

Shepparton Theatre Arts Group Incorporated Annual General Meeting 2021

Due to COVID-19 Held Via ZOOM 6th day of October 2021 at 7pm.

Welcome: *President Fiona to open the meeting: I would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet, the Yorta Yorta and Bangerang, I pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to their emerging Leaders. General welcoming comments.*

1. Present

Fiona Kennan, Nicky Pummeroy, Wendy Platt, Brendan Armstrong, Bron Prater, Sean O'Brien, Kathy Skidmore, Laura Varapodio, Ian Smith, Troy McKindley, Phil Croke, Dale Roberts, Sian Lewis, John Lewis, Robyn Black, Casey Fogarty, Carol Davidson, Suzanna Sheed, John Lancaster, Gemma Marchant.

Apologies

Cath and Ken Birkett
Matt Dowling

Motion: that apologies be noted and accepted.

Moved: Dale Roberts Seconded: Gemma Marchant Carried: Y

2. *Previous minutes of the AGM conducted 4 November 2020 have been distributed.*

Motion: that the minutes be accepted as a true record of that meeting.

Moved: Ian Smith Seconded: Laura Varapodio Carried :Y

3. Business Arising from Previous Minutes:

No business arising

4. President's Report:

PRESIDENT'S REPORT JULY 2020 to JUNE 2021 This report should cover the year from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, however I have continued it through to recently as we have been very much constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic and I felt the need to report on any activities after the usual end date. We continued 2020 in "pandemic" mode keeping a close watch on what STAG could present to our audiences, unfortunately restrictions continued irregularly making it impossible to present live shows, we turned to Zoom to keep in touch, most regularly for monthly Committee meetings. As reported last year our Zoom film, Corona Star 19 written by John Head was streamed on 4 July. This was a very successful initiative both financially and emotionally. With the on-going and ever-changing situation regarding the arts amid the pandemic, Laura Varapodio was appointed our COVID Officer creating a COVID safe plan for our premises and keeping Committee advised of any changes/adaptations throughout the year. In August under Gemma's direction, we presented a play reading of "Friday the 13th" by Jean Pierre Martinez. Using Zoom we had breakout rooms so several groups could read the play simultaneously and audience members could watch, all in all it was a success and it was good to see old and new faces and giving us a chance to catch up. In August 2020 we were advised of our success in applying for a \$6580 grant from the Greater Shepparton Connected Communities organisation. This money has gone towards the ongoing renovations in the Blackbox, in particular upgrading the greenroom area with toilet, sink and dedicated makeup/hair area. Troy McKindley has been overseeing this project with assistance from Phil Croke, Mitchell Street and Steve Condron. New props shelving has been built in the greenroom and Noella Kay and Carol Davidson spent many hours culling and sorting props which are now boxed, labelled and securely stored. In September John Head presented a Playwriting Workshop via Zoom, the writing process was broken down into all its components with participants then creating a monologue. Through necessity the Georgy Awards Committee created a new filmed category for Monologues. Workshop participants crafted their works to fit the guidelines, chose an actor to perform or presented the monologue themselves, this was filmed in the empty BlackBox theatre and entered into the competition. In September 2020 I was interviewed by Sue Nalder

