

# The BACKDROP

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## MARGARET BROOKE – Rest in Peace

A very sad start to this issue of Backdrop; with the unfortunate news of the passing of a most loyal and wonderful friend of BTC in Margaret Brooke. Not only has BTC lost one of its greatest supporters but Benalla– and in particular the local arts community – has lost a significant chunk of its heart and soul.

A lovely service was held at the Anglican Church in Benalla on March 26th which was attended by many of her friends and associates including local musicians and performers whose own stature may have been the lesser but for her encouragement and influence.

It is but a few short weeks since our Prom Concert in February at the Gallery; and as ever – despite her failing health - Marg was there with her warm introduction and heartfelt thanks for our contribution. As was often the case on this annual occasion Marg without fanfare or fuss passed me a cheque for her membership subs that included a significant personal donation just ‘to help out with things’ – as she politely put it. Anything more than a simple thanks (I’d often write to her) for this annual contribution was gently chided with an “it’s the least I can do” or similar self-effacing expression. This was just a small example of the selfless dedication and passion that Margaret gave to the things that she held dear; and especially the Arts in Benalla.

She was President of the Arts Council for many years and if for nothing else she will be fondly remembered for instigating the Prom Concerts and other forums that have brought so many wonderful artists to Benalla and given local performers the chance to shine. But she was so much more – a renowned botanist; a teacher of music and the arts; a gifted flautist; a more than capable tennis player and a lover of fine music and artistry in all forms. Indicative of her talent and the esteem in which she was held was the unheard of achievement in her youth of being appointed Head Girl at the prestigious PLC for two years running. She was also a mentor and ongoing inspiration for many talented local people including our own President Molly Craig.

This was one remarkable, gifted, dedicated, passionate and generous woman whose absence will be sorely felt by the Benalla community and especially by us here at BTC. I don’t think any of us will perform again in the Ledger Gallery again without thinking of her and all the support and encouragement she provided over so many years.

Good-bye Marg and thank you from the bottom of our hearts where you’ll always remain.

## Another Sad Passing

Bit of a down-beat start to 'New Edition 2' (apologies) but we must also record the tragic loss in a house fire of local identity **Rod Allen** who played the part of Rattlesnake in our production of Calamity Jane in 1996. It might be fair to say Rod had lost his way a little bit since those days; for he was a unique individual with definite artistic talent - and it's no way for anyone to go; especially for someone – however briefly – who was once a part of the BTC 'family'.

## LEADER of the PACK

Things are starting to get serious but still lots of fun as we move from Act 1 to the setting of Act 2. Senses of humour are certainly remaining intact (and need to be : ) as we launch into some serious but simple 60's choreography like for 'Da Do Ron Ron'. Be interesting to check out some of Kelvin's rehearsal photos for that one (and others) as I suspect there'll be some unique interpretations of 'The Swim' and other dances of the time by our mixed array of children of the 90's, Denise Drysdale wannabees and of course the ubiquitous selection of 'grumpy old men' dancing (with apologies to the handful of youngsters : ) Suspension of belief and the art of improvising or being in character are all part of the deal – and for a few numbers like 'Leader of the Pack' these attributes will be vital : ) But as long as we come across as having fun (and once we get all the singing & steps down pat we'll have even more than we're having now : ) the audience will do just the same.

Molly has finally got to the end of all the setting choreography with our 'final three' – so now it's over to Anne-Marie and of course a lot more practice and polishing. It's been great to have the band (Bruce on lead, Richard on bass & lucky Mick Ferris on drums) rock along of late and give that unique rock-n-roll feel to a lot of the numbers – and our soloists have certainly lifted a gear as a consequence e.g. Deb's great belt-out of 'River Deep Mountain High' the other night in front of the chorus with their new and effective routine. The additional Monday night singing prac (and now to be dancing too) has also been of great benefit – if only to keep in touch with those songs we haven't done for ages in rehearsal. Just ask a rusty old tenor.

On the production side we have most things covered except for someone to assist with the **Publicity and Front of House** side of things. They are both important aspects of the off-stage effort – the first to get bums on seats and the second to make them feel welcomed and comfortable in a trip to a BTC show. Please contact Molly or Emily if you can help out.



*Chloe/Ellie and some of the girls do a heart-felt rendition of the lovely 'I Wanna Love Him So Bad' while Brad ponders glumly that it might be him : )*



*Meanwhile the lads soon destroy the anticipatory mood by launching (with as yet uncoordinated gusto : ) into their 'Do Wah Diddy' routine.*

## At Last the Blessed Arrival



In contrast to our opening article(s) it is with great joy (and some relief : ) that we announce at last the arrival of young **Sophie Giselle Winkler**; the second lovely daughter for Steve and Tanya who with some encouragement finally blessed us with her presence just after midnight on Thursday April 9<sup>th</sup>. She is of course an exquisite little cherub (it's all in the breeding they say : ) and well worth all the extra time in the womb and the lead-up dramas.

