



# BACKSTAGE

The Newsletter of Sunnybank Theatre Group Inc  
Christmas - New Year, 2009/10

www.stg.org.au

## "We Dined Out with the Westminster Hotel Menu"!!



Richard Willie (Chris Chambers) starts his evening with his Jane Worthington (Wendy Moman)



Things start to go dreadfully wrong as they discover a 'body' in the sash window



Richard urgently calls for his PPS George Pigden (Greg Potter) to help him in this sticky situation



Richard's PPS George Pigden deals with the 'body' (Ashley Worsman)

Our last production of the year, the Ray Cooney Farce, "Out of Order" was very well received by our patrons. A wonderfully successful season with record attendance. For those of you who have not read the great review written by Eric Scott on his website.....www.absolutetheatre.com.....here it is:

It seems you have to book into a community theatre company to enjoy a good belly laugh these days. There are so many dark and tortured offerings on view in the professional ranks. Mind you, to be fair, not many professional companies can afford to bung on regular production with a cast of 10. And not many amateur companies can cast a play with professional standard actors. But I had a good belly laugh seeing the Cooney classic at the cosy Sunnybank theatre on opening night - I couldn't complain about the acting or the standard of production.

And the backroom boys could be proud of the set, which stood up well to the constant slamming of doors and window frames. A lesser built framework would have collapsed under the strain. Ray Cooney is a brilliant writer of English farce. He creates a simple situation, in this case Richard Willey, British Minister of parliament, spending an illicit night with Jane, typist with the Opposition, and twist and turns the plot and dialogue into a nightmare scenario for all the characters. In this instance things start to go wrong when an alleged dead body turns up in the window of suite 648 of the Westminster Hotel. Willey calls for his timid PPS to sort out the mess, tells a few porkies digging everyone into a deeper and deeper hole. Enter a horrified hotel manager, a suspicious husband, the compulsory maid, a bossy nurse, Mrs Willey and the eccentric room service waiter and the brew cooks up into a delightful and hilarious stew.

Farce is never easy. I've acted in a few and directed a few, so I understand the difficulty a company faces in producing one. Let that pace drop off or have a weak cast and an audience will leave a theatre bored. But Chris Guyler's production flowed beautifully and moved at the cracking pace that any successful farce needs. The cues were snapped up, the body language and mugging perfect and the full house audience laughed their socks off. The cast had huge smiles on their faces at curtain, and no wonder at the applause they deservedly received. Both the lead roles in this play are huge; Willey and his PPS George Pigden are on stage for practically all of the action. Chris Chambers played

Willey with just a touch of Basil Fawlty, not enough to be a copy of the John Cleese character, but enough with his own added character perceptions to create a very believable politician even in a farcical situation. There'd be no pre-selection problems for Richard! His comic timing too was excellent, not one of his lines went without its laugh. Greg Potter too as the much put-upon George had unflagging energy in a very physical role and added his fair share to the general hilarity, especially when the puppy dog turns into a raging lion.

I thoroughly enjoyed Deon Spann's interpretation of the hotel manager. His overbearing manner & his facial expressions during the innocent but seemingly blatant homosexual scene that appears in every Cooney play were priceless.

Brian Cannon, the most experienced actor on stage has played almost every theatre in Brisbane and almost every conceivable role. But once again he proved his comedy talent as the crusty, crafty servant who managed to milk every character for their money and every audience member for a laugh. It was a great performance. A British farce wouldn't be the same without the busty, underwear clad females prancing around the set flashing cleavage. In *Out Of Order*, Wendy Moman, as the naughty but nice Jane and Lesley Davis, as Pamela, the sophisticated wife of Richard Willey, provided the glamour the show needed and created excellent characters at the same time. Ashley Worsman

played the very movable body with a lot of floppy silence, while Julie Collins looked very Italian as the hotel maid. And Gail Payne is an actor who has played many comedy roles in a long career and she added her special touch to Nurse Gladys. Chris Coulston playing Ronnie, husband of the promiscuous. The least experienced actor in the play, but he certainly rose to the occasion playing his vital role well. It was a good night out and a reminder of the days when theatre didn't take itself quite so seriously.



And finally a note from *Out of Order's* Director, Chris Guyler.....“I am absolutely delighted with Eric’s review and I am extremely proud of my talented, dedicated cast who deserved every compliment that was made. They really worked extremely hard especially in the latter half of the rehearsal period when things all came together with a working set and many practical props. It was physically very demanding and they all rose to the occasion beautifully. Their talents were indeed rewarded with the wonderful feedback we got from many patrons and some newcomers who were urged, by friends that had seen the show, to come and see it! Apart from my diligent cast who brought all the characters well and truly to life, my thanks must also go out to the team I had surrounding me in a very supportive way. Franck Dance built a set where ‘nothing was a problem’ no matter how many times I changed my mind or asked for even more adjustments!! Thanks Franck a pleasure working with you and learning a fair bit about carpentry as well! To my highly efficient Stage Manager, Courtney Kiernan and her wonderful stage crew Jacqui and Julie, thanks a million for a lot of ‘window crashes’ right on cue! And to David Gemmell for the technical side of things with sound and lighting. Last, but by no means least, a big thank you to a very talented and efficient Assistant Director, Colin Robinson, who was fantastic to put up with me and always have everything just right even when I had forgotten something! Well done to you all, I’m proud to say, I think we did Ray Cooney’s script great justice! And many thanks also to all those involved FOH & Box Office”.

