

The Garrick Gazette

Issue 628 April 2025

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The Demon Burden Bell The Co

SWEENEY

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

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Dear Readers,

April was another huge month.

Midnight Murder at Hamlington Hall had its final curtain. It was a wonderfully funny show - which was received so well by our Garrick audiences. I found it absolutely hilarious. I just want to say well done to all involved: cast, crew and volunteers.

We are preparing for the Special General Meeting on Monday, 26 May - please keep an eye out on further communications coming out soon.

The Canterbury Tales audition date has been posted - Saturday 3 May from 10 AM at the theatre. There are plenty of fantastic roles up for grabs, we'd love to see as many of you there - rehearsals start in May for an August run.

We've opened up submissions for plays for our 2026 season. Now is your chance to submit that perfect play - submissions close Saturday, 31 May.

Sweeney Todd rehearsals are sounding great. The cast and crew have been rehearsing all over Guildford and have now arrived back home at the Garrick where their show opens in June. We look forward to seeing the set going up on 25 April, which is also ANZAC Day.

The Garrick would like to acknowledge the sacrifices and service of all those - past and present - who have served in peace keeping, wars and conflict.

Lest We Forget.

See you soon at the Garrick!

Ali Louise Acting President

Acknowledgement of Country

Garrick Theatre would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of this land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people. We acknowledge and respect their continuing contribution to the culture and life of this region and recognise the strength, resilience and capacity of Noongar people of this land.



GARRICK'S PRODUCTION OF MIDNIGHT MURDER AT Hamlington Hall wrapped up this month, but not before wowing our audiences, who were quick to jump online and leave some fantastic praise for the show. We also received terrific reviews from Kimberley Shaw writing for STAGE WHISPERS, Poppy Rogers for WHAT'S THE SHOW and Kate O'Sullivan for THEATRE REVIEWS PERTH. As always, we've included some of our favourite bits, but please see the links below to check them out further!



STAGE WHISPERS
KIMBERLEY SHAW
STAGEWHISPERS.COM.AU



Strong performances, bordering on the manic, abound. Meredith Hunter's Phillipa['S]...ability to play three roles in the second half is impressive. Jarrod Buttery's blustery Barneyis annoyingly excellent... Jim Brown captures director/writer/actor Shane beautifully in a believable performance...Jay Shaw is strong (and a little scary) as Stage Manager Karen. Olivia Keary is a delight [and] definitely a young performer to watch...and Jack Riche is top-notch.

This was my first time at The Garrick Theatre in Guildford, where patrons are warmly welcomed by the smiling front of house team... The experience begins from the moment you enter the venue and friendly faces and enthusiastic raffle ticket sellers ensure the evening starts on the right note. Bringing nearly 60 years of theatre experience between them, Kirstie Francis and Sarah House have banded together to direct... this talented cast.



WHAT'S THE SHOW?
POPPY ROGERS
WHATSTHESHOW.COM.AU

THEATRE REVIEWS PERTH KATE O'SULLIVAN THEATREREVIEWSPERTH.COM.AU



Technically, the show hits its marks. The set is spot-on for a community theatre whodunit—familiar, functional, and intentionally drab in all the right ways. Props are well chosen... and costumes do an admirable job of distinguishing characters...[the] chaotic quick changes lies a tender tribute to the indomitable spirit of theatre-makers...

- NL This was one of the funniest and best plays I have ever seen. Well done to the cast, you did a fabulous job, and the behind the scenes teams. Well done to you all.
- CP ...From the very beginning there's laughs and the curtain hasn't been raised yet! ...I laughed heartily and felt so good! Fabulous direction from Kirstie Halbwirth and Sarah House. The flawless cast... You don't usually get to see a play that the laughter starts in the foyer till the very end...
- JW Fantastic show. Cast were amazing. If you want a good laugh then book your seats you will not be disappointed.
- CKF Best show so funny from start to finish. Well done everybody.
- JF It was the funniest thing I have seen in a long time. Great acting by all.



FROM OUR FOLLOWERS ON FACEBOOK.COM/GARRICK1932/

KB - Ensure you go see this as it was very funny and well staged! The cast were excellent and energetic (especially with all the costume and character changes) and it was absolutely seamless. Well done to all the cast, crew and directors.

