

JOHNNY BELINDA

"In my endless silence,
life was meaningless un-
til he came. I fed him,
I kept him warm, I could
not sleep if he felt ill.
And when he smiled my
heart was filled with
song. I love him better
than my life."

— Elmer Harris

THE MACKAY COMMUNITY THEATRE

ADMINISTRATION

Patron: Dr. Ian Chenoweth

Director: Mr. R. F. Kilpatrick

Executive Committee:

Mrs. N. Green, Mrs. A. Atkinson, Mr. J. Onley, Mr. N. Meredith,
Mr. J. Smith and Mr. E. Adamson

Hon. Secretary: Mrs. N. Green

Hon. Assistant Secretary: Miss M. McVicar

Hon. Treasurer: Mr. N. Meredith

Publicity and Programmes: Mr. J. Smith

Play Selection Committee: Mrs. Pam Galletly and Mr. C. Paull

Front of House Manager: Miss Mary Williams

Trustees:

Messrs. A. M. M. Galletly, H. Hart and Senator I. A. C. Wood

BACK STAGE TO-NIGHT

Stage Manager: Ernie Adamson

Crew: Bill Langdon, John Onley

Electrics: Ken Bourne

Sound: Malcolm Lowe

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Valuable assistance has been given this production by many individuals and business houses. The Community Theatre acknowledges this co-operation and extends sincere thanks to the following:

Mr. Dave Murray for assistance in erection of stage ceiling; Mr. Barry Freeman of A.B.C. Brisbane, for assistance with sound effects; Radio 4MK for assistance in publicity; Mr. Basil Graham, signwriter; Mr. Michael Moohin and the Tradin Post for the loan of properties; and all those who kindly displayed posters, hoardings and windshield stickers advertising the production.

NEXT PRODUCTION



When this programme went to print the Executive Committee was giving consideration to our next production, which is to be a comedy.

The play selection panel has put forward four excellent comedies as possibles for the next subscription production, and a casting date will be announced as soon as the matter is finalised.

The four plays being considered are "Life With the Girls", "Travellers' Joy," "Winter Sunshine" and "Here We Come Gathering".



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THE PRODUCER



Just this time last year Colin Paull was busy with another play. That was "Ten Little Niggers", the great Agatha Christie mystery, which we hear, is now enjoying a revival in the U.K. "Niggers" broke quite a few records for Community Theatre and can certainly be considered one of this producer's best efforts.

Mr. Paull is experienced in both drama and comedy, as producer and actor and as one of the Theatre's most capable stage managers.

In choosing "Johnny Belinda," Mr. Paull recognised the many pitfalls that could pronounce failure if ineffectively handled. His choice of "Belinda" followed quite an exhaustive test for a number of this Theatre's more competent young actresses. He has strived for individualism in each character of the play and has taken on the difficult task of acting in the play he has produced.

INTRODUCING

THEATRE ROYAL, Mackay

JULY 23rd, 24th, 25th, 1963.



The scene of the Play is Prince Edward Island, a splinter of land, south of Newfoundland and north-west of Nova Scotia, jetting out into the mystery of the Atlantic. A rickety railroad serves the length and breadth of the island; and in the outlying districts lives a hard-bitten race of farmers, who divide their time between fishing and tilling stubborn soil.

The Play is laid at the eastern end of the island near a town called Souris, a bleak little village, perched on a cliff with a winding road down to the wharves where the cod fishermen put in, and where the cod are gutted and salted before being dried on stave tables along the cliffs. Each farmer has his pigs, sheep, geese and cattle, the whole family sharing in the labour of the farm, from the grandmother who spins and works at her loom, to the children who help with the chores. Rail fences must be repaired, barns shingled, and barn doors painted the customary brick-red, the more prosperous of the farmers whitewashing their houses every year or two. The soil, while fertile, has been worked for many generations, and requires nursing. It is done in a primitive way. In winter, oyster shells are dredged from the river-beds, and thrown on the land for lime every five years as crops are rotated from potatoes to hay. The island is beset by furious summer storms.

