

Presenting award-winning quality drama to Adelaide audiences since 1972

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## Committee

**President:** Heather Jones

**Secretary:** Viki Burrett

**Treasurer:** Rob Andrewartha

**Committee Members:**

Ellen Demaagd, Brian Donaghy, Danny Gibbins, Gayle Hammond, Lori Nielsen

## Visit

Find information on all our happenings, present & past at [stirlingplayers.sct.org.au](http://stirlingplayers.sct.org.au)

## Social Media

Follow us on [Facebook](#)



## Message from the President

Welcome to our autumn newsletter as the beautiful colourful blanket over the Adelaide Hills makes way for winter.

It was sad to see the end of the NELL GWYNN season, and to farewell director Megan Dansie and her wonderful cast. But as is the always the case, the show must go on, and we are already gearing up for a CELEBRATION in September.

We are thrilled to have Patsy Thomas back in Stirling, as Director, rather than Stage Manager, and the cast will gather at the first reading on 7 July. Our publicity machine is already gearing up, the costume hunt is on and ideas are flowing for decorating Front of House. In other words lots to keep us busy over the chilly months!

We look forward to welcoming you with our cosy fires in September!

Heather Jones





### What the Critics said about NELL GWYNN

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"This production succeeds because of Emily Currie's passionate, committed, consistent, engaging and vivacious Nell Gwynn."

"The strong Stirling Players ensemble, which notably includes Peter Davies as the charming, regal, and loving Charles II, supports her completely and admirably."

**Tony Knight**  
**Former NIDA Head of Drama**  
*Stage Whispers*

".. a personal triumph for Emily Currie in the title role"

"terrific supporting cast... are all outstanding and extremely funny!"

"this is a stupendous all round production brilliantly directed by Megan Dansie"

**John Ovenden**  
*Weekender Herald*

## **NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

***The Stirling Players are known for having a talented committee which is very hands-on.***

***The tradition continues...***

At our AGM in February we farewelled two valued committee members, Maurice Kneen, our Treasurer and Life Member, and Rebecca Kemp, our publicist for the past three years. Their contribution to the continuing success of our company was immense, and we wish them well in their retirement, and exciting new work role, respectively. At the same time we welcomed three new committee members, who are familiar faces.

**Rob Andrewartha** is renowned for his fabulous costumes, notably in *The Beaux Stratagem*. (Yes, one of them made another appearance in the recent NELL GWYNN "hat scene"! ) An accountant by day, Rob is our new Treasurer.

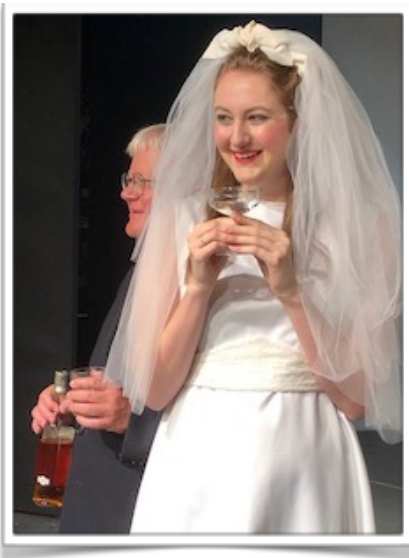
**Ellen Demaagd** has been working in our sound and lighting box for the past couple of years. We appreciate having a young and enthusiastic voice at the the meeting table, especially because she is a Year 12 student, and has a lot going on this year!

**Bryan Donaghy** has been constructing sets and working Front of Houses for many years. A retired journalist, Bryan brings his writing skills to the Publicity Team. He has already impressed by taking notes in shorthand!

### ***Patrons***

We welcome the Federal Member for Mayo, **Rebekha Sharkie MP** and the State Member for Heysen, **Josh Teague MP**, as our new patrons. Retired MP for Heysen, Isobel Redmond, has agreed to continue in her role as patron. **David and Belinda Clarke** of Bakers Delight Stirling, continue to offer generous, and much appreciated, support.

## COMING NEXT



*"Weddings and funerals, nothing like them for bringing out the best and worst in people"*  
*Willis Hall*

### **CELEBRATION**

**by Willis Hall and Keith Waterhouse**

**Directed by Patsy Thomas**

***Season Runs 13 - 28 September 2019***

Step with us back to the 1960s, where Rhoda is finalising the arrangements for her daughter's wedding, somewhere in the north of England.

Determined to give her daughter a proper ceremony on a tight budget, she has to contend with more than a hint of snobbish criticism and menfolk who are unenthusiastic helpers at best.

