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# TRUST NEWS

"JULIUS CAESAR"  
YOUNG ELIZABETHAN  
PLAYERS



**Our feature:**

**ENTERTAINMENT FOR CHILDREN**



**AUSTRALIAN  
ELIZABETHAN  
THEATRE TRUST**

"LITTLE FELLA BINDI"

# THE AUSTRALIAN ELIZABETHAN THEATRE TRUST

## **Our feature for this issue: ENTERTAINMENT FOR CHILDREN.**

One of the most important functions of our organisation is to instil into young people a love for the living stage. Only in this way can larger and more appreciative audiences be created for the future, but this is not our only reason. We believe the theatre is one of the greatest humanising factors in a world which is increasingly pre-occupied with technology. Hydrogen bombs, spaceships, atomic power, occupy so much of our children's thoughts that little enough is given to the civilisation that such things are designed to destroy, or to serve. The theatre, as a popular art, is a stronghold of human values—of man himself and his ideas. It is important that our children be brought up to appreciate the values it represents.

—H.H.

### **Young Elizabethan Players.**

This company has now completed its second year and proved that there is a very real need for its services. Shakespeare—cut so that each play shall last about an hour and a quarter, played by no more than six actors, with little in the way of costume or setting—can still hold his own. Indeed, educationists are of the opinion that the living actors carry greater reality and conviction than the great film names with their elaborate settings, and that the abridgement helps the student in quick apprehension of the totality of the play.

This has been particularly encouraging to John V. Trevor, who originated the idea with trepidation and still feels sacrilegious when cutting and adapting the texts. He tries, first of all, to let Shakespeare tell his always exciting story, then to give the principal characters full-balanced importance, and finally, to retain the best of the verse. The actors switch from character to character, often with nothing more than their acting ability to mark the change; their prime aim is to speak the verse to advantage and to retain utter, complete sincerity—anything phoney or staged is instantly detected by children, and instantly derided.

Nearly 100,000 school children—potential theatregoers of the future—have found a new unsuspected delight in Shakespeare and caught a glimpse of the magic of live theatre. They look forward to the Players' visits, remember individuals from the previous tour, and their demand has necessitated the formation of two companies for 1960.

### **The Tintookies:**

Peter Scriven's puppets—first "The Tintookies" and now "Little Fella Bindi"—have proved perfect entertainment for children.

The sheer enchantment of the shows leaves, not only the children, but adults starry-eyed as well.

That the puppets have played to more than 200,000 children proves their success.

The original Tintookies—the little people who live in the sandhills—which Mr. Scriven created in 1956, toured the Commonwealth as a matinee attraction with the Australian Elizabethan Trust Opera Company.

Success snow-balled with "Little Fella Bindi," a delightful play which tells the story of an aboriginal boy who makes friends with the bushland creatures.

The present tour of this company—all over the country—has been running for more than a year. It will play a return season to Melbourne, at the Princess Theatre, during the Christmas holidays.

The Trust and Peter Scriven are negotiating for the stage rights of Norman Lindsay's delicious book, "The Magic Pudding," which, if all goes according to plan, Peter Scriven will adapt as a successor to "Little Fella Bindi."

## **Smugglers Beware!**

"Smugglers Beware!"—which opens at the Elizabethan Theatre on December 21—is another treat in store for children.

Written by Australian playwright, Eleanor Witcombe, it is, as the title suggests, a rollicking tale of smugglers set in the notorious Rocks district of old Sydney.

An irrepressible boy sets out to lay some doubtful characters by the heels, and the result is an exciting adventure.

Emile Mercier's delightful poster design depicts the roguish tone of the play. "Smugglers Beware!" will be presented by the Trust Players and produced by Robin Lovejoy.

Eric Rasdall has written the lyrics, which have been set to the music of old bush ballads and sea shanties.

Wendy Dickson designed the set.

## **ENTERTAINMENT FOR ADULTS.**

### **The Union Theatre Repertory Company.**

In our last issue a brief mention was made of the Trust's co-operation with the University of Melbourne in the management of the U.T.R.C.

This fine professional repertory company has been in existence for the past seven years.

At the request of the University, the Trust has undertaken the administration of the company. A new Board of Directors has been formed, under the Chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University (Sir George Paton), consisting of equal representation by the Trust and the University.

John Sumner, our Victorian representative, is the Administrator of this company.

The first season of the new joint management opened on August 31 with a production of **WALTZ OF THE TOREADORS**.

The following plays have been presented during the season: **ARMS AND THE MAN**, **THE PARTY**, **VENUS OBSERVED**, **RAPE OF THE BELT**, **MOBY DICK**, and **THE GHOST TRAIN**.