## A wonderful variety of theatre with “A Trilogy of One Act Plays”

Comedy - “Chook Chook” by Fiona Farrell

Comedy - “Something Blue” by Kate Beck

and

Drama - “He Said And She Said” by Alice Gerstenberg

**It’s time to book your seats soon!**

**Don’t miss out, make a date  
to finish off the festive season!**

*Season from 29 January - 6 February 2010*

*Bookings open Saturday 2 January*

*Box Office lines will open 10.00am*

*Tickets also available at the Theatre’s Box Office*



# The Christmas Special of

## "BACKSTAGE"

to keep you up to date.

We hope you've enjoyed your Christmas break and Sunnybank Theatre Group wish you all

A Safe and Happy New Year !!

We look forward to giving you more of



## "BACKSTAGE"

in 2010.



### A reminder - AUDITION NOTICE

## "LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS"

Lyrics by Howard Ashman & Music by Charles Griffen

**Sun 31<sup>st</sup> January 2010**

Season runs .... May 21<sup>st</sup> - June 5<sup>th</sup>

Director: Anne Ross

Musical Directors:

June Gemmell & Robyn Ryan

Choreographer: Serena Altea

Assistant Director: Vicky Devon



#### Principals required

Seymour

Audrey

Mr. Mushnik

Orin

Voice of Plant (AudreyII)

Crystal

Ronnette

Chiffon

#### Vocal Ranges

Low G to high G

Low A to high D Belt

Low G to high E flat

Low G to high F

Low B flat to high G Belt

Low B flat to high F Belt

Low B flat to high E Belt

Low B flat to high C Belt

#### SYNOPSIS

An insecure, nerdy florist's assistant in a Skid Row flower shop discovers an exotic little plant that he calls Audrey II with a bizarre craving for fresh blood. It grows & grows into an alien singing creature hell-bent on taking over the world. We follow the hilarious exploits of Seymour & his girlfriend as they try to deal with the entertaining but ill-tempered carnivorous plant.

The show was written as an affectionate spoof of the 1950's sci-fi movies. A cast of all ages for principal roles & small chorus needed to bring this delightfully-dark musical comedy to life.

All auditions at the Theatre cnr of Mains Rd & Beenleigh Rd. Sunnybank  
Auditions by appointment only

Please ring **June Gemmell on 3273 6946**  
for details of audition requirements & to book a time.

## Sunnybank Theatre Group - Annual General Meeting



The time is rapidly approaching for us to put this important event into the diaries for the early part of 2010. The AGM will be held at the Theatre on **Tuesday 2nd February 2010**. All members are encouraged to attend the meeting and to actively be involved in the future of our theatre. You'll hear more about this in the mail or via email to all our members.



You will need to have all nominations in for the AGM Management and Executive Committee by no later than close of business on Monday 18th January 2010. Nomination forms and information will be available from our website [www.stg.org.au](http://www.stg.org.au) This may be the last opportunity to remind you, so please put this important date in your diaries and we look forward to seeing you there.

### Michael Frayn's Comedy - "Noises Off"

Auditions were held on Sunday 13th December and they went very well for Director, Pam Cooper, together with her Assistant Director, Steve Norris. They have been able to cast the show successfully and have already had their first read through of the play before taking the Christmas break. Rehearsals will start in the first week of January with the production scheduled for 5 - 20 March. Don't forget to keep an eye out for the box office opening for this great show! We'll keep you up to date with more about this show in the next newsletter.

### Trilogy of One Act Plays...let's hear something about them!

**"Chook Chook"** - comedy by Fiona Farrell is a story about some hens in a shed. It has a moral - and it's something to do with confinement and the cages - political, emotional, traditional - within which life energy can be trapped or exploited to the advantage of some indifferent 'system'. There are various ways to respond to the knowledge of confinement: deliberate indifference, sublimation in distracting activity, depression, frustration, rebellion or collusion and rage. What matters most is to retain the naïve but crucial vision of an ideal existence.

**"Something Blue"** - comedy by Kate Beck. Chaotic situations breed riotous comedic moments! In *Something Blue*, we take a look at what at first seems a routine day for Father Francis and his helper Sister Francis when they prepare for a wedding and a funeral on the same day. But of course nothing goes according to plan!

**"He Said and She Said"** - a drama by Dori Appel. Enid and Felix, a happily married couple, are hosting a dinner party with two of their dearest friends. However, scandal & mystery ensues, when Mrs. Packard drops a bombshell that could potentially ruin the lives of all involved. Enter glamorous socialite Diana with a delicious secret of her own. Friendship, Secrets, & Gossip feature in this delightful play set in upper middle class W.W.1. Australia by timeless playwright Alice Gerstenberg.

