

BRYAN EPSOM

Chairman: Nairobi City Players

1956 to 1993

A TRIBUTE

This production of " Dancing at Lughnasa " is dedicated to the memory of Bryan Epsom, a man of theatre in every respect. In our sadness at his passing we will remember gladly his wonderful contribution to the theatre, which has touched all ages and all races in this vibrant community in which we live.

There are few men who have worked as tirelessly and for so many years to maintain the highest traditions of amateur theatre here in Nairobi. Bryan had a "vision" way back in 1956, of an amateur group dedicated to producing plays of the highest standard. With four like-minded friends, the group known as Nairobi City Players was formed and throughout the following years, right up until his death, Bryan was committed to maintaining those standards.

For nearly forty years he was the driving force behind a company of players who gave Nairobi audiences musicals, straight plays and pantomimes which lived up to the original aim of the group. There were also travelling revues, taking the same quality production further afield than the National Theatre.

From the first production in 1956, "The Love of Four Colonels", Bryan drew on the finest amateur talent that Nairobi could offer. During the last twenty years he spiced the company with visiting professional artistes and directors to inspire and strengthen the local players. Many returned again and again to become personal friends of the Epsom family and firm lovers of Kenya'

As producer and company manager Bryan had few equals. But he was a fine actor too, with the ability to get inside a character and tum in a complete performance. His last stage role was as Juror No 3, the racially biased thug of a delivery service man in N.C.P's brilliant production of "Twelve Angry Men".

Bryan has been Master of Ceremonies for Olde Tyme Music Hall and taken part in revues himself. And, at all times, he was busy with publicity for future productions, Box Office management and attending to arrangements for visiting professionals.

It was this dedicated man of theatre who was impressed upon that pantomime was missing from our Christmas fare and from 1984, with "Cinderella", N.C.P's first (and coincidentally last year's production of the same name was his last pantomime) Nairobi City Players have established a firm hold on to the exciting lead up to the Christmas period.

Perhaps the greatest contribution Bryan made to Kenya through the Nairobi City Players, has been to elevate the productions in our National Theatre to a standard worthy of that time. As manager, producer, director and actor he will be remembered for a tradition of excellence. His standards were exacting, his determination to see things thorough and formidable.

Bryan Epsom will be sorely missed. The greatest tribute that Nairobi City Players will pay to his memory is the Group's desire and will to continue those same traditions of excellence he formed so long ago.