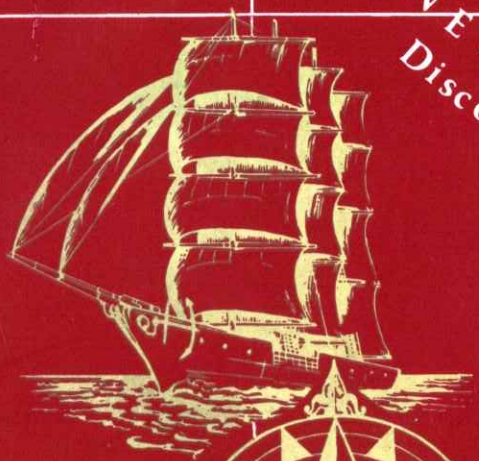


« West of the Reef »



NEW SOUTH WALES
 Discovered by Capt. Cook 1770.

Halifax Bay.

Magnetic I.
 (high)

Cleveland Bay

C. Cleveland

June 5

C. Bowling-green.

June 4

Holborne Isle.

Whitsunday

C. Gloucester

(Sun hills visible 12 Leagues)

Edgecumbe Bay.

(Low land between the bays)

C. Conway

Repuise Bay

CUMBERLAND ISLES
 Passage

June 3

Pentecost I.

Peak Vis 13 1/2

C. Hillsborough

June 2

Peak Vis 18 1/2

Extensive barrier reefs, mostly dry at low water, but within 5 1/2 smooth water. On the outside high breakers

In the presence of

His Excellency Commodore Sir JAMES RAMSAY, K.C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.C.
(Governor of Queensland)

THE TOWNSVILLE CHORAL AND ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY

presents

“West of the Reef”

(By MATHER and MARTIN)

5th - 12th SEPTEMBER, 1981

CIVIC THEATRE, TOWNSVILLE

*SPECIAL THANKS to BRIGADIER N. R. SMETHURST, M.B.E.,
Commander 3rd Task Force, North Queensland Area, for his help and co-
operation at our World Premiere.*

Mayor's foreword for programme of Townsville Choral & Orchestral Society's production of "West of the Reef"

It's a privilege for me to have the opportunity to contribute to this important publication.

As patron of the Townsville Choral and Orchestral Society, I'm well aware of the the society's deep involvement with many aspects of the performing arts in Townsville.

The society, and the organisation which preceded it, have been associated with our city for more than 75 years now.

During this time, its members have fostered and encouraged significant progress in their particular field.

They have arranged and performed in numerous musical presentations and choral activities, and have, of course, been closely involved with the development and encouragement of many talented young Townsville people.

But I think it can be fairly said that "West of the Reef" ranks among the finest achievements of the society in its 75 year history.

Those who attend the opening night will be witnessing a world premiere of the production.

It was solely written and produced in North Queensland.

I'm told the musical is set in this region — in the latter part of the last century.

This was an exciting and vital period of our development — it was near the time that our city was founded.

So I shall be delighted to see the "West of the Reef" interpretation of this fascinating era.

This premiere is, of course, a significant and noteworthy event — not only for the society — but all Townsville people and those throughout Australia who enjoy the performing arts.

I believe the significance of the occasion has been acknowledged and reinforced by the presence of Their Excellencies, the Governor of Queensland, Sir James Ramsay, and Lady Ramsay.

Sir James and Lady Ramsay are our most welcome guests for this important occasion.

So, on behalf of the Townsville Choral and Orchestral Society, and all the people of Townsville, I would like to extend our warmest greetings to Sir James and Lady Ramsay.

We are honoured that Their Excellencies have been able to attend.

But it's not really surprising that Sir James and Lady Ramsay are visiting our city for this premiere.

In Townsville we are well aware of Their Excellencies' keen interest in this part of our State.

And I'm sure that "West of the Reef" will hold a special attraction for Sir James and Lady Ramsay, as it will for me.

In advance, may I commend and congratulate playwrights Brian Martin and Gillian Mather, the society, and those who have contributed to "West of the Reef".

I'm sure it will be an outstanding and unprecedented success.



MIKE REYNOLDS,
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF TOWNSVILLE.

OFFICERS OF THE T.C. & O.S.

PATRON: M. F. Reynolds

PRESIDENT: T. Aitkens

VICE-PRESIDENTS: A. J. Smith, O.B.E., Rev. K. Stevens,
G. Dean.

CONDUCTOR: B. Young

DEPUTY CONDUCTOR: B. O'Connor, N. Smith

PIANISTE: B. O'Connor

DEPUTY PIANISTES: E. Smith, J. Ritchie

PUBLICITY: R. Allen

LIFE MEMBERS:

Mesdames E. Dawson, E. Ellery, D. Nott, M. Walker; Messrs
T. Aikens, J. Gilchrist, H. Harris, M. Murray, H. Nott, P. Wells.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: O. Rooney

MEMBERS:

Mesdames M. Bobeldyk, L. Clancy, D. Pease, P. Waters.
Messrs N. Challenor, J. Gilchrist, P. Marangelli, M. Murray,
J. O'Connor.