**Don't forget to book your seats from 2nd January onwards, on-line or over the phone.**

### An Audition call for "Hat Tricks"

by Dori Appel

Directed by Paul Marshall

#### Wanted:

Complex, older actresses for our production of *Hat Tricks*. Must be willing to take on both comedic and dramatic roles (50-80 yrs) so with an opportunity for an all singing all dancing musical finale if the cast can support it.

*"Hat Tricks"* is best described as a compilation of six scenes and three monologues designed for performance by mature actresses. Covering a range of women's experiences in the second half of life, the nine pieces range from the purely comedic to those that combine humour with thoughtful, sometimes poignant explorations. Casting will be flexible with a cast of between three and twelve.

The production will run from 16 July to 31 July 2010, **but casting must take place in mid-January 2010** to allow milliners the required lead time to create the hats that give the show its title.

**To register your interest for an audition on January 17 and to obtain more information or to receive a copy of the text that will be used in the audition please contact the Director, Paul Marshall on 0413 709 460.**

### 'Have your say we're listening'!

Don't forget we keep extending that invitation to all of you to have your say in the newsletter! It's been a bit quiet up to now and there must be some things you'd like to see featured in **BACKSTAGE**, or some comments you'd like to make, let us know! Also, we're always looking for talented people in any area, please come forward and let us know that you're interested in helping Sunnybank Theatre grow, such as a builder who can lend a hand with set building. Please let's hear from you! Just call the theatre 3345 3964 or drop an email to: Fiona Tainton, our Marketing Manager, She's on [fiona@stg.org.au](mailto:fiona@stg.org.au)



# STG PHOTOGRAPHY by Kayleen Gibson

Our wonderful Front of House photography in the Green Room and excellent quality of pictures for this newsletter wouldn't be possible without the talents of our fabulous photographer, Kayleen!

She supplies us with all our photographic needs in the theatre and here in the newsletter. Copies of the box office poster, Green Room collage and many other photographs are available for purchase.

Just give Kayleen a call or email her: Ph: 0411 867 377 kaymar@me.com



**Sunnybank Theatre Group**  
**PERFORMANCE CALENDAR**  
 Book your tickets online at [www.stg.org.au](http://www.stg.org.au) or phone 3345 3964  
 Theatre located Cnr Mains & Beenleigh Roads, Sunnybank  
 Evening shows - 8pm, Matinees - 2pm

## 2010 Season Launch



**Season of One Act Plays** 29 January - 6 February  
 Chook Chook, a comedy by Fiona Farrell  
 Director - Loretta Donnelly  
 Something Blue, a comedy by Kate Beck  
 Director - Jim Cliff  
 He Said And She Said, a drama by Alice Gerstenberg  
 Director - Lindsay Fletcher  
 Tickets on sale 2 January

**A great attendance and a good time had by all as the program was launched and for those who couldn't make it let's take a look at next year's program publicised on your 'easy to see' fridge magnets!**

**NOISES OFF**  
 A comedy by Michael Frayn  
 Director - Pam Cooper  
 Assistant Director - Steve Norris  
**5 - 20 March**  
 Tickets on sale 6 February

**"Season of One Act Plays" 29 January - 6 February**  
 'Chook Chook' comedy by Fiona Farrell,  
 Directed by Loretta Donnelly  
 'Something Blue' comedy by Kate Beck,  
 Directed by Jim Cliff  
 'He Said And She Said' drama by Alice Gerstenberg,  
 Directed by Lindsay Fletcher

**LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS**  
 The Multi-Award-Winning rock musical!  
 Lyrics by Howard Ashman and Music by Alan Menken  
 Director - Anne Ross  
 Musical Directors - June Gemmell & Robyn Ryan  
 Assistant Director - Vicky Devon  
**21 May- 5 June**  
 Tickets on sale 24 April

**"Noises Off" 5 - 20 March** Comedy by Michael Frayn,  
 Directed by Pam Cooper

**HAT TRICKS**  
 A comedy by Dori Appel  
 Director - Paul Marshall  
**16 - 31 July**  
 Tickets on sale 19 June

**"Little Shop of Horrors" 21 May - 5 June** Musical by Howard Ashman & Alan Menken, Directed by Anne Ross with Musical Directors June Gemmell and Robyn Ryan

**The Female of the Species**  
 A dramatic Comedy by Joanna Murray-Smith  
 Director - Yvonne Mes  
 Assistant Director - Derek Freeman  
**10 - 25 September**  
 Tickets on sale 14 August

**"Hat Tricks" 16 - 31 July** Comedy by Dori Appel,  
 Directed by Paul Marshall

**Nuncrackers**  
 The Nonsense Christmas Musical Comedy by Dan Goggin  
 Director - Stephanie Ellis  
 Musical Director - June Gemmell  
 Assistant Director - Dale Holyoak  
**19 November - 4 December**  
 Tickets on sale 23 October

**"The Female of the Species" Dramatic Comedy by Joanna Murray-Smith, Directed by Yvonne Mes and to finish the year off.....**

**"Nuncrackers" 19 November - 4 December** A Christmas Musical Comedy by Dan Goggin, Directed by Stephanie Ellis with Musical Director June Gemmell.



**Those who attended the Launch were treated to some very imaginative and interesting exhibits as you can see!**