



Personal stories shared in 'reality theatre'

A portrait of memories

GARY WARNER

PEOPLE who crowded into Theatre Eight last Friday evening were there for a production with a difference.

They were there to witness the unveiling of Voiceprints, a unique view of Geraldton's past that could almost be called 'reality theatre'.

An audio-visual presentation of six stories based on Aboriginal, maritime, migrant and fishing themes, each story presented against a backdrop of historical photographs, rare film footage and an original

soundtrack.

ABC presenter Bill Bunbury guided the audience on their journey through time, interspersed with live interviews on the small stage with some of the participants.

It was described as "a fascinating portrait of people and place", and so it proved to be as often deeply personal stories were told.

They included Aboriginal elder Clarrie Cameron, retired Geraldton Senior High School principal Jim

Trevaskis, fishing identity Bill Newbold, Aboriginal woman Jenny Clayton, Nancy Fong, and Vietnamese immigrants Tuan Dac Nguyen and his wife Nhan Thi Dao.

A particularly vivid story was that told by Bill Newbold, of surviving the sinking of his fishing boat by swimming several miles to shore in 1952.

Throughout the presentation, the tales were augmented by live and recorded music performed by Peter Grayling

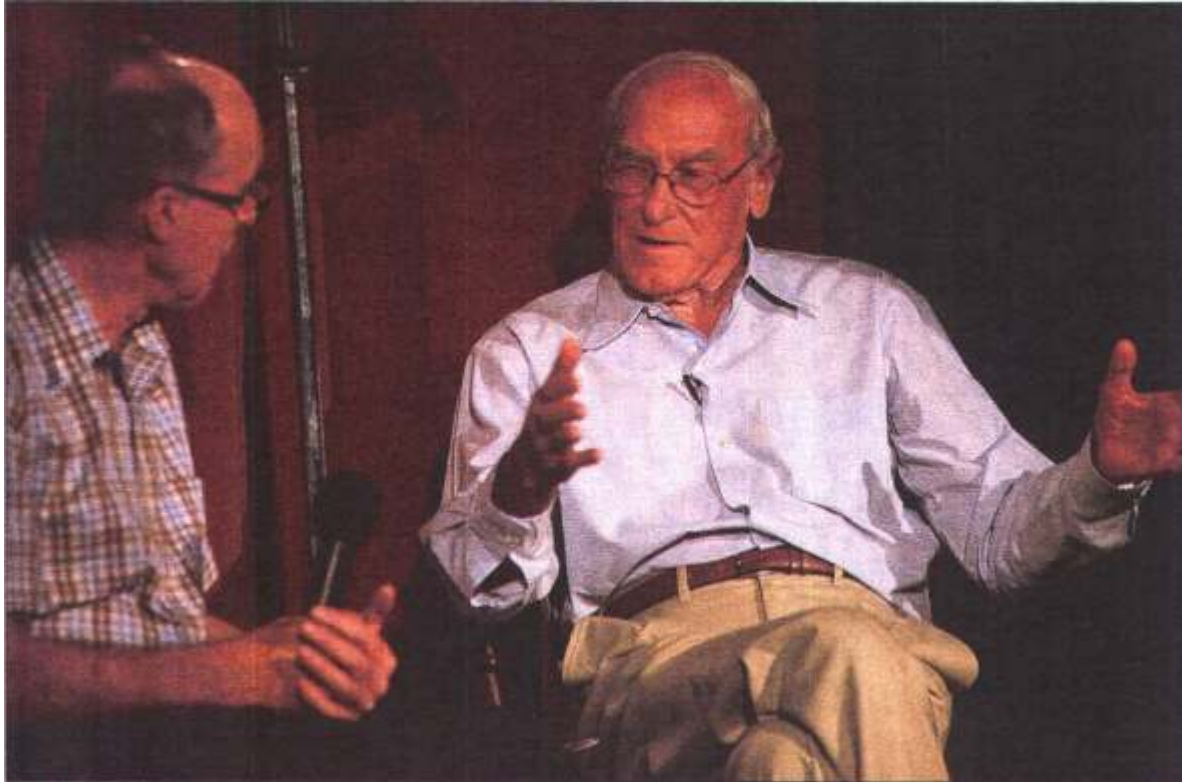
on cello and Rod Vervest on guitar.

All the music, which perfectly complemented the stories, was composed by Vervest, who also produced the presentation.

Jointly presented by the Perth International Arts Festival, Voiceprints Inc and the Geraldton-Greenough Regional Library, the unusual production will be presented in Perth as an element of the Perth Writers Festival.



Evocative: Cellist Peter Grayling and producer/composer Rod Vervest accompanied the Voiceprints production with an original score.



Lively memories: Voiceprints participant Bill Newbold recounts to Bill Bunbury his harrowing swim after a 1952 boatwreck. Pictures: GARY WARNER