



Lieder Theatre Company

NEWSLETTER

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Presidents Report

The theatre is a hive of activity with the first production in rehearsal, fire shows, clean ups and auditions for the second main-stage production coming up. The first activity was the clean up day. Thank you to those members who came along to lend a hand, not as many as we would have liked, but we did achieve some of the tasks on the list. There are still quite a few jobs left before the opening of the first show so if any of you out there have any spare time we would love to hear from you.

Then came the wonderful **Fire Show** performed in conjunction with *The Blues Festival* in Belmore Park. *The Youth Theatre Company* worked well together and with Chrisjohn's guidance put on a show to remember. They are not only talented but also very brave; you wouldn't get me jumping through skipping ropes on fire, no way! Thank you Brian, Bill, Alan, Colin, Chrisjohn and all the fire twirlers from the Youth Theatre Company for two great shows, the crowds loved it and we were proud of you.

The first main stage show of the year is **Away** by Michael Gow and is directed by our own *Chisjohn Hancock* it opens on Wednesday March 3rd. The cast are working hard to get it all together for the charity night performance which will be for VIEW (Goulburn Smith Family). It's a very impressive cast and the play is wonderful so make sure you all get along to see it. Performances are as usual every Wednesday Friday and Saturday at 8pm with one Matinee on Saturday 13th March at 2pm. The play closes on Saturday 20th March.

Next we had the **Great Poetry Splurge** for *Lizz. Murphy's farewell to the region*. What a wonderful night it was. An almost full house listening to a variety of poets reciting their own work and included a few performers from our own theatre reading a selection of works. Everyone had a good time, the company was good, the food was tasty and the drinks kept coming. There were a lot of new faces and some familiar ones. Thank you to the committee members who turned up to help with the hospitality.

Auditions for the second Mainstage production, which opens on Wednesday 28th April, are going to be held in the theatre at 7.30pm on Thursday 11th March. The Play is **Hating Alison Ashley** by *Robin Klein* and directed by yours truly *Judith Boyd*. It's a comedy and is suitable for the whole family. I need Five women and Two men. Alison Ashley and Erica Yerkin are the only two characters that stay the same; everyone else needs to be versatile and quick costume changers, as they will be playing several different roles.

The Saturday Children's Show rehearsals will start as soon as my son is married. That's next week and I'm a bit busy until then as we are hosting the event in our garden and the weeds keep growing!!

I hope to see you all at the Theatre sometime during the next four weeks. Remember to invite a friend and come to see **Away** and come to the auditions for **Hating Alison Ashley**.

Just a final note as this is the first full Newsletter since **Music Hall** in 2003.



Doreen Mullen in one of her more glamorous costumes for Music Hall December 2003

Music Hall was attended by much smaller audiences than we would have wished as so much work had obviously gone into the production.

However, the people who came cannot have been anything but impressed; everyone I spoke to as they left the theatre had nothing but praise for the show. It was a wonderful night of entertainment and the director *Stan Henderson* with his cast, musicians and crew should all be congratulated. The costumes were delightful, the singing was excellent, the skits were funny and the choreography was superb.

Well done and thank you to everyone involved, let's do another one soon.

Judith Boyd

Welcome to the first production for 2004

A not-to-be-missed Australian classic

AWAY

By Michael Gow

Directed by Chrisjohn Hancock

This marvellous, many-layered exploration of modern Australian life is one of Australia's most successful plays.

AWAY is set to the background of post-war baby-boom Australia when Australians were preoccupied with Vietnam and the divisions within society. With simplicity and a finely tuned sense of humour, Michael Gow traces three ordinary, yet very different, families setting off on their Christmas holidays during the summer of 1967-68. The families all head to the coast for their annual summer holidays to celebrate the New Year. Magically all three families are brought together on the one beach as a result of a violent storm where hopes and dreams and a process of healing begins.

The play is framed by two of Shakespeare's works, **King Lear** and **A Midsummer Night's Dream**. One of the main characters Tom, played by *Joshua Phillips*, has an alter ego of Shakespeare's Puck, and in one outbreak of rage, he brings down a puckish spell on one of the families by saying, "I hope you have a rotten holiday. I hope it rains. I hope the dunnies overflow and you all get the runs."

AWAY is sharply observed, clever, funny and yet very moving. Out of the familiar family ingredients, Gow constructs a magical play which deals with going 'away' as in a holiday, Vietnam, leaving home, being separated from family, loneliness, freedom, death, and the afterlife.

