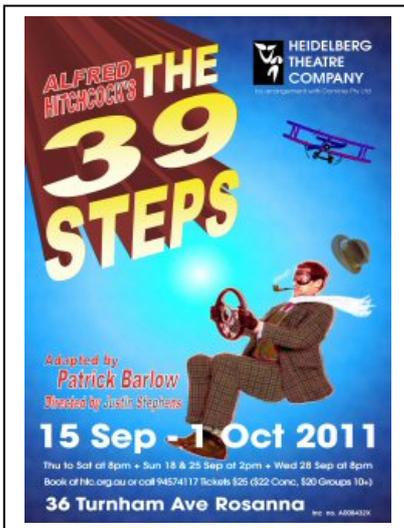


PROMPTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE HEIDELBERG THEATRE COMPANY



The 39 Steps

by John Buchan adapted by Patrick Barlow
directed by Justin Stephens

15th Sept – 1st Oct, 2011

Evenings at 8.00pm

Matinees: Sundays 18th & 25th Sept at 2pm

Subscribers requiring to alter their chosen night or reserve their booking are asked to call the Box Office BEFORE Monday, 28th August, 2011.

The play features the hilarious trials and tribulations of the wrongly accused *Richard Hannay* as he evades police and finds love while trying to foil the fiendish plot of a devilishly brilliant mastermind. **The 39 Steps** on stage is a rollicking thriller-romance script with madcap vaudeville like comic routines and a delightful array of characters.

The 39 Steps started as a groundbreaking World War I espionage novel by Scottish author John Buchan. It was later adapted for film by Alfred Hitchcock and his writing team for the masterful 1935 film.

The conceit of Patrick Barlow's 2005 adaptation is to perform, almost verbatim, the script of the 1935 thriller-romance film but with a cast of only four and the Company is delighted to have Chris McLean, Kate Bowers and Adrian Carr on stage at HTC again. They were in the cast of the Athenaeum's hugely successful production at Lilydale in March this year. Joining the cast for our production is a newcomer to HTC, James Cutler. So welcome James.

Leading our talented actors is Director, Justin Stephens who also directed the show at Lilydale's. Justin will be well known to HTC audiences as both actor and director, his first directorial role with us was **A Skull In Connemara** in 2009.

Maureen McInerney is Production Co-ordinator and Margaret Hassall the Stage Manager for the show. Assisting back stage is a great team of enthusiastic Crew; Melanie, Siobhan, Russell, Sue, Merrin, Jim, Dianne and Debra who will be run off their feet backstage helping to set up the scene changes and assisting the actors with their lightning quick costume changes.

Owen, Dennis, Des, Neville, Jim, Paddy, Doug and Mal are again working on the set designed by Merinda Backway. Deryk Hartwick is designing the lighting plot and Justin has designed the sound. Wardrobe is again in the capable and creative hands of Sylvia Carr from Lilydale and organising the costumes for our show is Wendy Drowley and the properties have been sourced by Steve Tanner, Jimmy Bru and Ian Carter.

The show at Lilydale was hugely successful with their audience, with many people coming back for second and even third viewings, so please, don't be disappointed, do book early for this one! Remember you can now book online at www.htc.org.au or if you wish you can call the Box Office on 9457 4117. FlexiBook Subscribers and ticket exchanges need to be organised via the Box Office.

P.O Box 141, Rosanna VIC 3084
Enquiries 9455 3039
Web www.htc.org.au
Email htc@htc.org.au
Inc. No. A008432X

EMAIL PROMPTS CAMPAIGN: Like to join HTC's email list and receive *Prompts* in digital format? It also saves us money on printing and postage. If so please send an email to prompts@htc.org.au and include your name, address & phone number

BOOKINGS – Online at www.htc.org.au or call 9457 4117



Review

The History Boys by Alan Bennett
Directed by Bruce Akers
Reviewed by Catherine Brain
for Theatre People,
www.theatrepeople.com.au,
on Thursday 7th July, 2011.



Heidelberg Theatre Company has delivered another strong production to add to their repertoire with their current season of **The History Boys**, the award-winning play by Alan Bennett. The production showcases a fantastic cast who are able to meet the demands of Bennett's script...and look like they are enjoying each and every minute along the way.

