

From The President

I'm feeling quite sombre this issue, people. This week I will be 29. It wouldn't seem all that much to so many of our membership, but to me, this birthday represents the end of (what should have been) my misspent youth! Unfortunately (well, perhaps not), I didn't actually misspend my youth, but did responsible things like complete two degrees, get married, have children, get a job, buy a house and all the rest. So, I suppose I could look upon the last year of my 20s as a chance to behave disgracefully... I've always loved that poem (of course, I can't recall the author or the title!): "*When I am old I shall wear purple, with a red hat that doesn't go*" – although I am probably slight too young for that sort of behaviour, the passing of the years certainly is a wake-up call... and as the election results this weekend proved, history can completely change within a single day – we should all be careful not to squander each day we are given, and each moment we can share with our family and our friends.

This issue we finally bid fond farewell to *The Music Man*. This show was faced with more trials than I think perhaps even Gilbert and Sullivan could have coped with. From uncertain location, inconsistent scores and librettos, terrible injuries, and the unavoidable absences of our cast, the production team spent many a nail-biting night wondering whether it was all going to come together in the end... as we all know, it did! The season went off fabulously, and my ears are still ringing from the compliments. I was particularly proud of the wonderful "invited member" of the cast – the 10 children who were charming from start to finish. I spend most performances chaperoning "the kidlets" on and off stage, cajoling them into costumes, and bribing the boys not to wipe off their lip-gloss the moment I looked away! You were all outstanding, and I was very proud of you all. Special mention (for me) goes to my eldest son, Seb, who spent a lot of the past 4 months sleeping on the floor, under chairs (at the after party, on a chair – caught at the last second by Niki Barton as he headed unconscious for the wooden floor!) while rehearsal continued around him, and production team meetings stretched into the unseemly hours. Seb, you were a star – and I think you've made a fantastic start to your musical career! Seb mentioned to a few people that he's not going to go on stage again.... He wants to be "musical director" like his Mumma! Goodness, lookout world!!

And now that the last trombone has died away, we are left a few moments of quiet reflection in the now quiet Lakeside Road Uniting Church Hall which has been our home for the past 45+ years. Although I don't think it was mentioned at the time, *Music Man* had the honour of being the final EUCMS show to be performed in our home ground. (Although I do think that's been said before, we have it on good information that this time it's really truly true!) At such a juncture, I feel it is appropriate to reflect on the friendships, relationships, marriages, families, communities and charities which have been formed, and have benefited from the work we have done in our erstwhile home. While we will be back (bigger and better than ever before...), we should give thanks for what we have shared in this place as we leave it behind for now.

And speaking of that, you will find a plea for help in the moving process (I absolutely detest moving) – we have a huge volume of costumes, props, equipment, bit and pieces and (unavoidably) junk squirreled away at Lakeside Road, and we urgently need the help of members, ex-members, associates, friends, or even the bloke up the street with a ute who can lend a few hours to help clear our belongings out. The alternative is that the bulldozer destroys it all, so now would be an excellent time to offer up your services!

And on Services, we have the Christmas service advertised this month, as well as a family Christmas Brunch. 'Tis that time of year, and it would be great to give thanks as a community for the times we have spent this year.

As December rolls closer, I look forward to a break from active productions, and the chance to learn more about *Carousel*. The Executive wishes Elaine and her team a wonderful season.

Next month I'll be a whole year older.... But I will have had a nice birthday dinner, and (John, are you listening?) a new pair of earrings. I suppose there are advantages ☺

All the best - Sarah

The Music Man

From The Director

To all my fellow EUCMS-iens,

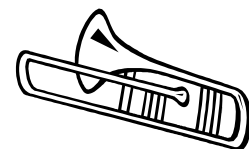
In this closing article I would like to greatly uphold the cast for their commitment to the show and to one another. They did not shy away from challenges, foreseen and unforeseen. Every night the cast and crew simply improved to a higher level of excellence as dazzling as the boys' band uniforms. (and boy, were they dazzling!)

A director can only go so far and for this show there was a lot left to this amazing team of versatile and entertaining people, who were not satisfied with a mediocre performance, but so often they would approach the production team with ideas to improve themselves and the team, reflecting marks of true character.

I would like to congratulate our leading man Gavin Owen, who had so much of the show's weight pinned on his shoulders, and state that he truly knew how to capture an audience both on and offstage. The last night, his performance of 'Ya Got Trouble' was the epitome of all his hard work, so much so that if anyone could have seen from my gawking face, (much to the amusement of my brother sitting next to me on the sound desk) that even I began to think he "knew something about leading a band."

