

ESTABLISHED 1995

**WACKY**

— **C R E A T I V E** —

21 YEARS ON

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**SINCE 1995, WACKY CREATIVE  
HAVE DEVISED AND PRODUCED  
CREATIVE IDEAS, PERFECTLY  
THEMED ENTERTAINMENT,  
AND MOBILIZED OUR EXTENSIVE  
TEAM OF AMAZING INTERACTIVE  
PERFORMERS AT OVER 10,000+  
EVENTS WORLDWIDE!**

**WITHIN THESE PAGES, FELLOW  
CREATIVES, FRIENDS AND  
FAMILY TELL THE TALE.**

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FORREN



**THE BOOK ORGANISING  
COMMITTEE WANTED TO  
SAY A FEW THINGS...**

**HIS ENTHUSIASM  
FOR MUSIC  
MAKING, HIS  
MISCHIEVOUS  
WAYS, HIS SENSE  
OF HUMOUR AND  
INFECTIOUS  
PERSONALITY  
HAVE ALWAYS  
WORKED IN HIS  
FAVOUR.**

## **Annette Yates**

I always knew when I married Nic Yates in 1993 that it would be an adventure filled with many highs and lows... but I have to say with lots of fun and laughing.

Our early part of our marriage was simply working really hard to establish our careers, house and lives. This consisted of Nic working full time as a classroom music educator at Assumption College Kilmore and in between, performing gigs around Melbourne on saxophone. Although, he loved teaching kids, ultimately he did not enjoy having his life revolve around a school bell, telling him when he could have a cup of coffee or lunch. He always pushed the boundaries in class or in front of a concert band or even in a staff meeting. His enthusiasm for music making, his mischievous ways, his sense of humour and infectious personality have always worked in his favour. All of his students loved him as he was really a big kid himself, however, the constricting nature of a school environment was not for Nic.

As time passed Nic's performing life was taking off and teaching became an arduous daytime occupation. So, the conversation of leaving the teaching profession was had. I remember I said to him *"Let's give it one year to get the Wacky business happening and I will be the chief earner"*... and here we are 21 years later celebrating the success of Wacky Creative.

# Colin Cameron

My history with Wacky is punctuated with so many amazing moments that I really struggle to remember even a small percentage of them. I often have to pinch myself when I think of the fun we have on a regular basis. Sometimes it only becomes clear to me when I'm reminded by others of 'How great my life is'.

In short, I owe a huge debt to Nic for 'how great my life is'.

He took a fun gig and through focus and skill turned it into full time jobs for 2 other people, that's no mean feat. Especially when he was trail blazing, there was no manual to follow for establishing a successful 'Roving Music Company'.

He has been dubbed 'my husband' and me in turn 'his second wife' by his actual wife Annette, an amazing woman who has trusted me away with her husband on so many occasions. I would like to think that this characterization 'second wife' is used not just because we have spent so much time together but rather because of our unique and amazing relationship.

Nic and I understand each other better than most married couples.

After nearly 21 years together certain things have remained the same since day one. I have always had and will always have total, genuine respect for Nic as a strong, principled, fair and hard-working individual with high standards that propel him to success. As performers, we have pushed our strengths and worked on our weaknesses but it is Nic's 'never say no' attitude that has seen us grow in ways I never thought possible. He accepted gigs that made me think he was mad; Over and over. (MMM @ the Mercury Lounge?)

Nic doxed us in for major stage performances and conference energizers at 7am, Footy Clubs, Hens Nights and more and much of the fear that I and others felt in the early days was immediately tempered knowing that he had full confidence in our abilities. Looking back, I reckon he accepted the gigs to push us to write better, play better and act better. Nic would sometimes admit to having no idea what he was doing himself, but I always felt that he had full confidence in me and my abilities. (Even if he rarely understands my jokes... Four Corners is funny. So is the metaphor river gag!)

This identifying of strengths and full support is a feature of Nic's attitude towards his team. He regularly mentions his great gratitude towards Luke for his focus and skill as a graphic designer; quite apart from his exceptional musicianship.

At this point I should mention that Nic's formidable skills on the sax formed the basis of Wacky. We became known as a group that could play virtually any request. In reality, we made the promise to the crowd then turned to Nic hoping he knew the song. Usually he did, and in any key to boot.

Interestingly, Nic would occasionally compare his playing to that of the great technicians and comment that he could 'never play like that in a million years'. I know I speak for any of the Wacky team when I say that I would choose Nic any time if gigs were a war and we were in the trenches! His rich sound, effective musical solos, his tight groove and rhythmical ability makes each tune a joy to play. Not to mention his biggest asset, his incredible ear.

As the years have passed the gigs have changed with Nic taking on more performers requiring at times weeks of preparation. His project management skills have grown dramatically with major event managers regularly relying on his great creative mind, his formidable contacts and ability to devise, create and deliver, often complicated, entertainment pieces or segments.

While I have in recent years pursued a side career as a solo artist, it has been with Nic's blessing and support. He has always embraced his team spreading their wings. I believe that he knows that the more diverse and educated we are, the better we are as performers and people.

A quick extra thank you: I met my beautiful wife Sharni on a Wacky gig (which makes her tax-deductible) and while I asked Nic for her phone number afterwards, he refused to give it to me unless I promised to call her. I called her and the rest is history. That's why he claims to be completely responsible for my sex life and children. I'll give him that.

(Feel free to pay for my kids' education...)

I look forward to many more years working with Nic, my husband, and cannot even fathom what the future will bring. I want to thank his amazing fellow director and powerhouse, his loving wife Annette. Without her extraordinary drive and enthusiasm in the early years, putting her career on complete hold for so long, none of us would be here today. Her support continues unabated and her character of strength and support and love is evident in her 3 beautiful children Talia, Meecah and Bailey.

Enjoy the book Nic, it took 21 years to write...

IT'S NIC'S  
'NEVER  
SAY NO'  
ATTITUDE  
THAT HAS  
SEEN US  
GROW IN  
WAYS I  
NEVER  
THOUGHT  
POSSIBLE

**“THE ENTIRE  
SUCCESS OF A  
SHIP’S VOYAGE  
LIES ON THE  
CAPTAIN’S  
SHOULDERS  
AND HOW  
WELL HE OR  
SHE MANAGES  
THE CREW.”**

# Luke Farrugia

Successful companies are created by people passionate about something...that believe in an idea. They care about what they do, what they have created and can bring together like-minded, passionate people to join them and help make real the idea.

At the time of my joining, Wacky had already developed the group into Wacky Music Comedy under the leadership and commitment of Nic Yates and Tom Ryan. Having an opportunity to follow my dream and passion of music as a profession, I left a uni course at the VCA to commit to Wacky too. Colin not soon after left his career as a university educator to commit fully to Wacky. I would find out years late that Annette had also committed fully to Wacky, not as a player, but in supporting Nic in the early years, allowing him to focus on it's development.

Commitment echo's itself through Wacky. Each musician, dancer, face painter, actor, or person on gig or in the office commits to Wacky in a way that is humbling to experience. A commitment to offer the very most to each gig, task or event and each other person. A commitment to the belief of what Wacky is, what it aims to provide and the professional level expected...this is to say the need to have fun and enjoy each gig...each moment.

Fundamentally it is a company that brings together a bunch of incredibly talented people to work together, under a very refined brand, to deliver experiences and moments. These moments are filled with fun, excitement and spontaneity and all come from friendships that have been created and developed over many of the 21 years of Wacky... or from before its inception. You only have to sit in a change room and listen in on the Wacky team to appreciate and understand that everyone loves performing in Wacky. If you screw up you'll never live it down...but then these jabs are taken, and given with utter respect, both professionally and personally, to each other. For without this respect and the wonderfully crazy friendships, who we play (literally and figuratively) with and for, would in fact become work.

It is who we perform for where the difficulty of separating Wacky from Nic Yates lies, for the line between both is hazy at best. To work for Nic is to work for Wacky. To work for Wacky is to work for Nic. And though it is hard to think of Nic Yates without Wacky... it is impossible to think of Wacky without Nic Yates.

Nic Yates. Captain. A title respectfully bestowed for just reason.

Perhaps for my early gigs on the Spirit of Tasmania, I've always thought of Nic as a captain of a ship, not an aircraft, to which others might for his fathers career in the airline industry.

So a ships captain... described as the following by Sonaku.com:

*"... the leader of an entire vessel, which can range in size from a small yacht to an entire cruise liner. He or she has vast experience with ships and their operation, and has likely worked their way through the ranks of other ship-related positions. Duties on the ship fall far beyond the scope of a management position, as the ship captain must be proficient in every aspect of running a ship, from ship operation to maintenance, and in the instance of touring ships, playing host to the passengers. The entire success of a ship's voyage lies on the captain's shoulders and how well he or she manages the crew.*

The parallels are therefore very fitting, as with most micro to small business owners, Nic is very much hands on. Perhaps it is that he enjoys the creative and performance side more than the business... though this is not to say he is any less capable in this area.

On any given day, our Captain will be working tirelessly in the office to manage the affairs of the company; steering both the creative and business sides to ensure Wacky continues to head in the right direction and offer new and exciting challenges, both for himself, the company and those that work for and within it.

Nic is respected as an incredible musician, performer and business owner. More so, the Captain is respected as a person of integrity, honesty and for the respect he reciprocate to performers, clients and suppliers alike. It is perhaps this, coupled with his infectiously likeable wacky personality, that people are drawn to. Nic doesn't supplant himself above any other person. He hasn't yet booked a gig that he wouldn't consider doing himself, be it wearing white underwear on stage and being painted by a blind folded guest, to putting on a Santa costume for 6 hours.

The Captain has always backed himself, the company and those that perform within it. There has been no gig that has been to big, be it for the company or any one of us as individual performers. Where the company or individual might fall short in delivery, he has supported and found ways to make sure we have risen to the level needed.

This support and commitment to the company and its performers extends well beyond the confines of the Wacky world, where Nic has always encouraged and supported both myself, Coco and I imagine every member of Wacky in our own personal endeavours. Offering advice and caution as well as direction and consideration.

It is this support and backing that is returned by everyone in Wacky. The knowledge that the Captain has your back only instils the desire to make sure you have his...and in fact the back of everyone in the Wacky family. This level of care has often gone well beyond the limit of the work place, not just by Nic but the entire Wacky family.

It isn't any wonder that Nic's email signature reads Director and Captain first followed only at the end by Boss. In fact, it is rare that I've considered Nic my boss. Perhaps the odd occasion where I have completely cocked up...and where a captains letter has been received. However for the most part, Nic will remain the Captain in my eyes. More a respected friend, musician and performer than a person that I should follow because it's my job to.

Through Wacky I've enjoyed many long friendships with wonderful people and mentors, many of these that appear in this book are those that I am extremely fond of and care very much for. Some feel more like brothers and sisters or distant uncles and aunties than colleagues and I'm blessed to work in an environment with people that are not only at the very top of their game and carry themselves at such a professional level, but are so incredibly wonderful as people also.

Nic, and Wacky, have given me the opportunity to not only flourish as a musician and performer, but also with graphic design and event management and production, and it has been an incredible journey thus far. One that I hope continues on for a long time yet. I'm thankful each day of the life that Wacky has allowed me to lead. For the close and enduring friendships of Nic and Col and entire Wacky family. I'm grateful for the continued care and treatment by Wacky and by Nic and the opportunities given to me.

Tom Ryan once said to me *"Stick with Nic and he'll look after you."* And ever since stepping into Nic's beat up car back in 1998, no words have rang more true. With Nic in time saying, *"Stick with the Captain!"*. For this is exactly what I intend to do.

Thank you for taking a chance on me all those years ago. For the laughs and madness that take place on gigs, on the way to gigs, and in fact all around them. Thank you for the challenges you offer and the chance and opportunities to continue to develop professionally and personally and to follow my passion(s).

Happy birthday Wacky!









**WACKY WILD  
WIND MACHINE  
THE WHACKIES  
WACKY MUSIC  
COMEDY THOSE  
WACKY GUYS  
WACKY  
ENTERTAINMENT  
WACKY MUSIC  
CREATIVE  
ENTERTAINMENT  
CONCEPTS  
WACKY CREATIVE**

For over 21 years, we've been called many things... boring not being one of them! And it hasn't always been Wacky Creative either.

Back in 1995 it was 'just' a band, combining music performance with interactive comedy... and overalls, let's not forget the overalls. Experimenting initially with alto and tenor saxophone and then acoustic guitar, it would finally settle on what is now known as the 'Wacky' style. Saxophone, trombone, tuba and drums.

Inspired by these instruments, and the personalities of each band member, *Wacky Wild Wind Machine* was formed.

Dressed in what their press release describes as "... overalls that should have volume control and sporting hats and accessories which most people wouldn't even admit to owning..." and with an arsenal of songs including Michael Rowed the Boat Ashore, Under the Boardwalk, All of Me, Tequila, Quando Quando Quando, In the Mood and Girl from Ipanema (to name a few... possibly almost all of them), these mad four ground their teeth, first on the streets of Melbourne, and then local events, developing the skills, style and group makeup that would define Wacky throughout the years.

Most would think that the outrageous costumes and cheap gags and routines were a cover for the lack of musicality, but it is that all three elements; costumes, musicality and interaction/comedy, were so strong that allowed the group to engage with and make such an impact with their audience.

Four friends, four instruments, three core values (music, interaction, costumes) and one philosophy.

Have fun... be Wacky!

**'WELCOME TO THE  
EXPLOSIVE SOUND,  
SIGHTS, AND COMEDY OF  
THE WACKY WILD WIND  
MACHINE. THIS CRAZY  
GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS  
BRING THEIR UNIQUE  
STYLE OF ENTERTAINMENT  
TO LIFE AND CHALLENGE  
YOU TO HAVE MORE FUN  
THAN THEM! DRESSED IN  
COSTUMES THAT SHOULD  
HAVE A VOLUME CONTROL  
THESE OVERLY ENERGISED  
LUNATICS REEK HAVIC  
THROUGHOUT THE  
AUDIENCE WHILST PLAYING  
AND SINGING POPULAR  
TUNES WHICH EVERYONE  
IS FAMILIAR WITH.'**



FOR BOOKINGS AND ENQUIRES:  
PH NICK 9489 1815





# Wacky Wild Wind Machine

## 1995

### THROUGH THE EYES OF MARTIN MACAULAY (TUBA PLAYER NO. 1)

I believe the earliest incarnation of the Wacky Wild Wind Machine can be traced back to the experience of the World Expo in Brisbane in 1988. In that year, a group of musical misfits from the University of Melbourne, Institute of Education, auditioned to be part of the Expo experience – really an excuse to take a year off study and hang out in the Brisbane sunshine. The immersion in musical settings during that year was entirely different from what a normal under graduate music teacher would do to supplement their teaching income. Potential career paths as a weekend warrior pub- musician, playing the evening three-step in a reception band or trying to score an orchestra gig were a world away from the gig up next to the Brisbane River. It was colour and movement the whole way – inappropriate costumes with capes that didn't suit the Queensland weather, marching band 'high mark time' routines and complicated choreography that, in some ways, brought music to life and was really interactive with the audience.

That Queensland experience must have given Nic the kernel of an idea – an idea that he literally took and ran with. And he ran hard. He and Tom Ryan saw that there was potential by developing an act that had a point of difference. It started with tie-dying overalls over at Sean Coleman's place. Then there was a 2nd edition of overalls, this time with individual colours and embroidered words that actually spelt out our character names on each cozzie - 'Wacky', 'Wild', 'Wind', and 'Machine'. How professional!

Any discussion of Wacky's beginning can't really take place without putting Tommy Ryan (Ri-arn) into the conversation. In the early 1990's, he and Nic played in a spin-off of the Grand Wazoo Band of a 1000 Dances – a band called 'Dr Bellows and

the Swing Genies' (with Peter Jackson). After gigs, Tom and Nic would continue the festivities as a duo – playing requests and having a ball doing it. Nic and Tom would conspire further direction in terms of repertoire, costumes and gags at Nic's parents place at Red Hill, flicking bugs into the zapper.

They would go out out as a duo for maybe \$120 a gig and would share a green room with stilt walkers who were getting \$400 each for their work. Nic, Tom and Chris Lavery decide to cash in on that idea (one that has had further incarnations) with 'The Very Big Band'.

The first four rehearsed at each other's places regularly on a Saturday morning in Clifton Hill, East Burwood, Ivanhoe and Blackburn South. It quickly became a contest as to who could outdo the next with the presentation of an over-the-top gourmet breakfast. I think we succeeded most in putting on weight, more than learning new tunes and routines.

Some of the earliest gigs that I can remember was the school gigs at Presentation College, (thanks Caz McLean) and Assumption College Kilmore (where Nic worked) playing 'La Bamba' with the lyric 'I smell your socks now' – or for the adult audiences - 'I smell your jocks now'. There were stories of vegemite being smeared in inappropriate places – but I can't (or don't want to) remember those specific details. 'Eine Kleine Nachtmusik' and 'Michael Rowed the Boat Ashore' were on the very first cheat sheets.

One of my favourite memories on a gig was the strategy to build an audience from scratch. We would get passers-by to stand together for a 'group photo shot'. This would take 10, 15 sometimes 20 minutes of the set. The idea was pure genius - manoeuvre people in and around the shot, keep adding people and changing their positions. I am not actually sure if we ever took a photo! We played at the Heidelberg festival, making the front page of the Leader newspaper no less. We were known to busk illegally outside the Arts Centre in Melbourne, wrestling punters to the ground to our 'Super Hero' medley.

Of course, there was the first Sydney trip performing at Darling Harbour with Steve Frisby on guitar (who could forget 'resting'

on his brother's yacht?), and playing at Sydney Luna Park – sharing the change room (and rider) with Aussie rock royalty Mental as Anything.

We were booked one afternoon to perform at an AFL game between Carlton and Adelaide at Princes Park and Tom was debuting as the character 'Captain Carlton'. The premise was that the Adelaide Crow had 'stolen' one of the Blues premiership cups – and Captain Carlton would arrive to save the day! In the payers race, Tom was having something between a nervous breakdown, anxiety attack and an out-of-body experience as he sucked on his 7th chain-smoked cigarette. Then it was time to chase down the pesky Crow. What was hilarious was that the Crow mascot was way too fast for Captain Carlton – Tom couldn't quite make up the distance as thousands of Carlton fans pissing themselves and hurling abuse at CC. I am still trying to track down footage of that riotous day.

Other early gigs included a pre-Olympics gig at the Melbourne showgrounds, the Brown Brothers Food and Wine festival and recording (on tape) at the ABC studios with Peter Jackson. I will never forget the amazing NYE gig in Auckland, or the time I was with Nic (and Rock Pig) at the Melbourne Aquarium as part of Skin Dive Jive when he jumped into an actual pool to do some CPR on a toy fish. Damn hilarious.

We know what sets Nic apart from the rest - his selfless drive to continually to develop the 'product' and be innovative in ways to engage new clients. Not just engage clients to get a booking, but really engage them at a level beyond the norm – he takes fun seriously.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of stories and amazing experiences that we share thanks to Nic. I will never forget a conversation we had over a beer somewhere – he said: "The most satisfaction I get out of my job, is getting gigs for my mates".

Well mate, HAPPY 50th BIRTHDAY.

# the beginning







**“SELECTING A NAME FOR YOUR NEW BUSINESS IS NOT EASY. A NAME DOES MORE THAN IDENTIFY YOUR COMPANY. IT TELLS CUSTOMERS WHO YOU ARE, WHAT YOU DO, AND MORE THAN A LITTLE ABOUT HOW YOU DO IT. YOUR NAME DIFFERENTIATES YOU FROM YOUR PEERS, PEAKS CUSTOMER INTEREST, AND INVITES FURTHER INVESTIGATION – IF YOU DO IT RIGHT.”**

– SUSAN FRIEDMAN  
THE TRADESHOW COACH



## **Wacky Music Comedy** 1996

The first name change, and perhaps the most significant, is credited to Col Cameron with his desire to drop the 'Wild Wind Machine' and leave it 'Wacky'. Something that was accepted as necessary by the group, and so the group began to mature.

With the new name came new songs and a new costume, one that would become a main stayer in the Wacky Wardrobe and become synonymous with Wacky over the coming decades... the sparkly jacket.

As with most evolution, it takes small steps and in this case the colours represented in the overalls remained with the new outfits. Red, Green, Blue and Yellow. Colours that are still allocated to the same people and instruments today... along with a few new additions.

### **THE EARLY DAYS OF WACKY / THE TRICKY WORLD OF GETTING WORK / AGENTS - COL CAMERON**

The early days of Wacky, or the Wacky Wild Wind Machine (WWW) for me were a vastly different dynamic from the one I felt later and continue to experience today. We were green. Learning every day what it was we were creating.

Finding our identity.

These days agents or employers often meet us and early in the conversation say "...well you guys know what you're doing so I'll leave it up to you." Over 20 years of experience, those contained within this book, give you a certain aura as you enter a meeting with the client or green room with other

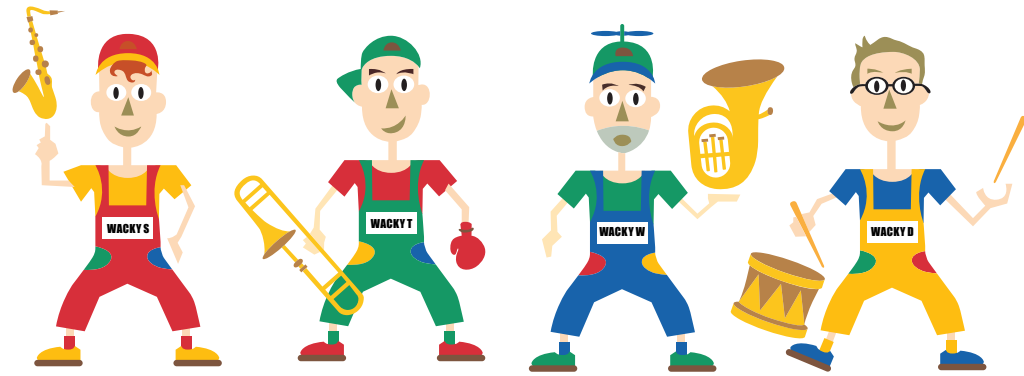
performers. Chances are Wacky Creative has booked most of the other acts in the greenroom - even if they don't realise it.

In the early days, WWW was more of a fun experiment. We were simply saying yes to almost everything and working out what to do along the way. We learned that selling our services could be achieved directly with a client and through an agent. While direct clients would grow later, early on Nic and Tom needed to rely on forging strong relationships with agents.

Agents seemed to come in two types: The 'old' ones who had been around forever and the brand new ones, some who are still around in some form today. Being an agents is a profession requiring great organisation, a good memory, a solid ego and very thick skin. They are constantly being undermined by clients looking for a better deal, often by comparing other agents' prices or worse, going direct to the act. As the act, you are in the middle of this push and pull, hoping to not burn too many bridges while you seal the gig. Older more established agents have a completely different outlook and attitude from newer less experienced ones. On a weekly basis Nic would have to negotiate with some who were stuck in their ways, fiercely protective of their end client and reluctant to ever meet face to face ('don't try to teach a grandma to suck eggs') through to genuinely excited agents or event managers wanting to meet face to face and create brand new concepts based around our skills - even pushing us well out of our comfort zones.

Knowing how to successfully 'read' and service the agents and direct clients, avoid the politics, develop systems for booking acts, follow the complicated meandering path of costumes across the city and state and control the flow of the finances, was a key to our success. This was expertly done by Nic and Caz in those formative years (often in the bungalow out the back of Shoobra Rd, Elsternwick) and later with Juliet Taylor and Kim Hyde and of course Brooke Balcombe. All of this was underpinned by Adrian Simpson's filemaker software skills.





WACKY WILD WIND MACHINE (1995)



WACKY MUSIC COMEDY (1996)



WACKY ENTERTAINMENT (2005)



**WACKY**  
 MUSIC COMEDY

Wacky offer a variety of shows which can be tailored for your function. The band will rave throughout your venue giving your guests "the individual touch" or provide a live on stage, hilarious musical show. Versatility is our strength. You name it, we'll do it and our challenge to you is to request a song that we can't play.

Recent satisfied clients have said the following:

"Wacky are infectious! They have a unique ability to spread their enthusiasm throughout a room. People just can't help getting involved! Next time you are having a special occasion call Wacky!"  
 - **Garwood Pottery, Arts Festival Pottery, Mission**

"During the time in which they were appearing, Lane Park received glad calls specifically inquiring about the times and dates when Wacky would be appearing again!"  
 - **Renee Gannon, Mission and Entertainment Co-ordinator, Lane Park, Mission**

"I would like to personally thank you on behalf of the Royal Agricultural Society for your contribution towards making the Perth '66 show such a success and I hope I will have the pleasure of working with you in the future!"  
 - **Ken Wannan, Entertainment Co-ordinator Public Show.**

**PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS IN THE LAST TWO YEARS INCLUDE:**

**FESTIVALS**  
 Australia Day 26/1/97  
 Melbourne Woodie Festival 26/1/97  
 Perth Show 24  
 Port Melbourne Festival 27  
 Torok Festival 27  
 Warrandyte Festival 27  
 Sandringham Festival 28  
 Warrington Festival 27  
 Red Earth Festival 24

**MAJOR EVENTS**  
 AFL Grand Final Parade 27  
 Australian Open 16/1/97  
 Snow Cup - Sydney 27  
 Melbourne Grand Prix 24/1/97

**CORPORATE WORK**  
 Paterasari's  
 Lane Australia  
 Crown Casino  
 Australian Taxation Exchange  
 Carlton Football Club  
 Taberai  
 Wittington Carnival  
 Festivals and Events Conference  
 Hunt Hill Apartments  
 Auskair - Public Transport Corporation  
 Freemantle Sevens Football Club  
 Fashion Week 2001

**CHILDREN'S SHOWS**  
 Royal Childrens Hospital  
 Yu Arts Summer Festival 27  
 Children's Week 26/1/97  
 Kids Comedy Festival 27  
 Victorian Arts Centre Fairy Day  
 Presentation College, Melbourne  
 St Kevin's College - Melbourne  
 Wellington Secondary College Melb

**PUBLIC VENUES**  
 Lane Park - Melbourne and Sydney  
 Melbourne Concert Hall  
 The Rocks - Sydney  
 Victorian Arts Centre  
 Esplanade Market - Melbourne  
 Darling Harbour - Sydney  
 Federation Square  
 South Melbourne Market

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## Wacky Entertainment 2005

As the late 90's moved past the doomsday millenium (phew... nothing happened) and into the noughties, we found ourselves working regularly with the same (non-Wacky) friends gig after gig. They were often engaged seperately as magician or juggler or acrobat etc. It made sense to Nic after a while, to book some of these great acts as a way to ease the booking process for our clients and also allow Wacky to make a small margin to cover the extra administration costs.

This led to Nic developing further booking system updates with Adrian Simpson to ensure that the Filemaker system could cope with not only the expanding Wacky stable of acts, and therefore costumes, but also the increasing number of non-Wacky acts booked.

Soon it was time to once again revisit the name and soon enough we settled on Wacky Entertainment to incorporate all our offerings. Never one to rest on his laurels, within a short period of time Nic and Arthur Ipsaros were developing a remote control speaker system that eventually had its first big outing at the MCG plus a few city parades.

'Wacky' didn't seem suitable within the name as a company now looking to develop business relationships with larger organisations and events.

Another name change was necessary.



## Creative Entertainment Concepts 1997-2015

Not many people were aware of Creative Entertainment Concepts (CEC) until it's public launch in 2014. Except some letterhead that existed, the name and company had until then served primarily as the trading company.

With the need for a new name to encapsulate Wacky Entertainment's new ventures and perspective clients, Creative Entertainment seemed appropriate.

Creative Entertainment Concepts sounded a lot more professional. It meant that both entertainment involving humans and machines could coexist along with a brand that included writing, brand development and concept creation.

Col leapt forward to provide free expert website advice because that's his expertise. *"For only \$33 we can get a WordPress theme and easily edit it ourselves."*

Hours and hours later Col and Luke had created a form of website that did the job, with Nic jumping in to help populate it with acts, images and copy to get it up and running.

And as we sat back to view our combined efforts... realised that it wasn't the website we needed... and we weren't the people to build it!

# Wacky Creative

## 2015

The company had by now diversified into a multifaceted creative group. Not only was it creating creative entertainment and concepts, it was still producing acts of wacky entertainment.

Wacky Creative didn't in fact come from a decision to re-brand... but we are jumping ahead.

With the adoption of Creative Entertainment Concepts (CEC), the current website didn't reflect the array of products and services CEC was beginning to focus more on. The current website was mashed together with limited word-press knowledge... much of this under Col Cameron's hard work and tireless efforts learning how to code a standard word-press template and sourcing bolt ons that would work for us, some with the help of his brother Alister.

Given this had been going on for some time, Nic being the pragmatist he is, decided to look at bringing in a design studio's help to create the website we were after and needed. The ability to view the breadth of acts available, showcase our events and most importantly, allow the people that haven't engaged with the company before, to understand what it offered as a creative group of entertainers.

It would prove how difficult it was, to find the right design studio that understood us and that could explain their vision for the website, by the time it took.

But we found them. Malt Creative.

Not only capable of making us feel comfortable with

their vision and the end result...but most significantly... their question about changing the name from Creative Entertainment Concepts.

People knew us as Wacky. Even with the change to CEC we were still called the "Wackies". So why throw away a brand that had been built over 20 years!

And the boys at Malt pitched the name Wacky Creative.

It made sense. So we said yes. And here we are. A brand spanking new logo and brand. One that epitomises the Wacky spirit and creative focus within a sleek look.

The feedback was all positive too... and we're glad we are still the Wackies AT Wacky.

It is interesting to note that the logo and brand includes a circle pattern through-out. A call back to the sequin jackets that are so synonymous with Wacky? Chance?! Or perhaps some incredible and subtle design?

The name wasn't the only thing the company had outgrown with the offices and warehouse bursting at the seams. "*We need a bigger warehouse.*" soon stopped being a joke when navigating the downstairs space, and quickly became something of serious necessity. For Nic, like most people's New Years Eve resolutions, had failed to follow through on his promise each year to not invest in creating costumes.

Cruiser Bikes, Electric Scooters, Cockatoos, more Christmas outfits, games, random costumes and of course, Colin's old drum kit and Nic's family camping and snow gear... all of it somehow housed in a 10 year old space.

It would just so happen that an opportunity would arise and allow Wacky to not only move into a bigger warehouse, literally a one minute scooter ride away (tested and timed by Martin

Macaulay on move day) and at the same time, through the same agent, also finding a new owner for the now ex premise on Turner St.

Everyone in the office was incredibly excited about the move... but a rattle in the current Wacky HQ roof had been noticed by the interested party and could have been the undoing of it all.

This was the very same rattle that had Nic ask Brooke and myself to be available in the office to create ambient office chatter, music and loud mashing of our keyboards... basically everything but having a party... as a smoke screen to hide the rattle if it reared its head, which as luck would have it, it had!

It was a stressful time but thankfully everything was signed off and it was on to preparing for move day.

Well that's another story, but suffice to say it involved throwing out, packing, organising, installing, collating, reminiscing, axle grinding and painting... and that's just moving out. Moving in is a whole other whale..but one that owes a very special thank you to Scott Rice, Richard De Bolfo and Martin Macaulay for giving up a day of their weekend to help load, trash, pack, wrap, lift, drive, push, screw, unscrew, groan and drink, the entire warehouse furnishings and costumes down, out, in and up more stairs and doors that should have been possible.

Though the downstairs warehouse is pretty much complete... the upstairs office is still a work in progress. Time is fleeting and currently better spent on creating amazing concepts and creative for current and new clients. Many more buckets of sweat, late nights and elbow grease will be needed to finish off the heart of Wacky.

But you can be sure when that finally happens, you may hear someone quietly whisper, "*We need a bigger warehouse!*"





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**A FEW MORE PEOPLE  
WANTED TO HAVE THEIR  
TWO CENTS WORTH TOO...**





1\ ALEX AND THE WACKY STOCKMEN AT A TRADE EVENT – DREAMTIME  
 2\ A NIGHT (TO REMEMBER) AT THE RACES – FLEMINGTON  
 3\ WACKY FORM A CHURCH OF HONOUR FOR WACKIES OF AN AMWAY CONFERENCE AT THE MCG  
 4\ NIC AS THE MASCOT FOR A TARGET AWARDS DINNER  
 5\ ADAM THE MODEL – WHAT YOU SEE ISN'T ALWAYS WHAT YOU GET  
 6\ THE SWITCH – ONE CAN ONLY WONDER WHAT IS GOING THROUGH HER MIND... AND HANDS  
 7\ TOURISM VIC CORREBORRE – THE ATRIUM, FLEMINGTON RACECOURSE  
 8\ 'WHITE' PERFORM AT THE 2006 COMMONWEALTH GAMES OPENING CEREMONY AT THE MCG  
 9\ COMMONWEALTH GAMES MEDIA LAUNCH AT WERRIBEE PARK MANSION WITH WILBUR WILDE AND THE WACKY BIG BAND

# Alexandra Nihill

– DESIGN AND DELIVER

## MY FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH WACKY

M2006 opening ceremony. With my Danny the Police man.

## NIGHT AT THE RACES AT FLEMINGTON

It was just another Night at the Races at Flemington, but this night, something was different. What should have been just a fun fashion parade with the guest contestants sashaying down the runway with a few provided props, turned into a the most hilarious sight. MC Nic LOST THE PLOT at the lectern as creative guests stripped off and wore the table LINEN as their outfits. There was even cutlery being used in the outfits. The client, the other guests, all the crew and the Wacky Team lost total control of the evening and I cannot remember a funnier night!

Definitely a highlight in the world of Wacky xx

## AIME MCVB DINNER - 2004 - GREAT HALL NATIONAL GALLERY

This is where he began his love affair with ADAM the Model - In the knickers. It's the Art of Melbourne thing.

Blindfold goes on - lady thinks she is smearing paint on a hot guy — do the switch — out comes Nic in Coke Bottle Glasses and a fat tummy.

More snorting. I tend to snort a lot when I am in the company of the Wackies xx

“...THE ENTHUSIASM IS GENUINE AND INFECTIOUS AND YOU GET IT.”

## PHOTO OPPORTUNITY!

So so many AMWAYS — you are all over the world. Seriously — you guys were the most popular act on the night — every time.

We need to get the guests in and seated — for crying out loud Wacky - STOP performing and getting pics with the guests - we gotta move em in!!

You must have a GAZILLION pics of this.

## IF I JUST HAVE TO PIC 3 MEMORABLE MOMENTS;

1. The Corroboree napkin / nudie incident. (editor's note — Nic will have to tell you about this. Alex doesn't elaborate)
2. Target Awards Dinner in 2011. The client did not have a character to wear the cossie so we got Nic on mates' rates and he was MAULED by all the drunk shop girls. He was absolutely exhausted at the end and there is a classic pic of him lying on the floor, legs in the air, still wearing his target suit. Ronnie is the character name. Rachel would be able to find this pic for you.
3. Melbourne 2006 - Needed something different as a roving act for the Games Family Reception. It was Opening Ceremony night so all the glamour was on the areas but we still had to deliver something wonderful inside.

From concept to creation and execution the brief was really nailed.

If there is one thing I can say about Nic (and all of you really) it is that the enthusiasm is genuine and infectious and you get it. You just get what is needed to get the job done. There is also a lot of fun. Always. I love collaborating and brainstorming with you all.

Bloody special people.





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# Natalie Kalkbrenner

– DANCER, GYPSY HOUSE PRODUCTIONS

1\ THE CRUIER BIKE TEAM JUST BEFORE GETTING STARTED AT THE CITY OF MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA DAY PARADE. 2\ POLAROID PROMOTION FOR COLES HEAD OFFICE. 3\ SNAKE WHISPERING AT THE EGYPTIAN THEMED COLES TEAM XMAS PARTY 4\ FLASH MOB TEAM FOR COLES PROMOTION 5\ SPINNING SOME FUNKY GROOVES AT CENTRAL PIER FAR RIGHT\ ARTY SHOT IN TOKYO DURING A SMALL HOLIDAY TAKEN AFTER A CITIBANK TOUR

Wacky creative are without a doubt one of my favourite companies to work/play with.. The gigs are ALWAYS hilariously funny, I usually never know what I'll be doing but always say yes because I know it's always a good time and I'll be doing something I usually wouldn't get to do. You guys give us all the chance to be very silly, have fun, showcase our talents and skills and get paid really great bucks to do so. I've never met a more professional, hard-working, successful, respected and yet hilarious team of peeps.

Happy 21st birthday Wacky, you all rock my socks!!!



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# Ryan McCluskey

– DRUMS

It would be easy to recall the 1,278 fat jokes (not that I'm counting) over the last 15 or so Wacky years... But that would be too easy. Being blessed with the moniker 'Beefy' (or Beefcake to the slightly more civilised) says it all right? Don't get me wrong, fat jokes are good... Better than good - they always kill and get a good laugh. Whether it's a sign pinned to your back saying "CAUTION, do not feed the drummer under any circumstances", or a pouring a whole packet of chips over your face in front of 3000 people at Hamer Hall (while dressing in a kilt) or pouncing around Flemington Racecourse dressed as the worlds first 'weight handicapped jockey' - fat jokes never fail!!! But none of these hilarious moments compare to the first time I realised the depth of performance I needed to achieve if I was to mix it with The Mighty Wacky men - Nic, Coco and Luke.

My first ever Santa gig. I was super nervous. Really super nervous. No idea what to say, how to act, petrified of what the kids would ask and what answer I give. "Don't worry!" said Nic, "You'll be fine" said Luke, "just follow us, we are all out there with you!" said Coco. "Yeah" said Nic "You will not have to say much. We'll talk to the kids and you just say HoHoHo a lot. The big red suit will do the rest. Trust me!"

Ok... I thought to myself... I can do this... The boys have got my back...

I suit up and we head out to the waiting throng of believing 5&6year old faces. "HoHoHo" I say, "Merry Christmas everyone!" ... The kids laugh and seem to be loving it, then a sorta lull comes over them and they look at me. "Shit, what next?" I think to myself. Then, Nic turns to me and says...

"So Santa... What's your Christmas message to all the boys and girls this year??"

What? Uh... Umm... Err..

I look at Nic, coco and Luke all of them pissing themselves at the stunned mullet Santa...

"Welcome to Wacky"



1\ ROYAL ADELAIDE SHOW  
– RYAN STEPS IN FOR COL.  
SIGN RETROSPECTIVELY  
SHOULD HAVE BEEN "PLEASE  
DONUT FEED THE DRUMMER"  
2\ WHEN THE FUN AND  
NOVELTY OF FREE FOOD  
AND DONUTS WEARS OUT  
AFTER THE 6TH SET AT THE  
ADELAIDE SHOW  
3\ MELBOURNE COUNCIL'S  
'LIGHTING OF THE TREE' IN  
THE CITY CENTRE.  
4\ ROCKING OUT AT THE  
MELBOURNE FORMULA ONE  
AS LATINO SOMBRERO  
5\ WE AREN'T REALLY SURE  
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE BUT  
IT LOOKS VERY WACKY –  
FLEMINGTON CUP CARNIVAL





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## Andrew Rahni

– ATHENAEUM CLUB, MELBOURNE

Since 2002, Nic and his very talented team of Wackstars have been an annual highlight at our 400 guest end of year Yuletide extravaganza.

Whether dressed as Christmas elves, puddings, trees, crackers or tinsel tooters, the Wackies always get our party rocking with brilliant roving entertainment, clever audience interaction, spontaneous improvisation, infectious humour, and a conga line or three! And after fourteen successive performances, every year brings a new innovation and tweak to keep the act fresh.

From a guest: *"I love the roving musicians, they are very talented, really fun, and add a good personal touch up at your table."*

Thank you Nic and the team for being so very exceptionally talented and an absolute joy to work with!

Andrew Rahni  
Events & Marketing Manager

6\ WE AREN'T SURE IF NIC STARTED WITH OR AQUIRED THAT BOA THROUGHOUT THE YUETLIDE EVENING  
7\ THE EARLIER DAYS AT THE ATHENAEUM CLUB. THE BOYS IN THE MOST LAVISH GREEN ROOM... COMPLETE THEN WITH LOBSTER AND CRAY  
8\ ONE OF THE MANY CHARASMATIC GENTLEMEN AND PATRONS AT THE ATHENAEUM CLUB  
9\ IN THE THICK OF IT. ROVING AND REQUESTING TUNES DURING YUETLIDE AT THE ATHENAEUM CLUB.





