

Sunnybank Theatre Group
in association with Origin Theatrical presents



by Derek Benfield

Directed by Chris Guyler

4 - 19 May, 2021

The play is set in Pete and Sarah's house in the suburbs of London

Act 1 : A Friday evening in the summer

Act 2 : A few minutes later

From the Director

After our very long break away from theatre due to our World situation, it's great to be back and entertain you with some good laughs! Written by a very prolific playwright, Derek Benfield, this great comedy is one of my favorites, where you the audience know what's going on but the characters on stage are totally unaware of the hilarious situation as it unfolds. The story of two great friends Pete and George, in fact George was Pete's best man at both of his weddings. Pete, now happily married to Sarah, is appalled when George arrives with news that his first wife Jessica was not killed in a mountain climbing accident as they had thought but is alive and well and keen to resume her life with Pete! I think you can probably guess this leads to a comedy of errors as Pete and George try and find their way out of this desperate plight without upsetting his two wives or his current powerful mother-in-law! I hope you sit back and enjoy some really good laughs!

We had our auditions way back in March of 2020 and even started with a couple of rehearsals but alas Covid put pay to that! But we're delighted to bring it to you this year and I'd just like to say it's been a joy working with such a talented and dedicated cast. I take this opportunity of thanking them for working so diligently at their art of comedic timing, especially with some newcomers as they hone their acting skills and the art of comedy. I'd also like to thank all the production staff, but especially my Production Assistant and Stage Manager, Andy Cosier, who has been such a great support. I really couldn't have done it without him. We all hope you have as many laughs as we have had putting it together.



(formerly Gold Coast Theatre Awards)

Sunnybank Theatre Group is a participant in the 2020 Gold Palm Theatre Awards



Chris Guyler

Director

Chris is no stranger to Sunnybank Theatre and no stranger to theatre production either. He might well have thought of a career in acting/directing had it not been for his parents, both entertainers in their own right and knowing how risky the entertainment business is, discouraged him saying "get a real job first". So pursuing a career in aviation, working for several airlines around the world, Chris satisfied his passion for theatre in every country he was based having left his birthplace in UK in 1971.

From his teenage days, during the last 60 years he's been involved in well over 80 productions acting and directing. After Australia became home in '74, in Melbourne and Brisbane, he's played many leading roles. At Sunnybank you'll remember him in comedy and drama, including *Beyond Reasonable Doubt*, *The Mousetrap*, *No Sex Please We're British* and as Rene in *'Allo 'Allo*. In 2018 he directed the comedy *Key for Two* and now he's delighted to be back after our agonising hiatus from our lovely theatre to bring you another wonderful comedy *First Things First* which he's sure you'll find extremely amusing!

The Crew

Production Assistant	Andrew Cosier
Lighting and Sound Design	Joanne Sephton
Stage Manager	Andrew Cosier
Lighting Operators	Joanne Sephton Allan Hare Georgia Cooper
Set Design/Build	Chris Guyler Andrew Cosier
Costumes	The Cast
Props	Chris Guyler Andrew Cosier

Thanks to Gem Guyler for furniture and set decor items.

We'd like to thank our wonderful volunteers who manage the bar, greenroom ushering and box office without whom your experience of STG would not be as great.



Brad Oliver

Pete

Brad first became involved in Brisbane live theatre in 2015 quite by accident, when he was asked to stand in for an injured cast member in Sunnybank Theatre's production of *Are You Being Served*.

He soon caught the acting bug and since then has performed in over a dozen plays at several Brisbane theatres. He even started to take on acting lessons.

By day he runs his own financial services business and fits in a few games of golf whenever he can.

When asked about his role as Pete in *First Things First* he had this to say:

"I am really looking forward to bringing poor Pete to the stage in this fast-moving British comedy. The Director and cast are all brilliant, and I have no doubt the audience will be splitting their sides as Pete constantly goes from one dilemma to another, trying to avoid disaster."



Nathaniel Young

George

After an enforced hiatus (of which we will not name!) Nate is ecstatic to shake out the cobwebs and return to the Sunnybank stage in *First Things First*, the first play he's performed in since *Chapter Two* and the *Tally Hall Radio Plays* in 2019! He is ninety-two percent sure he remembers how to do the things!

