February 2018

The Artful DODGER

1.*n.* roystering young pickpocket from Charles Dicken's *Oliver Twist.* 2.*n.* Printed handbill full of tidings from the W.M.I&A.A. with a closing date for contributions of 25th of each month to David Tynan on 98445727 or davidtyn@gmail.com

New Year, new hall improvements!

Welcome back everyone to a new year chock full of artistic endeavours at our beloved hall. By now the potters are potting, the actors are acting, the painters are painting (or drawing!), the Lilies are singing, and the crafties are at it again. In the summer break, we were able to complete a few hall improvements. The faulty supper room air-conditioner has been replaced with a powerful new one - no more sweating and dripping! We have fixed the tank overflow which was creating inundation in the toilets after especially heavy rains. The ageing hot water system has been replaced, and Graeme has renewed the deck surface so that we don't slip and slide over it anymore. The potters have done some gardening (see proof at right!), and the hall looks lovelier for their generous efforts. Finally, we still have some copies of the 2018 Mechanics Institute of Victoria Calendar - send me an email or call 98445727 if you are interested in securing a copy. Cheers David.

Its WMIAA Membership payment time

Now is the time to pay your annual subscription to the WMIAA so that we can continue to do what we do! Simply logon to

http://warrandytehallarts.asn.au/membership

Then follow the prompts to complete your membership

If you would prefer to submit your membership via the paper form, please see your group leader.

Can you help us keep the Hall and Warrandyte Arts alive?

The WMIAA committee recognises that we are all busy people, how many other groups we support, and the pressures of today's living style. Yet unless more people are prepared to put their hand up the WMIAA might struggle to survive in its current form. So if you feel you can make a contribution, no matter how big or how small, please email your name and a few details to davidtyn@gmail.com – your Association will welcome you.

[Advanced Notice of AGM: 7th May - 8 pm]

Group reports

Pottery News

The year started with a bang, David & Amanda rallied the pottery group into action for a clean up in the garden & in the studio so we are all set for a year of creating. Nothing is the same without our mentor & chief dear Marjorie, but she would be proud of us as we pick up the reins & continue on the good works she taught us & not a day goes by where her name isn't mentioned.

Liz Pryor

Group reports

Painting News

The painting group had a lovely final day for 2017. It was, weather wise, a lovely day and we ventured to the new picnic area across from the hotel, then back to the Hall for lunch together on the outdoor area at the rear. The group was scheduled to commence on 2nd February 2018, and as most members seemed to be committed to other things this did not happen. So, we are now looking forward to a good attendance for next Friday. The small number for membership is an ongoing issue. I received an email from Alison advising she will be unable to make it this year. I have recently advertised our group twice on the Warrandyte Business and Community Facebook Page and we had a stall at the Art and Design Market where we received a few enquiries. Six people attended Marion's life drawing group on 2nd Feb, which was a great morning. The model was as usual a great success, and a very quiet intense amount of drawing was completed during this session and was enjoyed by all. It is a pleasure to see all the different approaches.

Rhonda Stewart.

The Sharp End

One of our multi-talented members and WMIAA Web and all things digital guru Robert Black moonlights as a terrific cartoonist - you may have seen his work in other publications, including in the Warrandyte Diary. Robert generously permits us to publish one of his 'gently twist' cartoons each month - thanks Robert!

For more about the Sharp End, go to

http://www.robertblack.com.au/the-sharp-end

"It seems Mr Astaire disregarded the warning on the door."

Group reports (continued)

Theatre News

One Act Plays: Best laid plans scuppered by bridge extension - exclusive

I'll spare you the chain of emails between committee members but we decided to drop the matinee for the One Act Plays. The original date clashes with Warrandyte festival and the second Saturday clashes with closure of the bridge. We will now include an extra evening performance on Thursday 22nd March. Despite this hiccough we are hoping for good support for the 4 plays - a variety of comedies with something for everyone. Importantly … seating arrangements for the plays will be at tables and audience is encouraged to bring food and drink - a la Follies. So please, plan ahead and if you live in the north come along to the first weekend or Thursday 22nd. Everyone else come whenever you like!

The four plays are:

* *Smitten* by Mark Matthews and Anna Stillaman A Black comedy of star-crossed lovers.
  Cast - Grant Purdy and Lisa Upson
  Director - Alastair Rice
* *Albert* by Richard Harris - cultural miscommunication between a Finn, an Italian and an Englishman.
  But don't worry it has all been translated for audiences.
  Cast - Andrew Scarborough, Megan John, Fraser Baxter
  Director - George Benca
* *Little Box of Oblivion* by Stephen Bean. An absurd comedy involving a mysterious box (duh) a park bench and theories about its contents.
  Cast - Jazz Harwood, Luisa Romeo, Alex Holden, Tori Filis
  Director - Louise Phelan
* *Philip Glass Buys a Loaf of Bread* by David Ives. The only one of the four which is sung. This short but innovative play parodies Glass' style as a composer.
  Cast - David Tynan, Lisa Upson, Noelene Cooper, Simone Kiefer
  Director - Caroline Shaw

We had a good turn put for auditions including the young actors who will make up the core of the cast for "Little Box…" We welcome them all to the Company as we do the entire cast of "Albert" and its director, George.

