



H'ARK

Newsletter of ARK Theatre

ISSUE 7

SEPTEMBER 2015



ARKstraliana Season 2 THE BEACH

HOTEL SORRENTO BY

HANNIE RAYSON Directed by **MICHELLE SWANN**

In keeping with its goal to present a variety of theatre genres, ARK Theatre's most ambitious production so far will be an iconic Australian drama. Director Michelle Swann's first production with ARK Theatre is set between the Moynihan family home in the coastal town of Sorrento and the London flat of one of the 3 Moynihan sisters, Meg. Cast and crew are currently rehearsing to bring this new season to ARK Theatre's audiences in late September, early October.

Performance times have been adjusted to fit around the AFL Grand Final.

Performance times are:

Fri Sept 25th 8pm,

Sat Sept 26th 2pm and 8pm & (new time) Sun Sept 27th at 4pm;

Fri Oct 2nd 8pm and

Sat Oct 3rd 8pm only

Tickets are \$20 each or Groups of 10+ \$18 each

Purchase online via the trybooking link at the website

www.arktheatremelb.com

Or call Ticket Sec: **0491 151 340** (your call will be re-directed to Rosey's phone)

ARKstraliana Season 1 THE BUSH

FARMER WILL SWAP COMBINE HARVESTER FOR WIFE & DOWN CAME A JUMBUCK

Patrons were welcomed into a bush themed foyer by suitably costumed Front of House staff so that, as patrons have come to expect from ARK Theatre, the entertainment began even before entering the auditorium.

After trying without luck last year, *Farmer* Director, Gary Rens, finally managed to assemble a cast to present Hugh O'Brien's play. Led by Peter Fowler as Cyril Evans, the advertising farmer of the title, the audience enjoyed the obviously Australian humour and references (think "Chocolate crackles at smoko") With neighbour Gus (Ross Pearce), jilted ex-fiancee Delmay (Rosey Cullinan) and grazier Doug (Sam Corr) all plotting to foil Cyril's plan and 2 likely young ladies vying for his affections – Skye (Emma Gardner) and Roxfox (Jessica Battersby), Cyril is thoroughly confused.



Farmer cast (l-r) Emma, Peter, Sam, Rosey, Ross, Jessica

What began as a comedy, morphed unexpectedly into a dramatic and moving exploration of domestic violence. Emma, in particular, was widely praised for her emotional performance.

After discussions throughout rehearsals, the cast decided to dedicate their performance to White Ribbon the charity that "Draws the line on violence against women".

In a powerful move, after the curtain call, actor Sam Corr stepped forward to recite the White Ribbon oath, with Peter and Ross echoing his "I Swear" and inviting audience members to donate to White Ribbon or purchase merchandise in the foyer during interval.

ARK Theatre is proud to have raised over \$400 for White Ribbon programs and we thank our patrons for their generous support.

After an Aussie supper of Iced Vovos, Anzac Biscuits and Lamingtons, the 2nd half of the program was more light-hearted.

Jumbuck by Ian Austin gave Director Phillip Stephenson a quirky comedy to tell the story of how Waltzing Matilda "might" have been created. Banjo Patterson, was played by Ryan O'Keefe, his boss, Hubert by Robert Trott and the feisty Miss Church by Jenny Silalahi.

For the first time ARK Theatre's production was reviewed for the VDL's magazine *Theatrecraft*. Reviewer Graeme McCoubrie praised the set, costumes and FOH and commented "All characters (in *Farmer*) acted well with conviction and timely delivery" ... "All three actors worked brilliantly together, giving great credence to the script," So impressed was he with young Ryan's performance he also predicted that "he will capture many lead roles in the future".

ARK THEATRE VISION STATEMENT:

- Dedicated to engaging with performers and audiences, of all ages, interests and capabilities
- Dedicated to providing mentoring in both the performance and technical content of theatre
- Respect and enjoy the contribution of performing arts to the social fabric of our community.

