

wyndham
theatre
company

Presents

Charles Dickens'

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Directed by Alaine Beek

Crossroads Theatre

Corner of Synott Street & Duncans Road,
Werribee

24th & 25th Nov. 1st & 2nd Dec. 8pm
25th Nov & 2nd Dec 2pm

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT

www.wyndhamtheatrecompany.org.au

wyndhamcity
city coast country

Crossroads Uniting Church



Welcome



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



I love Christmas and I love a good story. I'm also fascinated with 19th century history. So, I was excited to once again be able to direct this wonderful Charles Dickens play 'A Christmas Carol'.

Dickens is a fascinating man. His writing was not just for entertainment but also gives a social commentary on the horrific life of so many living in squalor in 19th century London. He witnessed this first hand – his father sent to debtor's prison

which forced Dickens to, as a young boy, work in a rat infested blacking factory. This is what gave Dickens a deep sympathy with the outcasts of respectable society. He would wander the dark streets of London to experience first hand the poverty of so many.

Dickens loved to perform and later in his career gave readings of his plays to literally thousands. We won't have anywhere near that number but I'm sure the enthusiasm will be there.

Thank you to Wyndham Theatre Company for keeping community theatre alive. It is so vital in giving us all a shared experience to other worlds and a sense of belonging to the one we live in.

To my wonderful eclectic cast and crew whose enthusiasm and energy have made this whole experience a joyful one. Thank you. I can't ask for more than that.

- Alaine Beek - Essence Theatre Productions



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Hello everyone and welcome. The Wyndham Theatre Company has a rich history in Wyndham. This year we celebrate 55 years of community theatre production in Wyndham and 15 years at the Crossroads Theatre. We have produced 140 productions included 3000 cast and crew, entertaining 30,000+ local residents. From 1968 we performed at Werribee Park then the Wyndham Cultural Centre from 2001.

In 2009 we moved to the Crossroads Hall where we have performed most of our productions since with a couple of returns to the WCC with council support. The company is in a rebuild phase post COVID and we are seeing an increase of all ages including older adults and retirees in becoming involved in community theatre. The interest generated from the recent Wyndham Volunteer Expo and our participation in the recent WOMPA Short Play Festival has been very encouraging as we rebuild and offer training in theatre craft for our new members. Our play readings are also growing in attendance.

There have been many challenges for performing arts over the last 3 years, so it is great to be back at our Crossroads Theatre again with our production of the Charles Dickens classic A Christmas Carol. We are delighted to have Alaine Beek come on board as the director ably supported by Fiona Scarlett as assistant director. Onstage and behind the scenes we have some 30 people in the cast, backstage and front-of-house roles. They are very excited about performing this classic play for our Wyndham audience. Involvement in performing arts organizations can have lifelong benefits and learning growing older. Participation in community theatre has a positive impact on health and well-being, group relationships, learning and creativity. As we move towards 2024 we are already planning our season starting with the WOMPA short play event at the WCC. We will release the remainder of our season before the end of the year.

- Alan Thompson - President

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

A Christmas Carol, is a novella by Charles Dickens, first published in London by Chapman & Hall in 1843 and illustrated by John Leech. A Christmas Carol recounts the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, an elderly miser who is visited by the ghost of his former business partner Jacob Marley and the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come. After their visits, Scrooge is transformed into a kinder, gentler man.

Dickens wrote A Christmas Carol during a period when the British were exploring and re-evaluating past Christmas traditions, including carols, and newer customs such as cards and Christmas trees. He was influenced by the experiences of his own youth and by the Christmas stories of other authors, including Washington Irving and Douglas Jerrold. Dickens had written three Christmas stories prior to the novella, and was inspired following a visit to the Field Lane Ragged School, one of several establishments for London's street children. The treatment of the poor and the ability of a selfish man to redeem himself by transforming into a more sympathetic character are the key themes of the story. There is discussion among academics as to whether this is a fully secular story, or if it is a Christian allegory. Published on 19 December, the first edition sold out by Christmas Eve; by the end of 1844 thirteen editions had been released. Most critics reviewed the novella favourably. He went on to write four other Christmas stories in subsequent years. In 1849 he began public readings of the story, which proved so successful he undertook 127 further performances until 1870, the year of his death.

