

UPSTAGED

COFFS HARBOUR MUSICAL COMEDY COMPANY

- Welcome.....p1
- President's Report.....p2
- Diary Dates.....p3
- Beauty & the Beast.....p4
- Photos.....p5
- AGM News.....p6
- Stagecraft 2012.....p7



WELCOME to the new look Newsletter!

August is usually a fairly quiet month for news, but I can assure you there is a lot going on behind the scenes!

The cast of Beauty and the Beast are now into the rehearsal period, with Mauz again doing a fantastic job as rehearsal pianist. The music is full and rich with multi part harmonies, and the script is really very funny. The cast are having a ball with it, and I know this is going to be such an enjoyable show, both for the performers and the audience.

The set building team is putting things together apace in the shed, costumes are under way, and rehearsals for the orchestra will start soon. You may have seen the ad in the paper for musicians for the production. **If you are a musician, and would like to play in the small orchestra being put together by Peter Kaukiainen, please give him a call on 6649 2289.**

We also need volunteers who can help with sewing. The bulk of the costumes are being hired, but Colin has been flat out sewing various other costumes. He also has a big part in the show, with lots of lines to learn, so he would very much welcome some help with basic sewing and bits and pieces. **If you can help sew costumes, please give Colin a call on 6651 3676.**

Thanks to all those who attended the AGM on July 23rd. We are pleased to welcome some new volunteers to the committee, and would like to thank the outgoing committee for their many years of dedicated service to our company. The new committee details are on page 6.



Now is the time of year when we start to plan our program for 2013. In order to do that, we invite anyone who is willing and able to direct to put together a basic plan and budget, and submit that to the committee for consideration.

If you have a show you have always wanted to direct, please get in touch. You will not have to do the whole thing on your own, but will have plenty of help, support and expertise to call on. If you have an idea of what you want to do, and how you want to do it, we would be pleased to hear from you!

If you need help putting a submission to the committee together, please just ask, and we can help you with that too. I look forward to seeing some ideas!

Di O'Ferrall - Secretary



Storage

We need temporary storage for some of the larger, more bulky Beauty & the Beast costumes during the month of October. Please let Colin know if you have a shed or lock up we can use.

Front of House

We will need volunteer ushers during the production in November. Please email Gabby Barnes at ron_gab@hotmail.com

Directors!

We would like to receive submissions from anyone willing and able to direct in 2013. Expressions of interest to the committee welcome now please.

UPSTAGED

Welcome everyone.

I had to wrack my brain to try and remember all the things that have happened this past year, my first as President, it just seems to have flown by so quickly.

This year marks 10 years of my involvement with CHMCC, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the two former Presidents I have served under, Bill Jacobs and Grahame Williams, both of whom have put in many years of hard work and commitment into our great company, and have left a lasting and hugely successful legacy so that we now have the luxury of being able to produce shows on their own merit, and not just as a means to make money.

I would also like to acknowledge the sad loss of two of our members, one a former committee member in Chrissy McNichol, with whom I had the pleasure of performing with on a number of occasions, and Mary Snowball. They will be sorely missed in our community.

So what has been going on in the last 12 months?

And what has it taught us?

A new theatre manager was installed in October. In November the company produced *Rent*, a contemporary show dealing with some fairly confronting and controversial issues, and whilst it didn't break any box office records, it received great critical acclaim, and introduced some incredible young talent into the company. The cast was also invited to perform at the second annual CoastOut Festival, a wonderful opportunity which was so successful that it has led to us being invited to perform again in this year's festival, a great honour. In February this year we had to cancel our planned production of *A Chorus Line*, due to a lack of young males, a very disappointing and disheartening way to start the year.



"I wish for, and anticipate a fun and successful production of Beauty and the Beast"



CHMCC President, Maureen Burgess

As I'm sure you're aware, there's a Council election coming up in September, and though I don't wish to politicise our Newsletter, I would like to inform you all that Denise Knight has put herself forward as Mayor, and that I will be sitting at Number 4 on her ticket.

