

# ≡ Burning News from the Incinerator Theatre

January 2026



Ipswich Little Theatre  
SOCIETY ESTABLISHED 1946

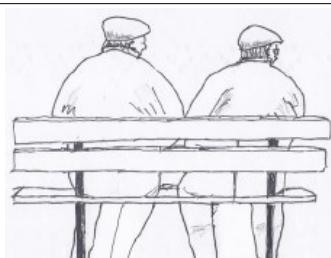
## Editor:

Ian Pullar

07 3281 4437 or e-mail:  
info@ilt.org.au

**NEXT ILT  
COMMITTEE  
MEETING**  
7pm  
Tuesday  
10 February 2026

From the (Past) President	2
The Shawshank Redemption	2
A New Life Member	3
Griffin & Phoenix Awards	3
AGM Barbecue photos	
Diary Dates	5
Auditions <i>Ophelia Chooses</i>	5
Contacts	5



*"Prime time television is so bad, I can't be bothered with it any more."*

*"I don't know. If it wasn't for prime time television, I wouldn't get any sleep."*

## Ipswich Little Theatre Society Inc Newsletter

### Annual General Meeting for 2026

The Annual General Meeting was duly held in the Incinerator on Sunday, 18 January and followed by a barbecue meal for members.

Our complex organisation required the presentation of 29 reports, before the meeting moved on the elections.

After seven outstanding years in the job, Jim Orr stood down as President. We welcome his successor Ann Collyer, and wish her plain sailing. Vice President Julie-Anne Wright, Secretary Helen Pullar and Treasurer Chris Greenhill are continuing on in these positions.

The **Administrative Committee** for 2025 comprises: Executive plus Martie Blanchett, Desley Cronon, Tony Erhardt, Aaron Evans, Connie Foy, Kim Frohloff, Ollie Gavranovic, Cynthia Graham, Mack Groves, Sam Hoepner, Kate Hoepner, Phil Holmes, Di Johnston, Alison Lees, Kay McAllan, Shane Mallory, Melinda Park, Ian Pullar, Jane Sheppard, Tracey Spence.

**Building Committee:** Helen Pullar, Ian Pullar, Melinda Park, Jim Orr, Jane Sheppard, Chris Greenhill.

**Selection Committee:** Martie Blanchett, Julie-Anne Wright, Shane Mallory, Ian Pullar, Jim Orr, Mack Groves.



### Our New President

**Ann Collyer** is no stranger to our Executive, having served as Vice President from 2017 to 2022 and then again in 2024.

She first joined ILT using her experience in tuck-shop management to contribute greatly to our operations in the catering department which she has now managed superbly for many years. She joined the administrative committee and became involved in plays, directing several one act plays and a full length play, *Quartet*. (I had the pleasure of performing in *Quartet* under Ann's direction and found working with her a great enjoyment – as indeed it has been on Selection Committee and all other contexts.)

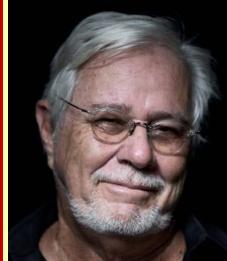
For many years she was assistant to Deirdre Lowe in directing both Junior Theatre and Little Players. She has been a very efficient convener of Selection Committee with major responsibility for selecting plays, casts and overseeing performances.

We welcome Ann to her new role, confident that she will serve as well as her predecessor.

Our first production for 2026, ***The Shawshank Redemption*** opens on 25 February. For details, see page 2 .

So once again we are appealing for assistance.

To volunteer for front of house, click <https://www.admin.ilt.org.au/foh-roster/>



## From the (Past) President

This will be my last President's message in the Newsletter so inevitably I reflect on the past seven years. What a roller coaster it has been with highs – brilliant productions, awards and wonderful developments like the courtyard roof – and lows – Covid 19, Cyclone Alfred and internal conflict. I have been honoured to serve as President of this organisation of which I am so proud.

I know that I am leaving the Society in good shape with Ann taking over as President. She will be a safe pair of hands, ably supported by the other members of the Executive and Committee. I wish everyone the best of good fortune.  
Bring on 2026.

*Jim*

## Redemption comes to the ILT stage in February

Director Shane Mallory, along with Assistant Director Amanda Harrison, Lighting and Sound Designer Phil Holmes and Stage Manager Leanne Bamford, are in the final throes of bringing the iconic 1994 movie, *The Shawshank Redemption*, to life, as a play, on the ILT stage from 25 February to 14 March.