Set in the 1980s at a grammar school in the North of England, **The History Boys** tells the story of 8 boys preparing to sit the Oxbridge exams under the guidance of three very different teachers....each with their own philosophy. While old favorite Hector seems committed to fight the system by focusing on the lessons of life, he is challenged by the ambitious Headmaster who is desperate to see the reputation of the school improve. The arrival of Irwin, a young supply teacher, challenges the traditional views on study and encourages the boys to see the truth as relative. In addition to tackling themes of transition and sexuality, the play challenges the value and purpose of education – do we live to fight the system or instead use it to get what we want?

The production design was cohesive and effective for the most part, and while there was the occasional opening night teething problem, the elements worked together well. David Dare has created a great set that has a very familiar feel to it...like it could be a classroom anywhere. The transition to the other scenes at times was a little clunky and slow – something that I am sure will become more smooth and seamless as the season progresses. I felt that while Deryk Hartwick's lighting design was effective it was too heavy handed in parts, particularly the over-reliance on the spotlight for every snippet of monologue. It slowed the momentum in some key moments and became very predictable.

As Director, Bruce Akers has done a fantastic job not only in assembling a strong cast, but delivering an interpretation that has a very genuine feel to it. His experience is evident in all aspects of the production – in particular, the interactions of the characters throughout as their relationships developed. While I understand there was a last minute change to the cast in the lead-up to the opening, I have to say that unless I was told I wouldn't have noticed. This speaks to the ability of the ensemble, under Akers' direction, to effectively 'absorb' a character so late in the piece. Well done.

The cast delivered a series of fantastic performances, with standouts on the night by Peter Maver, Tim Constantine, James Plunkett and Tim Driver. Maver's portrayal of *Hector* was effortless, and even in the darkest moments of betrayal and shame he was still loveable and endearing. Constantine brought a warmth to *Irwin* that took him beyond what can be a very callous and one-dimensional character, and his chemistry with his cast mates was evident. James Plunkett was equal parts charming and cocky as *Dakin*, and he delivered a commanding performance throughout. Tim Driver was an audience favorite as *Posner*, showing such vulnerability and strength in all aspects of his delivery...and showcasing a great voice that was used brilliantly throughout the performance.

It would be remiss not to recognize the efforts of the rest of the class, who showed a great sense of comedy and camaraderie on stage throughout. In addition, Juliet Hayday's short but sweet performance as *Dorothy Lintott* provided great perspective on the story (with particular effect during the mock interviews) as did Samuel Chappel as *Scripps*.

HTC are sure to have a successful season with this production, which is running through until 23rd of July.

SCHOOL'S OUT AT HEIDELBERG BUT IN AT WILLIAMSTOWN LITTLE THEATRE

Following our highly successful season of **The History Boys** the show has gone to Williamstown as their September offering.

The morning after our final night, our wonderful group of Set Builders dismantled the set and packed it onto a truck and delivered it to WLT. The costumes, furniture and props went too as will our actors and Director, Bruce Akers.

And Bruce, thinking he wouldn't have enough to do in getting the show up at Willy, decided that he would take over the role of the *Headmaster*, played in our production by Paul Kennedy, who couldn't be available for the run at Williamstown.

All the best to cast & crew, and if you or your friends missed it at HTC there is still a chance for you to catch it, **WLT Bookings 98859678**.

AUDITION NOTICE

Heidelberg Theatre Company's production of

UNDER MILK WOOD

by **Dylan Thomas**

directed by Chris Baldock

assisted by Helen Ellis

Auditions will be held at the Theatre

36 Turnham Avenue Rosanna (Melway ref: 31 A1)

Monday 19th September at 7.30pm
& Tuesday 20th September at 7.30pm

Play Season: 17th November to 3rd December, 2011

Weeknights and Saturdays at 8:00pm

Sundays at 2:00pm

Under Milk Wood by Dylan Thomas was originally a radio play. Initially, through a storyteller, we are invited to listen in on the dreams of residents in a tiny Welsh seaside village called Llareggub. Then, the town and its colourful characters awaken. With musical language and bawdy humour we see them going about their daily business and become aware of how their feelings affect whatever they do. The humour is black, impassioned, lyrical, and at times hilarious, yet poignant. A poetic theatrical delight.