I agreed to this not because I have a burning ambition to be a Councillor, and not because Denise is a friend, but because Denise is an extremely hard working, highly intelligent, motivated, active member of our community, has an enormous amount of integrity and is an outspoken supporter of the Arts. Although I don't necessarily have the same political beliefs as Denise, I do believe she would do a superb job as Mayor of Coffs Harbour.

With very little time, and a May spot booked, Judi Williams and I agreed to direct *Sweet Charity*, with Dave Tune as Assistant Director.

And then there was the launch. The new theatre manager went on leave.

Then there was the relaunch under the auspices of the acting theatre manager, who has been, and still is doing a very sound job acting as manager.

All things considered, *Sweet Charity* was an excellent production, again slightly down in audience numbers, but from a company perspective, hugely successful, drawing in some wonderful new talent, an absolute blast of a cast.

Behind the scenes ACCTS is still meeting regularly and negotiating with Council and Theatre Management on behalf of all Community Theatre groups, and with the doors of communication now open, we hope to regain some of our past entitlements.

Finally, what do I wish for in the next twelve months?

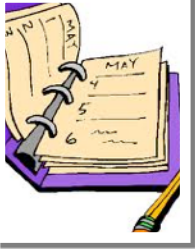
I wish that more members will get involved in the company in areas other than performing. We desperately need more people who would like to direct a show, you will have plenty of support! We desperately need people who will help with publicity, lighting and sound, backstage and front of house.

And I wish for, and anticipate a fun and successful production of *Beauty and the Beast*.

Mauz

UPSTAGED

Diary Dates



Upcoming events include CHATS' new production, and dates for our second show of the year, Disney's Beauty and the Beast.



Two Doors Down

by
Kelly
McLoughlin-Wilden



Fri Oct 5th 8pm Fri Oct 12th
Sat Oct 6th 8pm 12.30pm & 8pm
Sun Oct 7th 2pm Sat Oct 13th
Wed Oct 10th 8pm 2pm & 8pm

At the Jetty Memorial Theatre

November 9th - December 2nd



Directed by Donna Fairall

Assistant Director Judi Williams
Musical Director Peter Kaukiainen



WEDS 7pm	FRI 7pm	SAT 1pm	SAT 7pm	SUN 1pm
	Nov 9	Nov 10	Nov 10	Nov 11
Nov 14	Nov 10	Nov 16	Nov 17	Nov 18
Nov 21	Nov 11	Nov 24	Nov 24	Nov 25
Nov 28	Nov 12	Dec 1	Dec 1	Dec 2

Call the Jetty Memorial Theatre to book on 6652 8088
or book online at www.jettytheatre.com

UPSTAGED

Disney's Beauty and the Beast

Well it's week 5 of rehearsals and things are flying along!!!

We've already blocked almost half of the first act and the ensemble are starting their second big musical number "Gaston".

Frank, Nev and Kerry are busy building and painting the set while Sharon is finding hats, baskets, mugs and guns for our props and of course what show isn't complete without a flying rubber chicken!!

Colin has many of the costumes under way but we are desperately looking for some more people to sew...please let us know if you can help out.

We've advertised for musicians for the orchestra and have been pleased with the response so far.

Headshots for the programme are underway and it is great to see some "newbies" enter the world of theatre by coming aboard for this show.

I am loving my red Beauty and the Beast TShirt and the fact that we will be able to video the production. YAY!!

Have you bought tickets yet? Well they are already on sale at the theatre. I went in and bought out the whole G row for one performance just this morning. True to the Disney formula, this show has it all.....the cute, the sweet and the ugly (sorry Beast....lol)

It's going to be a fantastic show as it already has a fantastic team making it happen.

See you at the theatre in November.

Donna



Time is running out.

If the Beast does not learn his lesson soon, he and his household will be doomed for all eternity. But who could ever learn to love a beast?



UPSTAGED



UPSTAGED

AGM 2012

The AGM was held on July 23rd, and many thanks to those who attended. There were very few nominations received for committee positions, but it was at least encouraging to receive some nominations from some people willing to stand for the first time, and this has enabled others, who have put in many years of service to the committee to take a well-earned break.

