

Hello everyone, great to see you all here today, welcome to the Annual General Meeting of Shepparton Theatre Arts Group for the year 2025. It is my absolute pleasure to stand before you as the current president of STAG. Wow what a year we have had. I am so proud of our remarkable and productive year. Where do I start! I will try and be brief but there is just so much to cover, I'll apologise in advance as you will have to listen to me for a little while.

Behind the scenes

You will notice the Blackbox has had a little face lift. It has been completely painted black and doesn't it look great. Our chairs aren't they magnificent! I had a patron say to be the other day that they "absolutely loved the show but the chairs were so comfortable, much more comfortable than those at Westside".

We have new lights, scrim and a smoke machine. New lights purchased by STAG, the scrim purchased using some wonderful sponsorship from Xavier Stevens and a donation of the smoke machine from Ian Smith. They were all utilised in our production in *Woman in Black* and certainly set the scene.

Working Bees, these are always happening and we are grateful to our volunteers who show up time and time again to help with all the non-glamorous work that needs to be done.

Remembering

This year we lost some of our beloved STAG family. Neil Case and Maxine (Hunt) Gee. We, as a community, are lucky to have been able to call these people our "family". They will be forever remembered for their support; their photos are lovingly displayed on our wall of remembrance.

Congratulations

Congratulations are in order for our very own John Head who received an OAM. A well-deserved honour.

Our Christmas Part went off really well. So many people attended. I had to move the venue to incorporate all the attendees but what a night. Congratulations to those who won the Joyce Baker-Dawber Award for All Round Production champion:

David Shelly – *It Takes Two*

The Skurrie Family – *Little Shop of Horrors*

Greg Wighton – *The Vicar of Dibley*

Sharon Geraghty – *The Physicist*

And Troy McKingley for the Annual Dick Hutchinson Award for Outstanding Service to the Company and we can't forget Matt Dowling's award for "Doing a Foster"

Congratulations also to our very own Nicky Pummeroy and Chris Colman who were cast in the movie *Fragile*, which is being filmed later this year. Something to look forward to.

Shows

Little Shop of Horrors – what an amazing show. I had the honour of organizing front of house and all the comments from the patrons as they walked out was truly amazing. Well done to everyone and congratulations to Helen Janke for her vision. Congratulations to all those who received awards at the Georgy's they were truly deserved.

Vicar of Dibley – No No No yes it was awesome. Everyone should be so proud. It was so much fun to do. We all had an absolute blast and ticket sales definitely showed that people love the classics. Thank you to Gemma for directing us so beautifully.

Month of Sundays – what a great opportunity this is for local people, who may not have auditioned before but love to sing, to be mentored by the likes of Kat Bristol, Nicky Pummeroy, Neroli Cochrane and Clifton Boschetti. Sometime it just takes encouragement to get up there and our mentors did an amazing job as did all our singers.

10 in Ten – thank you to John Head and Laura Stevens for coordinating this year's performances. The plays were of such high standard and each and everyone who directed, performed and watched all enjoyed themselves.

50th Anniversary Dinner – it was just brilliant. There was so much organising. Well done Nicky in wrangling all your helpers. Thank you to all who helped setup up/clean-up/perform/present – everyone, Bron for the book. It was a brilliant night. Personally, I got to be in the same room with a number of *Godspell* cast from 1984. Everyone just loved catching up. I also had the great honour in presenting Anne Bowen, Ric Birkett and Pat O'Connell with their STAG Life Membership Awards.

Woman in Black – who didn't love it? Everyone who came walked out absolutely blown away. It was my first time as Producer – thank you Bron Prater and Nicky Pummeroy for taking me along for the ride. We done to all the crew and to amazing cast. I don't know how you remembered all your lines and characters. Greg let me apologise now but I miss the eyebrows and rollers. I did Greg's makeup and hair and let me just say he suffered for his art. It was so much fun. **Christmas in July** – the talent we have here in Shepparton. I am sure you will all agree. Well done to everyone and especially to Kat Bristol who coordinated the singers. I did front of house for this and everyone just said "Wow". Truly spectacular.

Moving Forward

We have two shows before the end of the year. A musical – Chicago and boy are the tickets selling fast, get yours if you haven't already done so. By all accounts this is going to be one to remember so get all you jazz on and razzle dazzle them.

In November Bella Walker will be directing 17. If you haven't read it do yourself a favour it is sad, hysterical and thought provoking all in one.

We have multiple play reading, some will have passed by the time of the AGM but there will be plenty more. Thank you Gemma for organising this:

- Dracula - A comedy of Terror on 30/7/2025 @6.30pm
- Foxtrot B-59 original play by John Head 10th August at 6.00pm
- Agatha Crusty and the Village Hall Murder 20th August @ 6.00pm

Thank you

A huge thank you to Bella Walker for organising our costume display at MOVE. The committee decided it would be great to go and see it together. After a very yummy breakfast, It is wonderful to see costumes from the past shows and the slide show Bella has put together is brilliant. Definitely put this on your to do list.

Thank you also to all our volunteers, STAG wouldn't be the same without you all. It certainly doesn't go unnoticed. To our sponsors thank you, your contributions enable us to do what we do best and without your assistance we wouldn't be able to put on such elaborate and fantastic shows on for our community.

Finally, I have made the decision not to stand as president again this year. It is time for fresh new blood to take over. I'll be around but not in a presidential role. I would like to personally thank those who have supported me during my time. I have had some illness during this time and if it wasn't for my right-hand people I wouldn't have been able to get by. It has been a ride many ups and some downs. I don't think a lot of people understand what the committee does behind the scenes. Being on the committee means turning up to the working bees, helping with front of house, attending the bar, cleaning toilets, making the hard decisions, doing all the little things as well as being able to enjoy performing and on stage. Many hands make like work they say. I have loved my time as president, I have had the support of some amazing people who just get in and do what needs to be done every time and we have amazing STAG members who just turn up and help. We are a community and it is awesome.

Love you all.

Wendy Platt