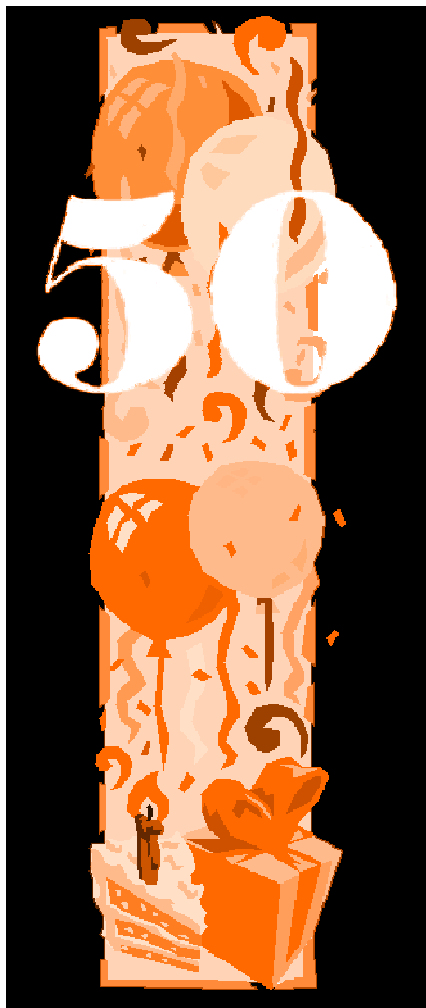




BABIRRA NEWS

Editor: Keren Evans



Happy 50th Birthday BMT

In 1956 a group of enthusiasts gathered to form a Church Choir at the Electra Street Methodist Church. The result was the commencement of Babirra Players who presented a concert of various choral items and Trial By Jury. The group continued to produce G&S Operettas to raise funds for charity.



Babirra Players moved to our current location at Highfield Road Uniting Church in 1958. Members would rehearse from February to May and then perform on weekends

from June until November. "Babirra" being an aboriginal word for 'Wandering Minstrel' was certainly an apt name for this group who originally took their shows 'on the road' and performed at many different venues throughout Victoria.

Many things have changed since the beginnings of what is now Babirra Music Theatre. To celebrate our birthday and fifty years of fine musical theatre BMT invite you to our

50th Birthday Celebration Concert and Afternoon Tea

Please note: this concert has been postponed until late 2006



Please pass this information on to any past members that we may have lost contact with and any other interested persons. If you would like to attend this celebration please contact **Lois** on **9802 1203**

Lyrebird Awards

Congratulations to BMT's winners of Lyrebird Awards for 2005



Greg Ginger - Sound (Musical or variety over 30K)
Me and My Girl

Philippa Chalke - Best Actress (Musical or variety over 30K)
Me and My Girl



Carmen Report

Carmen is firing all guns and director Jaison Hoernel is happy with progress so far. Going into Easter Act 1 was completely set and inroads were being made into Act 2.

Jaison reports that “the ensemble sounds and looks great. The Gipsy dancers are whirling the smugglers of the men's chorus into a frenzy.”

Shannon Pincombe pulled out of the cast in March and fortunately for BMT **Zak Brown** (Kismet, Camelot) has stepped into the role of Escamillo the Toreador. According to Jaison “He creates the perfect blend of voice and attitude” Welcome back Zak!

Sets are coming together including a ten meter wide bullring, running water, and fog (but not too much). Set building and painting are running a little behind and Alan Wright is looking for all the help he can get. See next column for details.

Carmen is shaping up to be all that it has promised to be with dancing, love, knife fights, fist fights, festivals, and bull fights. Come and see it all.

Help Needed!

Due to a change in original plans, the set requirements have only recently been made available. We now are running two month's behind and need **urgent help** in the build of an exciting set. If anyone can help please let Alan Wright know.