The nominations were:

President: Maureen Burgess

Nominated by Judi Williams, Second Colin Wilkes

Vice President: Jenny Beatson

Nominated by Pam Lane, Second Judi Williams

Treasurer: Russell Lane

Nominated by Grahame Williams, Second Judi Williams

Secretary: Di O'Ferrall

Nominated by Maureen Burgess, Second Judi Williams

Committee Members

Colin Wilkes, nominated by Di O'Ferrall, Second Judi Williams

Pam Lane, nominated by Judi Williams, Second Grahame Williams

Peter Hodges, nominated by Judi Williams, Second Di O'Ferrall

David Tune, nominated by Dee Tune, Second Donna Fairall

Pam Lane withdrew her nomination, enabling all nominees to be elected unopposed.



CHMCC

PO Box 1466, Coffs Harbour, NSW 2450

www.coffsharbourmusicalcomedycompany.com



President

Maureen Burgess
0405 703 837,
mauzabug@hotmail.com

Vice President

Jenny Beatson
6654 4977
jennybeatson@hotmail.com

Secretary

Di O'Ferrall
6653 7828
0432 518112
beachmob4@bigpond.com

Treasurer

Russell Lane
6653 2237
0412 958 449
rarscal@hotmail.com

Committee

Colin Wilkes
6651 3676
cvgwilkes@gmail.com
*
Peter Hodges
0414 582638
peter@virtuallyorganised.com.au
*
David Tune
0418 756797
d_tune@aapt.net.au

Contact the whole committee by email to: coffsharbourmcc@gmail.com

SAILING

Stagecraft 2012

Six of us from the outgoing committee were lucky enough to attend the Association of Community Theatre's Bi-annual Stagecraft Conference in July.

Here's what Mauz had to say about it:

"A few years ago, Judi Williams and I looked at a brochure that had been sent to CHMCC's P.O. Box regarding some weekend workshops that were being held at NIDA. As both of us were just spreading our "Directorial" wings, we thought it would be a great idea. This year, the light bulb came on, and we decided that it could be a real benefit to the Company if we actually did attend.

When it was discussed at a Committee meeting, there was interest from quite a few of us, and so, accommodation was arranged, workshops were booked, car pooling organized, and Judi, myself, Di, Jenny, Russell and Pam headed off to the Big Smoke to try to learn a thing or two.

Day 1:- Registration, morning tea, mingling and introduction from keynote speakers John Woods and Amanda Muggleton. Although both were interesting and engaging, it was clear that neither had any experience in Community Theatre as we know it (both had performed in one or two Pro Am shows, but had never actually been involved in amateur theatre.)"

We spent the weekend trying to fit in as many different workshops between us as possible, and there were plenty to choose from!

Mauz attended the following workshops:

Trash to Treasure.

"This was supposed to be a Props making workshop, but proved to be very much more. Our mentors were Bob and Col Peet, brothers who have between them 60 years or so of theatre expertise (both work predominately for Miranda Musical Society), and were an absolute joy, bouncing off each other, arguing, and generally having so many interesting things to impart that they barely took a breath.

It was a hands on workshop, so I was elbow deep in aquadere and rags, making gothic candlesticks for a future production of Beauty and the Beast before you could say Bob's your uncle. They had some wonderfully clever, inventive, and above all, CHEAP (everything was made for a tuppence) ideas for everything from a bookcase to a "marble" bust. Two hours very well spent.

Directing Actors.

I can't remember the name of our Actor/Dancer/Playwright/Director/Teacher Mentor, but she was thin and had an irritating voice. I was very much looking forward to this workshop, hoping to learn some new skills to try out on all of you, but unfortunately I didn't find it very rewarding, it was just a talkfest really, and I struggled to stay awake. Kept thinking about the Peet Brothers.....

Movement for Stage

Day 2:- I was scheduled to do The Art of Comedy, but at the last minute decided to change and do stage movement.

(Yes, a challenge, what could they possibly teach a graceful swan like myself?)