Despite a few tempestuous flings with Centenary Theatre Group and Nash Theatre, as well as writing, producing, and performing for Brisbane Anywhere Festival and Short+Sweet, he's come to think of

STG as his home away from home, and it's great to be back!

Additionally, his debut novel *Analog Cop* (as "Nathaniel James", wink wink, plug plug!) is available to purchase via Amazon.

He hopes you enjoy the show!



Lesley Davis

Sarah

Lesley is no stranger to the theatre, having appeared on stage for the first time at the ripe old age of 6. She is undoubtedly a familiar face around STG, having been an active member for many years, both on the stage and behind the scenes, including involvement on committees where she contributes to the future direction of Brisbane's friendliest little theatre company. It is certainly a far cry from her 'day job', for which she rocks up every day to help keep the cogs of government in motion.

She now looks forward to bringing the character of Sarah to life for you, as she and her overbearing Mother Margot, hubby Pete, and his best friend George, try to work their way out of some hilariously awkward situations in *First Things First* – a fabulous comedy from the author of *Beyond a Joke*, *Look Who's Talking*, and *Bedside Manners*.

So, sit back, relax, and enjoy what promises to be a fun filled journey into the lives of these six amazing characters.



Jessica Heinemann

Jessica

Jessica is a professionally trained presenter with a passion for theatre, screen and education. She was a contestant on the most recent season of *Lego Masters* on Channel 9. In 2017 she wrote, directed and starred in *Fact or Fiction 2.0* at the World Science Festival Brisbane.

Jessica was a scientist working in a lab trying to grow organs for transplant, before following her passion for sharing science and inspiring others. She has since travelled Australia and Internationally delivering educational shows, workshops and training.

Her musical theatre credits include *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Phoenix), *Mary Poppins* (Engadine Musical Society) and 'Lily the good fairy' in *Sleeping Beauty* (Brisbane Arts). This is Jessica's Sunnybank Theatre debut and she is looking forward to playing a very different kind of role with such a stellar cast and production team.



Chris Sibley

Margot

In her earlier days Chris' passion was to sing but was bitten by the bug of acting when she had enrolled her son in drama back in 1996 and thought she'd give it a go! Now she's retired there's plenty more time for theatre. This is the second time Chris has played the role of Margot having played it at St. Luke's Theatre in 2017! She's enjoying working with a totally new cast this time and this is her debut at Sunnybank Theatre. She's been in other plays with St. Luke's including *The Mousetrap*, *Cat's Cradle*, *Late Flowering*, *Holiday for Lovers* and *Pardon Me Prime Minister*. Chris has also performed at Villanova Players in *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and *Habeas Corpus*.



Aurelian Ritter

Alan

When Aurel saw the audition notice for this production he gave the Director, Chris, a call and asked if he may be suitable. Chris got a bit of a shock when he heard Aurel's French accent and must have thought to himself that there is only one role he could play that would fit in well with the plot. Aurel came to auditions and the rest is history.

Aurel fell in love with the Brisbane lifestyle and tropical weather and decided to move to Australia in 2013 and he enjoys running his small business during the week and playing soccer over the weekend.

He loves comedy and has participated in several theatre improvisation workshops while performing in a few plays. This is his debut with Sunnybank Theatre Group and he hopes to come to other auditions in the future.

Aurel loves this lively play *First Thing First* and his character, Alan, who seems to be tailor-made just for him.



If you love theatre like we do, come and join us.
You'd be very welcome.
We're a great bunch of people who share a passion for the stage.

If acting isn't your thing, there are lots of other ways to be involved.
You could work back stage, or with sound and lighting.
You could help build sets, or make costumes.
Perhaps you could give a hand in the box office,
or the bar, or show people to their seats.
You can be involved as much or as little as you want,
but we would love you to be involved.

Talk to one of our volunteers, call us on 3345 3964,
email us at info@stg.org.au,
or chat to us on Facebook (search for @sunnybanktheatre).

Be sure to follow us on Instagram to keep in touch with what's
happening at your theatre (search for SunnybankTheatreGroup).



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