Alan's contacts: Home 9758 5196, Bus 9287 2332, Mob 0405 395 875 (no text)



Plan for set building/painting for Carmen

Factory at 9 Aristoc Road,
Glen Waverley
– opposite the Swim Centre

Day	Date	Morn	Lunch	Arvo	Eve
		10 - 12am	12 - 2pm	2 - 5pm	5.30- 9pm
Thurs	May 4th	√		√	
Sat	May 6 th	√		√	
Sun	May 7 th			√	
Sat	May 13 ^h	√		√	
Sun	May 14 th			√	
Sun	May 21 st	Bump in			

Craft Market

The Nunawading Craft Market is on every 4th Sunday of each month. Located in front of the council offices at 397 Whitehorse Rd, Nunawading. All profits go to the Nunawading Arts Council – a great supporter of Babirra Music Theatre



Updated Logo

Introducing our refurbished logo. The essence of the old logo is there but we have given it a fresh look which includes our entire name. The word Babirra is coloured a bright orange but can change to a different colour to compliment a shows colour scheme.



Our old Logo



Did you know Keren Evans has been working on an updated and revamped website for Babirra Music Theatre. All will be revealed shortly — in time to celebrate our 50th Birthday so keep on eye on our site.

www.babirra.org.au

BMT Carols

During December Babirra members and friends again shared the Christmas spirit when they sang carols at Balwyn Manor, a nursing home and respite care centre on Tues 20th. The following evening their voices were again heard to ring out at Box Hill Hospital, much to the enjoyment of the patients and staff. A quick visit was also made to the first floor of the new Epworth Private Hospital across the road. For all involved it was an enjoyable experience and a nice way to share some Christmas spirit. We have been invited back for next year so the singing can't have been too bad even with only one rehearsal. Thanks to Juliette for her conducting and Basil for his accompaniment.

Bill Connellan



Coming in October 2006



A colourful and comic look at climbing the corporate ladder

How to Succeed

in business without really trying



Sun June 18th

Call George on 9855 9424 to book your audition

Big business means big laughs as a mere window washer schemes and scams his way to the top in this bold and bawdy musical that celebrates the Great American Corporate Way—and lampoons it at the same time. This tune-filled comic gem is a goldmine of the great Frank Loesser (Guys and Dolls) with songs including “I Believe In You”, “Rosemary”, “A Secretary Is Not A Toy”, “It’s Been A Long Day”, “The Company Way” and “Brotherhood Of Man”. This classic musical is bristling with humor, romance and song.

The story charts the meteoric rise of an ambitious window washer who with the help of a simple guidebook, gets the job, gets the girl, gets the raise and gets the attention of the big boss—all by his second day at work! Now it's only a matter of hours before he goes from zero to CEO!

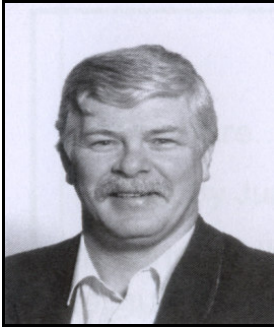
Direction by Di Shepherd
Musical Direction by Graeme Burnham

Stage Manager

BMT are looking for a **Stage Manager** to join the production team for “How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying” They will need to commit to rehearsals from July and will work closely with the director throughout the rehearsal period. Other duties will include responsibility for the rehearsal venue and primary contact person for the cast.



If you or anyone you know is qualified to fill this role please speak to
Alan Wright
(9758 5196)
or Lois Moran
(9802 1203)



Committee Member Focus

Bill Connellan

Bill Connellan was welcomed onto Committee at the recent AGM. Bill has been involved in musical theatre for over twenty-five years as a performer, director, committee member and president (Loyola). His CV includes professional cabaret and television as well as involvement with a number of well known and respected Melbourne amateur companies.

Bill first became known to BMT in 2001 as Merlyn in *Camelot*. He and his wife **Maddy** (performer/costume coordinator) have been close associates with BMT since that time and last year took over the running of BMT's costume store and hire business. Bill has delighted audiences in lead roles for BMT's past two shows *Me and My Girl* and *Tarantara*, *Tarantara* and promises to do the same in our upcoming production of *Carmen*.

When not involved in musical theatre Bill works in telephone communications and mobile phones (so if you need a good deal—talk to him). He is a self-confessed mad St. Kilda supporter and with his wife Maddy has become an avid teddy bear collector. He even carries a good luck teddy with him on stage during every performance. (I wonder where he hides it?)

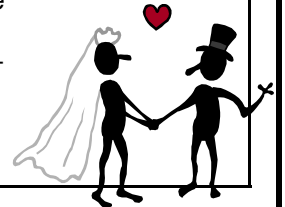
The Committee thank Bill for stepping forward to join their ranks and look forward to the wealth of knowledge and source of help that he will no doubt be in the day to day running of the Company.