LIBRARIAN: H. Nott

SECRETARY: B. Pease

TREASURER: M. Walker

THE TOWNSVILLE CHORAL AND ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY

75 Years of Song

The pregenitors of the society were two small choirs — The West End Musical Union and the City Choir — which combined in 1906 to form the Townsville Musical Union. In 1927 the choir was renamed the Townsville Choral and Orchestral Society with president, Richard McLelland; conductor, W. Sholto Jones and pianist, Ray Penprase.

During World War II the choir went into recess; being reformed in 1946 under the baton of Ray Penprase with pianist Miss Redman. Shortly after, Ella Dawson was appointed pianist and held this position until 1975. She was succeeded by Berneice O'Connor. Ray Penprase retired in 1973 and Percy Wells conducted until his retirement in 1979 when our present conductor, Brian Young, took charge.

Our primary aim has been competition in the annual North Queensland Eisteddfod; indeed the society sustained this movement over many years. Since 1953 we have presented thirty-three musicals to the Townsville public.

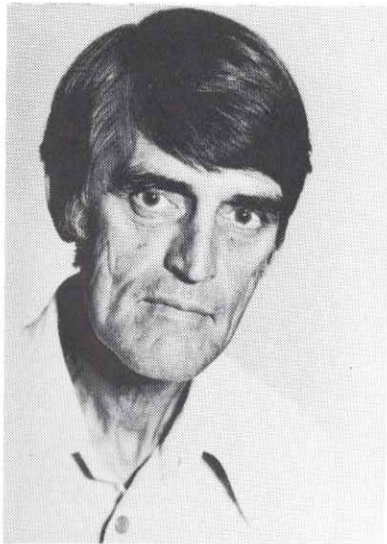
This year for our 75th Anniversary we are proud to present the World Premiere of "West of the Reef", a musical drama of the early days of the Townsville district. Lyrics and libretto are by local residents Brian Martin and Gillian Mather.

Half the proceeds of the gala first night will be donated to the North Queensland Society for Crippled Children.

Many thanks to all who have assisted in this production. In particular we record the patronage of the Board and Management of "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" on opening night as part of their Centenary Celebrations. The first edition of the "Bulletin" was published on Monday, 5th September, 1881.

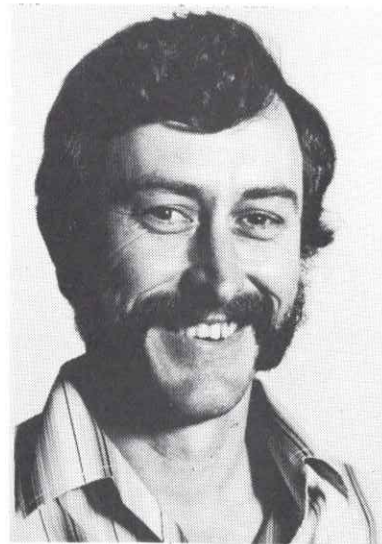
We invite those who are interested in our work and who possess a reasonable amount of musical ability to join us. You can make application for membership by contacting the Secretary, P.O. Box 5615, MSO, or phone 79 2495.

Practices are held at our hall, 485 Sturt Street, each Tuesday night commencing at 7.30. The Secretary may be contacted on practice nights at the hall, phone 72 1094.



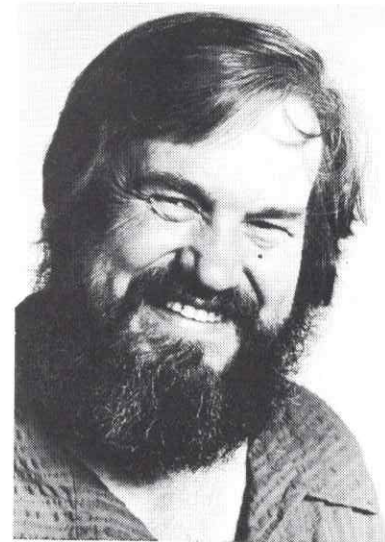
JOE WATERS as **GEORGE**

After a lengthy period away from musicals Joe returns to offer his expertise in the role of George.



ALAN WALKER as **J. T. BROWN**

A new member who sang in the chorus of "Iolanthe" now plays the important role of the reporter J. T. Brown.



ALAN POMEROY as **BULLY HAYES**

Alan portrayed the difficult leading role of "Petruccio" in "Kiss Me Kate" and carries on the good work as the villainous Bully Hayes.



JEAN RICHARDS as **MRS. HOPE**

A member who has worked in the chorus line for many shows and now plays her first speaking role.

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY

James Cook University of North Queensland congratulates the Townsville Choral and Orchestral Society on "West of the Reef", a production based on real characters and real situations from some of the more colourful years of North Queensland's history.

James Cook is the only University in Northern Australia and, indeed, one of the few 'tropical' universities in the developed world. Situated on a pleasant, park-like campus, 10 kilometres from the centre of Townsville, the University has a total enrolment of about 2,000 students.



