

MEDIA RELEASE

2 March 2018



Image caption: Members of a concert party group in Adelaide, c1922. SLSA: PRG 280/1/28/267

Explore the performing arts in South Australia during wartime

World War One, and its aftermath, changed the world forever. How it influenced the performing arts in South Australia is the focus of a new exhibition at the State Library of South Australia.

Beyond the stage: Aspects of performing arts in South Australia 1914 – 1936 shows how those back home responded to the unfolding events of the War.

Art can reflect and deflect history. It can also be used to support ‘a great cause’, and then to question its result. The performing arts were an integral part of this process. During the Great War South Australians were strongly encouraged to do their duty – enlist, convince others to enlist, and take part in the ‘great adventure’. Songs and poems were written, plays performed, concerts given. We were there and we were going to do our bit. After the War former soldiers, their families, and the community as a whole had to deal with its aftermath. Should we try to forget?

This exhibition displays rarely seen theatre programs, playbills, photographs, sheet music, artefacts, menus, postcards, and audio from the collections of the State Library. See costumes used in performances of *Hiawatha’s Wedding Feast* and *Babes in the Wood*, kindly on loan from the Performing Arts Collection of South Australia, Adelaide Festival Centre.

Also featured is a tennis ball autographed by Don Bradman. In 1933, Don Bradman performed for the first time in a theatrical production *It Ain't Cricket*, a testimonial for test cricketer, Ernie Jones. During this performance Don hit twelve autographed tennis balls into the audience.

Discover the story of contemporary musician Paul Kelly's grandparents, the Count and Contessa, who played vital roles in the development of opera in Australia. Similarly, the story of Hooper Brewster-Jones, South Australia's most significant musical influence of his era, and the grandfather of Rick and John Brewster of The Angels.

The exhibition was developed by the State Library of South Australia as part of an Australian Research Council Linkage Project with the University of Adelaide, Flinders University, State Opera of South Australia, State Theatre Company of South Australia, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and Adelaide Cabaret Festival.

Acting Director State Library of South Australia, **Geoff Strempel**, says, "We are pleased to partner with the University of Adelaide on this significant project. Participation in this project demonstrates the research expertise of our specialist librarians who share the knowledge and stories about the cultural, artistic and broader social history of our State. The exhibition showcases the depth of the Library's collections including pictorial, archival, newspapers, sound recordings, and oral histories".

Professor Mark Carroll, Lead Investigator, University of Adelaide says, "Exhibitions such as this offer glimpses into bygone eras in ways that words alone cannot. The items on display in the exhibition enrich our understanding and appreciation of South Australian society in that crucial and formative period. The University of Adelaide is thrilled to be part of this imaginative and exciting event".

Beyond the stage: Aspects of performing arts in South Australia 1914 – 1936 is on display at the State Library of South Australia until 17 June 2018.

EXHIBITION DETAILS:

Beyond the stage: Aspects of performing arts in South Australia 1914 - 1936

2 March – 17 June 2018

Open daily (except public holidays)

State Library of South Australia, Treasures Wall

Corner North Terrace and Kintore Avenue

Free entry

FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES CONTACT:

Mark Gilbert

Marketing Content Librarian

State Library of South Australia

Phone 08 8207 7355 or mb 0403 934 678

mark.gilbert@sa.gov.au

www.slsa.sa.gov.au