from Latrobe University regarding a project/survey they were carrying out, titled "Delivery of Art and Culture Services in Greater Shepparton - Public service supply chains: A case study into Art Services at Local Government Level". I explained that STAG was not employed by the Council to provide art services but we hired WestSide PAC, at the community rate, to present our musicals and plays, we entered into a partnership with Riverlinks to present a show in their Afternoon Delights Season for which we received a flat fee. We have also applied for and been successful in obtaining Arts Grants and Matching Grants for specific projects or minor improvements to our premises. In October 2020 Nicky Pummeroy and I took part in a "Power of Art" day for the Fairley Leadership cohort, this took place via Zoom and involved us talking about the significance of theatre in the community and the connections made, STAG's history and the challenges and successes along the way. We then led them in a few fun theatre games. The year's Christmas party was held at The Cheeky Grog Company on 13 December, it was a very relaxed affair with much discussion about the year just gone and what was in store for the coming year. Thanks to Wendy Platt for organising this event. Encores, a concert featuring songs from a variety of lesser known musicals, was presented over 2 performances with different casts, on 27 March 2021 at Chapel on Maude. This joyous show was the brainchild of Justin Dohrman, the cast were assisted by mentors Justin Dohrman, Kat Bristol and Nicky Pummeroy. Fortunately we were actually able to present this show complying with COVIDSafe protocols, little did we realise this would be the only live performance we would be able to present during this reporting year. 10 in Ten was our contribution to the 25th Shepparton Festival in March, unfortunately the performances on 18-20 March 2021 were postponed and re-scheduled for June, but continued uncertainty and rolling snap lockdowns forced us to make the difficult but inevitable decision to cancel the live performance and consider filming the plays to be presented online, again due to the uncertainty of when filming could actually take place we cancelled this idea and instead held a rehearsed reading via Zoom on 10 August for all involved. In late June at a Festival celebration STAG Life Member and past President, Rob Robson was made a Festival Life Member, Rob and Maxine travelled up from Warragul for the occasion and it was wonderful to see them both looking fit and healthy, I took the opportunity of giving them a tour of the Shed and the BlackBox, they were very impressed with the changes that have taken place since their departure. We welcomed John Head and Noella Kay to STAG's Life Members Group in July and December respectively, both have contributed to the company in many ways and their dedication is greatly appreciated. Sadly, we farewelled Life Members Helen Ferguson and Lance Woodhouse during the year, their involvement in theatre in Shepparton went back many years with them both being instrumental in the creation of STAG. Only last Friday, 1st October, our beloved Life Member Dick Hutchinson passed away, he was a one in a million whose commitment to STAG both backstage and onstage will always be fondly remembered, as will his sense of humour and cheeky smile. Mel Matthews and Sharon Geraghty stepped down from Committee during the year and I thank them for their time and dedication while on Committee. We received approval to stage The Drowsy Chaperone in April 2022, we have a Production Team led by Casey Fogarty, Director and Gemma Marchant, Production Manager who are working through the processes necessary to hold auditions and start rehearsals. I'm sure we are all looking forward to the opening night of our first big musical in a long time. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Committee for their support, dedication and courage during this difficult time, working our way through these unprecedented times has not been easy, as we all know the performing arts has been hit very hard by rolling lockdowns, density limits, social distancing and many other terms new to our vocabulary. We are all aware of the invaluable contribution the performing arts makes to the well-being of the community at large and STAG will bounce back to thrill our audiences. Ian Smith has been overseeing the introduction of Microsoft Teams which will streamline STAGs communication, filing and record keeping. Bron Prater is leading a team gathering information and anecdotes for the creation of a 50th anniversary book. Our Treasurer, Brendan Armstrong is stepping down from the position he has held since 2017, we thank him for his steady and reliable work keeping our books. I especially thank my "right-hand woman", Nicky Pummeroy for her tireless work, positive attitude and boundless energy. Finally, I have been President of STAG since 2010 and I feel it is time that I stepped down from the role. It has been an exhilarating journey which I have thoroughly enjoyed. STAG truly is a wonderful family and a great asset to the community and we will continue to thrive in the new world that is dawning. Thank you for being a wonderful addition to my life, I assure you I am not going anywhere and look forward to contributing to STAGs future endeavours. Sincerely yours FIONA KENNAN PRESIDENT OCTOBER 2021

Motion: that the President's Report be accepted.

Moved: Dale Roberts Seconded: Gemma Marchant Carried: Y

Nicky Pummeroy thanked Fiona with speech below. Sian and John presented flowers and certificate of the committee and members behalf

Fiona Kennan Stag longest serving president

Without a doubt Fiona Kennan has been one of STAGs most influential members. Elected as President in 2010 she took on the top job when there was only \$1500 in the bank. The company was in such financial strife that at the time Life member Lance Woodhouse and wife Wilma offered the company an interest free loan of \$10,000 to stage a show. This offer was not taken up. Instead, under Fiona's guidance the company began what was to prove historically to be the most successful decade financially, performance wise, and in the strengthening and building of the company.