*Vice-Chancellor of J.C.U.N.Q.,
Professor K. J. C. BACK*

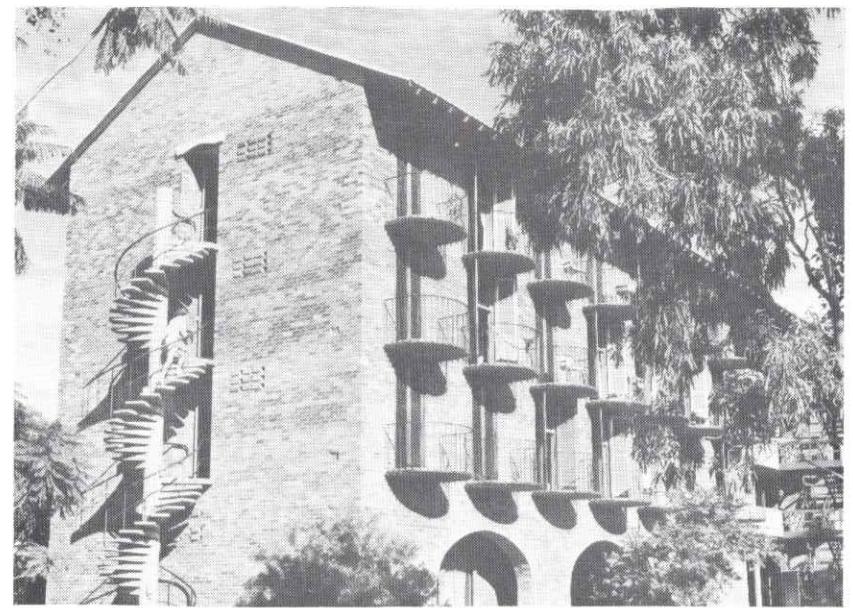
In its teaching and research programs, James Cook covers the usual range of subjects, as at other universities, but special emphasis is placed on topics of particular relevance to the local region and the tropics in general.

Despite its comparatively small size, the University has built up a world-wide reputation for its work in a number of key areas including tropical veterinary science, tropical marine science and research in the field of natural disasters mitigation — notably disasters caused by tropical cyclones (hurricanes).

In all of these areas, the University is able to draw on the diverse range of expertise of its twenty or so departments. For example, in the field of marine science, its research effort involves disciplines as varied as marine biology, zoology, biochemistry, geology, radar, physics, systems analyses and hydrology — to name but a few.

On the cultural side, the North's history and prehistory are being investigated, recorded and preserved by the University's archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, librarians and staff of the Material Culture Unit.

As well as catering for the needs of school leavers, James Cook University is acutely aware that education is an ongoing process and that an increasing number of people need to update their qualifications on a continuing basis to keep abreast with developments. Many departments make special arrangements so that their courses can be taken part-time and after normal working hours. In addition, some departments run special postgraduate courses for people employed in industry and in research institutions.



James Cook University — Hall of Residence.

As its name implies, JCUNQ is North Queensland's University. Many of its facilities are available to outside users and University staff provide advice and assistance over a wide range of expertise. During the 20 years since its inception, it has been a guiding principle of the University that its teaching and research programmes should be relevant to community needs at the local, national and international levels.



James Cook University — Indonesian Tutorial Class.

THE ART OF MAKE-UP

By GILLIAN MATHER

History tells us that the use of cosmetics is an art that has without doubt been in use for a very long time. The Egyptians practised an exaggerated form of eye make-up to enhance their beauty and the use of cosmetics to gain effect has persisted through the ages. Early products contained arsenic, mercury and even lead substances with fatal results in many cases. It has been mooted that Queen Elizabeth I used white lead on her face which greatly contributed to her death. However, the use of cosmetics continued—such is the vanity of women.

The development of make-up can be attributed to the Etruscans who came to Rome and played without the usual rigid masks, using coloured pigments and fats which in fact form the very base of modern make-up.

Tremendous strides in technology were made with the introduction of film in the 1920's. Highly artificial heroes were presented with starkly etched eyebrows, chiselled features and slicked down hair—the heroines were like alabaster statues, with highly arched eyebrows and cupid bow mouths. The more advanced film and theatre became, the more refined make-up became. No longer were the roughly drawn lines on the face acceptable or the layers of thick grease paint. Artists began to evolve a more natural appearance and new products were produced that revolutionised the whole film industry. Sticky spirit gum moustaches that frequently fell off became a thing of the past as new fixatives became available.

Water soluble pancake bases replaced the greasepaint and now it is used only as touch up and for special effect purposes doing away with the shiny countenance which was hard to control. The use of zoom lens in television and film demanded more skilful techniques and it became the job of the make-up artist to create harmony and colour co-ordination between the performer and the role.

So too did prostheses work develop. The present day make-up student must study anatomy, sculpture, chemistry and drawing, with special emphasis on wigs and hair styling. Using special latex solutions the entire character of the face can be altered. In this way no one performer can become type cast, as in earlier years. Latex has the advantage of mobility and this is particularly evident in modern productions such as 'Planet of the Apes' where the critical zoom lens exposes the face to closeup shots. There is no doubt that the film industry has significantly contributed to theatrical and television development. The modern make-up studio resembles a doctor's surgery—rows of chemicals, boxes of pancake, a selection of brushes and other paraphernalia mingle with the pervading odour of ether and methylated spirits creating a clinical atmosphere which is further endorsed by the make-up artist in his white coat.

Film in its infancy drew on the theatre for its artistry and inspiration and it now repays its debt by rendering technical skills and 'knowhow' back to the theatre.



RHONDA MITCHELL as GRACE McMANUS

A new arrival in Townsville and this is her first major role. She possesses a beautiful voice which you will find most pleasing.