The full cast

**Back row (L-R)** Aaron Evans (Dawkins), Shannon Griffiths (Hadley), Jon Darbro (Andy), Jamie Spence (Norton), James Sheehan (Rico), Daniel Stanton (Bogs), Michael Civitano (Erstwistle), Gaige Harrison (Rooster)

**Front row (L-R)** Sean Gibson (Tommy), Jason Lawson (Brooksie), Mark Scott (Pinky), Chemar Rehder (Red).

It's not often that a story holds such an enduring place in popular culture as *The Shawshank Redemption*. First penned by Stephen King in his 1982 novella *Rita Hayworth and the Shawshank Redemption*, the tale later became one of the most beloved films of all time. In fact, it tops the list of all-time most popular films on IMDB (Internet Movie Database). Adapted for the stage by Owen O'Neill and Dave Johns, this production by ILT brings a fresh intensity to the story of hope, friendship and survival behind bars.

When banker Andy Dufresne is sentenced to life imprisonment for a double murder he insists he didn't commit, he finds himself in the grim confines of Shawshank Prison.

There, he forges an unlikely friendship with Red, the prison's "fixer," and begins to find a fragile kind of hope amid the despair. As Andy uses his intelligence and quiet determination to navigate life behind bars, the story unfolds as a powerful meditation on resilience, friendship and the search for redemption.

Even for those who know the film, the stage version offers a more intimate experience. Through Red's narration and the clever use of time and space, we witness the slow burn of Andy's endurance from hopeless newcomer to quiet revolutionary and the impact he has on those around him.

*The Shawshank Redemption* is an emotionally charged piece of theatre that captures both the brutality and beauty of the human spirit. This isn't just a prison drama, it's a story of hope against all odds. It reminds us that even in the darkest of places, hope can still shine through. *The Shawshank Redemption* proves once again that 'hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things.'

Ticket Sales are going so well for this show that ILT have added an additional matinee performance on Saturday, 14 March at 2.00 pm. Don't be disappointed.

Get your tickets via the ILT website at <https://ilt.org.au/gettickets> or by phoning the Ipswich Visitor Information Centre on 32810555.

## A New Life Member

Following the AGM, Ipswich Little Theatre was delighted to award Honorary Life Membership to Christopher Greenhill for his long-term outstanding contribution.

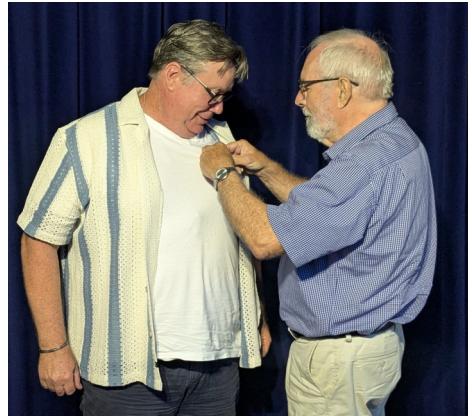
Chris joined ILT in 2001, assisting with S-Troupe. He then went on to perform in five Theatre Restaurants, four one act plays and two full length plays. Moving on to directing, he directed two one act plays, co-directed two full length plays (with Doug Moses) and a further six full length plays, the latest being *Waiting for God*.

He worked on numerous S-Troupe productions and has assisted with Junior Theatre, Young Theatricals and backstage for a number of Main-house productions. He regularly transported raffle prizes to the Theatre under the direction of his mother.

In February 2018, Josh Nixon resigned as Treasurer because of ill health and Chris was elected to the position which he has held ever since, managing our finances exceedingly well. As a member of the Executive, he has been involved in a number of major decisions.

He joined the Building Committee in 2023. Together with his husband, he took on the role of Director of Junior Theatre and is now director, as of 2026, of the Sparks. He has served on the Productions, Properties and Maintenance Team for at least five years. Anybody seeking evidence of Chris's contribution needs only to look at our grounds which he has meticulously maintained as gardener over the past several years.

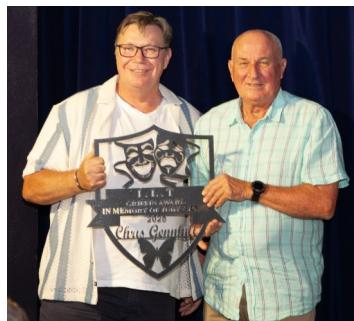
Congratulations, Chris!



