

---

## **ABSURD PERSON SINGULAR**

### **Galleon Theatre Group Inc**

Marion Cultural Centre

Until April 30.

Review by Stephanie Johnson

A first-class British comedy script provides the basis for a good production? Not always, but it certainly does for Galleon Theatre's "Absurd Person Singular".

Director Margaret Dixon has taken a great script, a cast of six excellent actors and a simple and effective set to provide a great night's entertainment.

Alan Ayckbourn's script from the 1970s is a little dated but very witty as the foibles of three married couples are ruthlessly exposed in three separate Christmas Eve parties.

The first act is a scene setter, the second act is a scene-stealer and the third is just plain silly – and lots of fun.

In the first act young couple Sidney and Jane Hopcroft (Andrew Clark and Kerry Cooper) decide to entertain with a Christmas Eve party for carefully selected guests. Follow-up parties result in the next two acts.

The clever twist is that this play is set in the kitchen for each party. The social façade is stripped and warts and all revealed in the intimate setting of the kitchen, while the party limps along in the neighbouring rooms. The results are hilarious, even in their darkest moments.

Joanne St Clair is delicious as the drunken, malicious Marion Brewster-Wright who slips easily from shallow small talk to malicious cracks. Jack Robins also provides a strong performance as her husband, Ronald. His "electric shock" sequence is one of the hilarious highlights of many during the night.

Some of the more poignant moments, and yet still shockingly humorous, are provided by young actors George Benders and Hannah Wooller as Geoffrey and Eve Jackson. It is a testament to these actors' skill that the pathos and humour are both so powerfully conveyed.

Andrew Clark and Kerry Cooper are given the challenging task of playing the unpopular and shallow couple Sidney and Jane Hopcroft. They cleverly convey an awkward sweetness that adds to the joie de vivre of this production.

The set is simple, cleverly doing its job of adding to the characterization and action.

Galleon Theatre Group is sailing home with a winner with this Ayckbourn seventies classic at the Marion Culture Centre. Please note that audience members can sit in cabaret style tables at the front of the theatre or choose to sit in rows at the back.