

# DISTINGUISHED SERVICE **AWARDS**

---

Celebrating our volunteers in  
creative arts scene



**2  
0  
2  
4**

**With Special guest**  
Laura Gerber MP.

**Hosted By :**  
Diane Robinson



# Table of Content

---

- **President Speech**
- **Mission & Award Criteria**
- **Event location**
- **Special Guest**
- **Presidents speech**
- **DSA RECIPIENTS - GOLD COAST CITY CHOIR & PHILHARMONIC**
- **DSA RECIPIENTS - TWEED THEATRE COMPANY & JAVEENBAH THEATRE COMPANY**
- **DSA RECIPIENTS - MURWILLUMBAH THEATRE COMPANY**
- **DSA RECIPIENTS - TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN LITTLE THEATRE**
- **DSA RECIPIENTS - TUGUN THEATRE COMPANY**
- **DSA RECIPIENTS - SPOTLIGHT THEATRE COMPANY**
- **EAGLE AWARD**
- **RED HAT AWARD**



# Mission & Criteria

---

## Mission

The Gold Coast Theatre Alliance introduced the DSA - Hero Awards in 2014 to honour dedicated volunteers in the Community Arts sector for their outstanding service.

Member organizations are encouraged to complete the provided nomination form and send it to the alliance executive for validation. Once the nominations are verified, the Award is bestowed upon the selected nominee. Recipients will receive DSA badges and certificates during a breakfast ceremony.

## Criteria for GCTAI Distinguished Service Awards

- **Years of Service**

It is expected that a DSA nominee will have given years of service to their community organization. Many of our previous DSA awardees have served over ten years in a volunteer capacity some thirty, forty years or more. The number of years of service should be clearly stated in the nomination. Some may have given extraordinary service over a shorter period, but this needs to be clearly outlined and detailed in any nomination.

- **Contribution**

The contribution should always be voluntary and should be viewed as extraordinary. This involves having given service beyond that as seen as a normal contribution by a community volunteer.

- **Type of service**

A DSA award is for the workers – unsung heroes. The emphasis should be on their voluntary work behind the scenes.. Nomination consideration should be given to the following volunteers: administrators, front of house staff, stage managers, stage crew, technicians including lighting and sound operators and designers, set builders, prop creators, directors, choreographers, musical directors, musicians, make-up artists, costume creators, wardrobe personnel, publicity officers and maintenance crews of theatres.



This years event was held  
during Volunteer Week

**19th May**

---

at

**Waterside Venue**

**Currumbin RSL Club**

165 Duringan St, Currumbin, Qld

Their Waterside Events space, which has won multiple awards, provided an ideal venue for our event with uninterrupted waterfront views.

Whether you require a large corporate setting equipped with cutting-edge AV technology or a cozy spot with private balconies and bars, the GCTAI highly suggests this venue for various occasions like weddings, networking events, corporate dinners, and community gatherings. The Waterside Events space can accommodate group sizes ranging from 10 to 700 people.

To learn more, contact them at <https://www.watersideevents.com.au/>

# Special Guest **Laura Gerber** **MP**

---



Member for Currumbin and  
Shadow Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support

## Career Background:

Before being elected, worked as a lawyer who finished the Bar Practice Course with the Bar Association of Queensland. Previously served as a Federal Prosecutor at the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions and as a Disciplinary Prosecutor at the Office of the Health Ombudsman.

## Community Involvement:

Active member of various organizations including Currumbin RSL, Currumbin Beach Vikings SLSC, Tugun Progress Association, Friends of Currumbin, and the National Trust of Australia (Qld).

## Contact details

### Electorate Office Address

Shop 5, Iconic Kirra Beach Resort  
74-76 Musgrave Street  
KIRRA QLD 4225

Phone: (07) 5601 9100

Fax: n/a

Email: [Currumbin@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:Currumbin@parliament.qld.gov.au)

# The Presidents Speech

---

## Nathan Schulz

**Throughout my time on the Gold Coast Theatre Scene, I acquired valuable experience and encountered a saying that has fueled my creative passion and sustained my involvement in the Gold Coast arts community and beyond:**

**“An actor without a techie is like a lone performer on a dark stage, struggling to convey emotions. A techie without an actor possesses valuable skills.”**

In the creative arts, I have come to consider a techie to be in various roles such as administrators, front-of-house staff, stage managers, crew members, lighting and sound technicians, designers, set builders, prop creators, directors, choreographers, musicians, makeup artists, costume designers, publicity officers, and maintenance crews – all dedicated volunteers who keep the venue operational for performers and dreamers to showcase their talents.