Our production includes a great cast of actors; *Heather Edwards, Russell Erwin, Josh Phillips, David Rayner, Jenny Hart, Geoff McMahon, Ann Elbourne, Shannon Logan, Blair Woodcock, Melissa Hillyar, Joshua Waters, Rebecca Christian* and *Bethany James*.

Opening on Wednesday 3rd March with a charity performance in support of The Goulburn Evening View Club and continuing for a three week season **AWAY** is set to entertain the whole family.

Tickets for opening night can be purchased from Trish by phoning 48218273. This evening will include a scrumptious pre-show supper with sweets, desert and tea and coffee at interval. All tickets \$20.00 7pm for an 8pm curtain

Performances will continue on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings commencing at 8pm until Sat 20th March. **One Matinee only** on Saturday 13th March commencing at 2pm

Tickets can be purchased in person at Michael Connolly Chemmart, 312 Auburn St. or by phoning the Lieder in Goldsmith St. on 48215066

Win a 2 night holiday for 2 at Darling Harbour

A special offer for patrons attending performances of **AWAY** will be the chance to win 2 nights away for 2 in Sydney's Darling Harbour staying at the Hotel Ibis, full breakfast included courtesy of

Berrima District Credit Union Travel Service

Fire show

Congratulations to the Youth Theatre Company for such an amazing and spectacular Fire and Acrobatic Show as part of the Blue's Festival.

It was heart stopping at times and drew large crowds in Belmore Park on both nights. Fantastic acrobatics lit up by UV and flares and new fire equipment fashioned by Bill Dorman to add to the repertoire of fire skills that thrill and surprise the audience.

Well done guys!



After school Drama classes

After school Drama classes are full for Term One with two groups operating on Tuesdays.

4 – 5pm for 8 – 10 yr olds
&
5 – 6pm for 11 – 12 yr olds.

Spaces may become available in Term Two. Phone Chrisjohn at the Lieder for more information

The Poetry Splurge

The Poetry Splurge was a wonderful success with poems from skilful wordsmiths flying everywhere throughout the night between the audience and performers from the region.

The evening featured work by Lizz Murphy who has just resigned from Southern Tableland Arts as the Regional Arts Development Officer. She will be missed greatly for the work she has done in the STARTS Region. Lizz will continue her work as poet extraordinaire and hopefully motivate us to organise more evenings like this. A great way to spend Valentines Day.

E.O.I.

Expressions of interest requested for anyone interested in joining our Play Reading Committee to choose Lieder's 2005 season of plays

This Year's Program

As this year's program of plays evolves and are locked into place we are now able to confirm the first three major productions for 2004.

Away

By Michael Gow
Directed by Chrisjohn Hancock

3rd – 20th March

Hating Alison Ashley

By Robin Klein
Directed by Judith Boyd

28th April – 15th May

The Ballad of Marianne Brownlow

By John Spicer & David Cole
Directed by Chrisjohn Hancock

16th – 26th June

Help Wanted

Help wanted to join the team who will be undertaking major renovations in the Lieder scene dock between May and August this year

Keep supporting the Lieder Theatre Sponsors in 2003



The Lieder Theatre is also grateful to the **NSW Ministry for the Arts, Southern Tablelands Arts (STARTS) Inc., Regional Arts NSW** and **Goulburn City Council / Greater Argyle** for financial assistance in 2004.



Have your say...

The Lieder Newsletter is for all members and supporters. If you want to contribute to the newsletter please email me at brianhill1@compuserve.com or lieder@goulburn.net.au or if you are not yet web savvy, snail mail your contribution to the Lieder Theatre marked The Editor, Lieder Newsletter, PO Box 786, Goulburn NSW 2580.

We welcome your contributions on any theatre related issues, they can be your review of a recent production, a personal story, suggestions for theatre activities/productions or be a devil and start a debate – be provocative. If you have elderly relatives that may have tread the boards in decades past encourage them to write to us.

Pictures are welcomed too, if possible send electronic images that are 10cm wide and at least 150 dpi colour or greyscale. Again if you don't have a computer or scanner then you can send photographs or phone me on 4821 0175 to organise a time to meet and have the images scanned. If you decide to send hardcopy photos then be aware that we may not be able to return them to you – all care and no responsibility taken.

My Year

In November 2002 I decided that I would move back to Goulburn, a decision I did not make lightly.

