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JUST CHATting

The Newsletter of CHATS Productions



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December 2023

Merry Christmas to all our members and supporters!

We sincerely hope you enjoy this special time of year and we wish you a happy & successful 2024!

Presidents Report.... 29/11/23

We are quickly coming to the end of another year.

Our 2023 shows Avenue Q, Educating Rita & Arsenic & Old Lace were all successful in their own right and I'd like to congratulate our 3 Directors & all cast & crew members on a job well done.

The last event for 2023 before Xmas was the Combined CHATS/CHMCC Xmas party on 16th Dec. @Plantation Hotel. What a excellent night!! From the challenge of the Trivia hosted by the lovely Courtney Bannon, the effort made by those who dressed in different costumes as favourite movie characters, the Photo Booth, the amazing raffle and finally the karaoke. It was non stop entertainment from start to finish. Congratulations to the winners: Trivia: Thelma & Louise team, Best Dressed: Marty & Mauz, And the raffle winners : Liz & Terry O'Sullivan.

I want to thank all the fabulous volunteers from both CHATS & CHMCC who worked together tirelessly to put this event together. It was a credit to you all. Can't wait for next years party !

Looking forward to our 2024 lineup especially stepping into the Directors chair in July with "A Vicar of Dibley Christmas"

Our first show "CLUE" on stage is in full swing with auditions taking place on 9th Dec. James had quite a bit of interest so it made casting the show a challenge however the Final Cut was made and the cast are ready for a busy rehearsal schedule ahead. His production crew are also in place so it's all steam ahead. Due to prior engagements myself & other Committee members were unable to sit on the audition panel but thankfully Sharon was there on our behalf. We are all looking forward to supporting James to get this wonderful show on the stage in April..

Make sure to grab your tickets.

Our other two 2024 shows, "A Vicar of Dibley Christmas" directed by myself (July 26-4 Aug) & "Companion Planting" directed by Penny Dennis (September 27-Oct 6) are also powering ahead getting things in place to follow "Clue" to round out another successful year at CHATS.

Finally I want to thank my fabulous Committee for making my job as President this year very rewarding. It's been a pleasure and a privilege to work with such a like minded bunch who have come together this year to take CHATS into the future in leaps and bounds.

Wishing all our members, patrons, supporters, sponsors and their families a very Merry Xmas & a Happy New Year and we hope to see all your smiling faces throughout 2024.

Cheers
Jenny Garratt
CHATS PRESIDENT

ARSENIC & OLD LACE

I had the pleasure of joining the cast about a month into the rehearsal period. I actually hadn't worked with these actors, and I watched the transition as they shaped and formed their characters and accents. Jenny and Merryn became the two elderly spinsters who finished each other's thoughts and sentences. Our star crossed lovers - Kaiyai embraced the frantic protagonist desperately trying to keep all plates spinning, while Emma, the fiancé, wondered whether it was she or he who should be committed in the relationship. Peter presided over the matters of state and the intestate, and was always correctly dressed for every occasion. Ken and Jesse – don't you hate it when family comes to visit? Theirs was the best double act since Jekyll and Hyde. The antics of this mad family were encouraged by Nicolas, Al and I. The resultant mayhem, cadavers (Mr S) and all, was a dark comedy, challenging yet enjoyable experience for the team of actors who put in hours of dedication and hard work.

Our illustrious Director, Beckley had brought together some amazing people, and provided us a clear vision. He encouraged and challenged his actors. And expected a precision. I was lucky enough to watch a rehearsal from the audience and saw the movements and flow he strove to create materialise across the stage. It made it more than just another stage performance. And Beckley used music, sound and lighting effects to enhance the scenes, not just support them. I learned a lot.

And no show is complete without all the people providing the admin and hard work that allows us to make it look easy on stage. Who knew we had someone with so much experience with ropes! And that the Stage Manager carried a big mallet. Stage hands, makeup, props, costumes and needles flew in and out – and these people still had a smile and a thumbs-up of encouragement for the (slightly) stressed actors. I know I will omit some people – forgive me – but to Jenny, Ange, Sharon, Virginia, Ann, (and Michelle), Emily, Robyn and everyone else backstage – thank you for your support. For their patience and precision, our Lighting, Bec Pakes and Sound, Sam Melinz, thank you. And our front of house, a special thank you to Jenny and her team of volunteers. And also thanks to the friends who helped us making the set, bumping in and out.

