

Patron: Her Excellency, the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania



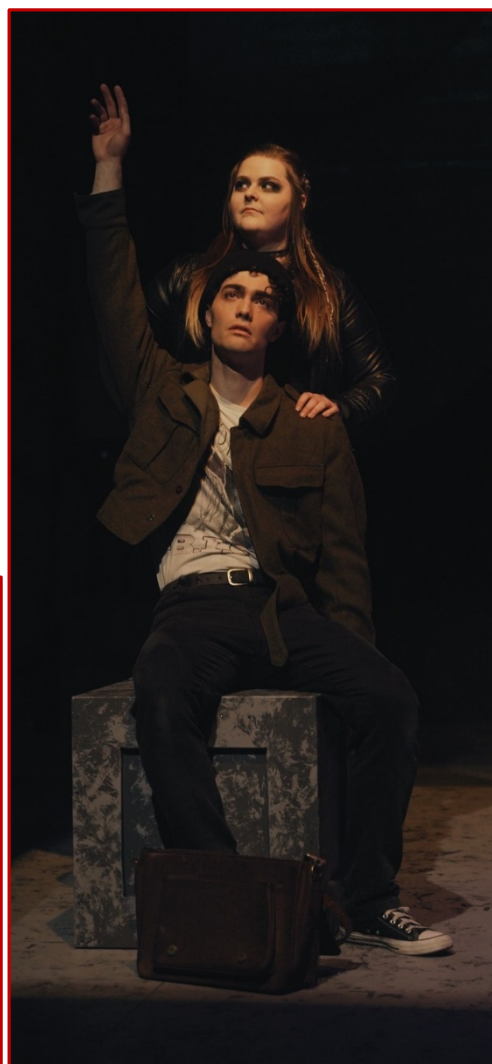
FOLLOW SPOTS

October 2025

“ANTHEM”

Our thanks and congratulations to director Leigh Oswin, his excellent cast and team of creatives for the fine production of this new Australian play.

This was the Players final offering in the Earl Arts Centre as we know it, and we all look forward to the new and improved theatre space which is scheduled to re-open in 2027.



100 YEARS AND STILL PLAYING



The Launceston Players will celebrate their 100th birthday in 2026, which I am sure everyone agrees is a really monumental achievement. As part of the celebrations, we will be printing a history of the Players which has been compiled by noted historian Dr Thomas Gunn.

To help us gauge how many of these books we should order, it would be most appreciated if you could email the secretary at secretary@launcestonplayers.com if you are interested in purchasing a copy. At this time, we do not have a definite price, but it should be a reasonable cost.

VALE

It is with sadness that we record the death of a former Players member who went on to achieve a sterling career in professional theatre, **Walter Van Nieuwkuyk OAM** (29.10.1944 – 29.9.2025)

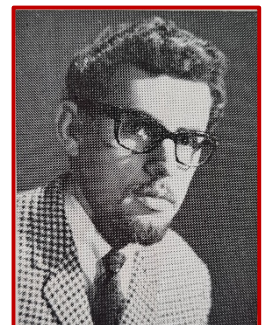
Walter, who lived in Launceston since he was 6 years old, was very involved with the Players before leaving to go to Melbourne in 1971 to pursue his dreams.

His interest in theatre was first aroused when participating in school productions. Since then, he had devoted most of his spare time to all aspects of theatre. Walter acted and directed many Junior Drama Festival entries for the Players.

As an actor, Walter appeared in **The Miracle Worker**, **The Diary of Anne Frank**, **Trumpet to the Wind**, **Salad Days**, **Showboat**, **The Boy Friend**, **Lady Windemere's Fan** and **Brigadoon**. He was Associate Producer to Alan Harvey for **The King and I** in 1965 and acted as Stage Director for Max Oldakers's production of **A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum** in 1966. Also, in 1966 he directed for the first time in the Senior Section of the 20th Tasmanian Drama Festival and was awarded the Catherine Duncan Cup for the Launceston Players with **Suburban Requiem**.

In 1967, Walter directed **Carousel**, then **Kiss Me Kate** in 1968 and **Boeing-Boeing** in 1969.

Walter in 1967



As a dancer, Walter also appeared regularly for the Tasmanian Ballet Company directed by Kenneth Gillespie. In 1968 he danced the role of Hilarion in **Giselle**. He also served on the Players committee for a few years from 1965.

Once in Melbourne he became a highly regarded Executive Producer in musical theatre with such notable productions as "The King and I", "South Pacific", "Hello Dolly", "Grease", "Big River" and "Annie".

He was a Life Member of Live Performance Australia, and Emeritus Executive Producer for the Gordon Frost Organisation, also awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 2018 for his Service to the Performing Arts.



In November 2005, The Players were most fortunate to have Walter return to Launceston to give a workshop and pass on his extensive knowledge about being an Executive Producer.

A more recent photo

He is remembered with much affection and esteem. R.I.P dear Walter.

There are several Local Theatre events coming up. To see what they are, and to book tickets, go to the Theatre North website at www.theatrenorth.com.au, visit the Box Office, or phone 6331 0052.

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