

Phil A'Vard AM

A life lived in Stages

Phil started in Show Business in 1962. His early career ranged through acting, Stage Direction and Management, Studio Management (TV) and Theatre Production. He worked for St Martins Theatre, Princess's Theatre, TV Station HSV-7 and toured productions to other cities.

In 1969 he became Manager of Monash University's Alexander Theatre rising to the position of "Director of Performing and Creative Arts". Under his stewardship, "The Alex" became recognized as a 'mainstream' venue, presenting professional national and international theatre companies; developed a reputation for children's theatre; helped establish a nation-wide touring program, and served the community as a venue for amateur productions.

He served on many arts-oriented Committees including The Australian Association for Theatre Technology, The Geelong Performing Arts Centre Building Committee and The Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres.

He received a Churchill Fellowship to study Children's Theatre in Europe and Scandinavia. Subsequent awards include two Green Room Awards from his industry peers, The Sidney Myer Foundation Award for Theatre Administrators and membership of The Order of Australia (AM) for services to the Arts

On retirement, Phil has consulted on a number of theatre projects, held executive positions on National Tours for major musicals and been interim CEO of Hobart's Historical Theatre Royal.

Phil became a Crabtree Scholar as the guest of Professor Arthur Brown at the third Dinner and Oration held in 1977.

His oration in 2001, *Was Crabtree a Thespian?* revealed Crabtree as a theatre practitioner who often left burning memories of his performances.

He assisted the Late Pat Kilbride as DEPHONSEC for some years, becoming HONSEC of the Australian Chapter in 2011 – an honour he considers to be his greatest achievement.