It's always a pleasure to be a part of such an iconic show as Arsenic and Old Lace. And more so when everyone enjoys it, even the audiences. The most magic moments are created when a team of people come together – yes, on stage - but it's also those special moments in rehearsal or in the green room that become the fond memories.

So another show is laid to rest in Panama, services were held (methodists actors and a few well sung hymns), and the curtains draw on the peace and serenity of a bygone era. And also (Teddy, a bugle flourish if you please) our treasurer adds we made a nice little profit.

- James Patterson -



Our Next Show!



Auditions and Clue On Stage - Coming April 2024

Directed by James Patterson

We had hoped for generate some interest for Clue on Stage. In fact we were overwhelmed with the response. 10 additional people registered to audition in the last two days!

I want to firstly thank all the people who auditioned – both in person, and those who sent in a self tape. It became quickly obvious to our panel – Rebecca Riches, Sharon Tomlinson and I – that our choices were going to be difficult. Everyone not only was enthusiastic, but had thought about and prepared for their monologues. Seriously, with three or more people expressing preference for a particular role, we realised that even experienced actors would end up being cut. We only had eight main roles to offer – and close to 30 auditions.

Tough decisions were made. We ended up short listing two (or three) people for all of the roles and some of these were younger less experienced actors who had absolutely nailed their character and audition. If you didn't get a role, please understand, it probably wasn't that you weren't good enough or didn't audition well. It was (too) often just a choice had to be made.

Also I would like to thank everyone for their patience. We ended up running over our time plan.

And a special thank you to Sharon and Rebecca who were both a sounding board and advisors for the entire weekend whilst I was trying to finalise the casting for all the roles.

The next stage is the gathering of the production team. We've had some interest expressed already.

I believe, and CHATS believe, that it's important to nurture people to become the future of our theatre group, so we want to mentor people looking to get experience in some production roles. I also have a few five minute walk on parts at the end of the play (hardly enough to call a "role") that I would like to offer to some people wanting to work back stage. We are also looking for people interested in light, sound, set design (creating the grand Boddy Manor) and so forth. Please let me know if you are interested in assisting or even mentoring.

I am really excited about this cast, and so without further ado, the cast for Clue on Stage 2024 are:

Wadsworth Ken McClenahan

Mrs White Anne McClenahan

Col Mustard Peter Creenaune

Ms Scarlet Fiona Stiles

Mr Green Ainsley Corbett

Mrs Peacock Allanah Jarman

Prof Plum Steve North

Yvette Ange Sands

Mr Boddy Sol Williams

Police Nicolas Chesher

Cook Lily Tasker

Motorist Fiona Shaw (her stage debut)

Clue On Stage is showing 29th March to 7th April at the Jetty Memorial Theatre

UPCOMING SHOWS!

(Local Theatre Groups)

- **Clue On Stage** by CHATS Productions Inc.
Mar 29th - April 7th
- **Vicar of Dibley Christmas** by CHATS Productions Inc.
July 26th - Aug 4th
- **Companion Planting** by CHATS Productions Inc.
Sept 27th - October 5th
- **Spritefire** by Seacrest Productions Jan 18 - 20th
- **Cats** by Naidu Theatre Company Jan 26 - 30th
- **We Will Rock You** by CHMCC Nov 1 - 24th
- **Jersey Boys** by CHMCC May 10th - June 2nd



Your 2023 CHATS Committee

President
Vice President/IT
Secretary
Treasurer
Costumes/Props
Committee Members

Jenny Garratt
Craig Golding
Jann Golding
Peter Creenaune
Sharon Edwards
Vanessa Crossley & TBA



CHATS website
FACEBOOK
INSTAGRAM

www.chats.org.au
CHATS Productions Inc
@chatsproductionsinc

You're Invited!!

All financial CHATS members are invited to attend our meetings. Please come along to have some input into your society...

Next Meeting: 9 Jan 2024 @ 6.30pm at the Pier Hotel
(up stairs out the back)

CHATS Productions is a Coffs Harbour based amateur community theatre group that produces 3 shows per year with at least one show of Australian content if possible.

An incorporated association, CHATS was founded in 1982 and encourages actors and crew of all abilities and experience to join and expand their skills on and off stage!

A Few Christmas Party Pics...

