



Mancom members' reports

President:

It's hard to believe another year has gone by, and as always I can look back and be proud to be part of the GCLT community. We began this year still feeling remnants of Covid however, just as the rest of the world has, we have worked through the challenges and have come out the other side. The community that we have is strong and resilient and we have proven that we can get through anything if we all work together and continue to put GCLT at the forefront of every decision we make.

As you can see from the reports from each of our management committee members, a lot of work has gone into this year and without these individuals we wouldn't be where we are. I would personally like to thank each of these people for continuing to put their time and love into this place. I also extend this thank you to the production committee for their work and supporting our incredible productions throughout the year.

At the conclusion of 2022 our beloved wardrobe manager, Shirley Whitehouse resigned. She had tackled some challenging costumes for our final shows and decided that it was time to retire. I personally want to extend my biggest heartfelt thanks to Shirley for the work she has put into GCLT, but it is time to enjoy retirement at its fullest. We also said goodbye to Isabelle Sutton and Kate Learmonth from the committee, but we welcomed Ricky Moss. We are always looking for people to help on the committee or any sub-committees that need to be formed. If you have ever thought about it, then reach out, we can answer any questions you may have.

Finally, I would like to thank all of our volunteers. From the front of house and box office staff, to the creative teams, cast and all the crew that helped put our productions together. We don't have a theatre to be part of without everyone working like they have for the past year. You all inspire me to continue doing what I do. No matter how challenging it may be to volunteer for a community organisation, by giving up your time and your energy for the benefit of the theatre, we can continue to create theatre for everyone to enjoy. I have loved being the president this past year (and the years prior) and I look forward to seeing GCLT continue to grow and deliver exceptional community theatre.

Stuart Morgan, president

Honorary secretary:

At the annual general meeting of members held on 27 March 2022, members elected to the management committee (Mancom) Stuart Morgan as president; Julanne Shearer, vice president; Ralph Lenton, honorary secretary; Chris Catherwood, honorary treasurer; Wendy Barnes, assistant treasurer; Lyle Stevenson, building manager; Lawrie Esmond, technical director; Amy-Louise Anderson, chair of productions; Kate Learmonth, publicity officer; Jeffery Walker, bookings officer; Shirley Whitehouse, wardrobe manager; Bob Watson, FOH manager; Lyn Smith, librarian; and Henk Steenhuis, social convener.

Members remitted the vacancy for assistant secretary to Mancom. Using the authority conferred by clause 14 of the Constitution, Mancom appointed Ricky Moss assistant secretary on 21 December 2022.

Kate resigned as publicity officer to take maternity leave on 10 October and Mancom appointed Jam Marshall as publicity officer on that date. Jam resigned on 16 November in order to travel overseas with her partner and the position of publicity officer remains vacant. Shirley Whitehouse

retired from the position of wardrobe manager on 16 November and this position also remains vacant.

In July, Mancom re-engaged Michelle Macwhirter as marketing manager and Michelle has kept the publicity portfolio ticking over throughout the personnel changes.

Mancom met monthly as required by clause 16(a) of the Constitution and, on average, eight members attended each meeting.

I mentioned in last year's report that one of the items on our long-term plan was to upgrade the kitchen/bar area. This was accelerated when an inspection by a City of Gold Coast compliance officer found several shortcomings in our system. By July, our kitchen/bar upgrade was complete and we are now fully compliant in regard to preparing and serving food and drink.

An inspection by the Queensland Fire and Emergency service found shortcomings in our record-keeping. We have addressed this and our record-keeping is now fully compliant with fire service requirements.

We have beefed up our building security by installing intruder alarms throughout the Molly's buildings and these are monitored in the same way as the sensor alarms in the main building.

We have also initiated a policy for working with children and young people so that we comply with the requirements of the Working with Children Act. You can access the policy from the Members page of the website. We still have more work to do in this area and will be addressing this in the coming year.

We experienced two big storms during the year which made the roof of the main theatre leak. A large amount of water got in and collapsed ceiling tiles in the bio box, destroying some equipment in the box. The leaks also discoloured many other ceiling tiles in the auditorium. We initiated an insurance claim for this damage and also for breakdowns to a bar fridge and an air-conditioning unit. All our claims were eventually accepted and we received insurance payments totalling \$14,436.96. We have replaced the bar fridge, mended the air-conditioner, repaired the roof and are in the process of replacing the bio box equipment. Mancom has not yet considered the discoloured ceiling tiles but I anticipate we will probably wait for another storm or two to pass through to ensure the roof repairs have fixed all the leaks before we consider replacing them.