To our leading lady Samantha Maddison, whom the cast described as having an angelic voice, (though from what I heard Matthew Forbes was a close contender to be her understudy,) I would like to thank for gracing the stage with beauty and splendour.

I couldn't have asked for a more dynamite leading couple. My sincerest thanks for their innovative ideas and flexibility when I was not able to spend time with them or initial ideas could no longer be fulfilled and it was left to them to make changes.



And there was no fear from auditions onwards that Max Newstead wouldn't be able to uphold his role. You can't say this guy isn't a natural when he never once tripped over his line onstage, "pickle barrels went out the window with the mail pouch cut plug..." (see, I can't even type it.)

Kathy Smith joined us once again to step up a notch from her previous EUCMS debut role in 'Fiddler' and became so lovable amongst us I wouldn't be surprised if we couldn't "all have had a kiss" from her well-crafted motherly Paroo. One question though—what is she going to do with that scarf? She could wear it on an Australia Day, if it was the right time of year!

My hat goes off (pardon the pun) to the quartet who not only had to obviously sing in 4-part harmony but tackled brilliantly Beth Madden's blocking & choreography. The greatest applause to Michael Simms as I believe this was his first musical production and yet he not only shone on stage (due to the dashing blue and white jackets he had made) but he threw himself into every rehearsal, being one of the first to arrive and last to leave, helping in anyway he could. An outstanding example to us all.

A big rap goes to our 'rebellious' teenage chorus. They proved that the chorus is not merely fill-ins at the back. The great enthusiasm and expression from all the girls (and lest we forget Tony) added so much to the entire show. Though this show demanded a higher level of energy it could have easily not been produced. They were continually responsive, jumped into everything asked of them and were always on the ball.

Never will we forget Amy's disappointed look when that frustrating fake fruit simply wouldn't stay in her grocery basket and even once rolled off the stage. (I don't know if I will ever trust fake fruit again.) Nor will we forget Wendy's googling eyes, Sally's shy but bright-eyed expression when Harold approaches her warmly, Megan's constant bubblyness, Pip's dreaminess in the library and elegant dancing, Bronwyn's impeccable sense of timing and Tony's continuous vivacity.

And who said we could never have tap dancing in a EUCMS show, even if tapping was never scripted to begin with? My highest regard to Jess Burns, not only for enthusiasm on stage but her vital production experience, professionally taking on choreography alone and juggling sound equipment with ease. To our newcomer Oscar Partridge, who could have ended up playing every mans' role by the end, his enthusiasm kept everyone on their toes and continually evaluating their characters.

And let's not forget our fantastic EUCMS 'picadilly' ladies – Bess Yager created such a distorted book-balancing formation I didn't know if she would be able to straighten up again, Caroline Reddel and Jenny Firth at all times carried such large stage presence, Belinda Bongers is such a great asset, continually on the ball and aware of others' presence onstage, Caryn Kneale's heartwarming affection for Daniel Tambasco was simply priceless, Jocelyn Birdsall and Karen Swancott just go from strength to strength with their characterization and watch out for Cathy Bulfin - she can get you right HERE to your heart and your funny bone.

Congratulations also to Peter Bulfin - the entire production team was continually impressed with your hard work every rehearsal and every show. And to Warren Grzic who had one of the most challenging roles. I don't think anyone one of

us ladies would like to be called 'girlie-girl' after the way you so creepily expressed it. I hope you are truly proud of your work!!

I was tremendously grateful to have the experience and guidance of Dorian Newstead our bubbling Mayor, aka Colonel Sanders and commercial voiceover. It was most invaluable and he is a great asset to any show. Just don't get him to slap you on the back!

It was hard for Jenny Firth to NOT steal the show and I hope that in the next role she plays (in which no doubt there will be many more), "I'm sure we will all be grateful," if you are able to bless us with your normal beautiful singing voice!

And last but not least - we all know the old saying, "when in showbiz, never work with animals or children," well the closest we got to an animal was coconut horse hooves, but it was a delight to have our 10 kids on board. The girls added so much vibrancy when they sang and especially when they nailed the 'Shipooopi'. And what a tremendous delight to see how expressive our four boys were, remembering all of their actions, particularly in 'Ya Got Trouble.' A bit of advice boys - David Forbes – don't get into any more punch-ups, Matthew Forbes – I hope you've washed by now, Sebastian Hogan -you might make a good jockey one day and Hugh Smart – all the best with your trumpet endeavours!

A big applause to our child principals – Justice Massaad and Matthew Forbes. They were so engaging the moment they began rehearsals and blossomed greatly with every scene. These are two to look out for in the future! There is a mountain of talent in all of these children. They may not have been able to say "that tuba's my Barney," but we surely had some mighty proud relatives in the audience!

