

Summer of the Seventeenth Doll



● Barney (Dan Haberfield) trying to impress and young Bubba (Millie Baylis) in *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* at the Richmond Theatrette until August 7.

■ "Righto, I'll be blowed, I'm as happy as Larry; I'm flat stony, stinkin' broke but I ain't gonna bludge on ya so hoo-roo."

Not every theatre production contains that or similar dialogue. *The Doll* does and some 60 years after it first appeared, it's still highly regarded.

It has been described as one of the first naturalistic Australian plays. It has Australian characters, jobs, lifestyles and language with international themes of love, loyalty, hope and failure. It is a tribute to the structure of the play that it remains credible and strong throughout.

The production does naturalism to a T. There's no side with the writing and no side with the performance. It's a WYSIWYG performance.

The costumes and hairstyles speak volumes for the period and the simple but effective set and props add weight to the overall success of the show.

The cast have the unique characteristics of their characters down pat and the subtle and not-so-subtle changes in the story are seamlessly presented.

Millie Baylis did well in the supporting role of Bubba and this being her first stage role, she was outstanding.

If you've never seen the *Doll*, this fine production would make an excellent introduction to Australian drama and Carlton as it was in the 1950s.

The Playhouse Players have set the benchmark high and their intention to focus on Australian material both new and old deserves the highest praise and as much support as can be given.

Summer of the Seventeenth Doll by Ray Lawler
Playhouse Players Inc. Directed by Susan Rundle

Richmond Theatrette, 413 Church St, Richmond
Performance season until August 7

Bookings: www.playhouseplayers.org.au or
8759 4821.

- Review by Cenarth Fox