

The BACKDROP

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White Christmas / Zonta / Georgy

To add to the great memories we have of the show, the performers have been duly recognised both at the recent Zonta Awards in Wangaratta (with three wins) and also with a stack of nominations for the Georgys at Shepparton.

A pleasant evening was had by just under a dozen members at the Zonta Awards – held per usual at the Gateway; where the meals were quite tasty but (in the case of the pork :) perhaps a tad small for your average well fed male. Nonetheless we made the most of the fare and the drinks service of course. A technical hitch killed the power point file that was supposed to accompany presentations but nevertheless glowing tributes were delivered for each of the shows with special mention being made of young Rosie and Benjamin as well as our leading personae and orchestra. A surprise to then not have young Benny nominated in his category at the business end BUT we did at least have nominations in all categories and came away with three well deserved ‘Z’s’ for Rosie (Best New Talent); plus Paul & Deb (Best Male & Female Support). Steve, Di and the show itself were nominated in another three categories but these were won by Wang’s ‘Cabaret’ (best show) and their MC / Sally (Best M & F Leads) Congratulations to all the nominees and winners; but it was a little mystifying that there were not more nominees in several categories from some of the other shows – especially companies new to the awards or needing to mount joint shows such as Euroa. They all put on a good demo of their particular show (ours being a reasonably tuneful version of White Christmas :) and let’s hope they will be determined to return to the fray.



A cheerful bunch of BTC Zonta Goers early doors before the cocktails and champagne kicked in (Dina, Jenny, Jim, David, Jay, Belinda, Molly, Deb, Steve, Mary-Ann) – though the two tarts at the end are looking frisky already :) Paul was either behind the camera or at the bar – though he of course gets his own winner’s piccie next page.



Winners are grinners – and Pauly Boy had every reason to be chuffed with another ‘Z’ to his credit for his role as Phil Davis. Well done Philly Dilly.

A preliminary note also for those who plan on attending the Georgy Awards at Shepparton on November 20th (and hopefully there will be a few given our number of nominations this year :) - the obliging and supportive Jenny who lives in Shepp has offered to throw open her house (or at least the courtyard under the tree) and host a preliminary drinks & nibbles session for those travelling over. Keep your ear out for further details as to times and possible joint transport; not to mention any coordination on ticket purchasing etc :) And thanks in advance to Jen for her kind offer; noting that entry at the gate will only be achieved by a bone donation to Jake the resident guard dog.

25th Anniversary Celebration

A highly successful weekend was staged over October 16 / 17 to celebrate our 25 years of existence as Benalla Theatre Company – firstly with a wonderful get-together and dinner at Raffetys on Saturday night followed by a more casual but equally enjoyable brunch/BBQ and memorabilia display at the Hut on Sunday morning. It was great to see so many past members at both functions and we trust that they all enjoyed the catch-up and the nostalgia trip. The organisers did a fantastic job, and much as one would like to single out a handful for extra well-deserved praise I will simply list all that I can think of and hope to God I haven’t missed anyone :) Molly, Deb, Emily, Mary-Ann, Kath, John & Jim plus Elaine, Steve & Kelvin should take a bow – but hopefully the appreciation of those who attended was sufficient. There was even a nice article and pictures in the Ensign (though in other parts of the paper our choir was still referred to as part of the Light Opera Company). We have a great tradition to continue – not just that of the Light Opera Company and Drama Club (our ‘Mum & Dad’ :) but now our own established legacy. Don’t think I’ll be performing at the time of the 50th – but if I still have a foot on the coil by then – count me in for another night. (Hmm - would Raffetys do a Chicken soup puree?)



What better photo to represent 25 years of BTC (apart perhaps from one with Alan Stone?? :) than two of the company’s absolute stalwarts and wonderful musical tag-team in Lorraine Kubeil and Elaine Heywood. I’d love a dollar for every note, lyric and orchestral tweak that these two amazing ladies have collaborated on. Legends.

Back to our ongoing 25th celebration theme with photos from past shows – this time an eclectic mix from the years 2000 to 2002 – ‘The Boyfriend’, ‘Sentimental Bloke 2’, ‘Mother Goose’ and ‘Me & My Girl’. With sincere apologies for the seeming narcissism (I think I appear in all of the photos) I can but blame our good President who forwards me same – methinks in this instance just to torture me with memories of a head full (though already thinning at that stage :) of dark hair.

*For the life of me I can't remember what song or scene this little tableau came from in **The Boyfriend** but needless to say the memory was probably traumatised from my psyche. Pictured in somewhat playful proximity to my perplexed and vulnerable person are (clockwise from left) Molly Craig, Mary-Ann Jolly, Kim Brach and Sue Izard. It may be from the ‘You Don't Want to Play With Me Blues’ or similar – but who cares it looks like I should have been having fun. Mind you – in the show I was (as in real life) old enough to be these young ladies' father; but I guess never knock back an opportunity to feel young (or in this case be felt by? :)*

An interesting show in many respects; set in the Roaring 20's with a diverse cast that included Di F & Matty Rispin from Wangaratta; a great array of what at that time was a wonderful and big group of multi-talented women (as evidenced by the photo) and a handful of one-timers in support roles and chorus. Director Sid from over Shepparton way was also an intriguing soul who had some unique ideas on warm-ups, general direction and off stage recuperation; but we all survived and enjoyed the experience - yet again in the old Town Hall



*One of the several madcap pantos we did back in the nineties and early 'noughties' **Mother Goose** was a great deal of fun plus a visual and aural treat for the kids. The cast (plus Stage Manager Margie in black) included David, Nick, Wayne, John, Sue, Anna, Molly, Jim, Kath and Di (in goose outfit :) One of the great John Hearn's backdrops again was invaluable and Di's golden egg laying scene was one of theatre's & nature's finest hours.*



Aah the infamous fight after the two-up game in Spadgers Lane during our second edition of **The Sentimental Bloke**. Martin Zierman played his first role with the company as the sleazy Mr Smithers – and is seen here receiving a well choreographed knee lift from our hero Bill (yours truly) while Deb as Rose pleads for assistance because “they’re gonna kill ‘im” (Bill that is :) Directed by Lorraine Kubeil (I think her first effort out from the piano) this was yet another fun show.