Dealing with insurance companies made us realise that our building was probably under-insured. We engaged a valuer who gave us a valuation for insurance purposes of a little over \$2.1 million. We have increased our building insurance to cover this amount. We also shopped around insurance brokers and found that our current brokers, which are engaged through an agreement with the Association of Community Theatres, are as good as any.

We applied for grants during the year from the Commonwealth government to motorise our stage curtain operation and from the Queensland government to install rooftop solar panels. Both grant applications were unsuccessful.

We successfully nominated Shirley Whitehouse and Lyle Stevenson for GC Community Volunteer awards and successfully nominated Shirley for a GC Theatre Alliance Hero award. Our sponsorship of the GC Secondary Schools Drama Festival was maintained.

In order to be ready for anticipated legal changes, we have amended our no-smoking policy to include a ban on vaping.

Our retiring management committee has been a very effective group but its age is a matter of concern. Four Mancom members who are retiring at this AGM are in their eighties and another four are in their seventies. Several of them are offering themselves for re-election and we will be delighted to see them back. But they are not going to last for ever. We have attracted some first-class young people to take part in the management of our theatre, but we need more. So please, step forward and help build a vibrant future for our theatre.

As secretary, I have received great support from all Mancom and Prodcom members and I record my gratitude for their help. I also appreciate the invaluable help we receive from our honorary solicitor, Julianne Shearer.

Ralph Lenton, honorary secretary

Honorary treasurer:

After what was an extraordinary year from a financial perspective in 2021 for GCLT, 2022 has consolidated our “return to normal” life in a positive position.

Some points to note from this year’s financials are:

- ❖ Ticket sales in 2022 were weaker than the previous year by just over 20%. This was expected by many as 2021 saw the public, post Covid lockdowns, flocking to get back into the world.
- ❖ All productions were delivered profitably across the year, and I would like to acknowledge the tremendous amounts of work put in by our many volunteers in achieving another successful year.
- ❖ The theatre suffered from some minor damage from the constant rain in 2021 and early 2022, which saw some of our technical equipment being lost. Adding to this the advancements in lighting and the age of some of the theatre’s technical equipment, 2022 saw the need to hire more equipment than usual, pushing up the costs of productions.
- ❖ Insurance claims have been lodged, and in 2022, \$10,234 was received from our insurances to cover the losses.
- ❖ The cost of compliance to meet our catering needs was considerable through the year, resulting in GCLT conducting a complete kitchen renovation.
- ❖ Cleaning in a post Covid world has seen this expenditure reduced by nearly 30% from the previous year.
- ❖ Insurance premiums saw considerable increases in 2022, with a 50% increase in premiums. Further to this, the management committee decided it would be pertinent to conduct a building valuation in order to ensure the insurances were sufficient to have the theatre’s assets covered in a worst-case event. As suspected, insured amounts have been increased substantially, so there will be further rises to these expenses in 2023.
- ❖ The management committee has identified many areas of the theatre needing improvements across the year, seeing \$27,717 in repairs and maintenance costs. Further to this, an additional \$26,994 was spent on capital items. These capital acquisitions will continue into 2023 and beyond so GCLT can further improve the delivery of community theatre performances to the public.
- ❖ In 2021, we started advance purchasing of tickets through our booking system in bulk batches, providing a significant discount. 2022 started to see the results of this with a 48% reduction in ticketing costs.
- ❖ While it may not seem obvious to many, to operate a community organisation like ours with a loss of only \$2,720 after allowing for \$32,668 in depreciation (an accounting expense, not a cash expenditure) is a very solid result.
- ❖ The theatre’s depreciation schedule is another area to be addressed in the 2023 year, as it has not been updated for many years. Our auditors have recommended any items under \$300 in written down value be fully depreciated. From the current schedule, this is 205 items with a combined value of \$7,906. This action is necessary, and I would like to advise members this will be reflected as an additional depreciation expense in the 2023 accounts.

The theatre continues to be in a strong financial position, with \$99,939 in our bank accounts at the close of the year. These reserves are continuing to being utilised to purchase new capital items, mainly in the areas of sound and lighting.

Should any of our members wish to discuss any aspect of the financial position of the theatre, I am happy to make myself available. The 2022 profit and loss, balance sheet and individual production analysis are available from the Members page on the website.

Chris Catherwood, honorary treasurer

Building director:

There were a few changes to the theatre this year. Most notable was the replacement of the kitchen and painting of the foyer, steps and ramp. These changes brighten up both areas. Also fitted was an oven which no doubt will get plenty of use on opening nights.