ARK THEATRE VALUES:

- Inclusiveness
- Rewarding
- Encouragement
- Creativity
- Respect
- Equality
- Social engagements
- Fun and enjoyment
- Mentoring
- Achievement

WOMINJEKA...WELCOME

ARK Theatre acknowledges the Wurundjeri people, the traditional owners of the land where we perform

Jumbuck cast (fr l): Ryan O'Keefe, Jenny Silalahi, Robert Trott



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ARK COMMITTEE 2015/16

PRESIDENT: TOM BLACKBURN

VICE-PRESIDENT: ROBERT TROTT

SECRETARY: JIMMY DUNNE

TREASURER: ANGELA McCULLOCH

GENERAL COMMITTEE: ROSEY CULLINAN; EVELYN DEVITT,
CHRIS KEUKEN, LUCY MORRIS

JUMBUCK WALTZES AWAY WITH AWARDS AT EMERALD

ARK Theatre's production of *Down Came a Jumbuck* was entered in the Dandenong Ranges One Act Play Festival at Emerald in July. In spite of having to make adjustments for the limited set in this travelling show, the cast of Ryan O'Keefe, Robert Trott and Jenny Silalahi presented this quirky comedy with energy and honesty. They obviously made a great impression on both the audience and the Adjudicator, Richard Keown, as nominations were received in many categories: Best Youth Actor: Ryan; Best Male and Female Supporting Actor: Robert and Jenny; Best Director: Phillip Stephenson

AWARDS were won in their respective categories by both Ryan and Jenny and ARK Theatre won Runner-Up Best Overall Production!!

Congratulations to all of you and huge THANKS for representing ARK Theatre in this festival. We are so proud!

H'ARK, DID YOU HEAR?

- Emma and Adric's honeymoon to the U.S.A is coming up. Bon Voyage Guys.
- Jimmy Dunne lost his beloved cat of many years we all share his loss. Our thoughts are with you Jim and Ange.



YouthARK Theatre is a new youth

theatre initiative for 14 -25yr olds founded by Peter Verhagen and Chris Keuken in June this year. Youth ARK Theatre recently produced and performed its first production, *First Time Out*. This comprised two plays that were written and put together over the two days leading up to the event. For the 17 young people involved, it was a very challenging and exciting event! ARK Theatre committee is thrilled with Peter and Chris's drive and enthusiasm and so proud of our new junior ARK!



Cast (l-r)Travis, Sam, Gina, Jack, Amy, Abigail (not pictured Pete, Annika) Photographer - Sam Berrie

The Committee congratulates YouthARK Theatre on its first foray into production. Now YouthARK is preparing to begin

rehearsals for its first full pantomime production of "Robin Hood", written by the wonderful Julie Cunningham. Watch out for more details closer to the December 11 & 12 performances



Cast (l-r) Brady, Aragorn, Susan, Joel (not pictured Chris, Jake, Ruth)



Singer, Anthony Gerace provided additional entertainment at *First Time Out*

ARK THEATRE CABARET AT SPJE PARISH DINNER DANCE

Ark Theatre is pleased to be associated, through several members and sponsors, with St Peter Julian Eymard Mooroolbark Revue Group. On August 16th Ark Theatre joined with SPJE and contributed to the entertainment at their annual Dinner Dance. Sub-committee Lucy Morris, Rosa Scabellone and Evelyn Devitt put their heads together and produced an item called "RAGS TO RICHES". Emma and Adric Gardner performed beautifully in the lead roles.

Emma worked really hard to perform all of the songs magnificently, portraying her character Lola with great heart. Adric proved to be a great dancer and romancer while Elyssia (their 2 yr old cutie) provided her own floor show on the dance floor. Lucy impressed everyone as the 'other woman' and Rosa was a great sidekick in her first time on stage for ARK Theatre. Evelyn contributed from the audience and was delighted to be able to see the performance as she had been away. Evelyn was also pleased to see a family from her After School Care program performing - up and coming YouthArkers maybe? Current ARK Theatre members Rosey Cullinan, Merelll Harris, Maureen and Harry Lowe and Ann O'Connor, the Director of SPJE Dinner Dance all performed as did several of ARK Theatres' regular audience members. What a fun night! Congratulations to all. And what a great way to promote ARK Theatre! Thanks Ann and Merrell for suggesting we be involved.

