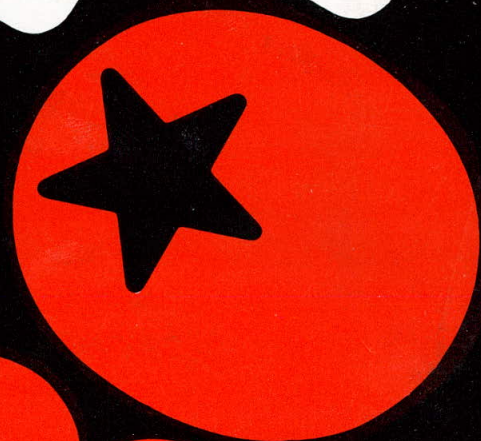


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The Scout Association of Australia

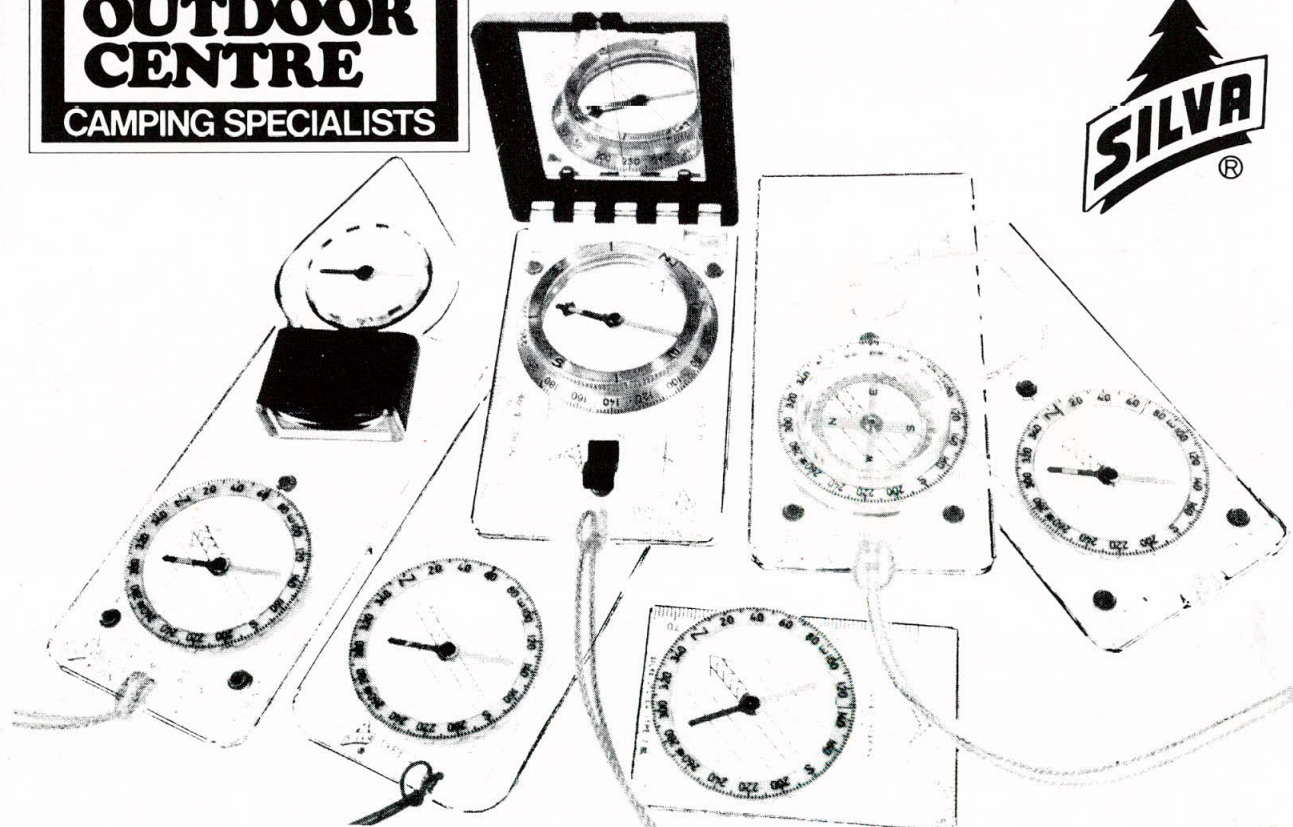
(Victorian Branch)



