

THE MAGIC PUDDING

Book by
NORMAN LINDSAY

Adapted by
ANDREW JAMES

Music by
SARAH DE JONG



Copyright: © H. C. & A. Glad, Sarah de Jong and Andrew James.
This edition published in 2020 by DSPress:
a division of David Spicer Productions - www.davidspicer.com.au

ISBN 978-0-9943473-2-9

All rights reserved

Copyright for Educational Purposes: The Australian Copyright Act 1968 (Act) allows a maximum of one chapter or ten percent of this book, whichever is greater, to be copied by an educational institution, for educational purposes, provided it has given a remuneration notice under to the Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) under the Act. Except as permitted under the Act, for example a fair dealing for the purposes of study, research, criticism or review no part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form without prior written permission from the publisher.

Performance: Any performance or public reading of *The Magic Pudding* is forbidden unless a licence has been received from the author's agent. The purchase of this book in no way gives the purchaser right to perform it in public.

For community theatre performance rights in Australia and New Zealand contact:

David Spicer Productions

PO Box 2280 Rose Bay North, NSW 2030, Australia

Email enquiries to david@davidspicer.com

www.davidspicer.com.au/shows/magic-pudding

Layout and typesetting by PJTonline Solutions. www.pjtonline.com

DAVID SPICER PRESS
SYDNEY AUSTRALIA



CONTENTS

About The Show	4
Background Notes: Andrew James	5
Personal Note: Andrew James	7
Glossary Of Terms	8
The Characters	10
Scene List.....	12
Script: First Slice.....	14
Script: Second Slice	53
Vocal Line	92
David Spicer Productions	125

ABOUT THE SHOW

This pudding will be the tastiest pudding in the world!

After being chucked out of home naïve young adventurer Bunyip Bluegum sets off to see the world. He soon meets Bill Barnacle, Sam Sawnoff and Albert, the Magic Pudding. Albert is a walking, talking, bad



tempered, wise cracking, altogether rude Pudding who can become any flavour that its owners want it to be. What is more it never runs out. ‘The more you eats the more you gets.’

Bunyip joins this Noble Society of Pudding owners and together they “wander along the roads, indulgin’ in conversation, songs and stories, and eatin’ at regular intervals from the Pudding.”

In between slices they spend all their time defending Albert from being pudding-napped by a nasty pair of professional puddin’ thieves, Possum and Wombat. Their adventures culminate in the trio’s arrest and a mad court case ensues in the town of Tooraloo where we discover the true origins of Albert.

The Magic Pudding is a fun mix of slapstick, nonsense, poetry, songs and humour, somewhere between *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Grinch*. The action and adventure never stop - until the end, of course.

BACKGROUND NOTES: ANDREW JAMES

The Magic Pudding, written and illustrated by Norman Lindsay was published in 1918 and quickly became one of Australia's most loved children's books. It has been reprinted many times and had its 100th anniversary in 2018. It is a comic fantasy and a classic of Australian children's literature.

The writing of the book reportedly came about as the result of a bet between Norman Lindsay and his friend Bertram Stevens. Stevens maintained that children liked to read about fairies, while Lindsay asserted that they would rather read about food and fighting! I would maintain that the pudding itself is a kind of fairy. So, Norman has got all three elements in there!

English novelist Philip Pullman described it as "the funniest children's book ever written".

In 1960 Peter Scriven adapted *The Magic Pudding* for his Puppet troupe 'The Tintookies' The show toured Australia and had several revivals over the next 20 years. The last performance was in 1988 at The Rocks Theatre in Sydney by The Marionette Theatre of Australia, directed by Richard Bradshaw. All the characters were string puppets manipulated by unseen puppeteers and the dialogue was pre-recorded.

An animated film adaptation was released in 2000 with John Cleese voicing the title role, Hugo Weaving as Bill, Geoffrey Rush as Bunyip and Sam Neill as Sam.

In 2008 I was commissioned by Marian Street Theatre for Young People to create this new adaptation and award-winning composer Sarah de Jong was commissioned to compose the score. This musical theatre adaptation is the first version of *The Magic Pudding* specifically written to be performed by actors as opposed to puppets. Or more correctly 10 actors and 1 onstage puppeteer/

actor, who manipulates and provides the voice for Albert, the Magic Pudding. The Albert puppet was designed and built by Sue Wallace and Steve Coupe from Sydney Puppet Theatre.

The show had a sell-out first season at Marian Street Theatre in 2010. It was directed by MSTYP's artistic director Margie McCrae and featured a cast which included students from the MSTYP drama school and two professional actors.



Marian Street Theatre For Young People.

Adapting *The Magic Pudding* to the stage presented its own unique challenges. Especially in the case of the star of the show, Albert, who is neither human nor animal. He is almost a kind of alien being from a strange planet. He is totally unique, a one off. Which is why I decided that the best way to reflect all these things was to make Albert the only puppet in the show.