“THE WACKY WILD WIND MACHINE IS LIKE NOTHING YOU HAVE EVER SEEN BEFORE.”  
— THE ATRIUM





# the very early years



“ THE COMBINATION OF THEIR MUSCIANSHIP AND INSANE SENSE OF THE RIDICULOUS ENSURES THAT THEY APPEAL TO A WIDE AUDIENCE. ”







# The Hot Dog

SAUCE DOG 1.15  
BARBEQUE DOG  
CHEESE DOG with tomato  
MILD AMERICAN DOG  
PREMIUM DOG  
DOUBLE DOG  
HOT WINGS

Dutch Ill  
for Christmas

DAILY SISTER



# Kirsten Yates

– PSYCHOLOGIST /  
PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE

Mr Nic Yates  
Director and Boss of Wacky Industries  
Unit 54, 63 Turner St  
Port Melbourne  
VIC 3207

24th July, 2007

Dear Boss Nic,

## Re:- Being A Christmas Pudding!

I enclose my application for the upcoming Christmas season for consideration as a Christmas pudding. You will note that this has been submitted in a most timely fashion to allow you due consideration of the merit of my application.

- I believe I would make a fine pudding for the following reasons:-
- I am already rotund and will need little extra padding
- I eat plenty of pudding and therefore know its habits well
- I adhere to the family tradition of pudding for breakfast on Boxing Day
- I waddle well
- I have good volume
- I can multi-skill and could fill in for other Christmas ornaments
- I work well in a team and will blend with other Christmas foods
- I have chutzpah!

You will note that I have made multiple applications in the past, which demonstrates my enthusiasm and commitment to the role. It also indicates that I am not easily dissuaded from a goal.

It is also pertinent that I fulfilled a far more complex role as 'The Queen' in recent times, which was universally applauded and may well result in further call-backs.

It has been brought to my attention that previous rejections have been made on the basis of a lack of talent...In contradiction to this claim and support of my abilities, I enclose Music and Theory qualifications, which highlight my particular talents and gifts. It should also be noted that I have minor qualifications as a clinical psychologist, which could assist you with any staffing and employee assistance issues that may occur with the documented increase in stress levels at this busy time of year.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience and being able to discuss my application with you further in person. I will of course be prepared to attend any interview in costume and assuming the professional persona.

Yours Sincerely,  
Kirsten Yates

## CURRICULUM VITAE

**NAME:** Kirsten Yates

**ADDRESS:** \*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

**PHONE:** \*\*\*\* \* (Home)  
\*\*\*\* \* \* (Mobile)

**EMAIL:** \*\*\*\*\*

### CAREER SUMMARY:

A pudding eater and appreciator from childhood, now dedicated to living out a career dream of achieving fame through being a pudding.

### PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:

Chief Family Pudding Eater  
Certificate of Appreciation for learning the secret family recipe  
Award of Merit for eating extraordinary amounts of Yates pudding at a sitting

### Incidental Qualifications

2002-2003 Master of Psychology (Clinical) RMIT University  
1998 Bachelor of Psychology (Hons) James Cook University  
1987 Bachelor of Business (Catering and Hotel Management) Footscray Institute of Technology

### PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:-

Australian Pudding Appreciation Society (Associate)  
Victorian Christmas Pudding Admiration Association (Full Member)

### CLINICAL PLACEMENTS COMPLETED:

Melbourne Juvenile Pudding Eating Contest (Certificate of Merit)  
Christmas Catering and Pudding Providers Co-op

### CAREER EXPERIENCE AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

#### **Company:** *Lions Club*

**Position:** Fruit Cake and Pudding Sales Consultant

**Duration:** Commenced 1996- onwards

#### **Company:** *Victorian Obesity Counselling Service*

**Position:** Correction of pudding over-eaters

**Duration:** November, 2003 – April, 2004.

**Description:** Provision of psychosocial assessments prior to surgery, and follow-up counselling.

#### **Company:** *Southern Health*

**Position:** Christmas Revue Lead Role and Chorus participation

**Duration:** 2004, 2005, 2006.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Queen Victoria Market Cooking Demonstration and Classes in advanced pudding making.

Live with fussy child who only likes the best quality food, therefore I can tell the difference between a good pudding and a bad one. (for the record I am certainly an exceptional pudding!!!)

### CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:-

International Conference of Pudding Delegates: Sydney 2007  
Christmas Fire Cracker Exhibition. Jeff's Shed. Melbourne 2006

### VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES:

I have studied the magic pudding by reading it aloud to my beautiful children, listening to it being read on a night time story CD-ROM therefore imprinting it on my brain. This helps because I have not only learnt about all the different types of pudding but I have learnt the attitude that a pudding should carry and display.

### REFEREES:

'Arthur' – The Magic Pudding

Aunty Elizabeth:- Keeper of the Yates traditional recipe

Shirley Yates:- Mad pudding maker and genetic source of all talent pudding related



**FAR LEFT** \ MUM AND 2 SISTERS (LEFT TO RIGHT) SHIRLEY, KIRSTEN, KATHARINE , NIC AND ANNETTE AT THE WACKY 'DOGS & DAIQUIRI' CHRISTMAS PARTY  
**RIGHT** \ APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT AS THE ROLE OF THE OFFICIAL CHRISTMAS PLUM PUDDING. STATUS: STILL PENDING.



# Gianni Marinucci

– TRUMPET

Christmas pudding... nobody could get near me when it came to playing this Christmas delicacy. A pair of tights, big round brown ball, a pair of big shoes, and the coup de gras... the custard on top. The custard really tied the costume together.

When I pulled those tights on and got inside that ball, I felt invincible. When I pulled that custard on, well... I was king of the world. Any Christmas tune, any key, no solo gig was too long.

One time, I was standing playing at a shopping centre somewhere in the Dandenongs. As usual I was nailing the pudding routine... 'Rudolf' in F#, 'Jingle Bells' in B, nothing could stop me.

**“WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO BE? YOU LOOK LIKE A SHIT WITH SHOES ON!”**

Suddenly two guys came up to me and stared. *“Any requests fella’s? Any key, I don’t care”* I asked with all the confidence in the world. The one on the left looked at me... thinking... tilted his head and said... *“What the fuck are you supposed to be? You look like a shit with shoes on!”*

The next weekend, a small girl saw me in the pudding outfit and said to her mum, *“Mummy, what has that potato got to do with Christmas?”*

The next week I asked Nick if I could be the tree.

Gianni Marinucci  
aka *“The Shit With Shoes On”*



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1\ WORLDS LONGEST LUNCH DOCKLANDS 2\ IF THE SHOE FITS... CHECK THE SHIRT 3\ SPOTLIGHT HORSHAM OPENING – GIANNI DROVE THROUGH THE NIGHT TO ARRIVE 10 MINUTES BEFORE THE START 4\ SHOPPING CENTRE PERFORMANCE IN HONG KONG 5\ NOT THE "SHIT WITH SHOES" BUT ONE OF THE MANY XMAS GIGS IN DECEMBER 6\ LOST TOURISTS WELCOME VRC MEMBERS AT THE 2005 MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL





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## Brad Croft

– FUNTASTIC PRODUCTIONS

The first time I ever saw Wacky, they were called the Wacky Wild Wind Machine and I was a stage manager for City of Port Phillip looking after roving groups at the Esplanade Sunday Market. I remember thinking that Wacky was amazing in their ability to make theatre come to life on the streets with immediacy and spontaneity for the general public on top of being very crafted musicians with wicked and iconic humour.

The photo I've chosen (above) doesn't have anything to do with those times, but is a favourite of mine.



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5\ THE AUSSIE TALL STARS AND WACKY AT THE MELBOURNE CRICKET GROUND 6\ DAME 'CROFT' EDNA WITH THE AUSSIE TALLSTAR LIFESAVERS AT MCEC 7\ ROYAL MELBOURNE ZOO EVENT 8\ 'AUSTIN' AND WACKY AT A CROWN CASINO PRIVATE EVENT







# Col Cameron

– DRUMS / COMEDIAN / CREATIVE

## CENTRAL EQUITY: ON THE BACK OF A HORSE

Central Equity can thank us for selling an extraordinary number of apartments. The number is most likely extraordinarily low.

Whose idea was it to have 3 musicians, who looked like they could never afford an apartment of their own, performing music while 2 highly uneducated 'promo' girls, short for 'promiscuous', hand out sales brochures? How anyone took a brochure let alone bought an apartment I'll never know.

In truth, the gigs were easy and reliable. In the early days Southbank still had plenty of land to destroy. Our gigs were sustained by rapid fire jokes, strange passers-by and a longing for the best donuts in Melbourne that appeared sporadically in the guise of an old, fat, Greek man with a cane basket.

As the weeks passed and our repertoire grew, our interest waned and we longed for a change. That's when Nic talked Central Equity into putting us on a horse and carriage.

We had so much fun riding around the city in the tacky Central Equity signed carriage and must have sold a stack of apartments to boot! So many that we never worked for Central Equity again after that ride.

## WHAT THE FUCK TIME DO YOU CALL THIS FOR A MEAL?

Was it 1997 perhaps when we sauntered into a seaside restaurant in Scarborough Beach, WA? All I know is by then, after a week of performing to the West Australians, we were pretty confident around the public, our repartee was tight and as 4 grown men with a night ahead of us, the testosterone was high. Until we were wrecked by a waitress. We entered the restaurant at 9:30pm having rushed from our gig to a welcome of "WHAT THE FUCK TIME DO YOU CALL THIS FOR A MEAL?!"

## WHERE ARE YA?

I was always paranoid in the early days that I would forget gigs. In those days everything went in a Debden diary that I dutifully bought, annually, from their flagship store in City Rd, Southbank. My paranoia was well founded when I missed a couple of gigs saved only by a last minute call. For years later Tom would call me and the awkward, infuriating conversation would go like this:

Me - "Hi mate"

Tom - "Where are ya?"

Me - (sweating) "I'm... at home... where am I meant to be?"

Tom - (pause) "Nowhere, I was just wondering."

I could have killed him.

## SPIRIT OF TASMANIA CROSSINGS (1998)

It was such a buzz to work on a real cruise ship! Well... ferry. The Spirit of Tasmania was to have 10 extra crossings over summer leaving Melbourne on each Sunday at 9am arriving in Devonport at 10pm then departing Devonport four hours later for the return leg. The title of world's most treacherous strait or world's oldest ship didn't bother us at all. Neither did the tiny four berth cabin we squeezed into. We were young and stupid.

**“SUDDENLY JUST AS WE BEGAN TO SLOWLY MOVE WE LOOKED OUT AND SAW TOM RUNNING FOR HIS LIFE, HIS TROMBONE CASE FLYING AROUND AS HE RAN.”**

With a brief to 'entertain the guests' but no real venue to do so, we improvised a stage at the intersection of a stairwell landing. It was on these trips that Nic inadvertently created my nickname 'Coco'. He ran into the crowd who'd assembled cross-legged on the floor and announced "Please welcome your quiz master... (glancing at me in a sparkly jacket and thinking of the most camp name possible) *Coco Cameroon!!*"

The trips were rocky as hell. I get seasick looking at shells in a department store so I was often unable to finish a set. I remember Nic having iron guts as he blew into that sax with force despite the force nine winds and waves outside.

I seem to remember that we once walked into the cocktail lounge on a very rocky crossing to double check no passengers were there. Unfortunately, our assumption that all passengers would be either in their rooms or heaving the breakfast buffet over the side was wrong. A couple from Germany were ready with drinks and requests. One by one we excused ourselves until only Nic was left playing them a solo. I can't remember when Nic came back to the room, my head was too deep in the bowl.

The most memorable trip needs some background. Each week, when the ferry stopped in Devonport we knew we had 4 hours between 10pm and 2am to head across the Mersey river to the only place open, the Formby Hotel; run by a delightful, softly spoken publican and his beautiful waitress, Fleur.

Tom, always a great networker, lined up free crayfish for the following week in return for us bringing our instruments off the ship and putting on a show in the front bar. One last important footnote, by week 8 we had become accustomed to the ship's rules and knew which we could break if necessary. We all agreed that as we had never departed before about 9:15am, our compulsory 8am boarding deadline, on a Sunday morning, seemed ridiculous. We all pushed back a little here and there until on this particular day, call it crayfish day, we all boarded a few minutes late to see the gangway bridge rise from the dock at about 8:20am! We immediately knew we were short one Tom. We knew immediately that there was no way the captain would lower the gangway for Tom. It was a moot point really because Tom still hadn't appeared. Suddenly just as we began to slowly move we looked out and saw Tom running for his life, his trombone case flying around as he ran. The best we could do was wave through the porthole and plan our excuse for why we were down a musician. I think that deep down we knew the whole crew had seen him running like he was chasing the last bus.

Back to the crayfish... So the crayfish was lovely, especially as we had an extra one! We played to the bar and the response was frankly underwhelming. We even had a jealous local try to pick a fight with us. He shouted a word that will go down in the annals of Wacky. "Who do you think you are ya F'n GOOGLIE-EGGS!" Never before has an abuser mixed such a strong, powerful F-Bomb with such a preschool insult. Totally bizarre. When he tried to start a fist fight we realised that leaving Tom behind was a mistake. He would have made mince meat out of the bloke, if only to get to the crayfish more quickly.

1\ EMCEE AT CITIBANK'S 2014 CHAMPIONS FORUM IN OSAKA  
 2\ TARGET ROADSHOW AT MCEC 3\ PRE-GAME AFL ENTERTAINMENT OUTSIDE ETIHAD STADIUM 4\ BANK OF MELBOURNE FAMILY DAY 5\ LEADING OUT THE ZORBA AT THE GREEK THEMED CENTRO AWARDS NIGHT 2010 6\ PASSING OFF AS THE REAL DEAL – WORLDS LONGEST LUNCH AT OSCAR W'S IN ECHUCA 7\ WORST GIG EVER – CONHUNA 8\ WOBBLY WAITERS PHOTOSHOOT 9\ MYER'S 'NEW YORK' PROMOTION – IMPERSONATING NYC FIREFIGHTERS AND POLICE OFFICES SO WELL PEOPLE THOUGHT THEY WERE THE REAL DEAL 10\ MELBOURNE STAR OPENING 11\ COLES ROADSHOW – ROOM FACILITATORS READY TO REV UP THEIR GROUPS 12\ THE OFFICE TEAM SPRUKING THE NEW 'CEC' BRAND – PICTURE IN FRONT OF COCO'S MASTER CREATION PING PONG GAME



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## APPARENTLY I'M NOT FUNNY

I am constantly reminded of this fact by my Wacky 'mates'. Every time I dropped a hilarious line no one would laugh. Seriously. It was like telling a joke just as the \$10,000 draw finishes at the Slots function at Crown. Oh except for Digit, who always held on as long as possible then burst out laughing. Although he may very well have laughed at the absurdity of the situation rather than the joke. Anyway, I have my Wacky mates to thank for my stand up comedy career. Deep down I think that I became a professional comic to show them that I am in fact not only funny but funny enough to be paid.

Proof of my funniness is my classic joke that got nothing... nothing but a tumbleweed followed by a long round of my explanations of the mechanics of the said joke. I speak of the wondrous 'Four Corners joke'. (Applaud now) At risk of cracking the reader up here it is:

*"I was watching Four Corners for an hour the other night... until I realised there was a picture in the middle."*

Are you ok? Ok I'll continue.

I'll have you know Nic that while neither you, Wedgie (his name coined on that very day in the Traralgon RSL) nor the inhabitants of the aforementioned RSL found it remotely funny, my wife thought it was hysterical. Perhaps that's why I married her and not you.

**“I WAS WATCHING FOUR CORNERS FOR AN HOUR THE OTHER NIGHT... UNTIL I REALISED THERE WAS A PICTURE IN THE MIDDLE.”**

Your inability to understand my sophisticated réportie is no better explained than in a metaphor. Actually I'm going to stop there and I think you know why.

Nic - *"What's the life of concrete you reckon?"*

Col - *"Pretty boring."*

Wait, there was one of my jokes in 21 years that I know conquered you. Remember this? I'm still very proud of it.

Nic looks up at a huge concrete overpass and asks Coco:

Nic - *"What's the life of concrete you reckon?"*

Col - *"Pretty boring."*

You're welcome.



## INFLUENCED BY OTHERS

There were so many acts who we should thank for giving us inspiration, ideas and professional pointers. Acts like Cristof, Justin Case, Nic Nickolas, Dave Holder, Ian McKellar, Lou Moore, Zip & Zap, The Zimbabwe Brothers, PJ Oaten, Carolyn Connors, Born In A Taxi, Anthony De Masi, Andrew Gill, Cirque Du Soleil, Slava, Deja Vu, Matt Hetherington, Peter Gray, Mike Bishop, Chris Lavery and many, many more.

Actually my best memory of watching another performer was the evening Wacky was booked for a function for Ford. It was the early days for us and neither Nic nor I had done much emcee work so we watched good friend Chris Lavery intently as he took control of the crowd as event MC. He showed such confidence as he started one quick joke before bringing on the Ford chief executive. As the joke continued the event manager standing side stage looked stressed. Supportive, but stressed. Chris hurtled through the joke with undeniable momentum. It featured a game of Celebrity Heads. The queen was playing and her turn was next to guess what was on her head. To be honest, I can't remember how it went. I do remember the important part. When the jokes rhythm suggested a climax was near and the room hushed, Chris transformed into the Queen as he voiced her final question... *"IS IT HORSECOCK?"*

Silence. And more silence. Event Manager scans the room with a painted on smile. Coughing and fidgeting. Snorting from Wacky is now audible. Chris regains his composure and drops the winningest line that is now carved in history books. *"Well... speaking of horsecock, please welcome the Managing Director of Ford Mr ...."*

It was like he was drowning and reached for a shark. Magnificent. Almost as priceless and the Managing Director's scowl as he powered across the stage.

We left Chris to MC the rest of the event on his own.

Note: I still give Nic a hard time for his most famous faux pas at the Royal Botanical Gardens. It was very early in his MC career when he introduced the Honorable Member for Willis as the 'Honorary Member'. Gold!

## WORST GIG EVER

We had a great habit of 'winning' at gigs. Meaning that while the start could be often dreadful and the middle sometimes diabolical, the end was always a success. Except for the 2 day corporate event in Cohuna. It promised so much and gave so little. Never have we worked the entrance and had 150 guests walk past us without a single one looking at us. Never! NEVER!! Pure Gold.

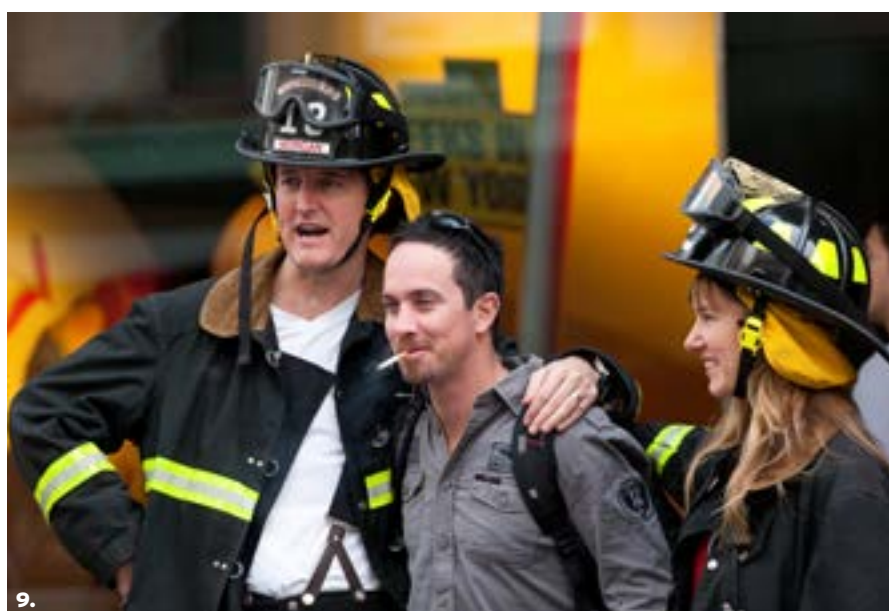
Oh and it was a long drive there. And back.



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1\ FLEMINGTON RACE CLUB'S (VRC) MEDIA LAUNCH FOR CAMPAIGN 'THE PLAYGROUND OF RACING ROYALTY' AT SOUTHERN CROSS STATION - WITH KIM FLETCHER 2\ TAKING STOCK (MEN) BEFORE THE CITY OF MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA DAY PARADE 2016 3\ THE MADNESS OF FASHIONS ON THE FIELD - DONE WACKY STYLE 4\ NIGHT AT THE RACES PHANTOM CALL AT THE VRC

### VARIETY OF STRIPPERS

I still wonder how it's possible that a children's charity would employ strippers but they did. In the late 90's we were asked by Variety Club to perform on a boat on the Yarra for 200 unfortunate looking men entangled with 10 unfortunate looking strippers. Strippers because they walked towards the boat like all their dignity had been stripped. I remember it vividly because I had a streaming cold, we wore our least protective costume (1920's bathing suits) and it was a windy 9 degree July day. The gig was awful and eventually consisted of the rejected strippers, that no one was interested in (men can be cruel) dancing to our music at the back of the boat. By the end we forgot they were strippers and I may have even given one of them my shirt to cover up. As we left I remember thinking that the strippers seemed to have more dignity left than the drunks who by this stage were too drunk to notice them.

### TOUGHEST GIG EVER

Nic once again couldn't say no and doxed us in for the toughest gig ever, performing at the Mercury Lounge nightclub at 11:30am. No nightclub should ever be entered before dark. It's like a bride before her wedding, or a TV newsreader before make up. It's horrifying. To sweeten the deal Nic told



us that it was a bogan event, a BBQ for Timbo & Bedders' MMM breakfast radio show. Oh and we were to perform for a 15 minute spot on 2 consecutive days to a crowd that had been drinking VB intravenously since 9am. Worse still was that we had a gig from 9 am until 12pm selling apartments for Central Equity using Barry Manilow and Lionel Ritchie tunes. Nic figured that no one would know if we left early. Yep, you and I would have used that as the perfect opportunity to get out of the gig but not Nic. The Central Equity gig would be the perfect opportunity to have a paid rehearsal.

I remember that we had a sketchy plan that didn't fill me with confidence. Our plan was like a Malaysian 777. We had no idea where we were going.

We walked into the backstage of the already rocking nightclub. The air was rancid with the smell of cheap reheated burnt meat mixed with, yet to be sanctioned, cigarette smoke. As we peered through the backstage curtain the few rays of light bounced off bald heads, tattoos and flannelette shirts.

Suddenly in unison we all asked where the toilets were.

Tom was the least fazed. He responded with his usual backstage nervous energy and searched for a drink. The drinks

were forthcoming, in fact they were everywhere. VB was most likely a sponsor. The water could have been turned off and no one would have noticed.

We followed an interview with a very popular member of Tism. The MC Ed Phillips then announced that Timbo and Bedders would be back soon *"but don't worry, during their break... please welcome Wacky!"*

Silence. Then from the back of the room (mockingly) *"You guys are Wacky!!"*

We died like a rat behind the fridge; silently and expectedly.

I can't remember what we played but it didn't go over.

As we left the stage in shame we remembered that we had to return the next day and do it all again. I vividly remember calling a rehearsal and pleading with the guys to go with my plan, to enter the stage playing Bananas in Pyjamas then stop looking stunned and argue whose fault it was that we had been booked for the wrong gig.

My recollection is that we came back the next day, played our Central Equity gig in silence then smashed the show.





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Well, smashed is a big word. Fair to say we adapted well to the situation getting a fat hairy guy to come on stage and skol 5 cans of VB before Nic could finish Flight of The Bumblebee. He actually beat Nic and skulled about 8 beers because he found the hosts' rider out the back to the crowds delight. The gig was also memorable for the fact that I said the word FUCK for the first time on stage. Ah... the memories.

#### JOKERS ON RYRIE

In the early 2000s we worked a lot for Tattersalls including producing and performing in their in-house training videos. However, most of the time we simply entertained gamblers' backs as they ignored us while pouring money into the pokies. On one fine day we were sent to Jokers on Ryrie, a bright, colourful and soulless money pit in central Geelong.

The gig was memorable only for one fact. A local elderly lady had a face identical to Nic's when Nic puts on his best nuff nuff face. Seriously, it was amazing. They could have been brother and sister.

What I didn't realise is that while my back was turned, Nic had whispered in the woman's ear in the style of a boxing coach - quiet, motivational and direct. Whatever he said it worked.

Judging by the lady the instruction was perfectly targeted, I'm guessing not overly complicated. Me thinks *"He really wants to kiss you. No really."*

While I was chatting to someone else she grabbed me by the shoulder, swung me round and planted the biggest pash on, sorry, in... my open mouth. It was a clash of mouths and culture all at once. Most likely a yeast culture because every time I think about it I swear I can still taste it.

#### FLIPPERDANCE FOR FIREMEN

We were booked to perform Flipperdance at the huge Bellarine Room at the old World Trade Centre. Back then we were using our high pressure water bottles and even clip on mics for the show. We were so organized. We needed to be. The stage was high, in the round and covered in carpet which we in turn covered in a large lino mat.

I remember the show well because 50% of the challenge of Flipperdance for me is writing a plausible script detailing why we're there.

This gig was a fund raiser or conference for Fire Fighters so Nic and I worked hard on a scenario where we were on our

way to the International Police & Fire Games and were going to compete as Synchronized Swimmers performing Flipperdance underwater. 'Unfortunately we can't be fully underwater tonight so we came up with this idea...' Then we handed out water pistols and super soakers to the front rows. Only we didn't really think through the practicalities of that one. The music started and immediately the old ladies in the front aimed for our eyes with a steady stream of pressurized spray. Not only were we immediately blinded (which was bloody hilarious) but the lino under our flippers turned to greasy ice.

OMG. I have no idea how the performance went but we were desperately trying to get the steps right while crying with laughter and falling over. Easily my most memorable Flipperdance experience.

#### THE EARLY DAYS

When I first joined Wacky Wild Wind Machine in March 1996 rehearsals were epic. Our breakfast rehearsals at Martfart's small unit in Ivanhoe or Heidelberg (whichever's cheaper) went on for an eternity. Thank goodness none of us had families to go home to. We started at 9am if there was no Richmond or North match the night before (otherwise 10), then made coffee, pancakes, bacon and eggs, a pack of cigarettes (Tom). Once

5\ FINE FILLIES, WINE... AND A FINE BAND MAKE UP THE MUST SEE AND DO DURING THE MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL AT FLEMINGTON  
6\ COL HOSTS 'TONIGHT LIVE' THEME AT A PETER JONES EVENT FOR MAZDA  
7\ WACKY STOCKMEN PHOTOSHOOT IN OUTBACK PORT MELBOURNE  
8\ AUSSIE FLAG SUITS POSE FOR A SELFIE STICK PHOTO IN THE BOTANICAL GARDENS - AUSTRALIA DAY  
9\ STUDIO PHOTO SHOOT FOR THE LATEST WACKY ACTS - CANDID SHOT AT VICKI JONES PHOTOGRAPHY





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the metabolism kicked in we were so sleepy we managed a warm up of Blueberry Hill (for Tom) a quick crack at The Austin Powers Theme and finally, to really challenge ourselves, a tedious dissection of Michael Rowed The Boat Ashore.

I lost patience with the long rehearsals, perhaps because I was the new guy. Actually I wasn't happy with the name Wacky Wild Wind Machine either which I remember having a strong hand in reducing to just Wacky. That was the end of my influence on the group. Oh except for lining the suit itchy pants. That was me too.

### 'MESH' DINNERS

A mesh dinner means nothing to most people, but to those of us who experienced them at Crown Promenade Hotel... we so much as see mesh on a car seat or band-aid and we begin to sing corny Christmas carols and salivate furiously.

### ECHUCA

Much like Mesh dinners, the mere mention of Echuca conjured up images of beer, beer and wine sitting on professionally converted 44 gal drums on the balcony of Dean Oberin's masterpiece the late 'Oscar W's'.

One of the great Wacky - Client relationships that spawned many a story from New Years parties, Longest Lunches, Private Parties, Teddy Bear Picnics and more. Sadly even I was too inebriated to remember them.

### COOL CALM COLLECTED CAPTAIN

The moment when I was at my worst, the Captain was at his best.

I had been employed to MC Citibank's annual conference this time in Osaka, Japan. I was looking forward to it like an athlete leading up to the Olympics. It was perhaps the first time I was to work without the rest of the Wacky team so I was pumped to do a good job.

My flight was set to depart at 10am on the Sunday approaching. As it happens the lead up week was very busy punctuated by an event on the Saturday morning that I was a little apprehensive about - being a reporter and working with a camera crew interviewing members of the public watching the Myer Christmas Parade.

On the Saturday morning I woke earlier than usual, well ahead of my 6am alarm, not just because of the excitement of the day but because I had a sudden fear that I hadn't checked the whereabouts of my passport for a while. Knowing exactly where it was, I awoke and without so much as squinting my eyes open I fumbled in the usual spot in my bedside table for my passport. The shock of finding nothing jolted me upright and within seconds had me frantically pulling draws out under the bright lights I'd switched on.

Sharni awoke wondering what all the commotion was about. I babbled indistinguishable sounds as I tried to explain that both my British and Aussie passports had gone missing. Oh, and her Aussie one too!

The next few hours were hell. I had no time to search, as I had to play happy, super energized reporter while my inner dialogue shouted WHERE THE HELL ARE THE PASSPORTS? THE FLIGHT LEAVES TOMORROW! YOU'LL MISS THE PLANE! YOU'LL NEVER WORK AGAIN! YOU'RE F\$#!\*D!!!!

After the gig was over I worked out that we must have accidentally thrown our passports out while trying to protect them from the bed bug exterminator we had hired to fumigate our house after our overseas honeymoon trip.

I fumbled for my phone as I headed back to my car and called Nic. I machine gunned how embarrassed I was and how unlikely I was ever to work again for Citibank and how I had a bad case of diarrhea and how... His response was completely calm. He just said "Well, while there's meetings on Monday, the conference doesn't actually start till Tuesday night so why don't you buy me a ticket and I'll cover until you get there?"

It was so simple. I never thought of that.

I managed to get a passport by 11am on the Monday and took a Tuesday early morning flight. What followed was hilarious. I arrived at 4:58pm, got out of my taxi and was met by Nic walking towards me. He didn't break stride as he said "Stick your bags on the bus, we're off to the Welcome Dinner and I'll brief you on the way." Turns out Nic hadn't gone to a single meeting and had just spent 2 whole days sight seeing, drinking Sake and shopping! Still, I was very, very thankful. (The next day he slept in, did 'Race Around Osaka' had a nice lunch and flew home!)

### CITIBANK ATHENS

The world's fastest and most honest taxi driver lives in Athens, Greece. His name is Dionysis. He made sure that as Nic, Luke and I were exhausted after a big conference week, we would have the best massage and meal Athens could provide. In truth, the massage, or cold foam bath (ask Luke) located in a private apartment, was pretty ordinary. What was memorable was Dionysis, ready to pick us up at every location and never requiring payment. He even trusted us to not pay him until he finally dropped us off at the airport the following day!!

We have to thank Dionysis for renewing our faith in humanity (even if he drove like an untouchable God), and introducing us to the best charcoal grilled fish EVER!



- 1\ CITIBANK PRAGUE
- 2\ CITIBANK ATHENS – LOST TOURISTS AT THE ACROPOLIS
- 3\ CITIBANK INSTANBUL
- 4\ CITIBANK PRAGUE
- 5\ CITIBANK OKINAWA
- 6\ CITIBANK – KYOTO/OSAKA
- 7\ CITIBANK BEIJING – 14 MINUTES INTO BUYING A ROLEX FROM ONE OF THE PARKS "SHOPS"
- 8\ CITIBANK OKINAWA
- 9\ CITIBANK AUCKLAND – COL EMCEES THE FINAL NIGHT GALA DINNER
- 10\ CITIBANK BEIJING
- 11\ COL EMCEEING ANOTHER CITIBANK EVENT
- 12\ CITIBANK BEIJING – AMAZING RACE BRIEFING
- 13\ CITIBANK OKINAWA – NICO 'THE SUMO' SAN ROUGHING UP SOME OF THE COMPETITION
- 14\ WAITING ON THE TARMAC BEFORE A GREECE TOUR AFTER A FIRE ALARM IN THE TERMINAL
- 15\ CITIBANK – KYOTO/OSAKA
- 16\ CITIBANK INSTANBUL
- 17\ CITIBANK ATHENS – COCO BREAKS A GLASS COFFEE TABLE WITHIN 2 MINUTES OF ARRIVAL IN THE HOTEL ROOM





1\ PARTYING WITH THE PIRATES IN PORT MELBOURNE 2\ MAZDA LAUNCH FOR DEALERS – NIC AND COL LEAD TAI CHI AT WERRIBEE PARK MANSION 3\ HALF BAKED TURKEY – COSTUME ASSEMBLY BEFORE A GIG 4\ CARAVAN AND CAMPING SHOW, CAULFIELD RACECOURSE – INAUGURAL GIG FOR THE HILARIOUS SHOWER MAN 5\ PHANTOM RACE CALL AT FLEMINGTON RACE COURSE 6\ ROLLING RUBBISH STUDIO SHOT 7\ 2006 COMMONWEALTH GAMES – VOLUNTEER PARADE THROUGH MELBOURNE

### PIRATES AHOY!

I'll never forget when Nic had a call from Felicity Ridgeway from Arcadia entertainment to provide 2 pirates for an exclusive private party in trendy waterfront Port Melbourne. I got the gig with Gianni, an interesting pairing given that we were both in a bit of a funk as both our first marriages were deteriorating at a rapid rate.

Nic said it would be easy and that we didn't even need a costume as Felicity would supply it. 'Just bring a few pirate props' he added.

Gianni brought his trumpet and I don't remember bringing anything.

When we arrived the host met us at the door and there were already at least 15 people there in the 2nd floor penthouse. We were shocked as we saw the quality of the costumes worn by the hosts and his friends. He must have pre-ordered these works of art. Fine silk and thick gold thread on heavily layered jackets with knickerbockers and tights. Even a real looking parrot on the shoulder.

Gianni and I were ushered into the back bedroom where our 'costumes' were laid out on the master bed. We froze at the doorway. The 2 tops and 2 pants looked like they were part of an exhibition of how we once lived. Even a schoolchild would have asked "Were people smaller in those days?"

I tried on the pants and had no chance of doing up the waist button. Gianni meanwhile was struggling with what looked like a large pair of socks. When his calf started to swell I grabbed the loose bit on the floor and yanked them off his legs. We would have laughed had we not been so panicked. We realised pretty quickly that I had the largest pair and that

Gianni would have to get himself into those.

The shirts weren't much better. They weren't long enough to cover the car crash going on around our waists. When Gianni finally got into his pants it looked like I'd poured him in and forgot to say 'when'. Then we searched for make up and of course a hat and eye patch. Nothing. This is all that was provided.

Luckily I had an idea. Without time to undress, it would have

been too risky anyway as Gianni had already ripped a hole in his crutch, we darted off to the nearest 7-11 store where we bought a pack of Chux Super Wipes.

We also bought some shoe polish for our faces. Bare feet would have to do though.

**“WHEN GIANNI FINALLY GOT INTO HIS PANTS IT LOOKED LIKE I'D POURED HIM IN AND FORGOT TO SAY 'WHEN'”**

The biggest stroke of luck was yet to come. While reverse parking I looked over my shoulder and noticed a plank of wood and wood saw that I was using that day for my home renovation. 5 minutes later, the plank is on the ground at the front door and I'm inviting guests to "Walk the plank... arr!!" while I saw the other end to Gianni's trumpet fanfares and sea shanties.

A very memorable get out of jail moment. Oh and I shouldn't forget that poor Gianni, dealing with an imminent marriage





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break up was chased all night by a frisky wench. He was such a gentleman. Many others would have taken the opportunity.

#### **MOST UNCOMFORTABLE GIG?**

I've never felt particularly comfortable around betting. Greyhounds, the nags, you name it.

Mainly because of the washed-up, cigarette-chuffing alpha males who live in that world and talk out of the corner of their mouths and only look at you if they have to.

So, when the gig came through from the chairman of the Moonee Valley Racing Club himself that Nic and I had to roam around the betting ring for 4 hours, dressed in loud jockey silk suits, and assist the public requesting better odds from the angry bookies on their behalf... I thought 'HEAVEN ON A STICK!'

It was cold, very cold, and very windy on those Friday nights at Moonee Valley. We had no idea how to calculate odds and many of the bookies hated us.

On the quiet nights there was no one around and we stood out like horse balls and on busy nights we would negotiate with bookies then return to our 'clients' and we couldn't find them in the crowds.

Most of the time I just wandered around looking forward to a German bratwurst.

#### **DRYER HUMOUR**

Probably the most fun I had was working with Nic (and others) as the 2 famous Dryer Brothers - Klaus Dryer and Hans Dryer (Clothes Dryer and Hands Dryer)

Our tennis act was a hoot combining a clever net and ball with line and swivel and lots of singing and the occasional underpant wedgie.

The best part was always the crap we came up with when talking to any media or International tourists.

#### **THE MOST DANGEROUS GIGS I EVER DID WAS:**

1. Mercury Lounge - Say no more
2. Dressing as a tennis ball and getting body slammed
3. Working alongside Nic dressed as a tree during Bucks season at the races (We thought a buck killed him one year)
4. Working with Luke as the cleaner when he sprayed a female lecturer in the face at Swinburne Prahran Campus at point blank range. She thought I was responsible.
5. Mercury Lounge

8\ AUSTRALIAN OPEN  
-THE DRYER BROTHERS  
POSING ON SWANSTON  
WALK 9\ THE DRYER  
BROTHERS IN ACTION AND  
COACHING 10\ UMPIRE ON  
STILTS AT THE AUSTRALIAN  
OPEN

## MACKAY

I don't really remember the event. It may have been a Coles opening. I think it was. That part is unimportant. The bit we all remember is Sergeant Jason Robertson - perhaps Luke remembers better than the rest of us.

I remember arriving in Mackay and having a few minutes to walk down the main street before heading to the gig. We were standing close to a round-a-bout and all of a sudden we were startled by a loud police siren. As we looked up we saw a vehicle being pursued by a policeman on a motorbike wearing what can only be described as a 1980's CHIPS style helmet with a microphone attached. The vehicle had failed to indicate out of the round-a-bout despite continuing in a straight line. (Against the law in QLD we discovered. It may be against the law in Vic too but if so it's never enforced).

We turned to each other and had a bit of a laugh at the scene. We must have been standing in a shopfront because the shop owner overheard us and interjected with something like *"Sergeant Jason Robertson, our local wanker! He books everyone for anything in this town. Everyone hates him. He even has his own Facebook hate page."*

We thought that was pretty funny as we made our way to the gig.

Fast forward a few gruelling hours and we finish our performance in the brand new shopping centre. There was a great atmosphere given that many stores were opening for the first time that day and so the whole centre seemed to have raffles, music and various launch parties. Nic was aware of our time constraints at the end of the gig so he began planning our escape. We were quite concerned about how we would get our large costumes to the airport as we hadn't seen many taxis, let alone maxi taxis. We also knew that there would be a lot of competition for a taxi given that many of the chain stores had flown staff up for the day and from the packing up going on around us we sensed a deluge for the taxi rank.

Nic headed off to the opposite side of the shopping centre where he had spotted a rank earlier in the day. Luke and I had the task of bringing the costumes and suitcases down from the store to the loading bay in the back alleyway.

We waited for quite a while in the loading bay for Nic to arrive, an area completely deserted with a few old pallets stacked in a pile and boxes discarded in lonely groups. Suddenly we were met by a familiar sound. A police siren peeled out as a maxi taxi turned the corner doing about 10kmph. Following the taxi was a gesturing Sgt Jason Robertson. The taxi dutifully stopped with the Indian driver looking sheepish and confused - after all he had failed to reach even 20kmph as he meandered around the shopping centre car park to the loading bay.

As Luke and I looked across we made out that Nic must have shared the Maxi-Taxi with two young ladies from another store. While the two ladies were desperate to get to the airport, Nic promised that sharing the taxi would be cheaper for them, and plus, it would be no inconvenience as we were ready to go immediately once we loaded.

A closer look revealed that all the passengers were holding the ladies' suitcases in a temporary fashion given that it wasn't worth packing them more permanently as Wacky had so many more bags and costumes to add.