It was a pleasure to head The Music Man. It was a show that allowed for a wide variety of age and talent, from 6 to over 60, the children musicians, the tappers, "the cheepers", the comedians, the Irish immigrants, the novices and the veterans.

Jeely kly, as director I ought to give EUCMS another try! You were a mighty fine cast!

All the best with Carousel!

Director

Clare Burgess

Audience Response to *The Music Man*

To: The Secretary, EUCMS.

Re: Music Man, Friday 16 November.

Congratulations on a wonderful performance – what a night of magic, singing, dancing and comedy. A big round of applause to all those involved. Yes, you had an outstanding leading man in Gavin Owen and leading lady with Samantha Maddison, but they were backed up with a great supporting cast, chorus and orchestra. We all expected Gavin to perform *76 Trombones* as an encore at the end, however that was not to be. A bonus was the \$2 programme which gave us all we needed to know of the cast and storyline, which was not buried in a heap of advertisements. Looking forward to "Carousel".

Signed, Peter J. Bonner, Waitara. 19 November 2007.

Costume Return

Don't forget to return your costumes on Tuesday 4 December between 7.30 and 8.30 pm. If you cannot attend at that time you MUST ring Vanessa Burgess (9831 8914) or Jess Allen (9716 6832) to make alternative arrangements. Generally, ladies' costumes should be washed and ironed. Hats are to be brought down IN HAT BOXES. Please return jewellery, bags, hat pins and gloves (washed). Men's suits and trousers should be dry cleaned; shirts (if they are not yours) should be washed and ironed.

Lost Property

If you own a box of books, mostly about plants, which were not collected at the end of Music Man, or a square blue plastic plate which had cup cakes for the after show party, please contact Jess Allen. They can be collected on 4 December.

Carousel

As announced last month, the production team of Carousel for 2008 is:

Director: Elaine Gow

Musical Director: Ben Cosier

Production Managers: Barb Sharpham & Megan Willis



Show Dates

All performances at Marsden High School as follows:

23, 24, 30 and 31 May 2008 at 8pm

24 and 31 May 2008 at 2pm

Auditions

Please find enclosed with this bulletin the audition material sheet.

Auditions are in the evenings of December 10 and 11, 2007, at Lakeside Road Uniting Church hall, Eastwood. Please call Barbara Sharpham on 9817 2779 to book an audition (not between 27 November and 1 December).

Rehearsals

Will be held at the Marsden Road Uniting Church hall on the usual nights of Tuesdays and Fridays from 8pm - 11pm.

Before considering to be part of the show, please look carefully at your other 2008 commitments that may clash with standard rehearsal times. Lack of cast attendance is a concern raised by previous production teams and they have asked the Executive to look seriously at this issue. Missing more than three rehearsals gives the production team the right to ask you to step down from your involvement in the show.

EUCMS News

Questionnaire

Last month we included our second questionnaire for the year, a revised copy is enclosed for you to complete and return to our PO Box, if you have not already done so. If you would like an electronic version to fill out instead, you will find it on our website. Click on the little black note on the front page to get to the members' section and follow the prompts.



Directors' Seminar

Elaine and those people who responded, have decided to delay this event until January.

If anyone else is still interested, contact Elaine on 9872 6453 so that she can prepare for whatever number there may be, as she intends to give each person a copy of her notes for future reference.

Even if you have the slightest interest in directing in the future, it will be a valuable evening to talk to Elaine and others who have directed previous EUCMS shows.

If you have directed before, we are sure Elaine would love your input on the night too.

2nd Show 2008

We are pleased to announce that the second show of 2008 at Marsden High School will be *SEUSSICAL*, directed by Penny Wilson.



Seussical - the Musical, is based on the works of the beloved children's author Theodore Geisel, known to the world as Dr. Seuss. It seamlessly combines a number of his most beloved characters and stories in a fantastic (literally) roller-coaster ride of a narrative with uplifting messages about courage, keeping promises and the rewards of being an independent and creative "thinker."

The show was written by Flaherty and Ahrens, the American musical partnership that also wrote *Once On This Island*, and features an infectious score with a wonderfully eclectic mix of musical styles for all ages.

Further production roles will be announced in upcoming bulletins when confirmed.

2008 EUCMS Plans to come

As stated in our last bulletin, we have been advised that demolition of the Lakeside Road complex will begin in February which means quite a number of things for EUCMS:

1. We will need to have all of our stuff taken away and stored by the end of January.
2. We will not be able to rehearse 2008 shows at Lakeside Road as they will have pulled up the hall floor
3. We will need to rehearse at Marsden Road church for the whole period.
4. We will have to perform 2008 shows at Marsden High School.
5. Any set building will need to be done somewhere else.