A Christmas Carol captured the zeitgeist of the early Victorian revival of the Christmas holiday. Dickens acknowledged the influence of the modern Western observance of Christmas and later inspired several aspects of Christmas, including family gatherings, seasonal food and drink, dancing, games and a festive generosity of spirit.

Marley's Ghost.

CAST

Charles Dickens

Scrooge

Bob Cratchit

Niece Fran

The Fundraiser

The Girl Singing

Jacob Marley

Ghost of Christmas Past

Boy Scrooge

Old Fezziwig

Young Girl

Young Man

Ghost of Christmas Present

Mrs Cratchit

Belinda

Patricia

Small Cratchit

Martha

Tiny Tim

Want

Ignorance

First Businessmen

Second Businessmen

Old Woman

Old Joe

Second Woman

The Undertaker

Third Spirit - Grim Reaper

Girl in Sunday Clothes

JOSH FERGUSON

GILBERT GAUCI

SAM PUNSHON

JESSICA GIACCOTTO

BELLE FULLER

BRIDELIA GAUCI

ANDREW CROFT

LISA BALZER WHITNEY

CHARLIE MURPHY

SAM PUNSHON

JESSICA GIACCOTTO

BEN CAZALY

VICKY RUSSELL

KATRINA GAUCI

KAYLA MURPHY

BRIDELIA GAUCI

BELLAFAYE BREARDON

JESSICA GIACCOTTO

CHARLIE MURPHY

BELLAFAYE BREARDON

KAYLA MURPHY

ANDREW CROFT

BEN CAZALY

VICKY RUSSELL

ANDREW CROFT

LISA BALZER WHITNEY

BEN CAZALY

BELLE FULLER

BELLAFAYE BREARDON

CAST & CREATIVE



Alaine Beek
Director

Alaine Beek is founder and Artistic Director of Essence Theatre Productions, a local independent not-for-profit theatre company. She is main playwright for the company and a number of her plays have won awards, toured regionally and interstate, studied by VCE Students and/or published on australianplays.org.

Alaine runs a unique youth drama program 'Say it Out Loud' and is determined to establish a fit-for-purpose space for performing arts in Wyndham.

She performs most weekends at Werribee Park mansion in 'What Was That?' or 'The Dress'.



Fiona Scarlett

Assistant Director

Fiona is a Melbourne based actor, singer and writer, originally from Gippsland in Victoria. Before taking time off to have a baby, Fiona most recently performed with Essendon Theatre Company in scratch season of Dear Sugar, La Mama's Cabaretica series and wrote sketch comedy for Comedy On The Rocks as part of Melbourne Comedy Festival in 2022.

2019 saw Fiona take her solo cabaret, Love Bites, to Edinburgh Fringe to wonderful reviews and prior to this was touring Australia with children's theatre company Meerkat Productions, performing musical puppetry shows.

She has performed and written for the Madwomen Monologues series by Baggage Productions at the Butterfly Club in a number of seasons. Fiona was a core ensemble member of the Owl and Cat theatre between 2016-2019 as an actor and writer, playing lead roles in productions of Tinderbox, The Boy's Club, The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name, Crush, Longevity, Choice, Damaged Guns and a regular writer for their Orgasm sketch series.

Fiona studied at Verve Studios. Performing in school plays formed the basis for a love of theatre later in life but Fiona's awakening to acting began when playing a tiny part as Ringmaster in a devised production of Soar at the Women's Circus when studying acrobalance in 2013. This experience opened her eyes to the possibilities acting can bring in exploring myriad lives. She finds theatre both thrilling and cathartic and couldn't imagine life without it.



