

# MUM'S the word

## National Tour 2004

Six women ...six stories...one common thread...a hilarious and intimate look at motherhood.

After three record-breaking tours and a West End run, this award-winning, sell-out theatrical phenomenon is about to embark on an unprecedented fourth national tour in two years.

The all-star cast features *Sarah White (Brookside)*, *Rebecca Wheatley (Casualty)*, *Kim Hartman ('Allo, 'Allo)*, *Maureen Nolan (The Nolans)*, *Polly Highton (Brookside)* and *Julie T Wallace (The Life and Loves of A She-Devil)*.

This award-winning production has received critical acclaim and attracted sell-out audiences throughout Australia and Canada, and across Europe. UK audiences have loved every minute of the show which the press claim *“should be sponsored by the NHS”*, with lines like:

**“Every day I start out Mary Poppins but I end up Cruella DeVil”**

**“I find it much easier to be a good mum in public.”**

**“Some mornings when I am desperate for more sleep, I lie to my husband about how many times I got up in the night with the baby.”**

[www.mumstthewordtour.co.uk](http://www.mumstthewordtour.co.uk)

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0141 229 1444 or e-mail [audrey@robertckelly.co.uk](mailto:audrey@robertckelly.co.uk)*



Sarah White



Rebecca Wheatley



Kim Hartman



Maureen Nolan



Polly Highton



Julie T Wallace

## THE BIRTH

It was the Spring of 1993 in Vancouver, Canada. Six women who had once been exciting, glamorous and professional actors were now exhausted, bedraggled amateur mothers with ten children under six between them. They decided to get together to write a show about motherhood.

They had a slot in a Vancouver Festival called *Women in View* and so they had a deadline. They met regularly on Saturday mornings without their children. They talked, they laughed, they whined, they complained and they laughed some more. Suddenly their first performance was just three weeks away. Although they had nothing on paper, they felt enormously better about their children, their skills as mothers and their lives in general. Luckily, in the ancient tradition of oral history, they remembered each other's stories and *Mum's The Word* was born.

Over a decade and more than 2,500 performances later, *Mum's The Word* has crossed the international dateline and the Equator.

The Australian version of *Mum's The Word* continues to bring the house down all over the country. Since its beginnings at The Melbourne Comedy Festival in 1998 it has enjoyed seasons all over Australia and has now been seen by over 400,000 people.

There have been two companies of Canadian Mums, including a sell-out success at Montreal's *Just for Laughs* Festival in 2001. The original Mums came together again for a two month season in Vancouver in May 2002. Two American companies of Mums have brought the hilarity of motherhood to audiences in Chicago and Minneapolis.

Spring 2002 saw the European premiere of *Mum's The Word* which starred Blythe Duff of *Taggart* fame. The show was a huge success, selling out in advance at all venues, before starting on a four week sit-down at the King's Theatre, Glasgow (the only show to play a longer season was Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Cats*). The show set new box office records for number of tickets sold and speed of sales at all Scottish venues.

This was followed by an English tour, which starred Beveley Callard of *Coronation Street* and played to rapturous audiences and received rave reviews in Autumn 2002. The West End production, at the Albery Theatre, enjoyed a stellar cast which included Patsy Palmer, Imogen Stubbs, Jenny Éclair, Cathy Tyson and Carole Decker as well as one of the authors – Barbara Pollard.

*Mum's The Word's* second Scottish tour in Spring 2003 attracted tremendous reviews and played to sell-out audiences. An Irish tour is planned for Autumn 2004.

## CAST BIOGRAPHIES

### SARAH WHITE - Deborah



Sarah White delighted television audiences with her portrayal of night-club owner Bev McLoughlin in Channel 4's *Brookside*. Viewers shared her laughter, tears, highs, lows, tragedies and triumphs – often in one episode! Bev was a character who did not do anything in small measure.

Accomplished actress Sarah joined the Liverpool soap only weeks after graduating from the Rose Bruford Drama School. She said: “We spent years studying theatre techniques and what seemed like moments studying television acting, and there I was joining *Brookside*!”

Her exhilarating appearances as mad-cap Bev prompted viewers to vote hers the Best Comedy Performance in the British Soap Awards before *Brookside* ended last November.

Recently she received rave reviews for her performance in the title role of *Abigail's Party*.

Sarah found herself “laughing all the way through” when she read the script for *Mum's The Word*. She admits to relishing the role of professional woman turned apprentice mum Deborah.

