



MUSIC THEATRE GUILD
OF VICTORIA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Music Theatre Guild of Victoria Inc
held at Williamstown Mechanics Institute, 5 Electra Street, Williamstown
on Saturday 17th March 2018 at 2.30pm**

Present: Babirra Music Theatre Co by proxy to Elly Foster
Ballarat Lyric Theatre Inc by proxy to Elly Foster
Brentwood Secondary College by proxy to Brett Wingfield
Darrell Boyd by proxy to Fran Boyd
Fran Boyd
Ang Cuy
Marcus Cassidy-Anderson
CenterStage by proxy to Lisa Hunter
CLOC Musical Theatre by proxy to Cameron Osborne
Graeme Cope
Carole Cuthbertson
Ang Cuy
Elise Dahl
Tony Dahl
Sandra Davies
Emmaus College by proxy to Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith
Nathan Firmin by proxy to Beverley Meldrum
Brad Fischer by proxy to Beverley Meldrum
Footlight Productions by proxy to Beverley Meldrum
Elly Foster
Simon Foster
Laurie Gellon by proxy to Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith
Carla Gianinotti by proxy to Elly Foster
Lynette Handy by proxy to Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith
Ann Head by proxy to Elly Foster
Tyler Hess by proxy to Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith
Holiday Actors by proxy to Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith
Horsham Arts Council by proxy to Beverley Meldrum
Lisa Hunter
Derek Ingles
Nicole Lylak
Mount Scopus Memorial College by proxy to Carole Cuthbertson
Jeff Maxwell by proxy to Beverley Meldrum
Beverley Meldrum
Mornington Players Theatre Company by proxy to MTGV Secretary
Nova Theatre Company by proxy to Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith
Panorama Theatre Company by proxy to Fran Boyd
Dot Parker
PLOS Musical Productions by proxy to Brett Wingfield

Red Door Dance & Theatre Company by proxy to Derek Ingles
Ringwood Secondary College by proxy to MTGV Secretary
St Michaels Grammar School by proxy to Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith
Frank Simcox by proxy to Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith
Mark Spencer
SPX Waterdale Players by proxy to Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith
Bernie Starls
Peter Tapai
Theatre of the Damned by proxy to Tony Dahl
The Hart Theatre Company by proxy to Fran Boyd
Wendy Tompkins by proxy to Fran Boyd
Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith
Williamstown Theatre Company by proxy to Marcus Cassidy-Anderson
Windmill Theatre Company by proxy to Brett Wingfield
Bev Woodford by proxy to Brett Wingfield
Melanie Xavier by proxy to Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith

Welcome Beverley Meldrum welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance at the 2018 Annual General Meeting of the Music Theatre Guild of Victoria Inc. and also thanked Williamstown Theatre Company for hosting the meeting.

Apologies: All companies and individuals listed above who have nominated a proxy, and Alan Stone.

Confirmation of Minutes of 2017 Annual General Meeting:

Moved: Elly Foster

Seconded: Carole Cuthbertson

Carried

Business Arising from Minutes:

Report from Mary-ElLEN Wallace-Smith Mary- Ellen provided a report which raised a number of issues last year. Although the report was acknowledged as requiring discussion, it was agreed that the AGM was not the appropriate forum, and it would be referred to the next committee meeting for discussion.

The Secretary read a summation of discussions held over two committee meetings:

The report from MEWS was distributed and discussed.

Committee does not feel that member attendance at the AGM is representative of the engagement within the music theatre community. A measure of the increase in support for MTGV is the increasing number of companies seeking membership and requesting their shows to be judged, however a survey of member companies to be undertaken to determine our core 'business' and whether the Guild can improve in any areas.

MEWS' concern over multi representatives from a member company being on the committee, as well as judges also being committee members. Given that we have limited personnel available, it is unrealistic to assume that we can specify such conditions.

Neither issue contravenes the constitution and is not seen as a conflict of interest. Committee members who are also judges do not participate in discussions / decisions regarding judging matters. MEWS also requested that judges should have formal qualifications, however it was acknowledged that the more barriers that are put in place, the less options the guild would have. Both chairmen liaise with Brett Wingfield, as the representative for the committee, to avoid any potential conflict of interest issues. Both chairmen are invited to committee meetings twice throughout the year. Additionally, codes of conduct and information for judges are provided individually and

readily available on the website. The panels are reviewed annually, and any concerns regarding the performance of any judge is discussed with the relevant chair.

MEWS raised concerns over judges taking part in discussions about shows in which they are involved. It was stressed that a judge can be nominated for a category however they CANNOT be the recipient of the award for that category. Judges cannot judge the same show they have been involved in (in any category) performed by another company within the same judging year. Judges cannot judge any show in which partners or immediate family are involved.