Joshua Ferguson

Charles Dickens

Joshua has been with WTC since 2019 as secretary and president over the years and performed in the One Acts Series of that 2019, as the 1930's Idiot Hero, Captain Crummond in Bullshot Crummond. This will be Joshua's full length theatre debut, narrating the play as Charles Dickens, the notable 19th century English novelist, play write, actor, director and philanthropist. Josh has his hands in many pies with this performance, assisting in costumes and prop and really hopes to be able to make this much loved play, fun, thrilling and exciting for both cast and crew as well as the audience. Josh has also been an extra in "The Widow" by Brendon Young and performed and won best Adult Comedy and the Adjudicators Award for lavish period set, costume and sound design... for Benedict III, written and directed by Alaine Beek for the VDL Inaugural Monologue Competition in 2020. "After Covid and the few years away from the stage, I am thrilled to be able to come together with friends and family to celebrate Christmas and this amazing time of year"



Gilbert Gauci

Scrooge

Gilbert is glad to see Wyndham Theatre bringing shows to the stage again since the lockdowns and was keen to take part.

Gilbert has performed at Wyndham previously as Vinnie in The Odd Couple (2017), Lawrence in Calendar Girls (2018) and Geoffrey in Stepping Out (2019). Doing multiple shows a year and travelling on public transport, this is Gilbert's sixth show of 2023, having done The Wicked Witches Of Oz (Encore), Ladies' Day (Malvern) and a Shakespearean trilogy with Much Ado About Nothing (Eltham), The Popular Mechanicals – based on Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream (Encore) and recently Hamlet (Avid Theatre). The adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Gilbert grew up watching was a recorded VHS tape of the 1970 film, Scrooge, starring Albert Finney and Alec Guinness. He hopes you enjoy the show and wishes you a merry holiday season, but until then....Bah Humbug!



Sam Punshon

Bob Cratchit & Fezziwig

Sam has been interested in theatre since the 80s with performances at South Street, Her Majesty's Theatre, Ballarat. She later went on to be involved in Blok and Lyric Theatre Productions, trying her hand at backstage. Sam progressed to community radio in Ballarat as well as becoming a Heritage dancer at Sovereign Hill.

Her interests are in television, film and singing and has always enjoyed being part of the community environment that this local theatre offers

"Being a part of WTC has been so exciting, playing Bob Cratchit and Fezziwig and challenging myself with new experiences and meeting new friends has really been amazing".



Jessica Giaccotto

Scrooges Niece Fran, Young Girl & Martha

Jessica is beyond proud to be part of A Christmas Carol as her debut theatre performance. She has organised all of her own costumes for the show and has played a big role along side Harcourts Point Cook to sponsor this production. After undertaking training with The National Theatre of Melbourne earlier in the year, she fell in love with the art of acting and wanted to find a local theatre community to be a part of.

She has been travelling since 2019 which is a love of hers and has been to Japan twice & Indonesia, with plans to see Europe, America and more of Asia with her fiancé and daughter. She is also the proud owner of a local beauty salon, Jessie Gia Beauty doing eyelash extensions and brow art which was founded in March 2021.

"Something I have really enjoyed through this experience is the character development and the challenge of playing multiple people. So much hard work has gone into A Christmas Carol and I know people are going to love it!"



Belle Fuller

Fund Raiser & Reaper

Belle Fuller graduated from The Actors Conservatory in 2004 with an Advanced Diploma in Stage and Screen acting. She went on to fulfil her passion in stunts and trained in Stage Combat, becoming a member of The Society of Australian Fight Directors.

After leaving the industry to complete a Bachelors, she returned to the industry in 2019. Since then she has worked on 5 independent feature films, The Clearing, 13 tv commercials and making her comeback in theatre in Wyndham's Theatre company, A Christmas Carol.

She absolutely loves theatre and believes it's the training ground for any actors. She is represented by Verdict Artist Management.



Bridelia Gauci

Belinda & The Singing Girl

Bridelia is a local student who has grown up attending theatre productions and absolutely loves it. She has taken part in Dynamic Performers Australia productions of The Addams family, Kaleidoscope, All Shook Up and Robin the Hood where she has played in the youth ensembles. This year she also took part in MacKillop College's production of the Addams family where she played in the ensemble as a dead ancestor. Bridelia also has done several years of dancing and now loves competing in gymnastics.