The play has elements of slapstick, vaudeville, shadow puppetry and stylised costumes and sets. It is quintessentially Australian and larrikin in vibe. It is faithful to Lindsay's book but incorporates modern elements as well.

PERSONAL NOTE: ANDREW JAMES

Mum and Dad bought us kids a copy of *The Magic Pudding* around 1961 when I was 5 and read it to us out loud, and often.

Later, we were taken to see the original Peter Scriven Marionette production, which was magic. All the characters have remained imprinted in my memory ever since, each in their own unique way. The illustrations are what I remember most, along with the chaotic, larrikin and ultimately good-hearted energy of the storyline and of course the rather scary but straight-talking Albert.

Twenty years later when studying at NIDA I wrote and workshopped a version of the Pudding with my fellow 2nd year students.

Twenty years on again and I'm having yet another go at translating this important and very tasty slice of our cultural heritage into a piece of music theatre with real live actors and one special puppet, in the sincere hope of delighting and bringing to a new audience the joys of *The Magic Pudding*.



Ballarat Grammar School.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ESQ. - Short for Esquire. An attendant and shield bearer to a knight; a candidate for knighthood

GIZZARD - Throat

TIMBUKTOO - A faraway place

BUNGFOODLING - Untranslatable

FLUMMERY - A fluffy dessert

SIRRAH - Sir

BON APPETITE - French for enjoy your meal mate.

DOME - Head

LANDLUBBER - A person not used to being on water.

VARMINTS - Pests

SNOUT - Nose

BONCE - Hit

SNOOTING - Upper class

BULBOUS - Large and round like a bulb

GUZZLE - Eat in an impolite manner

BUNIONS - Nasty things on the feet

BUN HEADED - An insult

CAT KIDNEYED - An insult

BEETLE CRUSHER - An insult

PIE EYED - Another insult

LILY LIVERED - Scaredy-cat

SOCKDOLOGER - A big hit

MONIKER - The name that one is called

FORTITUDE - Courage

MALEFACTORS - Baddies

HIGH FALOOTING - Up themselves

NINCOMPOOP - Idiot

POLTROON - Idiot

CHINWAG - Have a chat

FISTICUFFS - A fight using the fists

JIGGERY POKERY - Deceptive trickery

IN A PIG'S WHISPER - In a jiffy; very soon



The original cast in 2010.

THE CHARACTERS

All characters are played by actors except ALBERT who is a puppet manipulated by an onstage puppeteer. The puppeteer might be dressed like a chef.

BUNYIP BLUEGUM: A young koala bear

ALBERT “THE MAGIC PUDDING”: A bad tempered pudding. A puppet controlled and voiced by an onstage puppeteer

BILL BARNACLE: An ex-sailor

SAM SAWNOFF: A penguin, also an ex-sailor and Bill’s best mate

POSSUM: A possum

WATKIN WOMBAT: A wombat

UNCLE WATTLEBERRY: A koala bear with huge whiskers, Bunyip’s Uncle

BANDICOOT: A shy bandicoot

CONSTABLE: A police constable

DOBSON DORKING: A talkative rooster

MAVIS DORKING: Dobson’s wife

BEN BRANDYSNAP: A dog

JUDGE: A courtroom judge

USHER: A courtroom usher

CHORUS: When actors are not needed as their core character, they can join in on songs, become townsfolk, musicians etc in any way that the director decides. Doubling of characters is possible with a smaller cast. Below is just one way that characters could be doubled - there could be other combinations, depending on size of cast and abilities.

The script employs the use of shadow puppets in several scenes.

EXAMPLE DOUBLING FOR 8 ACTORS

BUNYIP BLUEGUM

ALBERT "THE MAGIC PUDDING"