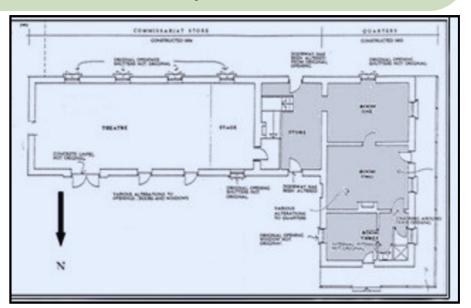
The Commissariat Store How a convict building became a modern theatre. (Part Two)



In our March newsletter, our archivist Tom Goode took us on a history incursion to discover the Garrick Theatre's beginning as the Commissariat Store on Meadow Street, Guildford. In part two, we explore how we became who we are today - Perth's oldest community theatre.

At a specially called Committee Meeting on 13 November 1934, an offer of £12 was offered to the Guildford Town Council as an annual rental for the store. This offer did not include the attached cottage, as it was still occupied by a retired policeman. £12 in today's money would be \$1,450 annum, or \$27.80 per week.

The Council erected the stage, and two small lathe and plaster dressing rooms were squeezed



onto the stage against the back wall. The floor was the original wooden floor with the main entrance from the Council yard to the north. Window shutters and the doors, even when closed, let cold air circulate. Heavy beams across the open ceiling installed to carry the fire brigades exercise equipment proved useful for stage lighting. Electrical power was connected, but seating consisted of stackable chairs borrowed from the Council.

The first step was to make the clubrooms livable by sealing some of the cracks in the shutters and around the doors and then purchasing black curtains to form a stage. With stackable chairs and a piano borrowed from the Town Hall, it was sufficient to stage a play or celebrate a social function. Under the guiding hand of Alexander Todd, plays were staged or read, members tried their hand at directing, acting or volunteering for the many essential roles associated with producing a play. The loss of leading lights Mrs. Dancer (1938) and Alexander Todd (1940) at the start of World War Two combined with the temporary requisitioning of their home for Air Raids Precautions (ARP) service, and the club went into recess in 1941.

After the break caused by WWII, activity resumed in 1945 - but there were still difficulties to overcome as the following report indicates. The original electrical wiring had serviced the cottage, and the electricity for the Garrick came from a switchboard backstage. It was not until 1975 that the building was rewired to modern standards.

The minutes from a meeting on 10 April 1951 show the call for a working bee to shift gear to the new rooms suggest the cottage (shaded area in the above diagram) added to club premises. Over time, this area has expanded into dressing rooms and space for wardrobe and props.

Throughout the ninety plus years of its existence, Garrick has received strong support from the local council. At a meeting on Thursday 17 June 1954, the Guildford Council granted the Garrick Club a three-year lease with right-of-renewal, thereby assuring the club of its premises for the whole of its existence. The 1950s were years of change for the club. The difficulty and expense of finding a suitable external venue for their public productions contrasted unfavourably with the now permanent home base.

By 1955, sound effects and lighting had been much improved with the addition of spot and dimmer lights, alongside club furniture made and donated by Ken Smith. Improvements and properties were greatly increased during 1956, by the almost completion of the Apron stage, new curtains, auditorium, lighting and new footlights. Properties and effects were also increased with a wind machine, new lounge, purchase of records, curtains, etc. Material for new stage curtains was supplied by the Guilford Council.

GUILDFORD'S Garrick Club players were putting on a drop of drama in their club theatre when a fuse blew.

The show differed from some amateur presentations in that it couldn't be performed in total



d a r k n e s s
without losing
some of its ent e r t a i nment
value. So members of the audience began pottering around
with matches
and peering into

fuse boxes.

This showed a nice spirit but didn't achieve anything constructive, and the fuse boxes remained with their secret locked in their bosoms.

Finally all hands seized the scenery and carted it round to the Guildford Town Hall. Where the show, in the finest traditions of the theatre, went on.

Daily News 25 September 1947

During the fifties, the decision to open club performances to the public was an important step forward, but the entrance to the theatre remained through the side door of the auditorium. Latecomers were a constant source of annoyance, as they had to cross between the audience and stage. Changing the entrance to the door at the back of the hall was an easy decision but exposed the audience to picking their way through the Council yard.