BMT Personals

Congratulations go to **Barry Page** who received a Masonic Jewel on Anzac Day at the Camberwell Masonic Centre to celebrate fifty years of involvement. Barry and Lorraine flew over for the presentation and were blown away by a surprise performance by BMT cast members. **Fiona Keys** (*Carmen*), **Ben Logan**(Jose), **Zak Brown** (Escamillo), **Nicole Wallace** (Micaela), **Jaision Hoernel** and **Owen Davies** provided an entertainment featuring songs from "Carmen—the Musical" at the event.



Luckily for BMT **Zak Brown** wasn't involved in another show when he was approached to fill the Escamillo role in *Carmen* because he had taken time off to marry **Adrienne George** (Labour Day) and honeymoon in Tahiti. We're very jealous and incredibly happy for both of you. Congratulations. *What I want to know is — did they take the rabbit with them?* - Ed



Ticket Secretary

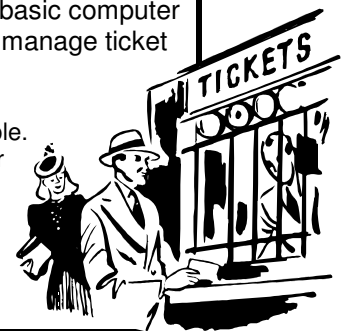
We Need You!

BMT are searching for a ticket secretary.

We need a trustworthy volunteer with a pleasant phone manner and basic computer skills to allocate tickets and manage ticket funds.

Full training and support available. A small honorarium is paid after each show .

Please call Keren on **9894 7220** for details.



BMT Committee for 2006/2007

President: Alan Wright
Vice President: Wayne Motton
Secretary: Lois Moran
Assistant Secretary: Owen Davies
Treasurer: Neil Spitzer

Ordinary Committee Members:
Paul Bennett George Rustean
Bill Connellan Christine Wright
Paul Hansen

As nominations did not exceed the number of positions available for office bearers and ordinary members of the committee, no election was necessary.



BABIRRA MUSIC THEATRE INC.

Annual General Meeting 2005

President's Report

Tonight, we return to our usual venue for the Annual General Meeting, after the more glamorous setting last year.

During 2005 we successfully presented "Me & My Girl" and "Tarantara, Tarantara".

"Me & My Girl", the Direction by Dianne Shepherd and Musical Direction by Basil Hawkins, achieved a high standard – both cast and audiences enjoyed this toe tapping show. In spite of our usual level of promotion, ticket sales were lower than expectations and as a consequence there was a negative financial outcome. Some departments significantly exceeded their Budget which illustrates how closely we need to be aware of the level of our spending.

In developing this show, we supported a rehearsal camp week- end, I believe a first for Babirra. The camp was a great experience and did much to step up the level of performance while enabling the cast to better know each other.

The show received a number of nominations for Awards, which have already been published. While we do not set out to win Awards, it is always heartening to receive them. Phillipa Chalke received the Lyrebird Award for "Best Actress" and Greg Ginger the Lyrebird Award for "Best Sound" in a Musical over \$30,000. Congratulations – a great achievement. I believe the whole cast and support team won awards of a different kind – they had fun and thoroughly entertained their audiences. Visually, the set was a great achievement by Ron Harvey and Dallas Homewood from a design by Rachel Mellors, inspired by Dianne Shepherd.

Our second Season saw "Tarantara, Tarantara" dusted off and given new life by Rose Chapple and Juliette Maxwell. With a cast of thousands, or so it seemed by the number of costumes, there was opportunity for everyone to shine. The show allowed new talent to emerge and even allowed some senior members moments of glory. With minimal setting costs and no bill for sound, the

show played to very good houses and was a financial success. It was great fun hearing a cross section of the great G&S collaboration and our audiences thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Each time we present a show, there is an involvement of over a hundred people, many helping quietly in the background. To all those involved I send the thanks and appreciation of your Committee.

To matters financial: I reversed the usual order of items tonight to allow me a comment on the financial state of Babirra, after the presentation of the Treasurer's report. We are blessed with great continuity and reliable support from Neil in his capacity as Treasurer.