However plans had just ground to a halt. The ever diligent and officious officer had picked up a discrepancy and followed the ill-fated van until he was sure his eyes weren't deceiving him. Yes, **THEY'RE NOT WEARING SEATBELTS!**

Officer Robertson immediately pulled out his pad and wrote out three fines. I seem to remember each fine had three figures starting with a 3. Nic was shocked but the good sergeant was in no mood to listen or negotiate. He wore his tight leather uniform with pride and conviction not to mention his CHIPS helmet that he failed to remove.

The two ladies were not as respectful as Nic and complained that this was ridiculous, that they were crawling through a carpark and worse, that they would now miss their flight.

Officer Robertson tore three sheets off his pad, thrust them forward and walked away.

**“EVERYONE HATES HIM. HE EVEN HAS HIS OWN FACEBOOK HATE PAGE.”**

Having lost time, and having inconvenienced the two young ladies, Luke and I threw our costumes and bags into the back and slammed the back door. Luke jumped in the sliding door and sat with his back to the driver pulling his seatbelt over his right shoulder. I did the same on the other side.

We finally headed off. Exiting the back alley cautiously, then picked up speed as we joined the main road towards the airport. We drove through a round-a-bout and I remember seeing a police officer stationed there directing traffic due to the shopping centre opening.

A minute or so later on the open road we were shocked to hear an all too familiar sound. It was the unmistakable peel of Sgt Jason Robertson's siren. I remember thinking as I looked out the back window that as he sped towards us he would surely continue past. But no, he began gesticulating again and before we knew it he strode to our side sliding door, flung it open and angrily shouted at Luke (Yes Luke!!) to get out of the van.

Luke was completely shocked. He undid his seatbelt and it snapped back over his right shoulder. He got out and with the door

open we heard everything. Sgt Robertson was incensed that after having just booked three members of the angry group, that Luke would have the temerity to not wear his seat belt! I thought Luke was going to explode. He was almost lost for words but then fired up explaining that the officer was completely wrong and besides, how did he 'know' that Luke didn't have his belt on? This is where the good sergeant revealed his vindictive side. He had radioed ahead to the officer on the round-a-bout and asked that he check that we were all wearing our seatbelt. Yes, one officer 30m away as we drive past at 60kmph! Of course Luke explained that the belt was over his right shoulder as he faced backwards, therefore out of sight of the officer. Robertson is a man who does everything by the book. No fine would be withdrawn that day. However, knowing we were all rushing to make flights, he walked as slowly as possible back to his motorbike to get his fine pad. I remember suggesting to the others that we leave Luke to receive his fine (or to have a futile negotiation) while we get the ladies to their flight.

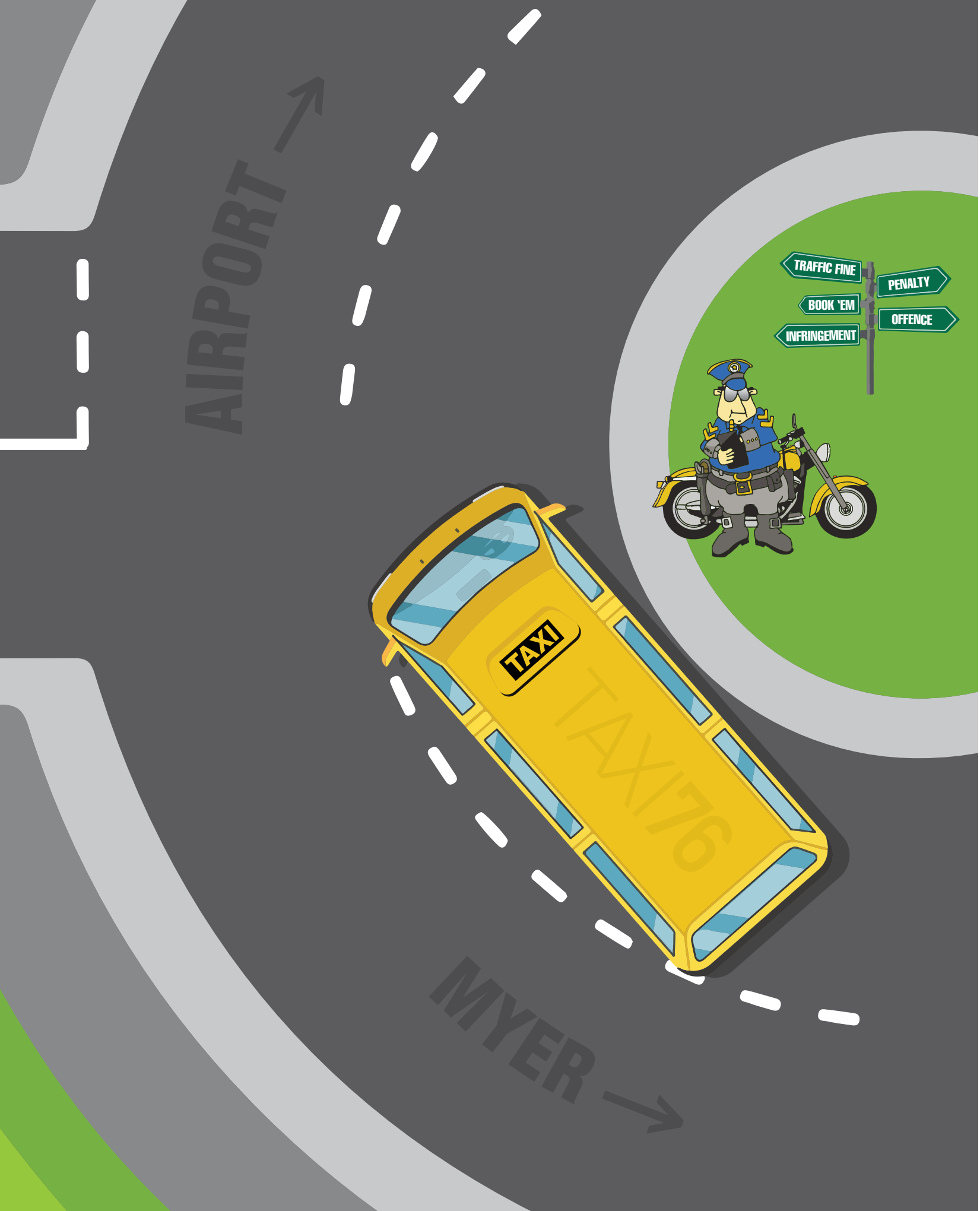
We all agreed that there was no alternative (the ladies were ropable) so we left Luke and rushed ahead. Along the way we noticed a couple of cameras in the van. I asked the driver whether we could get a copy of the footage and he explained that we had only 48 hours otherwise it would be wiped. Ironically, the only way to get access to the footage was to do so through the Mackay Police. Yes, through Sgt Jason Robertson!

At the airport, we sprinted in, dropped off the 2 young ladies and the luggage. I realised that we only had 6 minutes to check in so I rushed to start the check in process. Nic jumped back in the van and asked the taxi driver to go back as quickly as possible to pick up Luke. Suddenly the driver 'wasn't going back that way' and couldn't help. Nic got out frustrated, only to watch the driver 'driving back that way' as he headed off happy to see the end of us.

Now we were panicking. I was stalling at the check in counter as the Virgin staff member continually asked me where the other members of my party were. I said one was on the toilet and the other was 'just turning into the airport now'. In reality Nic had just found a taxi and was starting the 10 minute journey to pick up an agitated Luke from the side of the road.

We somehow made it. I seem to remember one of the ladies missed her flight while the other was saved by a delay in the aircraft's departure. The saga ended for all of us except of course Luke. After following up various avenues, some of them legal, and being hampered by the fact that it was a weekend, Luke eventually got some good news. The very 'by the book' attitude that had meant that the good sergeant simply had to fine us was the same attitude that saw him withdraw the fine once he saw the footage. Fears that he might manipulate the footage or destroy it were unfounded. Still, his malicious and vindictive actions kept Luke on his toes all weekend. Oh, and on a good note, made it a most memorable gig that would otherwise have been lost amongst the hundreds of store openings we've worked at since!





1.



2.

**LEFT** \ ARTIST RENDITION OF SCENE OF THE CRIME **1** \ INSIDE THE TAXI SHOWING THE SEAT BELT PLACEMENT **2** \ A PHOTO OF SENIOR CONSTABLE JASON ROBERTSON TAKEN BY A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC AND UPLOADED ON THE FACEBOOK GROUP PAGE 'I HATE MACKAYS MOTORBIKE COP'

# Woody Woodhouse

– HI-LIFE HORNS

Hi-Life Entertainment has been working on and off with Nic and Wacky since the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Back then, we were all struck by his energy and creativity. He always had great ideas and communicated them in a no nonsense way. No management speak, just great ideas presented in an easy to understand manner. I'm sure that is the secret to his and Wacky's success. Even difficult ideas can seem simple in Nic's hands. Since then Nic has engaged us to work for many Wacky clients in Sydney and we have come across him at a number of major events. When booking us he has never tried to change us into something we are not, he has always respected the musicians and performers we are. A Wacky gig is always a good gig, the act booked fits the client brief and everything just works. We are always well looked after and as a result the client gets the best out of us and we put in everything we can. Nic has an innate respect for performers and never undersells us or compromises conditions to make a few extra bucks (something that many working in the industry could learn!). I often recommend Wacky to my clients and never hesitate to say yes to a Wacky gig.

Congratulations on 21 years, you are an inspiration to us all. May the next 21 years be as fruitful, creative and fun.

All the best,  
Woody and Hi-Life Entertainment

1\ WOODY FROM HI-LIFE  
PERFORMING AT THE  
BUSINESS EVENTS NSW –  
REGIONAL SHOWCASE  
2\ HI-LIFE IN THEIR  
DEBONAIR SUITS  
PERFORMING AT THE  
BUSINESS EVENTS NSW –  
REGIONAL SHOWCASE



2.





## Silvie Paladino

– SINGER / ENTERTAINER

I have had the opportunity of working with WACKY quite a few times during Our Christmas Gift - the annual Salvation Army concert.

WACKY asked me to participate in a comedy sketch for the first concert. I thoroughly enjoyed myself; the WACKY team was easy to work with and welcoming, and the audience reaction was fantastic. We all laughed and had a great time.

More recently, WACKY saved the show. As well as performing in Our Christmas Gift, I was performing in Jerrys Girls at the State Theatre, and had to make fast dash to Hamer Hall to start Our Christmas Gift.

Well, I was late!

The WACKY boys wrote something at the last minute – they literally saved my behind, and saved the show. I can't thank them enough.

Always so professional, funny, clever, entertaining and down to earth.

Congratulations on 21 years of WACKY!

TOP\ SALVATION ARMY,  
OUR CHRISTMAS GIFT –  
SILVIE WITH SKIN DIVE JIVE  
BACKSTAGE AT HAMMER  
HALL, ARTS CENTRE  
MELBOURNETHE

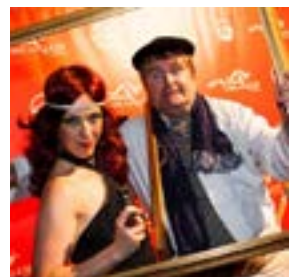




“ WACKY  
HAD ALL OUR  
GUESTS BESIDE  
THEMSELVES  
WITH LAUGHTER  
AND JOINING  
IN. ”  
— DULUX











# Andrew Pobjoy

– SAXOPHONE / ACCORDION / CARROT

## ANDY WRITES IN DETAIL ABOUT A FEW OF HIS FAVOURITE EXPERIENCES

As I sit to write this contribution to the Wacky 'history', the sun is setting outside my hotel window on Port Denarau, Fiji. In the distance, I can see a luxury cruise liner anchored for the day. Although I can't quite make out the ship's name painted on the bow, I could recognise her anywhere. There she sits: the Carnival Spirit. I smile. How funny, both in the humorous and coincidental sense that the very reason I am 'Wacky' is due to this very cruise liner.

Back in 2013, I took consecutive contracts as a piano bar entertainer aboard the Carnival Spirit. These months, my first ever working in the cruise business, turned out to be some of my most memorable months of my life. Night after night, request after request, scotch after scotch, searing hangover after agonising hangover, like a WWII kamikaze I turned the clock back fifteen years and relentlessly rocked the shit out of that throng of inebriated Aussie knuckle-draggers. It was both exhausting and exhilarating.

One particular night, there entered the bar a lanky, wide-eyed, curly-haired gentleman, who sat down directly at the circular bar surrounding the piano. Minutes later, I could hear noises. It started as quiet, rhythmical tapping. Gradually, the tapping poco a poco crescendoed into flat-out banging and slapping of the bar behind my left ear.

"*Another enthusiastic punter*", I thought to myself. Great. Later on, I see the same gentlemen downstairs in the seedy crew lounge: the land of the \$0.75 Stella Artois and the \$1.20 Chivas Regal. As it turns out, the aforementioned gentleman is none other than Mister Colin Cameron, visiting the ship as guest entertainer and stand-up comedian.

Colin subsequently frequents the piano bar, and also does guest spots with the house rock band, 'Music Manila'. I was undeniably more impressed with his abilities with 'actual' sticks on an 'actual' drum kit than his bare hands on a countertop.

I don't recall Colin and I spending a lot of time in conversation during that first cruise. However, I do remember Colin giving me his business card on the day of his departure. He explained in 25 words or less (which is actually impossible for Coco) what his company did back in Melbourne. I can still remember the card with its lightbulb logo and the business name 'Creative Entertainment Concepts'. I can also remember thinking to myself, "*That sounds as boring as batshit.*" Anyway, as with every business card I receive, I placed it straight into my wallet without another thought. Yet another card from yet another person I'll never see again on yet



another day where my brain is fuzzier than a bear's arse and my mouth as dry as a nun's nasty.

July 2013, I receive a phone call. "It's Col Cameron. You know, from the ship." Turns out there is a Wacky job going in Sydney. It's a trio, and they need someone on keyboard for a retirement party. Immediately, I say "yes". Literally two days after, I discover that I've been "drafted" back to the cruise ship for another four week stint, which clashes with the Wacky gig. I'm the first to admit that I did not make a good first impression.

Upon returning from that four week stint, Nic called and offered me a job at the Target Australia national conference at MCEC. Not many details were given, but obviously Col had put a good word in for me, and Nic was willing to take a second punt on me.

The brief was for two news presenters who would provide regular video crosses. These vignettes were to provide light entertainment as well as informative announcements, broadcast throughout the MCEC during the two days of the conference. The shtick was to be based around the Anchorman movies. I was to be the "Ron Burgundy" to w/s "Virginia Corningstone". I was 'Ted' and Michelle was 'Vivian'.

Looking back, I remember the whole two long days as being nothing but balls-to-the-wall, fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants fun and laughs. It was truly 'Wacky'. Michelle's bouffant hairdo was practically touching the heavens, my yazz flute was scorching hot, and the cheesy dad jokes, the callbacks and the caffeine were flowing freely.

My next memory is of my first Melbourne Cup. I can recall meeting all the guys for the first time, and trying to remember everyone's first name along with their bizarrely corresponding nickname. Digit. Crusty. Pig. Wedgie. Mildly baffling, and for a usually loud individual, I found myself taking a back seat and just watching the interactions and the camaraderie. There was obviously a lot of tradition, a lot of memories, and a lot of love here among these fellas.

Generally, performing in a strange costume has never bothered me much. Not the discomfort nor the [perceived] indignity of it all. Of course, I have form in this area, performing 'I Will Survive' in full drag at the age of 17 in front of 1,100 fellow students at our high school talent show. However, walking full-stride down Swanston St in the Melbourne Cup Parade playing the sax in synthetic trousers and a jockey's outfit with an enormous stuffed horse slapping uncontrollably against one's thighs did take things to a new level for me.

The parade concluded at the intersection of Swanston St and Flinders St where we encountered a noisy throng of animal activists, protesting against the cruelty of thoroughbred racing. Immediately, Wacky formed a super-group to combat the disorderly mob, counter-attacking with a seamless mega mix of 'Quando', 'The Chicken' and 'Don't Stop Til You Get Enough.'



FAR LEFT \ CITIBANK  
BUDAPEST – DISCO AND  
LYCRA LOOK BETTER  
DURING THE DAY  
1 \ YARRA TRAMS CHRISTMAS  
FAMILY DAY AT THE  
MELBOURNE MUSEUM  
2 \ TARGET ROADSHOW AT  
MELBOURNE CONVENTION  
AND EXHIBITION CENTRE –  
NEWS ANCHORS PREPARE  
FOR LIVE THROW  
3 \ COLES PROMOTION  
AT TOORONGA HEAD  
OFFICE 4 \ TOP HATS ALL  
ROUND AT MELBOURNE CUP  
CARNIVAL 5 \ INUGURAL  
PERFORMANCE OF THE OLD  
MELBOURNE GAOL MURDER  
MYSTERY NIGHT



The megaphones and the chanting gave way to the tooting and banging and clapping. A victory for Nic and his army.

This first Melbourne Cup Week helped me to understand the tightly knit nature of Wacky: the idea of doing stupidly funny things together, laughing about it and getting paid for it. It's a combination of unquestionable talent, mutual respect as musicians and the nature of the Aussie larrikin. There is something immediately charming and disarming about seeing a bunch of talented guys pumping out well-known songs, larking about in strange outfits and interacting with strangers.

Perhaps Colin should have taken a few more than twenty-five words or less to explain CEC to me. Or perhaps you just have to fully experience it to understand it.

Quickly, I adopted the title of 'Col's Foster Child', and it was great to be part of the family.

Naturally, all good families go on family vacations together. Wacky is no exception. Whether it be a weekend getaway to open an Anaconda store on the Gold Coast, or a Spotlight store in Bathurst, or a week-long extended trip to Athens or Prague, the family that plays together stays together.

My first big Wacky family vacation was to Japan in May 2015 for Citibank. Working with the Singapore-based events company, Wacky were to provide their unique brand of energy and interactivity to over 150 of Citibank's best and brightest salespeople from eighteen different Asian nations.

Under the guidance of the Captain himself, Coco and I boarded the plane in Melbourne, bound for Kyoto. Wearing our matching polos and jackets, Nic and I consumed four units of alcohol to every one of Colin's lame excuses for not drinking, which related mainly to dry eyes and feelings of lethargy.

**“THE WHOLE TWO LONG DAYS AS BEING NOTHING BUT BALLS-TO-THE-WALL, FLY-BY-THE-SEAT-OF-YOUR-PANTS FUN AND LAUGHS. IT WAS TRULY 'WACKY'.”**

In typical Wacky fashion, each group of delegates was greeted at the hotel with a cacophony of sax, accordion and drums, much to the delight of our audience. Later that night, Nic and I dressed up as Karate Kids and led group cultural activities such as origami and calligraphy, followed by ice-breaker games over dinner.

The following day saw us at the Kyoto Convention Centre for a team-building exercise. Picture 150 Asian and Indian delegates: the highest achieving and highest earning that Citibank has in the region. Now imagine asking these high-fliers to kick off their Prada heels and loosen the collars on their designer dress shirts to learn a three-minute dance

routine to be filmed two hours later for the conference highlights video reel. Toss in an instructor who only speaks his mother tongue of Japanese. This is literally an event organiser's worst nightmare. An incentives trip turned terminally 'awkward.'

Enter Wacky. Nic and I donned the fluorescent Lycra, the disco Afros and the bling and became the Richard Simmons to their choreography. Immediately, the atmosphere lifts. Col, as MC seeing the impending doom associated with the language barrier, grabs a microphone and begins quasi-translating the teacher's instructions by giving each of the dance steps a silly name. *“Reach for the stars, milk the cow, and slide 2 - 3 - 4, now crazy hands...”* And all of a sudden, we have a room full of successful businesspeople smiling and laughing and dancing in time. Crisis averted.

Later that evening, the group bundle into buses and visit a traditional Japanese restaurant. Before leaving, the Captain thought it good to bring our instruments along, just in case. Upon arrival, guests were ushered into half a dozen private dining rooms, and we three took up tables near the entrance and began ordering from the now infamous 'all-you-can-drink' menu.

Our meal was delicious: a traditional spread, with crunchy tempura, melt-in-your-mouth sashimi and all the trimmings. Lovely subtle flavours. Too subtle, as it turns out, for many of the sub-continental delegates. There was rancour among the troops. They were growing tired of the bland Japanese palate and were revolting over the choice of cuisine. The grog was flowing and the tempers were showing.

Once again, enter Wacky. Gradually, as we went room to room, we literally turned another potentially disastrous outing into the high point of the trip for many of the guests. Each subsequent room went off its nut to 'Living On A Prayer' or 'Too Good To Be True' or 'Happy', and particularly, 'Jai Ho'. Loads of singing, dancing, and smiles all round.

We all load back on the bus and get back to the hotel. Feeling a little peckish, the three of us head upstairs to the hotel bar to catch some jazz and eat something, only to find there was a USD\$15 cover charge just to get in. Instead, we venture down the street and find a small Japanese diner. Supremely compact, neat as a pin, with seats as the bar, a teppanyaki grill and creamy Asahi on tap. Everything we ate was magnificent.

Col decided it was time to call it a night, however the Captain and I were nowhere near ready for bed. We hit the street and met up with some of the Indian delegates. The fellas were on the lookout for a girlie bar. We joined the group and turned left at the canal and the Indians turned right.

It was at this hour that I learned of the Wacky tradition of

'upstairs, downstairs.' Basically, you only visit bars and watering holes that are not at street level.

What an adventure! We started out at a basement bar that was decidedly average. Nic needed the restroom, so we stopped for a drink so as not to be rude. Next stop: the 'YouTube Jazz Bar.' Basically, a tiny bar on the fourth floor with one bar attendant and jazz clips streaming on YouTube. Thanks, but no thanks.

**“POP A BEROCCA, THROW ON THE WACKY POLO, AND STUFF MY SUITCASES FULL.”**

We poked around a little further, and stumbled across 'Whisky Bar'. Up a narrow attic-type staircase, into a small room with a compact bar, six bar stools and an entire wall of single malt whiskies. Approximately \$15 a glass, served on a single giant ice cube. Nic and I were two of four patrons, the others being the proprietor's girlfriend and her friend. This place was a little slice of heaven. Each consecutive scotch went down smoother than the last, as if an angel were pissing on my tonsils.

As we progressed, bar to bar, the details become a little more sketchy in my mind. I remember the aptly-titled 'CD Bar': fourteen patrons squeezed in shoulder to shoulder, a wall of CDs behind a bar, with tracks being spun and drinks being served by who can only be described as Keith Richard's Japanese doppelgänger. I can also remember clambering through a tiny door, set high off the ground into another small bar where my broken Japanese was somehow coming out more intelligible than usual. Another bar we walked into, Nic and I entered, sang a chorus of 'Shi a-wase nara te o tatako' aka 'If You're Happy And You Know It', bowed and promptly departed. I can also recall entering another upstairs venue, slightly bigger, and being greeted by a smiling Japanese lady wearing a red dress and novelty battery-lit devil horns on her head. She offered us both a pair of the same devil horns, and invited us to sit down. Something wasn't sitting right: almost as if we had crashed a weekly meeting of the Kyoto Chapter of 'Brides Of Satan.'

We ended up at a really amazing place called 'Concrete Bar' which had a mezzanine, excellent cocktails and a food menu. Nic ordered rice with a raw egg cracked on top. Just what you feel like after two mega litres of booze. We promptly hopped in a cab and arrived back at the hotel.

The plans for the following day were that Nic and I would sleep in until 11am, wake up, check out and accompany the organisers to Osaka for the next day's events. Unbeknownst to us, there had been a change of plans and neither Nic nor myself noticed the red flashing light on the hotel room phone to say we had a voice message.





At 7:15am the next morning, my phone rings. Wake up call. WTF? Really? I call Col, and discover the horrible news that Nic and I were expected to accompany the travellers on the bullet train to Osaka immediately. I pop a Berocca, throw on the Wacky polo, and stuff my suitcases full. I grab a coffee from the buffet and meet Col in the lobby wearing my best shit-eating grin. Needless to say, I felt like pus.

"Where's Nic?", asks Col. I shrug my shoulders. "He did come home last night, didn't he?" "Of course", I reply. He had obviously slept through the wake up call. Col and I both head upstairs to Nic's room. After lots of banging, shouting, etc., a very seedy Captain greets us at the door wearing very, very little in the way of bed clothes. There were mentions of Nic 'pulling a Leachy', (see Andrew Leach stories) but we made it to the lobby in time to join the guests.

Judging by the photo posted on Facebook that morning, we paid heavily for every single frivolity the night before. However, out of sheer pity, in a world-first, Col Cameron nobly offered to carry our luggage for us.

The rest of the conference flew by, with highlights of Jimmy the delightful Filipino ladyboy who starred in their country's winning performance in 'Citibank's Got Talent'. I remember more "whoo-is-Kil sooo-DAHS" being ordered, along with a

spirited reprise of the Richard Simmons characters, followed by an impromptu jam on the baby grand with the Captain on tenor as we led the entire nation of South Korea in a diabolically awful yet enthusiastic version of 'I Don't Wanna Miss A Thing' by Aerosmith.

I can remember another trip to Athens some weeks later with just Col and I. Another fabulous event, with team building activities, lots of impromptu jams and singalongs, be it on the accordion or anywhere I could find a piano. Col worked the room with his usual grace, incomparable flair, witty quips, jokes any dad would be proud of, and an uncanny ability to pronounce the name of every single Asian award winner with ninja-like accuracy.

I can remember a great night out at a seafood restaurant near the Athens cruise ship terminal. We ate like kings, and then walked home like waifs because we couldn't find a taxi on the street. Col and I finished that trip off with an overnight stay on the isle of Hydra, a short ferry ride from Athens. Great times and wonderful memories.

Although I've only been working with Wacky for a short time (probably the shortest of everyone), I can honestly say that I have loved every minute of every experience. There's something really kooky and fun about doing a solo gig as a 10ft Christmas

tree at the Coles in Wyndham Vale, or dressing up as Santa for eight hours at Coles HQ, or goofing around dressed as a petrol bowser, or a giant Easter Egg, or even simply donning the old 'Sparklies' for a garden-variety roving gig.

The DNA of Wacky comes straight from Nic himself. There is never a costume he won't wear. Never a gag, stunt or sketch he won't completely embrace and pull off perfectly. From fireworks shooting out of the tenor, to a remote controlled stage, to the new Coat of Arms and Cockatoo costumes from this year, Nic is always pushing forward, always bringing new and funny ideas from concept to reality.

There is no doubting Nic's talent as a performer and a creator, but you just have to spend an hour at his home with Annette and the kids to see just how great a guy Nic is, how much he loves his family, and how much they love him back.

Simply put, Nic is a magnificent guy and it's great to call him a friend. Congrats on such a great milestone for your company, and keep 'following the fun!

ANDY  
xoxo

1\ CHRISTMAS CRAFT MARKET, DOCKLANDS – MIKE LARKIN GETTING "DOWN" WITH THE ELVES 2\ EMIRATES MELBOURNE CUP PARADE – THE MORNING SUITS IN BOURKE ST MALL BEFORE TEE OFF



# Aaron Tan

- SPINERGY

And after more than a decade of friendship & fun throughout the world, we still feel the same amount of energy and love from you guys every time we meet!!! After all these years, Wackys didn't age at all!!! (Except some extra pounds on the belly) You guys just got funnier & Wackier!!!

From your family in Spinerogy... congratulations to your 21st!!!  
Keep the wacky-spirit alive!!!  
God bless you!!



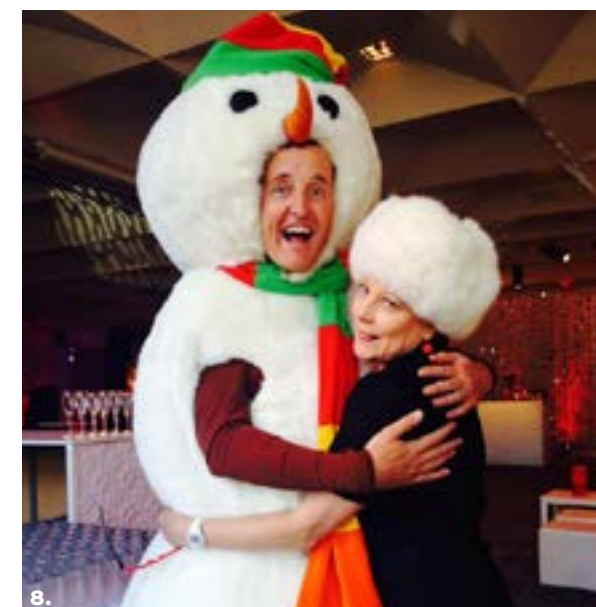




6.



7.



8.

## Fiona Schneider

– EVENTS AND  
STAGE MANAGER

This is a poem of Limerick-like prose  
An ode to one of a kind  
His assortment of hats it grows and grows  
From 'Wackiness' that flows from his mind.

I shall never forget a most memorable day  
Twas at AIME me thinks per chance  
Ya blew my mind, I never laughed so hard  
As the first time I saw 'Flipper Dance'.

Yes he and his comrades do magnificent work  
Quite often in cool sequined jackets  
The costuming is outstandingly good  
But on hot days, 'How do they hack it?'

We lit the lights on the Christmas Tree  
that great big one in the city  
done AFL Parades and Melbourne Cups too  
hard to remember them all 'tis a pity.

When Australia Day comes he's out there again  
Uuuup and dooown Swanston Street  
'Just hold up a minute, we need to soundcheck  
And then you can bring back the beat'.

At Flemmo and Caulfield, yep Spring Carnival time  
The punters are enthralled all day long  
With his sturdy steed and fine racing silks  
You can't help but join in the song.

He's found at the GP, the Tennis as well  
And Foodie events that rock  
And believe it or not I've put him onstage  
In nothing but glasses and jocks!

Now don't get me wrong, yes it looks like great fun  
With great effort and planning before  
The Wacky Creative is a joy to behold  
And makes every event soooo much more.

Well I've seen so much in these last 20 years  
The Good, the Bad and the ridiculous  
But when you want the Best that there is  
You know it will always be Nicholas!!

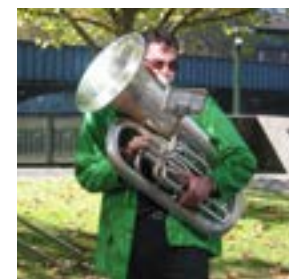
1\ CITIBANK BEIJING – MR MC  
AND CALEB 2\ CITIBANK  
BUPADEST – WACKY AND  
THE ENTIRE SPINERGY TEAM  
3\ CITIBANK ATHENS –  
WACKY WITH CALEB AND  
STACY 4\ CITIBANK  
BEIJING – ON THE GREAT  
WALL WITH ONE OF THE  
SPINERGY TEAM  
5\ CITIBANK OKINAWA  
– MAN LOVIN' WITH  
AARON 6\ COL PROBABLY  
PRACTICING A COMEDY GAG  
ON FIONA – NOT IMPRESSED  
7\ FIONA MANAGING  
THE WACKY PANTOMIME  
FOR THE MAZDA CX-9  
LAUNCH 8\ DOESN'T  
TAKE MUCH TO GET A HUG...  
JUST DRESS UP IN A OVER  
SIZED SNOWMAN COSTUME



# the early years



“ TO SAY THE VERY LEAST, YOU ALL "KICKED MAJORS" AND WERE NOTHING SHORT OF ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS ”  
— PERFORMARTS











1\ WHATEVER THE 'WELCOME ROVING CHARACTER' GIG WAS WE ALWAYS SEEMED TO DRESS IN THE THEME THEN PERFORM A VERSION OF WOBBLY WAITERS!

## Vicki Jones

– VICKI JONES PHOTOGRAPHY

This is the first photo I took of two guys from a group called Wacky with a slightly amused/not too sure party guest, in 2003. So long ago I had to scan a negative.

Their ability to engage guests in fun and song has made my job fun too! I love to see them at every event I photograph.

What a relief that Nic and Col were MC'ing the RMIT Graduation event at Federation Square last year (2015), with a special guest speaker running late and the crowd in graduation robes sitting in a 30 degree heatwave, the Wacky boys showed their years of experience and creative spontaneity by engaging the audience and saving the day!

Over the years their costumes have come a long way! As for the props in the photo: a jar, bells and a fly swat/magic wand - definitely wacky!

Congratulations on 21 Years to Nic and all at Wacky!! A great achievement and success story! XXXXXXXXX



# Steve Majstorovic

– SAXOPHONE

Thanks to Captain Nic for allowing me to pop my Santa Cherry in 2015. I had no idea what I was in for. After touching nearly 200 kids... I mean putting them on my knee, I was totally exhausted. A massive but rewarding day.

The next night I drove to a gig in Echuca and developed the worst Gastro I have EVER experienced. Vomiting, diarrhoea, cramps, fever, high temperatures. You name it I had it!

I thought it was some bad food or wine I consumed. Only to later remember that handling all those germ covered kids may have given me the Gastro. Thank you for the epic Santa gig and Gastro! You really do give me the shits in the most delightful way.

Thank you for having me as part of the Wacky family.

Your energy, creativity and PASSION have always been an inspiration to me. Every gig I do is always full of joy and good times.

Thank you for steering this ship in the right direction for so long!

Love ya to bits buddy.

Sail On!!!

Steve xoxo



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

2\ COLES FAMILY XMAS PARTY – THE STARS OF THE SHOW ON A WELL EARNT BREAK BETWEEN SESSIONS 3\ CHRISTMAS TREE HANGING OUT AT A LOCAL SHOPPING STRIP 4\ WACKY ENTERTAIN AFTER THE CEREMONY AT STEVE MAJSTOROVIC'S WEDDING IN DEGRAVES ST MELBOURNE 5\ LEADING THE WEDDING GUESTS FROM DEGRAVES ST TO THE RECEPTION VENUE 6\ STUDIO SHOOT FOR THE CHRISTMAS TOY SOLDIERS





1.

1\ DJ WALKER AND THE LIGHTHORNS ENTERTAINING AT DOCKLANDS 2\ WACKY GOLF AT THE 9TH PRESIDENTS CUP – CROWN CASINO, 2011 3\ CIRQUE PERFORMANCE AT MONDELEZ INTERNATIONAL XMAS PARTY 4\ SCOTT AS A TELLY TUBBY IN THE OLDER LASER OUTFIT 5\ WORKING AS SAMSUNG ENTERTAINERS AUSTRALIAN OPEN 6\ NOT QUITE THE MAGNIFICENT 7 –PEROXIDED HAIR AND CROP TOPPING WERE AN ARMY TECHNIQUE

## Andrew Leach

– TROMBONE

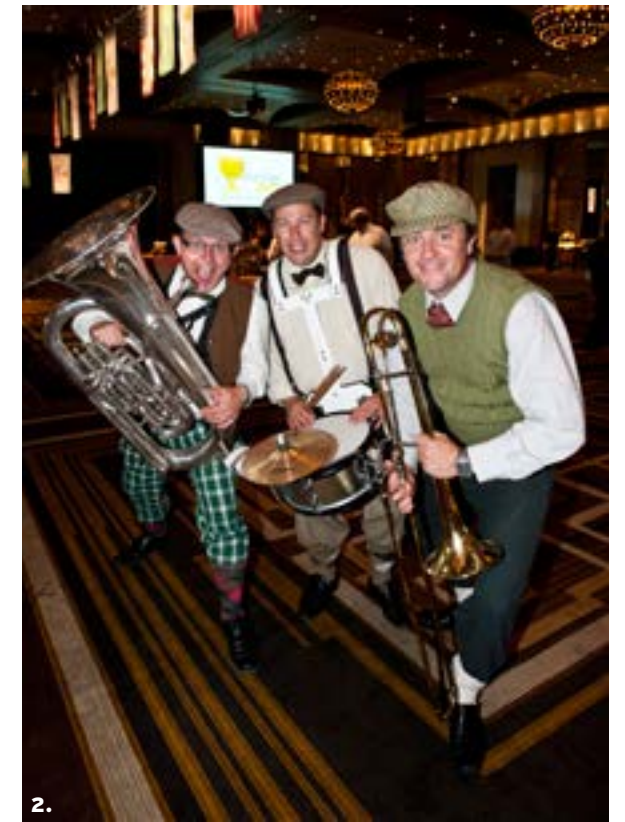
### LATE 2000. STORMING THE BRIDGE

Darryn Farrugia took my car keys to collect his snare drum from my boot before he headed home and thought it would be a good idea to kindly leave me my keys inside the locked boot. A two hour wait for the RACV in torrential rain followed, with no shelter!! Cheers Darryn!!!

### 2003. CANBERRA. THE SLEEP-IN.

After pints and darts following a late gig in Canberra, I rolled into bed around 5.30am with an alarm set for 7am for an early flight. I then woke up at approx 11am!! In fear I had missed the flight by several hours, I rang Nic, who to my great surprise was still at Canberra airport, with Coco and Marty - the flight had been delayed due to fog!!

I had a shower and some comfort food and made my way to the airport feeling rested and fresh as a daisy ready to greet my weary, hungover touring party, well in time for the flight!



2.



3.

### 2004. CH 9 STUDIO. CHRISTMAS WITH BERT NEWTON

During an ad break I recall being dressed as Frosty, and to my horror, being literally shoved live on air with Bert Newton and hearing a crew member count 3, 2, 1, go! Improvise some dialogue with the doyen of Aust tv!

The most nerve wracking minute of a man's life. A sole one liner saved Frosty from a lifetime of utter regret: "Snow good worrying about it".





4.



5.



7.



9.



6.



8.



10.



11.

#### AQUATICA BEACH COSSIES

Really need to thank Nic for providing not just my favourite ever cossie, but my favourite item of clothing. Quickly learnt a tight underpant was necessary for this one.

#### 2015 AUSTRALIA DAY DOCKLANDS

DJ Walker horns funkin it up with the LED suits while Rock Pigs cossie is reminiscent of a 'telly tubby'.  
(I have pics)

#### 2015 GRAND FINAL PARADE

After running down Spring St, then Wellington Pde, turning into the MCG park, panting, sweating, and then realising we were only about half way through the parade... It was as close as I've ever seen Nic to throwing in the towel!! Defibrillator please?! Hawks and Eagles fans from there on failed to hear their theme songs played in their entirety...

TWO special cup moments:

#### 2012 AFL HALL OF FAME GIG

Thank you Wacky for allowing me to get up close & personal with 1975 premiership cup. Go Roos!

#### 2008 MELBOURNE CUP PARADE.

A moment in time captured. Kissing the Melbourne cup!  
(I can confirm the lips did touch)

7\ UMPIRING A CORPORATE CRICKET DAY WITH THE CAPTAIN 8\ AUSTRALIAN MOTO GP AT PHILLIP ISLAND WITH A RING IN PLAYING A HORN MADE FROM A MOTORBIKE EXHAUST 9\ A TIME WHEN EVERYONE IN WACKY WAS STILT-WALKING 10\ MELBOURNE CUP PARADE – EXCITED TO BE PART OF IT AGAIN... AND NOT AS GIDDY UP 11\ PERFORMING AT FLINDERS ST STATION FOR AUSTRALIA DAY





TODAY WAS

GOOD

TODAY WAS

**FUN**

TOMORROW

**IS ANOTHER ONE**

– DR. SUESS



# wackademies

THE INUGURAL WACKADAMIES WAS HELD IN 2000. RECOGNISING AND CELEBRATING THE OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS, UNIQUE PERFORMANCES, NUANCES AND STORIES, OF THE WACKY TEAM.





1\ DAVE NEWDIC WAILING OUT SOME SCREAM TRUMPET BEFORE WACKY EXPERIENCED GREG SPENCE 2\ DRAWING FOCUS DURING THE AUSTRALIAN F1 GRAND PRIX AT THE VODAFONE CORPORATE MARQUEE WITH SOME AUSSIE ROCK FAVOURITES  
 3\ DOING WHAT WE DO BEST AT THE VODAFONE CORPORATE MARQUEE – ROVING MUSIC COMEDY  
 4\ ONLY THE ENTIRELY LOVABLE MICHELLE COULD GET AWAY WITH THIS  
 4\ TARGET ROADSHOW – BIG PERSONALITY AND BIG HAired NEWS ANCHOR  
 6\ COLES CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY – WHATS AN UNDERWATER THEME WITHOUT A MERMAID  
 7\ NIC AND MICHELLE LEADING A CONGA LINE AT MELBOURNE AIRPORT FOR THE AIR CHINA MELBOURNE DIRECT TO L.A MEDIA LAUNCH  
 8\ ON SET AT DOCKLANDS AS 'SUE SYLVESTER' DURING THE 2011 TOURISM VICTORIA AWARD VIDEO SHOOT  
 9\ COLES ROADSHOW – CHRISTMAS CHARACTER MAYHEM AND RIGHT AT HOME BEHIND A MIC  
 10\ COLES LIQUOR ROADSHOW – CHARACTER WORK FOR AN EXHIBITION STAND 11\ THE COCKATOO'S INAUGURAL AND SPECTACULAR SHOW DURING AUSTRALIA DAY AT DOCKLANDS PRECINT  
 12\ GIRLS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN, OH GIRLS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN – COLES STAFF XMAS PARTY

## Anne Gowlett

– *INSIGNIA MANAGEMENT*

I met Nic back in 2000, but it was when Vodafone commenced its sponsorship in Formula One that we were able to seriously work together.