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WELCOME

... to the 28th Melbourne Gang Show. Once again it's a brand new show, crammed with comedy, dancing and music. You'll meet penguins and Terrors, real-live mail boxes, and the roughest Guides you've ever seen. We'll take you to Rio, an Antarctic holiday resort, outback Australia and Africa. The Africa sequence is the highlight of our 1980 show -- the story of Stanley and Livingstone (that great comeday team from early silent movies). This item meant hundreds of hours of research by the Gang for accuracy in costumes, makeup and staging. The script is taken from the adventurers' diaries, and the props include a bottle of champagne, an enamel hip bath, Persian carpets, and a full set of silverware (including a tea strainer) -- items taken by the eccentric Stanley on his historic search. Africa is typical of Melbourne Gang Show (chaos?). It's the result of 12 months work and cooperation by the 350 members of the Gang.

Also we're all involved in Scouting or Guiding -- camping, hiking, playing games, earning badges, learning new skills, making bulk friends. Being in Gang Show is like being in a second scout troop. In this year's program I'm going to take you on a 12-month tour behind the scenes. It's the story of the making of a Melbourne Gang Show, the largest of more than 100 similar shows around the world. I thought I'd start with a bit of history. Here's Gee It's Great to be Young, the first number of our first show in 1953. The year before saw the beginning of the Brisbane Gang Show while in Melbourne we were doing the musical We'll Live Forever which toured suburban town halls. Its success led to Melbourne Gang Show starting the next year.

Gang Show Story 1



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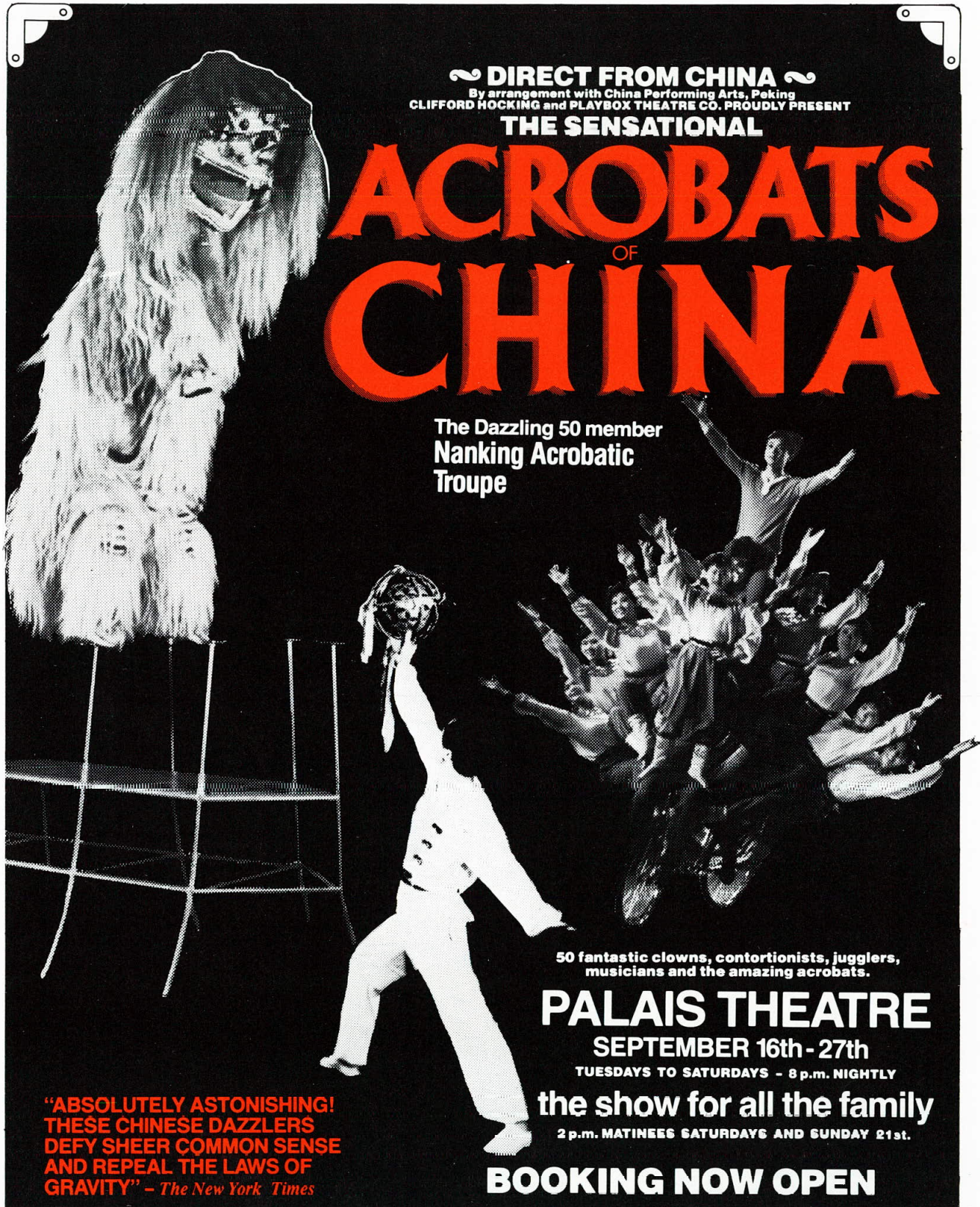
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Gang Shows 2★