Expanding on this enlightening saying learned in the Gold Coast Theatre Scene, one can truly understand the interdependent relationship between the institution, technicians, and actors in the performing arts. Their collaborative efforts' success relies on mutual respect and understanding, raising the final outcome to a new level of excellence. Their partnership not only enhances performances but also sustains the vitality and longevity of the creative arts community.

So it is with great pleasure, that the Gold Coast Theatre Alliance welcomes you, our members, guests, and the unsung heroes of the Performing Arts nominated for the 2023-2024 Distinguished Service Awards, Youth Award, and the Prestigious RED HAT awards during this year's National Volunteers Week.

This event aims to honor these often-overlooked heroes of the Performing Arts who generously offer their unique specialized skills for countless hours to the Gold Coast and Surrounding Regional Community Arts Sector. These exceptional individuals are recognized and nominated by their peers, making these awards truly special and unique in our sector.

The Gold Coast Theatre Alliance, in its 27th year, I would like to thank past and present members for supporting the Live performing Arts sector. We publish 40,000 directories annually with a exceptional online presence. I would like to thank Gold Coast City Council for the financial supports of our projects and give special thanks to retired members Annie and Wal Lotocki, Deborah Joy Sykes, and Patron Coral Kelly for their contributions.



# 2024 DSA RECIPIENTS

---



## **Helen Higgins** **Gold Coast City Choir**

Gold Coast City Choir have nominated Helen Higgins to proudly receive this award. Helen has been a member of the Gold Coast City Choir for 6 years and joined the Committee approximately 3 years ago. Her commitment to the choir has grown tenfold as she has proven herself to be a superstar in several domains. She has increased her role in the organisation to now be Vice President and is instrumental in keeping weekly rehearsals open and running. Helen has dedicated an extraordinary amount of time and effort to the choir's big transitions in recent years.

She has steered their website and online members program upgrade and supported the purchase and use of new iPads for the choir members in 2024. Helen has been available at rehearsals to support members in understanding how to access their online portals. She may not be as IT guru, but she has opened herself to learning about it all. By taking on the social media portfolio, she's increased the choir's online presence and following substantially as she continues to champion new ideas for the online sphere. In her spare time, she has recorded and shared learning tracks, for choir members to use, to support their learning of music. Helen is a bright and motivated member of the Choir.

Gold Coast City Choir President, Julie Watson has written, "Helen's significant time and effort is most definitely worthy of this recognition."



## **Lyn Anderson** **Gold Coast Philharmonic Society**

The Gold Coast Philharmonic Society Inc has proudly nominated Lyn Anderson to receive this award. Lyn has been working consistently for the Gold Coast Philharmonic Society Inc for nearly 40 years. (The Society was founded in 1984). During that time, she is acknowledged for playing the Cello with the Society's orchestra as well as Double Bass with the Society's Concert Band. Lyn has served on the committee in various positions, most recently as Archives Secretary and Assistant Treasurer and is helping train the new Treasurer. She was instrumental in setting up and cataloguing the music Library. Lyn has always taken a keen interest in proceedings and was part of the panel to ratify the constitution and have the Society Incorporated in 1989.

She has also been one to collaborate with other organisations, such as the Gold Coast Youth Orchestra Inc, The Gold Coast Theatre Alliance Inc, and the Tropicana/Gold Coast Eisteddfod Pty Ltd. Lyn has been a stalwart with the Front of House proceedings including ticket sales, raffles and refreshments. She uses her Logistics skills to organise the transport of instruments, equipment and people to venues when needed. Lyn is now the longest serving member and Friend of the Society and truly deserves to be recognised for her outstanding commitment.

# 2024 DSA RECIPIENTS

---



## Anne Westmorland Tweed Theatre Company

Anne has proven herself as a dedicated member since flawlessly auditioning for "12 Dancing Princesses" in 2015. She has participated in multiple children's pantomimes and productions including "Seven Little Australians" in 2016, "Princess and the Pea" in 2016, "Dick Whittington and his Cat" in 2017 and "Alice in Wonderland" in 2018. Anne has mentored and encouraged many new, younger cast members during all these productions. She has also volunteered her services in the Bio Box, undertaking the role as spot operator, lighting and sound operator.