Once the fishing is over, the crops planted, these Scotch-Irish farmers, with a sprinkling of French, can relax in such diversions as the Sunday-school picnic, with rustic arbours built in the fields, or dance at the school-house, the local fiddler supplying tunes inherited from father to son, on an instrument which has never been tuned; old and young join in square dances, the fiddler tapping his heel in tune with his music. More important is the Fair at Charlottetown, the capital, where farmers exhibit their prize stock, stand in awe of the six-legged calf, and risk a few odd dollars on the trotting races.

Of course, now with automobiles and radios, the prized possessions of farmers who can, or cannot, afford them, times have somewhat changed; but only a few years back the country people still wore homespun, and tumbledown mills ground their grain or buckwheat. A highly religious community still, where church-going is all but compulsory, and where desecration of the Sabbath can mean gaol.

This is the background of the Play.

'JOHNNY BELINDA'

BY

ELMER HARRIS

adapted by **SORREL CARSON** and **JOHN HANAU**

with the following

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Jimmy Dingwell, the Butcher	Bill Collinan
Dr. Jack Davidson	Jim Bussell
Belinda McDonald	Lyn Rowe
Black McDonald, Belinda's Father	Jan Smith
Lucky McCormick	Colin Paull
Stella Maguire	Margaret Monaghan
Villagers	John Buttle, Carmel Ellul, George Scott, Robin Cox
Maggie McDonald, Black McDonald's Sister	Kath Ponting
Mrs. McKee and Mrs. Lutz, Village Gossips	Esma Kean and Alma Chataway
The Reverend Edward Tidmarsh	Cyril Boudry

PRODUCED BY COLIN PAULL



SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The action of the Play passes in the living-room of Black McDonald's Grist Mill on Prince Edward Island, in the extreme north of Canada.

ACT 1

Scene 1 — Autumn
Scene 2 — Autumn.
Scene 3 — Autumn.

ACT 2

Scene 1 — Spring.
Scene 2 — Autumn.

ACT 3

Scene 1 — Winter.
Scene 2 — Winter.
Scene 3 — Winter.

TO-NIGHT'S CAST



However far **LYN ROWE** goes in theatre (and we hope it will be far) she will never forget "Belinda". This is Lyn's first appearance with Community Theatre, and it is a credit to herself and her producer that she has achieved such a standard in this, one of the most exacting of roles. Miss Rowe's previous experience in drama was gained at Teachers' Training College in Brisbane, where she took part in Shakespearean productions and comedy, and even handled her own production of "The Importance of Being Earnest".

Devoted attention to detail has been one of **JIM BUSSELL'S** primary concerns in mastering the extremely difficult role of Dr. Jack in to-night's production. Jim comes to us from Townsville, where he has acted and produced with the St. James Players and The Genesians. His most notable role of late has been that of Sakini in "Teahouse of the August Moon", and his latest in the "production line" was "The Women" for St. James last year. As a member of the Townsville Choral Society, Jim took part in many musical comedies.

The part of Black McDonald is perhaps the most challenging encountered by **JAN SMITH** in a series of character roles over the past THREE years. In this period he has played Wilkinson in "Dear Delinquent", Wargrave in "Ten Little Niggers", the Brigadier in "Breath of Spring" and a number of smaller parts.

Schoolmaster **BILL CALLINAN'S** busy life makes his appearance to-night one of the interesting aspects of the production. He teaches by day, lectures at Mackay's University Centre at night, has the responsibilities of a family man, and still finds time to enjoy the relaxation of theatre work. Bill's last appearance was as Lombard in "Ten Little Niggers".

COLIN PAULL makes his first appearance as actor in a major production for this Theatre since his memorable portrayal of Edward Bare in "Murder Mistaken" in August, 1961. To-night he plays the brutal Locky McCormick in his own production.

MARGARET MONAGHAN, a young school teacher with an A.S.D.A. to her credit, plays her first role with this Theatre as Stella Maguire.

KATH PONTING has taken time off from looking after a home and family to return to theatre after an absence of a number of years. Kath's appearance as Maggie in to-night's production is her first since her association with the Ipswich Little Theatre and the Brisbane Arts Theatre some years ago.