Here's the birth of a new Gang Show -- the first production meeting, less than 48 hours after last year's final performance. The production committee meets every Monday night throughout the year, interrupted by special shows like country trips, Myer Music Bowl or Jamboree shows. They choose the items for the show, develop how it will be produced, and create headaches for the technical departments. Problems like penguin costumes that don't stop the singing, a flying Mary Poppins, or sound effects like a burping mail box. For people like me, the show begins with auditions and interviews in April. These are held over two weekend after the hundreds of applications have been sorted by our Personnel department. At the auditions the people hoping to get into cast are taught a few songs, photographed, measured for costumes, interviewed, and asked to read a piece from a comedy sketch. Then comes the scarey bit -- when you stand up and sing a few lines on your own. (Even veteran Gang members still find the audition a big hurdle each year.) After that, the next part is a breeze. The 35 people at each audition are divided into small groups and taught a simple dance step. If you've get three left feet, you're in. Applicants for other departments have a short interview with senior members of their prospective division. Every Gang member has to re-apply each year, so new people have an equal chance of joining. The hassles of the auditions/interviews are worth all the trouble when you get a letter a couple of weeks later -- you've made it.





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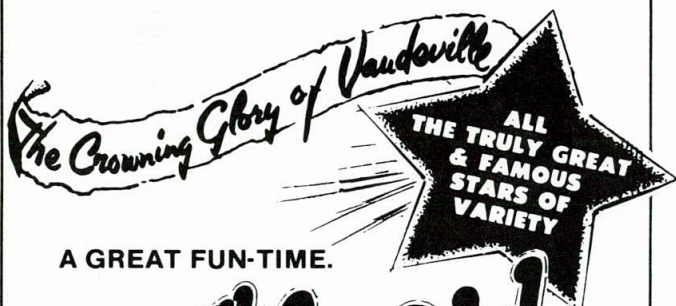
Acrobats of China
Fly

CATHAY PACIFIC
The Scent Group



Even before the selection weekends, other departments are starting to gear up for the new show. For some, the planning has begun during the previous season at the Palais. Our designer, Ken Smith, has the job of coordinating the overall look of the show. This includes, scenery, props, costumes, and makeup. Other busy departments are in the Administrative division. Office Services do our typing, printing, and internal distribution -- more than 100,000 pieces of paper each year. Member's manuals, song folders, costume manuals, scripts, extracted cast lists, direct mail campaigns, production notes, our weekly newsletter Scraggy, tonnes of memos, ticket sales bulletins, etc., etc. The Relationships department also work throughout the year, with seven sections doing hundreds of jobs. External Promotion deal with the media and Scout and Guide movements. Other sections are Shows Liaison (keeping in touch with dozens of similar Scout shows), Photography (for publicity, publications, and sales), Advertising/Sponsorship (raising thousands of dollars to subsidise our program, poster and booking form), and Ticket Sales (monitoring weekly sales and liaising with our agencies). The Publications section produces our application form, poster, booking form, tickets, VIP invitations, Scraggy, letterhead, program and other printed items. This year we had a "prominent poster competition". The 1980 Gang Show poster ended up in dozens of unusual locations, as well as being displayed throughout Australia, and in London, Frankfurt, Washington and Peking.