Step forward just a short period of time and rejoin the family after a funeral. All have shown proper respect for the dead, until "that woman" arrives and rattles the bars of their respectability.

Christine Lucas (The Bride) - <b>Rose Harvey</b>	Bernard Fuller (The Groom) – <b>Tom Filsell</b>
Rhoda Lucas (Bride's mother) – <b>Deb Walsh</b>	Edna Fuller (Groom's Mother) – <b>Penni Hamilton-Smith</b>
Edgar Lucas (Bride's father) – <b>John Koch</b>	Alice Fuller (Groom's Aunt) – <b>Mo Johnson</b>
Jack Lucas (Bride's brother) – <b>Nathan Brown</b>	Margo Fuller (Groom's cousin's wife) – <b>Jessica Bader</b>
Irene Howes (Bride's cousin) – <b>Kate van der Horst</b>	Stan Dyson (Irene's Fiancé) – <b>Ben Proeve</b>
Lilian Howes (Bride's Aunt) – <b>Madeleine Marin</b>	May Beckett – <b>Esther Michelson</b>
Frank Broadbent (Bride's Uncle) – <b>David Evans</b>	Sgt. Major Tommy Lodge – <b>David Lockwood</b>
Arthur Broadbent (Bride's Great-Uncle) – <b>Chris Leech</b>	Margo Fuller (Groom's cousin's wife) – <b>Jessica Bader</b>

**SAVE THE DATE**

***You Are Invited to One Wedding  
& a Funeral !***

***13 - 28 September 2019  
Stirling Community Theatre  
Avenue Road Stirling  
Details on our website  
Bookings open in July***



**WANTED**

***People interested in being part of our dynamic  
and creative team!***

***There are lots of opportunities to help in our  
upcoming production, from building the set  
and pulling it down, to painting, distributing  
flyers, sewing & selling programmes...***

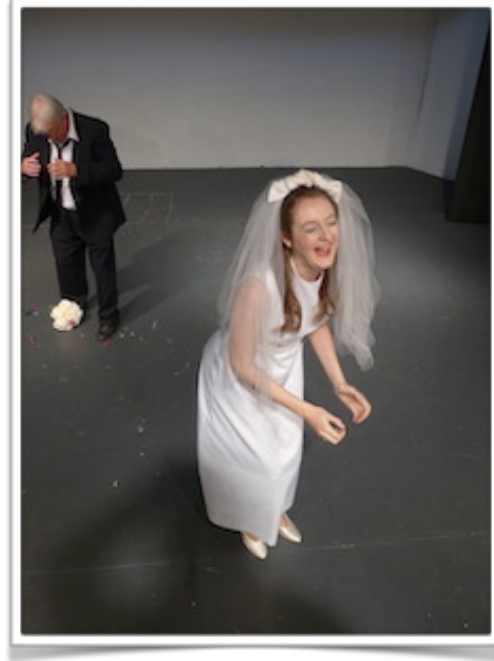
***If that's you or someone you know  
contact***

***Viki Burrett,  
stirlingplayerssecretary@gmail.com***

## Photoshoot fun!

Great fun was had by all at the recent CELEBRATION photoshoot. With Patsy Thomas directing and Dave Simms photographing, Rose Harvey and David Lockwood made an early start in their roles, suitably tarted up by Viki Burrett and Heather Jones.

Flowers by Rob Andrewartha.



*A little more practice needed in Bouquet throwing, Rose!*



*David celebrating & rehearsals  
don't start until July!*



*Be serious, David. It's actually a funeral  
wreath...*



## COFFEE BREAK READING: a lovely piece about the *CELEBRATION* playwrights

*The Guardian* published this obituary of Willis Hall in 2005. Written by Dennis Barker, it offers a great insight into the team of Willis and Waterhouse and Willis' rich and varied writing career.

"The prolific writer **Willis Hall**, who has died aged 75, maintained that he could collaborate happily with his friend **Keith Waterhouse** and others because he didn't need to. It was certainly true that before his collaboration with Waterhouse on the bitter-sweet comedy *Billy Liar* (1960), he had made his name and fame with his claustrophobic play about British soldiers surrounded in the Malayan jungle, *The Long And The Short And The Tall*, and that he continued his own individual writing.

More than a dozen childrens' books, including the Vampire series of titles, were, in the 1970s and 1980s, added to Hall's 40 radio and television plays. Described as having a mind you could almost hear ticking, and usually sparing in his conversation, he claimed to maintain regular writing hours from 7am to lunchtime, 365 days a year.

