

# *Little Women*

Wyong Drama Group's April production is Peter Clapham's skilful adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's much-loved American classic 1860s novel, *Little Women*. Director Ron Baker, who directed the successful *Harp on the Willow* last August, saw this play as a great opportunity for young actresses in particular. Miss Alcott has created the four March sisters, Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy as such interesting and individual characters, that most young readers find themselves identifying with at least one of them. The book has been widely read by successive generations since its publication in 1868 and its enduring charm seems to capture the imagination of modern readers, of all ages, as much as it did then.

Peter Clapham's dramatisation is faithful to the novel as the lives of the girls and their young neighbour Laurie are intertwined. Into her story of a year in the life of a New England family during the American Civil War, Alcott has woven much of her own earlier life and that of her family. It has a universal appeal as readers and audiences continue to identify with both the characters and the situations.

All the characters in *Little Women* are well drawn, each adding significant richness to the unfolding story. Marmee, the girls' mother, is kind, warm and sympathetic with a wisdom that helps her daughters negotiate life with all its complexities. Hannah, who has been with the family since Meg was born, is considered more as a friend than a servant. Jo, the second eldest and the tomboy of the family, is companion to the formidable, autocratic Aunt March described by Jo as 'a tiresome old fuss-pot!' Mr Lawrence, the Marches' wealthy neighbour and Laurie's grandfather, initially reclusive becomes a benefactor to the Marches, developing a special friendship with Beth, the second youngest, who is gentle and shy with a love of music. Mr Brooke, Laurie's tutor, falls in love with Meg, the eldest daughter who is a good-natured, well-mannered, mature young lady. Mr March, the girls' beloved father, is a scholar and a minister, serving as a chaplain for the Union Army. His return home is a highlight of the latter part of the play. Amy, the youngest sister, at times appearing vain and spoiled, is interested in art. Her relationship with Jo is sometimes strained.

A strong, enthusiastic cast of eleven led by Ron Baker, along with a highly acclaimed script, will ensure an engrossing and entertaining show.

## The Cast

Amy	Kalani Hirst
Beth	Renee Stein
Jo	Sarah-Ann Ballard
Meg	Erin Beecher
Hannah (maid)	Julie Bailey
Marmee (Mrs March)	Cathy De Vries
Aunt March	Pam Campbell
Laurie	Scott Russell
Mr Brooke	Robert Cottam
Mr Laurence	Marc Calwell
Mr March	Howard Oxley

Performances – April 7/8/9 – 14/15/16 at 8pm

Matinees April – 9/16 – 2.00pm

Prices – Thursday, Saturday matinees 2pm - \$17; Friday, Saturday 8pm - \$20

Tables or raked seating available, group discounts, Tea & Coffee included  
BYO Nibbles & Drinks

Phone Bookings – **43534353** -- Open from 9am March 17

Credit Card facilities for phone bookings available.

Wyong Memorial Hall, Anzac Ave ( Opposite RSL)