



EUCMS INC. INFORMATION FOR NEW MEMBERS

The following information about the Society is intended for your assistance but any of the Executive members will be only too happy to answer any queries or help with any problems you may have at any time.

1. GENERAL

The Eastwood Uniting Church Musical Society was formed in 1962 and is a group of enthusiastic people voluntarily banded together to perform (principally) musical comedies, both for their own enjoyment and the benefit and pleasure of others. Proceeds from performances, after deduction of production expenses, are donated to charities.

The vast majority of profits (ticket sales minus costs and anticipated expenses) are donated to charities suggested by members. Over the years EUCMS has donated many tens of thousands of dollars to a variety of charities, mostly favouring those without government grants or “big business” sponsorship.

2. THE EXECUTIVE

The Administration of the Society is carried out by a group of 10 members, variously known as “the executive” or “the committee”. These members are elected at the annual general meeting of the society which is held each February. Some of them have named positions, eg. President or General Secretary, and some as known as “floor members”. They all have badges denoting their position and several are usually involved in each show, should you need any questions answered. The executive meets once a month to deal with Society business. All members are invited to make suggestions, provide feedback, etc. on things to do with the Society. Please speak to them if you have any questions.

3. MEMBERSHIP

(a) Auditions

Most of you will have been told that membership of the Society is prerequisite of performing on stage and that those wishing to join the Society as performing members must audition. New member auditions are held at the end of January and in early July each year, which is just before rehearsals for our shows begin. Once you have auditioned for membership you don't need to audition again if you only want to go in the chorus of a show. You will need to audition if you wish to take a principal role in a show.

(b) *Shepherds*

You will be allocated a “shepherd” to help you with anything unfamiliar during your first show. Shepherds are members who have done several shows and should be your first contact point with questions on what to do or who to see about particular things. Hopefully they will remember to volunteer information to you so you won't always need to ask questions. They will also provide at least one familiar face for you to talk to during your first few weeks of rehearsal. If they can't help you they will point you in the direction of someone who can. Please don't hesitate to ask as many questions as you need to ask.

(c) *Fees*

Membership fees are \$20 per year payable as at 1 January and help to cover administration costs. Each member in the current show must be “financial”, ie to have paid the current year’s fees.

New Members should note that if fees are not paid within three weeks of being accepted as a member, the membership will lapse.

4. **AUDITIONS FOR PRINCIPAL ROLES**

These are held in the Church hall before the commencement of the rehearsal period. The date, time and other details for these auditions are announced verbally and in the Bulletin, and are often advertised outside the Society. Selection of the cast is the Director’s responsibility but he or she usually appoints a panel of two or more members, including the Musical Director, to assist in this task. If you are a member you do not need to audition to go in the chorus.

5. **REHEARSALS**

- (a) The rehearsal period for each show is approximately 13 weeks, with rehearsals being held at 8.00pm *sharp* on Friday nights (all cast members) and Tuesday nights (principals). For the last three weeks chorus members are usually required on Tuesday nights. In addition, chorus will be required on the odd Tuesday night for things like getting costume instructions but you will be given notice of these occasions.
- (b) Rehearsals are held at the Lakeside Road Uniting Church Hall, Lakeside Road, Eastwood.
- (c) In view of our short rehearsal period, members are urged to attend all rehearsals and arrive punctually. If you are unable due to sudden illness you should inform the Production Manager or the Director as soon as possible so that schedules can be rearranged if necessary. Although some leeway is given for absences for holidays etc, the Director has discretion to ask you to step down from the show if you will be missing too many rehearsals. You will **not** be permitted to participate in a show if you will miss a *performance*.
- (d) A date is set by the Director to finalise entry to the chorus. This “cut-off” date is generally in the first or second chorus rehearsal and refers to both participation in the show and withdrawal from it (this latter being especially important because of the costliness of materials for costumes)
- (e) Because of the size of our stage at Eastwood it may not always be possible to include all members in any one show. If this is the case, new members maybe asked to stand out for the show on a basis of being the last members to join. This is unfortunate but we feel it necessary to mention it to avoid disappointment. Every effort is made to include such members in the next show.

6. PERFORMANCES

Usually 9 performances of each show are given on the Friday and Saturday nights of consecutive weekends. Performances are held at Lakeside Road.

During the first show of the year we give a Sunday afternoon performance for the Christian Community Aid, which arranges an audience from local nursing and special homes, who cannot attend our evening performances. This is an "invitation only" performance and we do not sell tickets for it. Please note that you cannot invite family and friends to attend this performance even if they are unable to attend any other performances.

We also provide a Saturday matinee (two for the second show of the year). Tickets are available for this in the same way as for our evening performances. Information on our ticketing procedures will be provided later.

7. MUSIC

Each member involved in a show pays for his or her own score (and libretto if needed). Where possible these are purchased in bulk by the Society so that a slight discount on the retail price can generally be passed on to members. Sometimes our contract requires that we pay to hire scores from the copyright holder. You will then be asked to pay a small fee to ensure the return of the music. (This is much cheaper than having to buy one commercially).

8. COSTUMES

- (a) The material and instructions for costumes are provided by the Society under the direction of the Wardrobe Mistress **but it is each member's own responsibility to either sew his/her own costume or have it made at his/her own expense.** Small items such as zippers and cotton, as well as jiffy shoes, gloves, etc. may have to be purchased by you, the latter items remaining your property. The main costumes remain the property of the Society, unless special arrangements for purchase are made with the Wardrobe Mistress.

The number of new costumes to be made varies with each show but you must be prepared to arrange for the making of more than one costume if necessary.

Ladies may wish to invest in a pair of character shoes.

Throughout the rehearsal period you will be given dates for costume inspections. Please try to have costumes at the appropriate stage of completion at that time. If you have problems following the pattern or getting it finished in time, please see the Wardrobe Mistress before the date.

- (b) *Make-up.* All make-up is provided by the Society. It is expected that only Society make-up be used but if you have an allergy problem then you should approach the Make-up Director, and suitable arrangements can be made. New members' make-up will be done for them twice during their first season.

- (c) *Wigs.* Most ladies in shows with period costumes will need to wear a wig or hairpiece. The Society has a supply which may be borrowed but many ladies prefer to buy their own if they go in a lot of shows. If you wish to borrow a wig please see the Hairdresser/Wig Mistress early in rehearsals. The setting and styling of wigs, whether your own or the Society's is your responsibility. However, you will be given guidance regarding suitable styles.

9. **OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

The two shows each year and their preparation are naturally our main functions but other activities include a mid year dinner (June/July), Christmas party and two church services. Occasional theatre parties, picnics or other get-togethers are sometimes arranged by various members. There is also an after show party at the end of each season.

We trust that this will give you some idea of our activities but please do not hesitate to ask questions if you are in doubt.

Refer to our website: www.eucms.org for society contact details and the latest society news.