My brief was to make Vodafone's hospitality experience the biggest, loudest and most memorable ever! Nothing was out of bounds!

Sponsoring the prestigious Ferrari team called for something special and it was a job for Wacky! Fire engine red overalls were stitched and Nic and the team enjoyed many years as our favourite pre- race entertainment.

Not only did Wacky entertain our 400 guests, they captivated a whole section of the track, with a few thousand people in adjoining grandstands and corporate facilities joining in the fun. It was certainly party time at Vodafone and even when we switched to sponsor the McLaren team – the tradition lived on!

Great fun memories of a special sponsorship and activation at the Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne.

Meeting Nic and catching up with him at industry events or privately is always fun. I know Annette, Col and Luke have been the best support crew on his amazing journey... Here's to the next 21 years eh?

Anne Gowlett, Director, Insignia Management  
 Program Director – Vodafone F1 Hospitality Australia (2002 – 2013)







4.



5.



6.



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10.

## Michelle Berner

– VOCALIST / DANCER

To me, the Wacky team is a group of brilliantly talented, fun-loving people who shower their gifts in unique ways. It is an honour to be invited to work alongside such beautiful, insightful people.

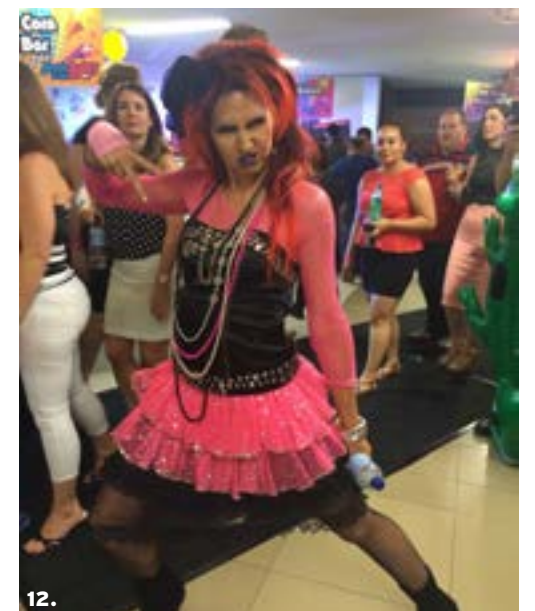
Wacky is fun with puns!! When you're dressed as an apple and sick to the core, or feeling "ap-peel-ing" in a banana suit, or maybe you're in a real state and actually wearing the Northern Territory suit... and we were undoubtedly pumped to be petrol bowzers!

One funny moment; Nic was dressed as a fish, quite a large fish, and tripped up onto the stage quite clumsily. Unfortunately, he did hurt himself rather badly - such a trooper to go on with the show!!! (I can't help but laugh remembering that awkward step!)

Thanks guys. Love your work, always  
Mish xxx



11.



12.









1.



2.



3.



4.



5.

# Jacob Pate

– DANCER

## Your 1st experience working for/with Wacky

Hmmmm my first experience working with Wacky was doing a fashion runway and dancing for Coles which was definitely interesting. Planning it out on a straight runway and then when we get there it was two different runways going in different directions. Yes for last minute re blocks!

## Funny moments on a gig/event

I think you for funny moments you can't go past being dressed as a chicken in the back of a van and then trying to get out of the van without falling over or taking a car out!

## A memorable moment

Dressed as the Easter bunny and having a dance off with a dance crew at the annual Easter egg hunt! That was so much fun!!

## Catastrophes on and off set

Catastrophies... Possibly the time when I was dressed as the Easter bunny this year and stacked it whilst walking through the Easter egg hunt area by walking straight into a little cube thing on the ground. At least I found some eggs hiding underneath it!

Oh and we can't forget the time that we went to Adelaide and Nic locked the keys, his phone and pretty much all the important stuff that we needed for the in the car before we'd even left the airport!

## Interesting correspondence

When you get an email confirming you for a gig and saying "Great! You'll be the sandwich!" I got so excited! It actually made my day to run around being a sandwich and saying "Eat me!" To everyone that walked past!

## Great quotes

Look there are so many great quotes. I can't think of one right now but definitely as everyone would know Nic's bad dad jokes are a killer! So bad that they're good!!

## The highlight gig with Wacky and why?

So far my highlight gig would've have to of been being a chicken for Coles and going to Tasmania one day and then Adelaide the next! It was super special because it was my last gig with Wacky for the year and it took me to two places I'd never been before in Australia, I got to see one of my best mates in Tasmania before flying overseas for 7 months AND I got to spend two days with a group of incredible people that I love so much and got to share such a fun time and make some awesome memories with them!

## What has Wacky meant for you professionally or personally?

Wacky to me is like family. Everyone is so amazing to work with, super talented and just in general beautiful people. I love that I get to go to gigs and be excited to work because I don't know which of my beautiful Wacky family members that I'll get to work with!

FAR LEFT\ NOTHING STOPS WACKY, WEATHER (PUN INTENDED) IT'S RAIN, HAIL OR SHINE – AFL GRAND FINAL PARADE 2008 1\ CHICKEN CHICKMAN AND HAM FEAST – COLES ROADSHOW 2\ CHICKENS MADE THE FRONT PAGE... ON A COLES CATOLOGUE – \$4KG CHICKEN PROMOTION AT COLES HEAD OFFICE 3\ COLES \$4KG CHICKEN PROMOTION NATION WIDE PROMOTION – THIS CHICKEN AINT HAPPY 4\ COLES CHRISTMAS SHOW REHEARSAL AT WACKY HQ 5\ PERFORMER TEAM SHOT AT THE END OF A CRAZY TWO DAYS – COLES ROADSHOW





1\ NIC SOLO'S WITH DEJAVU  
 2\ WACKY XMAS PARTY  
 3\ TOASTING NIC'S 40TH  
 BDAY 4\ ON THE ROADS  
 - AJ CAN CUT IT ON AND  
 OFF STAGE - MAZDA CAT50  
 LAUNCH 5\ WACKY & DEJA  
 VA VU BACKSTAGE 6\ VIBING  
 UP THE CROWD AFL GRAND  
 FINAL PARADE 7\ HUSBAND  
 AND WIFE TEAM - KATIE AND  
 BERNIE 8\ WACKY PAPP'S  
 HUSTLING FOR THE BEST  
 SHOT AND SCOOP - CROWN  
 CASINO PALLADIUM  
 9\ WHATS MINE IS MINE  
 AND WHATS YOURS IS MINE  
 - PHOTO SHOOT 10\ COUNT  
 HICKEY OUT FOR BLOOD  
 - COLES XMAS PARTY

## Anthony Jaye

- ANTHONY JAYE, DEJAVU

Looking back on the many years of my relationship with Nic, brings back an incredible amount of wonderful and heartfelt memories, both personally and professionally. Memories that date back to the early 90's when we were both cutting our teeth as musicians and performers, to more recent memories as business owners within the event community. It's hard to believe that so many years have already passed and we're now chasing 50, and in many ways the senior members of the event community - where have all these years gone I ask?

From band performances and street gigs together, tour bus rides and hotel room antics, who would have guessed that the boy from 'Wesley' and the boy from 'Thomo' would forge such

a strong union. So many events experienced, so much laughter shared and so many bevs consumed, it is fair to say that the underpinning success to this relationship has been continued honesty.

I don't have a particular moment that could be referred to as a highlight, nor a story that really stands out above any other; however I will say that my office time shared at WACKY HQ was a time in my professional history that will only ever be referred to as 'special'. I think it's fair to say that it was this time that Nic Yates and Anthony Lo Piccolo became mates for life.

Each day would start with a Captain Yates 'latte' (which were in fact as good as any of Melbourne best I'd had), and a 5 minute catch up that usually lasted 2 hours ☺. It was many of these moments that gave me the opportunity to learn more about Nic Yates the Man, the Dad and the Husband; these people were often overlooked prior because I only really knew the funny guy with the curly hair in the costume.

Never a dull moment to say the least when co-raising 3 kids, and never a dull moment EVER when trying to run a 'hands on' small business in the event community, but to your credit Nic Yates, you've only ever done it with a smile and that is why I, like many others, salute you!!

Your brand is WACKY indeed, your professional integrity is strong and your moral compass is unrivalled. It is with great pride I congratulate you Nic for your many years of dedication to the WACKY brand. Whilst I respect and acknowledge the wonderful team around you, you are a great captain, an inspiring leader and a very beautiful man- your success is NOT by chance my friend, you are a deserving winner, one that I consider a great mate and love very sincerely.

Here's to many years ahead of continued success, great health and love & laughter...





## Bernard Hickey

– TRUMPET

### REFLECTIONS

After years of watching the Wacky boys go about their business, I felt the audition for me was up at the Sydney Show where 'Flipper Dance' was making its debut as an all-singing, all-flapping stage show spectacular. Itchy Feet were up there performing but the group was heading into a gradual decline. Nicholas and Col both came along to support one of our shows and I suppose that sort of a forum was where my best work is done – minimal playing, lots of verbal rubbish. I think I did enough there to convince.

I remember having a few beers back at the Wacky apartment that night and Nicholas tucking me in with a blanket on the couch at the raging hour of about 10.00pm! Oh, the long winter evenings used to just fly by then. In fact I can remember Nicholas also handing me a blanket at one of the end of year Wacky parties at Brighton as well but that was mainly because I'd come horribly underdressed for the weather (we may have drunk a little too much as well).

Great memories of walking along Southbank asking members of the public if they'd like to draw an asparagus on my chalkboard to telling a gentleman walking out of a Coles Liquor outlet (whilst I was dressed as a bunch of Shiraz Grapes) that "he looked like a man who drank a lot". Only when you are dressed well can you get away with it. The costumes have been a huge part in helping us deliver the humour and vibe needed. I still love approaching shoppers walking through a shopping centre looking grumpy

only to be confronted by a trumpet playing Christmas tree and watching them break into a reluctant smile and give a nod of acknowledgement. The beauty of providing entertainment that people don't have to seek out or feel like they have to endure. I remember Dad coming to watch me be a solo Plum Pudding somewhere in Oakleigh and being delighted with the silliness of it all. It would have been something, given an opportunity, he would have loved to have done himself.

I haven't got many memories of disasters because almost all of my gigs have had all the hallmarks of how Wacky operates. Well organised, well paid and a clear brief about what was expected and the outcome to be achieved. The nearest thing to a disaster was the computer generated time change for the Coles Santa gig last year. Your phone call to Mart at about 8.00am came after I'd pushed our meeting time back to 8.00am in Box Hill. The car trip was particularly quiet, some would say frosty. When we arrived I said to Mart and Chris that I'd take responsibility. We met you at reception (thankfully with enough time to start on time) and after the greeting Mart and Chris just melted away to leave me to front with an apology. Their handpasses were smooth and effortless!

Along with that has been the great fun of working with people who have a similar outlook on life and are good fun to be around. Highlights have been the Coles Christmas Parties, the family trip to Brisbane that Wacky gigs up there paid for, welcoming young Katy into the fold and developing more confidence in my ability to deliver humour in a lot of different forums.

You remind me a lot of my father's former employer. A man who loved creating and nurturing his own business but also drew great satisfaction by providing meaningful employment for his friends and colleagues. Some would say that's the best of both worlds.

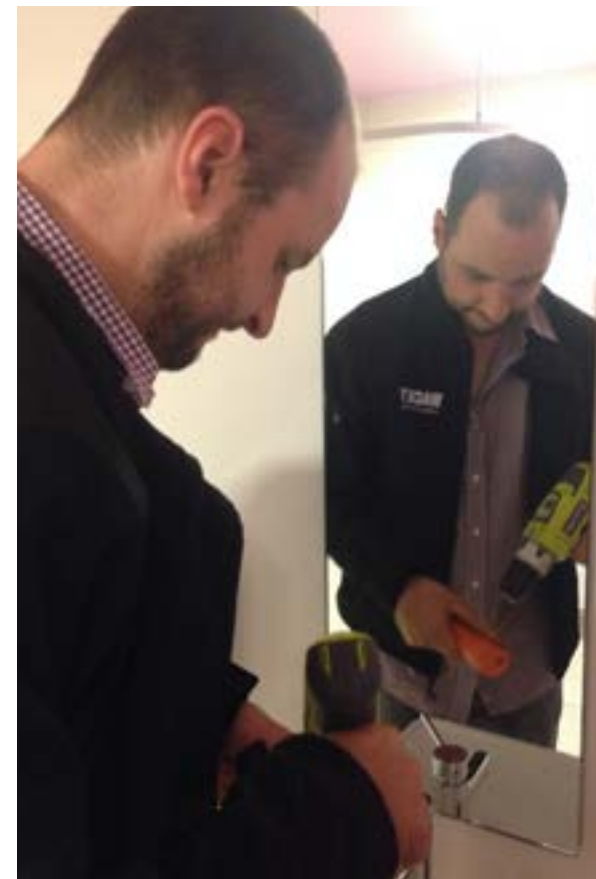
Well done Nicholas and thanks.  
Bernardos











“ THEIR [WACKY'S] PROFESSIONALISM AND ATTENTION TO DETAIL, INCLUDING AN EXCELLENT UNDERSTANDING OF OUR INDUSTRY, MADE THE EVENING A GREAT SUCCESS. ”  
— MITEK AUSTRALIA







## Luke Farrugia

– TUBA / DESIGNER

There I was a little after midday, a puny runt of a 17 year old, no license, mobile phone or idea that the greatest adventure of my lifetime was about to begin, standing nervously outside the Clifton Hill Railway Station with my tuba. Not ready at all to audition for a group called Wacky Wild Wind Machine.

I had seen the invitation to audition pinned up on a board at the VCA (Victorian College of the Arts), where I was in my first year uni, but as a young classically trained musician, dismissed the idea I was ready or good enough to be considered for a professional jazz band. Rob Sims, Head of Brass at the VCA at the time, had other ideas and mentioned he'd given Wacky my number, and so, after a quick phone call about auditioning I received in the mail a small selection of songs to learn. These songs had no notes!!! NO NOTES! Well maybe a couple. A bar here...a few there. But there was ultimately an expectation that I

would know how to improvise. What chance did I have, let alone of not embarrassing myself completely?

Back to the train station. A beat up brown Peugeot pulls up and a curly haired guy jumps out, all full of beans, and greets me as Nic. With a quick hello we stuff the tuba into the back and both jump into the front. To this day remember vividly the sight and sound that I experienced next. Pulling open the front door a plethora of cans, fast food containers, and trash tumble out of the car from a pile covering the passenger foot area. Even after Nic grabbed a few and threw them in the back I still had to navigate the space and nudge things out of the way to find a clear area for my feet.

A small drive to Nic's house, then in Clifton Hill, head in and WHAM...some huge block of hair, saliva and teeth jumps all over Nic...then ALL OVER ME. Nervous already about my first official professional audition...now, being scared of dogs, shaken too. The dog runs back down the corridor ahead and into the living area. Tom Ryan, trombonist and co-owner of the group is already there, drinking a coffee, and bursts out with a boisterous hello. There's chat about what I do and my musical background while a pot of tea is brewing before jumping

onto the large green leather couch and 'hooking' into some staple Wacky tunes. I say hooking, but for me it was more like skewering or harpooning most of the songs.

I remember two songs well. All of Me, a classic jazz standard, and Under the Boardwalk. Why? Because one was void of all notes and required me to 'walk' on the bass line, and the other thankfully having a bass riff used written in.

I fancied myself as a bit of a gun tubist. At least technically my classical chops were great and honked out a decent sound. But in all honesty, I thought I was no chance after finishing up. I'd floundered through the charts having no real idea of what notes to play for minor chords...let alone sharp 9's and augmented.

The rest really is a blur and I can't remember whether I'd gotten the gig on the back of that rehearsal or after some very well considered deliberation...and by that I mean Tom and Nic probably went to the pub and had a few beers...chose which, of the three tuba players that applied, would get the gig.

But I was in. I had a professional gig. I was going places.



## LIKE A VIRGIN

And by going places I mean Gippsland. Yeah! My first gig and already a road trip. Nic picked me up from the VCA and off we went. I'd been practicing the songs, there'd been more rehearsals, and still...I had no flamin' idea how I was going to go.

We were dressing up as Sargent Peppers, mine being completely oversized and even rolling up the pants and wearing a belt on the pants that had no belt loops, something that would continue throughout my time in Wacky, still remained oversized. The Premier of Victoria was attending along with media.

I had made a small cheat sheet of the tunes to stick on my tuba and the only two things that were offered to me was a soft pink and black soccer ball and the words "Just follow us, you'll figure it out!" I can remember vividly one scene where we were in a grassy field entertaining the attending public before the presentations began, an old wooden fence separating us from the public. We'd just finished a song and someone had grabbed the soccer ball, pressed between my tuba out of sight and thrown it at the crowd. "Sweet Georgia Brown!" was called and I madly scanned my cheat sheet for the chords...realising that the ball, now in the public's hands was going to be thrown at me and into the tuba bell. This wasn't a quick pay off. It took a while for that soft pink ball to go down, and when it did...we threw it back and went again. It was a mad skit of honking out a tune, chasing the ball and throwing it back and running around like a mad man trying to follow what was going on and keep the energy up.

It was all a blur. It was so exciting and crazy. So fresh and wonderful. THIS is what performing was. Not sitting on a stage detached from an audience but engaging with it. Working together with a group of other musicians to perform for a crowd to enjoy.

**“I LOOK UP AND THROUGH AN INCREASING GAP OF WATER CAN VAGUELY SEE NIC AND THE BOYS... REALLY NO MORE THAN SHAPES, STANDING ON THE EDGE OF THE POOL.”**

Years later, that soft pink ball, after many such skits around Optus Oval before Carlton Games eventually blew a seam and was let go. It was a sad day...but also came at a time when Wacky had surpassed cheap comedy skits like that for more refined comedy.

And though cossies are now mostly made with consideration to my size...or lack thereof, I still have to rip out a tape of gaffa, some pins, and a belt, to adjust some outfits to fit.

## SLIPPING AWAY

It's rare as a musician to be put in a situation where you can hurt yourself, and far less where your life can be put in serious risk. This isn't necessarily completely true when it comes to being an entertainer. Of course to balance this is the awareness of the risks and the full focus to mitigate this risk. Of the three incidents, two only that required reporting. One was facilitating

a game of cricket on a tennis court and jamming my little finger into the ground to catch a ball that I damaged some tendons. The battle scar of this being a finger that doesn't straighten so well anymore. The second in Sydney having finished a gig on stage and roving back to the change room. Turning away from squirting some kids following us with the inbuilt waterguns on our Skin Dive outfits, my flipper caught on the edging of a plant and I came down. A swollen lip ended that trip and Richard Debolfo (Digit) was flown up while I recovered. No battle wounds exist. It is however the third that could have ended in disaster.

We were performing at Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre as a mass band of about 8 performers. Marching across the walkway between the olympic lap pool and the diving pool, we were two by two in a column, Nic on my left honking away to what must have been a water tune of some sort. To make it interesting, we had planned prior for Nic to push me into the water. Loved the idea and always up for doing outrageous things. Without any real warning, I get a decent shove from my right. Not really needing to pretend as self preservation kicks in, I teetered on the edge, balancing for a finite moment before landing with a splash...or was in plonk...into the water.

Didn't really think about the fact that I was still hooked to the tuba.

Grabbing the first hook I get it unfastened. Done. I can hear the tuba gulping down the pool water. Air quickly escaping the tubing. It is at this stage the tuba becomes heavier than the water, and drops... with me attached. I'm trying to find the second hook. It's near my left hip but why can't I reach it. I'm freaking out. The tuba is full now and pulls me under just as I grab a lung full of air. I look up and through an increasing gap of water can vaguely see Nic and the boys...really no more than shapes, standing on the edge of the pool.

JUMP IN!!! SAVE ME.

This was getting serious. This is the diving pool. Five metres deep. And I'm sure I'm at about one metre down already. I've found it. I can feel the strap where the hook is and follow it to the tuba. Fumbling now. Time slows down. I feel like I've been under for minutes. Am I at the bottom yet? No. GOT IT! A weight falls from my shoulders...literally. I grab at water, climbing to the surface. I can make out faces. Almost there. I breach the surface and gasp for air. Hands grab me and pool (pun intended) me up and onto the walkway. Not as bad as I thought, I wasn't close to drowning. A little shaken, perhaps not so much as Nic who ultimately could have been responsible for one less tuba player in the world.

Tuba player ok, it would take someone in a scuba diving outfit to retrieve my Tuba from the bottom of that pool.

With every reported incident, a report about it must be filled out. We've always joked about one of the questions on these reports being 'How could this accident have been prevented?' I can only imagine had one needed to be submitted for this event, the person reading wouldn't know how to take the answer: 'By not pushing my tuba playing employee into a 5 metre deep pool whilst still attached to a 20kg tuba.'



**FAR LEFT** \ FOUR CHAIRS PHOTOSHOOT AT SAM D'AGOSTINO'S (SDP MEDIA) STUDIO **1** \ SKIN DIVE JIVE AT THE SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW – COMPLETE WITH WATER SPRAYING GLOVES AND HEADPIECES **2** \ SCOTTY TAKES ON NIC'S ROLL OF GOING FOR THE GROIN DURING A PHOTO – ALTHOUGH QUITE SUCCESSFULLY **3** \ LUKE'S VERY FIRST INVOICE SENT TO WACKY AND HIS FIRST PROFESSIONAL GIG



## HOT HOT HOT

There are great gigs. There are fairly uninspiring gigs. International gigs and local gigs. There are however very, very, very few gigs that we don't do because of the weather. Of the cold gigs and the hot gigs, it is the later that been the most enduring of character. These are the gigs where as a group, we've pulled together to battle the oppressiveness of heat. To overcome and be rewarded with the satisfaction of not giving up.

But sometimes it's just bloody hard work.

Like being dressed as a group of three Santa's, for three hours in 43 degree weather, in an outside retail zone in Melbourne... where anyone outside wasn't interested in stopping for a second...and where it was that hot that it had even sapped them of even feeling sorry for us doing what we were doing.

However, when you couple the heat with one particular Wacky costume, things get crazy...very very CRAZY!!

Made of a thick, heavy material, including tummy padding, and head mask, as well as a thick studded dog collar the Lion Suit was a pivotal part of the early years of my time with Wacky. It seemed any time I was in the lion suit, it was going to be hot. Mostly because any time I was in the lion suit, it WAS hot.

## COUNTRY CLUBBING

The first experience I recall was in Echuca for the Echuca/Moama Jazz and Blues Festival.

We were up there the night before to do a gig at Oscar W's, one of my favourite restaurants in the world, not just for the quality of food, but because of the respect and way we were treated on the gig by the staff, the enjoyment and fun and trust in what we did by the owner, and in Deano, the owner himself, being an absolute character and all round top bloke.

Anyway...gig done, it was time to continue the night. We freshened up back at the hotel and headed back out. Some drinks later, I was on the dance floor. I don't remember much of this truth be told. Not even dancing with a local lass.

It was a good night. A very good night.

It's a shame that very good nights are not usually followed by very good mornings. Especially when the morning involves a very hot and dry day, a wild hangover... and a long gig on the dusty streets of Echuca dressed in...yup...the lion suit.

With what seems like only hours since I was holding my head out of the back window of Nic's green Hilux looking for fresh air...we were pulling out the costumes, and getting ready to smash out the gig. With the lion body on, shoes on, and tuba out and ready to go, I was struggling. I rested my head on folded arms on the back tray of the Hilux, head spinning and feeling very very sick.

Sometimes it takes someone to say how it is going to happen for you to get on with it. In this instance it was Nic. Short and sweet saying "Put the lion head on!".

And since...I have never, ever drunk to the point where I would be in that situation again.

**“WHEN YOU COUPLE THE HEAT WITH ONE PARTICULAR WACKY COSTUME, THINGS GET CRAZY... VERY CRAZY!!”**

Much to my delight, this pearl of wisdom has not been learnt by everyone in Wacky.

The suit has also offered one other distinctive memory. Well no...two...but this is still about the heat. And I'll preface this by saying over the 19 years, it has not been uncommon for Nic to put on the captains hat and plough through an excruciating gig under the oppressive, furry heat of the suit.

## HUMIDITY IS HUMBLING

It would be the one time I've seen it almost completed defeat a person. We were in Asia. The finer points of the gig allude me. In fact most of it is fuzzy, this could be a psychological defence in blocking out some of the hardest gigs I'd done in the lion suit over in Asia myself. I think from memory it was the great Business Class upgrade trip...but I could be wrong. Tommy had, perhaps without much thought but as one of the owners of Wacky back then, graciously announced he would jump in the lion suit on that particular day.

Tommy's built tough. If he sets his mind to something, you can sure as hell bet he'll make sure it happens. Like I said I can't recall much of the gig...except for the moment Tom stepped through the change room doors for the set break. Pulling off the lions head, face red and glistening with sweat, he plonked straight onto a chair. And that's where he stayed for the whole break.

I've never heard Tom...well I didn't hear Tom. It's the quietest I think he's ever been. There were no words. What do you say to someone who very likely managed to transfer a greatest percent of their bodies water content in a furry brown piece of material? Sure there was some chuckling and laughing...but for me, being that Tom had taken my place in that suit, it was all about making sure Tom had a bottle of water at all times.

To everyone that was there on that very day, the defining memory of Tom and that lion suit was watching the head piece drip sweat for the entirety of the break...and then witness Tom, channelling his own inner lion, scowl with determination and pull it over his head to lead his team out for the next set.

Though each person across the duration of their time with Wacky will have put in an effort of similar determination under trying conditions, this is one of the greats.

## THE LIONS DOES NOT SLEEP TONIGHT

Now it's not all doom and gloom with the lion suit. In fact there are some wonderful times when the person in the Lion suit can really...come to the fore, and take advantage of a situation.

Like the opening of the Lion enclosure (might be elephant one) at the Melbourne Zoo.

I was once again chosen, above all others mind you ;-), to wear Lion suit, and this was one of those rare times a budget was available to get the Lion face painted. I mean that in itself was a rarity so you can imagine how good this gig was looking.

The weather was pleasant, there were lots of people about and the staff and zoo had a great buzz to it.

After a little stint outside the Zoo we moved to traversing the main walk way down from the gates, and then, up across the Lion enclosure walk way. Of course we didn't play whilst up there, and as I always remembered, the lion's gave little attention to the people staring and pointing, waiting for something to happen that never did.

Moving down to entertain around the enclosure on ground level...well that's when the fun really started.

You'd think a lion could figure out the difference between a REAL lion and a FAKE one...ie me! You'd think the alpha male Lion, leader of the pack, most ferocious of the big cats, King of the Jungle...wouldn't be interested at all in little ol' me.

**“AND SO BEGAN 4 MINUTES OF RESERVED FEAR...BECAUSE KNOWING YOU HAD THE ATTENTION OF A LION IS NOT FUN AT ALL.”**

No. No he didn't. And so began 4 minutes of reserved fear... because knowing you had the attention of a Lion is not fun at all. Watching him move toward the fence, those big eyes not swaying from me, hearing him roar and step a bit closer. Sure... there was a giant dirty big fence between me and him but that fence wire didn't look all that strong or thick...not when that lion kept creeping forward.

Nic and Col...well they couldn't help but let jokes fly about mating and spending time buddied up with the lion...at least between laughing so hard at the fear I had when they made me back up against the cage for a photo.

Now that I think about it...this was another bad experience in the Lion suit.

Scrap that. Do yourself a favour...follow these rules for working in the events industry. Don't work with kids, animals...or dress in an animal costume...particularly a lion!

1\ NIC AND SCOTT WORKING HARD... FROM THEIR LOUNGES 2\ FAMILY DAY AT THE MELBOURNE ZOO – THE MOMENT LUKE REALISED PRIDE OF LIONS THOUGHT HIM THE REAL DEAL 3\ THE BOSS TAKES ON THE LION SUIT FOR A FAMILY FUN DAY AT THE MELBOURNE ZOO 4\ PHOTOSHOOT INSIDE THE NEW ELEPHANT ENCLOSURE AT THE MELBOURNE ZOO 5\ LEOPARDS AND LIONS BACKSTAGE AT THE COLES STAFF CHRISTMAS PARTY 6\ AT ONE POINT OR ANOTHER, EVERYONE GETS THEIR CHANCE AT THE LION OUTFIT













#### LEAVING ON A JET PLANE

Wacky has allowed for some incredible experiences. Of these... many have involved travel...and without discrediting some infamous road trips (stay tuned for some recaps of those) the most fun trips have always involved planes. Be it interstate travel or overseas, Wacky has sent our 'boys', including myself, to all corners of the globe. We've opened Spotlight stores in Singapore, energised and entertained Citibank incentive groups all over the world, and even visited Tasmania a few times.

In the early years Wacky had, through Steve Carey's fine work, landed a gig for the launch of a Singapore Telecommunications company, StarHub. A group of 10 set of from Australia, and much to our delight at check in, had been upgraded to Business. What on earth were they thinking. They'd pick the most suave, classy, interesting, cultured, well to do people...and sat us right in the middle of them all. To be fair, by this stage Nic had invested in t-shirts with the Wacky logo so there was at least some sense of a corporate image.

Wine and cocktails flowed and cheese platters seemed to constantly be making their way up and down the isles. A smoking area existed...and was well used for some of the boys to enjoy fine cigars and cigarettes as they laughed with gay delight at the circumstances they were in, and the stories on the way to being there. Coco and I, much to the laughs and taunts of the rest of the group, were tucked up under blankets, with a Baileys or some other soft liqueur, watching the latest block buster on our 8" widescreen tvs. We've both not really out grown that image of our nanna selves...but we had a good time.

#### ALMOST LATE TO (BUSINESS) CLASS

It would take about 15 years before the opportunity to travel business class again would arise. And had it not been for Nic pointing it out, I very well may have missed it. We were off to Malaysia for a Spotlight opening. As usual we met at Wacky HQ and jumped in the Wackymobile to head to the airport. We always allow plenty of time just in case there are issues on the road there and, with Nic being a Virgin Lounge member, relax in the lounge to get some work done. This day was no different except we were travelling on Malaysia Airlines. Checking in, Nic had gone to the Business Class check in. Should have set of an alarm bell but we do that sometimes with Virgin, it was super quiet...so I thought nothing of it. Checked in, tickets in hand... we head through security...then customs.

The Captain is leading and we mozey into the Malaysian Lounge. More alarm bells? Nope. I ask, Nic says something about booking into the Lounge. I thought it was an incredibly nice treat and hooked into the muesli...then toast, then fruit, then coffee... then I think some more muesli...and a sweet.

Nic's not mentioned anything yet. And I'm sure he's enjoying the fact that I'm quite oblivious to the fact we are flying business.

Our flight is called and away we go. Out of the lounge and off to the gate. On arrival I notice there are still a bunch of people sitting around and not wandering through. This is unusual considering most always queue so they can wait in the bridge to wait on-board for take off...something Nic and I have never understood, along with people that as soon as the flight lands and the seatbelt sign goes off, stand up and grab their bags only to wait for 5 minutes cramped till the doors are opened...fools.

Nic ushers me to the gate attendant and she checks my ticket

and lets me through. Haven't worked it out yet...oh I'm so dumb. Nic follows engaging in general chatter.

It is bizarre that we are the only people on the gangway. I look at my ticket again. Single digit seat number. Not unusual. We happen to get that a bit flying Virgin. I'm looking at Nic. I'm looking at my ticket.

Realisation crosses my face. WE ARE IN BUSINESS CLASS. Nic is laughing as the beaming smile crosses my face and I show my 'business class' ticket to the flight attendant who guides us to our seats. Our big seats. Not big. HUGE! I had to ask for a map to find the tv allocated to my chair...lounge suite.

Nic plonks into the window seat and still laughing starts unpacking his gear. Bag, laptop, noise cancelling headphones...this time with plenty of room. I still can't believe it and basically sit in the chair with my legs stretched coming to terms with this huge surprise.

The Captain had been offered to bid on business class after purchasing the tickets, and putting in a small bid, had won. Well... my plans of sleeping on the way there were gone. I would not rest one bit to enjoy this and the flight over consisted of movies, food and wine a plenty, the stand out being Nasi Lemak for dinner followed by a platter of fruit.

The only disappointment is I didn't figure it out earlier so I could have enjoyed the anticipation of the experience more.

Alas it was hard falling from the top when Nic and I returned to Australia on an overnight Air Asia flight.

Though not business class... the budget airline in-flight meals Nic pre-purchased weren't actually half bad!

- 1\ QANTAS A380 LAUNCH AT MELBOURNE AIRPORT
- 2\ CITIBANK, BEIJING – HARDER THAN IT LOOKS
- 3\ CITIBANK, ATHENS – POINTING OUT THE DISTANCE FROM OZ TO GREECE ON THE AIRPORT WORLD MAP
- 4\ ALL SMILES BEFORE THE BUSINESS CLASS UPGRADE TO SINGAPORE
- 5\ CAPTURING A TYPICAL TRAVEL EXPERIENCE WITH COL ON A PHOTOSHOOT
- 6\ FIRST CITIBANK INCENTIVE EXPERIENCE IN SYDNEY
- 7\ WAITING FOR PLANES AT THE TERMINAL IS ALWAYS FUN
- 8\ NEVER A DULL MOMENT TRAVELING WITH COL
- 9\ NIC SOMERSAULT AND FALLS DOWN BUS STAIRS
- 10\ THE BOYS ON THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA
- 11\ PERFORMING AT 30,000 FEET DURING A CHARITY FLIGHT TO ULURU
- 12\ STARHUB GIG – BLANKETS AND LIQUEUR IN BUSINESS CLASS
- 12\ BOARDING A BOAT – VARIETY SPLASH 2009
- 14\ THE VERY FIRST GIG WITH COOL BLACK AND THEIR FUNKY HOLOGRAM JACKETS
- 15\ NIC AND LUKE'S PRIORITIES IN BUSINESS CLASS – SPOTLIGHT, MALAYSIA





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### JAMAICAN FAREWELL

It could be that I'm the smallest, it could be that I'm the youngest, it could be a whole lot of things...but it seems I tend to get picked on a lot. A LOT! Sure...all in good fun...but there's only so much a guy can take. In fact, no-one gets away with anything in Wacky. You slip up, you do something dumb, stupid, crazy, bad...you'll be called out on it...for years. Indefinitely. It will become the fabric of what defines you in the group. Just ask the Rock Pig.

Needless to say, everyone has their own stories. And everyone probably has a few rolls of that very fabric that defines them. Me included.

For example...lets take writing. Yes...hand writing. Penning a letter. You'd think one could sit down to write a 200 page letter on a green lined A4 pad, with a purple pen, at a 20 degree cursive slant without having Col and Nic jump on that (me) person. No...this isn't the case.

Ever overhear me be referred to as Wedgie? It was back in the early days...pre-2000. It was a gig out in a regional town for an RSL. One little thing we used to do was play Jamaican Farewell and make up new lyrics based on what was going on...usually to a specific group of people. And when I say we, I meant Col, Nic and Tommy. I always played the bass line...because without the bass line there's no song. So on this one gig we'd been roving around. Lyrics were being traded back and forth...and then a dreaded moment came where Nic pointed to me to sing and he started playing the bass line.

"\$^#&!".

No...no I've got this. It was a lady sitting on a seat playing the pokies....so off I went...the first line of the song is always the easiest, just describe what you want...the second also, not to hard...no rhyming. On to the third line and things are going along swimmingly. Hang on...what was that last word in the second line I had to rhyme with...."edgie".

"%^(\$#".

And this is where I cemented my own nickname....forever. Of all the words I could choose...and mind you, even now thinking about it there aren't really many...I fumbled out some line that ended in 'wedgie'. The boys loose it. LOOSE IT!! I turn bright red. They keep laughing. Not laughing. They are literally on the walls trying to keep themselves up, constantly repeating 'wedgie', at least between wheezing and crying and laughing.

Ever wondered why I didn't say much on gigs? Well outside of blabber mouth and looks like blabber mouth not giving me a chance to get a word in! Needless to say it took a long, long, long time before I was allowed to sing, or be given a line in a show.

### GRAVITY

Adelaide Cabaret Festival. We were over there for the first time as a four piece. Spence, Coco, the Captain and myself. It was a new area for us. We were pushing into a more arty fringe style under This was under the auspice of our new act 'The Four Chairs'. It was an exciting venture after being brought in to be part of the festival marketing video by Kate Ceberano. There were the well known big names and smaller acts, all descending on the cab fest...and we were there...in the centre of this creative love in.

We had an act, we had a funky look and we had a great cabaret show that we would perform outside the festival bar between and after shows. Everyone had a singing number.

Greg's was Stayin' Alive by the Bee Gees. It was edgie enough because Robin Gibb had just passed away. Hilarious because it skirted the line of not right...but too co-incidental not to do. Nic had Big Spender, adapted in lyrics and then into a saucy sax set. Col took on Cabaret. And then...toward the end of the festival, when his wife Sharni guest appeared, 'Somebody That I Used To Know' by Gotye.

All these went right off!

Mine....Defying Gravity.

I'd gone from singing Wedgie in 1999 to a full blown song... and a massive one at that. Hugely climactic and incredibly well known. We'd changed the lyrics and adapted it to fit into the context of the show. With the time I had I practiced...but there's a difference between learning a song and learning how to sing. I had needed a few more weeks. Would you believe a few more months? Maybe even a year?

It really should have been called 'Defiling Gravity'. I have put a stage spot embargo on myself since and that's all I have to say on this matter.

### UNDER THE SEA

2015. Coles Christmas Kids Day. Wacky was again supplying entertainment for this important day of the Coles Calendar,

1\ WHEN WACKY WASN'T INHIBITED BY SELF PRESERVATION - AERIAL ORKESTRA PERFORM AT THE HAWTHORN GRAND FINAL SUPPORTERS DAYA  
2\ READY TO PLAY NURSE AT A HOSPITAL EVENT IN ALBERT PARK  
3\ CLEAN UP OF THE WAREHOUSE AND THE END OF AN ERA WITH THE OLD PYRO TUBA HITTING HARD RUBBUSH  
4\ FUN TIMES IN THE SAFETY OF THE SHALLOW END - CORPORATE GIG AT THE AURORA SPA RETREAT, ST. KILDA





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this year an 'Under the Sea' theme. Carmel, Head of Events, Sponsorship, Marketing....and well... most of Coles, had set Nic the task of writing and producing a show after not finding any suitable off the shelf options.

A few glasses of red...some late hours...and the ability to draw on the incredible acting, singing and dancing talents of Mike Snell and Michelle Berner, and a show had been written... and I had a part in the script. Fears flooded back of Adelaide Cab Festival. 'Wedgie', impossible to forget now as I'm mostly referred to as it, always lodged in the back of my head to remind me of where the intersection of singing and talking went wrong.

We didn't have much time to rehearse. The script was ready days away from the gig. Michelle was Miss M the Mermaid. Mike, Fred the Fisherman. Both had 6 pages of script and 3-4 songs to learn, some with reworked lyrics. I had 8 lines. Off we went.

First rehearsal in and Michelle and Mike are smashing it apart. It's almost like watching an actual show and I was in complete awe at the incredibly professional level they were working at. I'm not saying Col or Nic aren't great at delivery...but this was just a different level...more...a different type of level. No interpretation or forgetting lines or words. Just bang on in every way.

Enter me. Last line on stage: 2012. I'd practiced the script so was confident in running without it in hand. Instead of referring to Michelle's character as "Miss M" I say "Miss B". Idiot. Obviously my brain was thinking of Michelle's real life surname, "Berner". Try again. "Mrs M". No. MISS M. Back track....

again..."Mrs B". NOOOOO! I see a look of disappointment on Mike's face. Nic is frustrated. Bugger. It's happening again. We've got another rehearsal.

