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BACKSTAGE

The Newsletter of Sunnybank Theatre Group Inc

August, 2007



HOUSE GUEST: A Thrilling Season

House Guest is now just a memory, but what a wonderful memory it is. I would like to thank my great cast for giving of themselves so selflessly and working so hard to bring their characters to life. It was a wonderful team and it showed with each and every performance.

My special thanks to Colin (my assistant director) and Deirdre (my stage manager) for their total support and belief in what I asked of them. Not once did they say, "NO" to any of my requests – no matter how impossible.

Thanks also to Brad for his tireless work with the lighting, and boy did I give you a challenge this time, to Loretta for her assistance backstage and to Maurice who, once again, came up with the perfect set.

As always we have a magnificent team of people behind the scenes, i.e. the front of house staff led by Bob and the box office under the supervision of Deon and Brad.

I would like to add one more thank you to John Rix of Decibel Recording Studio, whose voice patrons will recall from the opening of each of our performances. John does these recordings for us simply because he is a member of our theatre. I think it adds that professional touch we are coming to expect.

The biggest compliment a fellow member can pay to the cast of any production is to attend the show in support of those on stage. On behalf of myself and the cast and crew, I would like to offer those members who came to see *House Guest* a very big thank you for their support.

Pam Cooper (Director)

From the President's Pen



My congratulations on another great show for STG. Once again, Pam Cooper put together a strong cast and crew to bring to our stage a very entertaining Francis Durbridge thriller, *House Guest*.

With a wonderful set to work on, Pam did it again. Well done Pam, Colin, cast and crew for all the hard work put in to make *House Guest* an enjoyable show.

The feedback from our patrons was encouraging. We, as a theatre, have a duty to provide plays that our patrons can enjoy while maintaining the reputation we have built over the years.



Director Pam Cooper with Mike Cooper and Jim Cliff

We are fortunate at STG to have among our members good directors, stage managers, lighting and backstage workers, as well as willing box office and front of house staff. It is very important to keep in mind that this changes from show to show and I urge members to become involved in all areas of the theatre to uphold the standard we have developed.

Jim Cliff
President

Jim's Thought for the Month

"Life is a grindstone. Whether it grinds us down or polishes us up depends on us." ~ Thomas L. Holdcroft

The Stage Manger's Last Word

And so another great season came to an end. With the final performance of *House Guest* now just a happy memory, it is fitting to acknowledge the mutual support and collegiality of a great cast and crew.



It was a privilege to serve (as they say in some circles) and my thanks to a happy, friendly, supportive, noisy, quirky bunch of thespians. It was heartening to witness the roll up for bump out and the old maxim 'many hands etc etc' was indeed true. It was a total team effort from Pam down to the Child! And a special thanks to the kids for their assistance at bump out.

The Bossy SM

"Go, Go, Go, Joseph!" Auditioning Soon

Put on your dancing shoes and warm up your voice! It's nearly time!

This month auditions will be held for *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*: STG's final production for the year.

An information night will be held on Tuesday, 14 August. The purpose of this night is to provide all the information you need to know about the show and the audition process. We invite you all to come along for a sneak peek – and **bring your kids**. We ARE looking to involve children from 7-12 in two groups.

You MUST register your interest at [justbrad\(AT\)optusnet.com.au](mailto:justbrad(AT)optusnet.com.au) prior to the information night. Auditions will follow on the Friday and Sunday, we look forward to seeing you there.

Information Night: Tuesday 14 August, from 7:30pm

Auditions: Friday 17 August, from 7:00pm and again on Sunday 19 August, from 1:00pm

For more information, go to www.stg.org.au (for character requirements and audition details) **or call 0434 018 510, or 0416 141 620.**

SUBSCRIBER EVENING: October 19

For the first time in 2007 we have welcomed the support of many of our regular patrons who have elected to become yearly subscribers. The advantages are many and the feedback is very encouraging. Subscribers enjoy priority booking, confirmed seat selection, complimentary program and drink at each show at a great yearly all-up cost. We are planning a night to say 'thank you' to our subscribers and to welcome potential new subscribers for 2008. We expect that this will be a fun night in which we launch our program for 2008 and introduce many of the 2008 directors to our patrons. Friday, 19 October has been earmarked for the event - 7.30pm in the Green Room. So, if members know of any friends or regular patrons who may be interested in taking up this offer, please encourage them to come along on 19 October or better still, come with them. Alternatively, you could let Deirdre know and she will contact them.