His rich vein of material owed much to the Leeds working-class background he shared with Waterhouse. They lived 400 yards apart in the Hunslet neighbourhood, where there was a social distinction between those who had a scullery downstairs and those who did not. Peter O'Toole's parents lived in the same area, and sometimes drank with the Waterhouses and the Halls.

Both pupils of Cockburn high school, Leeds, Hall and Waterhouse met at the age of 12. They were members of the same youth clubs, and compared notes about girls. Hall, the son of a fitter in an engineering plant, left school at 14 and ambitiously tried his hand at journalism. He then joined the trawler crews sailing from Hull, and became a professional soldier.

While working as a signals corporal in Malaya, he wrote plays for the schools department of the local radio station. When he returned to Britain after seven years, it was BBC radio for which he continued to work as a playwright, in addition to directing the then unknown John Dexter in a Nottingham YMCA production of Jean Anouilh's *Antigone*.

Hall had considerable experience as a playwright when Peter Dews asked him to write a stage play for eight Oxford undergraduates he was taking to the 1958 Edinburgh Festival. They were to perform in a hall where the entrances and exits would be restricted for the actors because they would have to carve their way through the audience. A play in which the characters were so cooped up that they did not often have to enter or exit seemed to be a solution, and the resultant play was *Disciplines Of War*, later renamed *The Long And The Short And The Tall*.

Hall thought it was less about the clichéd futility of war than about the morality of killing; a sergeant had to decide whether a prisoner should be killed or not, and Hall

saw him as the true hero of the play.

After Edinburgh, the Royal Court theatre brought the play to London, where it found favour with the critic Kenneth Tynan. Albert Finney was cast as the north-country troublemaker Bamforth, but got appendicitis; he was replaced by the then unknown O'Toole, who turned the character into a cockney with no loss of plausibility. Robert Shaw was also in the cast and the director was Lindsay Anderson. O'Toole's understudy, who never had to appear, was Michael Caine.

*The Long And The Short And The Tall* was revived in 1971 at the Shaw Theatre, when a lot of the robust language originally removed by the Lord Chamberlain was patiently restored. His 19 "suggestions" in 1959 had included dropping one character's description of another as a "moon-faced pillock"; other expressions the censor did not like were "And my father's flogging charcoal" and "cook a little pig".

*Billy Liar*, Hall's first collaboration with Waterhouse, was an illustration of their joint working methods in shows that were to include several musicals. The two men had identical desks, typewriters and filing systems in their West End office. One would shout out an idea for a character, or a line of dialogue, while the other tapped it out. They never subsequently claimed exclusive credit, and never quarrelled.

In 1973, 15 years after Waterhouse's first novel, *There Is A Happy Land*, had been published, and when both men were working on the book for a musical version of Arnold Bennett's *The Card*, the routine was much the same. Drinking mineral water, never a favourite of Waterhouse's, Hall sat opposite rather than beside his colleague, talking lines to him as Waterhouse talked other lines back. Neither man attempted to act out the lines, knowing themselves to be poor actors. When creativity was temporarily at a low ebb, they played cards or Monopoly.

After the success of *Billy Liar*, Hall collaborated with Waterhouse on ***Celebration*** (1961), *All Things Bright And Beautiful* (1962), *Squat Betty and The Sponge Room* (1963), *Say Who You Are* (1965), *Whoops A Daisy* (1968), *Children's Day* (1969), *Who's Who* (1972), *Saturday Sunday Monday*, an adaptation from de Filippo (1973), *Filumena*, another adaptation from Filippo (1978) and *The Card* in 1994. They also cooperated on the script of one of Alfred Hitchcock's least tense films, *Torn Curtain* (1966).

In collaboration with Denis King, Hall wrote the musical of *The Wind In The Willows* (1985). *The Water Babies*, with John Cooper, was produced in 1987, and *Peter Pan*, with George Stiles and Anthony Drewe, in 1998.

Keenly interested in magic, Hall was a member of many magic circles in Britain and abroad. The president of St Albans football club in the 1960s and 1970s, as well as a season ticketholder at Chelsea and Fulham, he collaborated with Michael Parkinson on the book *Football Classified* (1974), and wrote two of his own, *My Sporting Life* and *Football Final* (both 1975). "

### **Dennis Barker**

*The Guardian*, 12 March 12, 2005

*Some memorable  
NELL GWYNN moments,  
thanks to Mark Anolak!*