Plenty of time to get the script in my head.

Rehearsal two...same script, same people. Same situation. Not happy. I'd rehearsed this. I run it with a script again. We finish up the rehearsal and Nic tells me to get Mike to record him running his lines so I can practice against it. He is of course flawless and even for a recording acts it out perfectly.

**“I'D GOTTEN IT RIGHT. NOT JUST RIGHT. EVERY PART WAS PERFECT. I'D GOTTEN THROUGH MISS M'S UNDERWATER SOIREE.. AND IF YOU'LL PARDON THE PUN, THE WORLD WAS MY OYSTER.”**

I go home...I run those damn lines. I stick it on my phone and run it on repeat through the night hoping it sinks in subconsciously.

Gig day! And this is what I mean about no-one getting away with anything. The extended Wacky team is onboard. Mike starts off...telling me not to get Miss B's name wrong. No. Miss M. Spence finds out and starts repeating "B" over and over. No.... Miss M. Nic's too busy running around like a madman or would have jumped in...but even Michelle....loveable adorable Michelle starts the reverse psychology.

I am FREAKING THE HELL OUT. I can not stuff this up.

It's go time. Mike and I are deep in dialogue. First line done. Easy. Second, sweet. Third, without a hitch. Nerves enter. It's like looking forward to Christmas day and going to see the dentist all at once. I know everyone back stage is waiting for me to stuff up. Here we go..."Miss M."

SAY WHAT!

Bam! Visualise that little person inside you suddenly coming to life and jiggling the jig of their lives.

I'd gotten it right. Not just right. Every part was perfect. I'd gotten through Miss M's Underwater Christmas Soiree... And if you'll pardon the pun, the world was my oyster.

On a tide note (no...that's not a typo), it is to be said that there were a few tiny...and not so tiny blunders. A bit of the script got swapped and the characters for the mass dance went on early...this is of course just after The Captain (nic), dressed as a giant fish, almost broke a fin after falling half way up the back stage steps.

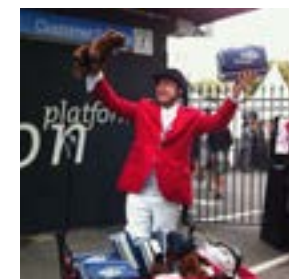
What's the morale of the story? None. I felt like I'd achieved something until I realised it took me 17 years of development to get 8 lines of script out perfectly. Eh!

5\ COLES CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY – IT ISN'T AN UNDERWATER THEME WITHOUT A PENGUIN  
6\ MISS M'S UNDERWATER CHRISTMAS SOIREE IN FULL 'SWIM' AT THE COLES FAMILY CHRISTMAS DAY  
7\ DRESSED AS OOMPA LOOMPA'S FOR THE COLES CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY





“ WACKY TRIO ARE A TALENTED AND FUNNY GROUP OF PERFORMERS. THEIR PERFORMANCE HAS CREATED A BENCHMARK FOR ENTERTAINMENT FOR FUTURE EVENTS. ”  
— AWM











1.

### I'D LIKE TO HAVE A BEER WITH ~~DUNCAN~~ SPENCY

Beer, wine, spirits...alcohol. These are a few of our favourite things. Not to say we NEED to have it. But it sure has been a great part of some wonderful moments in Wacky. And where Nic is the captain of Wacky, so is there a captain of the golden ale...none other than the country boy from Wangaratta

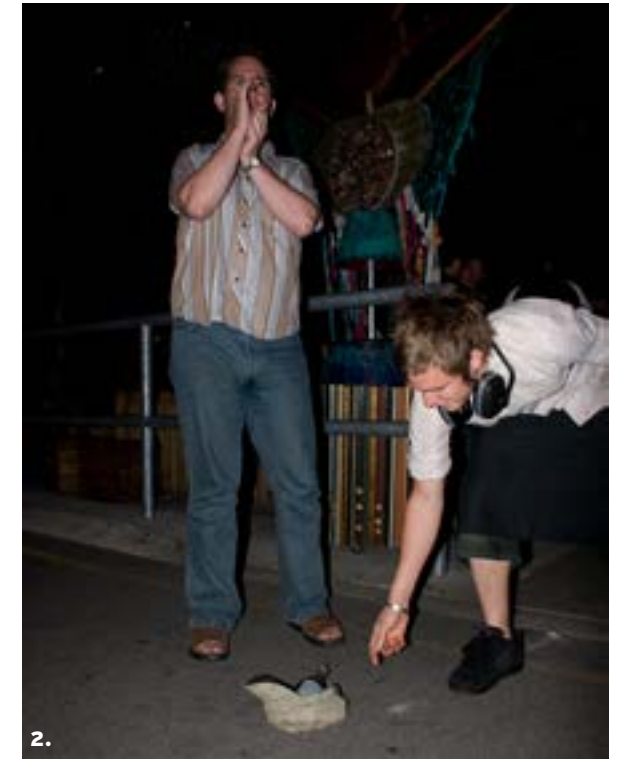
Now master of the trumpet and all round nice fella, has over the years lead and outlasted any challenger and/or non challenging participant in a night out or even session. Two such times I can recall were South Australia and Perth. South Australia...the great Colannades Myer trip, where Greg participated in, then lead the group of us into a night of beerage! Though myself and the captain pulled out when we hit our limits, that wild haired drummer Violi held on for dear life to the end. Lesson one.... DON'T try to keep up with Spency.

The second such time was Perth. Many years earlier where myself Col and Pete Slipper headed across for the Royal Perth Show. Back when we were still doing stilts. After a day smashing out a bunch of great sets on gig, it was decided we'd head to the infamous Little Creatures Brewery for a drink and dinner...

much to the cheers, smiles and gay excitement of the others. Off we trot...meals ordered. A warm night with the doctor not yet hit. It was hard to say what went down quicker...the food or beers. Thankfully I wasn't much of a beer drinker and so the rule 'Don't try to keep up with Spency' was void for me. Col and Pete hooked in though and it wasn't long before it was a long time since being there and the darkness, drunkness and delightfully giddy group felt it time to head back.

Well...it's hard to explain what a night out with Spence is like. That following morning, sitting in the shipping container that was our change room (it was all glitz and glamour back then), and with the sun trying to roast us alive, I took a pic of the struggle both Coco and Slipper were facing. The struggle to get through each set up on stilts without falling now seemingly a fear of another life. Coco I can only image, looking internally for answers that would explain the current situation he now found himself in.

My own painful experiences with the golden ale would happen many years from now. But in those moments...all I could do was search for some sympathy as I laughed at this battle of endurance... whilst chatting to the rather chipper Spence, unaffected.



2.



3.



4.

1\ DINNER AND DRINKS  
AT LITTLE CREATURES  
DURING THE PERTH ROYAL  
SHOW 2\ HEADING HOME,  
GREG DECIDES TO BUSK ON  
THE AIR TRUMPET USING  
PETER SLIPPERS HAT  
3\ PERFORMER CHANGEROOM  
AT THE PERTH SHOW -THE  
DAY AFTER THE NIGHT OUT  
AT LITTLE CREATURES  
BREWERY 4\ COL GIVES  
PETER SOME HELPFUL TIPS  
FROM HIS WEALTH OF TUBA  
KNOWLEDGE



# Waiver of Liability

— Socialising with Greg Spence —

**A COMPLETED WAIVER IS REQUIRED TO PLAY, SOCIALISE, FRATERNISE,  
SHARE ACCOMODATION OR BE WITHIN 100 METRES OF AN ALCOHOLIC ESTABLISHMENT,  
BEVERIDGE, OR BAND ROOM RIDER – NO EXCEPTIONS.**

In consideration of being allowed to enter into the 'play' area and/or participate in any parties, programs, activities being either known intent or disguised with Mr Gregory Spence, the undersigned, on his or her own behalf and on behalf of the participant's partner(s), acknowledges, appreciates and agrees that:

I, for myself, my band brethren or ward sign this Waiver and Assumption of Risk in consideration of the opportunity to drink, consume, ingest, imbibe, swallow, guzzle, gulp, knock back, 'smash' or gobble, or to participate in any parties or activities with Mr Greg Spence. I, acknowledge and understand that there are dangers and risks associated with socialising with Mr Spence and agree to assume all risk of personal injury, including the potential for headaches, hangovers, vomiting, temporary paralysis, swearing, acts of nudity and feeling like death.

I, for myself, agree to follow the safety instructions provided by those that have suffered at the hand, glass, bottle or shout of Mr Spence and that failure to do so may result in personal injury, sufferance, embarrassment and enrollment on the liver donor recipient register.

I, for myself, my child or ward, and on behalf of my or their heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, HEREBY HOLD HARMLESS CEC/WACKY ENTERTAINMENT, its owners, members, officers, employees, equipment manufacturers and sponsoring agencies from all liability for any such personal injury, disability, death or loss or damage to person or property to the fullest extent of the law. By the execution of this agreement, it is my intention to assume all risk of injury and do hereby surrender and waive any rights to sue or exercise any legal right to seek damages against CEC/Wacky Entertainment, its owners, agents, employees, officers, directors, trustees and all other persons acting on its behalf.

I, for myself, my child or ward consent to the publication of personal pictures which may be taken by CEC/Wacky Entertainment personnel or their representative. Publication may include but not be limited to, marketing materials, Facebook, website and our defense in a court of law because WE TOLD YOU SO!

I acknowledge that my participation in the aforementioned activities is strictly voluntary. I hereby certify that I am emotionally over 18 years of age; I have carefully read the foregoing covenant not to sue and acknowledge that I understand and agree to all of the above terms and conditions. Prior to signing this agreement, I have the opportunity to ask any and all questions. I am aware that by signing this agreement, I assume all risks and waive and release all substantial rights that I may have and possess.

I understand that this document is a contract and that I have read it thoroughly and fully understand the terms.

**PLEASE PRINT NEATLY WHILE SOBER AND STILL ABLE TO WRITE;**

Victims Name (Print): .....

Birth date: ..... / ..... / ..... Age: .....

Address: .....

City: ..... Postcode: .....

Email: ..... Phone: ( ... ) .....

Date of Consent: ..... / ..... / 20..... Consent Expires: ..... / ..... / 20.....

(Valid for 1 night with GS)

Victims signature: .....

## FUSYD

There's something about Sydney. It's always been the case. From loosing luggage, being treaded badly on the flight up, or stuck in traffic for hours... to a botched attempt to 'Nair' my hair during the Sydney Royal Easter Show and coming out the other side of it looking like I've had chemo. Then there is buying outrageous funky shoes with a secret compartment in the sole only to have worn them once... before falling apart and being thrown out, to spending two nights assembling a radio controlled car and concocting a bad business plan to invest in them with Nic as well as falling over at the Easter show on the way back from a Flipperdance stage feature.

Across a number of years it has been referred to as Fuck You Sydney. Each time something bad happens... no matter how small, no matter if in fact it isn't specific to Sydney... when it does... it now has it's own destination. FUSYD.

Sadly the IATA airport code system is limited only to 3 letters... so we can't officially petition to have SYD changed.

Secretly though we do love Sydney. There've been some great moments up there. Staying in Balmain while we worked through the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and Athletes Village (even though Nic and Tom spent the only day off we had at the rowing... by all accounts the most boring day they have ever had), eating giant prawns and drinking Corona's after a gig overlooking Bondi, dressing up as the Windy Kilts and smashing out a corporate gig in a nightclub and performing Skin Dive Jive three times for the massive Flight Centre Christmas Party to name but a few.

Each great experience I've enjoying with the Wacky boys... and each bad one with them too. It's what makes travel so much fun and interesting. Doing it as a team and finding the funny side to it. The greatest moments are the ones money can't buy... good or bad. and they make for the greatest stories.

## LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU

The fun never stops. From watching every member of the band say the same gag to the same person within two minutes, to cracking gags not realising you are out of costumes and getting strange looks, to the many and varied behind the scenes email communication and banter that goes on... be it random emails, or notes in the gig sheets, a formal and legal document, that make you realise that Wacky is all about fun and being entertaining.

A great example of this is the Waiver of Liability forwarded to each member of Wacky. An important document — and one that should have been drafted many years ago.

LEFT \ WAIVER OF LIABILITY  
SENT BY NIC TO ALL  
IMMEDIATE MEMBERS OF  
WACKY



1 - module 6  
10



to be coles





### THE SPIRIT OF TASMANIA

One of the great sea trips were the Spirit of Tasmania crossings. These were some of the very first gigs and Wacky were to wander the halls and decks of the ferry, entertaining random guests in random places with random sets. Coco was dosed up on sea sick tablets, but even still, managed to get through a set before heading straight back to our, retrospectively...cozy quarters...or was it eighths...it was small anyway...to rest up and recover for the next set. Other than the craziness and excitement of being on a ship playing to guests, was being away from home. Hanging with the boys on my first overnights, all you can eat dim sims in the staff café. WHAT?!?!? Heaven! Steamed dim sims and tomato sauce. Yes I know...not right...but hello! Darts and beers with the staff and then on to Devonport. After a solid 24hrs it was always great to say farewell and do it all again next time. I also learnt the quick and efficient art of how to reset a doona; start with the cover inside out...hold the corners away from the opening, grab the doona then pull it up and shake. The cover will fall over the doona and job done. Brilliant!

### TINNY - NOT THE ALCOHOLIC SORT

Nic has a habit of having something he is passionate about as a hobby...and then building it into a gig. Some say tax dodger... others say creative genius. One of the greats is the remote control cars bought in Sydney. The good old TL-01 chassis with a mini cooper shell, very quickly went from fun side project to a 10-15 strong remote control car act....used once for a Peter Jones gig. All well and great for him cept that I had just invested in 50 batteries with this new remote control car vision. Lesson learnt.

Anyway...Nic, being the avid fisher that he is, also bought into a personal water craft...not really bigger than a tinny really, and this also was used on a gig for the Variety Club 'Splash'. Dressed in 1920's bathers and arriving under motor (because rowing wasn't going to happen) we docked and entertained guests before relaunching to play out the armada of slightly larger and horribly more expensive watercrafts as they set off. No man overboards...it was all by the book. Fun, safe and Wacky.

However this same tinny also set forth a morning of pure pain and horror. Nic was heading out for a fish and had invited me to tag along. Hell yes. I don't particularly like fishing. You get no sleep because you are up early, you smell like fish when you're done...and at least for me...you're lucky to catch a fish...let along one worth eating.

### “I COMMITTED TO THE GIG...HOW BAD COULD IT REALLY BE?!”

Off we go...myself Nic and Greg in one boat, out near Mordi. As is always the case, I've not managed to get much sleep the night before and start feeling a bit average as we get further and further out. No chance now of pulling out and ruining everyone else's fishing I jump on the front of the boat and look at the shore, trying all the tricks to calm the gut, head and whatever else wasn't enjoying itself. Push on. The fishing is fairly light all round. A few nibbles but not much action for the boys, and a couple of hours in things start to get a little choppy. We decide to pull up stumps and The Captain, literally, starts angling back into shore.

Well...a little choppy turns to boat height chop, and this little craft is getting knocked all over the place. Life vests on, check. The previous laughter about me holding on to the edge of the boat with sickness soon turns to us all holding onto the boat for dear life. No-ones laughing...the mood is pretty serious now. We've lost exactly where to head back into and are now just focused on just getting back anywhere. Spray is going everywhere each time the boat hits a wave and Nic tries steering the boat into and around both, the waves, to reduce the rocking that's going on.

We some how miraculously get back into smoother water and see a pier. Land. I'm sick as buggery and holding out from some self made burley. Bang...the boat knocks into the pier and as soon as some tenuous link is created I pull myself up onto the pier and roll over.

Would you believe at that point the sun decides to break from the clouds. Now that we are all safe, focus goes back to my horrid state, I hear laughter being directed my way.

Never again.

### SUPER YACHT

Well, never again until we had another gig for the Variety Splash. Nic had organized for us to travel down to Geelong by train, so that we could play for those participating at the breakfast, before jumping on one of the big yachts...it could have even been an older maxi and we were might even honk a few tunes whilst leaving and returning to dock.

When Nic had told me about the gig, I had given private concern to my previous outings on the water. But it was a yacht. Maybe even a super yacht...and it was in the bay, so I committed to the gig...how bad could it really be?!

Everything was going swimmingly. We arrived on time, woke and pumped up all the dusty sailors after a big night on the piss, and then jumped on board to play some tunes as we departed.

Well it didn't really take long before that dreaded feeling came on and it was a long long long trip back to Melbourne spent looking forward at the horizon hoping it would help and holding back as much as I could from what would inevitably be a new paint job to the stern of the millions of dollar yacht. Not feeling good about feeling good, or that. It'd be like having some very generous soul take you for a spin in their supercar, and then after getting queasy, throwing up in it.

Other than the laughs, everyone was quite understanding. Nic was having a bloody sail of his life. Beaming smile as he enjoyed the rare experience we were having.

Never again...no really....never again.

FAR LEFT \ COLES TEAM MEMBER CHRISTMAS PARTY - NIC, MARC AND BERNARD DRAWING THE SHORT BANANAS IN THE NON BREATHING GORILLA SUITS 1 \ SEAN MCLEOD AND ANDY OOBJOY ENTERTAINING ON THE NEW SPIRIT OF TASMANIA 2 \ CITIBANK INCENTIVE PROGRAM - PERFORMING ON SYDNEY HARBOUR 3 \ COL, NIC AND LUKE TAKING A LITTLE BOAT TRIP IN THE FITZROY GARDENS AT THE MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW



1\ COL CONSIDERING HIS OWN BREAKFAST AT 7.30AM BEFORE A CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST GIG AT MYERS FOR KIDS WITH SEVERE ILLNESS  
 2\ FLEMINGTON CUP CARNIVAL – COL'S REQUIRED PRE-GIG BREAKFAST  
 3\ A TYPICAL 'SMALL' APPRECIATIVE BREAKFAST PUT ON BY SPOTLIGHT FOR THEIR STAFF ON GRAND OPENINGS  
 4\ FIVE FLOORS OF FAKES – NIC AND LUKE'S SURPRISE DISCOVERY FLOOR OF UNBELIEVABLE FOOD  
 5\ COLES STORE OPENING WITH THE WACKY FRUIT  
 6\ NIC AND CURTIS STONE AT A COLES EVENT  
 7\ NIC AND COL ENJOYING SOME NOVELTY JAPANESE ICE-CREAM IN TOKYO AFTER A CITIBANK TRIP  
 8\ OFFICIALLY LOOSING THE ABILITY TO DISCEMINATE REAL FROM FAKE FOOD – COL IN OSAKA DURING A CITIBANK TRIP  
 9\ MR BURGER – ONE PART OF THE DELI WRESTLING TEAM FOR A COLES ROADSHOW  
 10\ LOOK CLOSELY... IT'S SELF EXPLANATORY  
 11\ THE LUNCH ROOM OPENING AT DOCKLANDS  
 12\ NIC AND COL ENJOYING SOME SEAFOOD AND BEERS AT THE OKINAWA BEER GARDEN AFTER A CITIBANK GIG  
 13\ DINNER IN ECHUCA – BEFORE A NIGHT OF DANCING WHERE 'ELMO' CAME OUT  
 14\ FOOD SUPPLY FOR A TWO DAY CREATIVE RETREAT WITH COL, NIC AND LUKE  
 15\ COL CRITIC'S A GIRO IN ATHENS  
 16\ THE GREAT MUDCRAB FEAST – PRE-GIG DINNER BEFORE SPOTLIGHT GRAND OPENINGS  
 17\ MISH EXPERIENCES THE GREATEST AIRPORT CAFE, AS RATED BY COL  
 18\ THE FOODIE ISN'T ABOVE EATING MCDONALDS

## FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

Without it we'd cease to live. Without it myself, I wouldn't have the energy to keep up on Wacky gigs. Food. And there's lots of it. It brings people together with their love of the culinary cultural delights. Thankfully in Wacky, I've had the fortune to be...schooled and educated from my early days touring and embarrassingly ordering fast food while overseas, predominantly by my fathers both, Nic and Col. These gentlemen have played an important part in the fascination of the culinary world, and critical of what, and how, I put into my mouth.

## FINISH ON A SWEET

There is correct etiquette...and then there are rules. For Col, the most significant is that regardless of what, when or where you eat, you MUST finish on a sweet. Of course...this rule over the years has been expanded to starting on a sweet or eating sweets whenever they become readily available...or even in searching them out.

Never has this been more prominent than during the Melbourne Cup Carnival at Flemington. Wacky is contracted to entertain a number of gates and so have multiple groups and many players. All arrive earlier than a normal gig to make sure we are in on time and ready to go...however this also leaves time for the boys to grab breakie and a coffee from the café just inside the Members gate. Notably Col, on every day, of most years, would head in to grab an egg and bacon sandwich, coffee...AND...a yoyo. Oh does he go on about those yoyo's. They are "delicious". Breakfast done...and finished on a sweet.

Then there is the infamous cookies baked by scottie. I'm sure someone else will recount this in more detail...but in true form, at the end of the morning gig, everyone is now squashed into what was then a cleaning closet (yup...all 12 of us), changed, chatting...and having a cheeky bite of a half cookie scottie has baked. No normal cookies. Back in the early years when things were a bit more relaxed and liberal, the pig had put some love into his baking...for these were magic cookies. Mostly all in the room had a small bite. Enough to get a kick but not a trip. The pig was making sure no-one did anything stupid. Then Coco pops back from the toilets, sees the tin of cookies on the small table, says something like "Cookies, Who brought these! Yum!", picks up a whole one and shoves it into his mouth. No-one says anything. It's that moment of, should or shouldn't I, and before the should I bit wins over for anyone, the cookie is down and everyone's bursting into laughter. Someone...might have been Scottie, Nic or Spence, tell him it's a hash cookie. Coco realizes he's got to drive home and quite seriously asks how long he's got. Scottie hazards a guess and off shoots Col in a panic. Half way home he's shot a text to Nic mentioning it's kicked in.

Here we are worrying about the sugar content in sweets... where there are far worse things that occur from wanting to finish on a sweet!!

## EAT WHAT THE LOCALS EAT

Overseas trips have offered some incredible food experiences. The first was during a trip to Malaysia for a Spotlight gig. We had added another day after to explore before heading to the airport We'd already spent the day

**“THEN COCO POPS BACK FROM THE TOILETS, SEES THE TIN OF COOKIES ON THE SMALL TABLE, SAYS SOMETHING LIKE “COOKIES, WHO BROUGHT THESE! YUM!”, PICKS UP A WHOLE ONE AND SHOVES IT INTO HIS MOUTH.”**

on a slow train to some steps (fairly uninspirational) and return slow train back into town but had planned to visit a market we'd stumbled across earlier that wasn't open at the time. Well..by the time we got back this place was jamming. A bunch of hawker stalls set up the length of this long street. Food everywhere. Great food of all sorts. Nic and I pretty much grazed our way down the street before sitting down to watch the organized chaos of the market. Those closed off, motorbikes still whizzed down it and stopped on the side to pick up food, often just in plastic bags, rather than the containers we tend to get food in. Really it was the Asian old style equivalent of take away. Just horribly tastier and fresh and good for you...did I mention tasty?

Kuala Lumpur was also the spot of what was to become mine and Nic's love affair with one particular shop that we came upon when we found and located Little India and were rather dejected by the food on offer. Walking back toward our hotel, Nic noticed a little bunch of shops in a small building off to the right. "Should we?" was asked followed by a swift "Yes!" by me. There'd have been 4-5 shops of no more than 4x3 metres. We settled on the one that seemed the best of and walked up to see what they had on offer. A bunch of dishes and trays were arrayed with a very friendly man and the owner, welcoming us. We had no idea of the cost or what to do, so Nic, as he usually did, just started to point and pick. Onto a plate was scooped the choices and we settled down to be COMPLETELY blown away with the flavours that came to life in our mouths. Some other patrons were eating with their hands, and we did with a few things, but the spices and curries knocked our socks off and after a couple of orders of the 'red drink' that we had no idea of, we pulled back from what was a super meal. I think the both of us if we could would happily eat there every week. We need more Malaysian gigs!!

## FIVE FLOORS

China offered another incredible, and surprise treat, when after shopping again at the 5 floors of knock offs, exactly what it sounds like, we found that one floor had a food court in it. Like always in asia, you wonder around a little and find something that looks good. We both settled on a pho style dish that came out in a HUUUUUUUGE bowl. This thing was SLAMMING with flavour. Nothing like you get in Australia, but then there's probably a whole bunch of spices and herbs in there you cant import.

## WHEN IN GREECE

By far though, the greatest overseas meal was in Greece. Nic, Coco and I had some time off between gigs for Citibank and we decided to have a good day out. It started with wanting a massage. We found a taxi driver outside and told him what we wanted. Not a sleazy place but somewhere that would rejuvenate our bodies. He knew someone and would take us there. Not only that, but on arrival said have the place ring us once done and he'd come and collect us.

We were greeted by a gorgeous Athenian girl and decided to try two options each. We'd each have the body massage, but then had the choice of a few other options. Of these, I picked the salt bath. Yeah, sounds great doesn't it. No...no not at all. Not when you spend 40 minutes in a bath with salt...freezing because no-where did it say it was a COLD salt bath. What the! Anyway... Nic and Col had a huge laugh out of that and once we were all done, and a bit more relaxed even though the it was more of a relaxation massage than a hard work out one, we headed down to find our awesome cabbie waiting for us.

We wanted food. More specifically we wanted a really really good traditional Greek meal...and our guy knew the place. Off we went and after a fairly serious drive we found ourselves at a port of types and welcomed into a very open restaurant that looked out over this port. Well if you ever want to truly enjoy and experience fish...you find this place and do what we did.

Fish...yes. This thing was big and just outstandingly succulent. Perfectly cooked, seasoned and fell right off the bone. With it came marinated fruits like prunes, pear and a few others. Just wow. The ambiance of the place, the staff, all amazing. Once we had literally licked, scraped and polished off every morsel of fish, the owner comes over and offers us some oozo. I had one. Nick and Col had another. Then another. I think there may have been another after that.

The long short...up there with the best meal I've ever had. Company, food, venue, location, flavours, experience. Everything was just incredible.





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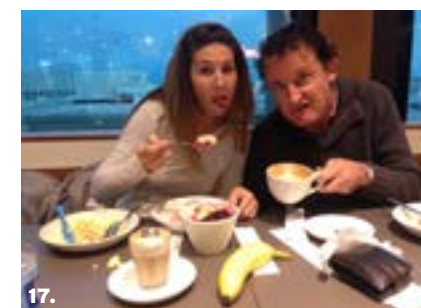
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## GAUCHO'S

Australia has held some of the finest food stories. Whether it be the retreat Nic, Col and myself went on over a weekend to write down a show, with probably as much emphasis put on the shopping and cooking of the meat, or the Eat Street event where we sampled Melbourne's top restaurants and wineries as well as dressing up as superheroes...spandex never looked so wrong.

There's the duck extravaganza in Sydney, the mud crab spectacular up north on a Spotlight gig. The early days at the Athenium where we were treated to left over Cray (I missed that year) all are great memories.

The stand out that I will always remember, not simply for the food, but for the night it set up was Gaucho's Argentinian Restaurant in Adelaide.

Spency, Violi, the captain and I were across the border for the launch of a Myer store at the Colonnades Shopping Centre. With an early start for the gig we'd flown over the afternoon before and as is a Wacky tradition, headed out for a nice dinner.

We started with a casual beer in our quest for a restaurant before ending up on Gouger Street. Near the wonderful Adelaide market we'd come across a wonderful Argentinian place... Gaucho's. The captain made the call and in we went. It was a steak place, just a really good steak place. We all ordered up. Meat, meat, meat and meat. I ordered the 1kg t-bone. Ambitious, maybe. But I was hungry.

The kitchen opened onto the dining floor, and though blocked by glass, we could see the chef's moving across pans and hotplates,

flames leaping up behind and around them. We were salivating, and had already hooked into a bottle of red...the first for the night. In we launched. The meat was outstanding. If it's possible to describe a bit of meat as ripe, then this was it. Wine flowed, meat was consumed. We were having a great time. I recall a glass being broken at the stem. I recall a serviette or two becoming headwear.

And this was only the start of the night.

I had in fact polished off the 1kg, plumply! Everyone was done. The wine bottles dry. It was time to move on.

**“IT WAS ONE OF THE GREATS. THROUGH THE SWEAT POURING DOWN OUR FACES AND BLOTting OUR EYES, WE ENTERTAINED, AND COMPLETELY CAPTIVATED A TWO LEVEL AMPHITHEATRE OF WAITING PUBLIC TO THE LIKES THAT I'M SURE COLONNADES WILL NEVER SEE AGAIN.”**

To be honest...I can't actually remember what happened next. I think we all headed to Italian for dessert...but what I do recall is Spency marshalling for the night to continue...and the captain and (poor) Violi accepting and supporting this. I was at this point too far gone to continue. I retired and found our accommodation to recover from an already wonderfully crazy night.

That night was a long one for Violi. He stuck it out with Spence. Nic retired some hours after, in the wee hours, as a responsible boss should. The other two managed a half hours sleep, I think.

We all were suffering a little...and a moderate amount...and a lot. Spence too though you couldn't tell. It was a tough gig...without a word of complaint from our self infliction. Spency and the captain sweated through the first hour...the most important with us warming up the crowd. Nic called on me to dance and dance I did. Violi...well...I'm not sure how Adrian got through that gig considering he'd been broken by the great Spence overnight. I'm not sure he's fully recovered.

The gig went OFF. It was one of the greats. Through the sweat pouring down our faces and blotting our eyes, we entertained, and completely captivated a two level amphitheatre of waiting public to the likes that I'm sure Colonnades will never see again.

Gaucho's on the other hand was, and still is, responsible for a lot of pain that following morning...but will remain one of the great dining experiences for me in Wacky.

## I NEED MORE CHILLI

Unlike the infamous skit 'I need more cowbell', not all good comes from asking for more of something. Over the course of my time in Wacky, The Captain has delighted in seeing myself and Coco sweat up from what he'd describe as a mild curry. It was nice to be there when he would eat his own words...and chilli.

We were on tour. For the life of me I should know where but I have a god awful memory, up North in Queensland in any case. It was another Spotlight opening and with it came the tradition to check Zomato or Trip Advisor for a recommended eatery for our traditional night before dinner. A Thai place had popped up and it looked the goods.

1\ GAUCHO'S MENU COVER AND GREG AND ADRIAN WAITING OUTSIDE THE HOTEL FOR THE CAR, ONLY 30 MINUTES AFTER RETURNING FROM A NIGHT OUT 2\ NIC AND LUKE DUKING IT OUT AN MCG CORPORATE EVENT 3\ EAT STREET MELBOURNE - SUPERHEROES THEME DONE IN STYLE WITH LEATHER, LYCRA AND LEGS





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Off we went, myself a little dubious that it wasn't actually as central to town as you'd think a decent restaurant is, considering I'd picked. But we drive closer and a wonderful sight greets us with a very nice looking place complete with fire bamboo things. We park, and head in. Greeted, seated and to picking what we want. Now my perspective is Nic considers himself a bit of a foodie secretly, and rightly so with Asian as he's been across enough with gigs, and family, to know what things should taste like and what they in fact are...which is why when the waitress came to take our order, he questioned the level of chilli in one of the dishes. A bit of back and forth...Nic chooses and asks for a little more chilli. He doesn't want a dull dish. Fair enough.

It's not unusual to chat work and upcoming things to do, reply to emails and personal stuff...general gossip and the like as we wait for the food. We're both looking forward to dinner. And here it comes, set down for us and we turn our attention on it.

Though I can't remember mine, it's delicious. Nic's though...we'll he's had about two mouthfuls and has pulled back and slowed down. As yet not admitting anything. I've churned through half of mine. YUM. Nic...well sometimes the great man is quite content to be full and often will leave unneeded rice or carbs on the plate...but looking over I saw an almost full dish.

I remark on it and Nic accepts defeat saying he can't get through 'more' of it. Really...you need to get through SOME of it to say you can't get through MORE of it. I give it a crack.

DAMMMMMN! The stuff touches my lips and they go tingly. I drop the spoon, grab the water and see Nic pull a 'see what I mean' face. Now I'm not one for wasting food...and I hate seeing

a full plate of it go unchecked...but currently I've got my own half dish left and I can't eat it because my mouth is on fire.

This would be the one time I'd witness the captain defeated by food.

20 minutes later, and still with the chilli niggling in the background, Nic's final words were, "Well I did ask for more chilli!"

#### IF I COULD TURN BACK TIME

Mistakes happen. It is unfortunately part of life, and a reality that can pull you down from any high you are on, rip out your heart and make you feel like you've completely ruined your career and left down your colleagues, company...and client. Every business has processes in place to reduce as much and hopefully completely this risk.

Wacky is no exception. In my 18 years of Wacky I'm surprised at the few that have happened...and at those situations saved in time or to best of our ability...but there have been some rippers.

Like the time at Raheen as a four piece band dressed up as jockeys. These gigs at Raheen were always very exclusive and always very important with the Pratt family always in attendance as well as important guests...including on this gig, the Prime Minister of Australia

The brief was simple. Entertain guests on arrival outside the front of the mansion. Easy.

At least it would have been had I remembered to put my tuba in the car. GUTTED!!

Not even I'd forgotten...but that I hadn't even noticed it not there. I still have a comment from Coco echoing in my head from that day. "A saxophone I can understand. Or a costume piece. But how do you not notice you don't have your tuba in the car?" A fair comment considering at that stage I was driving a Toyota Echo... a car that was really only inches bigger than the tuba itself.

I'd let the team down...but after a small time of Nic looking absolutely disgusted, turned to me and said "How about we get you to run up and down the driveway entertaining guests then."

YES!! A solution. Or at least a way to in some way rectify the situation. And with minutes before starting, hooked up my trusty steed of a stuffed horse, doffed my jockey hat and trotted down the driveway by my lonesome as the boys fired up the music

Let me just say, that for the short hour gig that it was, it was one of the hardest of my life. I was young. I wasn't carrying the usual 20kg tuba. It wasn't hot. But I was run ragged jockeying up and down that long driveway for guests. Every return trip saw me go slower and slower and Greg, Col and Nic laugh more and more at how painful my time as a 'character' performer was becoming.

By the end of the gig, I'm not sure if anyone could tell who was stuffed more...me or the horse.

Even having forgotten my tuba strap and carrying it for the duration of a 3 hour gig, does not compete to the absolute exhaustion of that gig at Raheen.

I've never forgotten my tuba again.

4\ WACKY SHOWCASES THE VRC AND MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL AT THE MCG FOR THE AUSTRALIAN TOURISM EXCHANGE 5\ ROLLING RED CARPET - AND A MIGHTY EFFORT ROLLING THOSE TWO CARPETS ALL THE WAY FROM BIRRARUNG MARR TO GATE 3 AT THE MCG 6\ UNUSUALLY IT WAS THE COSTUMES THAT WERE FOUND WANTING AND LIMP DURING THE FLAGPOLES INAUGURAL OUTING - AUSTRALIA DAY 2012





1\ COL SLEEPING AT GABS SYDNEY – WHILE ANTHONY MCKEE SOLDIERS ON WITH SOME SUGARY NUTRIENT HELP 2\ AS CLOSE AS BROOKE GETS TO STOPPING – TAKING A BREAK DURING THE PADDLE RACE MADNESS AT THE GREAT AUSTRALASIAN BEER SPECTACULAR 3\ TRAVELING IS FUN... THE PLANE TRIPS THOUGH DO WEAR YOU DOWN – LEGITIMATELY KNOCKED OUT 4\ NOT EVEN THE CAPTAIN IS SAFE FROM THOSE SNEAKY PHOTOGRAZZI'S! – ENROUTE TO GABS SYDNEY 2015 5\ THE DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS – SOUTHLAND SHOPPING CENTRE CHANGE ROOM 6\ COL TAKE A KIP ON A BREAK AT DDAWAY'S CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY 7\ NIC RETURNS THE FAVOUR AND GETS LUKE ASLEEP BETWEEN SETS AND POSTS TO THE COMPANY FACEBOOK... #WRECKED – GABS SYDNEY 2015 **FAR RIGHT\** NICSAN ABOUT TO WEIGHT INTO THE FINAL NIGHT CITIBANK GALA DINNER IN OKINAWA JAPAN

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#### L.O.V.E

In the early days of Wacky, I was the baby of the group. Nic, Tom and Col took it upon themselves to make sure I was schooled in the world...according to them. And to be fair...retrospective with the time I spent with them, they were in reality, surrogate fathers.

One aspect of a father is making sure you impart advice to your child, on relationships; love...and sex. Thankfully Papa Yates, Cameron and Ryan never pulled me aside to have the sex talk with me. At least not the traditional kind.

You get to know each other quickly in Wacky and it didn't really take long at all for the guys to understand that I had little to no experience with females when I joined Wacky. And because of this, it was Nic, that lead the charge to find me a girlfriend. This wasn't done subtly, nor occasionally. The desire to find me someone was built into every possible gig. Wherever a girl of equal age was around and where we had stopped to get a song or interact with a group...and where it was found out the female in focus was single, regardless that they were so incredibly far out of my league, as deluded as even that was...inevitably I would hear those embarrassing words "Our tuba player is single too!"

You often hear people talk about traumatic experiences. This... though not on the same level as those very serious issues and experiences...were times I dreaded. I loved the idea of the guys caring about me. I was a bloody shy kid. There was a reason I was single. I wasn't good at approaching females like that. But really...if you asked me if I would pick wearing a bikini backwards on every gig...or having the boys try and hook me up on every gig...I'd choose the first.

This happened A LOT! Not sometimes. Not often. A LOT.

And it worked...once!

We were entertaining patrons at a Dandenong RSL that played pokies and offering some fun, excitement and a little light in their lives, the real sort, not the light that comes from the flashing lights on the slot machines. Again, a young female was there. Again she was single. Again I heard the words... "Our tuba player is single...you guys should go out." Well nothing happened there and then...but finishing up the gig we were walking out and bumped into her again. I got nudged and told to go and give her my number. I'm sure I was very close to as nervous as I was when I first auditioned for Wacky.

Long boring story short. We caught up...it didn't go well...and I would spend the next decade dodging the captains...and then also Coco's on gig love matching attempts.

#### LULLABY

Nic and I were heading off to Adelaide for the Royal Adelaide Show. Skin Dive Jive all packed in the back of Nic's green Toyota Hilux along with a few other costume changes. It's a long way. So I fell asleep. Sure...we were only 40km out of Melbourne. And over the coming years and trips there, it may have happened often. In fact...I have tended to fall asleep in most places. Cars, planes, change rooms, on breaks or while Coco has been testing some of his 45 minute stand up set on me...for the ninth time.

And every time I fell asleep, Nic would make sure he was there to get a picture of it.

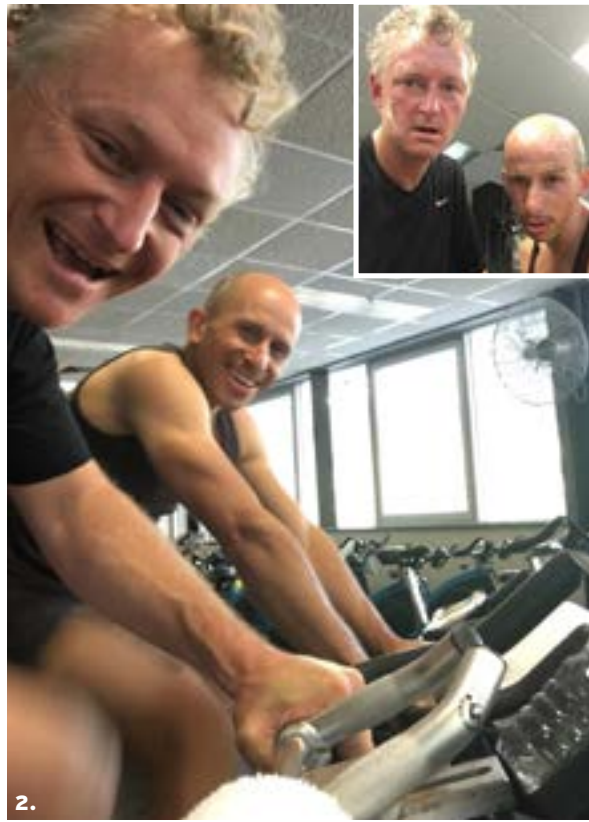


CHAMPIONS' FORUM 2013

# CITIBANKERS CAN DANCE







1\ SHORT PEOPLE GOT... WELL TALLER – ENTERTAINING THE GORGEOUS PEOPLE AT FLEMINGTON RACECOURSE DURING MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL 2\ NIC AND LUKE BEFORE A LES MILLS SPIN CLASS IN DARWIN BEFORE A SPOTLIGHT STORE LAUNCH – AND THEN AFTER SAID SPIN CLASS 3\ SKIN DIVE JIVE AT DOCKLANDS ENTERTAINING DURING THE MELBOURNE FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL – THE SAME GIG NIC FLIPPED OFF AT A FAST PACE... AND WITH THE RAIN... THE SAME GIG SCOTT AND LUKE BATTLED NOT TO FLIP OVER

It goes both ways though. It's rare....but it's occasionally great to get The Captain back. I think I've managed to get him twice. Once on a trip overseas...the second on a trip to Sydney for GABS (Great Australian Beer Spectacular) in the plane. Given it was one of few times I got one up on Nic, this one went straight to Nic's facebook page as soon as we landed. I was very proud of myself.