Lyrebirds Awards

What a hullabaloo!! The competition was stiff but the evening relaxed though formal. A spectacular evening and all the more fun if you had been nominated for an award or knew someone or even better were part of the same company of a nominee. Over two and half hours 52 awards were presented punctuated by musical performances from member companies.

We were nominated in 7 drama categories for "Proof": best set, best costume, best supporting actor female, best actor female, best actor male, best director/s, best, best production. Reschelle O'Connor carried away the award for best female actor in a drama. Congratulations to Reschelle and the entire production team and cast of "Proof."

Congratulations too, to "Trio de Gare" our one-off station band of David Rackham, Daryll Mitchell and Jack Stringer who won a special judges award for enhancing transitions through music in "Brief Encounter."

And thanks to Lisa MacGibbon for getting this off the ground and also presenting an award.

Warrandyte Music

The first concert for the 2018 Warrandyte Music year is the Jawa Pitu Band - Traditional Indonesian inspired Jazz, Groove and Funk World Music!!! It will be held on Saturday February 17th 730pm (doors open 7pm). This will be a lively evening to begin the Warrandyte Music year that is family friendly. One of our local residents Ascelin Gordon is a member of the band and looks forward to sharing their musical and cultural passion with us.
And that's not all … there will also be dancers from the Sanggar Lestari Melbourne dance group.

Warrandyte Music presents

The Jawa Pitu Band

Indonesian inspired Jazz, Groove and Funk World Music

A lively evening to begin the Warrandyte Music year with this exceptional Indonesian and Gamelan music inspired ensemble combining traditional and western music with improvised grooves.
http://www.jawapitu.com/ http://fb.me/jawapitu

Saturday February 17th 7.30pm

Warrandyte Mechanics Hall
Cnr Yarra St & Mitchell Ave. Warrandyte

Bookings: please call 0401 167 223, warrandytemusic@gmail.com

Tickets: Full $20, Conc. $15, Child/Youth $10 (7-17), Family $55
Our cafe will be open on the evening for refreshments
with traditional Nepalese Momo's from Everest Momo's.

Check them out and we'll see you there:
http://www.jawapitu.com/ and https://www.facebook.com/jawapitu
An exceptional musical evening for the whole family!

Lisa Pearson

Brief Encounter Reviews

VDL Theatrecraft Review

BRIEF ENCOUNTER

by Noël Coward
Warrandyte Theatre Company
Directed by Adrian Rice
Reviewed by Alan Dilnot – November 24, 2017

Brief Encounter became famous as a film, starring Trevor Howard and Celia Johnson. The film was based on *Still Life*, a one-act play by Noël Coward. Now the film has been re-converted to the stage, in an adaptation by Emma Rice.

Evidence of the adaptation's earlier life as a film was seen in some rather cumbersome scene changes that would have been handled more fluently in a film, but this production partly bridged the gap between film and stage by using a screen at the rear, on which were projected stills of a railway station, a country residence, a street scene and an hotel, and clips of 4-6-2 steam locos and raging stormy waves—the latter a little too noisy at times, almost smothering the dialogue. There was a generous supply of smoke when a train was in motion. Clever use was made of a large box centrally, to double as a boat on the river or as a bed; and there was a handy mobile armchair with reading lamp attached, for use by Albert. There was very good use of music as background to mood or as accompaniment to songs, and it supplied great continuity throughout the play. However, because a film script is often less wordy than a stage script, the transfer of medium in this instance gave the leading couple rather a paucity of lines. This was especially difficult for the character Alec who, apart from his opening 'grit in the eye' speech and his closing confession of his pending departure to South Africa, had lines which more or less were repetitions of 'I love you'. Laura was better supplied, because she had a range of lines to indicate her resistance to Alec's passion. But both had lengthy pauses between speeches and a lot of agonised drawn-out looking at each other—fair enough, given the situation—but, entailing that, the central situation was rather static.

Of course the central couple were inhibited because the setting for their encounter was in public at the refreshment room of a railway station. The personages regularly working there, or frequenting it, supplied necessary comic relief at times, having emotional commitments of their own, but they also acted as witnesses to the behaviour of Laura and Alec.

Gabby Llewelyn was first-class as Laura. She certainly looked the part of a respectable and personable married woman, perhaps a few years younger than her husband. Although she wore an overcoat that was red, there was no suggestion that she was a scarlet woman. She moved gracefully and her diction was clear. She was able to suggest that while she was powerfully attracted to Alec, she was undergoing intense emotional turmoil.

Sean Paisley Collins was an excellent Alec. Especially good was his mastery of the clipped Coward-like delivery. He moved well on stage, and one understood why he would capture Laura's affections. There was also just a suspicion of insincerity, despite his protestations of enduring love, for while he declared that Laura was the love of his life, he put the claims of his family and especially his career ahead of romance.

Lisa Upson gave a very accomplished performance in several roles, but especially in her main one as manageress of the refreshment room, combined with her on-off relationship with Fred. She sang and danced well and was quick on her cues, and helped supply some humorous tones as a background to the main action. Likewise Simone Kiefer did a very good job, especially as Beryl, and in her relationship with Stanley.