“What I liked about the character of Deborah was that she was not perfect. She doesn't come to motherhood very easily – or quietly for that matter! She comes kicking and screaming. Deborah and all the other characters on stage show there is more to becoming a mum than having perfect kids, a perfect home, perfect hair and make-up and fitting into size ten Gucci jeans,” said Sarah.

Her daughter Ruby appears to be following in her famous mum's footsteps – Sarah describes her as lively, full of fun and very energetic, with a finely developed flair for the dramatic!

## REBECCA WHEATLEY - Linda



Rebecca is best known as Amy the receptionist from BBC's *Casualty*, a role she played for four years. She has been seen most recently as one of the regular presenters of *Loose Women* for ITV and previously presented a series called *Body Beautiful* for the Living Channel.

Rebecca also featured in television dramas including *A Pinch of Snuff*, *Wycliff* and *Pie in the Sky*. Guest appearances included *This Morning*, *GMTV*, *Top of the Pops* but her personal favourites were *Call My Bluff* and *Celebrity Ready Steady Cook*.

This talented artist trained for eight years in classical singing and has appeared in most of the cabaret venues in London's West End. She starred in the hugely successful *Fame* at the Cambridge Theatre. In contrast, she has been invited to sing at the Royal Opera House Belfast in televised performances for BBC Northern Ireland and at the Albert Hall for the TV Times '*Christmas Carols with the Stars*'.

Rebecca has performed in numerous jazz and blues clubs throughout London and is a regular artist at Pizza in the Park, Knightsbridge. She recorded two top ten singles – *Everlasting Love* and *Stay With Me Baby* as well as the album *Time Stands Still*.

Rebecca performed her one-woman show at Edinburgh's Fringe Festival and toured the South West of England with her own blues band.

"I had just had my son when I auditioned for *Mum's The Word* and so much of it was about my life, I just had to be part of it all. So, Fred will be joining me for the tour. I think he'll be our official mascot really!"

## **KIM HARTMAN – Alison**



Kim's early work included performances at the Chichester Festival Theatre, Harrogate, The Bristol Old Vic and the Redgrave Theatre, Farnham, playing Rita in *Billy Liar*, Margaret in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Sorrel in *Hayfever*, Doonyasha in *The Cherry Orchard*, Alice Hobson in *Hobson's Choice*, *Shaw's St Joan*, Mary Yellen in *Jamaica Inn* and Alys in *Abelard and Heloise*.

Kim played Helga in all 96 episodes of *'Allo, 'Allo* as well as the *'Allo, 'Allo* stage show which toured the UK, Australia and New Zealand and had five West End seasons.

She co-produced the West End thriller *Double Dutch* which toured nationally. Kim followed this with a New Zealand tour playing Jacqueline in *Don't Dress For Dinner*, a part which she subsequently played for a year in the West End. This versatile actress returned to New Zealand for four months to play the leading role of Josie in *Steaming*. She toured the Far and Middle East with *Move Over Mrs Markham* and *The Maintenance Man*.

Other UK tours include *My Fat Friend*; *Beauty And The Beast*; *My Mother Said I Never Should*; *Relatively Speaking*; *Table Manners*; *Bedside Manners*; *Killing Time*; *Stepping Out* and *Hayfever*. Television credits include *Miss Jones and Sons*, *The Kelly Monteith Show*, *The Pedlar*; *Comedy Playhouse*; *The Brittas Empire*; *Casualty* and *15 Storeys High*. This highly-skilled actress has appeared on numerous talk and quiz shows, radio dramas and pantomimes, and is a trainer in personal presentation. Directing credits include *A Jovial Crew*; *Comedy of Errors*; *Henry V* and *The Cherry Orchard*. She is a co-founder and director of the production company Quinton Arts.

Kim said: "I was part of an all-female cast in *Steaming* and we had lots of fun. I thought it would be great to a part of it with *Mum's The Word* . I think the show is so popular because it strikes a chord with so many people."

Her son Tom and daughter Miranda have travelled as far as New Zealand to see Kim perform and will be sure to see their Mum in *Mum's The Word* .

## MAUREEN NOLAN - Jill



Maureen Nolan and her sisters enjoyed world-wide success with a string of chart-toppers. The Nolans got an entire generation “*In The Mood For Dancing*” and were frequently mobbed by screaming fans in America, Japan and throughout the UK.