The advent of television meant the closure and redevelopment of the Capitol Theatre in Perth. By fundraising among members, the Garrick Theatre purchased 100 padded seats with armrests, which provided much more comfort, but meant the floorspace could no longer be used for dancing. Subsequently the seats were mounted on raised platforms to improve the viewing.

By 1980, a new foyer had been added (with a small kitchen and toilets) providing a very necessary space for the audience before, during and after the show. Control of sound and lighting was transferred to a 'bio-box' between the two buildings, which allowed the operators to see the action on stage. The audience now entered via a path along the South side of the building.

By 2000, the foyer was extended with the addition of a bar and store, and, as recently as 2013, the seating was staggered to improve viewing at the loss of about 20 seats.

The enthusiasm of Garrick members has seen the premises grow from an abandoned fire station to a boutique theatre that regularly stages dramatic performances of a high standard.

With up to four plays in rehearsal at any one-time, Garrick is looking to expand, but where, when and how questions are still to be settled. Watch this space.

Author Note: This information is a combination of research and personal experience. If you believe there to be any corrections, please email Tom Goode, Garrick Theatre Archivist, at: tomgoode@aussiebb.com.au

Continually occupi

Continually occupied since the 1800's, the Garrick Theatre is renowned for the warm hospitality it extends to the generations of patrons who enter its historic doors... but what of the spirits who never left?



PHOTO CREDIT: PARANORMAL PERTH | FACEBOOK.COM/PARAPERTH



By Carly Ranger

CONTENT WARNING: CONTAINS MENTIONS OF PARANORMAL ACTIVITY.

For years, the Garrick has been listed among some of Perth's most haunted buildings.

Generations of casts, crews, committee and volunteers have reported hearing strange noises or voices at the Garrick, feeling like they're being watched, noticing stage props moving without explanation, and hearing ghostly footsteps walk across the hallowed stage.

Modern cast members humorously refer to the Green Room Ghost as 'George' and believe that if you don't greet him as you bump in, strange things may occur. People who have performed at the Garrick believe that the spirit of George means no harm, and that he likes being there and simply wants to be acknowledged.

Some say, if you don't greet George, costumes and props may go missing immediately before they are needed, only to be found later in a strange spot. Lighting and sound tech issues arise, and mischievous sniggers can be heard by a ghostly voice backstage. Therefore, many actors call out a simple 'Hi, George!' upon arriving through the stage door, in order to keep his cheeky ways at bay.

- Do you have a ghost story about the Garrick you'd like to share?
- Would you like to attend another paranormal investigation evening at the Garrick?
- Let us know at:
 garricktheatreguildford@gmail.com

While the Green Room is usually a hub of excitement and a chance to convene with the cast before curtain-up, there are some who have mixed feelings about the Green Room and Costume Room areas. Some report feeling uneasy, especially when they're alone. One was convinced they felt a pair on unseen hands pushing them out of the Costume Room.

Biobox operators have also reported seeing strange movement in the rafters directly above the auditorium. The infrared camera, which feeds to the front of house and backstage screens, has shown orbs, images and movement. Performers have also reported seeing a shadow entity sitting in an empty auditorium.



PHOTO CREDIT: The Afterlife Party Paranormal Team Members. facebook.com/AfterlifeParty Paranormal Some of the other unexplained activity appear to have occurred in the modern additions to the theatre, separate to the historical parts of the building. Two visiting tradespeople, who were completing some work at the club, unaware of its history reported seeing a gentleman 'using' the facilities. They saw this gentleman on two separate occasions. Shortly after, they mentioned this odd occurrence to one another - and they immediately packed up and never returned to the Garrick. You see, there was no one else in the building that day.

One member told me that one day at the club, they heard their name being called out by a familiar voice. The voice belonged to someone who had passed away several years ago. Others have reported seeing a middle-aged woman, in the kitchen and foyer area, particularly near the ticket booth door. Is she still welcoming patrons to the Garrick? All this begs us to question: is the Garrick haunted?

...there are some who have mixed feelings about the Green Room and Costume Room areas...

Recently, we had two paranormal teams: Perth Paranormal and The Afterlife Party contact the Garrick to investigate the reported paranormal occurrences. Their scheduled appointments were the result of months of planning. Due to productions, rehearsals, auditions and other engagements, it is very rare to encounter the Garrick stage empty. The stage, once in rehearsal and production mode, is considered sacrosanct one does not step foot on stage unless express permission is given!