We had a delightful British gent as Mentor (his name alas, has also slipped from my mind), who didn't seem to give a toss about what level any of us were at, he was just happy for us to get up and about and move a bit. My kind of guy! Our first bit of Chore was to everyone's favourite, "The Cowboy and the Farmer can be Friends" from Oklahoma!, and I think it fair to say that Jenny B and I totally nailed it, we yee hied with the best of them. Then onto Mary Poppins, which both Jen and I are still working on, and Hairspray, where we learnt to "pick up our luggage" (or barrow or trough or something) and do the Smashed Potato with much gusto. We also learnt how to do a very convincing hair pulling, and a "lift" (working towards), and that stage fights are all about angles. Much fun was had.

Directing a Musical.

Again, much anticipation, many hopes to learn some useful tips, again sadly, a bit of a let down. Our Mentor was the fabulously talented (and super dishy) Jonathan Biggins, who as it turns out, has never worked in amateur theatre, nor actually directed anything, so this turned into another talkfest, with not much that was very relevant to our little Company. Handsome man though..... Overall, I feel it was a worthwhile endeavour, and I would certainly love to go again, but be more judicious in the workshops that I chose. If not, I could happily spend the entire weekend with those crazy Peet lads."

Jenny attended the following 4 seminars, and had this to say:

Let's Put on A Show:

"Several reps from various theatrical rights agencies spoke about the shows they have on their books and what's being released to amateur companies in the near future - very useful and informative.

They also had information stands in the foyer with miles of catalogues and even CD samples, everything from the "big" shows like 'Phantom' to kid's shows to little drawing room comedies. Well worth attending.

Publicising your Show:

Di, Pam & I went to this hoping to learn new ways to get the word out there about our shows, but came away a bit disappointed I'm afraid. We're already doing pretty much everything the guy suggested, and I got the impression he was mainly touting for business (he runs a small communications/PR business). While I'm sure it would be of great benefit to use a professional publicist, as some of the bigger Sydney companies do, we just don't have the budget for it.

He didn't seem too know very much or be very keen on the idea of using social media (like Facebook) to publicise shows either, whereas we've found it to be a great way to generate publicity and a bit of a buzz about a show, as well as a place where our performers can chat and read info on upcoming rehearsals and events to do with a show.

Stage Movement:

This was an absolute HOOT. Not exactly a dance class, but a set of (relatively) simple and typical choreography styles that an ensemble of mostly non-dancers might manage. A young and very energetic NIDA dance and stage-fighting lecturer had Mauz and I yee-haaing all over the place to "The Farmer and The Cowboy" from Oklahoma; stumbling through a very fast-paced "Supercalifragilisticexpealidocious"; and totally mastering our 80's style in a number from Hairspray. And THEN came my downfall.

They don't call me the Dancing Brick for nothing, folks!

Yes, it was the Argentinian Tango. But not for this little black duck - after standing on my own foot several times, I had to bow out, although Mauz kept going valiantly. We also learned the noble art of stage face-slapping and hair-pulling (keep an eye out for Gaston pulling Le Fou offstage by his hair!!) Exhilarating but exhausting!

Building Your Character:

A 2009 NIDA graduate took this class, and it was excellent. Very physically active, with lots of improv, a bit like TheatreSports I guess. For the last half-hour, she sat us down with an incredibly useful page of info on researching your character, understanding the script, doing some work

SAILING

on the setting, time and culture of the play. Judi and I attended this and Judi's already set some of her principals homework on their B&B roles, which I for one have found really interesting. **I learned a lot more about my character, Mrs Potts by doing these exercises and hope it will bring a truth to the role that otherwise mightn't have been there.**

The conference dinner was a little bitter-sweet for me, as I caught up with so many old Sydney theatre friends that I hadn't seen for ages.....a "tired and emotional" moment. I also caught up with old friends Col and Bob Peet, who run a successful scenery and prop-building business now they're retired. They are an amazing pair of guys who seem to be able to make anything out of anything! Oh, and they are both talented directors in their own right. Col directed my last Sydney show (Secret Garden) for Miranda Musical Society and has thrown his hat in the ring to direct their upcoming "Phantom of the Opera".

My sincere thanks to CHMCC for this wonderful opportunity to learn so much and catch up with so many old theatre friends."

As well as an opportunity to network with other community theatre companies, it was good to meet the theatrical licensing companies and pick up books, leaflets and handouts on all the different productions they offer.