Sister Aria was in hospital with croup for the two nights previous so there was a fair bit of stress and precious little sleep in the Winkler household.

As I said to Steve though – you'll be able to look back and laugh – let alone grin from ear to ear with pride at a beautiful and healthy baby girl. There is also a lovely photo of the three (Mum, Dad & Sophie) in this week's Ensign.

Congratulations to a tired but happy Tanya and Steve and let's hope Sophie's birthdays don't come around as quickly as Aria's – it seems hardly any time at all – let alone 2 years – that we were welcoming little Princess Number One : )



## Goorambat Night

Similar to last year's successful promo for State Fair – we are off to **Goorambat Hall on May 2<sup>nd</sup>** (with a run through the night before) to give the good folk a taste of Leader of the Pack. We have a goodly number of names on the attendee list – and provided we can get our singing/dancing 'in sync' we can't help but encourage a few people to get along and see the whole shebang. And unlike last year I hope I can keep the car in one piece on the night.

## Trivia Night

Always a fun & popular night, we are staging a **50's/60's Rock 'n Roll Trivia Night on Friday May 8<sup>th</sup>** at the clubrooms – usual deal – 7pm for a 7-30 start; teams of 6 to 8; \$10 a head entry; dress up in your R&R gear if you feel like it (the Halloween one last year certainly gave some good photos – especially of the Molly/Jolly clan and Paul's Boy Wonder : ) and of course see if you can get some friends along to enjoy the occasion.

The usual quizmaster and MC will be yours truly – who will endeavour to come up with a fun-provoking but not too challenging array of questions – and we'll try to have some that relate to the recent decades and not just that Baby Boomer Big Bang era of the 60s and 70's : )

Contact Emily to book a table on 5762 3682 or 0400 639 536 or [briteiz41@yahoo.com](mailto:briteiz41@yahoo.com)

## New Web Site

The more eagle-eyed of you may have noticed the change (at the start of the newsletter) in the home address for the Benalla Theatre Company website (<http://benallatheatrecompany.org/>) The site has recently been updated and improved by the dedicated toil of Kelvin and Emily.

Congratulations on a fine job guys – it looks really good and has a great deal of useful and memorable content that makes for both a good browse and also as a promo for the company.

## Important Dates

<b>May 1</b>	<b>Goorambat Rehearsal Night at Goorambat</b>
<b>May 2</b>	<b>Goorambat Preview Night</b>
<b>May 8</b>	<b>Trivia Night at the Hut \$10 a head BYO Drinks/Nibbles</b>
<b>May 9</b>	<b>Bump-in Day (from Hut 64 to BPACC)</b>
<b>May 15 to 30</b>	<b>Show Run (remembering Sat Matinee on 23<sup>rd</sup>)</b>

**HUMOUR** (a few old Bob Hope quotes to finish on a lighter note – apologies if seen before)

A bank is a place that will lend you money if you can prove that you don't need it.

A James Cagney love scene is one where he lets the other guy live.

A sense of humour is good for you. Have you ever heard of a laughing hyena with heart burn?

Bigamy is the only crime where two rites make a wrong.

I do benefits for all religions - I'd hate to blow the hereafter on a technicality.

I don't feel old. I don't feel anything till noon. That's when it's time for my nap.

I grew up with six brothers. That's how I learned to dance - waiting for the bathroom.

I have a wonderful make-up crew. They're the same people restoring the Statue of Liberty.

I like to play in the low 70's. If it gets any hotter than that I'll stay in the bar!

I love to go to Washington - if only to be near my money.

If I have to lay an egg for my country, I'll do it.

If you watch a game, it's fun. If you play it, it's recreation. If you work at it, it's golf.

Middle age is when your age starts to show around your middle.

She said she was approaching forty, and I couldn't help wondering from what direction.

The trees in Siberia are miles apart; that's why the dogs are so fast.

When she started to play, Steinway came down personally and rubbed his name off the piano.

When they asked Jack Benny to do something for the Actor's Orphanage - he shot both his parents and moved in.

You know you are getting old when the candles cost more than the cake.

You've got to be rich to have a swing like that.



Benalla Theatre Company  
invites you to a

## **50s-60s Trivia Night**

**Date:** Friday 8th of May

**Where:** BARC Hut 64

at the

Aerodrome Complex

**Time:** 7:00pm for  
7:30pm start

**Cost:** \$10 per person

Tables of up to 8

BYO drinks & nibbles

If you dare, dress up for  
the occasion.

Contact Emily Watt on 0400639536  
to book your table or more  
information