Bridelia is loving being in this production and meeting new friends and learning about the art of Theatre work. Bridelia wants to thank the cast and crew for giving her this unique opportunity.



Andrew Croft

Jacob Marley, Business Man & Old Joe

Andrew is playing old Marley, who visits Scrooge to tell him of his fate if he does not change his ways.

He is also playing the large businessman and old Joe, a merchant proprietor of a run down shop in the city that usually sells good acquired from not so honest ways.

This is Andrew's first theatre performance since school musicals such as Oliver in the 1980s.

He is a baritone and has participated in various church choirs in the last 25 years including Holy Trinity Williamstown.

His kids have decided that it was time he took a short break from driving them places and did something he enjoys.



Lisa Balzer Whitney

Ghost of Christmas Past & Second Women

Lisa is playing the first spirit to visit Scrooge in his dark and dreary home. He take Scrooge on a journey to the past to show him what's changed.

Lisa has been treading the stage for roughly 40 years! She has been a wicked Step Mother, a Wicked Aunt, a Wicked Witch, a Prostitute, and a Psychic to name a few roles. Her last role was as Barbara in David Williamson A Conversation with Sunshine Theatre Company in 2018. They were asked to perform this play at the Melbourne Fringe Festival in 2019.

“I have enjoyed getting to know my cast mates and have loved rehearsals and bringing Dickens’ characters to life. I hope you all enjoy our production. I just love being on stage and being other people”



Charlie Murphy

Tiny Tim & Young Boy Scrooge

Charlie is 8 years old, the youngest member of the cast.

When he is not at school or rehearsal you can find him practicing his soccer skills. Charlie has a great sense of humour and a fantastic outlook on life.

This is his first ever play, he has learned so many new skills during rehearsal and has met so many new friends.

"I'm playing Tiny Tim, and Boy Scrooge, this is my first play, I love all the excitement behind the scenes and on stage, I'm a little bit nervous for opening night, but I can't wait!"



Ben Cazaly

Young Man Scrooge, Second Business Man & The Undertaker

Ben is fairly new to the theatre community, this being his second ever production, hopefully of more to come.

He was the Stage Manager in The Geelong Repertory Theatre's production of 'The Book of Everything' back in 2019.

Since then, Ben has been travelling throughout the UK, teaching in two different countries, training himself up in writing, radio and improv classes and treasuring every moment he has had with the cast and crew of A Christmas Carol.

He hopes you spot the sneaky DuckTales reference he spun into Young Scrooge and that you enjoy the show.



Katrina Gauci

Mrs. Cratchit

By day Katrina is a nurse educator and in her spare time she loves taking part in Amateur theatre. She has been in a few local musicals with Dynamic Performers Australia, where she has been a part of ensembles in The Addams family, Kaleidoscope, All Shook Up and Robin the Hood.

This is her first role in a play and she is loving playing Mrs Cratchit in this production. She loves sharing the stage with the amazing talent in this production and also gets the chance to work with her daughter who is playing one of her children.

This has been an amazing experience, thanks to Alaine and the brilliant production crew and awesome cast.



Kayla Murphy

Belinda Cratchit & Ignorance

Kayla is one of your younger in 'A Christmas Carol'. It has been extremely fun getting to work with the talented cast and crew of this production. I've made many new friends and learnt many new acting techniques.

This will be Kayla's debut performance and she is so excited for the opening night yet so nervous for this it to end.

"My favourite thing from this production has been seeing the backstage workings of a theatre show"



Bellafaye Breardon

Small Crachit Child, The Girl in Sunday Clothes & Want

This is Bellafaye's debut in acting. She is a vibrant, happy person who was immersed in her characters and remembered all her lines from the very first rehearsal.

Bellafaye loves acting and she feels excited to bring her characters to life. She enjoys providing entertainment and joy for her audience.