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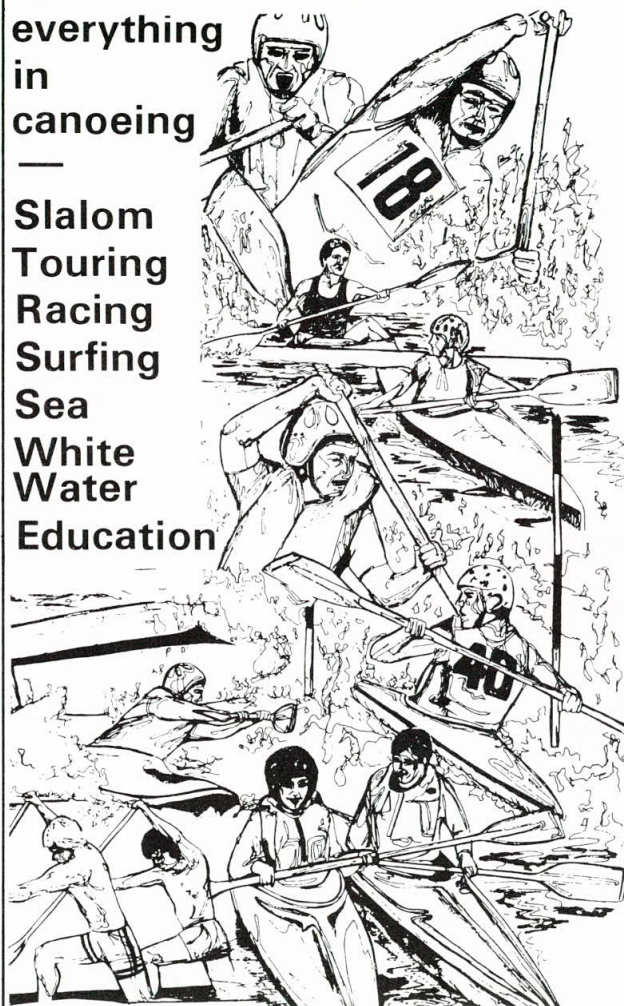
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**Camp
Show
Story
4**

I think
Powerhouse
is too warm.

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For the Scenery Manufacture team, home during winter weekends is Gang Show's Richmond scenery store. There they're spent 1500 hours, 1200 feet of timber, 150 litres of paint, and 800 square metres of canvas to make this year's scenery. This year's headaches included the awkwardly large scenery for Every Time You Go (an airport scene) and the lavish South America set (which took 60 hours for scenic artist Laurie Lane to paint). Props also work at Richmond, making dozens of handheld items. They also get set impossible tasks like finding slimy green paint that won't mark the curtains (for The Return of the Terrors) or borrowing unusual animals. The Costumes department has been flat out since April. A team of 60 parents and friends has spent 10,000 hours to make 1500 new costume items, for the 1980 show these have been added to 2500 items drawn from our stock of 20,000 costumes at our Chadstone costume store. For the WRAF and RAF uniforms in the Opening, Department Head Pat Bold sought help from armed services organisations, The Sullivans, and the British Embassy. Finally she borrowed a wedding photo, and made authentic replica uniforms from the 1940s. After Gang Show we hire our costumes (and lights and scenery) to other shows. This job is coordinated by the Support Services department, which is also responsible for training, library and property.