(ABOVE) Investigators use scrying among other methods to uncover paranormal energy in Garrick's Green Room. Notice the orb seen above a photo of a past production. A Garrick member noted that there are only two people in the image still alive today. PHOTO CREDIT: PARANDRMAL PERTH | FACEBOOK.COM/PARAPERTH

Both investigative teams are highly professional and sensitive in their approach to the paranormal. They use a range of scientific methods to detect unexplained activity and have some group members with psychic and mediumship ability to help-detect energy or spirit activity in locations. The teams brought infrared video and digital cameras, sound, light and electromagnetic detectors, dowsing rods and so on. Following the investigations, the teams literally spend hours analysing footage and sound and will make the call if a capture can be debunked, such as dust or light exposure.

They also showed tremendous respect to our location, and to the potential activity at the theatre. The teams were incredibly mindful that we have loved and lost friends who once belonged to this theatre, and it is a credit to them for the respect they demonstrated. That said, we also had lots of fun, too!

Read our May newsletter for part two to see how 'the show must go on' long after the audiences have gone home - and find out what they discovered at the Garrick.



SWEENEY JODD: REHEARSALS IN FULL SWING

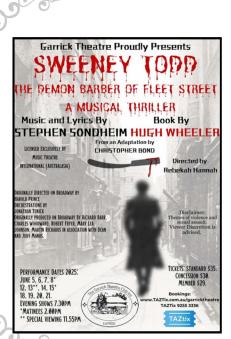
The cast and crew of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* have finally settled into their home base at Garrick Theatre, after weeks of rehearsing across multiple venues in Guildford. With the previous production, *Midnight Murder at Hamlington Hall*, occupying the space, the dedicated ensemble of 20+ performers rehearsed at Guildford's Town Hall, Mechanics Hall, and Wesley Church — a testament to their commitment to bringing this thrilling musical to life.

Under the expert direction of Rebekah Hannah, the cast has been tackling the complexities of Stephen Sondheim's demanding score with remarkable skill. The haunting melodies and intricate harmonies require precision and vocal strength, and the entire cast—comprising Bass, Baritone, Tenor, Alto, Mezzo-Soprano, and Soprano—has blended their voices to create a sound that is nothing short of electrifying. The full ensemble numbers promise to lift the roof off the theatre, immersing audiences in the dark and twisted world of 19th-century London.

With themes of vengeance, justice, and the grim realities of Victorian society, *Sweeney Todd* remains one of the most gripping musicals ever written. The tale of the vengeful barber and his cunning accomplice, Mrs. Lovett, is brought to life with chilling intensity by a cast that has risen to meet the challenges of this demanding production.

Excitement is building as the show approaches its June opening, and tickets are selling fast — with some performances already nearing capacity. Audiences eager to experience the macabre brilliance of *Sweeney Todd* should secure their seats soon, for what promises to be an unforgettable theatrical event.

Are you ready to step into the shadows of Fleet Street?





Performance Dates 2025: June 5, 6, 7, 12, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21 at 7.30pm Special MIDNIGHT Showing: Fri 13 June at 11.55pm June 8 and 15 at 2pm *Mature audiences only, 18+ Tickets: Adult \$35, Concession \$30, Members \$29

<u>TAZtix.com.au/garricktheatre/</u> or phone TAZ Tix on 9255 3336

















AUDITION NOTICE

The Canterbury Tales

Saturday, 3 May 2025 | 11am - 2pm Garrick Theatre, 16 Meadow Street, GUILDFORD

This is a workshop audition, which allows actors to work together on various exercises and activities, like drama games, improvisation, or devising, to be cast, rather than just a traditional monologue or scene audition. It will allow the director to see how actors interact with each other and the material in a more organic way to find the right chemistry. The only preparation is to be familiar with the scripts and characters. Actors Aged 13 and above. Genders are flexible.

About the show: Chaucer's classic collection of tales comes to life in a brilliant full-length adaptation. A group of travelers set out for Canterbury on a pilgrimage. To pass the time they entertain each other with a storytelling contest. Best story wins a prize. Every performer gets a chance to shine in this spirited, charming script. Great characters, OTT, lots of humour, and strong ensemble work. Text uses modern English. For more information or to register for an audition, email Gail at glusted@westnet.com.au.

