

REPERTOIRE JULY 2024

*Agatha Christie* **THE  
UNEXPECTED  
GUEST**



**PLAYHOUSE THEATRE**

**10-20 JULY**



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome again Hobart Repertory Society members. I hope everyone is well and coping with this cold spell of weather.

We started off our 2024 productions **Last Cab to Darwin** which opened on 7 February, directed by Shauna-Lee Ward.

The show was thought provoking on many levels and was a fantastic production. Everyone involved should be extremely proud of this play and it has set the bar high for this year. Congratulations.

Our last production was **Anne and Gilbert**, directed by Anne Blythe-Cooper. This carried on the story of Anne of Green Gables that Anne directed for us previously. Again another successful production. Congratulations to Anne, the cast and production crew.

Our next Rep production is **The Unexpected Guest** (Agatha Christie), directed by Jeremy Pyefinch opening on **10 July and closing 20 July**.

I'm looking forward to seeing this and have had great reports on this upcoming show.

Don't forget to book for this and our other shows:

**The History Boys – 28 August to 7 September**

**Summer of the Seventeenth Doll – 16 to 26 October**

**Panto- the Princess and the Pea - 1 to 8 December**

We will also have our **One Act Festival** directed by Ros Peck on **4 and 5 October**, so get those one act plays out and nominate. This is a great forum for new and old work to be presented.

**We will become 100 years old in 2026 and planning is underway for various events for this year.**

We are still actively looking to find a place to relocate our operations from Creek Road. We have looked at a number of properties and had one EOI submitted without success.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT (Continued from previous page)

We have been progressing a number of initiatives and updates to how we conduct our business within Hobart Rep.

This includes procedures like Codes of Conduct, expectations of behaviour around each other, working with vulnerable individuals and safety of our patrons, staff and productions.

We are very conscious of providing a safe and creative environment for our Rep family. This is an ongoing and ever changing process.

Also congratulations Wayne Wagg and his wife Shirley for recently celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. (See below)

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

I on behalf of the Hobart Repertory Society Board, thank you and wish you the best for the rest of 2024.



Yours in Theatre

*David Clements*

President HRTS

0417 059 002

david@playhouse.org.au

Wayne behind the camera  
taking a photograph of  
Jeff Kevin for a Playhouse  
production  
(thanks Moya)



*Agatha Christie* **THE  
UNEXPECTED  
GUEST**

Rehearsal Shots by  
Bethany Denholm



Director Jeremy Pyefinch



### **A few words from Director Jeremy about this production:**

It's terrific to be returning to the Playhouse to direct Agatha Christie's self-proclaimed best play. I'm truly lucky to have an astonishingly brilliant group of actors and creative minds around me who are all doing sensational work in bringing this delightfully juicy mystery to life. When this play was last staged by Rep, in 1993, it was co-directed by an incredible woman named Barbara Button. At around that time, Barbara was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and passed away in 2009 – and if you're wondering why that's particularly important to me it's because she was my grandmother and, in that '93 production, the role of Laura Warwick was played by an utterly astonishing young woman named Chelle Burt who we very sadly lost in January of this year after a long battle with cancer. These were two incredible women of Hobart theatre and so, in their honour, we not only dedicate this performance to them both, but we will be raising money in the foyer after each show for Parkinson's Tasmania and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre.

## MEET OUR NEW PATRON : MEG WEBB MLC



### **Your Dad has been involved in Theatre for a long time. How did this affect you as you were growing up ?**

My Dad, Tony, has always been a very theatrical person, and throughout our lives has shared with us his appreciation of theatre and live performance. During my childhood, Dad was mostly very busy with his day job as a school Principal, with not much time to be formally involved in theatre, but I can tell you that he made pretty much anything into a performance! For example, as a young child, I remember playing a game with my sister, transporting various toys around the garden in a wheelbarrow 'ambulance', when Dad decided it might be fun to have a bit more realism in the game and introduced tomato sauce 'blood' as a special effect, which we totally loved!

A bit later in life, as Dad moved away from being a Principal and returned to his first love of drama teaching, we also got to see him really throw himself into involvement with Hobart Rep, both as a committee member and as a performer. Through his involvement, we had the opportunity to hear about and enjoy so many wonderful plays brought to life by Hobart Rep.

### **Did you get involved with theatre too? How? When? What? (Tell us all!)**

I have very fond memories of my time as a drama student at Hobart College, where I did Speech and Drama Level 3 when I was in Year 11, and then Theatre Studies in Year 12. I especially remember the rather epic major production in Speech and Drama called *Entertaining Strangers*, which had a huge cast, was a period piece, and for which we had to sew our own very elaborate costumes, including constructing our own corsets to wear under them!