**Gang
Show
Story 5**



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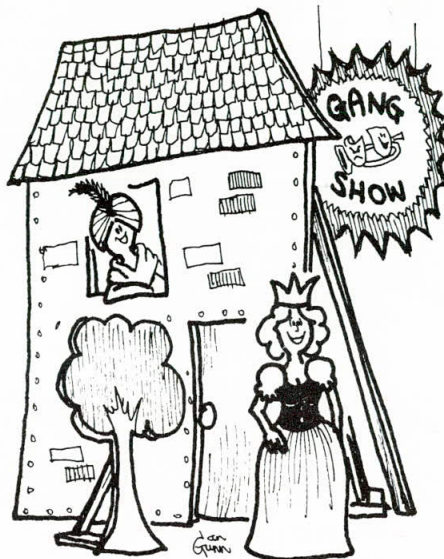
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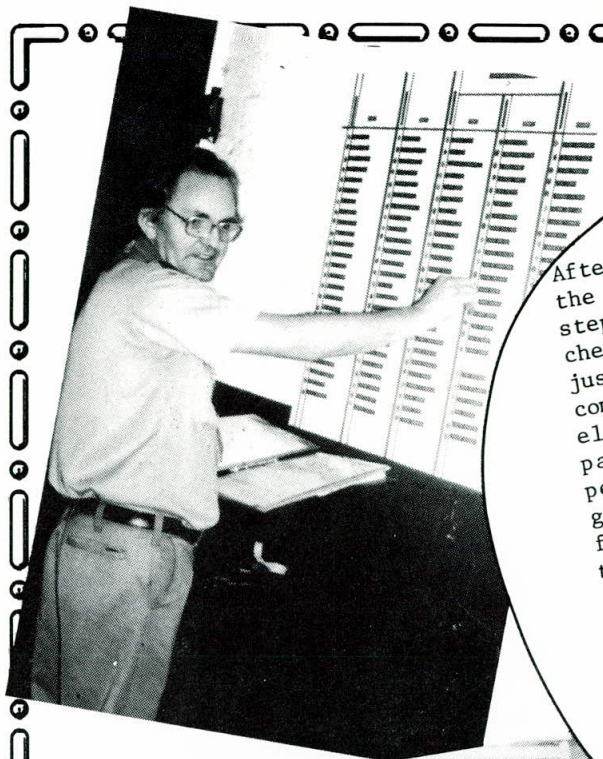
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After our weeks of rehearsal, we finally arrive at the Palais. It's a real buzz the first time you step through the stage door to get your name checked off the big board by Personnel. (That's just one of their jobs. They also produce the computer-printed directory of the Gang, and keep elaborate files on who will be breathing in any particular location at a certain time in each performance). If you're in cast and survive getting past Personnel without being blasted for wearing improper uniform, you have two hours to kill before the curtain goes up. You either a) sneak out for a hamburger, b) get grabbed for a special rehearsal (because they've decided to rewrite your sketch or re-do the dance you've spent three months learning), or c) get your makeup on. Makeup's a drag, but it's good to get it over before the rush. Clutching only a towel to protect your clothes, you go down some narrow steps into the dark depths under the Palais stage.



Gang show story 6



There a team of 15 people (who allegedly practise many times before the show) waste \$600 worth of makeup, moustaches and wigs on unlucky cast. If you're extra unlucky, you have 3 or 4 "specials" — full makeup changes -- later during the performance. For this year's show, the makeup team are using 100 wigs from their stock of 400, plus bulk beards and eyebrows. While we're suffering under the stage there's tonnes of action in the foyer. Our audience are starting to arrive. The Front of House team is busy flogging programs and showing people to their seats (up to 2964 at each performance). The Cubs are buying drinks so they can get lost going to the toilet halfway through the first act, and again after interval. Another section of our Front of House team organises and entertains our VIPs and celebrity guests. Some of them come backstage after the show and tell us what they like. (They're very polite.)

