

 **MMUDS** presents

A PLAY BY WILLY RUSSELL

SHIRLEY VALENTINE



By Arrangement with ORiGiN™ Theatrical - On Behalf of Samuel French
A Concord Theatricals Company

Production Crew

Director - Karen Pirie

Stage Manager - Joanne Arrowsmith

Producer - Laurel Lawrie

Set construction - Roger Nolan

Props - Joanne Arrowsmith

Wardrobe & Set Design - Karen Pirie

Sound Set-up - Michael Isbister

Sound Operation - Jack Arrowsmith, Bernadette Gifford

Lighting Design - Tegan Evans

Lighting Operation - Samuel Arrowsmith

Stage Crew - Geoff Pitt, Daryl Hunt, Amelia Kennedy, Laurel Lawrie

Wig Design - Andy Dolling

Hairdresser - Jackie Cesnik

Front of House Manager - Erica Morgan

Front of House Crew - Suzie Roberts, Tim Morgan, Atlas Lamont, Wendy Lindbom, Catriona Wilson, James Wilson

Poster Design - Daniel Belle

Program - Karen Pirie

Photography - Joanne Arrowsmith

Special thanks to:

Mansfield Coffee Merchant, Mansfield Produce Store, Delatite Hotel, Marks IGA,

Mansfield Courier, Delatite Wines, Vintage Emporium, Mal Ryan & Glen

This production is being judged for the 48th Annual Georgy Awards, to be presented in 2023.

This production is being judged for the APT Awards to be presented in 2023.

MMuDS is a member of the Victorian Drama League and this production has been entered into the VDL Awards.

Meredith Newman



Meredith Newman is a graduate of Federation University's Arts Academy (formally BAPA) and 16th Street Actors Studio.

For MMuDS, Meredith has previously performed in Black Adder II (for which she was nominated for a Georgy Award for Best Female Performance) and The Elephant Man.

Other theatre credits include: As You Like It (Robot Fish Productions), Sunset Rising (BarnDaw Productions), 1984 Uplate (Eagle's Nest Theatre Company), Falling Grace (Melbourne Arts Factory), Cosi (Player's Theatre Company).

Independent Film credits include Trolleyology (Natalia Chernaya Productions), The Prince (Graeme Simson Productions), Palms Hotel (16th Street Films), Welcome Home (Seion Films), Tangle (UB Arts Films).

I became a fan of Willy Russell when I was lucky enough to see a production of "Blood Brothers" in London's West End when I was in school.

His works often explore complex human emotions and relationships, including the challenges of love, family, identity and social class, with humour, compassion and sensitivity to the human condition.

Shirley's story is timeless and relatable regardless of when it is told. It speaks to the universal desire to break free from the chains of daily life and find true meaning and happiness.

Exploring the life and world of Shirley Valentine has awarded me a more empathic understanding of my own parents' experiences and needs, having grown up in Britain during the same time and under similar circumstances.

I have relished the challenge of performing the role of Shirley and the opportunity to dive deep into her character and bring out her unique personality, quirks, and mannerisms.

Thank you to Karen Pirie for your trust and patience.

To Jo, Sam, Laurel, Roger and all the crew for your hard work and commitment to this show. To MMuDS for taking a chance on a one-woman play. To my partner (and real-life rock), Craig, for your unwavering love and belief in me. And to you, the audience, for your time and support. Thank you!

I have fallen in love with Shirley Valentine - I hope you do too. Enjoy!

Directors Message

I first saw Shirley Valentine as a movie when it came onto the big screen in 1990. For a film to have such a lasting resonance is a pretty good indication of a good show in my opinion. Since then I've seen the show on stage and loved it just as much.

I've had the privilege of directing Meredith Newman in MMuDS productions of Black Adder II and The Elephant Man. She is an amazing actor who has shown us all that she has an inexhaustible range of acting skills.

It seemed quite natural to ask her if she'd like to be Shirley Valentine. Luckily for me she said yes and so we started on this fabulous journey to bring Shirley Valentine to the stage in Mansfield. And wow what a show! It is a rollercoaster of emotions but ultimately the message of living and loving life is what you take away. Who could ask for more!

A one person show is a first of its kind for MMuDS and so I thank the MMuDS Committee for having faith in me, and of course Meredith and our Production Team.

I thank everyone who comes to see this show and I know you will feel proud like I do, knowing that our community continues to produce quality entertainment and supports and encourages performing arts of such a high standard. I say to Meredith, "Thank you for completely allowing yourself to become Shirley Valentine".

Karen Pirie



Willy Russell - playwright

"When I was writing Shirley I found myself thinking in her voice, speaking in her voice and having access to the wit which she – unlike me – naturally has. It wasn't done consciously on my part but, like the kind of film actor who remains in character for the duration of a shoot, I began to 'live' Shirley, seeing the world as she would, inwardly noting and commenting as she would and in her voice. And I discovered that on those occasions when I had to drop 'being' Shirley, when I had to focus on other things and give my attention to other matters it would take me days to get her back and I'd go through hellish panics because I couldn't bring her back.

Once I realised that by letting her go, by switching off from Shirley for a while, I made it so much more difficult for myself to start again, so I just completely held onto her. I saw the world in terms of Shirley Valentine, so I'd be out shopping or across at my neighbours having a word with them about something and I'd say things and they'd be falling about. Because it would be Shirley Valentine talking – not me! And I wasn't doing it in a cynical way, to try out stuff so that I could write it into the play the next day. I just found that it was so much better for the writing process if I carried on 'being' Shirley. It's why I think of Shirley Valentine as a play that was performed into being as much as it was written."



Happy Anniversary MMuDS

40 Years of Community Theatre

Here's Cheers!