While I didn't really carry my own acting efforts past school, there was one time that I had a paid acting gig as an adult - it was in my early twenties and the Law School at UTAS needed some people to act as legal clients for a legal interviewing competition. A friend roped me into it and I thought it would be a fun way to make an extra \$100! We were given a character with a back story involving some legal problem and told to improvise a legal interview with the law students who were competing against each other.

### **Politics as Theatre? (examples/observations)**

I've always enjoyed public speaking, and I think part of that is the element of performance that it requires. Successful public speaking goes beyond simply conveying information, because people tend to remember very little of the content of what you say to them, but they do remember how you made them feel, and most of that is achieved through delivery. Public speaking is a key part of politics and, whether it is a small group in an intimate setting or a large public rally, the key aim is to win hearts and minds. That means making an emotional connection, which needs an element of performance.

Many of my jobs pre-politics have involved elements of performance in some way, and now as an independent MLC, I see aspects of theatre in a lot of what goes on in the political world. In some ways that can be negative – for example, politics can seem performative, that a politician is not genuine in their convictions and actions. However, at its best, the theatre of politics isn't about pretending or falseness, but can be about connecting and shared experience – which is similar to an excellent theatrical performance.

I'd also hazard a guess that actors and politicians may be amongst the professions which most crave and seek public approval – with actors measuring it in ticket sales and good reviews, politicians in election results!

### **Thoughts on being Patron for Hobart Rep?**

It's a genuine honour to have the opportunity to become Patron of Hobart Repertory Theatre Society. The recently-retired Rob Valentine was such a passionate supporter in his time as Patron, and he has left very big shoes to fill. I hope that as I step into the role of Patron, I will find my own ways to be a champion and staunch supporter of Hobart Rep, and I am so appreciative of the chance to get to know the local theatre scene even better from this new perspective.

## **ROB VALENTINE**

### **PAST PATRON OF THE HOBART REPERTORY THEATRE SOCIETY**

#### **How I became involved with Hobart Rep**

Since commencing my career as an elected member on the Hobart City Council, way back in 1992, I have grown to appreciate the value the performing arts provides, some of that value not being immediately obvious. As I see it, not only does theatre provide a great outlet for the creativity of individual directors, on-stage performers, musicians and associated supporting roles in the production of each play, it also provides a great source of entertainment for the community as a whole. This in turn provides many benefits, particularly community well-being and health – increasingly necessary in our corner of the world today.

My support of the performing arts, and theatre in particular, was also galvanised by the fact that those involved produced so much of their work, largely through the dedication and commitment of individuals (both financially and in time provided), for the large part without government funding.

In the field of performing arts, I became a director of IHOS Theatre, and also of the Thylacine Dance Company in the mid 1990s. Later as Lord Mayor, from 1999, I became a member of the Business Advisory Group for the Conservatorium of Music, Patron of the Hobart City Band and the City of Hobart Eisteddfod.

With regard to Hobart Rep, after becoming Lord Mayor I was approached to take on the role of Patron. But I do have to say I am struggling to recall which president it was that made the initial request. Perhaps someone in Rep will be able to enlighten me! Nevertheless, I was certainly most happy to accept the role, given the importance I placed on the work of theatre companies, both amateur and professional, across our city.

#### **How did you become involved in Theatre?**

Apart from the above, my 'treading of the boards' has been confined to a number of appearances in 'The Bawdy Panto', through which I imagine many are still traumatised! I have been a casualty (read 'subject') of a Uni Revue or two, much to my surprise - one of which gained me a front row centre seat, only to find out I was the butt of one of their skits on stage, and of course all taken in good humour - dare one not take such attention other than in good humour, as it would be bound to come back and bite at some point no doubt!

#### **Politics as Theatre?**

As genuine as each may feel they are, a number of the more vociferous politicians 'play to the audience', in order to drive home their view - and score a point in the cut and thrust game of 'fencing', that is Parliament. One only needs to hear the one-liners of erstwhile Prime Minister Paul Keating to underscore such a notion, some of which do have a funny side to them, one has to agree. It is a technique that can be effective, but often is not, as the 'performance' can overshadow the importance of the subject being debated. While I don't indulge in 'histrionics' that often, there have been occasions where passion rises to the surface and bubbles over. I guess it is inevitable at some point in any politician's career, as they are often passionate people that I believe, in the main, do care, which might be a surprise to some.

## Any memorable moments from Hobart Rep productions over the years?

There are many, many plays that both my wife Margaret and I have attended at the Playhouse, over a period of some 25 years - with many thanks to Rep for such largesse. But it never fails to impress how performers remember their lines, with virtually none stalling with so-called 'stage fright' during that time. If in fact it has ever been the case, 'papering over the cracks' has been very well undertaken so as not to be at all obvious. That said, I am sure those involved with such occurrences will no doubt have stories of their horror (and possibly terror!) to tell.