OWEN ROONEY as ANGUS McMANUS

He has played many roles previously for the Society and is the hard-working Chairman of Committee.



KEN WELLS as HUMPHREY

Ken worked with us in "Kiss Me Kate" and now plays the pompous Humphrey.



DOUG LEE as WILLIAM

Another newcomer to principle roles, he only worked in the chorus of "Iolanthe", and we feel sure you will enjoy his portrayal of this difficult role.

SETTING FOR A PLAY

During the turbulent decade and a half from its first settlement in 1864, Townsville was a bustling frontier town.

The mushrooming growth of the town owed much to the mining booms on the Star River, Ravenswood and Charters Towers. Additionally it provided a port to export the products of the interior.

Shipping increased as the trade for the hinterland was funnelled through the port on Cleveland Bay. This had a marked effect on the population as for the first twenty years crews from visiting ships outnumbered the population, sometimes by more than two to one.

The hotels sprang up to cater for the thirsty visitors and the Exchange Hotel in which "West of the Reef" commences was so typical of those early public houses.

Built in the very early days of Townsville by E. A. Head, adjacent to the theatre called the Exchange Assembly Rooms, it was taken over by Mrs O'Neil who later married Alexander Ball, one of the three discoverers of Townsville. The original two-storey hotel was destroyed by fire in September 1881, the month in which The Townsville Bulletin was launched.

The successful introduction of island labourers to the sugar plantations of North Queensland stimulated a demand for these workers. The infamous blackbirders plied their trade in the South Seas and Billy Hayes, the American sea captain, was probably the most notorious of the blackbirders. Even the responsible local company of Burns Philp Ltd. found two of its ships the "Heath" and the "Hopeful", in breaching the government immigration regulations.

Out of town, the first settlers and miners lived in daily fear of attack from the hostile Aborigines. Southern Australian history books rarely emphasised the ferocity of their attacks or highlighted the fact that such encounters caused between 400 and 450 white deaths.

It was a town designed around the Customs House and hotels along the Strand, turning down Wickham Street then along Flinders Street, past the wharves and warehouses with the houses of the wealthy merchants spread out along the beach and slopes of Melton Hill.

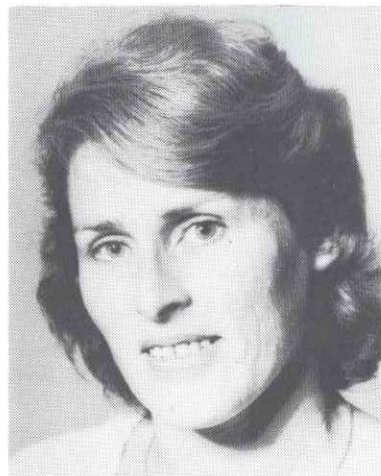
It also provided a rest and recreational centre for pioneers seeking respite from the harsh interior. Even the celebrated John Murtagh MacCrossan camped on the shores of Cleveland Bay to recuperate from his fever. Until 1881 arrivals by sea either negotiated the slippery rocks or were stranded waiting in small launches until they could float over the bar which blocked the entrance to the mangrove-fringed crocodile-infested creek.

The beauty of this tropic outpost impressed the overseas and southern visitors time and time again and the memoirs of the literate few captured this wonder. For instance, one visitor wrote:

"Above him the great cliff which crowns Castle Hill is burnished with the yellow light of the newly-risen sun, which but five minutes ago rose from the horizon 'fiery red with haste'; the dark blue mass of Mount Elliott to the south is relieved from the gloominess and glamour of the night; the creek with the river beyond, gleams and glistens; tiny wavelets flicker over the bay; the long line of fleecy surf twists and twirls in graceful folds; the island rests in a setting of azure enamel; the sea moans musically on the beach — and so nature rejoices in the beauty and glory of the morn."



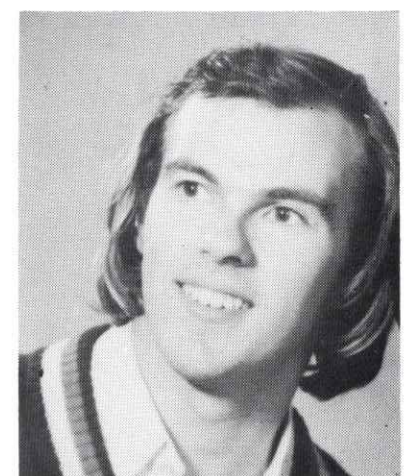
JULIE DEARNESS as TILLY
Julie's delightful personality comes through in her excellent portrayal of Tilly.



ELIZABETH SMITH as KATH
Elizabeth gives an excellent performance as the bossy but lovable Kath.



MAUREEN ALLEN
(Wardrobe Mistress)
No one works harder than this lady and the excellence of her work will be shown in the costuming of the show.

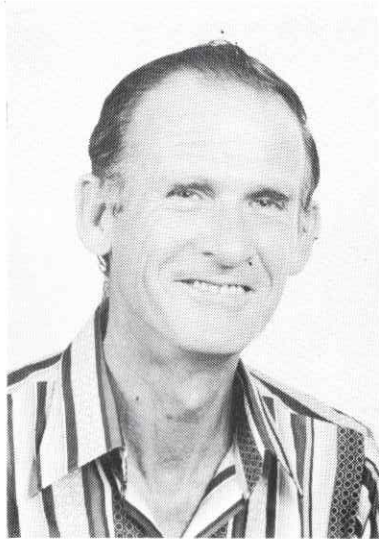


DAVID BROOKE-TAYLOR
as THE PREACHER
David played the comedy role of Will Parker in "Oklahoma" and is a real surprise packet as the Preacher.