In 2011, the company needed a venue to perform the play Enchanted April. After a lengthy meeting with ideas being tossed from empty shops to football clubs and senior citizens venues, it was suggested that we clean out the storage room and create our own theatre. Thus began the dream of creating our own theatre without the costly constraints of hiring a venue. Fiona spent countless hours emailing, meeting with council and many long phone calls to building inspectors, building planners, builders, and plumbers. Without her dedication and determination, we would not have what we have today, STAGs very own theatre, The Bakehouse Blackbox Theater.

During her time as president, Fiona, continued to perform and direct leading with a calmness and professionalism through thick and thin. She supported new and old members to create and bring their ideas to the company. If she wasn't performing, she was doing makeup, helping with costumes or front of house. A multi-Georgy award winner she was presented a Life membership in 2015 on the final night of the play Merry Widows which she starred. Fiona leaves the STAG committee as the longest serving president. Her mark will forever run in the veins of the company and will be very hard to follow. Thank you from all of us who have had the pleasure to work alongside you over the last 10 years plus. You have indeed left the company in a better state than when you started.

5. Treasurer's Report:

The report covers the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

\$15,500 income

\$18,500 out

There has been an insurance rate increase

Solar Panels have helped cut electricity bills. \$60 for the whole year.

Motion: that the financial report of Shepparton Theatre Arts Group Inc for 2020/21 be accepted.

Moved: Sharon Geraghty Seconded: Ian Smith Carried: Y

6. Election of Office Bearers/Committee

By our rules all positions on the committee are declared vacant at each AGM.

Election of executive: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary.

a. President

Nomination for President received from: Wendy Platt

Wendy Platt be elected as President for 2021/22.

b. Vice President

Nomination for Vice President received from: Gemma Marchant.

Gemma Marchant be elected as Vice President for 2021/22.

c. Treasurer

Nomination for Treasurer - received from: Sean O'Brien

Sean O'Brien be elected as Treasurer for 2021/22.

d. **Secretary**

Nomination for Secretary - received from: Nicky Pummeroy

Nicky Pummeroy be elected as Secretary for 2021/22.

e. **Ordinary Members (up to eight)**

All positions are declared vacant. Mel Matthews and Sharon Geraghty stepped down during the year and we thank them for their time on Committee.

Nominations for committee ordinary members have been received from:

John Head, Troy McKindley, Bron Prater, Ian Smith, Laura Varapodio, Kathy Skidmore

All elected as ordinary members

7. **Membership fee subscriptions: amount and date payable.**

Membership fees for 2021/22 were: Adult: \$55, Concession: \$30, Family: \$80

Patron: \$30.

Adult: \$55

Concession: \$30

Family: \$80

Social: \$30

Moved: Gemma Marchant Seconded: Fiona Kennan Carried: Y

It is also necessary to set a date for payment of membership fees for this financial year.

MOTION: Due to COVID-19 making it impossible for STAG to carry out its usual activities it is proposed that the membership period be extended until the end of June 2023.

Moved:Laura Varapodio Seconded: Bron Prater Carried: Y

General Business:

8. **Sub-committees for 2020/21 and nominations for sub-committees**

*Comment: these are not formal committees required by the rules but rather sub-committees which operate to make recommendations to the STAG committee
Call for sub-committees for 2021/22 their new titles.*

Motion: that the sub-committees for 2021/22 and members of the sub-committees be as follows:

- **Bakehouse Building/Development:**

- **Reading:**
- **Artistic:**
- **Future Planning:**
- **Fundraising:**
- **Social:**
- **Technical:**

Moved: Phil Croke Seconded: Ian Smith Carried: Y

9. **Affiliations**

Motion: that Shepparton Theatre Arts Group Incorporated retain its affiliations with: Victoria Drama League, Music Theatre Guild of Victoria,

Moved: Gemma Marchant Seconded: Sean O'Brien Carried: Y

10. **Other Items of General Business: NONE**

Declare Meeting Closed – time: 7:39pm