

## The One Day of the Year: controversial classic explores Anzac Day's meaning

A PLAY that created a public furore when first released – and is now regarded as an Australian classic – comes to the Old Mill Theatre this October.

Written by Fremantle-born Alan Seymour and directed by Brendan Ellis, *The One Day of the Year* follows the Cook family during the week of Anzac Day and, while family patriarch Alf sees it as the one time of year old Diggers can get together and be commemorated, his son Hughie regards it merely as an excuse for them all to get drunk.

The play raises poignant questions about class, education, inter-generational communication, free expression, respect for people and history and attitudes towards war.

First performed in 1960, *The One Day of the Year* was rejected at the time by the Adelaide Festival of Arts for its supposed anti-military stance.

On Anzac Day 1961, during the dress rehearsal for its opening at Sydney's Palace Theatre, there was a bomb scare and police were forced to close the theatre for 24 hours.

Seymour, who was educated at Perth Modern School and worked at radio 6PM, received death threats and was labelled a communist sympathiser and un-Australian. He died earlier this year in March.

"On the outside, *The One Day of the Year* examines Anzac Day and its meaning to the Australian culture," director Brendan Ellis said.

"But when you look deeper you can see it explores the universal rift between the previous generation and the next – what values should be discarded and what stays relevant and which direction should we as a nation, and a society, head towards?"

Brendan said the main challenges stem from the fact the play was written in the late 1950s and whether some of the issues raised remain in the 21st century.

"On the 100-year anniversary of Gallipoli, how many of the points raised still apply?" he said.

"And how many members of the audience will relate to the subject matter?"

"The talented actors and I have put a lot of thought and work into helping audiences recognise the relevance this play still holds."

Involved in theatre for



*The One Day of the Year* features Tom Rees, left, Chris Henderson, Val Henry and Matt Randall exploring the conflict between generations in relation to Anzac Day.

more than 10 years, Brendan has appeared with Stirling, Playlovers, Marloo, Melville, Garrick and Groovy Boots Theatres and ARENAarts in productions such as *Maskerade*, *Miranda* and *Twelve Angry Men*, among many others.

He directed David Williamson's *A Conversation* at the Old Mill Theatre in 2013, winning the annual Milly Award for best director and best production, and also directed *Ninety* at Garrick Theatre in 2014, another best production winner.

"When Alan Seymour first wrote *The One Day of the Year* in the late '50s, it was banned from public performance due its controversial subject matter, as deemed at the time," Brendan said.

"Interestingly, it has since been recognised as one of the first Australian-written plays that actually deals with uniquely Australian issues.

"For a piece that received such animosity to now become so renowned and historically important is an amazing feat and I feel honoured to be able to direct it."

The cast features Chris Henderson, Tom Rees, Val Henry, Matt Randall and Carmen Miles.

*The One Day of the Year* plays at 8pm October 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23 and 24 with a 2pm matinee October 18.

It is the sixth show in a year of all-Australian plays at the Old Mill Theatre to commemorate the centenary of the Gallipoli landing in 2015.

**Tickets are \$25, \$20 concession – book at <http://oldmilltheatre.com.au/tickets> or call 9367 8719**



Hughie (Matt Randall) and girlfriend Jan (Carmen Miles) set out to expose the drunk underbelly of Anzac Day in the late 1950s.



## Milly Awards: confirmed



**YES, the Milly Awards have been confirmed for another year – so mark Friday, January 22, in your diary.**

And for those who like to keep track of things, the Finley Awards night looks set to be January 16 at the Heath Ledger Theatre (to be confirmed).

More details on the Milly Awards as they come to hand. Rest assured, it will be the regular fun-filled evening of mirth, merriment and more with play excerpts, awards across a range of categories, food, drink and more...

## Security upgrade

**FOLLOWING** a recent break-in at the theatre, security has been considerably upgraded.

Webcams are now situated all around the building, providing 24-hour surveillance.

## Sunday Serenades

**SUNDAY Serenades**, the concert series for a relaxing Sunday afternoon, have two shows remaining for 2015 at the Old Mill Theatre.

**November 1:** The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber.

**December 13:** Sleigh Bells Ring – Christmas Concert.

Both shows start at 2.30pm. All tickets are \$15 and include afternoon tea with the performers.

To book tickets, go to [www.trybooking.com](http://www.trybooking.com) or call Bel Canto Productions on 0408 855 458 or email [belcanto@westnet.com.au](mailto:belcanto@westnet.com.au).

Please note: dates, performers and shows are subject to change.