BERNEICE O'CONNOR
(Pianiste)

Berneice carries out her duties in a most devoted manner and the Society is most fortunate to have a person with such musical talent.



BRIAN PEASE as **BAR FLY**

CAST

George
Kath
Maisie
William

Bully Hayes

Bar Girls

J. T. Brown

Bar Fly

Irish Bar Fly

Preacher

Erasmus Fitch

Sea Captains

Mrs Hope

Mingo

Humphrey

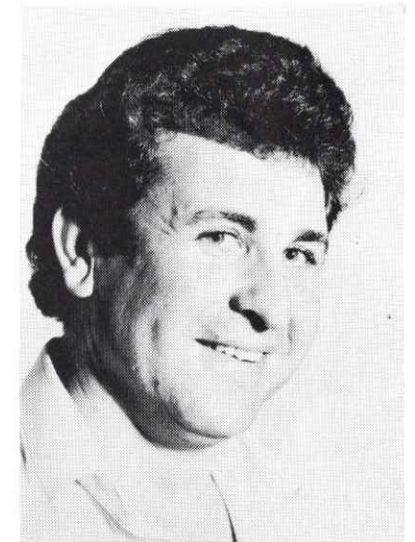
Duncan McDonald

Grace McManus

Angus McManus

Tilly

Joe Waters
Elizabeth Smith
Chris Webb
Greg Radley
Doug Lee
Geoff Nolan
Alan Pomeroy
Judy Lamont
Lorraine Kertland
Wilma Chenery
Alan Walker
Brian Pease
Owen Rooney
David Brooke-Taylor
Neil Smith
Otto Hampel
Chris Hill
Don Adamson
Jean Richards
John Kift
Ken Wells
Norton Challenor
Daphne Turnbull
Rhonda Mitchell
Rob Allen
Owen Rooney
Julie Dearness
Judy Pomeroy



JOHN KIFT as **MINGO**

Another new face, he has previously worked in the chorus of "Kiss Me Kate" and now shows his talent as the bodyguard Mingo.



MICHAEL MURRAY (Stage Manager)

SYNOPSIS OF "WEST OF THE REEF"

ACT 1

The story opens in a waterfront hotel in Townsville in 1881. The proprietor of the hotel George O'Grady is concerned that four notorious blackbirders are in port and that they are to be meeting in his hotel that night. His wife, Kath, in a practical way insists that "business is business" and that a blind eye be turned to the unwelcome guests.

The captains duly arrive, including the famous 'Bully' Hayes who takes a fancy to the female companion of William McManus, the profligate son of a struggling farmer.

A quarrel develops into a brawl as William is coerced into a knife fight with Bully.

The entrance of Captain Duncan McDonald saves William from certain death and we meet the ill assorted duo Mingo and Humphrey which form his entourage.

Robert Towns' agent Fitch enters and settles up with the blackbirders for past cargoes of black labour.

The action is interrupted by the sudden entrance of the Rev. John Payne, and evangelist, who endeavours to hold a revival meeting in the hotel. After a scuffle he is thrown out.

Bully Hayes, the mate of the "Water Lily", McDonald's ship, is naturally hostile when McDonald informs him that he will not be receiving any of the profits. In a stormy scene McDonald gives the ship to Bully.

The act closes with the triumphant Bully strutting in his new promotion and Captain McDonald, taking pity on William, decides to take him home.

— INTERVAL —

ACT 2 — SCENE I

Opens at the McManus farm as Mrs Hope, a neighbour, is saying farewell to Grace McManus after bringing her some stores from town.

Grace expresses her distaste for the pioneer life in contrast to Mrs Hope who tries to encourage her, but mentions the fact that a Ball will be taking place the following night in Townsville.

Angus McManus, the father, enters and Grace asks him to go the Ball and be her escort. Angus flatly refuses, as he is anxious about his cattle in the drought and cannot spare the time.

A heated argument develops between Grace and her father which nearly leads to violence. Grace retires in tears and the old man is startled by a thunderous knocking which heralds the arrival of Captain McDonald, Humphrey and Mingo together with the drunken William.

Very concerned Angus and Humphrey go to the bedroom to care for William, leaving Grace alone with Captain McDonald. After some initial embarrassment she becomes friendly with McDonald, who, attracted to her, begins to make love to her. She rebuffs him and sweeps out leaving him somewhat amused.

ACT 2 — SCENE II

Next morning, after spending the night in the barn, McDonald asks Humphrey to instruct him in the art of waltzing. This interlude is interrupted by Grace who exhibits a terse attitude towards McDonald.

Angus is interested when McDonald suggests that a partnership could be possible between them. They exit to examine the farm's potential. During their absence we meet Tilly, a West Indian companion servant to Grace, who shows a considerable interest in Mingo, McDonald's body guard.

