

Young performers present 30th Darling Downs Revue

Going back in time for Scouts

Rhylea Millar

Nearly 30 Scouts and Girl Guides took to the stage to celebrate three decades of the Darling Downs Revue with a variety show which took audiences back in time.

The two hour performance honoured the special anniversary milestone by incorporating scenes from past productions since the revue started in 1991.

The show Rewind Through Time included a mixture of songs, drama and skits when it was showcased at the Centenary Heights State High School Performing Arts Centre on June 30 and July 1.

To celebrate the performance, The Chronicle sat down with several cast members to find out why they love being part of the Scouts and their future aspirations.

ALICE MATUSZCZAK, 10

Taking to the stage for her second performance with the Darling Downs Scouts Revue was Alice Matuszczak who performed many different roles including "Monkey Brat".

Inspired by the monkeys from The Wizard of Oz, the 10-year-old said she essentially acted "like a little brat"



Alice Matuszczak.

and did a lot of cartwheels.

While Alice admitted she was initially nervous in the lead-up to her performance, she felt fine once the curtains drew.

The Year 5 student said she had joined Scouts two years ago because she wanted to follow in the footsteps of her dad.

"Dad did Scouts here in Newtown, but that's just a Scout shop now," Alice said.

"I enjoy making new friends at Scouts and revue has given me more confidence."

Unsure about the career she hopes to pursue in the future,



Amber Sanders.

Alice said she loved acting, dancing, art and solving maths problems.

AMBER SANDERS, 11

Stepping into various roles for the 2023 production was Amber Sanders who was cast as a "Country Dancer", "Lighthouse Keeper", "Scout" and one of the "Revoluting Children" from Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical.

Not new to the spotlight, the 11-year-old has been involved in the revue for almost five years and signed up for Scouts at the young age of six.

"I actually started going on camps when I was four because my mum is a Scout Leader so I've known most of the people for a long time," Amber said.

"My favourite character (was the Scout) because I get to say lines and act more in that role."

Amber said working hard to rehearse her lines had helped her to overcome her nerves over the years.

The Year 6 student said her favourite aspect of revue was seeing her friends as well as acting and dancing on stage.

With a growing interest in the medical world, Amber said she enjoyed watching movies about doctors, helping others and wanted to be a nurse when she's older.

ANNIKA MADDEN, 12

From playing a school student who is trying to start a riot to the "Super Dazzler" – a superhero based off the 80s Marvel Comic character, Annika Madden's roles were chalk and cheese.

But the aspiring actor said she had thrived on diverse roles since she started working in theatre groups from the age of six.

The triple threat who can dance, sing and act not only performs with the revue but is also an active member of the



TOP PERFORMANCE: Briar Wieden was among the performers as Darling Downs Scouts and Guides presented the Darling Downs Revue 30th season Rewind Through Time. Pictures: Kevin Farmer

Toowoomba Choral Society and La Creme Dance Academy.

"Performing makes me feel good," Annika said.

"This (was) my seventh production through revue, but this year (was) one of the best because it brings back old memories.

"My highlight (was) our dance parties after rehearsals when we put music on and the entire cast and crew just start(ed) dancing."

Annika said she joined Scouts eight years ago to learn new life skills and build social connections.

When the Year 7 student



Annika Madden.

finishes high school, she hopes to act professionally with her sights set firmly on Broadway.

BRIAR WIEDEN, 22 (THEY/THEM)

For Briar Wieden, the feeling of escaping the hustle and bustle of the city to enjoy the calming space of nature was all the encouragement they needed to join the Scouts.

One of the group's latest members to join, Briar only signed up last year making the 2023 revue production their very first.

The 22-year-old said the character they had enjoyed playing the most this year was Sir Gummore in the Decrepit Knights scene because it involved lots of jokes and comedic moments.

"I joined Scouts as an adult which is a bit unusual, but friends encouraged me to give it a go," they said.

"Everyone has been so welcoming and encouraging, and I definitely think more young adults should look into it."

While Briar is new to the world of scouting, they grew up hiking in parts of Southern Queensland with their family, creating a safe space within nature for Briar to be themselves.

"I don't have to worry what others think in the outdoors, and I get to escape the pressures of everyday life," they said.

"Conservation and sustainability are my two biggest passions so I love being out in nature."

Briar, who currently works as a teacher aide, is also studying environmental science and hopes to one day work as a park ranger or environmental officer.

DAKOTA SHARP, 13

Performing in the opening

song No Business Like Show Business was Dakota Sharp who stepped into the role of the "Sparkles Dancer".

The 13-year-old said she first got involved with Scouts four years ago when her older brother William signed up with the Darling Downs group after attending an open day event.

Dakota said in addition to learning new skills, the scouting experience had helped the siblings form a close-knit bond.

"I like learning how to survive in the bush, navigate my way around and cook on open



Dakota Sharp.

fires when we go camping," Dakota said.

"We also do Messy Nights where we do art and craft and science experiments like making slime or blowing up watermelons."

Unsure about her future career aspirations, the Year 7 student said her interests included spending time with friends.

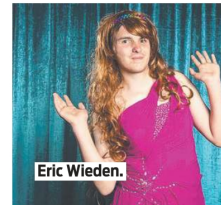
ERIC WIEDEN, 15

Not afraid to wear pink or a wig, Eric Wieden and a group of male Scouts played princesses and performed a dance number to Man I Feel Like a Woman by Shania Twain.

The 15-year-old said while he understood not all teens would be open to the unique experience, he really enjoyed it.

"(I had) a great time rehearsing in my dress but not heels because that's not practical," Eric said.

"Getting out on stage to act and be someone completely different (was) really fun.



Eric Wieden.

"Our Man I Feel Like a Woman scene (was) my favourite because it's a great dance, great song and everyone (was) having a great time."

The Year 10 student has participated in seven of the revue's productions and been involved with the Darling Downs Scouting group for the past decade.

He said his favourite memories have been going on statewide camps, whale watching and on cool adventures.

With dreams of becoming a veterinarian, Eric said he loved animals and had always had a diverse range of pets including dogs, guinea pigs and birds.

LIAM HARRIS, 9

It may have been the first time Liam Harris performed lines on stage, but the nine-year-old still excelled.

The young Scout said he had enjoyed doing revue with his old brother Eric and spending time with his friends.

Both brothers said their joint involvement had proved handy when reminding each other to bring their costumes to rehearsals or study their lines.

Liam played the characters of "Mouse" and a cub Scout who had to join the Girl Guides because the cubs were at capacity.

The year 3 student said while he enjoys Revue, he does not want to be an actor.

He said while he wanted to be a police officer at one stage he has since changed his mind.



Liam Harris.