Producers have included John Sumner, John Trevor and George Ogilvie. The season has proved that there is an enthusiastic audience for repertory drama, and the work of the company has been highly acclaimed by the Melbourne Press.

Subsequent plays will include **SWEENEY TODD**, **THE ENTERTAINER** and an Australian play. The season will conclude on March 12.

### **Trust Players.**

The Trust Players have concluded a successful tour of Tasmania, Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong, Adelaide, Western Australian country towns, Perth, Canberra, and Brisbane, during which the following plays from the 1959 season were presented: **FIRE ON THE WIND**, formerly called **THE BASTARD COUNTRY**, **MAN AND SUPERMAN**, and **LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT**.

Members of the Trust Players will be engaged in the Christmas production of **SMUGGLERS BEWARE!** at the Elizabethan Theatre throughout January.

The Trust Players' 1960 season will commence early in February, when the following plays will be presented:

**RAPE OF THE BELT**, by Benn Levy—a new and saucy view of the Greek heroes in their struggle with the Amazon women—is one of the most brilliant comedies to be played recently in the West End. It is witty, naughty and wise.

**MOBY DICK—REHEARSED** is Orson Welles' adaptation from Herman Melville's famous book. This powerful theatre-piece breaks new territory in stage technique. It will be presented as a guest performance by the Union Theatre Repertory Company, directed by John Sumner, with the well-known actor, Frank Thring, in the leading role of Captain Ahab.

**MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL**, by T. S. Eliot. World-famous actor, Robert Speaight, will appear with the Trust Players in T. S. Eliot's modern verse masterpiece, "Murder in the Cathedral." This production by Hugh Hunt will be a highlight of the Adelaide Festival of Arts in March. We are delighted to be able to retain Mr. Speaight for an exclusive season of this play in Sydney.

**THE HOSTAGE**, by Brendan Behan. "The Hostage" is the most recent work for the stage by this controversial Irish playwright. It combines the irreverence of his "Borstal Boy" and the earthiness of "The Quare Fellow" in a play of lingering humanity and visual poetry.

The repertoire of plays may be re-arranged if a suitable Australian play is found.

## 1960 OPERA SEASON.

Two of Australia's finest singers are returning from the United Kingdom and Europe to take part in the Trust's 1960 GRAND OPERA SEASON.

They are Joan Hammond and Kenneth Neate.

Joan Hammond, who returns from London in February, will sing the title roles in **SALOME** and **MADAME BUTTERFLY**.

Kenneth Neate will come from Germany to sing Pinkerton in **MADAME BUTTERFLY**, and Tamino in **THE MAGIC FLUTE**.

The 1960 repertoire comprises five operas.

They are **SALOME**, **RIGOLETTO**, **MADAME BUTTERFLY**, **THE MAGIC FLUTE** and Puccini's three one-act operas, **THE TRITTICO**.

Musical Director of the Trust Opera Company (Mr. Karl Rankl) will be conducting, assisted by Mr. Eric Clapham and Mr. Georg Tintner.

Stefan Haag will produce **SALOME**, **THE TRITTICO** and **THE MAGIC FLUTE**, with designs by Raymond Boyce, of New Zealand, and Louis Kahan, of Perth.

**RIGOLETTO** will be produced by Robin Lovejoy, with costumes designed by Louis Kahan, and sets by Wendy Dickson.

Well-known Australian artist, Elaine Haxton, has designed the sets and costumes for **MADAME BUTTERFLY**.

The Company will open in Adelaide on March 17, where its productions will be a feature of the Adelaide Festival of Arts.

The Melbourne season, from April 18 to May 14, will be followed by a season in Sydney at the Elizabethan Theatre from May 21 to June 25. The tour concludes with the Brisbane season from July 2 to July 30.

The orchestras in each State will be supplied by the Australian Broadcasting Commission. An orchestra comprising more than seventy members will be used for **SALOME**.

## SPECIAL SHAKESPEARE SEASON

**RICHARD II** and **TWELFTH NIGHT** are scheduled for production by the Trust during 1960 in Sydney.

Theatregoers will welcome the chance to see **RICHARD II**—one of Shakespeare's greatest studies in human frailty—which has not been performed professionally in Sydney for many years.

Children, as well as adults, will be interested to see both these plays, which are included in the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate syllabus for 1960.

## "SUMMER OF THE SEVENTEENTH DOLL" FILM

Proceeds from the world premiere of the film, "Summer of the Seventeenth Doll," which took place at the Century Theatre, Sydney, on December 2, were divided between the Trust and Torchbearers for Legacy.

The Trust gratefully acknowledges the generosity of United Artists and Hoyts, who gave the film and the theatre for the premiere.

The Trust's share of the proceeds will lay the foundation for a fund to purchase a special touring van.

The van will be used for transporting such companies as the Young Elizabethan Players throughout the country.