BILL BARNACLE

SAM SAWNOFF

POSSUM / MAVIS DORKING

UNCLE WATTLEBERRY / WATKIN WOMBAT

BANDICOOT / CONSTABLE

DOBSON DORKING / BEN BRANDYSNAP / JUDGE



SCENE LIST

FIRST SLICE

PROLOGUE

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| (#1) COME JOIN US WE ENTREAT | COMPANY |
| 1. WHISKERS IN THE SOUP! | |
| (#1A) WHISKERS! | BUNYIP, UNCLE
WATTLEBERRY,
COMPANY |
| (#2) TO SEE THE WORLD | BUNYIP, UNCLE
WATTLEBERRY,
COMPANY |
| 2. BUNYIP SEES THE WORLD | |
| (#3) BUNYIP BLUEGUM SETS OUT | BUNYIP |
| 3. POSSUM AND WOMBAT PLOT | |
| (#3A) CARROT REVEAL | |
| 4. BUNYIP MEETS THE PUDDIN'-OWNERS | |
| (#4) NO JOY IT BRINGS | BUNYIP |
| (#5) IF THERE'S ANYTHING BETTER | BILL, SAM |
| (#5A) PUDDING ENCHANTMENT | |
| (#6) I'M THE MAGIC PUDDING (RAP) | ALBERT, BILL, SAM |
| (#6A) PUDDING CHASE | |
| 5. FIRE! FIRE! | |
| (#7) FIRE! FIRE! | |
| (#8) IT'S WORSE THAN WEEVILS | BILL, SAM |
| (#9) LET GLOOM GIVE WAY | BUNYIP, BILL, SAM |
| 6. HAS ANYONE SEEN A SINGED POSSUM? | |
| (#9A) BANDICOOT ENTRY 1 | |
| (#9B) BANDICOOT DANCING | |
| (#9C) BANDICOOT EXIT | |
| (#9D) DORKING'S EXIT | |
| 7. BUNYIP'S PLAN | |
| (#9E) POOTLE'S PATENT (PART 1) | |
| (#9F) POOTLE'S PATENT (PART 2) | |
| 8. JOIN THE CLUB | |
| (#10) THE SOLEMN WORD IS PLIGHTED | BUNYIP, BILL,
SAM, COMPANY |
| (#10A) SOLEMN WORD (ACT 1 FINALE) | COMPANY |

SECOND SLICE

1. EVERYONE'S A PUDDIN'-THIEF
(#11) ENTR'ACTE
2. PUDDIN'-THIEVES BEARING GIFTS
(#12) AS IF WE'D BE NICE
(#13) OH WHAT A FEARFUL FATE
3. BEN BRANDYSNAP TO THE RESCUE
(#14) ON A TERRIBLE QUEST
4. PUDDIN'-THIEVES ON THE RUN
5. RESCUE PLAN
(#14A) BANDICOOT ENTRY 2
(#15) BY OUR TERRIBLE ZEST!
6. IF YOU ARE WATCHING THIS
7. ON THE ROAD TO TOORALOO
8. ALBERT'S LAMENT
(#16) OH, WHO WOULD BE A PUDDIN'?
9. A PROCESSION OF PUDDINGS
(#17) TOORALOO AGRICULTURAL SHOW
(#17A) PUDDIN' RIOT
10. JUSTICE IS SERVED
(#18) I REALLY THINK YOU OUGHT
(#19) IF YOU'VE A CASE WITHOUT A
JUDGE
(#20) THE BALLAD OF CURRY AND RICE
(#21) I THINK THE FACT SUFFICES
11. HOME
(#22) ROLLIN' ROUND THE OCEAN
(#23) BOWS

POSSUM, WOMBAT
BUNYIP, BILL, SAM

BUNYIP, BILL,
SAM, BEN

BUNYIP, BILL,
SAM, BEN

ALBERT

JUDGE

BUNYIP
BILL, SAM
CONSTABLE,
JUDGE

COMPANY

FIRST SLICE

PROLOGUE

(#1) COME JOIN US WE ENTREAT

[On a shadow screen we see various silhouetted tableaux of characters. Performers enter singing. During the song the puppeteer who is dressed as a CHEF enters carrying a box. The box has a star on the lid and the name "Albert". It is covered with old shipping labels from many countries.]

ALL

COME JOIN US WE ENTREAT,
 COME JOIN US WE IMPLORE.
 IN FRIENDSHIP'S NAME OUR GUESTS WE CLAIM
 AND FRIENDSHIP'S NAME IS LAW.

ACTOR 1: Welcome to the first slice of...

ALL

WE'VE PUDDIN' HERE A TREAT,
 WE'VE PUDDIN' HERE GALORE.
 DO NOT DECLINE TO STAY AND DINE,
 OUR PUDDIN' YOU'LL ADORE!

THE MAGIC PUDDING!

OUR PUDDIN' WE REPEAT
 YOU REALLY CANNOT BEAT.
 OUR PUDDIN' WE REPEAT,

YOU REALLY CANNOT BEAT...

[The box containing ALBERT is passed along the line. The chef/puppeteer places box down, opens the lid and peers inside.]

CHEF/PUPPETEER: Shhhh! He's asleep.

ALL [SOFTLY]

OUR PUDDIN' WE REPEAT,
YOU REALLY CANNOT BEAT.
OUR PUDDIN' WE REPEAT,
YOU REALLY CANNOT BEAT...

ACTOR 2: The Magic Pudding begins at breakfast time.

ACTOR 3: The best part of the day.

ACTOR 4: The world has just had it's face washed...

ACTOR 5: And the air smells like Pears soap.



SCENE 1: WHISKERS IN THE SOUP!

[A treehouse. Actors push BUNYIP forward. He picks up a bucket.]