PILLOW TALK: On Sale Now

Tickets are already selling well for our upcoming season of *Pillow Talk*. Cast and crew – under the guidance of director Susan Willingham – have been rehearsing diligently to prepare to bring this hilarious comedy to our stage. The season opens on September 21 and runs (Fridays at 8pm, Saturdays at 2pm and 8pm and some Wednesdays at 8pm) until October 6. Book your tickets now!

To purchase tickets for *Pillow Talk* visit www.stg.org.au or call 3345 3964. Members can receive their special discount (one per member) by entering the promotional code when purchasing tickets online. Become a member now!

Also visit www.stg.org.au to see some rehearsal photographs of the cast in action!

News from the STG Secretary

Following the recent General Meeting to complete the passing of the changes to the STG Constitution, all the required paperwork has been submitted to the Office of Fair Trading for their consideration. As soon as we receive confirmation that everything is in order we will make copies of the new Constitution available on the website. If you would like a copy and do not have access to the internet please let me know and I will make sure you receive a copy by more traditional means.



Those of you who attended the meeting will know that the Vision Forum that was held immediately after the General Meeting saw the generation of a great deal of constructive discussion about the future of STG. Brad Rush, our facilitator for the evening, has been putting the contributions gathered at the Vision Forum together with information gathered from other sources. A summary will be available from www.stg.org.au by the end of August and I encourage you to read through it and provide us with your thoughts and comments. Again, if you would like a more traditional copy let me know.

Brad has also been representing STG at a number of events with a focus on accessing support from external sources. He tells me that the document we are working towards – a Strategic Plan - has been identified as a key factor in increasing the chances of success when seeking both financial and in-kind support. Your contribution towards the Strategic Plan will help us ensure that it is the best it can be. Finally, thank you to everyone who has supported the run of *House Guest* and we look forward to seeing you and a large group of friends for some *Pillow Talk*.

Paul Marshal (Secretary)

LATE BREAKING NEWS:

Just before going to press we heard from the Office of Fair Trading in regards to the new Constitution we passed at the Special General Meeting in July.

It looks like everything is going well and we are hopeful that we will have written confirmation that our proposed changes have been approved by the end of the month.

More in the next edition of *BACKSTAGE!*

Members Night: Friday, September 7

It's that time again! STG's next members, friends and family night will be held in the Green Room on Friday, September 7 from 7:30 p.m.

Our June evening was a big success with more than 20 members, friends and family (including children) attending. Make sure you don't miss this one!



STG MEMBERS (L to R): Lesley Davis, Gary McEwen, Jane Andersen and Deon Spann at the June soiree.

Remember, supper is provided and the bar will be open. All you have to do is get yourself there!

STG Props Store Propstars: Kay and Jan

Have you ever tried to find anything in the props store under the theatre? You may have needed a dust mask and a GPS to get there! Continuing the job started at the last working bee, members Kay Halford and Jan Noack have made amazing progress.

Kay and Jan have cleared out, cleaned up and categorised the many props stored downstairs. We thank these ladies for taking on this very dirty work and hope members will respect their effort by maintaining the pristine condition of the props section, and ensuring that all props are returned from whence they came at the conclusion of each show. Anybody who has ever searched for that odd property item will now appreciate how easy it is to find in the refurbished set-up - and it is so clean and bright and accessible!

