

'AUSSIE MUSICAL MADE FOR THE FAMILY'

From the first burst of colour and life on stage, it's obvious *Seven Little Australians* will be a delightful way to spend the next few hours.

This lively musical has all the ingredients of family entertainment, with the refreshing attraction of being a totally Australian-made product.

Written 96 years ago, Ethel Turner's story of the stern Captain Woolcot (John O'May) and his unruly bunch of children is proving timeless. It makes a perfect musical, and is as entertaining for those in their second childhood as for tiny tots.

The children seated next to this reviewer laughed and went quiet in all the right places, the acid test for any form of entertainment. (Tissues are definitely a must in some scenes).

Edwina Cox gives a sympathetic performance as Woolcot's kindly young wife, Esther. Melissa Bickerton's flame-haired Judy, the most spirited and dearly loved of the seven, exudes an energy which is one of the main forces of the show.

Beckerton's "romantic and daring" character is a perfect vehicle for her impish qualities and wonderfully expressive face.

Judy's brothers and sisters are an endearing lot, especially the tiny Scott Vanderheydon as the Little General, who in a scene at Victoria Barracks, teams up with the tall and talented Gerrard Symonds for a wonderfully comic routine.

This nostalgic Aussie should be placed highly on any parent's list of school holiday activities.
