

## Company Theatre - The Early Days

In this section on the web is the History of Company Theatre, and further down you will find a list of all our productions since 1980.

Company Theatre (formerly known as the North Shore Company Theatre and Dramatic Society Inc.) celebrated 25 years in 2005.

Company was the brainchild of Keith Passmore and John Dylan. In 1980, it consisted of a group of performers which performed at various venues on the North Shore under the name of "Company Players." John eventually took the reins singularly and created COMPANY THEATRE and gave it a base in St Michael's Hall, King Edward Ave, Bayswater. The small group of nine people who started it, wished to stage theatre of an experimental or "avant-garde" nature. John Dylan was the first President of the society and the initial nine are remembered in our Logo. (If you look you can see nine people sitting in a theatre!)

In 1982, a new committee was formed, with a view to producing more box office shows.

During the period 1982 - 1987, a number of very dedicated theatrical people joined the society and the most influential members of this group were Geoff Clews, Peter Segrove and Neil Burgham. All served as Presidents for the society but most importantly, they were all involved in the idea to find Company a permanent home on the Shore.

In 1988, Peter Segrove wrote a letter to the Mayor of Takapuna, Wynn Hoadley, to ask for consideration in this matter and it received a favourable reaction.

In 1989 plans were announced! The council proposed to satisfy the requirements of three groups within the Belmont area - Company Theatre was to have a new permanent home, Belmont Primary School was to get a new school hall, and the area would get a much needed Community Centre. The three groups would operate from a building to be called The Rose Garden Community Centre & Theatre.

Company Theatre (small as we were), managed to fundraise \$10,000 to put into the new building venture and in September 1992, The Rose Centre was officially opened.

In November 1992, Company Theatre presented Habeas Corpus by Alan Bennett- our very first production in our new home. It was directed by Peter Segrove.

During the early to mid 90's our "Junior Company" flourished under the leadership of Ruth Segrove and Moira Coote. Changes in recent yearsThe Rose Centre's use as a performing venue for hire to other groups has grown over the years. Company Theatre has its own Home Room, at the back of the Rose Centre to house its props, materials and extensive wardrobe (overseen for 20 years by Cathie Sand.)

Many other community groups have had access to Company Theatre equipment to produce a wide variety of events at the Centre. Doug Bourke helped maintain and hire out Company's equipment for many years (until his passing in 2004.)

The foyer area was extended in early 2002 to cater for the larger numbers of people coming through the building.

Starting in 2004 and completed in 2005, a major electrical and technical upgrade was undertaken involving the change over from analogue to digital. Company Theatre, through the success of 3 very good years and some sell-out shows, was a major financial contributor to this upgrade. A second (and independent) lighting system was installed for use by other hirer's of the Rose Centre, easing the pressure on Company Theatre's own lighting equipment. The Company Theatre Home Room now has a new kitchen and an upgraded and accessible storage area! A thank you to Sherry Ede (President 2002 - 2004) and volunteer Joe Smith, who spent many months co-ordinating this major upgrade.

All of Company Theatre's shows from when they first arrived at The Rose Centre in 1992 to the present day are displayed in poster format along the foyer wall.

In 2006 our membership fee is just \$10 per year. We also have a free mailing list or email list to receive information on upcoming shows.

From small beginnings, Company Theatre has succeeded because of the hard work and dedication of its enthusiastic, loyal, core members and of course, the audiences who support us.