Mansfield Musical and Dramatic Society has been creating 'on stage magic' for the Mansfield communities since the early 1980s. In its first 4 decades MMuDS has staged 76 shows, involving hundreds of local drama and music enthusiasts and these numbers continue to grow every year.

MMuDS first theatrical home was the original Star Cinema. Always flexible, MMuDS has staged shows in a number of Mansfield's church, Masonic and CWA halls, the Football and Netball Clubrooms, the Golf Club, the gardens of the Delatite Station and in the Botanic Park. MMuDS has also performed to audiences in Alexandra, Healesville, Violet Town and Bendigo. The Mansfield Performing Arts Centre is now the base for most of MMuDS' events.

The stated purpose of MMuDS is to "foster, promote, and facilitate theatrical and

musical activities, with an emphasis on local productions and talent alongside other performing arts events within Mansfield and surrounding communities."

MMuDS has become so much more than just its popular stage shows, including the MAD orchestras, play reading, choirs and youth theatre. Even during the COVID 19 pandemic MMuDS continued to engage audiences in theatrical performances utilising online systems.

Costumes, lighting, sound, makeup, front-of-house, production and stage management have a symbiotic relationship to what happens 'on stage'. MMuDS inclusive approach means everyone has an opportunity to participate.

Community involvement is highly valued and as a result, thousands of volunteer hours go into the MMuDS productions.

1983	The Boyfriend	2003	Wonderland
1983	Barefoot in the Park	2004	A Little Night Music
1984	Chrysanthemum	2004	Five
1984	Arsenic and Old Lace	2005	Pride and Prejudice
1985	Lola Montez	2005	Three Fairy Tales
1985	Chase Me Comrade	2006	The Gondoliers
1986	Calamity Jane	2006	Scones
1986	Sweetie Pie	2006	Big Bill
1987	Iolanthe	2006	Super Scary Monster Show
1987	Move Over Mrs Markham	2007	Lady Windermere's Fan
1988	The Pyjama Game	2007	Oliver!
1988	Ten Times Table	2007	California Suite
1989	Fiddler On The Roof	2008	Crumbs
1989	The Knacker's ABC	2008	Life After George
1990	HMS Pinafore	2008	Jesus Christ Superstar
1990	The Removalists	2010	Into The Woods
1991	The Marvelous Mansfield Show	2011	Much Ado about What You Will
1991	And Then There Were None	2011	Grease
1992	Camelot	2012	Footloose
1992	Aladdin	2012	Cabaret
1993	Brigadoon	2013	Sweet Charity
1993	A Midsummer Night's Dream	2013	Brilliant Lies
1994	Dimboola	2014	Sound of Music
1994	The Mikado	2014	A Month of Sundays
1995	Sweeney Todd	2015	Man of La Mancha
1995	Mrs Thalley F	2016	Beauty and the Beast
1996	My Fair Lady	2016	COSI
1996	The Big Men Fly	2017	Jekyll & Hyde the Musical
1996	Gypsy Queen	2017	Lyfe of Bryan
1997	Annie	2018	Title of Show
1998	If There Be Dragons	2018	Mary Poppins
1999	Oklahoma!	2019	Blackadder Goes Forth
1999	Summer of the Seventeenth Doll	2019	Seussical
2000	Pirates of Penzance	2020	The Show Must Go Online
2001	The Importance of Being Earnest	2021	Blackadder II - The Elizabethan One
2001	Footrot Flats	2022	The Elephant Man
2002	Mansfield's Greatest Moments	2023	Summer Youth Drama Program
2003	Widow of Wappan	2023	Shirley Valentine
2003	Guys and Dolls	2023	The Castle

MMuDS Patrons

Al Rozefsky
Ann & John Herbert
Anne & Ian Todd
Bernadette & Jon Gifford
Isabel & Bob Appleby (in memory)
Bonnie Doon Caravan Park
Carey's Paint Place
Carrun Squires - Naturopath | Clinical Nutritionist
Cat & Pete Wright
Catriona & James Wilson
Central General Practice Pty Ltd
Chris & Julie Walpole
Cindy McLeish, MP. State Member for Eildon
Deb & Brian Dodgson
Delatite Dental
Eisner's Guardian Pharmacy
Emily & Harvey Odd
Jackie Cesnik
Joan and Tony Tehan
Joanne & Brent Arrowsmith
Karyn Hoseason
Kate & Bill Parsons
Kieren Innes-Irons & Catherine Robinson
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Mansfield Printing
Mansfield Regional Produce Store
Mansfield Rudolf Steiner School & Kindergarten
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Marion & Robert Friday (in memory)
Marsha & Andrew Grimwade (in memory)
Monica & Monty Sketcher
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Peter Brett
Pop Stoney & Matthew Morrow
Raffindale Nominees
Rick & Charlotte Lindsay
Ron Black
Roger Nolan & Laurel Lawrie
Sally & Jeremy Madin
Sally Harvey & Chuck Wark
Tim & Nicole Ross
Sue McDonald & Ed Adamson
Miriam Zolin
Kerrie Dowling
Liz Bannister



MMuDS

MMuDS has been presenting performing arts programs since 1982, providing entertainment and participation opportunities for community members. MMuDS also supports complimentary arts activities, including MAD Orchestras, Re-Actor Factory youth program and the Summer Youth Drama Camp.

Patron support helps MMuDS to create productions of high artistic standard, within a pricing framework, which promotes community accessibility.

The support of Patrons is vital to the long-term success of local theatre in Mansfield and the encouragement of ever more ambitious projects for the enjoyment of our audiences, cast and production personnel.

To thank MMuDS Patrons we will provide you with two complimentary tickets to MMuDS productions. Our appreciation will also be demonstrated by the acknowledgement of Patrons in show programs, newsletters, on our website and in our annual report. Thank you again for your generous support.

www.mmuds.org.au