

# National Theatre Ballet

Proudly presents Beverly Jane Fry's 2010 production of

# The Nutcracker

*World's Favourite Christmas Ballet*

Performances  
**4** Only

Fri 10 December 7:30pm

Sat 11 December 2:30pm 7:30pm

Sun 12 December 2:30pm

Book Online: [venue.nationaltheatre.org.au](http://venue.nationaltheatre.org.au)

Phone **9525 4611** Tickets from **\$15\*** Concessions Available  
The National Theatre Cnr Carlisle & Barkly Sts St Kilda \*Transaction fees may apply

Sponsored by Re-Creation Health Clubs; Studio 7 Dancewear



## NATIONAL THEATRE

National Theatre CEO, Robert Taylor, who led a group of SKHS members on a memorable tour of the theatre in October told us the National Theatre, St Kilda opened on 7th September 1974 as a live performance venue in the converted Hoyts Victory cinema on the corner of Barkly and Carlisle Sts.

Since then The National, more correctly the Australian National Memorial Theatre Limited, offers training for all ages in accredited Diploma and Advanced Diplomas of the Performing Art. The Ballet School accepts international students in its full-time courses and also conducts recreational courses for all ages.

Today, the National continues its longstanding policy of helping develop the performing arts by providing heavily discounted use of its theatre and facilities not only for its own students, but for over 70 other Victorian performing arts groups.

Among them are educational institutions, metropolitan Melbourne dance schools; shows put on by charities, and multi-cultural groups as well as high profile international acts.

### OPENING 1974

The existing building is substantially a 1928 renovation undertaken by then manager, Frank Thring (snr) who was involved with Hoyts Cinemas. He went on to establish Wattle Path Film Studios which would later become the St Moritz ice rink, now site of Novotel St Kilda.

Decades later in 1971, Hoyts offered the cinema to the "National Theatre Movement" as its permanent home.

The Victory's conversion to a live performance venue — supported by public donations and financial assistance (a loan) from the Victorian State Government — saved the bulk of the auditorium and the main foyers which are protected by heritage controls, as is the exterior.

The theatre has operated profitably ever since, providing financial support for the National Theatre schools and a versatile and attractive performance venue for a wide cross section of community arts and educational groups. It receives no recurrent funding and all donations or bequests are fully tax-deductible.

### NATIONAL THEATRE MOVEMENT

The National Theatre Movement was established in 1935 by soprano Gertrude Johnson (1894-1973) on her return to Australia after a successful overseas career.

Schools were established in Opera, 1935, Drama, 1936 and Ballet, 1939; along with professional performing companies in Ballet and Opera in 1948 and Drama in 1951. (The opera School amalgamated with the VCA in 1980.)

The original intention was to create a nationwide organisation but this dream did not materialise and the activities of the organisation have mostly been confined to Victoria.

The Movement established the basis for the Australian Ballet, Opera Australia and our existing State Theatre Companies while continuing to produce many of the most talented and successful members of the Australian Theatre Industry. And, over the years its three schools together with its professional theatrical companies have produced many premieres and toured extensively.

### GERTRUDE JOHNSON

Founder of the National Theatre Movement, Gertrude E. Johnson, 1894-1973, OBE, who is buried in St Kilda Cemetery, was born on 13 September 1894 at Prahran, Melbourne, second child of George James Johnson, a professor of music, and his wife Emily Gertrude, née Pridham.

Gertrude was educated at Presentation Convent Windsor. At age 17, she enrolled, on (Dame) Nellie Melba's advice, as a student of Anne Williams, Melb University Conservatorium of Music.

**Main Sources:** National Theatre; St Kilda Historical Society; Heritage VIC

## NATIONAL THEATRE St Kilda



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Gertrude Johnson