# Review: AN ANZAC DUO

**“...cancel everything else to see them...”**

**Extract by GORDON THE OPTOM**

Source: [www.ita.org.au](http://www.ita.org.au)

*AN Anzac Duo* features two exceptional one-act world premiere plays presented for a short season at the Old Mill Theatre.

*Armistice Day* is poignantly written by Noel O’Neill and powerfully directed by Valerie Dragojevic.

For those old enough to remember returning servicemen – from any war – we know their silence, the secrecy as to what actually happened, their character changes and often the inability to see the lighter side of life; Noel has once again hit the nail on the head, he has written a super script, with a huge depth to the four, perfectly conceived characters.

Director Valerie has taken the cast, given them courage and guidance to enact the tremendous emotion and tension demanded. The performances were all outstanding, but a special mention must be given of Travis and Phil’s depiction of the suffering vets. A stunning play.

*Dolls From The Sky* is a cleverly-structured play, written from the heart by local playwright Yvette Wall. It is then brought to life by director Mary Wolfla.

It is Australia in 1953; the scene is a comfortable sitting room with a three-piece suite and coffee tables.

Yvette has written a deeply moving script. A tale that starts with the rich characters making the audience laugh and yet cringe at the same time.

Award-winning Kerry Goode played an extremist, the type that was still commonly around even a few years ago.



David Partidge, left, Phil Barnett and Travis McCurry in *Armistice Day*.

Then the mood changed to tragic drama with the dynamic cast firing perfectly on all cylinders.

Magnificent performances made you gasp at the tension within the house and see what a broken heart can do to a person. Luckily, we still had a few tissues left from the first play.

Often with short play productions, there is one good play with the other one or two sadly there to give a local author a chance to try out their first – sometimes, very average – play.

On this occasion we had truly outstanding pieces of writing, cleverly directed and presented by hugely talented casts. Not a weak link to be seen.

You do not have many opportunities to see these plays but cancel everything else to see them. An amazing night of theatre.

## WINNERS!

**CONGRATULATIONS** to the cast of both *Armistice Day* and *Dolls From The Sky* for their recent successes at the Hills Festival of Theatre and Dramafest.

In mid-September, Valerie Dragojevic was named best director and Travis McCurry won an encouragement award for acting at the Hills Festival of Theatre for *Armistice Day*.

At Dramafest, Noel O’Neill picked up the Beryl Silvester Award for new writing and Rex Gray was named best supporting actor, both also for *Armistice Day*.

*Dolls From The Sky* also received the Peter Mann Costume Award and playwright Yvette Wall was given an adjudicator’s certificate for quality of writing.



Playwright Yvette Wall, left, and Natalie Aung Than in *Dolls From The Sky*.

**Colour your world: check out the colour version of this edition at [www.oldmilltheatre.com.au](http://www.oldmilltheatre.com.au)**

# Membership renewal



**OLD MILL THEATRE**  
 PO Box 1390, South Perth WA 6951  
 ☎ (08) 9367 8719 /e: oldmilltheatre@iinet.net.au

Membership fees are due on **October 1** each year. Please complete ALL areas of the form below and post to the above address to receive information on the interesting mix of plays and theatre activities planned for 2016.

APPLICATION or RENEWAL—NEWSLETTER/ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP 2015-2016  
 TAX INVOICE ABN 19250378001

NAME.....  
 ADDRESS.....  
 ..... POSTCODE.....  
 PHONE.....(H).....(W).....(M)  
 email.....

We appreciate people completing this form, even if you are a long-time member, because it helps us maintain up-to-date records. Please write email addresses LEGIBLY. If no change, write "as before". If you're a new member, welcome aboard!

**SUBSCRIPTIONS** from October 1, 2015, will be unchanged:  
 Newsletter only: \$12 per year, full membership: \$20 per year (double \$30)  
 [Full membership entitles you to act, direct and be an active member of the theatre. Our "membership year" runs from October 1 to September 30]

**FOR ALL MEMBERS:** If you would like to assist with front-of-house during a season, please tick this box and we will contact you.

For active members: please tick your areas of special interest: ACTING  SINGING   
 DIRECTING  STAGE MANAGEMENT  SET BUILDING  LIGHTING/SOUND   
 PUBLICITY  WARDROBE/COSTUMES   
 ANYTHING ELSE?  (please indicate).....

Cheques should be made payable to the Old Mill Theatre and sent with this completed form to the address at the top of the page. Alternatively, you can pay by credit card:

VISA/MASTERCARD number: ..... Exp.....  
 Amount: \$

OFFICE USE: Date received ..... Amount ..... Cheque/credit card  
 Receipt ..... Category .....