Since then Maureen has been a stalwart of pantomimes, enjoying the ‘family’ feeling of this theatrical ensemble.

“I think it is all to do with coming from a big family. You get used to being part of a group. Pantomime really is like that – with everyone mucking in together and having a good time,” said Maureen.

“Three of my sisters have played the lead role in *Blood Brothers* and I must have seen it dozens of times. Watching the audiences’ reactions, I thought how great it would be to do a drama or comedy. Then the script for *Mum’s The Word* arrived and I was hooked,” she explained.

Maureen immediately loved the character of Jill – the bohemian rock-chick turned hyper-anxious parent.

“I think all mums can remember what it was like when their babies were first born - how much you worry about what you are doing right, if you are doing anything wrong, if you aren’t doing enough or too much! In spite of all that worry, Jill never loses the wonder of her baby and I really like that,” said Maureen.

Maureen’s son Danny is a sports-mad teenager with a real talent for golf – a skill which Maureen assures us he didn’t inherit from his Mum!

## **POLLY HIGHTON – Barbara**



Polly is reprising her role as quirky earth mother Barbara. She received rave reviews for her performance in the 2002 English tour of *Mum's The Word*.

“What I loved about playing Barbara was her extremes of emotions. She has this fierce love for her kids, but still longs for a bit of peace and quiet. She loves her husband but is usually too tired to do anything about it. I think any woman who is running a home, looking after a family and trying to keep her own sanity knows where she is coming from,” said Polly.

This Liverpool-born actress has appeared in *Casualty*, *Coronation Street* and in *Brookside* as Sinbad's love interest Barbara Newton.

Other television appearances include *Heatwave*, *Medics*, *Watching*, *Megamaths*, *Filthy Rich and Catflap* and *Happy Families*.

She recently appeared as Mrs Bardell in *Pickwick* and the major tour of *Love Me Slender*. Polly appeared in the Liverpool Playhouse productions of *Fur Coat and No Knickers* and *Murder in the Cathedral*. Her film work includes *I Said, She Said*.

Polly describes her children – ten-year-old Louis and 13-year-old Nina – as “incredible” and “fantastic”.

## **JULIE T WALLACE - Robin**



Julie T Wallace trained at the London Academy of Musical and Dramatic Arts. She appeared in *Beauty and the Beast*, in Bristol and as Anne in *The Worlds* at the Royal Court Theatre.

Her sensational television debut as Ruth in Fay Weldon's classic tale of female revenge *The Life and Loves of a She-Devil* gained her a BAFTA Best Actress nomination. Following on from that success Julie played double agent Rosika in the James Bond movie *The Living Daylights*. She then went on to play Coaxer in the film of *The Threepenny Opera* and appeared in *Hawks* with Timothy Dalton.

Julie played Carlotta in *The Cherry Orchard* in Dundee and Lynda in LWT's series *Stolen*. Other television roles included *Morning Sarge*, *Selling Hitler*, *Stay Lucky*, *Les Dogs* and her starring role in *The Lunatic*. She has worked on *Sharpe*, *Lovejoy*, *The Life and Times of Henry Pratt*, *Anchoress* and *Queen of the Wild Frontier* as well as *The Full Wax*, *Heartbeat*, *Sharpe's Rifles* and *Rory Who Else?*

Julie's West End debut was as Annie Wilkes in *Misery*. Her film work includes *The Fifth Element*, *The Beautician and The Beast*, *B Monkey* and *Nowhere*. Most recently she appeared in *True Tilda*.

She plays Mrs Avery, a series regular in *Last of the Summer Wine*, and appeared in *My Family* as well as working with Steve Coogan in *Dr Terrible's House of Terrible*.

Julie played the lead in *Chillers* and *The Last Detective* and is currently working on a new comedy series called *Catterick*. She has a son and a daughter.

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# MUM'S the Word

starring

**SARAH WHITE**  
**REBECCA WHEATLEY**  
**KIM HARTMAN**  
**MAUREEN NOLAN**  
**POLLY HIGHTON**  
**and**  
**JULIE T WALLACE**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

*Mum's The Word* is a tell-it-like-it-is comedy about the trials and tribulations of having children and the overwhelming effect they have on your life.