Anne became a committee member in 2019 and is a proactive member of the company. This year is her second year as Vice President. Even though she is employed part time as an administrative assistant, she willingly took on the time-consuming task of researching and applying for suitable NSW Government and Council funding grants, of which she has had some success.

Another example of Anne's commitment to the Tweed Theatre Company is her willingness to recruit front -of-house volunteers from her personal friendships and has established a roster system to improve efficiency.

Anne has an impressive array of skills and continues to amaze us with her Humility, Honesty, Charisma and Passion.



## Gareth Hunt Javeenbah Theatre

Gareth's association with Javeenbah began in 2018 as an audience member and supporter of his performing daughter, Sarah. Together with his wife Lisa, he volunteered to work front of house and soon became a solid friend of the theatre. After limping along for close to 12 months without a front of house manager, Gareth was elected to the position of Front of House manager in October 2019. Already a very busy volunteer for Rotary and working full time, Gareth selflessly gave his time to redesign and refine many of Javeenbah's organisational practices extending beyond just front of house as he has extensive expertise in digital platforms and management.

What Gareth thought would just be simple coordination of volunteers, soon became a legal and health position with Covid affecting the way we managed patrons from the start of 2020. Gareth immersed himself in government directives and advice and steered Javeenbah through the mire of how to protect our patrons and members. He instituted and oversaw numerous processes in what we all know was the most difficult of times.

His extended network of connections also introduced many new volunteers to our front of house team. Not one to step onto the stage or contribute creatively to the performances, Gareth soon became an integral part of our team and without him, his patience and generosity, Javeenbah would have floundered through 2020 – 2022. What he thought would be a one year tenure to help us out soon stretched to be 4 years of very difficult work and we are so grateful that Gareth is and will always be, a friend to Javeenbah Theatre.

# 2024

## DSA RECIPIENTS

---



### **Douglas Jardine** **Murwillumbah Theatre Company**

Murwillumbah Theatre Company Inc have proudly nominated Douglas Jardine to receive this award. Douglas began working with the Murwillumbah Theatre Company Inc when his wife "dragged him along" to assist backstage with "The Magic Rainforest" in 2005. Since then, Douglas has been kept busy as Manager of Set Construction creating such innovative items as half a car (complete with steering wheel and a working seatbelt for use in 'Two Doors Down').

He also designed a set, behind a set for "Wrong Window" and a giant snail for "Alice's Adventures". Although the set team is a collaboration of creatives, Douglas always goes the extra distance, creating plans and set designs in mathematical detail.

Douglas has also trodden the boards for the Murwillumbah Theatre Company Inc, playing the grandfather in "Fur Coat and No Knickers", the lead in "Rumplestillskin.Com" and Senator Ludicrous in "Up Pompeii". Some of his performances have been most memorable for being "out of time" in any dance or marching routine- this was a bit of a problem when he was Head of the Army in "The BFG". President, Bryanne Jardine has written "Whether working backstage, building sets or acting a role, Douglas always gives 110% and his commitment is appreciated by all."

### **Lydia Plim** **Murwillumbah Theatre Company**

Murwillumbah Theatre Company have proudly nominated Lydia Plim to receive this award. Lydia started her involvement with amateur theatre in Sydney at the age of 12 years and joined the Murwillumbah Theatre Company in 1984 when she moved to the Tweed Valley, making her one of the longest continual members. Lydia has performed over many years, ranging from lead roles to seconds, minor and multiple character roles in a wide variety of plays. She has also been a lead and backup singer and "attempted" dancer in several plays. She has acted in just over 40 productions over this time.

Most recently, Lydia has Directed "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "Macbeth", and earlier, was Musical Director of 4 productions. She has also contributed as Stage Manager and Assistant Director and has written and performed original songs for 3 productions and co-wrote a musical comedy "All Fired Up"

Lydia's commitment to the company includes being an active committee member, having historically fulfilled various roles as Artistic Director, President, Secretary, Publicity, Membership and Newsletter Officer. Lydia is currently Vice President and WHS officer.

Lydia's passion and commitment to the performing arts and to the Murwillumbah Theatre Company is lifelong.



# 2024

## DSA RECIPIENTS

---



### **John St. Clair** **Tamborine Mountain Little Theatre**

Tamborine Mountain Little Theatre has proudly nominated John St Clair as a recipient of this award. President, Cath Buckley, has written

"We would be lost without John in our technical and staging and he is part of the backbone of our group. We hope he knows just how much he is appreciated, as he always has the best interests of TMLT at heart. "

John St Clair has been with TMLT for more years than can be counted and can be found assisting with lighting and or sound. However, his long-term devotion to the theatre is the running of our "Movies on the Mountain "screenings. This is a once-a-month commitment where they show both a matinee and an evening show of a recently released movie on our big screen at Zamia.