PHOTOGRAPHY by Kayleen Gibson

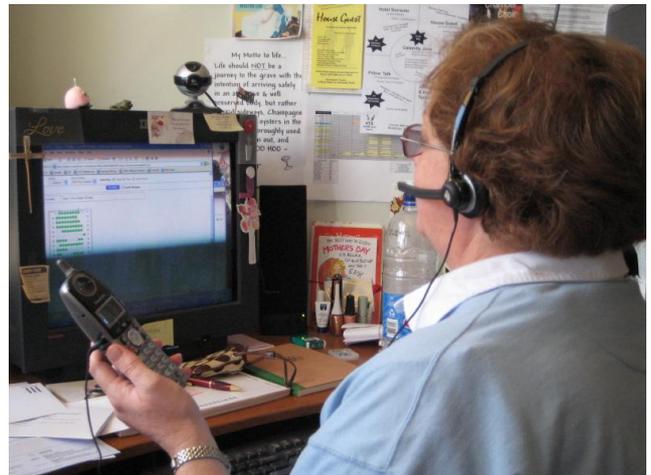
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Not Just a Voice: Who is Elizabeth?

Some know her as Mabel in *Pajama Game*, Maria Helliwell in *When We are Married*, M'Lynn in *Steel Magnolias* or for her appearances on stage in STG's 40th Anniversary Concert. Many NOW know her in her pivotal role as...



... BOX OFFICE OPERATOR! Elizabeth Hood tells, "It has been a great experience. Apart from the challenges of learning the new system, which have been very rewarding, I have enjoyed the great opportunity to get to know many patrons. Both patrons and operator have managed the steep learning curve that is technology. The patrons have, generally, been extremely patient and together we are getting the hang of it all. For some it has been a breeze and for others a bit more challenging as we are now into our third show with the new box office arrangements - I see smooth seas and blue skies ahead. Thank you to all my new friends. Chat soon! Call the theatre on 3345 3964!

Comments and Contributions

Caroline welcomes all comments and contributions for the next issue of *BACKSTAGE* before Sunday, September 30 by email at [cjdehennin\(AT\)hotmail.com](mailto:cjdehennin(AT)hotmail.com). Have a funny story about something that happened to you at - or away from - the theatre? We'd love to share it!



Appendix 1: Vision Forum

Tuesday, July 10: 2007

Sunnybank Theatre Group Inc

Following successes in the last few years at Sunnybank Theatre, it was agreed by the present committee to review current strategy and make some precise plans for the next five years or more. In the last few years the theatre has produced many sell-out performances of a very high standard. This year alone, we have seen the introduction of an automated ticketing system and many improvements around the theatre facility. In 2007, members elected a group of very forward thinking participants eager to guide the theatre into the next phase of growth and development.

Members and interested parties were invited to an open forum to discuss ideas to become part of a working strategic plan.

Purpose of a strategic plan – The committee agreed that to remain progressive in the development of the theatre, it was important to make documented plans that were a result of a consultative process between management committee and members. A detailed strategic plan would form the framework for current committee, and committees in the future.

As a result of some financially sound management a 'healthy' bank balance exists. The committee is eager to make improvements on the theatre but only after consideration of the 5 year plan. It is a waste of resources to spend money in areas that may not be relevant in a few years time, or may not exist because a wall is moved or something has been re-arranged.

There are some great funding opportunities available through Federal, State, and Local governments. Whilst there is much competition to gain funding dollars, there are definitely more opportunities available to organisations demonstrating strong management and good forward planning.

Format – The format of the forum was relaxed and open. Facilitated by Brad Rush, it allowed for open feedback from the interested parties that were present on the evening. Every positive idea has been documented and recorded for review by the committee in due course.

The facilitator encouraged feedback and consolidated thoughts into these three main areas:

1. People – including, members, volunteers, management and audience
2. Artistic – including programming and opportunities for directors, writers, actors, lighting/sound etc
3. Facilities – meaning the building, surrounds and equipment

A report has been submitted to the theatre's committee for review and action. More details will be available soon at www.stg.org.au