

Biltong & Potroast back after 35 years

Parker's Comedy & Jive, at Montecasino in Fourways, is hosting a piece of South African comedy history from 18 to 21 February, 2010, as there will be four reunion performances of the ground-breaking comedy show Biltong & Potroast, first seen on South African television screens in 1976.



Biltong & Potroast features four of the original cast members - Mel Miller, Cyril Green, Eddie Eckstein and Dennis MacLean - Biltong & Potroast 2010 is set to take audiences on a no-holds-barred trip back to the advent of South African stand-up comedy!

Biltong & Potroast was devised in 1975 to pit South Africa's finest comedians against comics from Europe in an improvisational contest which saw host Clackie McKay handing out points based on the quality of their jokes on a series of randomly selected topics. The show enthralled viewers for its five-year run, eclipsing the immense popularity of the BBC's *World At War* on the early SABC and causing everything in the country to grind to a halt each Tuesday evening. "Biltong & Potroast was the reason pubs and clubs installed television sets for the first time in the late 1970s - otherwise nobody went out on a Tuesday night!" said Cyril Green, who told the first-ever joke on the show.

Outwitting the censors

That jousting wasn't limited to the on-air battle as they also had to find ways to outwit the fearsome SABC censors while making their content relevant - and, of course, funny! "We brought our own props and wardrobe, wrote our own script and told our own jokes - all the broadcaster had to do was point the cameras at us - and we got paid R35 per episode for the privilege!" said Mel Miller, South Africa's "Godfather of Comedy" who continues to fill stand-up comedy venues after 46 years in the business.

Skewering the politicians

While the foursome aim to roll back the years for those who loved the television series, they won't shy away from tackling content relevant to life in South Africa in the 21st century. "I still read the newspaper every day and get angry about some of the things I see - and I can't wait to get out on stage and skewer politicians with as much relish as we tackled the government in the 1970s," said Miller.

Performances of Biltong & Potroast 2010 run from 18 to 21 February 2010 at Parker's Comedy & Jive at Montecasino in Fourways. Performances 18 to 20 February are at 9pm and at 7pm on 21 February. Tickets are priced at R150 and are available from Computicket and via the Parker's Comedy & Jive website (www.parkerscomedy.com).