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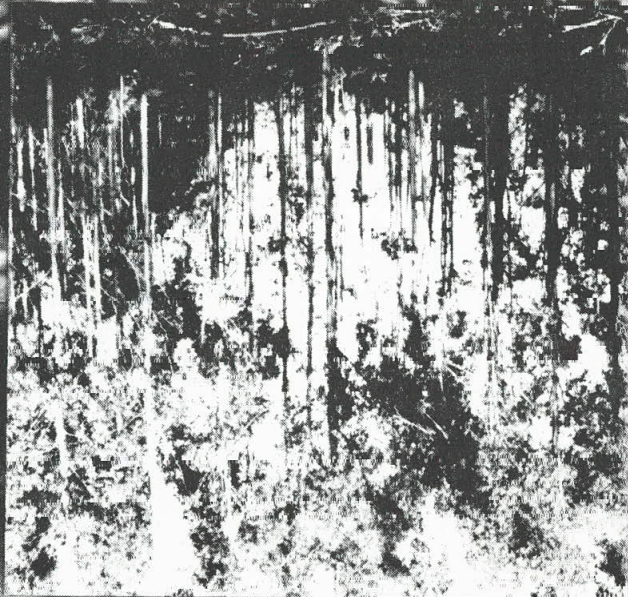
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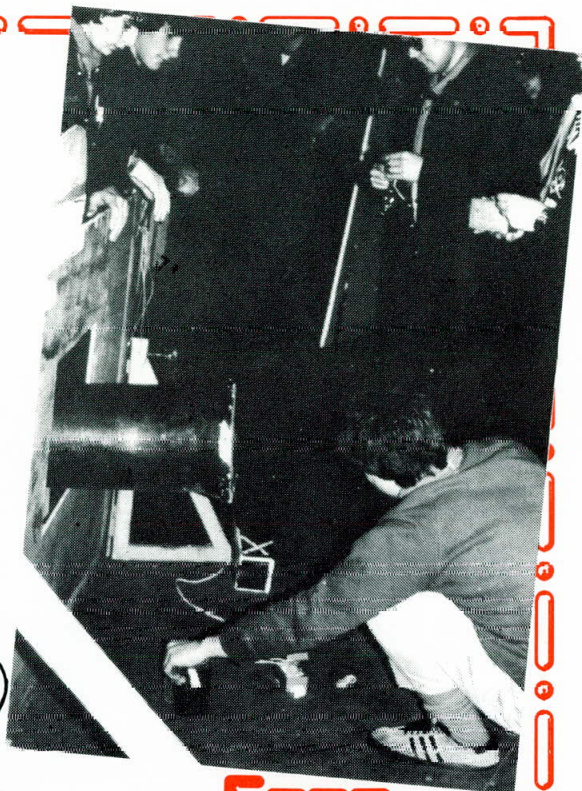
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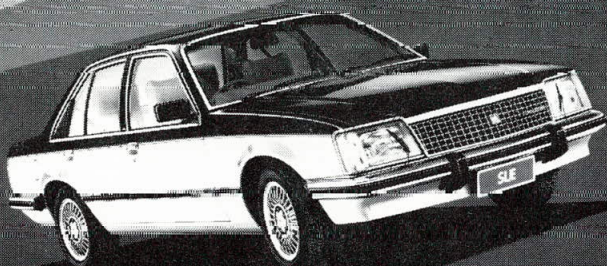


Gang Show Story 7

The Electronics department is full of bright sparks to play with sophisticated toys. The Special Effects team handle unusual tasks like wiring up fake cannons for explosions (there are no flashpots this year). This year there are fog and bubble machines, light up dresses in South America (each dress has nearly 100 lights and a battery pack) and lots of projectors. Four projectors with two dissolve units will play a series of slides of events of the past 50 years into two screens during the opening number. They're computer-programmed and controlled by a tape which carries the recorded dialogue and electronic signals for the projectors. The projectors are mounted on the balcony circle, with a fifth one, which is for the presentation to the Royal Geographical Society. This will show photographs of etchings, specially treated to give a sepia, magic lantern look. Lighting also have a mammoth job. There are three follow spots in the dome high above the audience. Then there are six lighting bars above the stage, two box booms in the side balconies, and two proscenium booms at the side of the stage -- holding 82 flood lamps and 84 profile lamps. Another eight front-of-house flood lamps are on the circle above the stalls, plus other lights are shifted around backstage on floor stands during the show. Lighting is controlled from the OP balcony (that's on your left). They use a Duet microprocessor memory-controlled switchboard with 96 circuits. And they're kept busy. A typical show, like last year's, has about 170 separate lighting cues. Sound have 32 microphones, a backstage board on the P-side of the stage (to control the foldback, the sound the cast hear on stage) and a sound booth at the rear of the stalls. This is used for controlling the sound levels to the audience and playing recorded sound effects. They also make a cassette monitors to show what's happening onstage to the stage director, makeup room and other backstage locations. They also record the show on videotape for the Gang Show and Branch Videotape libraries.

