

# TRAVELLING NORTH

by David Williamson



## Director's Note

"Grey nomads" were not part of the vernacular when David Williamson wrote *Travelling North* in 1979 however the older generation were already moving to warmer climes like Queensland's Gold Coast even in the 70's. *Travelling North* takes place between 1969 and 1972 during the Vietnam War, the election of the first Labor Government in twenty-three years, and changing social attitudes. It is into this world that the older Frank and his younger partner Frances find themselves building a new life in 'sub-tropical splendor' in Tweed Heads; away from their family and life in the 'cultural capital' of Melbourne. But all takes a downhill slide when Frank's health rapidly declines.

*Travelling North* is ultimately a love story. A love story between two people who have the complexity of lives well lived. The play also raises important questions about family, loyalty, tolerance, and compassion. It shows growing old is not pretty for those it is happening to and those who love them. It has been my focus for this production to tell the story with absolute truth and heart. It is an amazingly warm, humorous, and touching play that has characters and moments that most audiences will surely recognize from their own lives.

On a final note; one thing our audiences will notice is that the character of the doctor has been changed to a female. I am an advocate for gender swapping in the theatre and love the fact that we were able to make this David Williamson classic our very own by adapting Saul into Sarah which, from a plot line perspective, gave us many challenges; but challenges I believe we have met. However, to be honest this came out of a lack of candidates in casting. And yes, we do have the approval of David Williamson!

*Sahn Millington*

Director

The action takes place in various locations in North Queensland, Melbourne, Tweed Heads, and Sydney during 1969 to 1972.

**SAHN MILLINGTON – Director** Graduating from the University of New England in acting and directing, Sahn started theatre life in Brisbane and moved to Sydney. Most recent credits include *Short and Sweet Theatre* in Sydney and Brisbane, *Amanda* (New Theatre) as part of Sydney Fringe 2014, Assistant Director on *Simpson, J. 202* (Genesian Theatre 2015), Production Manager for *Winslow Boy* (Genesian Theatre 2015), Director on *Dinkum Assorted* (New Theatre 2015), Director on *Nothing Personal* (Genesian Theatre 2016), Assistant Director on *House of Games* (New Theatre 2016), and Production Manager on *Consensual* (New Theatre 2017). She also has a postgrad degree in Arts Management from UTS and has worked with Carriageworks, the New Theatre, Rock Surfers, and Vivid, to name a few.

**CARLIN HURDIS – Assistant Director** Carlin is delighted to be serving as Assistant Director for the first time. Over the past 18 months, he has operated lighting and sound on five shows across both the Genesian Theatre and the New Theatre. A member of the Genesian Theatre for five years, he last featured on stage in *Pride and Prejudice*. He has also served as a member of the theatre's playreading committee. Carlin studied English Literature at the University of Sydney, where he performed with the Sydney University Dramatic Society (SUDS).

**CATRIONA MCCABE – Costume Design** Catriona is a Costume Designer and enjoys painting in her spare time. For the past year she has travelled with *Cirque du Soleil's Kooza*, first as the Costume Dresser and afterwards as the Stitcher. Catriona has worked on various projects, including the New Theatre's *Marat/Sade* as Costume Assistant, the independent film *Life of the Party* as Costume Standby, and as Circus Joseph Ashton's Dressmaker. Catriona has a degree in Historical and Performance Costume for Stage and Screen from the University of Hull.

**MARTY GALLAGHER – Lighting Design** Marty has been involved in technical theatre in Sydney for the past two years. He has operated audio and lighting at a variety of venues and festivals such as the New Theatre, Old 505, Sydney Fringe, and Seymour Centre. He is excited to be showing his first design at the Genesian Theatre with *Travelling North* and hopes you enjoy the show.

**MEHRAN MORTEZAEI – Sound Design** Mehran has written, directed, stage managed, and sound / lighting designed many plays in different theatres since his studies in Performing Arts some 20 years ago. He has been a member of the Genesian Theatre for five years.



**DAVE KIRKHAM - Frank Brown** Dave is delighted to be back with the Genesian, having last performed with them in *A Man For All Seasons* over ten years ago. Recent stage appearances include *Visiting Mr Green* and *An Inspector Calls* (Pymble Players), *The Winter's Tale* (Secret House), *Violent Extremism* (Ain't it Fun Theatre), and *The Crucible* (Bard on the Beach). He has appeared in a number of feature and short films, notably *The Haircut* which won Best Film at The Cannes Short Film Corner in 2007.

**JANE THORPE - Frances** Jane has loved the stage since she was cast as Thumbelina at the age of nine. She joined the Genesian 10 years ago, after moving to Sydney and has had roles in a number of plays including *The Real Inspector Hound*, *Daisy Pulls it Off*, *The Winslow Boy*, and *Northanger Abbey*. Having lived in North and Western QLD, she is thrilled to be travelling north in the role of Frances.



**MEGAN SHOOTER - Sophie** Meg has been performing since she could talk. A dedicated lover of the arts she has explored performing, producing, directing, and writing. Meg has taught acting to both adults and children and has also appeared in numerous short films and web series, landed a lead role in an episode of *Deadly Women*, and been in numerous stage productions. This is her first show at the Genesian and is thrilled to be a part of Genesian Theatre history.