Starring Sarah White (*Brookside*); Rebecca Wheatley (*Casualty*); Kim Hartman ('*Allo, 'Allo*); Maureen Nolan (*The Nolans*); Polly Highton (*Brookside*) and Julie T Wallace (*The Life and Loves of A She-Devil*).

*Mum's The Word* is a production that hangs the dirty nappy laundry of maternity out to dry and brings both the laughter and tears of motherhood to the stage.

Humorous, emotional, ecstatic and hysterical, *Mum's The Word* is a chorus line of confessional anecdotes and vignettes combined to create the mother of all comedies. Without the rose-coloured lens treatment, *Mum's The Word* is a hilarious, intimate look at motherhood. Six mums tell stories you have not heard before – stories too embarrassing, too personal to tell even their closest friends, but based on experiences all mothers share. It is group therapy like never before.

It was written in Vancouver in Spring 1993 by a group of six women who had once been exciting, glamorous, professional actors and were now exhausted, bedraggled amateur mothers with ten children under six between them.

With a slot in a Vancouver Festival called *Women In View* they decided to write a show about motherhood and met regularly on Saturday mornings to write. They talked, laughed and moaned. Suddenly the festival was three weeks away and they had nothing on paper but felt enormously better about their children, their skills as mothers, and their lives in general. Luckily, in the ancient tradition of oral history, they remembered each other's stories and *Mum's The Word* was born.

## WAYNE HARRISON

Wayne Harrison is a writer, director and producer based in London, but working in the UK, Europe, Australia and South Africa.

From 1999-2001 he was the Creative Director of SFX/Back Row and Clear Channel Entertainment (Europe). During this period he was part of the creative team behind the productions *Gumboots*, *Tap Dogs*, *Slava's Snowshow*, and *Fosse (Europe)*. *Gumboots*, which he conceived and wrote with Zenzi Mbuli and the Rishile Gumboot Dancers of Soweto, and which is now in year five of its international touring life, recently enjoyed seasons in Berlin, Stuttgart, Vienna and Paris. It is currently on tour in Portugal.

His various productions of *Mum's The Word* have been seen in North America and the UK over the last four years. In 2002-3 he directed John Breen's rugby play *Alone It Stands* at the Sydney Opera House and *Defending the Caveman* at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival. With Ross Mollison and Robert C Kelly he produced *Too Far To Walk*, starring Prunella Scales, at London's King's Head Theatre. These producers will combine again in 2004 to present *Satango*, a new musical by Justin Fleming and Stuart D'Arrietta.

From 1990 to 1999 Wayne was Artistic Director/CEO of Sydney Theatre Company. It was during his time at STC that he produced the original season of Dein Perry's *Tap Dogs*, in a specially constructed nightclub, overlooking Sydney Harbour.

Among the STC productions he directed were *Burn This*, *The Normal Heart*, *A Little Night Music*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, *Into the Woods*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, *The Gift of the Gorgon*, *Falsettos*, *Two Weeks with the Queen*, *Dead White Males*, *Heretic*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Three Tall Women*, *Medea*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Amy's View* and the Julie Anthony musical, *Lush*, which he also co-wrote. *Lush* was revived by the Ensemble Theatre at the Sydney Opera House in 2001.

Wayne also directed the London premiere of Michael Gow's *On Top of the World*, and the award-winning South African production of *Two Weeks with the Queen*, with a combined Australian/South African cast.

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**What the international critics said ....**

“hysterical, possibly shocking, definitely moving”  
**Chicago Footlights, USA**

“absolutely hilarious; a must-see for everyone”  
**Kane County Chronicle, Chicago, USA**

“an insightful joy”  
**Addison Press, Chicago, USA**

“Mums bundles up huge laughs... a comedic triumph”  
**Victoria News, Canada**

“Get ready for the screams, laughter, tears and gasps of recognition”  
**Vancouver Sun, Canada**

“funny and brilliantly executed...a theatrical first”  
**Vancouver Sun, Canada**

“The mother of all shows! is a great night out – away from the kids”  
**The Herald Sun, Australia**

“...your face will hurt from laughing at the brutal reality of ” **Sunday Herald  
Sun, Australia**

## **What the critics said about the 2002 Scottish tour**

“roars of delighted recognition”

**The London Times**

“a hilarious coup de theatre that you have to see for yourself”

**Daily Mail**

“A blisteringly funny and perceptive piece of theatre”

**The Stage**

“ is a beautifully crafted show, full of the warm, tragi-comic rhythm of life; and absolutely impossible to dislike.”