Victory would be short lived.

It only took one set at the gig for me to collapse in the chair on break. And there is was, staring at me when I woke. All over facebook. And not just all over my facebook. It was posted up on the companies facebook page. Not only one upped. I got completely wrecked.

It's not your eyebrows you need to worry about when you sleep.... just the fear of a pictorial coffee table book that may be published.

### ONE STEP AHEAD

Nic doesn't do things by halves. Or quarters. Nor does he just step into things. It might start with a step...but usually the captain dives right into anything he does. And diving is where keeping up with Nic is difficult.

It was a wet day. Myself, Rock Pig and Nic were working Southwharf pier, entertaining people as part of the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival. Nic call's our usual water medley to play with us lining behind each other and snaking around.

Rockpig beats out the two 3's (that typical drum beat you hear of Marching bands just before they step off), and off we go..."Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream..." Well this day Nic was on something. He didn't just step off...he bloody well shot off like a torpedo. I've got short legs and a 20kg tuba and I was doing all I could to keep up with him.

Not hard? Maybe keep in mind we are wearing flippers. Big ones. These things catch on everything....cracks, twigs...other flipper. Now remember we are marching...in step. You can't just speed up or you'll be out of step.

Nic is a good 2 metres in front of me now. Scottie's keeping on my tail but it feels like we are whales and Nic a young snapper fish. Half a medley later we run out of boardwalk...which is just as well because I'd run out of air, legs and any hope of keeping up.

He's slowed down a bit now, but I will always be the young yearling trying to keep up with the old bull.

### SWAY

It was a beautiful warm day. I was down at Port Melbourne with my girlfriend of the time, sharing an icecream and having a beautiful day. A group of bikes ride past and I hear my name yelled out. I turn to see find it's the Captain with the, Rockgod, Sean McLeod and one or two other friends, out for a ramble (a Wacky term for cycling). Turning to come back and say hello, Nic completes

most of the turn...most. Then he's down. Smack bang into the concrete path. Nothing serious but enough to open up a bit of blood.

I hand the icecream over and run across to help. The boys are off their bike and lifting it..and Nic up. The Captain explains he's ok, brushing it off as the small fall it was....before fainting and collapsing, almost onto the ground, again if it had not been for being held up.

Maybe a bit more serious, he gets rested up against the bluestone concrete wind break wall and given some water. He looks white. Well...whiter than normal. We soon find out that Nic can't stand the sight of blood. I'm not sure if it's any blood or more so just his. But after another attempt to get up and finding legs wobbling it was decided to have someone get the car and come pick him up.

This being said...it has not stopped Nic riding. Not so much now but that's mostly a time thing. You're likely to find him sweating out beads of pain and effort at a spin class with his good buddy the marathon man.

I do wonder though if Nic cycles to keep fit...or as just another avenue, outside of Wacky, to fulfil his love of wearing lycra.

Keep rambling my friend! Keep rambling.



## DON'T CHANGE

The experiences, gigs, places, songs, moments, laughs and challenges have all come from the fact that at it's core, Wacky is made up of a diverse group of people, all unique in their own way. Diverse and strange, every person that has become part of the fabric of Wacky has their own intricacies that make them them and make Wacky...well...Wacky.

It's true that diversity in a business is vital, both in personalities and skills. It's what makes everyone so interesting and fun to be around and this diversity feeds the energy that is generated on gigs, both whilst performing and before we've even left the change room. Each person has brought their own story to Wacky and in some cases, had Wacky completely re-write what defines them and what they will be known for...and as.

Though I speak of everyone being this way, one person stands out by far.

Colin, known endearingly as Coco, would in a perfect world have his own sitcom...and perhaps his own emergency department too.

Every gig Nic and I sit and wait for what new story or crazy mad illness or inflection is causing strain in Col's life. Everything has a story, like the time he was almost late for a gig because his cat had "Done a shit and dragged his arse across the length of the living room". From Blepharitis or Plantar fasciitis, itchiness of the skin, sensitivity to light, sore muscles, sore bones, there is always something. We aren't sure anymore if these are legitimate or just made up to keep us entertained.

You can then look at food and Coco's fussiness with it all. There's never a time that his French background isn't referenced to how the quality of food or a dish should be. I can't count the number of times he's complained about how an egg benedict or florentine sauce should be, and how much better he does it at home. Or complaining about how he doesn't have a local bakery that does artesian bread and the importance of buying good quality bread...to which of course Nic always responds, "Try buying expensive bread for a family of five and see how far your budget goes." Of course this is counter balanced by Col's appetite and eyes. No muffin or sweet is safe, especially no biscuit based cheesecake. It's not unusual for him to rock up to an early morning gig with a muffin, bacon roll and coffee because he didn't have time to have a proper breakfast at home.

We can speak about the desire and drive to keep his body in tip top shape. It's not unusual to see him fine tuning things with a pre-gig yoga-esk, annual, stretch. Or hearing that he has gone for a big run...the first in months...days before the 2015 Melbourne Cup Parade...to make sure he is warmed up for the epic Giddy Up parade spectacular...only to injure himself and not do the gig at all.

The list goes on. I've learnt more about the world through Coco's analysis and cross examination of his own analysis that what Google, the newspaper and every other mentor I've had, combined, has taught me..

# PROJECT COCO

## 2013 FIELD TEST REPORT

**ERROR: 20823**

### Overactive Diagnostic

Triggered by machines that fly. Related to error 91100

**ERROR: 91100**

### Headaches

Brain working overtime

**ERROR: 37842**

### Motion Sickness

Fault linked to texting while walking but symptoms may be delayed if other fault codes trigger first

**ERROR: 03103**

### Sensitivity to Frequency

"Some frequencies go straight through my head."

**ERROR: 73946**

### Weak Arms

Inability to carry own drums to gig

**ERROR: 81653**

### Skin Sensitivity

Unusual sensitivity to spray deodorants and hotel soap

**ERROR: 11839**

### Cupping Bruises

Inflicted by local witch doctor

**ERROR: 29374**

### Allergy to Sugar

Issue resolved with muffins, pastries, etc...

**ERROR: 88436**

### Constipation

All Blocked Up syndrome. Often resolved 5 minutes before going on stage

**ERROR: 99918**

### No Final Clearance

Advised to go around again

**ERROR: 34789**

### Bottom Chafing

Rubs him up the wrong way

**ERROR: 87526**

### Think Tank

Creative concepts often conceived while attempting final clearance

**ERROR: 12673**

### Wool Allergy

Pain felt by all

**ERROR: 38931**

### Tight Skin

Despite \$1000's spent on stretching foot, flexibility is still limited

**ERROR: 77201**

### Collapsed Arches

Expensive lab orthotics rejected. Refer to skin stretching test results for latest data

**ERROR: 91176**

### Highly Sensitive Feet

Intolerance to concrete & hard surfaces

**ERROR: 09328**

### Ingrown Eyelashes

Still a problem despite use of imported removal device.

**ERROR: 900136**

### Sensitivity to Brightness

Sunglass sponsorship applications welcome

**ERROR: 55292**

### Torn Cornea

Linked to dodgy backyard surgery

**ERROR: 12987**

### Aversion to silence

Persistently tries programmed humour on other prototypes in dressing room and wonders why no reaction is received

**ERROR: 28367**

### Time Lapse Feeding

Unable to consume breakfast at home as often suffers from "Night Stomach" syndrome resulting in regular attacks of sudden hunger on way to a gig. Fault resolved with pastries, muffins and recent membership to Costco

**ERROR: 09328**

### Adams Apple

Sudden onset choking syndrome

**ERROR: 73923**

### Irritated Nipples

Prototype hates embroidered shirts. Resolved by band-aids over affected areas

**ERROR: 10428**

### Genuine Equipment Only

Requires vintage bracing system circa 1988

**ERROR: 28344**

### Santa Fat Scratchy

Can cause his 'ho ho' to become 'ah ah'

**ERROR: 42032**

### Uncoordinated Arms

Inconsistencies in rhythm while mouth in operation

**ERROR: 11304**

### Sporadic Pre-Gig Stretching

Motivated by various physical conditions or dancers in dressing room

**ERROR: 90012**

### Shoe Velcro - Top of Foot

Fault not replicated when tested by others

**ERROR: 84327**

### Shoe Size Indifference

When wearing 2 shoes exactly the same size, complains that they are different

**ERROR: 42954**

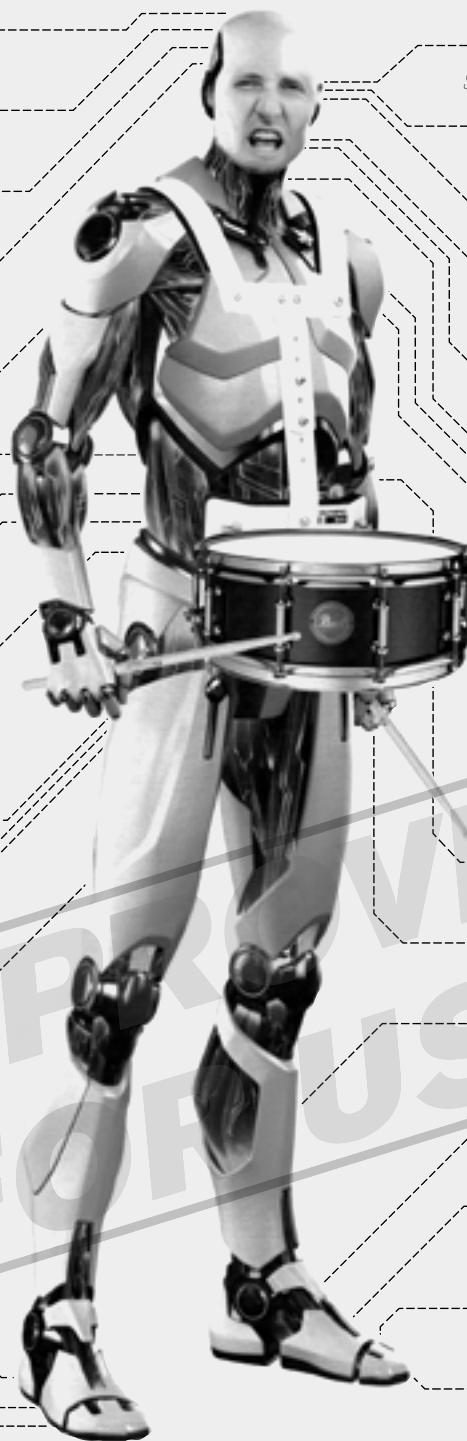
### Chafing Between Toes

Caused by thongs

**ERROR: 18434**

### Horse Poo Magnet

Foot bonds with equine discharge



LEFT: PROJECT COCO – FIELD REPORT, LISTING ALL AILMENTS NOTED AT TIME OF PUBLISHING. REPORT COMMISSIONED BY THE CAPTAIN IN 2013



## 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

It's beginning to look a lot like...shhhhhh. Don't say it. We are no-where near christm...that time of the year. That season that everyone loves. The season of festive cheer, gift giving, puddings, presents, Santa Claus...and a whole lot of Christmas carols. Eh....I said it. Christmas!

If like the song, there were only 12 days, I'd be one happy little Plum Pudding, or Christmas Present...or Candy Cane... or Christmas Tree or Elf or yes, even once, Santa. But no... Christmas goes for a couple of months...at least, and as everyone knows...the lead up usually makes it feel like it's been going for a half year.

Unless of course you are playing Christmas carols in October... such as the case one fine year.

The year that almost ruined me.

It was this year that I'd decided to count the number of times I played Jingle Bells. Why? Because the running joke was that I hated Christmas. And like all jokes, there's a part of truth in them all. Finishing Christmas and having kids ask for carols through January and WELL into February...even March...heck, that's AFL season (stop with the Christmas requests already), well that's just a pain no parent should let their kid put on a musician. But then I could always count throughout the year to slip Christmas Carols into songs. Most of the time I knew what he was up to a few notes in...but there have been times when I'd get half way through the song before realising and then watch Nic try to keep playing as he began grinning knowing the torture he was doing to my fragile mind.

One must know that it was, and still is, tradition to start any Christmas gig with Jingle Bells and it's unique unmistakable introduction. Do di do, Do di do, Do di do, Do do di do do do di do do.

So in a year and season where I think there were above 60 Christmas gigs...well you do the math.

The count began. 1. 2. 3. Slowly at first. I'd thought about marking these on the Tuba. Etching each playing into the brass... like a prisoner counting the number of days as an inmate.

20, 21, 22. We were still in October. 59, 60, 61 But as the count started to move up, and the more Wackies that found out, the easier it was to be reminded of what I was up to. I cracked the ton. 100. Bradman would be proud. I'm sure my soul wept as I hit that number. Still early days. We are on the cusp of December. 123, 124...Nic start playing it more. Start of sets...133. Hidden in other Christmas Carols. 151, 152, 153.

Things are out of control. Everyone's in on it now and calling out Jingle Bells at every chance. 164, 165. If a bunch of kids yell out a song to play...you can bet the one requesting Jingle Bells will get it played. 173. 174.175. Or even if it wasn't called...189. 190. 200. Holy crap. 200 and Christmas Day is still...weeks away. I'm 203 not 204 sure 205 how 206 much 207 longer 208 I 209 can 210 keep 211 this 212 going 213 before 214 going 215 mad 216.

261. Breakdown.

It's about mid December. I can't do it any longer. I stop counting. It's too much. For my own sanity, and to still feel I can give Christmas cheer on gigs, I stop.

Post this Christmaclysmic season, and after sometime with John Farnham on repeat I project, based on the escalating levels of play that was occurring that Christmas season, that I would have reached upwards of 400 Jingle Bells.

Now sure...400 doesn't seem like much...REALLY!!! Yes retail have to listen to their Christmas carols on repeat, but they are distracted by shoppers, co-workers and all sorts of things specifically to keep them out of their head. I had to actually PLAY that song...AND I had the team of dedicated Wacky boys working with and on me gig after gig to break me.

They got close. But what doesn't break you only makes you stronger...and these days I've come to peace with Christmas. The usual jab about it only a throw back for those that remember the old seasons.

### DON'T MIND DOING IT FOR THE KIDS

Wacky has always offered time to charity events. From Very Special Kids to Eat Street to the Christmas breakfast event Myer put on. These gigs have been such rewarding experiences, where we have worked often with many other creatives and organisers to assist in fundraising for charitable organisations. It is only superseded where we can engage the children themselves that are effected and help create an incredible event, moment and distraction for the struggles they face day to day.

I think the highlight of these would have to Eat Street 2011, where along with Sally Cockburn (Dr Feelgood), we dressed up as superheroes for the night.

Wacky has always had an affinity with lyrca. It felt so wrong, and I'm sure for many it looked that way too...yet...it seemed so right and was hilarious seeing the boys struggling to keep their appendages in place.

## OTHER MEMORABLE MOMENTS

- Bad Santa during our mad week of gigs for Qantas. Though the guy was a giant and looked the part (aside from his mad eyes) he sure didn't play it, throwing lollies at kids passing his chair because he was too lazy to get up and out of it.
- Forgetting my shoes for the Elf costume at Crown Casino and taping up Nic's converse shoes with black gaffa to get away with it. Thank god for a dark atrium...and gaffa tape!
- Working at the Aquarium on Christmas day with Marc Matthews, and even though we were getting fed, the great man brought in a little pudding for us to share.
- The amount of times seeing Nic rush through, with glee, tmany a changeroom in his undies or a hotel room in... well the nude (there are pics, but this aint that sort of book!)
- Watching the fear cross Marc's face when Coco, on a stage in front of a big corporate family day crowd, asked 'Santa' what a random child's name was.
- The annual Wacky gig at the Athenaeum Club. In the early days there were multiple groups and we chanced some delicious seafood 'leftovers', being they were a normal persons feast. But every year we get to catch up with the crew there and enjoy the mad characters that come to life when we burst into their rooms.
- Seeing what crazy names our Christmas costumes are called by the public, the stand out being a 'shit in shoes'.
- Pulling the basket ball free from my tuba bell countless times during 'Sweet Georgia Brown' in the early days.
- Coughing up smoke when the tuba was blown up beside Nic's Sax. #pyrotechNIC.
- Mesh Dinners. All you can eat food following our gigs for Crown's club members. I think the only way we were nourished enough to get through the silly season.
- Nic 'nairing' my hair in Sydney when I decided to go bald... instead I looked like I'd been through chemo. Don't use Nair!
- Trying to fit into costumes that even with gaffa, press studs, pins, velcro and a belt, still fall off me or touch the ground.
- Nic touching my... and ultimately everyones... arse on gigs to throw me off during a song or photos.

1\ CHRISTMAS AND GIG  
HIGHLIGHT – ON SET FOR  
THE DAY AT GMA WITH THE  
KING OF ENTERTAINMENT  
BERT NEWTOWN 2\ CROWN  
CASINO – CHRISTMAS  
LAUNCH IN THE ATRIUM  
3\ QANTAS, MELBOURNE  
AIRPORT – WACKY  
SHINANIGANS ENTERTAINING  
QANTAS CUSTOMERS IN  
THE WEE HOURS OF THE  
MORNING AT CHECK IN AND  
GATE LOUNGES 4\ GAFFA  
WILL FIX EVERYTHING  
– LUKE BORROWS NIC'S  
CONVERSE RUNNERS IN THE  
B1 CHANGEROOM AT CROWN  
AFTER LEAVING SHOES AT  
HOME 5\ WACKY BEFORE  
GOING ON STAGE AT THE  
CITY OF MELBOURNE'S  
LIGHTING OF THE TREE  
6\ CHECKING THE TURKEY  
STUFFING BEFORE A  
CHRISTMAS PHOTOSHOOT  
7\ DEFEATED – NIC  
CAPTURES THE EXACT  
MOMENT LUKES LITTLE  
CHRISTMAS HEART IS  
BROKEN





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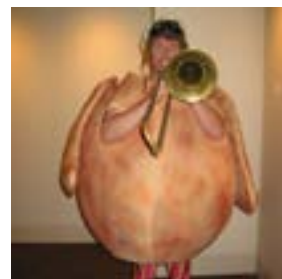
# have yourself a very wacky xmas







“ YOU HANDLED THE FUNCTION WITH EASE, AND MADE IT A HAPPY, HUMOROUS NIGHT FOR THE RETAILS ”  
— COLINS PLACE RETAIL AWARDS





# Andrew Gill

– AGENT CREATIVE

Nic Yates and Wacky have come a long way from when I first met them when 'they' thought it was acceptable to wear yellow overalls and be a kids music act!!

I reckon it is somewhere between 1996 and 1998 and Nic and maybe Colin came to talk with me about their Wacky music concept for Southgate.

I think I also gave them their first PJSE Parade gig – should have gone on a trailing commission!!!

Their hair was bigger and the concepts daggy but the force of fun and service delivery has powered along.

Great ideas and creative execution. v dunking tuba, the talking wheely bin. MC barnstorming and now the cockies.

21 years of sequined jackets  
 21 years of dressing up and playing music  
 21 years of comedy creation and message delivery  
 21 years of loud suits and shoes  
 21 years of making audiences very happy and clients calm and trusting

Always great to work along side or commission.

The only thing left is a Vegas Show Cirque De Wacky or Wacky de Bergere.

Love the consideration and wish I had the business acumen/savvy.

Congratulations to you Nic and all who follow and support the Wacky way.

1\ WACKY ON STAGE WITH ANDREW AT THE MELBOURNE F1 GRAND PRIX LIVE SITE  
 2\ CIRQUE WELCOME AND ENTERTAIN GUESTS AT THE MAZDA 3 LAUNCH  
 3\ WACKY TAKES THE CHANCE TO HAVE A PHOTO WITH MELANIE-JADE NETHERCLIFT ON THE MELBOURNE F1 GRAND PRIX LIVE SITE STAGE  
 4\ TUBA BASKETBALL DURING A CARLTON HOME GAME AT OPTUS OVAL  
 5\ ANDREW AND THE GRID GIRLS AND MELANIE-JADE NETHERCLIFT (2005 RACE AMBASSADOR







## Lou Pardi

– STRATEGY DIRECTOR,  
AGENCY MAROU

You'll meet a lot of ideas people in life but few who've brought as many to life as Nic and his team. It's always a pleasure to work with inspired and inspiring people - and these are some of the best in the business.

## Chris Jordan

– MANAGER

Look it's hard to put one's finger on where one's career in the industry all began, but after one boozy session in Noosa back in the early 1990's only one person could really see the lack of talent I had that shone through the many "shushies" being had. After seeing and believing I had no acting ability what so ever, he was the only one that had the belief and vision that one day I would become a part of the greatest roving entertainment business in the world.

As the years moved on, he fed the odd bit part role here and there and yeah sure I cooked the BBQ at his company Xmas break up party one year (we've all done that!), but it wasn't really until he got me considered an Oscar for my role as a Monty Python knight at a wealthy 60 year old's birthday party at the Melbourne Library and then considered for a Tony later the following year for that all day sweat session in a Santa suit at Coles did I know that I was finally finding my Wacky feet.

But for me, the creative genius of the man really exemplified itself when he got me sensationally considered for a Logie where ironically (and it was on their 'White' carpet) I played the part of Biff the security guard picking up fake dog poo off the carpet that I knew I had finally arrived as a Wacky performer.

Captain, you are an inspiration to many, a genius and hero to a few but to me you're just an average bloke that wasted his god given talent as a music teacher at Assumption College, and mate I love you for it.

6\ CHRIS IN ACTION AS  
'BIFF THE SECURITY GUARD  
– HOLDING THE THRONG OF  
PAPARAZZI BACK  
7\ PRIVATE BRITHDAY PARTY  
– ONE OF TWO KNIGHTS OF NI  
FROM MONTY PYTHON



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7.





# Glenn Jacobi

– TROMBON / TUBA

## MACKAY

Peter Slipper and I were booked to play a Wacky gig for the opening of a Spotlight in Mackay, flying up from Melbourne. Nic had stressed to us that this was a Very Important Gig. He and the team were going to be in Sydney at the time, also doing a Very Important Gig of their own, so he was relying on us to do a Good Job.

We were to fly up the day before, spend the afternoon and evening in a nice hotel by the beach and play at around 7am for the store opening. We were looking forward to one of those great Wacky gigs that we could reminisce about for years to come – a trip to Northern Queensland, a few drinks, a visit to Pete's family in Mackay, a great dinner, a few hours in the morning being Wacky and return with some great photos and stories for the rest of the crew.

Originally, Greg Spence was going to do the gig but had to swap out at the last minute, so the plane tickets to Mackay were transferred to Peter. I was booked on a separate ticket, but the same flight.

**“IT TURNED OUT THAT VIRGIN HAD CHANGED THE FLIGHT TIME BETWEEN THE TICKETS BEING CHANGED AND HADN'T TOLD US.”**

When we turned up at the airport, however, we found out that we were half an hour late and the plane was just about to leave. It turned out that Virgin had changed the flight time between the tickets being changed and hadn't told us.

So there we were standing at the airport, having missed our flight and needing to get to Mackay for our *“Very Important Gig”*. There were no more Virgin flights that day - they tried but couldn't help us.

After the initial panic, we started trying to work out an alternative. Because we had to start the gig early in the morning, there were no flights the next morning that would get us there early enough, we had to make it up there that same day. We didn't want to call Nic who was in Sydney and make a fuss, so we started going to the other airlines in the terminal and also making phone calls to all and sundry, to try and sort this out ourselves.

It turned out the closest we could do at that late stage was to pay for our own flights with Qantas that afternoon to Townsville, 400km north of Mackay.

So that's what we did, which had us arriving late in the evening at Townsville Airport and then renting a car for the four-hour drive.

That would have been bad enough, arriving about 10pm and having a long drive ahead of us, however when we got our luggage and our horns and finally got into the hire car, we got a few kilometres down the road when the rental car started playing up – nothing too serious, but the engine was coughing and spluttering every now and then, so we decided to turn around and take it back. Luckily, the car rental place was still open and they had another vehicle for us.

We finally made it on the road sometime really late in the evening. The drive down was actually quite fun in the balmy weather up there, but by the time we made it, our lazy afternoon hanging out at a hotel beach resort had turned into arriving at a deserted hotel around 3am, with just a couple of hours sleep before we had to be bright eyed and bushy tailed for the morning's work.

Being the dedicated Wacky guys we are, the gig went fine. We got our story for the crew, but it wasn't the one we originally hoped to get. It was only when we finally got back to Melbourne that we called Nic. The conversation went, *“Hi Nic, the Mackay gig went fine, however...”*





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LEFT \ DIAGRAM OF THE ROUTE AND FLYING/DRIVING LEGS OF THE TRIP TO REACH THE SPOTLIGHT STORE OPENING IN MACKAY  
 1\ ROYAL STEWARDS ENTERTAIN MEMBERS ENTERING THE MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL  
 2\ ALL WRAPPED UP PERFORM DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON AT GREENSBOROUGH SHOPPING CENTRE  
 3\ WACKY FRUIT'S INUGURAL PERFORMANCE AT THE FOOTSCRAY MARKET  
 4\ DODGY ATHLETES ENTERTAINING DELEGATES AT THE CITIBANK AMAZING RACE - CITIBANK BACELONA  
 5\ MORE CAPTAINS THAN YOU CAN POKE A SHIP AT  
 6\ WACKY PIRATES ENTERTAINING GUESTS DURING THE 2008 EAT STREET AT THE SOFITEL  
 7\ TEAM WACKY ALL OVER THE SOCIAL SHOTS FOR AIR CHINA'S MELBOURNE TO BEIJING DIRECT LAUNCH





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## Chris Eury

– TRUMPET

1\ WACKY ELVES  
PERFORMING AT  
FLEMINGTON RACE COURSE  
FOR A CHRISTMAS RACE  
DAY 2\ LATINO SOMBRERO  
ENTERTAIN ON CROWN  
CASINO'S PROMENADE  
3\ RETAIL STRIP  
ENTERTAINMENT DURING  
SPRING RACING CARNIVAL  
4\ PIRATES AHOY – CHRIS  
AND MARTY READY TO SING  
A SEA SHANTY AND PILLAGE  
THE SEVEN SEAS  
5\ ROYAL STEWARDS  
MIDWAY THROUGH THE  
MELBOURNE CUP PARADE

My first gig for Wacky was back in April 2006. It's nearly my 10 year anniversary!! The gig was the Grand Prix... you asked for highlights... well sharing a change room with the Fosters Grid Girls was a pretty good start. I thought, wow these Wacky gigs are OK! It was playing in the Latino Sombrero act with Marty, Stu B. and Ryan.

I think my highlight gig has been being Santa at the Coles party for the last few years. It's hard work and it sounds sucky...but since I have kids the same age as the ones coming in to see Santa I enjoy hearing how much they believe in him and their excitement at seeing Santa in the flesh.

Getting to play music with good guys at great gigs dressed as ridiculous characters was always one of my career goals. Tick!

### OTHER GREAT MEMORIES:

Costume Problems! Mostly user error!!

- Suiting up in a room and then realising you don't fit out the door
- Suiting up and then realising you can't bend your knees to pick up your horn
- Suiting up and realising you can't bend down to put your comic shoes on!
- No elf socks...buy some Sydney Swans socks from the AFL store!
- Becoming accustomed to sitting at cafe dressed as an elf and not feeling weird!
- Starting to enjoy dressing in full body lycra undersuit.

I remember Nic calling me to do a gig at late notice for the Coles Roadshow. I was on school holidays and planned to do some major work in the garden!! I said "Nic don't think I can do it. Sorry! Jen will kill me if I bail on the garden!" Nic's response... "With the money from the gig you can pay a guy to do the same work and have some left over!" Why don't I think like this!!!! Great idea. I got on the phone booked a gardener and did the gig. Good advice Nic! Plus I got to look awesome dressed in yellow!!!

**“GETTING TO PLAY MUSIC WITH GOOD GUYS AT GREAT GIGS DRESSED AS RIDICULOUS CHARACTERS WAS ALWAYS ONE OF MY CAREER GOALS.”**

Working for Wacky has meant I have the chance to collaborate with musicians and great friends on some awesome gigs and I never have to work in the garden again!!!

Congratulation on 21 years guys.





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## Anthony De Masi

– MAGICIAN

I have had the fortunate luck to work with Nic and the Wacky team for close to 20 years at Major events, corporates and special launches.

Wacky has given me some of the best opportunities in my career. Awesome gigs & always a magical energy amongst the team of artists working the event.

There is no one in the business that is as reliable, honest, efficient and real to the business (Nic is the real working agent that works the gig with the artists).

I feel lucky to not only have worked with Nic over all these years but more fortunate to be his friend. My career has grown and developed with Nic through his support, encouragement and confidence.

I have always admired his ability to visually and creatively make an event/show magic!

My highlight gig has been working on Hamilton island on the school holidays for the last 4 years. Nic gave me the heads up for this opportunity and didn't even worry to run it through his business. He has always been the man to look after, respect and care for his mates in the business. I am grateful that I have been able to work for Nic and Wacky Creative over all these years. Every single gig has been amazing and just a joy to work.

Congratulations on your 21st and I look forward to seeing the entertainment magic you create over the next 21+ years to come.

6\ NOT A ONE TRICK  
MAGICIAN – DE MASI DITCHES  
MAGIC FOR CHARACTER WORK  
AS A WACKY PAPERAZZI  
7\ PERFORMING HIS MAGIC  
SHOW FOR THE DIMENSION  
DATA CHRISTMAS FAMILY  
DAY 8\ MYSTIFYING KIDS  
AND ADULTS AT DOCKLANDS  
PRECINCT DURING  
AUSTRALIA DAY  
9\ THERE'S A REASON  
HE'S THE BEST MAGICIAN  
IN MELBOURNE. SHARP  
THREADS, SHARP TRICKS  
AND QUICK HANDS  
– AUSTRALIA DAY,  
DOCKLANDS 10\ MAGIC  
IN THE SPIEGELTENT FOR A  
CORPORATE FAMILY DAY  
11\ CONFERENCE DELEGATES  
ENTHRALLED WITH AMAZING  
MAGIC SKILLS IN THE BLOCK  
ARCADE



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## Annette Yates

– DIRECTOR / PARTNER

### ELSTERNWICK

When we moved from Clifton Hill to Elsternwick we looked for a home that had a separate garage, bungalow or studio space. Indeed we did have a small bungalow and this was converted into the first Wacky office where Caz Clarkson at that time was employed in the Wacky family. The side of the bungalow housed plastic tubs full of equipment but where did the costumes go???? Yep, it all began spilling in the front room of the house on many racks. This worked for a while until we had our daughter Talia wanting to visit daddy and Aunty Caz in the office. I must admit it was lovely having Caz and Nic around for a morning cuppa being a mother of a toddler and baby Meechah. It was also amusing for our children when the boys would come over

1\ NIC ENJOYING SOME TIME WITH HIS KIDS – TALIA, BAILEY AND MEECAH  
2\ IF YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT A YOUNG CHILD NIC WOULD HAVE BEEN LIKE... ENTER BAILEY  
3\ ALWAYS ENGAGING AND ENTERTAINING, NIC AT HOME WITH MEECAH  
4\ ANNETTE JOINING IN A PHOTO SHOOT FOR CHRISTMAS AS THE PRESENT

for a rehearsal in our lounge room. All the boys embraced the kids and Colin would give auxiliary percussion instruments to the kids and they danced and played along. A joyful and musically enriching environment was created. The time of separation between family and business was imminent. To this day people do not realise the pressure that we were under to finance a property, having a mortgage whilst bringing up a young family. We knew that Wacky was invading the household with Wacky stuff so, we were forced to move the company elsewhere and purchased Turner Street Port Melbourne... our new Wacky HQ. We took the plunge and did it!

### FAMILY AND WACKY FAMILY

Nic has always been generous in helping out his nieces and nephews or in fact any youngster willing to work. All of them have had the experience of either working at Wacky HQ or dressing up at a gig. Brittany has worked as a horse, Josh in the garden, Casey as a lobster. Just recently our daughters Talia as a fish and Meechah sorting out costumes tubs. In time, Ben and Bailey will join in too. I do recall Nic's father driving a van for huge events such as the Grand Prix and Flemington

Races. Nic's cousin John is also a part of Wacky being the company's accountant.

His sister Kirsten has always wanted a gig so she sent a formal application to Nic asking him to be a Plum Pudding at Christmas time (it has become a bit of a family joke) ..she is still waiting!

Over the years the Wacky family has grown with many employees coming and going. I thank each and every one who has worked for Wacky and those who have contributed to this 21st birthday book but, without being too biased I must say that there have been two in particular that have special places in my heart - Luke Farrugia and Colin Cameron. These guys are Nic's right hand men, brothers in arms or whatever you want to call them. Their contribution to the company is without a doubt an integral pathway to the success of Wacky, always bringing to the table their creative writing, design and humour.

We have had many memorable life moments with these 2 guys. Lukey began at the tender age of 17... his first real job. His mum and dad were so proud of him at his 21st birthday saying how Nic was so wonderful giving Luke employment as a tuba player.





We have also seen Colin marry Sharni and having three beautiful children. Nic was honoured to be Col's best man at his wedding.

There are countless stories and memories with many Wacky personnel... many will be revealed and celebrated in this book!

#### **DADDY DRESSES UP, PLAYS HIS SAXOPHONE AND MAKES PEOPLE LAUGH**

Trying to explain to a 4 year old what your daddy does for a living can be tricky. The best explanation I came up with was, *"Daddy dresses up, plays his saxophone and makes people laugh"*. It is as simple as that! In kindergarten both Talia and Meechah had their own version of what daddy does for a living and of course I got the phone call from the kinder teacher asking if everything was alright.

Talia - *"My daddy plays saxophone for the elephants at the zoo"*. At the time, Wacky opened the new elephant enclosure at the Melbourne Zoo. Talia was lucky enough to be in the enclosure with the handler and the Wacky Safari Brothers.

Meechah - *"My daddy sits in a garbage bin and squirts water at people"*. Wacky had just released a new concept called The Rolling Rubbish Company. We were at South Bank watching the gig where Colin was a cleaner and Nic was hiding inside driving the garbage bin. It mimicked the old show from the 80s 'Candid Camera'. A person would lift the lid wanting to place rubbish in it and they would get squirted with water or the bin would follow people from behind, causing lots of laughter.

#### **BEING MRS WACKY**

Nic has never been a person to sit still and waste time. He has always had the mindset of living each day to the fullest and making each moment count. I have watched a man who has undoubtedly worked so hard in making our family, our home and our life a good one. His family have always been his number 1 joy and being Mrs Wacky is a privilege. I would be lying to say it has been easy especially when Wacky travels interstate or overseas. Every time Nic was away and even now I get *"When is dad coming home?"*. He is certainly a hands on father making sure every moment he spends with the kids is quality... , even

now at 16, 14 and 12 years of age, they pine for his presence. Nic had a fire of sheer determination to create a business, to play saxophone that would sustain him and us to have a comfortable lifestyle and he has certainly done that!

This book will hopefully make him appreciate that his hard work, his dedication and passion, his optimism, his creative mind, his vivacious and funny personality, his talent in music making have not only impacted our family but influenced many musicians, industry colleagues and the Melbourne entertainment industry.

I wish my husband Nic all the best on his 21st birthday of Wacky and Thank You for the many adventures. May they keep rolling and the company thrive for many more years to come. Congratulations!

With all my love always,

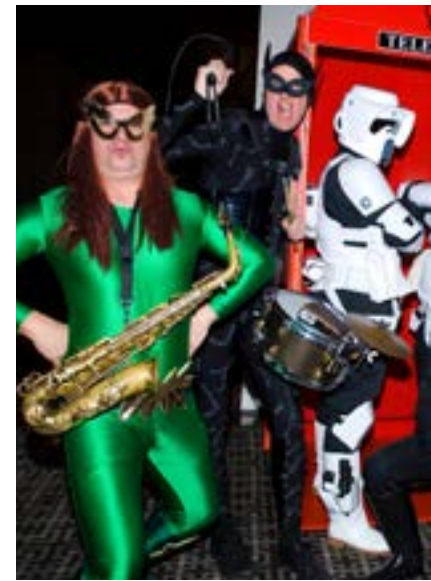
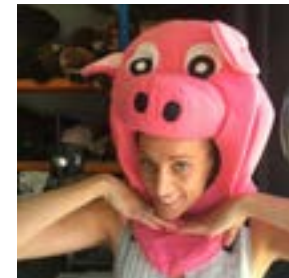
Annette  
Xo

5\ COLES CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY – CASEY ENJOYING HER TIME AS THE LOBSTER  
6\ LEADING A HORSE TO WATER – MUSICAL GUIDANCE FOR NIC'S DAUGHTER TALIA AT HOME IN ELSTERNWICK  
7\ A RARE GIG – NIC AND ANNETTE FINALLY PLAY ON A WACKY GIG TOGETHER AS ELVES AT A SHOPPING CENTRE  
8\ TALIA CHECKS IN ON THE DOLPHIN MASCOT BEFORE JUMPING INTO HER OWN AT THE COLES CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY

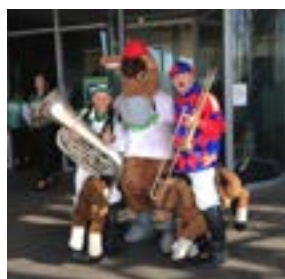
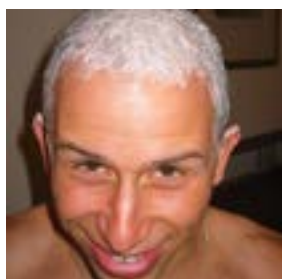




“WACKY DELIVERED A FAULTLESS PERFORMANCE WHICH WAS ENTERTAINING, WITTY AND INTERACTIVE.”  
— DHL













# Chris Lavery

– STREET PERFORMER

My favourite memory is of Wacky roaming (wacking) around Melbourne Park in flippers, wet suits and snorkels on a stinking hot day. Yes these guys are mad. And that is what makes them so special. It just continues on with the latest photo I saw with Nic and Luke dressed as a knife and a fork. No-one else does this shit. I was lucky enough to do a tour to Hong Kong with Wacky and it is something I cherish and will never forget.

They're mad, they're crazy, they're wacky.

Well done on delivering the wackiness and putting a smile on so many faces over such a long period of time.



# Sam D'Agostino

– SDP MEDIA, ARTIC STUDIOS

You can always trust the geniuses from Wacky to get the crowd going at any event. It's so easy to capture fun photos with the help of these guys. I love working with them and it's always so much more fun.



FAR LEFT\ WILLY WONKA, OOMPA LOOMPA'S AND AUGUSTUS GLOOP RECREATING A CHILDHOOD CLASSIC 1\ EVEN IN MIME CHRIS IS HILARIOUS AND ENTERTAINING 2\ WACKY AT SENTOSA ISLAND – TOM WRANGLES AN EXTERNAL GIG AT A BAR OWNED BY AN EX-PAT ON A NIGHT OFF 3\ THE MANY FACES AND CHARACTERS OF CHRIS LAVERY 4\ IMITATION IS THE GREATEST FORM OF FLATTERY – COL SHADOWS SAM AT A SHOOT 5\ ONE OF THE RARE TIMES SAM IS IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA, EVEN IF IT ISN'T HIS OWN – WACKY PHOTO SHOOT AT ESSENDON AIRPORT FOR WACKY AIR





1.

