

# The BACKDROP

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## White Christmas

Congratulations to everybody associated with White Christmas (esp the Production/backstage crew) for helping put on what lots of audience members said was a fantastic show – and one of our best. Alas the final number of audience members was down on our normal expectations (and our budget is looking precarious); but that doesn't detract in any way from the veracity of the comments – it was a great show!! Just looking at Kylie's photos on Facebook (and all of Kelvin's on the CD etc) really bring to light what it looked like from 'out there' compared to how it felt from on stage. A big accolade to Deb and all her costume helpers as visually it was a feast of colour and era-matching authenticity – top job DD ! The orchestra were wonderful and really professionally belted out some great numbers; matched of course by the delivery of our great leads (Steve, Di, Deb & Paul), energetic and loving chorus, plus of course those show stealers in Martha and Susie (Mary-Ann & Rosie) – the latter I'm sure to feature prominently in any 'best new talent' category : ) Jay & Charmaine were a great highlight as Rita & Rhoda while Dave (as Gen Waverley) brought a lump to many throats at the end; and the two Bens (younger and not so younger) got a great share of laughs. My personal favourite moment was Steve/Di's song(s) in the Regency Room and their 'getting together' (sentimental type : ). Apologies if I haven't mentioned everybody (as you ALL deserve one) but in the end it all boils down to the great vision, professionalism, patience and perseverance of a wonderful Director. Well done Molly. Be proud.

## BTC 25 Years Celebration

Our celebration of 'shows gone by' continues with the following photos from 1996 & 1997; in the form of 'Calamity Jane', 'The Touch of Silk' and the fabulous 'Viva Mexico'.



*'Say yer prayers rabbit' could well be what 'Calamity Jane' (Kim Brach) is saying to our sweet little bunny Katy Brown (Debbie Patterson) but fear not – for protection is near at hand in the form of Lieutenant Danny Gilmartin (Mike Ryan) while Wild Bill Hickock (Ross Bootes) looks on in shellshock at how well the fireball 'tomboy' scrubs up in a dress – let alone handles a gun. A memorable show at the Town Hall with Molly at one stage doing Kim's lines/singing from the orchestra pit due to Kim (a very rare occasion indeed : ) losing her voice. Gwen Barnes stepped up as a great Adelaide Adams and not for the first time yours truly had to don a dress (as Francis Fryer).*

*This is a scene from the wonderful Australian play 'The Touch of Silk' which tells the poignant tale of a French war-bride Jeanne (Wendy Hyland – pictured right) who battles the loss of all 'the fine things' she had back home plus the small-mindedness of an outback town and the deteriorating mental condition of her returned soldier husband Jim (Steve Rankin). Vince Branigan played the town doctor (pictured consoling an unhappy Jeanne). The highlight of this show was the great performances of both Wendy and the late Steve Rankin in the major roles.*



*A colourful scene from what was undoubtedly one of our best and most enjoyable shows – **Viva Mexico**; and a surprise packet at that as we really didn't know a great deal about it till we staged it under the wicked directorial hand of Alan Stone. Lots of familiar (and younger : ) faces in this photo including the late John Hearn, Wayne Wilson, Kim Brach, Faye Waller, Col Milligan, Gwen Cheetham, Anne Block, Di, Molly, Mary-Ann, Ross Bootes, Marty, Deb, Jim of those I can pick out. A show of many highlights - with the likes of the infamous 'flattening of Jo Jeffery' in the Mexican Hat dance (guilty); Marty Burke (as bandit Mendoza) with his surprise emergences from the well; leather pants extraordinaire and a set of lyrics in 'La Cucaracha' that varied drastically each performance as he cavorted amongst the chorus lines; the temple scene and dancers; Colin Milligan actually singing (about his phantom flea 'Frederico') and of course participating in a memorable slapstick rendition of 'Manana' where the bumbling Pablo & Pepe get tied up in knots and disintegrating sombreros. My caholes still ache at the memory.*

The preparations for the **25<sup>th</sup> Celebration weekend (October 16 and 17)** continue with a hard-working sub-committee (well some of them anyway – I seem to be doing a lot of watching people work - like Deb do her lovely handwriting on invites : ) Formal invitations to everybody we could find an address for will be going out very soon; and we hope to get enough attending to make our Saturday night dinner & get-together at Raffetys a great success – plus the Sunday morning hut visit; where we hope to have a heap of memorabilia out on display. Just looking through Elaine’s collection of newspaper articles last night was a real nostalgia trip – so many shows, characters, memories etc. Come along and re-live yours on that weekend and hopefully catch up with some old ‘stage buddies’. Contact Emily, Jim or Molly if you have anything to contribute (memorabilia wise) and as far as paying for the Saturday night any method can be sorted out (despite the invites saying send a cheque) – just see the Hon Treas = Jimbo.

## **Other Stuff**

### **Theatre Sports Anyone?**

Christine D and the NECTA (North Eastern Theatre Co Alliance) have been busy getting together sporadically to get concession tickets for members to other company’s shows and now looking at running ‘Theatre Skills/Sports’ type competitions between companies – hopefully starting in November if all can be brought together. Watch this space for more details as they are finalised but if you’re keen to be part of any team that BTC may put together then please let me (Jim : ) know. Could be a bit of fun and a chance to hone some impromptu skills – as well as socialise with other groups outside of award nights.

### **Sad Passing**

Very sad to hear of the recent and untimely passing of Andy Willett from Wangaratta who had delighted us in so many roles on stage and been a convivial part of Zonta evenings and many other occasions. His wonderful sense of humour and talent will be greatly missed.

### **‘Benallalujah’ Brother**

We’ve been asked to be part of a ‘massed choir’ that will be part of an extravaganza live-air opening of the Mural (and commemoration of the bridge??) during the Benalla Festival over 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> November. Come along to singing rehearsals (starting Sept 5) to be part of that plus of course Night of Entertainment (Dec 3rd) and/or Legacy, Lodge and Carols by Candlelight. In for a penny in for a pound? May as well be shot for a soprano as a tenor?

## **Important Dates**

**Saturday Aug 28<sup>th</sup>**  
**Sunday Sept 5<sup>th</sup>**  
**Sat/Sun Oct 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup>**  
**Thurs Oct 21<sup>st</sup>**  
**November 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**Sat Nov 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**Friday Dec 3rd**

**Costume Return for White Christmas**  
**Start of End of Year Singing Rehearsals (at Hut)**  
**BTC 25 Year Get Together (Raffetys and Hut)**  
**Zonta Awards Night**  
**‘Benallalujah’ Mural Opening Gig**  
**Georgy Awards Night**  
**Raffetys Night of Entertainment**

## **HUMOUR**

With the BTC Team winning yet again at the TDA Trivia Night I ran last weekend, it seems opportune to continue with a few more quotes from good old Groucho Marx (it was one of the Q’s : ):

A man's only as old as the woman he feels.

Before I speak, I have something important to say.

Behind every successful man is a woman, behind her is his wife.

From the moment I picked your book up until I laid it down, I was convulsed with laughter - someday I intend reading it.

Go, and never darken my towels again.

I have had a perfectly wonderful evening, but this wasn't it.

I never forget a face, but in your case I'll be glad to make an exception.

I remember the first time I had sex - I kept the receipt.

I worked my way up from nothing to a state of extreme poverty.

Those are my principles, and if you don't like them ..... well, I have others.