Bellafaye hopes she will be able to pursue a long and rewarding career doing theatre and perhaps even acting on the big screen. She hopes you will enjoy "A Christmas Carol" presented by Wyndham Theatre Company.



Vicki Russell

Ghost of Christmas Present & Old Woman

This is Vicki's 7th appearance with WTC having played the roles of Queen Eleanor in The Lion in Winter, receiving VDL nomination for best actress in a drama, directed by Alaine Beek, the seemingly uncaring wife in The Lyons, the eccentric Letitia in The Vicar of Dibley, Jessie, retired school teacher with attitude, Calendar Girls, + 3 x 1 act plays, now she plays 2 very different characters the charismatic Ghost of Christmas Present, and the light fingered Old Woman.

Vicki is a committee member of WTC and is pleased to have us back onstage doing this full production after Covid shutdowns, well done to all hardworking crew both onstage and behind the scenes, keeping everything ticking along.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Directors

ALAINE BEEK & FIONA SCARLETT

Production Manager

ALAN THOMPSON

Stage Manager

ALAN THOMPSON

Set Design

ALAN THOMPSON

Set Realisation

ALAN THOMPSON, BETH CROFT, KAYLEE ROSSETTO

Set Dressing

JOSH FERGUSON

Lighting Design

ALAN THOMPSON

Audio Complilation

BETH CROFT

Lighting Operator

KAYLEE ROSSETTO

Audio Operator

BETH CROFT

Backstage Support

GRACE CROFT

Costumes

JOSH FERGUSON, VICKI WITHERS & SANDRA SAVORY

Rehersal Promt

FIONA SCARLETT

Poster Design

KAYLEE ROSSETTO

Program Design

JESSICA GIACCOTTO

Photography

LORELEI VOISEY VINTAGE AURA PHOTOGRAPHY

Ticketing Manager

ALAN THOMPSON

A CAPELLA CHOIR

Judy Vincent - Choir Master

Angela Murnane

Chin Hiu

Elaine Belcher

Elizabeth Smith

Hamish Petrascu

Wendy Barnes

COMMITTEE

Alan Thompson President / Treasurer

Peter Ross

Elizabeth Ross

Fiona Scarlett

Vicki Russell

Lisa Balzar Whitney

Bob Carey-Grieve

Lara Helene

LIFE MEMBERS

Peter Ross

Elizabeth Ross

Alan Thompson

Pamela Tunen

BEHIND THE SCENES









WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

SING ALONG!

We wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year
Good tidings we bring to you and your kin
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year
Oh, bring us some figgy pudding
Oh, bring us some figgy pudding
Oh, bring us some figgy pudding
And bring it right here
Good tidings we bring to you and your kin
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year
We won't go until we get some
We won't go until we get some
We won't go until we get some
So bring it right here
Good tidings we bring to you and your kin
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year
We all like our figgy pudding
We all like our figgy pudding
We all like our figgy pudding
With all its good cheers
Good tidings we bring to you and your kin
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year
We wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Harcourts Point Cook

Harcourts Point Cook have sponsored our theatre production this year providing us with ongoing support through advertising, such as the billboard located at the venue as well as online advertisements.

Harcourts Point Cook

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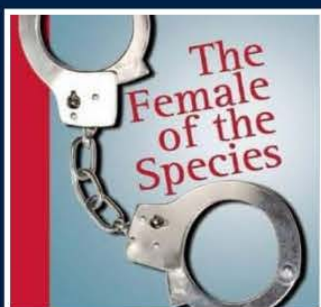
pointcook@harcourts.com.au

pointcook.harcourts.com.au

UPCOMING LOCAL PRODUCTIONS

2024

- Female of the Species by Joanna Murray - Smith
- After Dinner by Andrew Bovell
- WOMPA One Act Play Festival - April 21st



A CHRISTMAS CAROL PRESENTED
BY WYNDHAM THEATRE COMPANY

2023



THANK YOU!!



Wyndham Theatre Company

info@wyndhamtheatrecompany.org.au

<https://www.wyndhamtheatrecompany.org.au/>

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Essence Theatre Productions

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