In preparation for my move I made several visits to Goulburn to check it out and conduct research. I found some of my suspicions were well founded – very few good restaurants, mullets are still in fashion as is stretch 'anything-one-can-squeeze-cellulite-into' types of garments, single parenthood is more the norm than the exception (condoms and safe sex people, take it on board) and drunken violence is still considered a good night out by some.

However, there were also many pluses, and fortunately they outweighed the negatives. These are; the constant influx of new people into Goulburn, an indoor cinema complex (the drive-in was fun, but hopeless for watching movies), the shorter travelling time to Sydney and Canberra and an active and diverse arts scene.

Several of my fact finding excursions included taking in shows at the Lieder and I must admit to being very pleasantly surprised by the quality and high production values of these shows. I don't know why I was surprised as the Lieder has always been very 'professional' in its production values. Probably the 25 years I spent in Sydney and away from the Lieder had caused some sort of fogging of my memory in regard to the theatre and the enthusiasm and high standards of the volunteers and paid professionals who take part in staging the performances.

The first few shows I saw were (and excuse me if I get them out of order) The Vagina Monologues, Sylvia, Beauty Queen of Leenane and several of the Youth Theatre fire shows. I thought it was extraordinary that The Vagina Monologues was staged without protest from the locals, as I know Goulburn as a conservative sort of place. Silvia was an absolute delight, simple set design and strong well delivered performances made it one of the best stage shows I have seen for some time. Then the Mad Woman (type cast I have since learnt) in Beauty Queen – Wow! Edge of the seat stuff, one knew where it was going, and hoped it wouldn't, but was still shocked when it did.

Then of course the inevitable happened. I moved here and was

immediately sucked in. I did a couple of newsletters, helped out with the Peace Festival as a fire marshal and lugger of things that are too heavy for a chap of my delicate disposition and age. I worked with John Spicer and the cast of A Month of Sundays as the lighting operator, assistant set builder and painter and dirty jobs that needed doing person. With the able assistance and cooperation of several other people I worked with the Youth Theatre on their production of UBU (Roi) as costumer, stage manager and young person wrangler.

I have saved the best 'til last, my venture back onto the stage. Under the direction of Mr Stanley Henderson and Ms Barbara Nell, and with much trepidation, I was in Music Hall.

Believe me the very words Music Hall strike fear into the hearts of non-singers, of which, I am one. I attended the auditions with a little piece rehearsed, but having watched the talented vocalists do their bits I promptly decided to help Pauline with costumes instead.

After the auditions I overheard CJ and Stan chatting (or was it plotting?) and my name being bandied about. I had in a moment of weakness suggested to CJ that if the Christmas show was a Panto' or Music Hall I would like to do a melodramatic bit, as-long-as-I-didn't-have-to-sing. I knew that the Melodrama in Music Hall was to be an Operetta so on hearing from CJ later that night (at Eric's) what he had suggested to Stan I had a mild to severe panic attack. Alfonso, the tenor and love interest. Not how I pictured myself. I was told it would all be "arm waving and shouting" so I felt more

relaxed about performing, a good bit of fun and nonsense, I thought, a bit of a laugh.

Rehearsals, those bloody singers, can't help themselves can they. "Says here in the script can be sung or shouted" they said, "let's sing" they said. Meanwhile my courage and confidence are off and running away rapidly. "No!" says I, "It'll be more fun to shout and wave our arms about there lot's of music already" surely they'll agree and I will be able to breathe easy once more. Oh no, not them with voices, all those tenors and sopranos and those other vocal types that I didn't even know existed. They make music with their voices and wave their arms about, then there's me, a voice somewhere between nails on a blackboard and a crow with a sore throat. So I shouted and waved my arms about, got shoved into a box two sizes too small for my portly frame, hammed it up to the max and survived. (I was even told that I did actually hit of a couple of notes and was a bit musical at times – pity I can't recognise which notes were right so I can use them again...oh well.)

Now I find myself on the Committee, an old hand at fire shows, the wardrobe mistresses' lackey and loving it all.

It has only been twelve months, seems longer, I have crammed so much into this past year and feel as though I have grown and achieved much. I hope to continue as I started and I would encourage everyone to be more involved in the Lieder, it can be scary but it is an immensely rewarding experience. Go on - give it a go.

Brian Hill



***Pictured Left:** The cast of Music Hall. (I'm the good looking chap with the beard in the hat and cape.)*