Their romantic interlude is shattered by the explosive entrance of Angus who has discovered that three of his cattle are speared. His anger is further fanned by the entrance of William who quarrels with his father. Angus orders William out of the house and in retaliation William discloses that Captain McDonald is a blackbirder, whereupon the old man orders McDonald off his property.

ACT 2 — SCENE III

The Ball in town is in progress and we meet the socialites and the upper crust of Townsville.

Old Angus has relented and arrives with Grace at the Ball.

Towns' agent Fitch accosts Angus for the non payment of mortgage fees, and an unseemly scuffle develops.

Angus drags Grace and Tilly from the Ball and storms out.

A messenger arrives with the news of a massacre at the Hope's farm and all the men are called to form a posse.

ACT 2 — SCENE IV

Back at the McManus homestead the old man is in a terrible state as McDonald arrives to lend a hand in case the farm is attacked.

The old man refuses aid and as the farm is attacked, he is speared to death leaving Grace and McDonald to work out their future together.

CREDITS

STAGE MANAGER Michael Murray

CONSOLE OPERATOR Donna Ahlers

WARDROBE MISTRESS Maureen Allen

COSTUMES Lynne Clancy, Ailsa Doig, Heather Dearness

SET DESIGN Brian Martin

SET CONSTRUCTION Michael Murray, Jim Gilchrist, Harry Nott, Eddie Goon Chew

LIGHTING DESIGN Bob Garland

LIGHTING ASSISTANT Terry F. Brown

PROPS Vernie Sayers, Daphne Pease, Margaret Bobeldyk, Gillian Mather

HAIR STYLES Mae Nielson

MAKE UP Gillian Mather, Claire Rooney and Wilma Chenery.

PHOTOS FOR PROGRAMME Les Brady

FRONT OF HOUSE Maisie Walker, Freda Shaw, Margaret Laun, Trina Nielsen, Daphne Pease, Ettie Downey,
Ann Padgett, Margaret Wheeler

CHOREOGRAPHY Ann Roberts School of Dancing

SPECIAL THANKS to "The Speckled Hen" and "Pots and Pans" for the loan of the props

PROMPT Peter Kelly, Kevin Currie



MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT 1

OVERTURE

1. "Rum is the Drink for You"
George Bar Flies and Chorus
2. *Hornpipe Ballet*
3. "Ich Liebe Dich"
Bully Hayes and Chorus and Dancers
4. "I am the Captain now"
Bully Hayes and Chorus.

INTERVAL

ACT 2

ENTRACTE

5. "What's to become of me"
Grace
6. "What do you know of my life"
Grace and Angus
7. "Song of the Sea"
Duncan
8. "My Bonnie"
Duncan
9. "I don't like the Sea"
Humphrey
10. "River Song"
Tilly
11. Reprise : "What's to become of me"
Grace and Tilly
12. "This is the night"
Chorus
13. "To Waltz with You"
Grace and Chorus; Dancers and Ballet
14. "Duncan's Ride"—Orchestral Interlude
15. "No Time"
Grace and Duncan
16. Ultimo Finale
"West of the Reef"
Angus, Duncan and Chorus



GRAMME



THE ACTION OF THE MUSICAL IS SET IN THE 1880s

ACT 1

Bar of The Exchange Hotel, Townsville

ACT 2

- | | |
|---------|---|
| SCENE 1 | The McManus Homestead
at Braemar Station |
| SCENE 2 | Bar of The Exchange Hotel,
Townsville |
| SCENE 3 | The McManus Homestead
at Braemar Station |
| FINALE | Tableau |

LADIES OF THE CHORUS

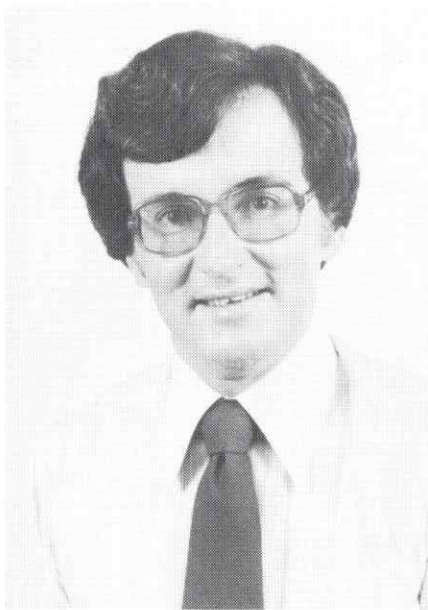
M. O'Sullivan
M. Tann
K. Murdoch
B. Snewin
J. Richards
A. Davis
L. Clancy
Y. Kaye
E. Potter
P. Daveson
W. Chenery
M. Lucas
L. Kertland
A. Secombe
A. Wisbey
J. Lamont
C. Webb

GENTLEMEN OF THE CHORUS

R. Sayers
B. Marangelli
G. Purchase
O. Hampel
C. Hill
M. Dyson
R. Hinds
D. Adamson
J. Gilchrist
E. Goon Chew
R. Cannon
P. Squires

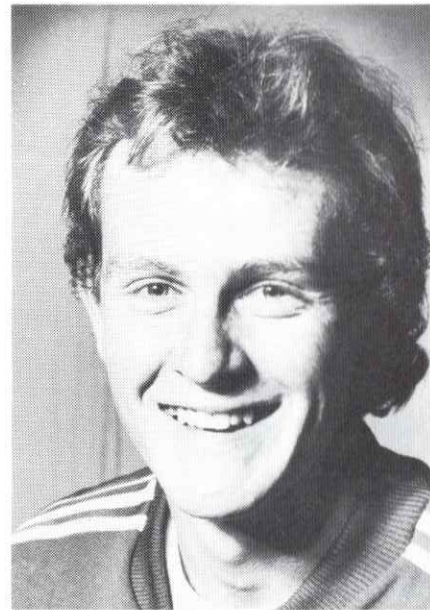
Ann Roberts School of Dancing

Janelle Dumaresq
Megan Heppell
Franchesca Poletto



BRIAN YOUNG
(Musical Director)

Our hard working Conductor who has brought the Society to a very high standard in choral work.



