



Adelaide Theatre Guide

www.theatreguide.com.au

Supporting live theatre in South Australia

PO Box 738
MODBURY SA 5092

info@theatreguide.com.au
ABN : 93 297 960 525

THE CEMETERY CLUB

The Therry Dramatic Society

Arts Theatre

Until 12 November 2011

Review by Fran Edwards

This gentle comedy is full of Jewish humour, and is all about death – but definitely not morbid. Set in Queens, New York, Ivan Menchell's witty script is a gem and the stage version is much better than the 1993 screen version, which held so much promise and failed to deliver.

Ida, Lucille and Doris visit their dead husbands' graves every month. The friendship of the three couples was strong in life and the widows keep the faith, to varying degrees. Doris, played by Penni Hamilton-Smith, plans her life around her cemetery visits. Ida (Julie Quick) is ready to move on but loyalty keeps her bound. Lucille (Pam O'Grady) is already playing the field and keeping up the visits for the sake of her two friends – or is she?

Quick is excellent as the solid, sensible widow trying to move on. She elicits sympathy and wins the audience over with ease. O'Grady plays the flighty Lucille with depth – always flamboyant, always ready for anything. Hamilton-Smith is suitably introspective and subdued as Doris, waiting to join her mate.

All three convey the Jewish edge, but with varying success on the accents. Hamilton-Smith wavers more than the others, but it does not detract from solid performances.

With good support from John Greene, as Sam Katz (Ida's tentative suitor), and Julia Whittle as Mildred (the rival) this is a funny and poignant production.

Director Loriel Smart has extracted the humour without slipping into the mawkishness that would have been so easy. The set, by Patsy Thomas and Stanley Tuck, provides an excellent backdrop – comfortable and homey. This is complemented by Colin George's realistic lighting and the unobtrusive sound design by Myles Leon.

The opening night audience was appreciative and this is, without doubt, another Therry success. It's not a long season, so get your ticket now!