Commodore II

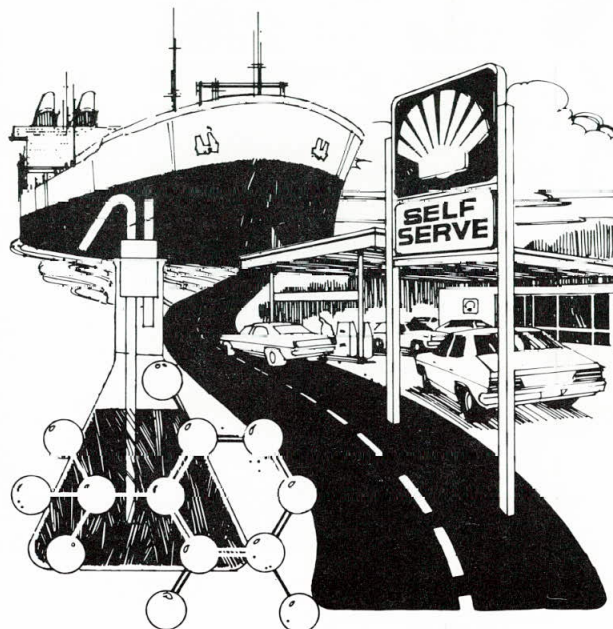
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Some things change. But Shell is still putting Australia on the road to a very bright future.



Shell



By now the audience are pouring in, the backstage crews have checked their gear and are ready. There's not much to do except check you've got your costumes ready and put on the first one. Soon the announcement will come over the PA to head for the stage for pre-show notices. Then the rush begins. Every member of the Gang works hard at his or her job. Between items there's a chance to tear down to the wardrobe team to get an emergency safety pin/patch/iron for a sick costume, or to grab a drink from the Parents and Supporters team. (P and S also do lots of other jobs like catering for our weekend rehearsals and fundraising for special gear we need). The stage crew work in bursts. They boast that they can clear a stage of 60 cast and scenery and reset it in 15 seconds. They're helped by the 73 grid lines of flying scenery which live way above the stage and are lowered and raised by the fly ropes on the prompt side of the stage. But there's still lots of scenery to move at stage level. A stage hand can sometimes enjoy a break holding up a flat (like the impressive ship from the 1979 Cut Throat Buccaneers). They need their rest after the long and hectic days spent moving into the Palais and hanging scenery and lights before opening night.

Gang Show Story





Gang Show Story

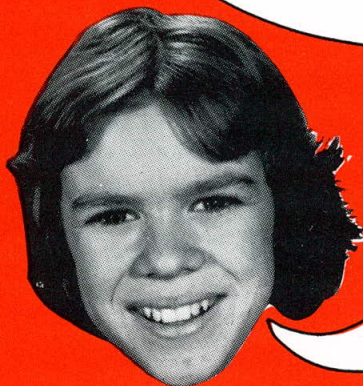
Suddenly a special buzz goes through the Gang. The show is about to start. The stage is cleared and thrown into darkness, the personnel team is checking the waiting cast in the wings for the opening number, the stage director takes control of the show. "Orchestra to the pit". "House lights down". "Conductor's on his way". "Spot conductor". Then the cheers filter backstage as the overture begins. The stage director calls: "Act out". The main curtain rises and the show has begun. From the stage there's the heart-stopping first view of thousands of faces and the twinkling aisle lights. (There's always traffic in the aisles.) For 2½ hours there's the tension of hundreds of split-second technical cues, the rush of costume changes, the unpredictable incidents of each performance. After Wonderful Life the cast and crew can relax, sink to the stage, and wait for the distribution of the "hate sheets" (the postmortem of each performance) and the speeches of the VIPs. Then it's a race to hang up costumes, clean off makeup, or check technical equipment, before heading out for supper. One show down, eight to go.



GOODBYE

Hi, I'm Andrew. It's my job to say goodbye and thanks for coming to see the show. This has been a really great show and it's a shame that it's almost over for another year. This year the show was a real challenge. I had to act like a Zulu warrior in one scene, then change and act like a post box. We're all glad that you came to see our show and we hope we'll see you all again this time next year. Somehow, Gang Show gets better every year, so you had better catch next year's show; or even better be in next year's show.

If you're aged 10 or over in Scouting, or you're an invested member of the Girl Guide Association, aged 15 or over, you can join Gang Show. Just write to 72 Queens Road, Melbourne, 3004 and later in the year you'll receive an application form. Auditions and interviews are held in April — so see you there.



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