## Clare Turner & Evan Jones

– STILT WALKERS AUSTRALIA

We've done a lot of unusual gigs over the years that definitely fall under the name 'Wacky Creative'. I'm sure that all the Wacky crew have a list of interesting costumes that they have worn over the years, so here are some of ours.

There was the hearing technologies expo that had a Night At The Museum themed event where we were the cave people dressed like junkie versions of the Flintstones. Nic told us to rove around like primitive cave people and wait for Marc the 'Security Guard' to put us back in to our exhibit. When Marc saw us out of our exhibit he was fine with that and kept playing the drunken Security Guard role with the punters. Without anything to do we commandeered a deserted hearing technologies stall and introduced ourselves as Mongo and Mongolia. As people entered the event Mongo would say in broken english, "Would you like to hear about the hearing technologies of the future?" and occasionally he would try and do a wife swap.



2.



3.

On another memorable occasion Nic had Clare dress up as a Wacky Wench for a mediaeval themed event, and when she went through the venue's staff entrance and told the person on the desk that she was the Wacky Wench performer, the receptionist yelled back to their co-workers, "The prostitute is here".

And the Coles Roadshows! Oh the Roadshows! We have been giant sized wine bottles in costumes where you could not bend your knees or elbows. Clare made a very surly bottle of red whereas Evan was quite bubbly as a champagne bottle. (Must have been a good year.) But the real stand out costume would have to be Spider Pig; which was Spiderman's body with a pig's head. Can you guess why? To promote Spider Ham!

1\ DANKS 150TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS – IN SOME VERY UNCOMFORTABLE, BUT ICONIC LOOKING, COSTUMES 2\ GIANT CANDY CANE AND ELF PERFORMING FOR THE COLES CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY 3\ DELI AND BAKERY ROOM PERFORMERS BACKSTAGE – COLES ROADSHOW, MCEC





4.



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7.

But the crazy costumes all started for us with the Danks' Balls back in 2009.

You know that a gig is going to be a bit different when its a three dimensional costume designed around a two dimensional logo. This logo was a swirl of coloured rings making up a sphere, like electron rings around the nucleus of an atom. The rings were suspended around a ground based performer who was wearing a lycra body suit and matching fez hat. The costume didn't have arm, leg and head holes. It just had an assortment of holes and you wore the sphere however it fit best.

There were four performers being Danks' Balls. We each had our own colour scheme. Nic was on the job, and we were the fresh faced newbies, so this was our chance to impress the boss or the big ball so to speak.

It was a long gig over three days, and the sheer number of hours in front of the audience meant that we found ourselves working with two Nics; Boss Nic and Performer Nic. Boss Nic instructed us that if we could discreetly get food during the expo that was fine. Performer Nic taught us how to nab food and then retreat in to our balls like turtles in to their shell, so we could hide and snack in plain sight.

Boss Nic made sure that we were out on the floor engaging people as much as possible. Performer Nic disappeared with Evan for a period, and when the two other Danks balls found them they were immersed in a game of Wi Tennis (which in 2009 was cutting edge entertainment, and probably quite liberating for a Danks ball to be hitting a virtual ball around). To this day Evan claims that he and Nic were playing at the request of the vendor to get his stall more attention.

Boss Nic pays attention to detail with costumes yet by day three Performer Nic had gone rogue, and was seen throwing his Danks' sphere high in to the air. Nic then attempted to leap frog the other Danks' balls, leaving Evan's costume a little out shape. Evan's sphere now resembled a sad egg or as Nic put it a "pooey nappy".

It has been great working with Wacky for all these years. 21 years is such an impressive milestone and we feel privileged to be part of the team. We're sure that there are many more crazy costumes to come and we will wear them with pride.

Congratulations Nic!

4\ COLES ROADSHOW  
2012 – BREAK OUT ROOM  
ENTERTAINMENT  
5\ STREETS OF MELBOURNE  
– REPRESENTING THE HIPPIY  
BACKPACKERS UBIQUITOUS  
TO THE ST KILDA AREA  
6\ WOBBLY WAITERS AT  
CROWN CASINO – SOME FINE  
SLAPSTICK AND VISUAL  
GAGS ON SHOW TO SHOCK  
AND ENTERTAIN GUESTS  
7\ GIANT FOOTBALLERS  
WITH SOME AMAZING STILT  
WALKING SKILLS DURING A  
VERY WET AND SLIPPERY  
AFL GRAND FINAL PARADE



# great australasian beer spectAPular



“ THE ALE CAPONES WERE THE HIGHLIGHT THIS YEAR. SMASHED BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY. ”







“ THE ROAMING BAND WENT TO SYDNEY!?! PROBABLY MY 2ND FAVOURITE THING ABOUT GABS JUST QUIETLY.







## Adam Arnold

– TUBA / TROMBONE

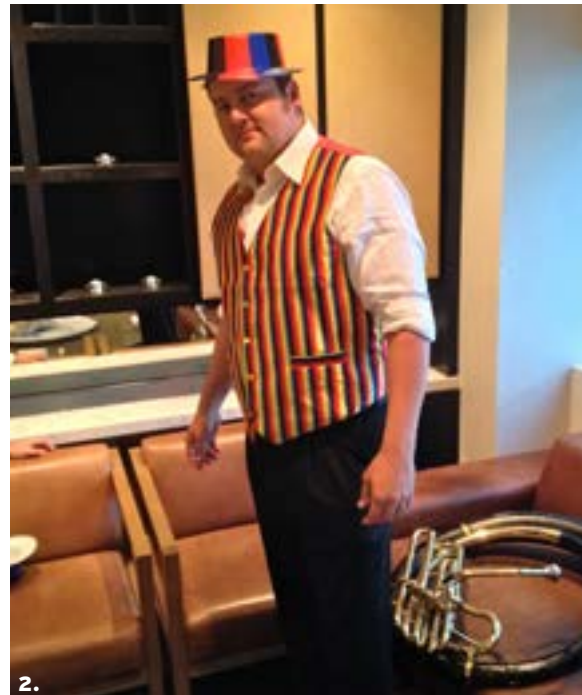
1\ TUBA DOWN. PAPARRAZI FOR THE BAYSIDE ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX LAUNCH 2\ NO-ONE DOES DIXIE BETTER THAN ADAM ARNOLD..OR GETS AWAY WITH PLAYING SOUSAPHONE 3\ RACING STEWARDS – MELBOURNE CUP PARADE 4\ WACKY CRICKETERS PERFORM AT A FLEMINGTON RACE DAY 5\ MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL – MORNING SUITS PLAY AT THE NOVA BOOTH

Wacky has been a massive part of shaping my view of the profession of music performance. Like most graduates of University music performance degrees, I was single mindedly pursuing an orchestral career (and, embarrassingly, a solo tuba performance career!).

Then I spent a week as Elvis at the Melbourne Cup Carnival and was reminded what other uses my tuba playing had, and how removing the formality and anachronistic traditions of music performance was so incredibly liberating.

It is a week I will never forget. Thanks for everything Nic!

Oh Captain my Captain.





# Joanne Camilleri

– TELSTRA FRANCHISEE /  
MARKETING MANAGER

My relationship with Wacky all began at a MEA event... from memory I think that through good old networking, Nic became aware that I was working with a few 'industry' people with marketing needs and thought we could potentially work together. We had a meeting, discussed the possibilities and a new relationship was born! The marketing consisted of working with various stakeholders but a stand out was a website design company with an illustration arm who had done an incredible job of bringing Wacky to life. Coming on board to work on a new website was my first project.

I loved the Wacky offices... that nice long table, a good coffee and a great atmosphere with endless costumes beneath us.

Some funny memories include Nic constantly laughing at me being late.. and he soon worked out that it was because of my terrible sense of direction. I was always turning the wrong way. He followed me out of the offices once and I was busted... he watched me do a few U turns and then asked what the hell I was doing!

I remember Nic going out to buy a new company car and I suggested to him it should be red. He thought that was nuts and old hat...and the car then rocked up...red of course!!

The most fun we had was developing Wacky Day! We identified that it was always really hard to acknowledge clients for all of their support around Christmas as it was the busiest time of the year. So we decided not to. We didn't need Christmas, we would create Wacky Day and that legacy still lives on today.

Nic has built a sensational business on the foundations of great entertainment, happiness, fun and delivering memorable moments. An awesome story deserving of every success and it is no surprise that Wacky is now 21 years young. Working with Nic I always found him to be generous, kind and I loved that creativity. It was incredibly inspiring and certainly a highlight of my career.

I wish Wacky all the best for the next 21 years.



6.



7.



8.

6\ BACKYARD PHOTO SHOOT FOR A WACKY DAY PROMOTION CARD  
7\ ANOTHER CARD COVER FOR NATIONAL WACKY DAY  
8\ NIC WITH JO AND HER TEAM FOR THE LAUNCH OF THE IPHONE 6





## Greg Spence

– TRUMPET / TROMBONE /  
OCCASIONAL TUBA

### WACKY MADNESS

The first gig Greg did for wacky was a Central Equity gig by the Yarra River and the costume was Sparklies. He never thought he would look SO dashing in sequins! A feeble attempt to play the ABC news theme as some famous news presenter walked passed quickly put Greg back in his box but he soon came back swinging when he said to a group of tourists from Romania, *"Oh that's nice, how long are you going to Remain-eya?"*.

**“GREG CALMLY GRABBED HIS CAR KEYS, STEAK IN MOUTH, AND MUTTERED THE WORDS UPON ANSWERING “WHERE AM I SUPPOSED TO BE?””**

From that poignant moment, Greg's wacky fate was sealed. It wasn't long before he really hit his straps as Elvis at the Melbourne GP where he was heard to say, more than once, *"Damn, I'm Hungry!"*

The staple diet of Brazil, Quondo and Under the Boardwalk was soon to take a bettering when asked at a gig at crown, do you guys play Livin on a Prayer? That was a pivotal moment in the existence of Wacky. The flood gates opened and soon all of the mega hits and anthems became part of the repertoire and even the Christmas repertoire when Jaco Pistorius' The Chicken became Joy to the World.

There are so many gig highlights both fun, funny and musically delightful that it will take until the 42 birthday to name them all but some highlights include:

- Playing GO WEST outside a 7/11 store.
- Playing *"WHO PUNCHED HUMPTY"* with a massive Easter Egg at the Royal Sydney Show.
- Getting photo's taken while dressed as Scotties yelling *"1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,TITTIES!!!"* Sydney Royal Easter Show
- Stepping up a gig, it was time to hit the stilts and sing *"move in to the light"* 10,000 times to disco music.



- Then falling from grace, it was time to MC a gig where the word "fill" made 3 minutes feel like 300 minutes. Greg has not MC'd since that moment!
- The moment you walk in to a gig to do a meet and greet and the crowd of chefs have already been met and greet and are sitting at their tables awaiting a 30 minute floor show by the Wacky Christmas Pudding and Turkey
- The moment you arrive in Bacchus Marsh with your banana suit to do a gig... a month early!
- Another moment your team lets you down when you get thrown into singing 'Away in a Manger' in the style of Elvis when dressed in a Xmas tree costume in front of 500 people. Greg begins singing then hearing no support looks around to see the star, the pudding and the "Dog" (Reindeer) all turned around facing the back of the stage, pissing themselves laughing and not playing. People always try to cut you down when performing as a tree.
- A couple of fantastic moments thanks to Myer in Adelaide: The taxi driver demanding an extra \$10 to move the seat forward so we could fit our gear in the back; the dinner at Gauchos where Luke drank far too much Voyager Estate Shiraz and ate a 1kg Argentinian steak, the night out where we got home with 30 minutes before it was time to leave for the gig and Nic is starkas on his bed; playing living on a prayer with the worlds worst hangover; the invention of the fruiting at the Hilton (Corona with Lemon and Lime) to get our moneys worth.
- Deciding to have a lisp during a stage performance that rendered the entire cast thpeechleth "*I'm Thorry Thir, I didn't realith you were not thupoethed to take a thower in a thubmarine!*" Show momentarily paused. Royal Easter Show Sydney.

#### INTRODUCING 659

After bragging for many years about the close proximity of Greg's house to the city, the time came to put this to the test. At approximately 6:30pm on a balmy Thursday evening, after cooking a lovely meal for his one of his many wives, Greg's phone rang. The screen screamed, NIC YATES! Greg calmly grabbed his car keys, steak in mouth, and muttered the words upon answering "*Where am I supposed to be?*" With the flare of Superman, Greg ran to the car and parted traffic like Moses to get to the Aquarium in the middle of the city. He quickly grabbed flippers (or Fins to the cranky staff) snorkel and lycra, oxygen tank and trumpet and proudly announced at 6:59pm he was ready to start the 7pm gig!



FAR LEFT \ GREEN CROSS HEALTH - FLEMINGTON RACECOURSE 1 \ COLLINS PLACE LUNCH ROOM - CHRISTMAS CRAZINESS BETWEEN SETS 2 \ SYDNEY EASTER SHOW - THE WINDY KILTS SHOW WHATS WORN UNDER THEIR KILTS 3 \ EASTER AT CAULFIELD RACE COURSE - BADGES MADE BY THE KIDS... LOOK CLOSELY TO SEE WHICH THEY LIKED MORE 4 \ 2013 ADELAIDE CABARET FESTIVAL - PERFORMING AS 'FOUR CHAIRS' 5 \ COLES TRADE SHOW - BRINGING TO LIFE CRAFT BEER CHARACTERS 6 \ SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW - SKIN DIVE JIVE SHOW FEATURING THE FLIPPERDANCE





1\ JUPITER'S CASINO – TRACKS THE PROGRESS OF THE NIGHT. FROM THE CASINO FLOOR TO THE ROOM SERVICE AND CELEBRATIONS  
 2\ BLOWING OUT A RACE AHEAD OF A CORPORATE FASHIONS ON THE FIELD AT FLEMINGTON RACE COURSE  
 3\ AMWAY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT CROWN CASINO – WHITE SINGING "STEP INTO THE LIGHT, MOVE INTO THE LIGHT" TO GUESTS ENTERING THE BALLROOM

### INTRODUCING 00050

Ever had one of those days where everything seems to just go right? On arriving at Jupiter's Casino, the Wacky mob are checking into their rooms and Greg gets to the counter and is told that he has been upgraded to a suite. A piece of information he wants to keep to himself but accidentally blurts out at the top of his voice.

Preparing for the gig, the group gets informed that we are starting later than first planned and finishing earlier than expected. After what turned out being a fun gig, the boys hit the bar and the tables. Colin would win a little then lose a bit. Nic would win a little then lose a bit, but Greg, the always determined gambler was losing a bit, then a bit more waiting for the elusive ZERO to come up.

After some time, all hope was distinguished and in a last gasp of desperation Greg decided to double his bet on ZERO and to his delight, and the relief of the staff who had to endure the

increasingly drunkard abuse from the Wacky gang, the ball landed on the green ZERO and a roar was heard far and wide.

As is the norm, when a win is had, the bet is doubled back on ZERO. The electricity in the air quickly turned to anticipation of the next spin as the Wacky Boys were back in town. As if a script from a feature film, the ball wanting more of an ovation, decided to head right back to the green pastures of ZERO and the screams resonated like the goal after the final siren of a Grand Final. The crowd started to gather and some concerned faces were noted amongst the security staff and table supervisors.

Greg proceeded to throw chips at the boys like they were oreos; their ship had come in!

There was a sudden hush around the table as the dealer grabbed the ball, burnt his finger a little then sent it flying around the spinning money making machine. Like that moment between seeing a fireworks blast and the delayed sound of its explosion,

the ball fell, for a third straight time into the ZERO slot. The dismay of all and sundry erupted into screams of sheers elation. Even the staff were smiling. None of them had ever seen this happen before!

With more chips on ZERO than possibly ever imagined, the dealer grabbed the ball and as if he had said to a woman, "you look like Chappelle Corby's Mother", he totally destroyed the vibe by rolling a 5. The crowd dispersed and it was back to normal... or so you think.

Greg, the eternal optimist was not done yet, so he loaded up on ZERO for one last burst. As if no one was paying attention, the ball, like Greg had other ideas and like a pesky fly, landed straight back on ZERO for a 4th time in 5 Spins.

Greg has never played roulette since.

The Wacky team headed to Greg Suite and ordered everything on the menu including two serves of the oysters and a quality bottle of champas. Just another typical night on the road with Wacky!!!



# Peter Jones

– PETER JONES  
SPECIAL EVENTS

Congratulations to you all on 21 years!

I can't even remember the first time I ever met Nic or what the first gig was. Whilst I might already have a touch of memory loss, it obviously means it was a long time ago – like in the last century!! Since then, Nic has gone on to create a unique company that no one really knows what they do except turn up in outrageous costumes and play musical instruments. It is certainly much more than just that, as more and more acts are specifically designed for particular events. I don't think there has ever been a time when Nic has said "we really can't do that" as he has always been able to create something from an idea. Congratulations to Nic and the Wacky Team for lots of great fun and laughs and long may it continue!

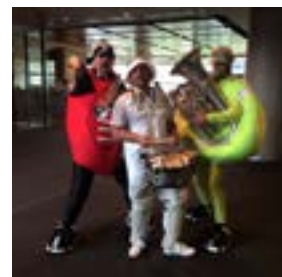


6\ MELBOURNE CRICKET GROUND'S 175TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION – WACKY ENTERTAIN SEATED GUESTS AHEAD OF THE SPECTACULAR SHOW ON THE HALLOWED TURF  
7\ LIKE PEAS IN A POD – THE FLAMBOYANT PETER JONES AND NIC YATES SHARE A MOMENT DURING THE 2015 AIME DINNER  
8\ EVENT ORGANISERS ARE PEOPLE TOO – NIC OFFERS OLIVIA FROM PJSE A PEP UP HUG DURING THE MCG'S 175TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION  
9\ PETER JONES JUMPS IN FOR A GROUP SHOT  
10\ NIC AND ADAM 'GILLY' GILCHRIST AFTER AN EXHIBITION MATCH ON THE MCG WITH AMWAY DELEGATES

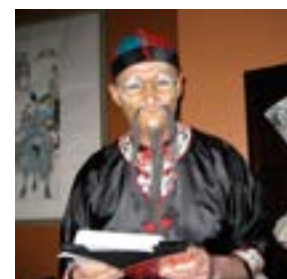




“ WHAT A FANTASTIC JOB YOU DID THE IMPOSSIBLE AND GOT THE UN-ENGAGEABLE TO ENGAGE! ”  
— PANASONIC EVENT











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## Eva Daley

– COMMUNICATIONS  
MANAGER, SPOTLIGHT

I have so many memories of Nic, having worked with him over 10 years at various different places.

One of my favourites was when I forgot to book the Wackys for our Mentone store opening in 2015, every man and his dog was there and EVERYONE was asking where the Nic and his gang of Wackys were. I was in so much trouble, and I called Nic a million times who was otherwise engaged in Japan. Whooops! I definitely have not forgotten to book you for an opening again!

Another highlight was when we opened our first Spotlight store in Malaysia! It was absolute chaos from the get go and Nic and Luke were dressed in sparkly Aussie flags, handing out 10,000 mini koalas and keeping the crowds entertained as they lined up to get in the store for hours. We had a ball.

Nic, working with you has always been an absolute pleasure, not only because you are a legend and always bring a smile to my face along with everyone else's but also because you are the utmost professional and can make anything happen (even a face painter at every Anaconda store with in 24 hours.

Congratulations! Eva x

## Rob Picking

– COMMUNICATIONS  
CO-ORDINATOR, SPOTLIGHT

Nic's reaction when he discovered that the Minions would be performing at the Castle Hill grand opening was like that of a jaundiced lover. "They've got our name wrong!" Nic declared as the Minions were announced over the PA system. Nic and Luke raced to the front of the store and began playing a slow but ever-increasing tempo, challenging the Minions to 'dance along'. As the tempo increased the dancers inside the costumes began to struggle, sleek choreographed dance moves were replaced with flailing arms and heavy, rasped breathing. Mothers recoiled and held their children tight as the Minions dropped exhausted on the floor one by one.

Nic stopped playing and let out a cheeky smile. "Wackys 1 - Minions 0," he remarked.



14.



15.



16.



17.

1\ PART OF THE SPOTLIGHT FAMILY – COMPLETE WITH OFFICIAL NAME BADGE AND MATCHING FASCINATOR  
2\ SPOTLIGHT GRAFTON – MEETING ONE STRANGE CHARACTER WORKING FOR THE LOCAL RADIO STATION THAT ALSO DOES SOME FREELANCE PERFORMING. THINGS ONLY GOT STRANGER AS THE DAY WORE ON  
3\ SPOTLIGHT DARWIN – IT'S NOT A GRAND OPENING WITHOUT WACKY CARICATURES STUCK ONTO THE STORE MAP  
4\ ANACONDA HIGHTETT – WACKY RUNNING A COMPETITION FOR STORE VOUCHERS  
5\ NIC DOING A BIT OF BARGAIN SHOPPING FOR NEW COSTUME MATERIAL  
6\ SPOTLIGHT CASTLE HILL – WACKY TAKE ON THE MINIONS  
7\ SEQUINS, SAX AND A SMALL BIKE – ANACONDA GRAND OPENING  
8\ ANACONDA DARWIN – ONE VERY HAPPY CUSTOMER DANCING TO A WACKY TUNE  
9\ NO CATCHING WACKY OFF GAURD WITH CANDID SHOTS  
10\ SPOTLIGHT STORE OPENING – SOMETIMES SEQUIN JACKETS AREN'T ENOUGH  
11\ LUKE LEARNING TO OVERLOCK IN SPOTLIGHT MALAYSIA  
12\ SPOTLIGHT STORE OPENING – GOES TO SHOW YOU ARE NEVER TOO OLD  
13\ SPOTLIGHT BAYSWATER STORE OPENING  
14\ ANACONDA MARIBYRNONG – VP OF SPOTLIGHT MARKETING, JONO GELFAND IS INITIATED INTO WACKY  
15\ SPOTLIGHT MALAYSIA – A FULL DAY OF QUEUES STRETCHING THROUGH THE STORE AND ACROSS FOUR LEVELS OF ESCULATORS  
16\ THE BOYS PRODUCT REVIEWING BEDS AND QUILTS – SPOTLIGHT TRINITY GARDENS  
17\ ANACONDA HIGHTETT – NIC AND COL STEPPING IN TO SIGN AUTOGRAPHS IN PLACE OF AFL STARS



# Dave Thornton

– COMEDIAN / RADIO ANNOUNCER

To all Nic and all the guys at Wacky – happy 21st birthday!!!

I really am proud of you guys and what you have accomplished. Amazing stuff. However not to bring the mood down but the email I received about your birthday jogged my memory of a Worksafe claim I placed against your company when I was an employee.

I'll forward it on to you now, enjoy the celebrations on the night and you'll be hearing from my lawyers soon.

FOX FM Morning Announcer,  
Dave Thornton



1.



2.

1\ PHOTOSHOOT AT  
ESSENDON AIRPORT FOR  
THE WACKY AIR GROUP OF  
ACTS – THE 'SILVER CLIPPER'  
DOUGLAS DC-3 BOOKED AS  
PART OF THE SHOOT  
2\ DAVE HORSING AROUND  
WITH WACKY BACK IN 2006

**To: The legal representative team at Worksafe Victoria.**

I would like to lodge a formal complaint against Wacky Entertainment in regards to a job I performed for them on Sunday, September 17th 2007 at The Melbourne Cricket Ground, Richmond.

I had been working for said company for a couple of years in a freelance capacity where I had served as a hospitality/hardware consultant serving drinks with tape measures and spirit levels on them.

For a one off performance I was booked for 3 hours in the middle of the afternoon and asked to bandage myself up from head to toe, lay in a banana lounge, all in the name of an Epworth Hospital family day event, while children tried to guess the ailment I was suffering from (in a humorous twist - I was said to suffer from an ingrown toenail, which you know at Worksafe is no laughing matter). My intention was to moan and play up to my bandaged appearance, which I felt I did to aplomb. Sounds innocent enough. However it was a hot day and I, thinking of safety first, decided to replenish myself with glasses of refreshing water. As the glasses added up, so did my bladder. After 2 hours I needed to relieve myself but I was covered with only one extremely long bandage that required at least 10 minutes of my time to unwrap. I dutifully stayed in the bandages and laid on the lounge diligently while stranger s children poked and prodded me to find out my "illness". It was, to put it bluntly, a form of torture. I thought I would certainly explode like a balloon on a hot plate.

No medical assistance was given and the only relief was the sound of a trumpet player, a tuba player and a drummer roving around the platform performing jovial tunes. The PTSD still haunts me to this day and I can't help but shudder even now when I urinate thinking of how I was wrapped up like a Christmas Ham holding on to a bladder as big as a basketball.

The compensation I am looking for is a large monetary sum, placed behind the bar on the Wacky 21st Birthday and enjoyed by anyone and everyone who was a part of it s rich history.

Yours truly,

Dave 'can someone get a sponge to clean up the banana lounge' Thornton



“ IT'S FUN TO  
HAVE FUN, BUT  
YOU HAVE TO  
KNOW HOW! ”

DR. SUESS









1.

## Carolyn Connors

– ACCORDION / SINGER / ENTERTAINER

I'd like to wish everyone at Wacky the happiest of birthdays. I don't remember much these days, but I am very happy to say I do remember seeing all of the Wackys in their underpants at one time or another as we have shared many a change room. The first time was definitely last century, in a large first floor space on Fitzroy street (above Leos?) when we were all preparing to rove for the St Kilda Festival.

Our paths have crossed many times, and I have been lucky enough to have been employed by Wacky; we have shared many a footpath or a foyer or a change room since then, the most recent time I saw them in their underpants was at the Business Events Victoria shindig at Bobby McGees in 2015.

They are always professional, cheerful, dedicated, creative and polite. Happy Birthday.

Now that you are 21 I'm wondering for goodness sakes will you start behaving like adults?

Big kisses and happy birthday from Grandma  
(Mrs Ida Noe) X



2.

## Leo Dale

– LEO DALE /  
WEFO STUDIOS

I'd love to provide you with anecdotes but I've never done a gig with Wacky. I have witnessed many occasions that have caused me to exclaim:

He did THAT? with WHAT?

Congratulations on an incredible milestone.

In 10,000 years when they dig up the remnants of this civilization, it will be your esteemed organization that will be the subject of a best seller about how aliens must have visited the planet EARTH.

Lots of love to all of you.

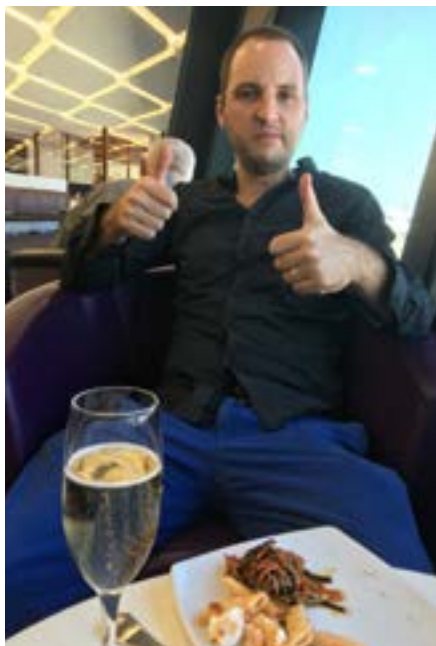
## Bettina Spivakovsky

– UPFRONT EVENTS

It was 21 years ago that I first met Wacky using this strange and exciting combo of technically proficient musicians who where happy to step out of their comfort zone and be performers entertaining and engaging everyone who stopped to listen and look. Brilliant, funny, irreverent and charming - A clearly successful combination that I have had the pleasure to work with and which developed over the many years. Well done Nic, well done Wacky!

FAR LEFT\ NIC IN MAKEUP BEFORE PERFORMING AS LAZER HARP – CITIBANK NEW ZEALAND 2012  
1\ BUSINESS EVENTS VICTORIA – 'GRANDMA' AND WACKY POSE FOR A PIC AFTER PERSONALLY LEADING GUESTS AT BOBBY MCGEE'S 2\ BUSINESS EVENTS VICTORIA – 'GRANDMA' HAVING A SCREAM OF A TIME DRAWING WINNERS AND ANNOUNCING WINNERS ON THE NIGHT







# #leadership

DEFINITION - THE ACT OF PURCHASING OR ACQUIRING SUITABLE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES FOR THE EXPRESS ENJOYMENT AND BENEFIT OF OTHERS, OH, AND YOURSELF.





1\ GINA AND LAURIE POSING WITH THEIR INCREDIBLE BODY ART WORK ON BUSH BOY AND BOTTLE BRUSH BABY – 2015 YPO CONFERENCE DINNER  
 2\ GINA ALWAYS FINDS A WAY TO MAKE KIDS HAPPY AND SMILING WHILE PAINTING THEIR FACES  
 3\ THE FULL MELBOURNE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE MARKET RELOCATION LAUNCH – THE FULL WORKS TO AGE NIC 4\ GINA AT WORK ON THE ATZEC GOLD PERFORMERS FOR THE 2016 VRC YOUNG MEMBERS BALL AT CROWN CASINO  
 5\ THE JOKER MID FACE APPLICATION FOR COLES ROADSHOW 6\ BLOOMIN' AWESOME KEEP THE CROWDS ENTERTAINED AND THE JUMPS PROTESTERS SUPPRESSED WITH GREAT TUNES ON THE MELBOURNE CUP PARADE 7\ GETTING THEIR AUSSIE ON FOR AUS VS IND ONE DAY INTERNATIONAL GAME – CRICKET AUSTRALIA 2011 8\ RACING STEWARDS AT THE MEMBERS DATE DURING MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL 9\ PERTH ROYAL SHOW – LEARNING SOME NEW TUNES IN THE COURTYARD OF OUR ACCOMODATION  
 10\ WACKY INITIATION ON THE MELBOURNE CUP PARADE – YOU AREN'T REALLY A MEMBER OF WACKY UNTIL YOU ARE ALLOCATED TO THE GIDDY UP TEAM AND GET THROUGH A PARADE IN ONE PIECE WITH THE LOVEABLE STUFFED HORSE HANDICAP (NOT THAT YOU CAN TELL IT'S HARD WORK FOR PETER) 11\ WHEN ON STILTS, DO WHAT THE STILT PERFORMERS DO... LEARN HOW TO WALK ON STILTS (WITH EXPERT GUIDANCE FROM COLIN – PERTH ROYAL SHOW, CHANGE ROOM



# Gina Nomachi

– BODY PAINTER / SFX ARTIST

One of my first memories of Nic was seeing his big balls - they were Oh So Big, covered in hair and bounciness. They were also fluoro green as I was at the tennis you see and he was dressed up as one. He'd love to slap his balls across the court, blowing into his sax,... as you can imagine I didn't forget Nic that easily.

His balls may have faded and deflated a little but the legend that is Nic Yates and the Wacky Creative team has grown. He and his team have become my friends, my colleagues and a major source of my event work load, for which I am truly grateful. Wacky Creative have always stood by exactly that, the wacky and the creative, maybe that's why I fit into the jigsaw oh so well. My face paint/ body art crew- Juliet, Laurie, Elena, Janie are truly grateful for all the work you provide us with, and the challenges!!

So to you "Captain, my Captain" I salute you, congratulate you and admire your belief in making a living by being Wacky. Three cheers to you and welcome to 21... again!

Big Love  
 Gina Nomachi







6.

## Peter Slipper

– TROMBONE

### MELBOURNE CUP

Probably already mentioned by someone else, but one of the undercroft gigs at Melbourne Cup, where we barricaded ourselves behind coffee stall barriers to stop the crush of the huge crowd. Then, just after we started Come on Eileen a crazy guy swung his backpack around and hit Scott Rice's drums, making the band stop playing. The huge crowd all immediately started chanting to the guy "fuck off, fuck off" until he left the area. Scotty counted back in to the song and the crowd cheered louder than I've ever heard a crowd cheer. It was pumping like a mosh pit at a Metallica concert. Then the police came and shut the gig down, telling us to move to a more open area where they could better crowd-control. We moved to the lawn, where the crowd simply got bigger, so they stopped us again, asking us to "pied piper" them all to the train station. So, 4 jockeys playing Hot Stuff, lead about 600 singing, drunk party goers on a funky march to catch a train.

### MELBOURNE GRAND PRIX

Duo gig at Melbourne GP in pit-crew costumes with you, Luke. KISS, who were booked to play the post GP concert were doing a cd signing and had a big line in front of them. So we get up to the stall and play a trombone/tuba duo version of 'I Was Made For Loving You' to them. Paul Stanley stands up and conducts us.

### MELBOURNE CUP PARADE

My first Melbourne Cup parade with Luke, Col and Gavin Cornish. We were getting such great crowd reactions (even just by waiting), that we were horsing around, pretending to gallop etc. Once the parade started we continued this behaviour while playing Yeah Yeah over and over again. I remember being so out of breath that I couldn't play more than a few notes at a time (nor could Gavin - so we ended up playing this fragmented version of the melody). Then, we get to the Arts Centre and meet up with other Wacky groups and jam out on The Chicken. I remember having to go home and go to bed, I was so tired and sore. I've never expended so much energy in such a short amount of time - perhaps 30 mins all up. Needed a massage the next day.

### PERTH SHOW

After a week of gigs at The Perth Show, we were sitting on the lawn at our university accommodation, packing up the stilts etc, when we decided to have a jam on some new song ideas. While playing, we were approached by a uni student resident of the college and asked whether we could pop by their friend's 19th birthday party later on, which we did. We came into the party and just ROCKED THEM SENSELESS. Living on a Prayer, Run to Paradise, I was made for loving you, Long Way to the Top if you Wanna Rock n Roll. Then we were gone. The next morning at the college campus dining room, I overheard all these conversations about this incredible brass band that had gate crashed some girl's party and rocked the house down.



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1\ WACKY COCKATOO'S AT DOCKLANDS PRECINCT FOR AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS 2\ SOME SECURITY YOU JUST DON'T WANT TO MESS WITH - ON THIS OCCASSION BROOKE IS ONE OF THEM 3\ CAN DANCE, CAN PLAY UKELELE - REHEARSAL AT WACKY HQ FOR AN UPCOMING COLES PROMOTION 4\ COLES EXPRESS 'NEW YORK, NEW YORK' TOUR 2016 5\ COLES PROMOTION AT HEAD OFFICE - CHICKEN SELFIE 6\ BUSH BOY AND BOTTLE BRUSH BABY AT A CORPORATE EVENT AT CENTRAL PIER 7\ CHEERLEADING CENTRE STAGE ON THE MCG FOR AN AMWAY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 8\ STREETS OF MELBOURNE - FLAMENCO DANCER FOR THE SPANISH STATION 9\ BROOKE AND NAT WELCOME GUESTS AT THE NADFA CONFERENCE WITH COL 10\ WHEN YOU SAY NO TO COSTUME AND CHARACTER GIGS AND YOUR BOSS MAKES YOU WEAR IT AT WORK #BROOKTOPUS



## Brooke Balcombe

– DANCER / CHOREOGRAPHER / ACCOUNTANT

Since meeting Nic and the Wacky boys I believe it's fair to say my life has changed forever.

For the best or worst is still up for discussion but if this is work and these are now my colleagues I am grateful.

I first met Nic through being hired to dance at a massive Coles event with a backpack contraption of laser lights attached to my back dancing through crowds of thousands whilst tackling staircases mid show. This kinda sets the precedent of the crazy

world of Wacky Entertainment that I was about to dive head first into.

He was bossy at rehearsals, fussy, involved, maybe too involved ... haha, but always hands on the job and demanded the quality and standard that the Wacky brand is well known for.

This impressed me.., and I soon learnt that he was not the kinda boss to shout the orders and watch from the safety of the side lines. He was always front line, as anything - a spoon, Xmas turkey, tennis ball, banana etc. etc. effortlessly playing his sax and entertaining whoever was in sight. Always, always, always having fun!

After nearly 10 years working as a dancer in the industry, it's fair to say Nic encouraged me to lower my fear of not being taken seriously and remember how to have fun working. This simple lesson changed everything for me.

He has persisted in attempts to get me to wear the bloody 'Banana' costume, I have refused to ever get in a suit, but in recent months I have to admit (although the banana will never happen) I have been rocking the full suits as a dolphin, crab, Easter bunny, chicken and of course, our latest, scooting cockatoos... and yes having fun in doing so.

It makes me angry and smile simultaneously, only you could have succeeded in this Nic!

I'm sorry I flooded your office, both levels nonetheless, and was kinda grateful I was busy on an 8 hour gig the day you and the boys had to deal with that! Emptying the entire warehouse into the parking lot couldn't have been that much fun and the following week of soggy carpets and giant noisy fans during the busiest time of the year was less than ideal...but somehow you still managed a laugh out of the situation.

At least I do the dishes huh?





Thanks for trusting me and believing in my talents both with handling your books in the office and the events we now collaborate on together.

The world of dancing and fashion has been fun to bring together and mesh with your wacky world in creating some truly awesome results. They keep getting bigger and better and I look forward to continuing to learn from you as we create more magical entertainment for our audiences.

A highlight for me was our Shrek musical for Coles. The sheer brilliance of your concept from scratch to the end result was really incredible. The constant encores from the crowd was a testament to how clever you are and the fact you make everybody involved feel confident to expand and shine in ways they could not have imagined before being involved in your work.

#leadership, speaks for itself! Travelling is never dull with you and the wacky team. So many laughs on and off the job. It's hard to believe we are working most of the time.

Are you being ripped off by the air in your chocolate bars?? Ask Nic if you would like a detailed description of the injustice of advertising and pricing of your favourite chocolate bars on the shelf.

Most of all I would like to say thank you for having me on board. Congratulations on such a successful 21 years to date and all my best for the many years to come of work, play and ongoing success.

You are such a talented and hard working man and it's inspirational to all those around you, so thank you.

*"Do what you love, love what you do!"*

Brooke Balcombe - dancing accountant.







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# Juliet Bradford

– BODY PAINTER / SFX ARTIST

1\ JULIET AND 'THE GIRLS' AT MELBOURNE AIRPORT ON THE WAY TO A GIG  
 2\ CLASSIC JULZ – COLES, THE BLOCK 3\ KIDS ARE ALWAYS IN SAFE HANDS WITH JULIET 4\ FULL BODY PAINTED MODELS BEFORE THE HEADS GO ON THE 'ZEBRAS' AT A PETER JONES GIG FOR MAZDA  
 5\ JULIET'S HANDIWORK MAKING THE CAPTAIN... A CAPTAIN – MAZDA EVENT FAR RIGHT\ PHOTOSHOOT AT WACKY HQ BY VICKI JONES PHOTOGRAPHY

I love working with Nic for wacky and his team.

What Nic has created oozes, fun and fabulousness in a friendly and enthusiastic culture.. I always rock up to gigs and there are smiling faces. What more could you want than to work in such a way? It's a credit to 'THE BOSS'.

Where else could you find your employer dressed in an Egyptian get up, a tennis ball and Cirque make-up... even an emu..!

Wacky by name and Wacky by nature.







# Leonie Deavin

– NOVASTAR PRODUCTIONS

For the past 20 years I have known Nic and worked alongside him on hundreds of events, festivals, private parties, parades and functions.

I love that Nic has always without fail made me laugh. Memories from way back at the Aus Open Tennis and the Grand Prix where the days are long and hot but the green room is always full of jokes and laughter. It really has made working exactly what it should be – entertaining! What a legend!!! For me as a stiltwalker it is always the best event ever if I can dance around to Nic and his amazing bands.

I loved dancing with Leo Sayer at the Grand Prix two years in a row to 'You make me feel like dancing' while Nic and his crew jammed out his song. Magic Moments to treasure!

Nic has inspired me to be a better business owner and has offered on so many occasions to listen to me and offer advice within the industry. What a truly amazing successful human being on so many levels.

Congratulations Nic on being always at the forefront of ideas and keeping the customers in stitches with your incredible wit and talented team.

I personally feel extremely privileged to have known and worked alongside Nic for many many years. Thank you for everything and being amazing!

1\ ADDING COLOUR AND FUN AT THE GALA DINNER FOR AN AMWAY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2\ LEO SAYER DROPS IN FOR A SING AND DANCE AT THE AUSTRALIAN F1 GRAND PRIX 3\ HIGH SOCIETY'S LADIES DURING THE MELBOURNE CUP PARADE 4\ LEONIE AND NIC OUTSIDE THE PERFORMER CHANGE BUS BEFORE THE AFL GRAND FINAL PARADE 5\ MORE PERFORMERS THAN YOU CAN KICK A FOOTY AT – PSYCHED UP AND READY TO WALK THE AFL GRAND FINAL PARADE ROUTE 6\ LEONIE BUMPS INTO COL ON A CHARITY GIG AT THE COMICS LOUNGE



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# Kim Hyde

– VICTORIA RACING CLUB / MARKETING MANAGER

When you work at the VRC, one of the things that happens is you get calls from all sorts of people looking for free tickets... and everyone's got a story.