Over the years, I have no doubt the calibre of performers in Hobart Rep hold their own! We remember quite a number of plays with great affection, the skill of individual performers, the sets, lighting and music, but to avoid being egged through not mentioning some, I will only single out one show which was an absolute stand-out for me and that was *Elephant Man*. The performance of John Lenthall in the lead role was absolutely superb! The way he projected the pain of the main character to the audience was visceral and he should take a long and well-deserved bow.

Space does not really allow for much further elaboration I'm sure, but I do wish to thank Hobart Rep for the wonderful privilege it has been to 'perform' in the role of Patron over such an extended period of time and wish the whole company of directors, performers, musicians, staging and supporting staff all the best going forward. It is starting to sound like a farewell speech, but I can assure you all that we will not be going anywhere, except to the theatre to keep in touch with folk we have come to regard in many ways as our 'theatre family'!

*Thank you*

*Rob!*





# FROM THE ARCHIVES

## The Great Hobart Repertory Theatre Society/ Talbot Hotel Scandal of 1952

The final night party has long been a tradition in theatrical circles although, more recently, the aftermath of the final night is spent dismantling the scenery and cleaning the theatre!

However, check out this fascinating tale of a Hobart Repertory final night from 72 years ago! This story filled page three of the Tasmanian Truth newspaper on 16 August 1952.

In June of that year, Hobart Repertory had just completed a successful production of Noel Coward's *This Happy Breed* at The Playhouse, directed by John Moore. Indeed the season had been extended for an additional week.

Following the final performance on Saturday 21 June, Hobart Repertory Society member Mrs Powell invited the cast and crew back to her place for a final night party. The problem was that Mrs Powell was the wife of the licensee of The Talbot Hotel in New Town, and she resided at that location!

At 1.20am the following morning, two members of the licensing squad appeared at the hotel and found general merriment and someone playing the piano! Twenty four Repertory Society members were charged with being on licensed premises during prohibited hours and all were required to appear in the Hobart Police Magistrate's Court some six weeks later.

The lawyer acting for these 24 people argued that the party was a social event which "just happened" to have been held by the licensee and his wife at their home. He continued that, "Repertory work was educational and a valuable thing in any community. Part of any play season was the end of season party which helped to create necessary harmony ... between the players." He added that, "In many ways it was a frivolous offence."

Police Magistrate R.F. Turner disagreed. "I can't see how any hotel party could lead to any furtherance in education. It doesn't matter whether it's a football party or a theatre society party", he ruled.

He imposed a two pound fine and eight shillings costs on the director John Moore and each of the other 23 theatregoers!

**Special Thanks to Meredith McQueen**

**HOBART PLAYERS STAGED A DRAMA IN COURT SETTING**  
TWO OF THE CAST AND THE SCENE

PRODUCE Take 24 members of the Hobart Repertory Society to court today for being on licensed premises during prohibited hours. The case is being heard in the Police Magistrate's Court today.

OUR real life play opens one night in Hobart early in June this year. But before we disclose the full plot, let us study the names of the members of the cast and their backstage assistants.

THEY are: Mrs Powell, the licensee of the Talbot Hotel, New Town, Hobart, who invited the cast and crew to her home for a final night party on Saturday 21 June.

Act One

Act Two

Act Three

Act Four

The main scene was held at the Talbot Hotel, New Town, Hobart, on Saturday 21 June. The licensee, Mrs Powell, invited the cast and crew of the Hobart Repertory Society to her home for a final night party. The party was held at 1.20 am the following morning. Two members of the licensing squad appeared at the hotel and found general merriment and someone playing the piano. Twenty four Repertory Society members were charged with being on licensed premises during prohibited hours and all were required to appear in the Hobart Police Magistrate's Court some six weeks later.

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**4-Act Tragedy**  
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Recently all the various Rep Committees had a combined dinner get together. Lots to discuss.  
(Some even theatre –related!)





**The Hobart Repertory Theatre Library/Archives**  
**Wants Your Donations!**

*Many Rep members would be unaware that we have a library of plays and archival material at our Creek Road location. This is open for browsing on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month, between 10am to 1pm.*

*We would welcome donations of any play scripts and Rep archival material, in particular old programs, photos and video recordings of previous productions.*

***Please feel free to contact Meredith on 0400 121 471 if you want further information.***

***Quiz Night!***

**Rosny Park Bowls Club, 21st**

**September**

**More information later!**

Heather & Christopher  
Chong



Rob  
Valentine MLC



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