Correspondence:

Nil

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer presented her report and read the Auditor's Independent Audit Report and Profit and Loss Statement for the year 01/02/17 to 31/01/18

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| Retained surplus as at 31 st January 2017 | \$29,798.68 |
| Plus total income to 31 January 2018 | \$59,861.77 |
| Less total expenditure to 31/01/18 | <u>\$47,972.79</u> |

Retained surplus as at 31 January 2018 \$41,687.66

The Treasurer's Report was moved Fran Boyd, seconded Mark Spencer Carried

Auditor

John Wallis has advised of his retirement as Auditor – Arrangements to be made to appoint a new Auditor.

President's Report:

As we celebrate another successful year of the Guild, we can reflect that 2017 gave us comedy, drama, innovative and emotive productions. We all leave a legacy and are impacted by the legacy left by others, whether we realize it or not. Embracing the vision and characters of certain shows sometimes causes us to reflect on our own life lessons, both taught and learnt, and how these influence our choices and the way we behave. Musical theatre is not just entertainment it is a marriage of musical ideas and themes providing an avenue to nurture passion and enjoyment to share the universal language that is music.

We are blessed with so many amateur member companies in Victoria and it is interesting to note that productions from the Junior Section of the Guild exceeded those of the Open in 2017, ensuring that the future of young talent will continue to be recognised and showcased. It was hard to believe that some of the performers were still students, as their talent was exceptional.

It is not always the case that big productions dominate. Many small companies have given us the element of surprise with clever, creative direction, sometimes in limited spaces with limited budgets and limited resources, proving that sometimes less is best. We are living in a technical age where minimal sets are used and special effects take over. This can sometimes distract from the actual show content if there is excessive overuse of lighting and projections. I am sure we are all aware that the heart of any production is the quality of its cast and their ability to achieve the perfect balance between score and character. Peripheral enhancements are the dressing but the core is the cast and production team; the glue that holds a show together. So, to the many smaller companies whose budgets do not cover the luxuries that modern technology have on offer, build and develop your core and the results will speak for themselves. Excellence comes from passion and commitment and that costs nothing.

Sincere thanks go to the judges from both panels for their dedication, time and energy in adjudicating 107 productions in 2017. They travel thousands of kilometres to see the wonderful talent this state has to offer and should be duly acknowledged for their efforts.

I make special mention of Open Panel Chairman Brad Fischer and Junior Panel Chairman David Crawshaw for their outstanding work in 2017. We welcomed new judge Carole Cuthbertson to the Junior Panel and offered our thanks to Open Panel Judge Shaun Kingma, who has stepped down. To our relief judges, Carla Gianinotti, Fran Boyd, Melinda Gregory, Peter Maver, Elyse Carmichael and Scott Hili, we thank you also for volunteering your time and expertise.

To the Bendigo Theatre Company who generously hosted the Awards Night, we thank them for their support in the preparation and Front of House management and also Bendigo South East College for providing the venue for the Guild rehearsal.

The Ulumbarra Theatre proved to be a stunning and wonderful venue and truly set the scene for a fantastic night of musical celebration.

Thanks go to the production team of Director Vern Wall, Musical Director Cynthia Holsworth, Production Manager Brett Wingfield, the wonderful orchestra and everyone behind the scenes. Feedback from the night has been very positive. The performances, carefully chosen throughout the year by our judging panels, were a showcase of excellence from companies and schools far and wide in Victoria and made a statement that talent is not discriminated by location.

Congratulations to Edith HARRY Award recipients Bernard and Gemma Hedger, acknowledging their outstanding contribution to musical theatre and to Malcom Huddle, recipient of the Musician's Award. Congratulations also to the dual recipients of Junior Production of the Year - Mary McKillop College for Blood Brothers and St. Helena Secondary College for Rent, and to the recipient of Open Production of the Year, Babirra Music Theatre for Thoroughly Modern Millie. To all nominees and recipients in 2017 congratulations for creating, innovative, beautiful and entertaining theatre for our collective enjoyment.

I am very grateful to my Guild Committee colleagues, in particular for their time, support and cohesive work throughout the year and we should not forget the partners of Judges and Committee whose unseen support is also acknowledged and greatly appreciated. To my Executive Brett Wingfield, Fran Boyd and Elly Foster personal thanks seem inadequate to fully appreciate all the great work that you do. Without your cohesive support the Guild would not be able to function as efficiently as it does.

I would also like to acknowledge those companies, individuals, corporate bodies and foundations that sponsor our Bruce Awards each year in support of the Awards Night.

To all companies and schools, I wish you success with your productions and look forward to seeing you at the 32nd Bruce Awards for Excellence in 2018, to be held at the stunning new Bunjil Place Theatre in Narre Warren, in the very capable hands of Director Stuart Dodge and Musical Director Malcom Huddle.