Characters

*Note: actors may portray more than one character where appropriate

Female-presenting:

Fox (Prioress' Tale) [F] 27 lines Queen (Wife of Bath's Tale) [F] 16 lines Eveline (Franklin's Tale) [F] 3 lines Agnes (Pardoner's Tale) [F] 30 lines Hilde (Reeve's Tale) [F] 0 lines Bertha (Wife of Bath's Tale) [F] 30 lines Avaline (Franklin's Tale) [F] 2 lines Waitress (Pardoner's Tale) [F] 14 lines The Cook [F] 43 lines. The cook at the Tabard Inn. Pertelote (Prioress' Tale) [F] 40 lines Maude (Reeve's Tale) [F] 18 lines Eve (Wife of Bath's Tale) [F] 68 lines Joanne (Franklin's Tale) [F] 4 lines The Prioress [F] 49 lines. The prioress is in charge of a priory (a monastery). Allison (Miller's Tale), [F] 15 lines Mary (Wife of Bath's Tale), [F] 11 lines Dorigen (Franklin's Tale) [F] 26 lines Old Woman (Pardoner's Tale) [F] 10 lines

Male-presenting:

The Reeve [M] 57 lines. The manager of a manor in the later medieval period. John (Miller's Tale) [M] 33 lines Arviragus (Franklin's Tale) [M] 8 lines Jacob (Pardoner's Tale) [M] 46 lines The Pardoner [M] 55 lines. The Pardoner sells religious forgiveness and relics for a fee. Nicholas (Miller's Tale) [M] 40 lines Simekin (Reeve's Tale) [M] 30 lines Aurelius (Franklin's Tale) [M] 17 lines Knight (Wife of Bath's Tale) [M] Astrologer (Franklin's Tale) [M] The Franklin [M] 58 lines. A Franklin is a property-owner, but not of noble birth. Chanticleer (Prioress' Tale) [M] Allain (Reeve's Tale) [M] King (Wife of Bath's Tale) [M] Harold (Pardoner's Tale) [M]

Rehearsal schedule (to be confirmed)

May – rehearsals start TBA; Monday 6.30 – 9, Thursday 6.30 – 9, Saturday 11-3 June – rehearsals; Monday 6.30 - 9, Thursday 6.30 - 9, Saturday 11-3 July – rehearsals; Monday 6.30 - 9, Thursday 6.30 - 9, Saturday 11-4July 26th – July 31st – Tech/dress week August 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 8th, 9th, 10th, 14th, 15th, 16th

Performances

Performances are on August 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 8th, 9th, 10th, 14th, 15th, 16th Evening performances: 6pm –10pm Matinee performances: 12.30 - 4.30August 6th - fun run (no audience). 6.30 - 9pm. August 17th – Bump out, approx. 10pm – 3pm







All members are reminded that your 2025 Garrick membership fees are now overdue. You should pay these no later than 31st March to avoid becoming unfinancial.

Our members are the lifeblood of the Club, and we would love to see you all return this year. If you want to get involved beyond being an audience member, please speak to one of our friendly committee members, or email us at garricktheatreguildford@gmail.com and we'd be glad to assist you.

Membership subscriptions are the same as last year:

Single - \$25

Double - \$40

TAG Membership - \$20

Junior / Student / Production - \$10

The preferred method for paying your fees is via Trybooking. Simply go to Trybooking and enter Garrick in the 'Search' field and then 'Garrick Membership Subscriptions 2025' or simply follow this link: trybooking.com/1318239

You can also pay be direct transfer to our bank account as follows:

Bank - Commonwealth BSB - 066-109 Account No. - 1001 1188 (please put your name in the reference field)

If you have any difficulty with this you can contact our Membership Registrar, Terry Brown, at treasurer@garricktheatre.com.au

Of course, you can still pay by cheque, cash or EFTPOS at the theatre when you attend a production - simply ask one of our friendly front of house team.

Visit: garricktheatre.com.au/membership/ for more membership information.



Garrick Theatre Club Inc.

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If you'd like to submit a play and you're accessing this newsletter online, click the play submission image above or copy-paste this link into your browser: https://forms.gle/q3kgMy8zw9MgxgKT7

The Garrick Gazette

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