Here is a photo of the original production and our attempt to recreate this shot.



### THEN AND NOW



**SHORT PROMO VIDEOS FOR THE WINSLOW BOY FILMED AT THE TOWN HALL**



Thanks to  
Wayne Wagg



**Watch them here! (links below)**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wiv4TK21LAzDC9QjX1ABZbRiI2nLX8dO/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wiv4TK21LAzDC9QjX1ABZbRiI2nLX8dO/view?usp=share_link)

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X9SUgoqpDxBJOCsbc2LAizQisQpwcZER/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X9SUgoqpDxBJOCsbc2LAizQisQpwcZER/view?usp=share_link)



**REHEARSALS**



**Bookings:**  
<https://playhouse.org.au/>

## From the Archives

### November 1921 – Before Rep

As the centenary of Hobart Rep approaches in 2026, it is worth noting that our founder, Miss Olive Wilton, was producing plays in Hobart before that time and was actively seeking repertory subscribers.

As early as August 1921, The Illustrated Tasmanian Mail reported that Miss Wilton was “*getting a good deal of support for her proposed repertory theatre. Five hundred subscribers at one guinea a year is the objective. For this four performances a year would be given, for which each subscriber would get a certain number of tickets gratis.*”

On 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> November 1921, Miss Wilton presented four one-act plays at the Town Hall, in the presence of the Mayor Sir William Allardyce and his wife.

The plays were:

*How He Lied to Her Husband* – George Bernard Shaw

*The Last Man In* – W.B. Maxwell

*The Dear Departed* – Stanley Houghton

*The Playgoers* – Sir A.W. Pinero

Three of the plays were extremely well received, with the newspaper noting:

*“...the productions were wonderfully produced and acted, and Miss Wilton is to be congratulated on the success achieved by her and her clever company. Hobart audiences should indeed be grateful to Miss Wilton for placing before them such high class productions, and too much praise cannot be bestowed on her and her pupils.”*

However, *The Last Man In*, set in a tavern, brought letters to the paper condemning its subject matter as “revolting” and “repulsive”.

Financial records for the event show expenses of over 68 pounds including seven pounds for hire of the Town Hall for 2 nights, six pounds for a three-piece orchestra, and seven pounds for advertisements in *The Mercury*. Takings were over 75 pounds, resulting in a profit of 7 pounds, 6 shillings and sixpence!

Bernard Shaw’s *How He Lied to Her Husband* is a one act play held in our Rep library. It is a terrific satire – well worth reviving soon!

**A true inspiration in the early Tasmanian  
Theatre scene  
OLIVE WILTON**



Special thanks to Meredith McQueen for research





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Chong**



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