

NAPIER REPERTORY PRESENTS

Goodnight Mrs Puffin





ROY HOLDERNESS



GORDON FORGIE



MAREE MURRAY



NEVILLE BAKER



IN REHEARSAL

The Season That Was Yesterday

Radio listeners recently heard the NZBC production of Terry Coyle's "The Season That Was Yesterday" from Station 2ZC. This play was premiered by Napier Repertory Players in November 1965 and was an encouraging success for the playwright. NZBC purchased the radio rights for the play, and earlier this year, William Austin, NZBC Drama head, auditioned and produced the play locally. The casting was unique. Four of the original stage cast played the same roles in the radio version, Bryan Johnson, Brian Howlett, Priscilla Ball and Anna Molenaar. The other two parts went to Maree Murray, who was the pianist in the "Fantasticks" this year, and Eric Bradwell, local theatre critic. The radio version, condensed to one hour, was very successful and is being re-broadcast over several X stations.

The Theatre Needs People

The complexities of staging a play are not widely realised. "Goodnight Mrs Puffin" involved up to thirty people, yet only ten appear on stage.

Many people would no doubt like to be associated with plays, yet are perhaps dubious about appearing in a production. For these people there numerous backstage tasks such as set construction, properties, lighting, painting, costuming, furnishings, scene shifting, prompting, to name a few. Often, enthusiastic helpers do several of these jobs, and so gain a great deal of useful knowledge of theatre.

Any offers of assistance are always welcomed by Repertory, and those who are willing to help will be under the guidance of very experienced people in all fields of backstage work. More actors and actresses are also needed, and indeed, welcomed at every audition. Experienced or not, you may audition for any part you wish and come into consideration. If you wish to participate in any way, please contact any Repertory committee member.

On Comedy

Firstly and lastly I am more than ever convinced of the health giving properties of laughter. It is, in its best form, a kind of spiritual antiseptic, and I have noted again and again how it breaks up poison in people's minds and acts as a mental tonic; how it preserves balance in emotional crises and generally tones up sagging attitudes of mind.

- The Craft of Comedy - Athene Seyler

"I think I can recognise comedy when I see it; that's as far as I go"

- P. G. Wodehouse

Comedy - a play designed to present everyday life in an amusing satirical manner with avoidance of violent passions and ludicrous exaggeration (cf. tragedy, farce) regarded as an entertaining spectacle.

- Oxford Dictionary definition

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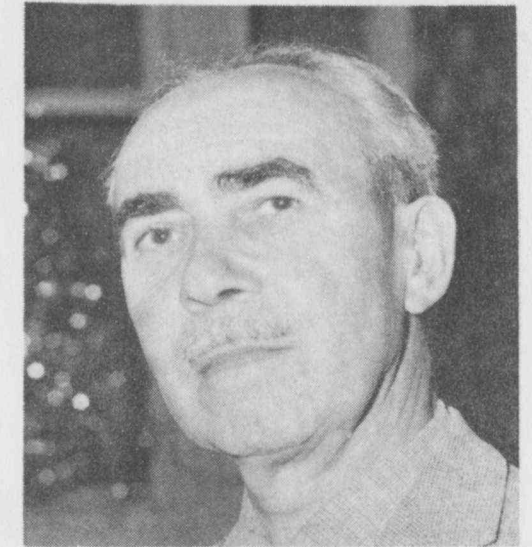
GOODNIGHT MRS PUFFIN