John has been the movie coordinator within the group for many years. He also builds sets and is the "fix it guy", as well as Director, actor and Life Member. Truly a man of many talents and very deserving of this Award.



### **Brian Franklin** **Tamborine Mountain Little Theatre**

Tamborine Mountain Little Theatre has proudly nominated Brian Franklin as a recipient of this award.

Brian has been with the group for over 30 years and has a wealth of technical experience. He is the "go to" person for both sound and lighting and is also a wonderful Director and actor. Brian designs most of the lighting plans for their productions and is most often found in the bio-box, assisting with the lighting and/or sound for visiting entertainers.

He is the long time Secretary within the committee and keeps an eye on the webpage. Brian is a life member of Tamborine Mountain Little Theatre and is integral to their past, present and future success. Brian has the best interest of the company and Zamia at heart and is a hard-working supporter of the Arts, in many forms, on the mountain.

Their President, Cath Buckley, has written, "We are very lucky to have had Brian within our Company for so long, and I hope he knows just how much he is appreciated"

# 2024

## DSA RECIPIENTS

---



### **David Neumann** **Tugun Theatre Company Inc**

Tugun Theatre Company have nominated David Neumann to receive this award.

David Neumann is a kind, practical and generous person who gives his all to any project in which he is involved. During the past few years, he has been turning his energies to help Tugun Theatre Company in any way he can. David attended the University of NSW, gaining two Architecture degrees. His hobby is woodworking, with the emphasis on building furniture. He has put these prodigious strengths to good use at Tugun Theatre Company, helping to design and build sets and props.

Several of his sets have been nominated for a Gold Palm Theatre Award, despite the small budgets and limited time periods. He is Mr. Fix-it, repairing or re-jigging whatever needs fixing or improving. He has also helped many times with the Front of House duties (selling raffle tickets is his specialty), but he assists wherever required.

David is a great asset to Tugun Theatre Company, donating his time and skills on a regular basis.

### **Georgina McDonald** **Tugun Theatre Company Inc**

Tugun Theatre Company have nominated Georgina McDonald, (also known as Georgie) to receive this award.

Georgina has been involved with Tugun Theatre Company since 2018. She is an avid supporter who is always willing to lend a helping hand. This includes backstage, Front of House and in many other ways, behind the scenes.

She has Stage Managed many complicated shows and always manages to stay calm and still ensure everyone is where they should be, so that the show can go on!



# 2024

## DSA RECIPIENTS

---



### **Erica Graham** **Spotlight Theatre Company**

Spotlight Theatre Company have proudly nominated Erica Graham. Erica first came to Spotlight Theatre Company in 2004 when her daughter performed in her first show. It didn't take long for Erica to lend a hand volunteering in various roles around the Theatre. Erica has filled many roles including, assistant to the Director in various shows, Spotlight Theatre Companies delegate to the Gold Coast Theatre Alliance, general Committee member and most importantly Vice President. Erica is very passionate about every task she takes on and will always look for the best for the Theatre.

She is a perfectionist and always goes "the extra mile". There is always something Erica is doing behind the scenes, to benefit everyone else around her. Her commitment and loyalty to the company is unquestionable. She is never afraid to tackle the difficult tasks head on and her dedication is above and beyond what is expected. Her motherly hugs and big heart are always welcomed by many at Spotlight Theatre Company, in particular the Committee and Box office volunteers. Spotlight Theatre Company Secretary, Noreena Wines, wrote, "I know I am only one of many that would say Erica is extremely deserving of this award and deserves to be acknowledged by her peers in the Theatre industry"



### **Jamie Watt** **Spotlight Theatre Company**

Spotlight Theatre Company have proudly nominated Jamie Watt for this award. Jamie first came to Spotlight Theatre 11 years ago and they have felt blessed ever since. He is an exceptionally talented and clever person. Just a few of his special traits include that he is an energetic performer, an insanely amazing Director/Producer, a caring mentor to other Directors/Performers/set designers, a perfectionist, and a bright and shining lighting designer to name just a few. He has an eye for the smallest details that will blow your mind and will be the first person to put his hand up to help anybody with anything they require, from set building to just listening, or giving thoughtful advice.