## Performers of all ages wanted!

HERE'S a chance to be involved in a play about that happened the Old Mill – no, not the theatre, but the theatre's namesake, the actual Old Mill on Mill Point Road near the Narrows Bridge (a graphic representation is in the theatre's logo).

Drama teacher Chrissy Tallowin, involved in theatre for the past 28 years, is devising a project called *Sails and Tales – A History of The Old Mill* and wants to hear from you. She's looking for people of all ages to perform in the voluntary, not-for-profit project.

"It is for the promotion of the Old Mill to attract more visitors to the museum and South Perth," she said. "The project is running in conjunction with the City of South Perth council.

"The outline of the project is to tell different events



at the mill, such as its erection, the raid, the fire that decimated it, its re-build, the protest about its demolition and what the mill means to people in South Perth.

"There will be the use of a narrator to link the stories together, as well as poems, music, movement and straight acting. It will be part of the South Perth Fiesta and hopefully be performed in February."

To get involved, call Chrissy on 0410 406 102 or email [chrissitallowin@hotmail.com](mailto:chrissitallowin@hotmail.com).

## WHAT'S ON ELSEWHERE?

### THE 39 STEPS

Limelight Theatre, Wanneroo



Hitchcock meets hilarious...  
 8pm Oct 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16 & 17. Book on 0499 954 016 or at [www.limelighttheatre.com](http://www.limelighttheatre.com).

**LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL**  
 Koorliny Arts Centre, Kwinana



OMG! The pinkist and perkiest stage musical!  
 8pm Oct 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30 & 31; 2pm Oct 24 & 31.  
 Book at <http://koorliny.com.au>.

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL**  
 Latvian Centre, Belmont



The classic Charles Dickens tale.  
 8pm Nov 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 & 28; 2pm Nov 15 & 22.  
 Book on 9497 5140 or [arenaarts@hotmail.com](mailto:arenaarts@hotmail.com)

**SAUCY JACK & THE SPACE VIXENS**  
 Phoenix Theatre, Hamilton Hill



Cheers meets Red Dwarf meets Rocky Horror in cult UK musical.  
 8pm Nov 19, 20, 21, 26, 27; Dec 3, 4, & 5; 7pm & midnight Nov 28. Book at [blakyak.com.au](http://blakyak.com.au)

**SILHOUETTE**  
 Garrick Theatre, Guildford



Australian premiere of mystery thriller full of twists.  
 November 18-December 5.  
 Book on 9378 1990 or [bookings@garricktheatre.asn.au](mailto:bookings@garricktheatre.asn.au)



# NO NAMES, NO PACKDRILL

COMING soon to the Old Mill Theatre is *No Names, No Packdrill*, set in wartime Sydney in 1942.

After recovering from a gunshot wound sustained during battle, 24-year-old Marine Sergeant Harry "Rebel" Porter docks in Sydney and decides he's had enough of fighting.

After drowning his sorrows in a Kings Cross pub, Rebel is invited to a party in a young woman's apartment and ends up crashing the night.

Sydney postal worker Kathy McLeod is 28 with her husband and brother both away fighting in Papua New Guinea.

Kath finds the US Marine asleep in her lounge room and wants to rid herself

quickly of the uninvited guest.

But later that morning a telegram arrives and her whole world changes...

Written by Bob Herbert and directed by Kristen Twynam-Perkins, *No Names, No Packdrill* runs from December 4 to 19.

[Yes, there has been a change of director. Unfortunately, Tim Prosser was no longer available to do the show so Kristen Twynam-Perkins kindly stepped in, being the trooper that she is.]

*No Names, No Packdrill* is the seventh (and final!) show in a year of all-Australian plays at the Old Mill Theatre to commemorate the centenary of the Gallipoli landing in 2015.

Updates available at [www.oldmilltheatre.com.au](http://www.oldmilltheatre.com.au).

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## Plans afoot for 2016

WHEELS are in motion for the Old Mill Theatre's 2016 seasons.

While many details still need to be sorted out and remain in the planning stages, we can confirm the first season will be *It's All Greek To Me 2*.

It's a follow-up to Noel O'Neill's smash comedy hit of 2013.

Tony Howes, new to the Old Mill Theatre, will be directing the second season with the name of the play still to be advised.

Also note: from the start of 2016, the Old Mill will be doing two matinees for each season - the first and second Sundays.

More information as it comes to hand will be posted at [www.oldmilltheatre.com.au](http://www.oldmilltheatre.com.au) and detailed in *The Old Mill Times*.

## Old Mill Theatre 2015 Board of Management



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