

Jackson Center Splendid Setting For

THU NOV 14 2002

By **ROBERT W. PLYLER**

The Robert H. Jackson Center for Justice plays host to a production by the Bunbury Theatre Company this week. It's a theatrical look at a jury's deliberations, titled *Twelve Angry Men*.

The version performed in Jamestown is cut down from an original screenplay by Reginald Rose. It was originally set in the 1950s, and the local production makes some efforts to bring it up to date, while leaving it in the original, in other ways.

The result is a bit bi-polar, but the overall effect is very good, indeed.

The script begins when the members of a jury are taken to the room where they are supposed to deliberate the guilt

or innocence of a 19-year-old young man who is accused of having stabbed his father to death.

At first it seems as though they're involved in an open-and-shut case, but one juror holds out, insisting that the evidence isn't as compelling as it seems at first glance.

The arguments range back and forth, and as they argue, the jurors display as much of their own personal character as they do of the evidence in the case they're deciding.

The Jackson Center, with its enlarged photographs of the Tribunal at Nuremberg was a splendid setting for the production. It's been years since I've attended a performance in their theater,

2

IN REVIEW

which has housed the Little Theatre of Jamestown and The Shoestring Players, among many others. It is an attractive and comfortable venue.

The script was written to be a film, in which the camera can travel in circles and largely control where the audience looks, at any given minute. Translated to the stage, we're faced with two hours during which 12 men sit in a circle around a table. To reduce the number of people with their backs to the audience, the jury table has been lengthened and tapered. Still, it poses an awkward situation.

The cast ranged in experience from