Any production that has Jamie Watt's name involved means you know it will always be of an incredibly high standard. He is one performer/Director that is respected by everyone that has crossed paths with him. He has held positions on the Spotlight Theatrical Companies' management committee and Production Committee's and has been responsible for all the Social Media formats for many years. Noreena Wines, Secretary Spotlight Theatre has written, "I am honoured to be able to nominate Jamie for this award and the recognition that he truly deserves."



# 2024 EAGLE AWARD

FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PERFORMING  
ARTS BY AN UNDER 25YO.

---

## **Jake Goodall** **Javeenbah Theatre Company**



The Gold Coast Theatre Alliance Executive proudly announce that Jake Goodall is 2023-2024 winner of the Eagle Award for under 25 year olds. Jake has just turned 23 but his contribution to all aspects of Javeenbah Theatre Company would rival that of most people 3 times his age.

Jake joined Javeenbah Theatre Company in January of 2019 after completing school at Trinity Lutheran College, where he had already honed many skills in singing, musicianship and drama. He performed in the Platform Festival demonstrating not only his beautiful voice and piano skills but also his vibrant and warm personality. Later that year, he joined their management sub-committee working with the Publicity team.

Whilst he already had developing skills as a director, under the mentorship of many Javeenbah Theatre Company stalwarts, Jake first worked as assistant director on "Eyes to the Floor" in the lock-down ridden 2020 and then directed his first mainstage show, "Boys in the Band" in 2022. Throughout this time, Jake also trod the boards himself in the play "Two Weeks with the Queen" and musicals "Ordinary Days" in 2021 and "Next to Normal" in 2022.

But Jake does not only contribute creatively. He has moved through several vital positions on the management committee. In 2021 he was elected to the role of Publicity Officer. At committee level, Jake's experience through his university study, work and involvement with Scouts Australia, has brought innovative ideas and practice to the management and direction of the theatre throughout covid recovery years.

At the 2023 AGM Jake was elected Artistic Director and aged 22 is the youngest person to hold this position, whilst also directing the acclaimed musical "Falsettos", followed immediately by once again sharing his on-stage talent in the musical "35 mm."

Javeenbah Theatre Company is so enriched by Jake's enthusiasm and selfless service, and they are so proud of this highly deserved recognition of his contributions.

The Gold Coast Theatre Alliance Executive congratulate Jake on his extraordinary contributions to the Performing Arts on the Gold Coast and Regional Areas. Your future success looks very positive indeed and you truly do lead by example.



# 2024

# RED HAT AWARD

WINNER FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO  
THE PERFORMING ARTS.

---



## Christine McLachlan

### Javeenbah Theatre Company

The Gold Coast Theatre Alliance Executive proudly announce Christine McLachlan as the 2023-2024 winner of the prestigious RED HAT award. She has always genuinely represented the spirit of volunteering with her unstinting efforts which have become legendary.

Javeenbah Theatre Company have written the following about Christine.  
"There is scarcely another person in all existence who has done more for Javeenbah Theatre than Christine McLachlan.

She is stitched into the very fabric of the place, having curated and cared for our none-too-small costume wardrobe for an impressive 20 years. Always conscious of authenticity and dedicated to costumes that tell a story themselves, Christine has an eagle eye for detail and a tenacious work ethic that always – somehow?! – always gets the job done. And done in style!

Equal parts contributor, champion, sage counsel and clever collaborator – her invaluable assistance doesn't end with costuming skill.

She is incredibly well read, knowledgeable, assured and curious of the world around her. Christine is just as equipped to spot a dropped hem as she is to notice the subtleties of an actor's performing choices, the niche musical nods to a particular era or the reasoning behind a set's colour palette decision.

Long has she toiled under the ever-present threat of water flooding her wardrobe space. Many a time has she indeed found her wardrobe flooded, to which she unfailingly responds with rolled up sleeves and gritty determination to save her stores.

Never with complaint, always with devotion. Never without humour, always in support of bringing visions to life. Never for personal glory, always for the success of her home theatre. If a stitch in time saves nine, so too has Christine McLachlan helped keep Javeenbah Theatre Company stitched together throughout her years of dedicated service. We would unravel without her and so incredibly grateful that we can call her ours!"



**A big thank you to our volunteers  
for their dedication and hard work  
behind the scenes, enriching the  
Gold Coast community through the  
arts.**