This is an ensemble play at its very best. Although hoping for a large cast, the number of people to play the roles listed below will be determined by who auditions. So an ensemble cast of 10 to 24 people will be created! **Ages 18 to 80+ are welcome to audition.**

The auditions: the auditions will be a group read of sections of the play. Your ability to create characters, to savour and enjoy the language, to tell a story, to work as part of a team and to have fun will be looked at. Although you do not need to book a time, please advise which day you will be attending.

Accent: A Welsh accent will be required for all roles. HOWEVER it is not expected that you will have perfected it at auditions as they will be worked on and developed throughout the rehearsal period. You will be required to demonstrate that you can do accents however. An Aussie accent just won't work for this play!

Rehearsals will be Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays – 7.30pm. Please do not audition if these days do not suit.

Characters:

Voice 1, Voice 2, Ocky Milkman, Polly Garter, Evans the Death, Jack Black, Organ Morgan, Mrs Organ Morgan, Police Constable Attila Rees, Nogood Boyo, Mr Cherry Owen, Mrs Cherry Owen, Mr Willy Nilly, Mrs Willy Nilly, Utah Watkins, Mae Rose Cottage, Bessie Bighead, Dai Bread, Butcher Beynon, Mrs Butcher Beynon, Rev. Eli Jenkins, Mr Pugh, Sinbad Sailors, Mary Ann Sailors, Lily Smalls, Lord Cut Glass, Myfanwy Price, Mog Edwards, Captain Cat, Mr Waldo, Mrs Ogmores Pritchard, Mr Ogmores, Mr Pritchard, Gossamer Beynon, Mr & Mrs Floyd.

For further information and to book an audition time please email

Chris Baldock at chris.baldock@gmail.com

Where did those 60 years go? HTC's turning 60 next year and we've had some great ideas on ways to celebrate from our Committee, Members, Subscribers and friends, so thank you all.

We'll revisit plays performed over the years, your favourites we hope, but we must say it now –

Nick Nick is a NO! NO!

We'll be draggin' out lots of the old gladrags from Wardrobe and delving into our archives to retrieve old photos, videos and other paraphernalia from past shows.

So lots of memories, laughs, and maybe even a few tears, as we come together with HTC's old and new friends to celebrate this landmark year in our Theatre's life.

(watch this space for updates.)

CHANGE OF DIRECTOR FOR UNDER MILK WOOD

Your copy of Prompts may have arrived a little late and for this we do apologise, but unfortunately Sandy Green, the director of **Under Milk Wood**, the final production in our 2011 Season, has unexpectedly been taken ill and has had to withdraw from the production.

Chris Baldock has kindly agreed to replace Sandy as Director of the show and will be assisted by Helen Ellis. Both Helen and Chris will be well known as actors to HTC audiences and Chris has also directed a number of plays for us, his most recent being **Cloudstreet** in 2009.

We all wish Sandy a speedy recovery and welcome Chris and Helen back to HTC.

BLOCK BOOKING OPTIONS

Preview Night & First Nighters' Specials – Groups of 50 – \$10 per ticket.

BOOK NOW -

call our HTC Box Office on **9457 4117.**

Groups of 10 or more - any performance – \$20 per tkt.

BOOK ONLINE at: htc.org.au
or call the **HTC Box Office**
9457 4117

HELP!!!

needed at the

WORKING BEES for

THE 39 STEPS

Saturdays

3rd & 10th Sept

from 10.30am

lunch is provided

So do come along. It's a great experience and a fun time too!

Working Bees not your style?

How about assisting
backstage or FOH.

Like to know more – call the Theatre on 9455 3039

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 3 rd	10.30am	Working Bee with Lunch
Saturday 10 th	10.30am	Working Bee with Lunch
Thursday 15 th	8.00pm	FIRST NIGHT – THE 39 STEPS
Monday 19 th	7.30pm	Audition – Under Milk Wood
Tuesday 20 th	7.30pm	Audition – Under Milk Wood
Tuesday 27 th	7.15pm	Heidelberg Film Society – The Kite Runner

OCTOBER

Saturday 1 ST	7.15pm	FINAL NIGHT – THE 39 STEPS
Tuesday 25 th	7.30pm	Heidelberg Film Society – Charlotte Gray