

AUSTRALIAN VARIETY ARTISTS' ASSOCIATION

Situated in the Queen's Hall Building, the Sydney branch of the Australian Variety Artists Association was officially opened on 9 May 1907, with the inaugural president being Bert Rache. The opening was addressed by Sam Gale, who had previously founded a similar organisation in Melbourne, along with Fred Andrews, Harry Shine and Albert McKisson. In addition to its 200 members, a number of representatives from the press were also present.

In covering the AVAA's opening the *Theatre* magazine's variety editor wrote that "it was high time such an organisation came into existence to protect the interests of the artists." The article goes on to note that the problems were not so much caused by managers but rather fly-by-nights who were otherwise employed during the day and who were content to work for lower rates, thus undercutting the employment opportunities of professional entertainers. The editor went on to argue that it was "high time this class of individual was stamped out."

In his opening remarks Bert Rache indicated that while the association was intended to benefit the profession there was no intent to antagonise theatrical managers. He further stressed that it was hoped that the AVAA would be mutually advantageous to both sides of the business, and that the rooms of the Association would be available for managers to apply for artists. Rache made a point of noting that while artists could register with the AVAA and that the nature of any salaries between the individual and management would be kept confidential, no member would be allowed to engage for under 10/6 a night (June 1907, n. pag.).

SEE ALSO

- [Sam Gale](#)
- [Bert Rache](#)