Ian Pullar pinning Chris's Life Member's badge

**Griffin Awards in memory of Judy Grant** (for outstanding service over a wide range of activities in the course of 2025) were presented by the Grant family:

**Shane Mallory** has spent countless hours working behind the scenes to ensure that the box office and all electronic operations of the theatre are stable – never more so than when our systems were hacked at the start and again during the One Act Play festival. He has appeared in one production, been assistant director for another and is currently directing the first play for 2026.



Chris with Ross Grant



Shane with Ross Grant

**Chris Greenhill** has excelled as Treasurer, gardener, and serving on Executive, Admin, Building Committee, PPM team, Junior Theatre director and director of *Waiting for God*.

**2025 Phoenix Awards** (for outstanding service to each group).

### Senior Theatre

**Martie Blanchett** has been everywhere and is always willing when help is needed.



Jim Orr with Martie

### Young Theatricals

**Kailen O'Dea**'s commitment to learning, performing and helping others is wonderful to see.



Aaron Evans with Kailen and Matthew Grant (Ross's son)

### Junior Theatre

**Eva Read** is kind and thoughtful towards everyone and has demonstrated a maturity way beyond her young age.



Chris Greenhill with Eva and James Grant (Matthew's son)

**Daytime Theatre Troupe** did not participate, electing to present their own awards.

The AGM and Awards presentations were followed by a barbecue evening meal.

Photos by Kim Frohloff



## 2026 Season in Brief

Season 1: 25 February — 14 March

**The Shawshank Redemption** by

Owen O'Neal and Dave Johns

Director: Shane Mallory

Assistant Director: Amanda Harrison

Rated MA15+ Strong Adult Themes, Violence and Coarse Language

..

**Season 2: 13 — 31 May**

**Ophelia Chooses** by Buddy White.

A Theatre Supper Season

Director: Alison Lees

Assistant Director: Robyn Flashman

<sup>A</sup> Rated: PG .Adult themes

## Annual Drama Festival

Director: Aaron Evans

7, 8, 9 August

**Season 3: 16 September — 3 October**

**The Pink Hammer** by Michael Amos

Director: Jim Orr

Assistant Director: Chris Austin-Greenhill

Rated M Adult themes, Coarse Language & Sexual References

**Season 4: 18 November — 5 December**

**Ben Hur** by Patrick Barlow

Director: Sam Hoepner

Assistant Director: Melinda Park

Rated PG Adult Themes and Religious References

## DIARY DATES

28 January 4:30 pm	Sign on for FIREBRANDS
31 January 8:30 am	Sign on for SPARKS
31 January 10:30 am	Sign on for FLAMES
2 February 7:30 pm	Auditions <i>Ophelia Chooses</i>
25 February 7:30 pm	Opening night <i>The Shawshank Redemption</i>

## Auditions

### ***Ophelia Chooses: A Supper Season***

Adapted for the stage by Buddy White from the tragedy *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare to be directed by Alison Lees with Assistant Director Robyn Flashman.

In this delightful comedy/drama, a modern-day playwright and feminist mysteriously enters the world of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in an effort to right the wrongs suffered by the character Ophelia. Ophelia becomes the architect of her own fate as she learns to stand up to those who would control her, including friends and foes of both the classic and modern varieties.

Auditions will be held in the Jean Pratt Building at 7:30 pm on Monday 2 February. Descriptions of the available parts can be found in the December Newsletter or on line.

Further information and scripts are available from the director (alisonlees4305@gmail.com) or you can complete an audition form via <https://www.ilt.org.au/getinvolved/auditions/>

**Season 13– 31 May**

## 2025 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

President	Ann Collyer	0400 997 365
Vice President	Julie-Anne Wright	0419 758 724
Past President	Jim Orr	0402 377 258
Secretary	Helen Pullar	0400 801 443
Treasurer	Chris Greenhill	0427 977 007

## CONTACT DETAILS FOR OTHER IMPORTANT POSITIONS

Membership Secretary	Julie-Anne Wright	0419 758 724
Group Liaison	Martie Blanchett	0405 186 767
Marketing	Kim Frohloff	0428 725 379
Building Bookings	Desley Cronon	3288 8754 / 0435 309 352
<b>Youth Theatre – Sparks</b> – Flames – Firebrands	Chris Greenhill Mack Groves Kate Hoepner	0427 977 007 0439 202 955 0479 048 979
Daytime Theatre Troupe	Kay McAllan	0439 305 658
Theatre number		3812 2389