A Comedy-Farce by ARTHUR LOVEGROVE

Produced by TERRY COYLE



GILLIAN DAVIES

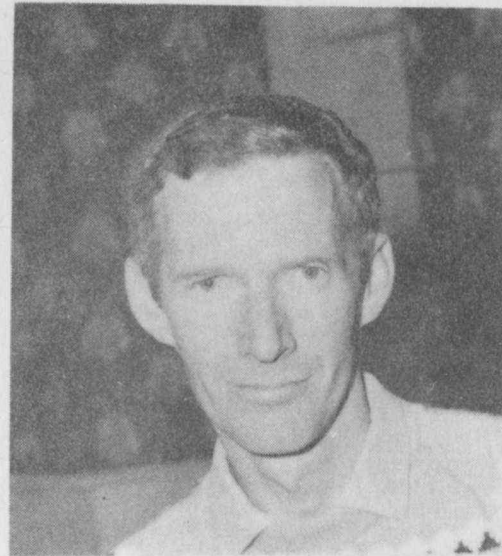


BILL CORFIELD

Cast in order of appearance:

ETHEL FORDYCE
 JACQUELINE FORDYCE
 PAMELA FORDYCE
 NICHOLAS FORDYCE
 ANNIE
 MRS AMELIA PUFFIN
 HENRY FORDYCE
 STEPHEN PARKER
 VICTOR PARKER
 ROGER VINCENT

Mary Fisher
 Shirley Kauter
 Betty Evetts
 Brian Howlett
 Maree Murray
 Gillian Davies
 Bill Corfield
 Neville Baker
 Roy Holderness
 Gordon Forgie



BRIAN HOWLETT



MARY FISHER



SHIRLEY KAUTER



BETTY EVETTS

The action of the play takes place in the drawing room of the Fordyce's house in Hampstead.

Time - The present - a week before Christmas.

Act One
 The Afternoon
 INTERVAL
 Act Two
 Later that evening
 INTERVAL
 Act Three
 An evening, three days later.

Stage Manager JOHN MATTHEWS

SEPTEMBER 1967



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AMATEUR THEATRE - CAN IT BE SAVED?

Amateur theatre in New Zealand faces a precarious future. Since the advent of television, live theatre has in most cases remained static in quality and type of presentation, while viewers of television have become more selective in choosing their entertainment. Whereas live theatre and films rarely vied for attendance because both entailed the same effort to attend, television has made our home the theatre, and we are always loath to leave comfortable chairs to watch either films in reasonable comfort or live theatre in, what is quite often, dire discomfort.

Yet live theatre has so much to offer, especially to people who have never seen a live play. There is something so very real in seeing actors that one can almost reach out and touch, to who seem to appear larger than life. But the object of live theatre, to create a fantasy or illusion, is often missing. We may have a nice comfortable theatre, good seats and a most realistic setting, yet so often we are disappointed with what we see. In small communities, this is often the fault of being too well acquainted with the actors, for even with convincing performances, some audiences are unable to completely immerse themselves in the play and so forget these personal relationships. Again, in small communities, groups seem to have very little real talent to call upon and this of course is a situation that can rarely be remedied. Yet there is often enthusiasm and drive, the next best thing to talent provided it is guided in the right direction.

But the major factor governing the future of amateur theatre is play selection. Good selection coupled with enthusiasm can give some very satisfying theatrical experiences. However, the choice of plays is sometimes so bad that this enthusiasm is lost, and a mediocre production and poor audience attendance is the result. The damage is two-fold. Young actors and actresses are discouraged, by the response of the public and spurious critics, and those who attend the play do unlimited damage by that most successful advertising medium, word-of-mouth.

Amateur groups under the guidance of artistic people who keep up to date with the latest theatrical trends have an advantage of being better able to judge audience appeal. We must select modern plays, for techniques and tastes have changed markedly over the past decade. In doing so, we must also disregard the false moralist who is opposed to change, and the presentation of anything the least "risque" in theatre. Live theatre cannot survive standing still.

There must be more plays of a high standard to appeal to the younger audiences and younger actors. We have so few good natural actors and actresses in New Zealand and it is doubtful whether drama schools in their present form do any real good. An actor cannot be taught to be convincing. He must have the natural ability, an exciting play, and imaginative direction.

The time has come to brush away the cobwebs that have been allowed to form. Then live theatre can again come into its own.

- B.M.H.

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