ACTOR 5: Once there was a koala bear. This koala bear's name was Bunyip. Bunyip Bluegum.

BUNYIP: Esquire!

ACTOR 5: What?

BUNYIP: Bunyip Bluegum Esquire!

ALL: Esquire? Ohhhh!

ACTOR 5: Ok. Bunyip Bluegum Esquire.

BUNYIP: *[to audience]* It all began with the whiskers.

[The doors of a treehouse swing open to reveal UNCLE WATTLEBERRY. His whiskers completely fill the house.]

UNCLE WATTLEBERRY: Ahhh! Breakfast time!

BUNYIP: Morning, Uncle Wattleberry.

U. WATTLEBERRY: There you are Bluegum. Hurry up boy! I'm especially hungry today.

BUNYIP: Here's your eucalyptus soup, Uncle Wattleberry.

U. WATTLEBERRY: *[slightly deaf]* I hope it's soup. In particular I hope it's eucalyptus soup.

BUNYIP: It's Eucalyptus soup Uncle Wattleberry...

U. WATTLEBERRY: Yummy!

BUNYIP: *[to audience]* Every day it's the same old thing. Up at sparrow's, down to the creek lugging this big old bucket, mashing up the eucalyptus leaves...

U. WATTLEBERRY: Get a move on. I'm famished.

BUNYIP: I don't mind that so much. The main problem is...

[BUNYIP places soup in front of UNCLE WATTLEBERRY.]

U. WATTLEBERRY: Ahhh. Breakfast.

BUNYIP: *[shouting]* The whiskers!!

CHORUS

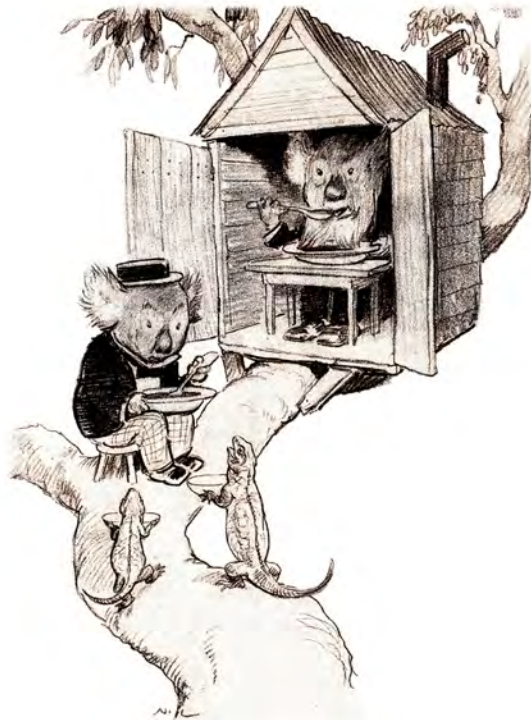
TOO MANY WHISKERS!

BUNYIP:

*“Whiskers alone are bad enough,
Attached to faces coarse and rough,
But how much greater their offence is,
When stuck on Uncles’ countenances.”*

U. WATTLEBERRY: What’s wrong with whiskers?

*“As noble thoughts the inner being grace,
So noble whiskers dignify the face.”*



(#1A) WHISKERS!

CHORUS

WHISKERS, WHISKERS, WHISKERS, WHISKERS

BUNYIP: I am forced to eat outside because your whiskers fill up
the whole place.

U. WATTLEBERRY: Eh?

BUNYIP: And they blow about.

U. WATTLEBERRY: So?

BUNYIP: And they get in the soup.

U. WATTLEBERRY: What!



CHORUS

HE HAS TO EAT OUTSIDE
 HIS WHISKERS FILL THE ROOM!
 AND THEY BLOW ABOUT!
 AND GET IN THE SOUP!
 HAVE A SHAVE MATE! HAVE A SHAVE!

[UNCLE WATTLEBERRY is presented with a huge pair of scissors, then a cut-throat razor, a big can of shaving foam and a shaving brush.]

U. WATTLEBERRY:

*“These whiskers are staying,
 These whiskers are mine,
 These whiskers are sacred,
 They’re almost divine.”*

BUNYIP: *[to audience]* See what I mean?

U. WATTLEBERRY:

*“Shaving may add an air that is brisker,
 For dignity, commend me to the whisker.”*

[UNCLE WATTLEBERRY throws away the razor and shaving brush.]

BUNYIP: The fact is Uncle Wattleberry, there’s not enough room in this treehouse for you and me and the whiskers.

U. WATTLEBERRY: Is that so!

(#2) TO SEE THE WORLDCHORUS *[SPOKEN]*

BUNYIP, IT’S TIME TO LEAVE HOME.
 BUNYIP, IT’S TIME TO STRIKE OUT ON YOUR OWN.

BUNYIP: Leave home?