**The Scotsman**

“moves along at a cracking pace”

**The Herald**

“as sharp and hilariously funny as you are ever likely to get”

**Perthshire Advertiser**

“hilarious”

**The List Magazine**

## **What the critics said about the 2002 English tour .....**

“It’s a show that should be sponsored by the NHS.”

**The Mail on Sunday**

“...wickedly funny account of motherhood that nobody should miss”

**The Stage**

“It made you laugh, it made you cry. It was a beautifully crafted comedy that made you proud to be a mum.”

**The Kent Messenger**

“mercilessly funny, with line after line of poignant humour and full on belly laughs”

**The Sentinel, Stoke-on-Trent**

“great comedy with the six actresses going all out for - and collecting – big laughs”

**The Daily Post, Liverpool**

“the audience howled with delight and nodded their understanding”

**The Walsall Observer**

“mixing hilarious comedy with emotive, moving drama”

**Sutton Coldfield News**

## **What the critics said about the 2003 Scottish tour .....**

“a hugely entertaining phenomenon”  
**The Scottish Daily Mail**

“ is a no-holds-barred laugh-a-minute outpouring of all it is to be a mother”  
**The Evening Chronicle, Newcastle**

“It’s back - this side-splittingly funny collection of stories about motherhood”  
**The Evening Times, Glasgow**

“providing one of the funniest and most enjoyable girls’ nights out currently on offer  
in Britain”  
**The Scotsman**

“a comedy that at least 50% of the population will see as a small miracle”  
**The Northern Echo**

“many of the speeches and one-liners are hilarious”  
**The Inverness Courier**

“this whole show was a delight of humour and pathos”  
**The Nairnshire Telegraph**

“great shared moment of recognition when the audience suddenly erupts with  
laughter”  
**The Highland News**



**THE BECK THEATRE**



**Princess Theatre  
Torquay**



**new  
Wimbledon  
Theatre**

**Spa Pavilion  
Felixstowe**



**The Lighthouse,  
Poole  
Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March to  
Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2004  
Box Office: 01202 685222**

**The Beck Theatre, Hayes  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March and  
Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2004  
Box Office: 0870 606 3560**

**Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone  
Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March and  
Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2004  
Box Office: 01303 253193**

**The Princess Theatre,  
Torquay  
Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2004  
Box Office: 08702 41 41 20**

**New Wimbledon Theatre  
Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March to  
Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2004  
Box Office: 0870 060 6646**

**Spa Pavilion, Felixstowe  
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> April and  
Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2004  
Box Office: 01394 282126**

**The New Theatre, Oxford  
Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> April to  
Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2004  
Box Office: 0870 606 3500**

**The Palace Theatre,  
Manchester  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April to  
Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2004  
Box Office: 0870 401 3000**



**The Hippodrome,  
Bristol  
Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April to  
Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2004  
Box Office: 0870 607 7500**



**The Theatre Royal,  
Nottingham  
Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May to Saturday  
8<sup>th</sup> May 2004  
Box Office: 0115 989 5555**



**Jersey Opera House  
Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May to  
Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2004  
Box Office: 01534 511115**



**The Palace Theatre,  
Southend  
Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May to Saturday  
22<sup>nd</sup> May 2004  
Box Office: 01702 351135**



**The Empire Theatre,  
Liverpool  
Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May to Saturday  
29<sup>th</sup> May 2004  
Box Office: 0800 587 5007**



**The Wyvern Theatre,  
Swindon  
Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May to Saturday  
4<sup>th</sup> June 2004  
Box Office: 01793 524481**



**The Hall for Cornwall,  
Truro  
Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June to Saturday  
12<sup>th</sup> June 2004  
Box Office: 01872 262466**



**The Lyceum Theatre,  
Sheffield  
Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June to  
Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2004  
Box Office: 0114 249 6000**



**The Churchill Theatre,  
Bromley  
Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June to  
Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2004  
Box Office: 0870 444 6063**



**The Grand Theatre,  
Leeds  
Monday 28<sup>th</sup> June to  
Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2004  
Box Office: 0113 222 6 222**



**The Theatre Royal,  
Brighton  
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday  
10<sup>th</sup> July 2004  
Box Office: 0870 154 40 40**



**The Milton Keynes Theatre,  
Milton Keynes  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday  
17<sup>th</sup> July 2004  
Box Office: 01908 606090**

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