The driveway is also being renovated and will remove bumps and puddles making foot traffic a whole lot easier.

Normal maintenance was carried out when required and if there is a bulb or leak needs fixing please call.

Lyle Stevenson, building director

Technical director:

Technical notes from the 2022/2023 season.

2022 Programme.

Plays

The Cake/Charitable Intent/Pride and Prejudice

All of the above productions were successful from a technical point of view, and were very well received by patrons.

Musicals

Sweet Charity/Jekyll and Hyde

Both productions were challenging from a technical perspective. Once again all audio systems and microphone cues were handled by computer and in a digital format. *Sweet Charity* was perhaps the biggest technical production we have attempted, with the live orchestra playing in Molly's, and the sound being mixed in the theatre with the cast onstage.

Jekyll and Hyde lived up to its name and was also well received by patrons.

2023 Programme

The Last Five Years has started off the 2023 season, again featuring a live band, and it was a pleasure to be able to present one of the most musically challenging productions I've been involved in at GCLT. Thank you Amy for having the insight to feature this play, and to Michelle Watkins, my fellow band members for the interesting musical direction, and a stellar cast.

General

Major upgrade to the theatre stage lighting is currently underway, involving the replacement of some of the older incandescent lighting with new LED moving fixtures. This not only provides us with greater variety in lighting design, but quite a saving in power usage. Upgrades will continue throughout the year as finances become available.

Audio system servicing is currently underway and will be completed prior to the opening of *Guys and Dolls*. Our radio mics are an ongoing high maintenance component of theatre inventory and will be upgraded to the newer digital variety as they become available.

Test and tagging of all theatre electrical equipment was completed in September 2022.

Thank you to all for your support and encouragement during the past 12 months.

Lawrie Esmond, technical director

Chair of productions:

The last 12 months have been highly successful on stage at Gold Coast Little Theatre. At last year's AGM we had just enjoyed *The Cake*, a funny and thought provoking contemporary comedy. A big thanks to Jim Dickson and his team for bringing this play to our audiences. From there, 2022 went on to bring us two more beautiful plays and two hit musicals.

Charitable Intent welcomed the work of Williamson back on to the GCLT stage with a piece beautifully acted by a range of GCLT regulars and some great new faces. Gael Ballantyne's careful and controlled direction kept audiences intrigued through this 90 minute drama. The next of our plays hit the stage as our final work of 2022. Having lost the originally advertised directors, we were thrilled to welcome Production Committee member, Di Francis, back into the director's chair for *Pride and Prejudice*. New life was breathed into this traditional comedy, seeing modern staging and theatre conventions used, whilst maintaining what audiences wanted when they came along to enjoy this much-loved Austen comedy. We thank Di and her team for their organisation, professionalism and fun-loving enthusiasm.

2022 also saw two popular musicals hit the stage. Firstly, the song and dance classic, *Sweet Charity*, sparkled, backed by an amazing orchestra, expertly housed in Molly's by Lawrie and our tech team. Cilla Scott and her team were such a welcome addition to our creatives, wowing audiences with this beautiful, long adored show. We look forward to welcoming this excellent team back this year and into the future. The second musical of the year changed the tone dramatically. *Jekyll and Hyde* saw our president, Stuart Morgan, finally get to direct a show that he asked for, after repeatedly filling our needs and requests. This dark, yet delicious piece will long be remembered for its remarkable performances, stunning set pieces and jaw-dropping costumes.

The first production of this year having recently been completed is sure to be just the beginning of what 2023 has to offer. I am thrilled and humbled to have been given the opportunity to direct *The Last Five Years*. Further to that our two extraordinary casts meant that I was able to direct it twice, at the very same time. For the very last time (maybe), how about that set? My experience as a director for our company only stands to remind me how lucky we are to have been able to develop such a supportive team of amazing people within the village behind every show.

I thank the outgoing Prodcom: Di Francis, Shane Caddaye, Lee Patterson, Ann-Britt Riget, Becky Morgan and Del Halpin for their support, their time and their wisdom. Although I am stepping away from the role of Prodcom chair for a while, I do so with no intention of being any less a part of our GCLT family and I have every plan to return to active duty in the future.

Amy-Louise Anderson. Chair of productions

Social convener:

I would like to thank all the volunteers and committee members who turned out for all the functions last year. Let's hope this year will bring us closer to normality.

Henk Steenhuis, social convener

Publicity officer:

[Position vacant. Report prepared by our marketing manager]

Over the past year, the promotional strategy for each production has included a mix of email marketing, social media, street banners, print materials and event listings on digital media websites and news hubs.