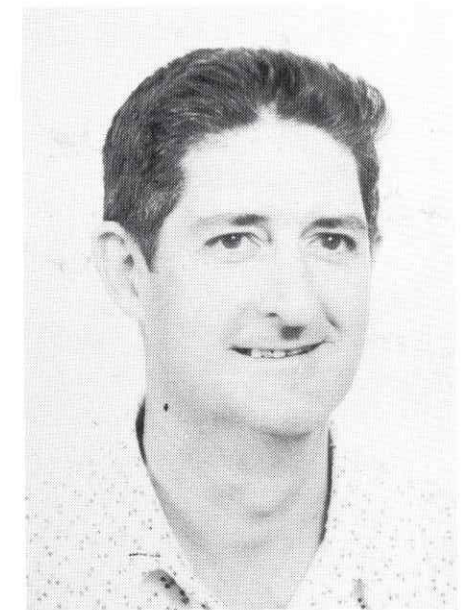
GREG RADLEY as WILLIAM

A new face with the Society and gives of his best as William.



JUDY POMEROY as TILLY

Judy was the lovable Hattie in "Kiss Me Kate" and gives an excellent portrayal of Tilly.



NEIL SMITH as ERASMUS FITCH

Neil has worked in many musicals and plays this role with great conviction.

TITLE SONG

"WEST OF THE REEF"

*Give me your hand
and follow close behind,
Step by step
And what you seek you'll find.
Here is an Eldorado
If wealth is the spur you need,
But nature will avenge
A country raped by greed.
Let West of the Reef be an Eden
In sacred trust be held,
Let us guard our heritage.*



PAST PRODUCTIONS

- 1953 "THE DESERT SONG"
- 1954 "THE STUDENT PRINCE"
- 1955 "THE BELLE OF NEW YORK"
- 1956 "RIO RITA"
- 1957 "NEW MOON"
- 1958 "HIGHLIGHTS"
- 1959 "ROSE MARIE"
- 1960 "OKLAHOMA"
- 1961 "SHOWBOAT"
- 1962 "THE MERRY WIDOW"
- 1963 "SOUTH PACIFIC"
- 1964 "THE MUSIC MAN"
- 1965 "CAROUSEL"
- 1966 "ANNIE GET YOUR GUN"
- 1967 "BRIGADOON"
- 1968 "NAUGHTY MARIETTA"
- 1969 "THE KING AND I"
- 1970 "THE GREAT WALTZ"
- 1971 "PIRATES OF PENZANCE"
- 1971 "PYJAMA GAME"
- 1972 "CAMELOT"
- 1973 "THE VAGABOND KING"
- 1974 "H.M.S. PINAFORE"
- 1974 "THE MIKADO"
- 1975 "THE MERRY WIDOW"
- 1976 "WALTZ WITHOUT END"
- 1976 "THE GONDALIERS"
- 1977 "OKLAHOMA"
- 1978 "SOUTH PACIFIC"
- 1978 "PIRATES OF PENZANCE"
- 1979 "WHITE HORSE INN"
- 1980 "KISS ME KATE"
- 1980 "IOLANTHE"

GILLIAN MATHER

One must wonder what Gillian would have achieved had not polio limited her physical capacities—competent horsewoman and judge of ring events, public relations expert, taxi cab driver, big game fisherwoman, Town Clerk, and journalist. The variety of her occupations and skills are phenomenal for one with such a handicap, but somehow one very soon forgets the clumsy brace on her leg—the obvious crutches, for Gill has that rare gift—a warm and engaging personality. Her infectious enthusiasm coupled with dogged determination sets her very much aside from the norm.

Having a lively imagination, and a natural student of human nature, the long hours of introspection in hospital obviously encouraged her natural creative flair—so that creative writing gave her the outlet for her physical frustration.

“WEST OF THE REEF” is her first attempt at a musical drama, but behind this play is the blood and sweat of many hours of critical research. Gillian was not content to read other author’s works, in order to form her opinions—but amassed a mountain of reference material from contacts all over the world—tracing the movement of ships and captains and checking all her facts with pedantic accuracy.

The mere physical labour of many rewrites was daunting together with running a home and her job with Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, but somehow with her boundless energy she coped.

During the production stage she has spent hours with the individual cast members coaching and cajoling her interpretation of dialogue, an invaluable help to the Producer.

To some this would be the end of a lifetime ambition, but one can be sure Gillian’s fertile imagination is working, and her crusty old Imperial typewriter will be feeling the impact of her creativity shortly—and that we all wish her the greatest success which is a natural reward for courage, determination and sheer persistence.