Anyone for croquet??!! I did warn you about the prevalence of my ugly mug in this edition; but that aside I think this shot captures the great colour and fun that was an integral part of **Me and My Girl**. This was a silly but fun little number opening Act 2 called ‘The Sun Has Got His Hat On’ with me as the foppish Gerald Bolingbroke (who is domineered by Kim as Lady Jackie but eventually ‘becomes a man’ and gives her a good spanking – so to speak) Martin & Debbie were our wonderful leads (a travesty that Martin didn’t win something that year) while there were some great character roles and wonderful sets including our live ancestral paintings. We also had a good influx of talented fresh faces that year (eg Shane & Collette) which added to the fun. A lovely show all round.

Raffetys / Lodge / Legacy / Carols / Benalla Festival

The regular Wed/Sun practices continue for these end of year occasions (see the Important Dates list) but for those who are particularly interested in just doing Carols (and there are some) – the first hour or so of each Sunday rehearsal from now on will be devoted thereto. In plain English – Carols practice will be from now on every Sunday at 7-30. All else goes well with the choir sounding good in their numbers (a bit of polish needed for our ‘Glee’ number perhaps?) and as of last night the Vicar of Devenish script being handed out to those misbegotten souls of the Parish Council (and special guest this year)

Other Stuff

NECTA Theatre Sports

As advised a couple of Backdrops ago (and alas forgotten last month) Christine D and a handful of others from various companies (North East Community Theatre Alliance) have been trying to organise Theatre Sports competitions between companies. The first was scheduled for Nov 13th at Wangaratta but may be cancelled from lack of support/entries e.g. from BTC – though heaven knows we seem busy enough already :) Anyway; if there is anyone interested in being involved in this activity/competition (which can certainly be fun and good skills practice) please let me know ASAP.

Allegro's Blackadder

Who else but that man Shane Douthie will bring to life yet another TV/Film classic as Edmund Blackadder with a 'three episode' show of the First World War series at Yarrowonga. Speaking with Shane at Zonta – it promises to be a great show as one expects from Allegro; with a large dose of that great Rowan Atkinson comedy and a pertinent piece of poignancy as well. The antics of the trench boys (Blackadder, Baldrick & Lt. George), Lord Flasheart, Captain Darling and the General Melchett will be on show to an appreciative BYO cabaret audience. I'm sure a Benalla crew will be heading up that way with great expectation; though hopefully not taking any pigeon pie for supper a la 'Speckled Jim'.

Updated Emails Please

Apparently Emily has been getting a few 'bounces' when sending out the monthly copy of Backdrop. If by chance you have (and are reading this in hardcopy :) or are going to change your email address, please let Emil know (her details on page 1) so that the mail list can be kept up to date. The fewer we have to mail out the better too.

Important Dates

November 5 th	'Benallalujah' Mural Opening / Bridge Naming Gig
November 7 th	Carols Practice for all (then each Sunday at 7-30 for 1hr plus)
Sat Nov 20 th	Georgy Awards Night
Thursday Dec 2 nd	Set Up & Practice for Raffetys
Friday Dec 3 rd	Raffetys Night of Entertainment
Sunday Dec 5 th	Legacy at the Bowls Club
Saturday Dec 11 th	Lake Foreshore Xmas Get Together / BBQ / Picnic 6pm
Tuesday Dec 14 th	Lodge Concert
Sunday Dec 19 th	Carols by Candlelight

Humour(?)

What else but a few choice Blackadder quotes to inspire us and the Allegro crew

- Baldrick, you wouldn't recognize a subtle plan if it painted itself purple and danced naked on a harpsichord singing 'subtle plans are here again'.
- I can't see the point in the theatre. All that sex and violence. I get enough of that at home. Apart from the sex, of course.
- "I want my mother." "Ah, yes Baldrick. A maternally crazed gorilla would come in handy at this very moment."
- BA: What, are you wearing round your neck?
- P: Ah! It's my new rough!
- BA: You look like a bird who's swallowed a plate!
- P: It's the latest fashion actually and as a matter of fact it makes me look rather sexy!
- BA: To another plate swallowing bird perhaps. If it was blind and hadn't had it in months.
- "Great Scott, sir! You mean the moment's finally arrived for us to give Harry Hun a good old British-style thrashing, six of the best, trousers down?" "If you mean, 'Are we all going to get killed?', then...yes."
- Clearly General Haig is about to make yet another gargantuan attempt to move his drinks cabinet six inches closer to Berlin...
- "If we do happen to step on a mine, Sir, what do we do?"
- "Normal procedure, Lieutenant, is to jump 200 feet in the air and scatter oneself over a wide area."
- "Baldrick, you have the intellectual capacity of a dirty potato."
- "Ah, Percy. The eyes are open, the mouth moves, but Mr Brain has long since departed."
- "A man may fight for many things: his country, his principles, his friends, the glistening tear on the cheek of a golden child. But personally, I'd mud wrestle my own mother for a ton of cash, an amusing clock and a stack of French porn."