While our funds diminished this year, we are faced with a situation where we must not appear too flush with funds or we may not qualify for the Grants that support the cost of mounting a production. At the same time, there has been the need to invest in Capital items – a replacement rehearsal piano, new strops for flying sets - required by OH&S regulation. There are many more examples where equipment has required updating, these are not frivolous purchases but necessary for the continuation and safety of the Company.

We are a "Not for Profit" organisation and surely our purpose is to do what we love, have fun in the process as we present a high standard of entertainment. Yes, we should be good Stewards but we are not running a commercial enterprise for profit.

Part of our current income constraint is our inability to sell the number of tickets to support the cost of mounting the shows we select. Recently, we have started to experiment with presenting ourselves differently "BMT at the Whitehorse" is an example. This was an attempt to modernise our approach and link ourselves with the venue which hosts our productions. It is certainly not our plan to lose "Babirra Music Theatre", indeed, there is a new version of our logo which Keren Evans has designed, keeping the familiar theme of the theatrical masks and adding the whole company name, at the same time including a splash of

colour. We will continue this process of seeking ways to increase our appeal through better marketing.

As a marketing tool, our website does a fantastic job at a first class creative and informative level. We have Keren Evans to thank for the countless hours she spends at the computer and the developing skills she demonstrates in the process. We have every reason to be proud of the showcase that is our website. Keren is retiring from Committee tonight but has expressed the will to continue her work on the website and the Babirra Newsletter. Keren has been an involved Committee Member with strong opinions, ready to debate issues – the lifeblood of any Committee. Please join me in expressing our sincere thanks to Keren.

At this time, I wish to bring to your attention the work achieved by Geoff Beare as Ticket Secretary. It requires a real dedication to be available to handle the whims of our supporters. Thank you Geoff for your knowledge, counsel and dedication.

Maddy Connellan continued the Management of our Costume Store

At the end of the year, we were faced with the requirement by Monash City Council, to vacate our storage and set-build facility at Fleigner Hall in Oakleigh North. The whole complex is to be refurbished at the cost of \$350,000 – an amazing sum! There was little notice involved and we had to move quickly. Prior to the move, there were a few weekends of shedding unwanted items and three huge dump bins later, our stocks had been partially pruned. This was accomplished by a small group of members. A recent visit to Fleigner has seen the improvements taking place. It will be an amazing facility when we settle back in, after “Carmen”

In December/January, while I was overseas, Wayne Motton arranged the transfer of our stocks of sets, props and costumes to a temporary site at Glen Waverley and into a container provided by Monash City Council. Although Wayne called on members to help, there was a poor turn out - the usual few! I ask you to show appreciation for the fantastic task achieved by Wayne and mainly Committee Members in moving our stocks. In the midst of all this work, Maddy Connellan, as Manager of our Costume Store, organised the Costume Collection in to bags for removal to the temporary store and is working in this difficult environment. It will be worth the wait as the new

arrangement will provide a Sewing Room and a Laundry in addition to better facilities for the storage of our costumes. Thank you Maddy for your work with our extensive Costume Collection.

It is a hope that we will see more membership involvement in projects which require a team effort, plus set building and painting tasks. The current show is no exception. Due to a change in original plans, the set requirements have only recently been made available. We now are running two month's behind and need urgent help in the build of an exciting set. If anyone can help, please talk to me after the meeting to arrange times.

To the year ahead... our Golden Jubilee – 50 years of performance! We plan a Concert and Celebration Tea on Sunday the 11th June, following “Carmen the Musical”. It is the chance to walk down Memory Lane – if you are a member from past shows and have a “Party Piece” please let us know – there may be a revival!

In conclusion, I can report our current production of “Carmen the Musical” is sounding absolutely wonderful, under the direction of ‘Jean val Jean’ and ‘D’Oily Carte’ (Jaison Hoernel and Basil Hawkins) the talent in this show crosses the age spectrum and the leads and ensemble sound the best for many years. This is a great show to celebrate our 50th year of performance! I call on all Members and Life Members to take responsibility for increasing the sales of tickets. There are brochures with Booking Forms and Business Cards here for you to distribute. Geoff is waiting to take your bookings. (9885 9654)

My sincere thanks go to Lois Moran, our Secretary who has shouldered the yoke of Secretary this year and to Neil Spitzer, our Treasurer, to Wayne Motton my Vice President and all Committee Members for their involvement in things Babirra. You are all to be commended for your efforts.

Alan Wright
30th March 2006