SKYL'ARKS

Most of the cast and crew of *Hotel Sorrento* and other ARK Theatre members once again 'manned the mikes' for Karaoke at the Ming Pavilion in Mooroolbark. Everyone enjoyed the food, music and entertainment and of course the company was, as you would expect from fellow thespians, vibrant - many a risqué number was performed and everyone had a good laugh. The cast enjoyed relaxing together and appreciated the down time after working so hard at rehearsals. Well done guys and Chookas for the season!

HOW GREEN IS OUR THEATRE?

ARK Theatre makes every endeavour to reduce our environmental impact. This is why we prefer to communicate electronically whenever possible and you may notice that we have cast photos displayed on a laptop in the foyer. Please assist us by recycling the program if you do not intend to keep it. We are happy to send you an electronic version if you would like – just drop us an email!

WELCOME ABOARD

A big ARK welcome to these members who joined us recently: Elise D'Amico, Jennie Kellaway, Ann Quinn, Joe Tuppenney, Julie Cunningham (another welcome to Ross Pearce not Pearson!)

ARK-KNOWLEDGEMENTS

A shout-out of appreciation to:

Rosa Scabellone for her efforts on the committee

Our recent sponsors:

Australian Millenium Lifestyles – Jimmy Dunne

First Impressions, Mitcham

Evelyn Devitt

Shire of Yarra Ranges

Jimmy Dunne founding Editor of H'ARK – great job Jimmy!

UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS

- Dec 11th & 12th Youth**ARK** Theatre presents *Robin Hood* by Julie Cunningham, Directed by Molly MacKinnon and Peter Verhagen
- 2016 Season 1
ARK Theatre Old Time Music Hall
Dates TBC
- Season 2 *Daisy* by Terry Mervin
Directed by Robert Trott Sept-Oct season

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Season 2 – Hotel Sorrento**
Thurs Sept 24th 7:30pm Final Dress Rehearsal
Week 1:
Fri Sept 25th 8pm,
Sat Sept 26th 2pm and 8pm &
Sun Sept 27th at 4pm (NB new time)
Week 2:
Fri Oct 2nd 8pm,
Sat Oct 3rd 8pm only (NB no matinee due to AFL Grand Final)
****To volunteer for Front of House please call Angela on 9736 2687 with your availability. We'd be grateful!**
- **October 11-12 Shed Fest** (watch out for details)
- **Sat Oct 31st Healesville Race Day**
- **Sun Nov 29th 2PM A Very ARKy Christmas**
- **Fri 11/ Sat 12 Dec 8pm Robin Hood**
Youth**ARK** Theatre Pantomime

***We welcome input for H'ARK or any feedback.**
Please send any items for future newsletters to ark_theatre@yahoo.com.au Att: Editors*

A word from the new **H'ARK** editors, Evelyn Devitt and Rosey Cullinan

ARK Theatre needs your help!

No theatre company can survive without an audience. Actors and crew work for months to bring to life the words on the page; to create a show that will amuse or entertain or move people. The effort is the same whether it is performed to 2 people or to 200. Yet the feedback from those 2 groups is vastly different: the laughter, gasps, silences, the cries of delight or despair.

When you found a new theatre group, you know it will take time to build an audience.

So far ARK Theatre's audience numbers have been increasing with each production, and yet still we struggle to engage with a full house (or even half full!) Because we always have tickets available, people know they can just buy a ticket at the door, so we don't know how many people we can expect to come along.

It is fair to say that response from audience members has been overwhelmingly positive.

We've had comments like: "More people need to see you guys! You deserve a bigger audience" Or "I can't believe how professional your shows are." and "This is such a high standard!"

If you have enjoyed your ARK Theatre experience, **TELL PEOPLE** and help us to build our audience so that more can appreciate and enjoy the work of our stellar casts and crews. Help us encourage these same actors, crew and audiences to return to ARK Theatre for other shows.

Invite a friend along, AND BOOK YOUR TICKET/S PRIOR TO THE PERFORMANCE.

Share this newsletter or a flyer for our productions. We can drop off a current poster or send it via email. Can you post it in a shop window? Is there a noticeboard that you could post it on or a group you are involved with you could tell about ARK Theatre?

**YOU'VE ALREADY HELPED US FLOAT
THE ARK, NOW HELP US FILL IT**

(2X2 JUST, LIKE NOAH!)