**LAUREN BIRDSALL - Helen** Lauren first fell in love with performing at the age of 3, dressed as a teddy bear for her first dance concert. The thrill of an audience never left and years later she went on to study a Bachelor of Performance at Nepean (University of Western Sydney), completed a Cert IV of Performing Arts at Brent Street Studios, and has continued to refine her craft training under some of the world's leading acting coaches. Lauren has played lead roles in numerous commercials, independent films, and drama series which have gained acclaim both locally and internationally, and is excited for her return to the stage!

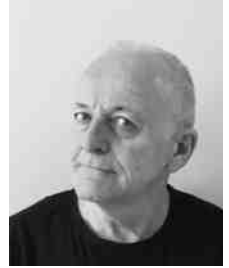




**COURTNEY FLEMING - Joan / Celebrant / Gallery Attendant**

Courtney trained at Sydney Theatre School (2011) and is a graduate of University of New South Wales (BA - Media/Theatre). She most recently appeared in *Tears Before Bedtime* (Ferknerkle Productions) and has since continued to test her wit by joining the company's regular improvisation workshops. Other theatre credits include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Imaginary Creatures*, and *Memoru Min*. She currently acts as Box Office & Front of House Co-Manager at New Theatre. Courtney is thrilled to perform in her first production at Genesian Theatre.

**PETER IRVING SMITH - Freddy Wicks** Peter studied acting under the tutelage of Hayes Gordon at the Ensemble Acting Studios, Sydney. Recent theatre credits include *The Removalists* (King Street Theatre) and *Contrite Spirit* (Leichhardt Arts Festival). He has appeared in Australian TV productions such as *G.P.*, *Water Rats*, *Above the Law*, *Wild Boys*, and *Underbelly: Badness*. Peter has appeared in recent TV commercials for AAMI, Brydens Lawyers, and Volkswagen.



**SANDRA BASS - Dr Sarah Morgenstein** Sandra Bass is a long-standing member of the Genesian whose most recent appearance was as Miss Marple in *A Murder is Announced*. Her last stage appearance as a doctor was with Sherlock Holmes in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, so she has had to update her medical "expertise" for *Travelling North*. Sandra's screen work includes a leading role in *Tap into the Heart* which dealt with tap-dancing rather than cardiac surgery, and her film work with Aged Care Channel started with a convincing portrayal of dementia. She enjoys acting because "it offers a way to explore life from so many different perspectives".

## **Production**

Director

**Sahn Millington**

Assistant Director

**Carlin Hurdis**

Set Design

**Debbie Smith, Sahn Millington**

Costume Design

**Catriona McCabe**

Lighting Design

**Marty Gallagher**

Sound Design

**Mehran Mortezaei**

Production Manager

**Debbie Smith, Roger Gimblett**

Costume Consultant

**Susan Carveth**

Lighting Consultant

**Michael Schell**

Set Construction

**Debbie Smith, Paul Gilbert,**

**Michael Denglar, Members of the Company**

Photography

**Anthony Burns - HomePix**

Graphic Design

**Patrick Magee, Tom Massey**

Ticketing

**Shane Bates**

Transport

**Debbie Smith, Paul Gilbert**

Acknowledgements

**Andy Powell, Mark G Nagle, New Theatre,**

**Bruce Gerard, Barry Nielsen,**

**Shaun McKean**

## **Crew**

Stage Manager

**Hannah Dunwell**

Lighting & Sound Operation

**Janina Olmos-New**

## **Cast**

Frank Brown

**Dave Kirkham**

Frances

**Jane Thorpe**

Sophie

**Megan Shooter**

Helen

**Lauren Birdsall**

Joan, Celebrant, Gallery Attendant

**Courtney Fleming**

Freddy Wicks

**Peter Irving Smith**

Dr Sarah Morgenstein

**Sandra Bass**

# About the Genesian Theatre

The Genesian Theatre Company celebrated our 70th year as a company in 2014. For over 60 years we have been operating from our home at 420 Kent St in the Sydney CBD. We boast among our alumni numerous household names in Australian theatre and film such as Bryan Brown, Baz Luhrmann, Judi Farr, and John Bell. We are also just as proud of the hundreds of other talented actors, directors, stage managers, set and costume designers, lighting and sound specialists, stage and production staff who have contributed to Sydney's unique little theatre. We are particularly proud of all our members who volunteer their time to work Front of House to help you enjoy your visit to the Genesian Theatre.

Over the years the company has developed into a theatre providing a training ground for young theatre professionals and a place where those who love the theatre can meet, share, and extend their knowledge of the performing arts. The Genesian Theatre Company is one of Sydney's most active theatre companies. In addition to six main stage productions each year we run classes, workshops, and many other activities.

The building which houses the Genesian Theatre Company was originally St John's Church, and dates from 1868. It served as both a church and a poor school until 1932 when it became the Kursaal Theatre, housing the Sydney Repertory Company. In 1938 it became the first Matthew Talbot Hostel. Since 1954 it has been the home of the Genesian Theatre Company which was formed in 1944.

The Genesian Theatre Company acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of the land our theatre stands on.

## Membership

If you're interested in acting, directing, stage management, sound, lights, publicity, admin, etc, or if you just want to experience being a member of the group, we would welcome you as a member. You don't need to be experienced, we can provide training and can cater to different levels of involvement. Please see our web site for further information.





Coming next to the Genesisian...

# **Sherlock Holmes** and the **Speckled Band**

by Arthur Conan Doyle  
adapted by Max Gee

7th April - 12th May