IMPORTANT: We will need LOTS of volunteers to help move our equipment, so please think about whether you can give some time in the next couple of months. We ask that all members offer to give some time to what will be a mammoth task for us.

We intend to purchase a shipping container and store it at Galston. If anyone can provide a closer location for this container, or can provide smaller storage areas, please let Andrew McAlpine know - we would also love to have offers of accommodation for our gear, in particular, safe, dry, weatherproof and vermin-proof storage for our remaining costumes and other perishable props.

EUCMS T-Shirts

We are currently compiling a list of names of those who would like a EUCMS shirt with an embroidered note logo (as on the top left of page 1). We will be getting black shirts with a white logo, but if we have enough interest we can hopefully organise other colours as well. Cost for a short sleeve T-shirt will be about \$25 and a short sleeve polo shirt will be about \$30 depending on the quantity we order. If you would prefer a sloppy joe we can consider getting some of those too. Please let Belinda know if you are interested.

We want to order these early next year, early in *Carousel* rehearsal period.

Christmas Party 2007

Our family Christmas party is to be held on **8 December** at Blenheim Park, Blenheim Road at North Ryde starting at 10.30am for a BYO Christmas brunch. Eg. BYO favourite foods and drink for a Christmas brunch to share and bring a picnic rug, chairs, table etc as you prefer. We hope to get there early to secure a table and BBQ area, but otherwise there is a big shaded area behind the bike track where you will find us. Look for the show T-shirts to find us!



We would love to see the young and old there, especially the families with kids as it has a fantastic play area. Call Adam Wilson if you intend to come so we know to look out for you on the day.

Christmas Service

We have been invited to participate in the Eastwood congregation's Christmas service on the evening of Sunday 23 December, by contributing a group choral item as well as participating in the choir. Although this is a busy time of year with many members having other church services on this date, we would like the society to be well represented. There will be a number of rehearsals for the choir, on Thursday nights. If you wish to participate, please try to attend as many of these as possible. So that we can get an idea of your availability for either the choral item and/or the choir, please telephone Andrew McAlpine.



Members' News

Get Well Wishes

We wish Elaine Gow all the best as she recovers from her recent knee surgery and prepares for her upcoming *Carousel* auditions. Elaine sends thanks for the flowers we sent to her in hospital.

Elaine has also recently gained a great niece - a daughter and grand-daughter respectively of former members Darren and Jan Grant.

Another Golden Anniversary

Congratulations to Harold and Pat Bedford on their recent celebration of 50 years of marriage.

We also got a letter of thanks from Don & Beryl Glover for our 50th Wedding Anniversary congratulations.



Exams

Congratulations also to those members (or members' children) who have recently sat for or are about to sit for, exams. Phew, the HSC is over!!

Congratulations

Congratulations to Niki Barton on being awarded a Credit for her 7th Grade Singing Exams.

Happy 21st Birthday

Many happy returns and congratulations to Bronwyn Carroll on her 21st birthday. Every good wish for all the future years ahead Bronwyn!

Our Sympathy

Our thoughts are with Tristram Fieldhouse and his family after the recent unexpected death of his father.

Important EUCMS Dates

8 Dec 2007	EUCMS Family Christmas Party
10 & 11 Dec 2007	<i>Carousel</i> Auditions
23 Dec 2007	Eastwood UC Christmas Service
Jan 2008	Directors Workshop

Executive Members 2007

President - Sarah Hogan

Ph: 9868 5492 skhogan@tpg.com.au

Vice President - Adam Wilson

Ph: 8812 2575 ozpanda@optusnet.com.au

General Secretary - Belinda Bongers

Ph: 9874 7334 bbongers@froggy.com.au

Business Secretary - Megan Willis

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Treasurer - Tristram Fieldhouse

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Property Officer - Andrew McAlpine

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Floor Member - Niki Barton

Ph: 9802 9686 nikibarton@optusnet.com.au

Floor Member - Beth Madden

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Floor Member - Caroline Reddel

Ph: 9449 4561 cazthelion@hotmail.com

Floor Member - Kath Sharpham

Ph: 9481 8376 sharp_kat@hotmail.com

Current Director - Elaine Gow

Ph: 9872 6453 eebeegee@bigpond.com

Mail: P. O. Box 246 EASTWOOD NSW 2122

Phone: 02 8061 7195

Website: www.eucms.org.au

Join our official EUCMS email list by sending a blank email to: eucms-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Or our members' chat list by sending a blank email to: euchat-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Next Executive Meeting

17 December at Sarah Hogan's house, starts 8pm.