Our thoughts are already in 2018 mode with the prospect of an exciting and creative year ahead.

Beverley Meldrum

President – Music Theatre Guild of Victoria

AGM

17th March 2018

Election of Office Bearers

All positions were declared vacant and Sandra Davies was asked to oversee the election of office bearers.

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| President | There were two nominations received for President: Beverley Meldrum – nominated Fran Boyd, seconded Darrell Boyd Mary-Ellen Wallace-Smith – nominated Lynette Handy, seconded Frank Simcox A ballot was conducted and Beverley Meldrum was elected President |
| Vice President | Brett Wingfield – nominated Colin Armstrong, seconded Elly Foster |
| Secretary | Elly Foster – nominated Fran Boyd, seconded Carole Cuthbertson |
| Treasurer | Carole Cuthbertson – nominated Beverley Meldrum, seconded Darrell Boyd |
| Committee | There were eleven nominations received for eight committee positions Fran Boyd – nominated Darrell Boyd, seconded Beverley Meldrum Ang Cuy – nominated Carole Cuthbertson, seconded Beverley Meldrum Tony Dahl – nominated Elly Foster, seconded Darrell Boyd Tyler Hess – nominated Jo Buckingham, seconded ME Wallace-Smith Derek Ingles – nominated Elly Foster, seconded Fran Boyd Nicole Lylak - nominated Carole Cuthbertson, seconded Tara Kaban Karl McNamara – nominated Elly Foster, seconded Fran Boyd Dot Parker – nominated Elly Foster, seconded Darrell Boyd Richard Senftlben – nominated GLTS Committee, seconded Lisa Hunter Mark Spencer - nominated Marcus Cassidy-Anderson, seconded Elly Foster Mary-Ellen Wallace-Smith – nominated Lynette Handy, seconded Frank Simcox |

A ballot was conducted and the following people were elected to the Committee for 2018:

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| Fran Boyd | Karl McNamara |
| Ang Cuy | Dot Parker |
| Tony Dahl | Mark Spencer |
| Derek Ingles | Mary-Ellen Wallace-Smith |

Thank you to all nominees – the interest in joining committee and supporting the Guild is most gratifying,

General Business

Rehearsals for awards night: On behalf of CLOC Musical Theatre, Sandra Davies raised the difficulty in getting cast members to attend the first rehearsal for the awards night, especially when held in regional areas. With modern technology, can the Guild look at alternative methods to accommodate those who are unable to attend eg music files, videos, using a secure platform?

Committee to discuss further.

Awards night 2018: Sandra Davies raised the issue of the poor behaviour of audience members at the awards night – especially the junior attendees. Can a letter be sent to each junior company / school providing a code of conduct, and requesting that this is discussed with the attendees, so that an acceptable level of conduct is clearly understood?

Committee to discuss further.

Consistency in judging: Sandra Davies raised the lack of consistency in the judging from year to year – as an example – an award received for a support role one year, and a leading role the next year.

Musicians' rate of pay: On behalf of CLOC Musical Theatre, Cameron Osborne raised the issue of the increasing pressure on non-professional companies to increase the level of pay for musicians. There is a lack of consistency in pay rates, with the current rate ranging from \$40 to \$50 per call. Given the very healthy budgets of private schools, and the corresponding budgetary constraints on government schools and open companies, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the latter to attract the musicians they would prefer to employ. Can the Guild provide a forum for collaboration with all companies for discussion / resolution?

Committee to discuss further.

Website: Cameron Osborne also requested more frequent updating of the Guild website.

Beverley Meldrum advised that the website is about to be completely redeveloped and regular updates and information will be provided.

Judging criteria: Cameron Osborne suggested that there needed to be more transparency in how productions are judged and the criteria used. Lengthy discussion ensued, including determining and communicating what the process is; the transparency of data – not specifically the numbers, but more about the criteria; committee members also being judges; the lack of expressions of interest in becoming a judge; judges having appropriate skills and qualifications; whether a show should be judged on opening night; increasing membership fees to increase remuneration to judges to increase interest; supply and demand.

Brett Wingfield was thanked for his excellent work in the delivery of judging communication.

Committee to discuss further.

Lisa Hunter from Geelong Lyric Theatre Company thanked the Guild for all of the work it does.

Brett Wingfield thanked Beverley Meldrum for her continued commitment as President of the Guild

Beverley thanked Brett for his support as Vice President and his untiring commitment as Production Manager of the Awards nights.

Beverley also thanked Williamstown Theatre Company for the use of their premises as the venue for the AGM, and their generous hospitality.

Meeting closed at 4.25 pm