A key component of marketing success has been ensuring that each production has high quality photography, design and videography. Fortunately, GCLT has had excellent internal resources for photography (Shane Caddaye) and design (Stuart Morgan) and regularly books an external videographer to present shows in the best possible light.

The email list currently reaches 5,443 active recipients with a high 40% open rate and is a key driver of ticket sales, with emails sent each month including the newsletter plus show promotion emails.

GCLT has a growing social media following, with 4,200 followers on Facebook, 1,500 followers on Instagram and a new presence on TikTok. Reach each month varies from 10,000 to 40,000 impressions. Social media strategy includes posting promotional videos and photos, cast interviews, auditions and Facebook events. Paid social media campaigns have been effective at reaching new audiences. Social media is also a strong driver of ticket sales.

With increased reliance on digital promotion, GCLT has limited its print materials to street banners, internal wall posters and sometimes physical postcards and posters. Most recently, GCLT replaced the production board with digital screens, allowing us to reduce print costs and the time required to design and pin the board.

The Marketing/Publicity roles provide additional support to the theatre including assisting with the program, ordering cast gifts, promoting/supporting events such as the Dolphins and hirer shows, website updates and preparing marketing materials for Season launch.

Michelle Macwhirter, marketing manager

Bookings officer:

Hello everyone from your amazing box office team of Jeffery, Barry, Del, Sharron and Di.

We have been extremely busy and successful at the box office during the past 12 months with *The Cake, Jekyll and Hyde, Pride and Prejudice, Charitable Intent* and *Sweet Charity*.

Our shows played to full and near full houses.

Ticketsearch, our online ticketing platform, has performed extremely well.

New features we have launched in the last 12 months included:

- The 2023 Subscription series.

- Selling Fast and Limited Availability notations appear on events with high sales.

- Reservation reminder emails and Membership renewal reminder emails are now sent out prior to expiry.

- Financial members can now purchase one member ticket online instead of ringing the box office.

Thank you to everyone who has booked and supported us in the past 12 months and we hope to see you again.

Jeffery Walker, bookings officer

FOH manager:

The past year has been an active and productive year for the Front of House team of volunteers. The new kitchen and undercounter oven have been installed to ensure that all of the Health, Food handling and Safety requirements have now been maintained.

Bar sales remained steady and the spending per head, although acceptable, was hampered by two productions not having an intermission. It should be noted that profits from the Bar are all retained by the theatre for use in productions or repairs etc. and are not shared with outside parties.

Thank you to our team of dedicated volunteers for their tireless efforts and dedication to GCLT.

I look forward to the coming year and hope that our productions will be successful.

Bob Watson, FOH manager

Wardrobe manager:

Position vacant.

Librarian:

Being the theatre's librarian has largely changed over the years that I have held the position. My main activities are acquiring the performance rights for plays and musicals. Some plays, still under the terms of producing the play, require a set of scripts be purchased. We do have a collection of plays in our library some of which date from 1950 when GCLT first began.

In the past few years we have, by necessity, entered the digital age where material can be accessed quickly and easily. Most communication is now email or SMS. We do use Australia Post to return rehearsal material to the theatrical companies who hire it to us.

The librarian works in conjunction with the chair of productions and the committee. They ask me to ascertain who has the rights and if they are available for non-professional or community theatre. We usually have to wait some years before they are released. Until fairly recently, we still used faxes or early morning phone calls to London or New York. Now emails suffice.

Rights are now held by agents like Origin Theatrical Pty Ltd or Hal Leonard. Applications are done online and payments are made using theatre debit cards.

One of the major changes in producing a musical, or a play with music to a lesser degree, is that digital music can be used. Sometimes it is embedded with the licence from Music Theatre International such as was the case with *Jekyll and Hyde* and 2023 first play *The Last 5 Years*. However, with *Sweet Charity* the digital music had been withdrawn. Either we had to put together a 23 piece orchestra or find an alternative! Luckily the music director was able to source an American music director who could produce a reduced orchestration for us, which he did and we used. So, we had an orchestra set up in Molly's, our original theatre. It did cost us but it was brilliant. When we do use the digital music it is downloaded into everyone's phones.

One issue for me is that some cast members "forget" to return libretti and conductor scores at the end of musicals. This costs us money and perhaps a bad reputation.

The 2022/23 season was very interesting to put together and luckily we were successful in acquiring a variety of plays/musicals to appeal to a wide audience range. This was reflected in audience numbers and critical acclaim.

We survived Covid.

Lynette Smith, librarian