ESMA KEAN brings a wealth of experience into her performance of Mrs. McKee in "Johnny Belinda". Her last appearance in a major production with this theatre was as Abby Brewster in "Arsenic and Old Lace" in September last year. Esma and **CYRIL BOUDRY** (who plays the Reverend Tidmarsh to-night) were members of the cast of "Fumed Oak" which brought Community Theatre some notoriety when it won the major award at the recent Central Queensland Drama Festival. Cyril was the Rev. Dr. Harper in "Arsenic and Old Lace".

Another newcomer to the stage to-night is **ALMA CHATAWAY**, who plays the part of the second village gossip, Mrs. Lutz.

BE OUR GUEST . . .



If you wish to meet some of the people connected with the presentation of to-night's play (and there are many more than you'll see on stage to-night) you'll be made very welcome at the Community Theatre's next Club Night.

Our Club Nights are held at the C.W.A. restrooms in Gordon Street on the first Wednesday evening of every month. If you wish, you can join in play readings, the presentation of one-act plays, and many other club activities. Perhaps you may even like to become a member.

If you enjoy what you see to-night you may wish to join our ranks right away. Phone our Secretary (Mrs. Green) at 5548, or call at White's Newsagency.



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Top Festival Award Goes to Mackay

(From the “Morning Bulletin,” Monday, May 6, 1963)



The Mackay Community Theatre broke the Rockhampton Little Theatre's hold on the Central Queensland Drama Festival's major award when it was adjudged the best group in the finals on Saturday night.

Mackay won the award after competing against 10 other groups in the preliminaries and against Rockhampton No. 1 and Mt. Morgan in the finals.

The adjudicator (Mr. James Mills) said of the Mackay Community Theatre's entry, “Fumed Oak” by Noel Coward, that he had seen the play innumerable times, but when it was well done he didn't tire of it. This performance was a case in point, in that he had thoroughly enjoyed every moment.

Of Megan Kean, who played the daughter, Mr. Mills said that she was the first well-built child he had ever seen in the part, but he could pay her his highest compliment in saying she was every bit as repulsive as the skinny wretches she had always seen cast in other productions.

Others in the cast of “Fumed Oak,” which was produced by Mr. Jim Brown, were Cyril Boudry, Esma Kean and Betty Atkinson.

ACTORS MAY BE PELTED

(From the "Daily Mercury")

A troupe of "travelling" actors who will present a play in Mackay later this year are fully expecting to have things thrown at them by the audience.

Not only will they expect it but they will encourage it.

The "Travelling troupe" is made up of members of the Mackay Community Theatre and the play they will present will be an old-fashioned melodrama entitled "Only An Orphan Girl".

The whole essence of old-fashioned melodrama is audience participation.

Melodramas, such as "Only An Orphan Girl", "East Lynne" and "The Drunkard", were famous in the early American theatre and were performed by travelling troupes who presented one night stands.

In those days audiences took their theatre a little too seriously and it was common practice for the villain to be greeted by boos and catcalls and pelted with fruit and peanuts.

The Community Theatre will revive this style of theatre with its production of "Only An Orphan Girl" to aid the Mackay branch of the Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association, after the August school holidays.

(Producer is Ray Riordan, and the venue will be the cabaret room at the Boomerang Hotel-Motel. "Only An Orphan Girl" will run for one, two, three or more nights.)

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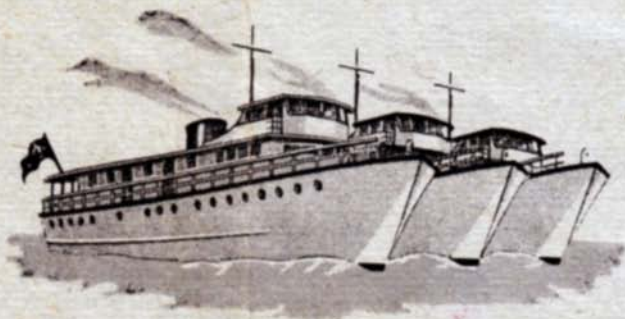
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