Flora Terrens had mainly back-up roles, but as the well-to-do middle-class friend of Laura she delivered her one big speech expertly, preventing Laura and Alec from having the opportunity to say farewell to each other.

David Tynan had two roles, one as the pipe-smoking, home-loving husband of Laura, the other as Fred, the station master and would-be beau of Myrtle. He was credible in both parts, the one quietly considerate, the other cautiously amorous. Tony Clayton shone in his main role, the would-be lover of Beryl.

These five, Lisa, David, Simone, Tony and Flora, all sang well, harmonising agreeably as a choir, and in some cases handling solo roles too. Perhaps it was because of good musical ears that they were also each able to do a range of accents.

The band, David Rackham, Daryl Mitchell and Jack Stringer, the "Trio de Gare", were excellent. Very competent musicians, they also supported the choir vocally in several numbers. They certainly gave an extra dimension to the play as an entertainment.

Perhaps one song, "A Room with a View", sung by Alec, might have been omitted. It is a great song, but didn't quite suit the play's situation, and seemed as if loosely tagged on. It was notable that Laura was given no balancing song.

The period detail was very good; in particular, the costumes were superb.

This was an adventurous and innovative treatment of Coward's work. It had that bitter-sweet quality that marks many of Coward's plays, and in this instance, amidst the froth of witty comedy, it reached profound emotional depths. Our thanks to Adrian Rice and his team for persevering with this project and for achieving such a rewarding outcome.

Warrandyte Diary Review

review

By BRIONY BOTTARELLI

ON ENTERING the "old green hall", the Warrandyte Mechanics Institute, my companions and I were greeted with a full house and the wonderful sounds of the "Trio de Gare".

So nice to see Jack Stringer back — and in good health.

The cast were already busy at work, checking our train tickets so we could embark on a journey of loves, both found and lost.

The story is of an illicit love affair — or two — unintentionally entered into by a couple at a certain stage in their lives, both married with children and perhaps questioning what life was all about.

We get to see Laura (Gabby Llewelyn) interact with her children and husband, Albert (David Tynan).

A lovely, gentle man who seems to sense something is amiss with his wife, but is prepared to quietly ride it out and hope all will return to normal down the track.

We are not privy to Alec's (Sean Paisley Collins) family, but learn he is a doctor — with considerably more time on his hands than a doctor should have.

Alec is a frightfully proper English gentleman with wonderful diction.

One feels he quite possibly makes love with his socks on.

Behind the scenes, more down to earth shenanigans are going with several different parts being played with great talent by Lisa Upson, Simone Kiefer, Tony Clayton, Flora Terrens and David Tynan.

All the actors are wonderful to watch performing.

Nöel Cowards music and words featured throughout, with one of my all-time favourites *Mad About the Boy*, a spoken song, delivered beautifully by Simone.

The singing throughout the play was lead with expertise by the talented Lisa Upson.

Adrian Rice did his usual great job of directing.

The costuming was delightful, particularly Laura's first dress, which rumour has it, belonged to her (Gabby's) grandmother; what a wonderful piece to have and treasure.

The sets were well thought out as always and the audience in general thoroughly enjoyed the production.

I fear poor Laura may never be quite the same, but that the good doctor will have a similar interlude(s) when he re-settles in South Africa. *C'est la vie!*

By DAVID HOGG

IT'S NOT ONLY the acting which is brilliant but the whole atmosphere.

As soon as we enter the Mechanics Institute we are all transported back to the 1930s to witness this production of Nöel Coward's *Brief Encounter*.

A smartly dressed and capable orchestra "Trio de Gare" is already playing music of the era.

Old-fashioned ushers in uniform clip our tickets.

The play centres around a chance intimate meeting which develops into a surreptitious extramarital affair, at a time when such emotions must remain controlled and secret.

Most of the action takes place in the refreshment room of the station at Milford Junction, and a clever set consisting of two projection screens assisted by stereo sound and smoke effects makes a brilliant job of depicting the trains.

Gabby Llewelyn makes a welcome return to Warrandyte and brilliantly portrayed Laura.

Her final scene, standing on the platform trembling with tears streaming was so realistic and had us all wondering whether she would conquer her suicidal impulse.

Sean Paisley Collins made his Warrandyte debut as the dashing Alec and, like Gabby, had perfectly mastered the accents and mannerisms of the day.

Warrandyte regulars Lisa Upson, David Tynan, Simone Keifer, Tony Clayton and Flora Terrens played a number of parts hilariously, most of them revolving around the operation of the station buffet.

Of particular mention must be the uproariously funny *So Good at Love* dance by David and Lisa, and the gushing, chattering Dolly played by Flora.

Brilliantly woven into the adapted screenplay were a number of songs and poems set to Coward's music, and although the performers (Lisa excepted) were not trained singers, they carried this off extremely well and with great enthusiasm.

This was local theatre at its very best.

Next year's season has three one-act plays in March, *Doubt* in June, *Vere* in late September and *The Festive Follies* at the end of November.

Don't miss them!