Pam Lane attended a workshop on stage makeup, and is looking forward to showcasing what she has learnt at some workshops we're planning for the Beauty & the Beast cast in the not too distant future.

Here's what Di had to say:

"I tried to attend some different workshops so that we covered lots between us, so the first one I went to was the

Musical Theatre Audition Workshop:

This workshop was really aimed at those trying to break into professional theatre or who do the rounds auditioning for all the big Sydney companies, facilitated by Amanda Muggleton and a chap called Michael Huxley, who has acted, directed and been a regular audition accompanist.

He started off by educating us on how to prepare your music for an accompanist, and how to treat your accompanist at an audition - with extreme politeness, these people hold your life in their hands! He really recommended that you practice with an accompanist, who will be able to go at

your pace, rather than an audio track which keeps going regardless.

Several other useful pieces of advice followed, such as 'If you start badly, or don't pitch your song quite right, stop, apologise, and start again', and 'If you can't see you in the role, how on earth do you expect a director to?'

Most of the advice was about preparation, preparation, preparation, with lots of good advice about song choice (choose a role & a song that fits your voice), performing the song you're singing. More advice followed on posture and vocal care.

There were about 10 terrifically talented people who had prepared a song to audition, and since I had absolutely no intention of getting up there (as if!), I was able to sit back, relax, and enjoy the performances. After each performance, they were asked to do a particular bit again, or differently, with suggested changes in delivery, posture or approach.

The most important thing I learned? 'Breathe!'

I also did Filling your Theatre with Jenny & Pam, which covered PR, Publicity & marketing, and included some good tips on preparing press releases and photos.

Whilst of course there are things that we can always improve on and do better, it was reassuring to see that we weren't country bumpkins and had a reasonable grasp on the publicity machine! I came away feeling reasonably confident that we had been doing all the right things.

On day 2 I attended Production and Budget Management, which you won't be surprised to learn, was not one of the more popular workshops.

Successful Production Management involves deciding what to produce, how you want to produce it, identifying what you need in terms of resources, planning to make it happen, monitoring the process, and holding a post production review to find out what went well or went badly.

They also focussed on the role of the production manager, which I was quite surprised to learn included overall responsibility for OH & S and on site safety at your theatre.

As if our production managers don't already have enough to do!

Basically NSW state law on OHS has changed, and we as a theatre company (even as amateurs), are now considered as an entity conducting a business, which means we have a legal liability to ensure safe work practices in all our activities.

We will no longer be able to rely on saying 'well we've never had to do that before', or 'but this is how we have always done it', because now we have a legal responsibility to properly assess risk, restrict access to unsafe areas, and take reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of our members.

You may find in future that you will be asked to sign yourselves in and out of the theatre (for fire safety reasons, so that a member of staff knows how many people are on the premises), attend a safety induction when we bump in, and other things like that. It would be greatly appreciated if people just accept that these things need to be done, rather than making life difficult by complaining about it.

The budget management side of things was really quite interesting, and I have been able to modify a template for our own use, which will help directors work out a budget, and enable us to track costs in different areas and compare each show with the last.

My last seminar was **Directing a Musical**, with Mauz & Russell, and as Mauz said, it was just a Q & A session with Jonathan Biggins asking the questions, and reps from all the big companies blowing their own trumpets. I didn't learn anything, and I'm afraid Mauz & I sneaked out before the end and left poor Russell holding the baby! I just looked at my notes from the workshop and all I've written is 'ego management'.....

I really enjoyed the conference though, and it was nice for me to put faces to some of the names I regularly deal with at Hal Leonard and Origin Theatrical.

It was a whole new world though, most of the other theatre companies are much bigger than us, and might have several separate teams available to produce up to six shows a year. It's frustrating how much work there is to go around even for us producing two shows a year, and I would love for more people to get involved in some of the behind the scenes work.

We were very fortunate to have entertainment by Gosford Musical Society at the conference dinner, who performed a medley of various numbers for our delight and delectation, including some from their talented youth program.

It made me think that a youth program could be just what we need here at CHMCC.

All in all, it was a very full program, and completely exhausting, but I was very glad to have the opportunity to go"