BRIAN MARTIN

The author and composer of “West of the Reef”, talks about the Townsville Choral and Orchestral Society’s world premiere production of the musical drama.

“Tales of blackbirding and seafaring have always fascinated me.

“As a small boy I was introduced to a very mysterious gentleman who lived in a Wuthering Heights-style house in Sydney, filled with native curios and artefacts.

“It wasn’t until I was much older and investigated the stories about him that I found to my amazement, they were true.

“I now believe the old man was a blackbirder himself, living the life of a recluse with his shadowy Asian wife, haunted by memories of the past.

“When I came to Queensland about five years ago I recalled the yarns when I heard references to blackbirding in the State.

“The more I investigated, the more fascinating the project of creating a musical drama became.

“My scriptwriter and I spent nearly a year in Townsville researching the possibility of a locally-based story.

“This was further encouraged by a grant from the Australian Music Board, which enabled me to devote all my time to “West of the Reef”. Two years later, it was completed.

“The music for the show had to be carefully considered as no Australian identity was available for the period during the 1800’s in which the play is set.

“Like the polygot European community the music was tailored accordingly.

“I have taken the liberty of using modern scoring and harmony techniques in an unusual way, so my own creative identity and interpretation is not lost.

“The development of the music has been the result of a life-time of musical training starting at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music studying piano and violin.

“In an obscure way my army training contributed to a greater understanding of the philosophical concepts of human life, which I apply to music.

“On the advice of my late grandfather, Australian composer Alfred Hill, I went to the Sorbonne in Paris and studied under Nadia Boulanger.

“I was fortunate, too, that I was able to study other theatrical techniques and these skills I have been able to apply to “West of the Reef” by designing the scenery, costumes, make-up, lighting and sound and directing the production.

“Back in Australia I was disappointed to find music in a state of depression, so for a time I devoted my abilities to commercial fields before joining the Elizabethan Trust Orchestra as the conductor for its Tasmanian tour.

“In Hobart I was lucky to form my own group, having gained experience with bands earlier as band leader for Lennons Broadbeach and others.

“This group attracted the attention of the ABC and I had the opportunity to perform on numerous radio broadcasts and later produced 27 major television shows before funding for such freelance activities began to dry up.

“In Melbourne I was appointed lead string master for three major high schools before being invited to join the Allans group of musical companies as publishing editor, where I stayed for eight years before retiring to Queensland.

“My experience at Allans in the commercial aspects of music was invaluable but it left me no time to compose my own works.

“This ambition has been realised in “West of the Reef”.

Mr. Martin believes lack of adequate funding or patronage is one of the major factors preventing Australian composers tackling such projects.

“Australia has the resources and talent to make a major contribution to the world in creative musical fields, and with assistance works of world standing would be forthcoming.

“The greatest worry we have today is loss of standards. Old skills are forgotten as mediocrity becomes acceptable.

“I am most grateful to the Townsville Choral and Orchestral Society for having the courage and foresight to tackle a new, untried work, which I hope will serve as an encouragement for other creative artists.”



OFF NOLAN



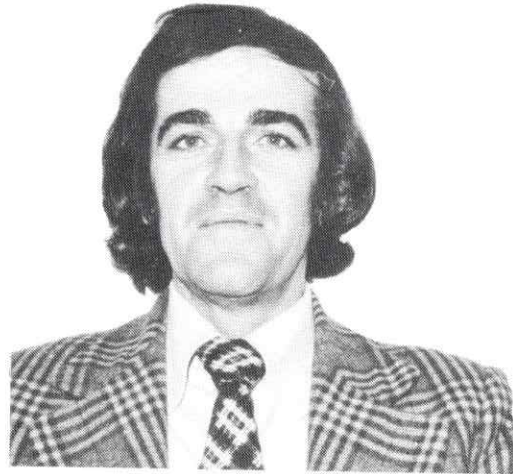
*DAPHNE TURNBULL as
GRACE McMANUS*

Daphne has played many leading roles in musicals and has had great success in Eisteddfod work. She gives an excellent performance as Grace.



*NORTON CHALLENGOR as
DUNCAN McDONALD*

Norton's voice will thrill audiences in his musical numbers.



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SOUND AND LIGHTING

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Behind every production is a team of unseen workers, without whom the show could not function correctly. "WEST OF THE REEF" is fortunate to have the experienced services of Bob Garland from Mackay.

Bob received his early training in cinema and in legitimate and variety work in Brisbane before joining Claude Carnell in the famous 'Playroom' on the Gold Coast. He was also responsible for the only live recording made by the late John O'Keefe.

After a ten year stint Bob felt it was time to stretch his wings further and he joined Stan Elson's 'Million Dollar Review' at the Grand Hotel, Labrador. Two years later he joined Paul Sharrat and Clyde Collins at 'Orton's Music Hall' in Surfers Paradise. Later the following year Bob was engaged with 'Disney on Parade' as Manager of the audio and projection aspects of the show. The Company toured Japan and Asia for 10 months and later the capital cities of Australia playing to a total of three million persons, with a single performance night reaching as high as fifteen thousand people.

Bob has always been willing to share his expertise and has organised and produced several productions in Mackay where he has lived for the past four years. He is currently the producer of the 'Barbary Coast Theatre Restaurant'.