- "Kim we went to kindergarten together, you must remember me?"
- "It's my dying wish to see a Melbourne Cup"
- "I want to propose to my girlfriend on the Members' Lawn"
- "I want to spread my Dad's ashes at the Winning Post"
- "I want to try one of Peter Rowland's famous crumbed sausages" (yes they were famous in the members' cafe back in the 90's)

But the strangest phone call I received one afternoon was from a guy who wanted to come to the Melbourne Cup, with his mates, dressed as an assortment of characters.

On his character list he had...a jockey, a dodgy bookie (is there any other kind?), a lost tourist, a waiter, a chef

Or come dressed in...a kilt, a safari suit (they wouldn't be allowed in the Members), a morning suit, a fat suit (yes it was the 90's and you were allowed to say fat), a wet suit, cricket whites, footy gear.

Ok he said - "I just want to stand out, I can wear my sequin Jacket or I can come dressed as Elvis."

But this wasn't the strangest part about the request, that came when he began detailing to me his fees for the opportunity to do so.

No one had ever tried this approach before, I always wanted to meet Elvis and it was a quiet week, so I thought why not meet this guy and find out what he's really about.

And the rest as they say is history.

To Nick and all the team,

Congratulations on turning 21!

In life there is a little saying, "people never forget how you make them feel" and when racegoers step off the train and onto the course, then hear that Wacky sax, tuba and drums, they feel like they're in for a fantastic day ahead.

You are the most professional entertainment suppliers to work with and I know the event is always in safe hands when you're around.

The work that you've done at Flemington and at other VRC events has been an integral part of creating that special atmosphere that is so unique to Flemington and nothing that other racecourses around the world can match.

All the best for the next 21 years.

Kim Hyde  
VRC Marketing & Events 1995 to 2003  
(and still a VRC Member today)

7\ MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL – THE SPLENDID LOOKING KIM BUMPING INTO WACKY OUTSIDE THE GRANDSTAND 8\ DAY TWO WORKING ON CREATIVE ENTERTAINMENT CONCEPT'S BRAND AND MARKETING STRATEGY 9\ THE WACKY OFFICE TEAM TAKE PART IN THE DESTINATION DOCKLAND CORPORATE TEAM CHALLENGE





**Screening Area**

Please remove all items from pockets and place in tray provided.

The following items are not permitted in this venue:

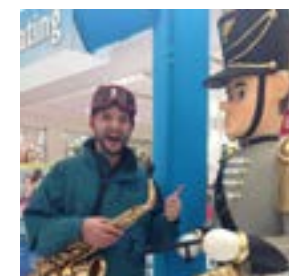
- Alcohol
- Bicycles
- Batches
- Cars
- Chairs/stools
- Firearms/knives/dangerous goods
- Fireworks
- Flares/distress signals
- Glass containers
- Illegal substances/items
- Laser lights/projectors
- Musical instruments
- Rollerblades/skates
- Small/hoisted large commercial quality cameras, broadcast devices and tripods
- Skateboards/scooters
- Torn up paper
- Weapons
- Whistles/horns/loud hails
- Sporting balls
- Animals other than guide dogs
- Large eskiers (that under seats)
- Large flags/banners
- Unauthorized signage and products

And other items that could cause harm, damage as determined by Melbourne 2016 Commonwealth Games Organisers.

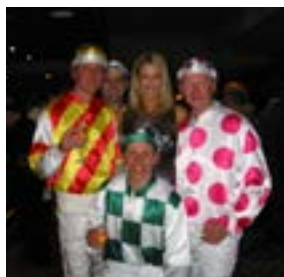



“YOU WERE THE GLUE THAT HELD THE PROGRAM TOGETHER. YOUR WORK ON-STAGE WAS BRILLIANT.”

— ROTARY INTERNATIONAL











1.

## Nichola Crouch

– ACTOR / DANCER

**“WE ARE WHAT WE REPEATEDLY DO; EXCELLENCE, THEN IS NOT AN ACT BUT A HABIT.”**

– Aristotle

When I think of Nic, excellence is the first thing that comes to mind. But how do I explain why this man is excellence? How do you captivate his genius in words and exactly what it is that makes him such a brilliant boss? Well I'll admit it had me stumped and then I thought who better to help me describe what makes a great boss than another great boss! So I called my friend David Brent for a few words of wisdom.....

**“PROFESSIONALISM IS... AND THAT'S WHAT I WANT.”**

– David Brent

I remember when I first meet Leo...wait sorry I mean Nic. I'm supposed to be talking about the man himself and not the first of his many alter egos's that I meet that day. Surely you can understand the confusion, working with Nic means you'll be a different person (or animal or inanimate object) every time. But getting back to that first day, it was Natalie K that originally contacted me to see if I was at all interested in doing a gig where I would pretend to be a 70's style air hostess. I think my response was something like "Hell's yeah!" It was basically like she had called to say "did you want to perhaps be paid to live out a fantasy of yours?" That morning I meet Nat and Brooke outside Jeff's Shed and they both assured me how lovely this man I would be working for was. When I looked up to see Leonardo Dicaprio walking towards me fresh off the set of Catch Me If You Can, I knew I was going to love this gig. After spending the day basically living out a long awaited dream of mine, I was left with two first impressions, not only is this man ridiculously fun to work with but highly professional.



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Yes even through the childlike role playing, I was able to see how organised, creative and caring this man was. How well he looked after all his staff and how happy they all were to be there. I was impressed by his confident direction in coordinating the entire event and ability to get the job required done to an extremely high standard, all whilst making sure everybody was having such a great time that it was almost impossible to have called it work. It was safe to say the only concerns left in my mind were, would I get to do this again? I had found a family I wanted to be a part of, a creative I could learn a lot from and little did I know I hadn't seen anything yet...

**“WHEN PEOPLE SAY TO ME: WOULD YOU RATHER BE THOUGHT OF AS A FUNNY MAN OR A GREAT BOSS? MY ANSWER IS ALWAYS THE SAME, TO ME, THEY'RE NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE.”**

— David Brent

And when it comes to Nic they certainly aren't! I think a prime example of this would be 'Strictly Melbourne'. A gig I found so funny I was barely able to maintain character myself. Playing some kind of washed up ex dancer now bitter judge with a duck face that puts any 16yr old to shame, didn't seem like a challenge initially. Please I could do this in my sleep. As me and Brooke dolled ourselves up or should I say Drag Queened ourselves up I thought, this is going to be fun. Once Trav was dressed the trio stood in front of the mirror loving themselves sick and I laughed, *“oh Pru you're a scream”* and we have this in the bag. We've nailed it. And then Nic got changed. I probably could have handled the tan, maybe the jacket, definitely starting to push it with the wig, but the combination of the three did make it damn near impossible to take the man seriously.

He looked like a human Ken doll, who had realised Barbie was never coming back and he has no choice but to get a facelift, a few shots of Botox and become a B grade game show host in the 80's. It was going to be tricky not spending the entire time out there laughing at him. Still I'm a professional, I can do this. I couldn't. Once we actually got out there and he added the physical personality to this visual hilarity, I was gone. I spent majority of the



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time out there torn between being unable to look away yet unable to watch because I might wee myself. Hands down the funniest gig I have ever done and the only time I forgot I was supposed to be performing myself. All I could think of was *“don't laugh, just keep it together and don't even look at him”*. I'll admit it; I came dangerously close to literally pissing myself on stage.

**“A SERGEANT MAJOR SPENDS HIS TIME TRAINING HIS MEN TO BE KILLERS. HE DOESN'T SPEND HIS TIME POLISHING HIS OWN BOOTS. HE PROBABLY DOES POLISH HIS OWN BOOTS, BUT, YOU KNOW, THAT DOESN'T MEAN I HAVE TO DO MY OWN FILING.”**

— David Brent

....or filming.

One of the great things about Nic is he is very hands on. He knows when to delegate but will do most of the work himself and wouldn't ever ask of his staff to do something he wouldn't do. Sure things may need to be workshoped, a new skill learnt here and there and I'm often challenged, however the requests are never unreasonable or beyond capability because he has already gone through the process himself and will be able to offer support and guidance. It's one of the things I love most about working with Nic. I'm forever learning and pushing boundaries and feel confident in doing so because he instils a sense of security by never asking something he wouldn't do himself. Until the day he asked me to film for him. That day I realised that there is actually something he would do himself (easily in fact) that he really shouldn't ask me to do and I really should have had a particular conversation with him. I don't do technology. I can pretty much do anything performance wise and I can help work out how to physically do something or how it would be strongest presented. When it comes to actually sitting at a computer or using that expensive piece of technology, I'm kind of out.

As I sat on the scooter extravagantly dressed as a cockatoo it occurred to me, the giant wing span slightly choking me



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would not be the challenge of the day. In fact the only weight on my shoulders was, don't break the new toy. Really Nick? You couldn't just ask me to ride the scooter through a wheel of death? Perhaps I could launch from a giant ramp at the top end of Swanston St and become a real flying cockatoo that glides above the parade and gracefully lands at the art house. Crazy enough these seem more safe options with less chance of something going horribly wrong. Naturally I had underestimated this man's ability to fool proof things and with camera securely locked on to the bike (and shamefully turned on and off for me) the task became so easy I forgot I was doing it. Smart enough to never place all his eggs in one basket, his compilation of the many cinematographers he employed that day made for a brilliant result in the events footage. I will forever remember this event as revolutionary not because of the giant flying cockatoos that took months of planning and preparation, not because it was the first time I had to ride a scooter wearing a two meter wing span, not because the crowd completely lost their minds over this ingenious concept, but because even though I never really touched it, I still get to say I used a GoPro and didn't break it. Proving once again the trust I can place in this man to continually raise me to new heights. That working with Wacky means I don't just believe I can fly. I know I can and will.

**“IF YOU WERE TO ASK ME TO NAME THREE GENIUSES, I PROBABLY WOULDN'T SAY EINSTEIN, NEWTON... YOU KNOW. I'D GO MILLIGAN, CLEESE, EVERETT... SESSIONS.”**

— David Brent

What better way to spend your life than on a comedy skit show? And working with Wacky certainly delivers that. Every job will have me role playing so sort of character with freedom to add a comical spin and almost demands an element of wackiness. Most days I feel as if I'm a cast member of Fast Forward. I'd have to say that is most appealing thing about working with Nic, I get to play like a child and call it work. Whether it's because I'm pretending to be a blind mouse in a Shrek panto about Coles' productivity, dancing like a cheap chicken, glamorously playing a human red carpet or flying down a parade, every job feels like I'm playing out a childhood fantasy and there's no shortage of fun times or comedic role play.

1\ NEWS CHANNEL TEAM FOR A COLES ROADSHOW – OVERLY EXUBERANT STAGE MANAGER KEEPING THE ENIGMATIC NEWS ANCHOR IN PLACE 2\ ONE OF THREE WACKY COCKATOO'S ENTERTAINING THE CROWDS ALONG THE MELBOURNE PARADE ON AUSTRALIA DAY 3\ GETTING DOWN WITH THE COLES CHICKENS AT TOORONGA FOR AN INSTORE PROMOTION 4\ LAST MINUTE ADJUSTMENTS OF THE COCKATOO OUTFIT BEFORE A TEST FLIGHT/RUN/RIDE 5\ WELCOME ABOARD AT THE NADFA 2014 6\ EVEN A BREAK BETWEEN STORES DURING A FULL DAYS PROMOTION DOESN'T STOP NICHOLA PERFORMING





1\ PRINCESS ELSA AND PRINCE HANS AT THE FROZEN THEMED COLES CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY 2\ COLES HOME INSURANCE PROMOTION AT THE BLOCK'S 2014 AUCTION DAY 3\ FLASHMOB AT MELBOURNE AIRPORT FOR THE LAUNCH OF AIR CHINA'S DIRECT FLIGHTS TO BEIJING 4\ THE THREE BLIND MICE SUPPORT COLES STAFF FOR AN EPIC SHREK PANTOMIME DURING A ROADSHOW 5\ THE CAPTAIN AND CREW AT THE 2014 COLES LIQUOR TRADE SHOW 6\ PREPARING BACKSTAGE FOR THE UNDERWATER THEMED COLES CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY

**“WHAT IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR A COMPANY? IS IT THE STOCK? IS IT THE BUILDING? IS IT TURNOVER? IT'S THE PEOPLE, INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE.”**

— David Brent

... Or random characters

One of my favourite characters to play was the rather impromptu character Mrs Claus. A cross between Mary Poppins meets Mrs Doubtfire, this most loved lady became alive as a British grandmother (call it artist freedom) and she could not have been more fun to play. To be honest I'm not entirely sure where she even came as I didn't even get to meet her myself until she went on stage, but once she appeared I found her difficult to get rid of. I found myself in the break room still continuing to talk to people with a British accent in a tone that almost implied they were children themselves. Some staff in fact believed that was my normal voice and I was in fact an 80yr old woman. The last part didn't do much for my vanity, but still I took it all as a compliment. I'm not sure if it was the

voice, the costume, or how much the kids loved her, but days later I still found myself channelling Mrs Claus just for fun. I think the highlight of it all is that I have a photograph of Mrs Claus with a dolphin and I can actually justify why it makes sense; it was just another wacky underwater Christmas.

**“I SUPPOSE I'VE CREATED AN ATMOSPHERE WHERE I'M A FRIEND FIRST AND A BOSS SECOND. PROBABLY AN ENTERTAINER THIRD.”**

— David Brent

There are many reasons why I love working with Nic. Why from that very first day I met him I wanted to be a part of the wacky family and why I am forever grateful I now am. I guess firstly it would be that I do feel part of a family and I don't just feel like an employee. I feel supported and cared for, I feel valued. Second that I do feel directed by a great boss, who is professional, organised and someone I can trust will ensure smooth sailing to a successful result. Third that he is ridiculously entertaining to be around and I'm not only guaranteed to have a blast working with him but will also

receive a free comedy show from yours truly. But mainly it's the amount of times I find myself asking, “*what is life?*” It's the bizarre situations I find myself in that keep me thoroughly entertained and constantly wondering how will he top this? And it's the fact he does top it time and time again that keeps me eagerly awaiting his next vision and where it will take me. I've always believed that life's too short to not enjoy every moment and the key is to find something you love doing, that makes you happy and that you can make money off. I want to spend my days laughing and Nic makes hard work fun. So much fun in fact that I can't ever really call it work

So I guess to sum up what Wacky means to me and why I never want to leave....

**“YOU WILL NEVER WORK IN A PLACE LIKE THIS AGAIN. IT'S BRILLIANT. FACT. AND YOU WILL NEVER HAVE A BOSS LIKE ME, SOMEONE WHO'S BASICALLY A CHILLED OUT ENTERTAINER.”**

— Nic Yates



**A WEEK AT WACKY CAN SEE US  
ENERGISE DELEGATES OF AN  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE,  
CREATE EXCITEMENT AT A STORE  
OPENING, ENTERTAIN 100,000  
PEOPLE AT A MAJOR SPORTING  
EVENT AND DELIVER A FESTIVAL  
EXPERIENCE THAT PEOPLE WILL  
TALK ABOUT FOR YEARS.**



## Fran North - Coombes

– MELBOURNE CRICKET CLUB

Not too many people can walk the grounds of the MCG dressed as large goal posts, giant footballs, clad themselves in bright sequinned jackets or declare to be Santa for the day, whilst simultaneously playing joyful tunes on a variety of instruments... except for the team at Wacky Creative. Happy 21st to Nic and his team and thank you for years of entertainment and happy vibes.



1.

## Sammy J

– COMEDIAN

People still don't believe me when I tell them I once got paid to ride around inside a wheelie bin squirting children in the face with water. In fact I find it hard to believe myself. Sometimes if I'm standing on stage and the audience are staring at me with disdain I dream of being back in that bin, where nobody could see my face, and where I could attack hecklers with jets of water whenever I wanted. From memory it was my stick-like figure that got me the job of interior bin driver, whilst Dave Thornton - dressed fetchingly as a janitor - chaperoned me around family fun days, convincing both adults and children that the bin was in fact voice controlled. Having just dropped out of uni to pursue a career in showbiz, it was a genuine thrill to be hooning around golf courses terrifying small children - and being PAID for it! I have lots of other wonderful memories of my time at wacky - including my spectacularly disastrous wobbly waiters debut (who would have thought it possible to spill glasses that were screwed to the tray?) - and Nic, Col and the gang were not only welcoming, but taught me so much about the business side of the entertainment world, and the importance of making your own luck and creating your own opportunities. On that note ... I'm pretty sure I'd still fit in that bin. Just saying.

1\ WACKY GROUPS COME TOGETHER AT THE MELBOURNE CRICKET CLUB'S 175TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AT THE MCG 2\ PINK LADY MATCH AT THE MCG - TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS AND ATTENDEES BEFORE THE MATCH 3\ SANTA AND HIS ELF SET UP SHOP AT THE MCG FOR THE CRICKET AUSTRALIA FAMILY DAY 4\ ON THE MCG'S HALLOWED TURF FOR THE ANNUAL RITE OF PASSAGE 5\ A PERFECT TRIFECTA FOR THEMCG OPEN DAY - CRICKET, FOOTY AND SUNNY DAY



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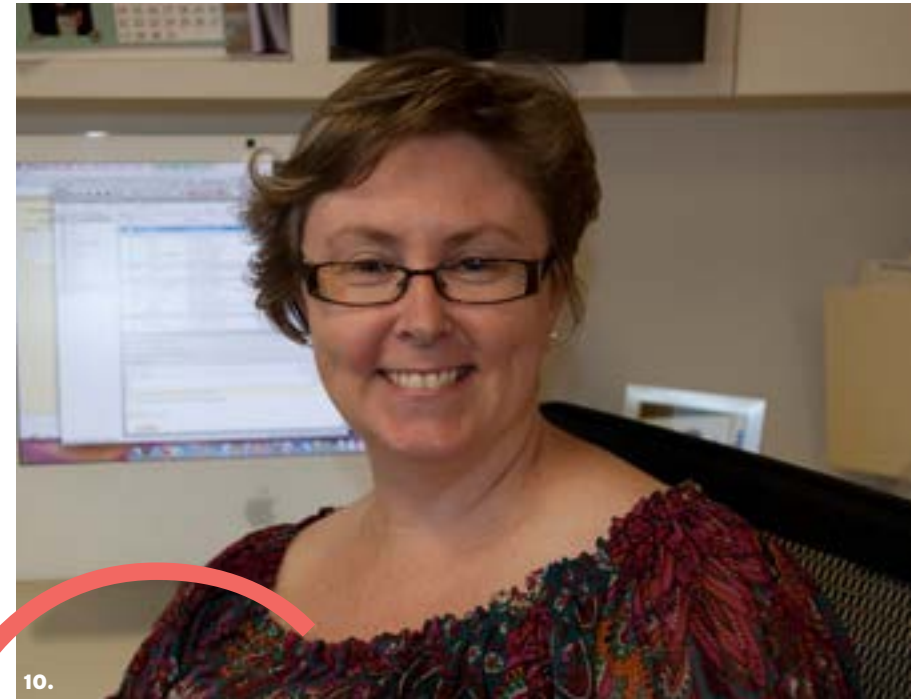


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# Caroline Clarkson

– ACCOUNTANT/  
OFFICE MANAGER

## THE WIDE WORLD OF WACKY... WHAT CAN I SAY... ?

From red wine drinking college days and Bourke Street busking, the initial incarnation as Wacky Wild Wind Machine, the establishment of CEC and several re-brands, I have witnessed the birth and development of a Wacky empire, many years of it at close quarters. And I've survived to tell the tale!

I will never forget Orchard Road, Singapore, come alive with its first influx of roving performers back in 2000 when the telecom market was deregulated. Ten crazy Australians in sparkly jackets, almost always damp from rain or sweat (or both) but definitely always laughing.

As the saying goes, never work with children or animals but one year for the Coles Children's Christmas Party, we had hundreds and hundreds of children, a truckload of farm animals, five Santas (sshhh, don't tell the kids) and it all worked.

Congratulations on all you have achieved over 21 years. I've watched Wacky, booked Wacky and am very proud to have been a part of Team Wacky.

- 6\ ON THE TOOLS – PHOTO SHOOT FOR WACKY CONSTRUCTION IN PORT MELBOURNE
- 7\ PHOTO SHOOT IN THE TURNER ST BOARDROOM FOR AN A-LIST MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENT
- 8\ WACKY'A 'SILLY HAT' CHRISTMAS PARTY WITH ANDREW LEACH
- 9\ ANOTHER PHOTO SHOOT ON THE LOCAL BEACH AT PORT MELBOURNE
- 10\ THE ALWAYS SMILING CAZ, AT LEAST BETWEEN KEEPING US ALL IN LINE, FIRING BACK WITTY DRY GAGS AND KEEPING THE PLACE RUNNING – TURNER ST WACKY HQ

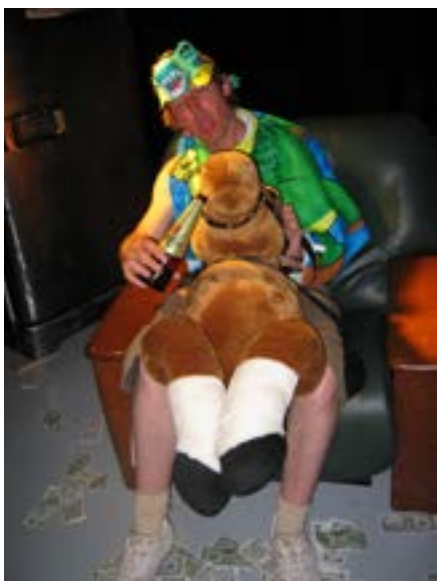






# Xmas party '04

'MESS WITH YOUR HEAD' THEME, WITH SPECIAL GUEST BAD SANTA. FOOD & DRINKS, DOOR PRIZE & AUCTION FOR WACKY PARAPHERNALLIA.





# Anthony McKee

– ANTHONY MCKEE PHOTOGRAPHY

Dear Mr Yates,

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my audition last week. I know you are busy, and it great to see you, even just for a few moments as you popped your head out the window. I don't normally get an audience at auditions, but when your neighbours all came outside to listen I felt even more inspired to try and get the high notes.

I have been learning the trumpet now for over 40-years, and during this time my family have always encouraged me to go somewhere with it. Last year I moved into an apartment building, and now even my new neighbours are keen for me to take my playing to the next level.

Seeing you perform at the GABS festival was the revelation I needed. Since then I have realised I want to play music at events with you and your wonderful team. You have so much fun, the crowd loves you. I am sure if you gave them enough time, the crowd would learn to love me too.

If you want, I am happy to come by for another audition. The last one did go wrong for me; first the wind blew my music away and then the police asked to borrow my trumpet. If you can call Footscray Police Station and ask them to return my horn, it would be good; I thought the officer only wanted to borrow it for a few minutes.

By the way, I have also been learning photography for almost 40 years too, so if ever you need someone to make you look good, give me a call! I can bring my camera AND my trumpet.

Thank you again,

yours,  
Anthony McKee

PS... I think you need to get rid of the Greg guy... he is good at screaming the high notes but he is nowhere near as good on those low notes as that little guy on tuba... he rocks! entertainment and happy vibes.



1\ GABS 2016: AUCKLAND NEW ZEALAND – EXCHANGING CAMERA FOR TRUMPET. ANTHONY JAMS WITH WACKY AS GREG SPENCE PERFECTS HIS PHOTOGRAPHY SKILLS  
2\ GABS 2016 – AFTER THE FINAL SESSION IN NEW ZEALAND, A LITTLE IMPROMPTU SHOT WITH EVENT CREATORS STEVE JEFFARES AND GUY GREENSTONE 3\ MR MCKEE STILL SMASHING OUT A TUNE. GREG'S PHOTOGRAPHY SKILLS IMPROVE QUICKLY – GABS 2016 4\ SOME OF ANTHONY'S HANDIWORK AT GABS 2016 AUCKLAND **FAR RIGHT\** BEFORE THEY PLAY, THEY HAVE TO LEARN THE TUNES – CITIBANK ATHENS 2017







MONDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2008



FRE

# mmx



## Pop secret

Madge's undercover love

PAGE 3



**MELBOURNE IDOL**  
The band puckers up for a touch of luck at the Melbourne Cup parade in Bourke St this morning.





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# Tynille Catanzariti

– VICTORIA RACING CLUB

## CATASTROPHES ON AND OFF SET

None that come to mind, it's usually smooth sailing.

## INTERESTING CORRESPONDENCE

I love after a race day receiving an image of the Wacky team in the costumes, the best part is that all images come with TERRIBLE Dad jokes!

## THE HIGHLIGHT GIG WITH WACKY AND WHY

This will not only be mine but I'm sure one of Nic's.... receiving the Taj Mahal for Melbourne Cup Carnival, it was a great way to not only reward Nic and the team but nice to know my favourite supplier was well looked after!

## FUNNY OR MEMORABLE MOMENTS ON AN EVENT

I remember the first time i got Nic's message bank. The message of hi you've called Nic from Wacky please feel free to leave your details including medicare and credit card numbers. I tried to call back so the rest of the office knew what I was laughing so hard about but Nic answered!

## WHAT HAS WACKY MEANT FOR YOU?

The one word that comes to mind is EASY. Nic and the team make my job a dream.

FAR LEFT\ FRONT PAGE THE MELBOURNE CUP PARADE  
 2\ THE SUPER BAND OUTSIDE THE VRC GRANDSTAND  
 3\ SUPER SATURDAY AT THE VRC 4\ GIDDY UP AT THE MEMBERS GATE 5\ COL AVOIDING HORSE DUNG ON THE MELBOURNE CUP PARADE  
 6\ TYNILLE AND NIC AT THE RACING ROYALTY MEDIA LAUNCH 7\ WACKY CHEFS AT FLEMINGTON'S GRAZING TRAIL & CELLAR DOOR RACE DAY  
 8\ 2014 CUP CARNIVAL TEAM





## Adrian Simpson

– BLUEWING

I remember walking down the side of the house towards the tiny blue shed at the end of the driveway in Shoobra Road and wondering what that Nick Mitchell had got me into now. Nick Mitchell had been a work colleague for some years in our former lives as Mac Resellers and Service Providers. Whilst he dabbled in database programming I had gone full time, and he had a habit of dishing off the clients that had got beyond his limits.

Still a lead was a lead in the early desperate days of *"I'll do anything for a quid!"*

It was a relief to meet a super nice guy inside the little cubby house - bright, passionate and getting a business off the ground not unlike my own situation. One instantly had the feeling that this was going to be a good relationship, if I could ever work out what the business was all about!

**“IT WAS A RELIEF TO MEET A SUPER NICE GUY INSIDE THE LITTLE CUBBY HOUSE - BRIGHT, PASSIONATE AND GETTING A BUSINESS OFF THE GROUND...”**

Half way through that meeting, I was pleasantly distracted by his wife Annette, and a few little ankle biters playing in the backyard. I say distracted because I had the uncanny feeling that I had met her before. Of course, not really possible, but the feeling persisted. After several visits and both of us having the very same feeling, we finally tracked back through a myriad of acquaintances to a single person we both knew - and suddenly it dawned on me - here stood the woman who I had left at the church on a wedding day some 15 years before. Not what you think! She and our mutual acquaintance and I had been booked to sing at a wedding, and I got lost on the way there and never showed - to my eternal embarrassment. What an incredibly small world.

After the shame of practically dumping the wife, well, one could not really dump the husband too, so onward and upward it was from there.

I learned more about the entertainment world, how crazy one would have to be to want to create a business in it, and how, indeed, anyone associated with it probably was...

Over the ensuing 15 years, the Wacky World of Nic Yates and Co have gone onto bigger and better things, and so has that small little database that he started with. In that time, I saw Patience and Forgiveness being regularly added to Nic's personal arsenal, required many times as I wrote new code, bugged things up, pushed one way and retreated to go another, and somehow manage to survive and deliver a product that just about keeps it all together. Of course, Wacky Creative has to deal with a lot of very creative folks, and creative folks change their mind a lot, so pity the poor buggers that have to manage hundreds of em, and pity the poor database developer that has to think of ways to accommodate em. I also remember nearly getting roped in to assisting with a Christmas gig - what was I going to be... Santa? - but luckily for Wacky, in the end they did not need me!

I don't know what seemed to grow faster - his children or the costume collection, but both seemed to happen very fast. It was a nice synergy when a new client I picked up ended up being an avenue of creativity for his children as they explored the artistry of the performing arts, learning song, dance and drama. It was a nice thought that in some very remote way, I was helping a client who was bringing some measure of joy to Nic's kids.

My family and I always look out for the odd news feed and video snippet to see our Wacky friends hamming it up for a crowd. Just last month my son rang me excitedly - *"Hey dad, I just saw Wacky playing at the shops!"* I guess my love for this guy and what he has built with some very close friends has rubbed off. Wacky started for me as a family affair and gratefully, in my experience, it still is.

Living in Wagga Wagga now, I see much less of Nic, but like true old friends, it does not matter how often we see each other, it always feels like coming home. And if he keeps his coffee machine, I am always happy to be lured back from Wagga for a visit!

1\ PHOTOSHOOT OF NIC INSIDE THE OUSIDE OFFICE AT SHOOBRA RD ELSTERNWICK 2\ THE "TINY BLUE SHED" OFFICE REPAINTED BEFORE SALE. FAR RIGHT\ A SELECTION OF IMAGES SHOWCASING THE VERY BEST SLAPSTICK GAGS OF THE WOBBLY WAITERS – SHAVING, RUBBER CHICKEN, WOBBLY GLASSES... SAY NO MORE. GOLD!!







# Richard Sayer

– INSTINCT ENTERTAINMENT

To me Wacky was originally the Wobbly Waiters. Of course there were many other costumes, acts and event themes that the roving musical acts could cater for.

But the Wobblies was a main stay!







1\ MYER, COLONNADES  
TORE OPENING, HAWKINS  
REQUESTS PHOTO WITH  
WACKY 2\ BLEMINGTON CUP  
CARNIVAL, WACKY BRING  
OUT THE MUSIC IN VICTORIAN  
PREMIER DANIEL ANDREWS  
FOR THE MEDIA 3\ CIRQUE  
IN FULL FACE 4\ RACING  
STEWARDS IN BOURKE  
ST MALL BEFORE THE  
MELBOURNE CUP PARADE

## Adrian Violi

– DRUMS

### MY INTRO TO WACKY

My first wacky gig was 'Wacky Umpires' at the Medallion club in September 2005 with Spence and Marty. I recall coming to Wacky HQ before my first gig to meet Nic, get Col to show me how to use the 'rig' and give me tips on walking and playing at the same time and what hardware I'd need to make a rig work whilst getting completely freaked out with the sheer amount of cossies on offer and come to grips with what was about to happen.

The Umpires gig was pretty easy. It was what happened after that that was the real game changer. That one gig lead to the

most crazy Christmas season I've ever had - it hasn't been matched since. Suddenly I was wearing scuba outfits, snowman and sweating my balls off all

**“I WAS LEARNING SONGS ON THE FLY, MADLY TRYING TO KEEP UP WITH GAGS AND LEARNING SOMETHING NEW ABOUT A SIDE OF THE ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS I'D NEVER EXPERIENCED BEFORE.”**

the while, walking and playing at the same time - both of which I still had no clue how to do. I was learning songs on the fly, madly trying to keep up with gags and learning something new about a side of the entertainment business I'd never experienced before from Nic at every gig. My 'Wacky cherry' was certainly popped. It was fun whilst I was doing it.



This mad introduction to Wacky was great EXCEPT that I may have got a little too comfortable with the new role I was in because there was a Christmas party at Wacky HQ that year. I remember it well - a 70s' theme - and luckily I had a (real) raging afro that I had fluffed up especially. It was a great party - beers everywhere and Nic walking around with 'cock sucking cowboy' shots on a tray. I was drinking like a fish and dancing my arse off to AJ and Michelle playing tunes in the corner. Everything was splendid until I hurled my guts out in the dunnies with the door locked and passed out on the floor. I then proceeded to spend the night in the warehouse on the couch and woke up with the realisation that I completely destroyed any kind of dignity I may have had in this new company... FAIL.

I still cringe thinking about it. Thankfully, I was invited back!





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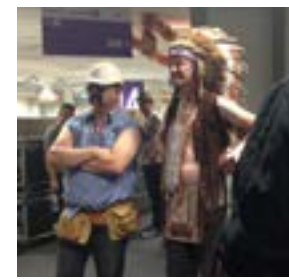
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### HIGHLIGHTS/MEMORIES

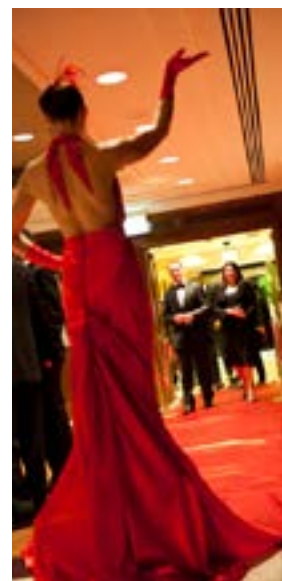
- The already mentioned embarrassing situation.
- Walking on the MCG.
- Marching an entire corporate party of guests through the city in flippers.
- Doing MYER breakfasts interstate playing Living on a Prayer at 8am to raging fans.
- Flemington weeks with super band performances - and who can forget the undercroft arvo gigs (when they were still legal).
- Playing at the Grand Prix (you know me).
- The buffets at Crown after a Xmas gig.
- The sweat running down my back being in the snowman for 20-30mins at a time.
- Doing solo Cracker at Moonee Valley and being completely taken down by kids after telling lame jokes from a joke book that Nic gave me.
- Getting in and out of the Cracker suit on my own...
- Making a kid cry at Qantas as Santa after a bellowing "HO HO HO."
- Trying to kneel down to fix the buttons on the crotch of Nic's costume when the man was dressed as the Star on an Xmas gig - let's just say I saw more of Nic than I bargained for when I looked up... He thought it was hilarious.
- The Amway gigs - MASSIVE.
- The parades - always great fun.
- Spency's "Rising Fast" gag at the races to the hottest girls every year.
- Seeing myself on the news every November.
- My boss seeing me on the news after a sickie.
- Trading 4s with the Pig in the middle of Swanston Street with horses behind us.
- Watching Luke bust out faster bass lines than most bass players I know.
- Making headlines when Premier Napthine banged my drum.

5\ WACKY STOCKMEN AT THE MCG - 2007 AIME WELCOME RECEPTION  
 6\ COLES SUPERMARKET - WACKY FRUIT 'GOING OFF'  
 7\ AFL GRAND FINAL PARADE - THE YEAR IT GOT LONGER... AND BIGGER  
 8\ THE WACKY DRUMMERS - PROBABLY THINKING THE AFL PARADE IS ALL FOR THEM  
 9\ CROWN CASINO CHRISTMAS LAUNCH - SWEATING IT UP IN THE SNOWMAN  
 10\ MEN IN SUITS ADDING STYLE AT A CORPORATE EVENT IN ACMI

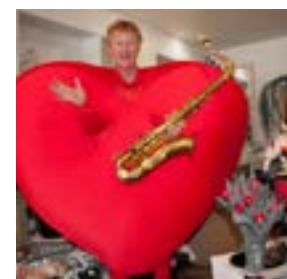








“THE ENTIRE CROWD WAS ENTHRALLED WITH YOUR PERFORMANCE, THEY WERE UP DANCING AND SINGING ALONG - AND MOST OF THESE GUYS ARE STUFFY STEEL MANUFACTURERS!”  
— STEELINE









# Richard De Bolfo

– TUBA / PART TIME SINGER

## MY FIRST GIG

The opening of IMAX in Melbourne was my first gig. I remember it being a nerve wracking experience. After no doubt milking Marty for any pre-game tips, I armed myself with chords to the old day Wacky favourites such as Brazil, Quando and probably other notable tunes such as Mambo number 5 and Soul Bossa Nova. If my memory serves me correctly, we did a rove around dinner tables. One thing that hasn't changed over the years is the nervousness I feel when the call goes out "Do you have any requests?" My first thoughts are "Please let it be a blues, and not in E." or "Please don't modulate half way through the song to simply maintain the sanity of the Wacky A Team". Cheat sheets were the order of the day and I still managed to probably stuff up 3 out of the 4 tunes I had to learn for the gig. Amazes me how Nic ever booked me again. Which begs the question, what was the next gig? Quite possibly Central Equity. Now I think of those gigs, they were great as they were a stress free rehearsal where you got to hang out with guys that have since become life long friends.

## THE BIRCHIP BULL

It would be at least ten years ago that Nic and I trekked to Birchip in the Mallee region of Victoria. We left in the morning for a gig that evening. After being on the road for about an hour, the conversation quickly turned to lunch. The plan was to stop at the best looking country pub along the way for a counter meal. Stopped at the first pub where we were met with "sorry kitchen is closed". Never mind. Onto the next pub "sorry, the chef only works 6 days a week". Ok. Not to be perturbed, onwards we went and as the excuses got funnier and funnier, we got hungrier and hungrier. I think the last excuse was "Sorry but we are out of steak and chips and chicken parmans". I could be stretching the truth a bit here but who cares. Whatever the excuse, by the time we got to Birchip, it was fair to say that the Captain and I could have eaten the crutch out of a low flying duck or even a 'Birchip Bull'.

The gig was great. Think it was a Christmas gig. The locals were awesome. I remember it being right in the middle of the drought so the morale could have been low. Obviously the appearance of "the shit in shoes" (plum pudding) and the "letterbox, xmas hot dog" (xmas cracker) was a sight for sore eyes.

The gig finished and drinking season had just opened. I think Nic and I drank half the volume of the Goulburn Dam in beer and I was determined to mount the main attraction of Birchip - The Birchip Bull!

It was pretty late in the evening and I think I slurred to Nic that I was gonna jump on the said Bull. As the bull was virtually as big as the whole town, I needed a plan. I had to be discreet, we needed photographic evidence and I had to try and do it without breaking any limbs. So when it came to crunch time, I then mounted the massive sculpture which as the photo suggests has even more massive aggot. Truth be told, I used his aggot as a stepladder. Suffice to say, I reached the summit and I think there is photo evidence somewhere.

## DON'T SAY FUCK IN FRONT OF THE CLIENT!

Wasn't on this gig but I'm hoping the pig has provided his account of this.

## ELVIS AT THE RACES

More of an infamous story that a famous one. Wacky was probably in its relative infancy performing at the Spring Racing Carnival at Flemington. Viva Lost Elvis were performing up near the train station. Elvis Spence on trumpet or was it trombone? Elvis Pig on drums and Elvis Digit on Tuba. The first set went swimmingly. Spence was on fire, Pig was being a pig and I was happy as long as we kept playing Blue Suede Shoes and Jailhouse Rock in any key except E. (See reference in my first gig anecdote).

**“BY THE TIME WE GOT TO BIRCHIP, IT WAS FAIR TO SAY THAT THE CAPTAIN AND I COULD HAVE EATEN THE CRUTCH OUT OF A LOW FLYING DUCK OR EVEN A 'BIRCHIP BULL.'”**

Things went so well that the Pig said at the end of the set, "Who wants a beer?" Gregggy said "Hello!" and I'm sure I said words to the effect of "I don't think that would be professional Greg and Scott, I think you would be both letting the team down". But as majority rules, I begrudgingly took the advice of my role models and accepted the invitation. Sitting in costume in one of the open bar areas, the pig went to the bar to order three pots. Just as Elvis pig went to say "3 pots please", Nic appeared from what might as well have been the grassy knoll in Dallas Texas (circa 1963). Greg and I sensed the danger as Nic approached saying, "What are you blokes doing and where is Scott?" Greg and I looked at each other with the whites of our eyes in full view. There was only one way to tackle this situation and that was with honesty. I gave Greg the wink as a suggestion of "I will take it from here". "Well Nic" I said, "Scott asked us if we wanted a beer. Greg and I both said no to which Scott replied don't be a pack of softcocks".

Sadly, we never got the beer, happily, pig got berated and finally, this incident made it into one of the top three agenda items on the following Wacky Annual general meeting. We were told in no uncertain terms that the consumption of alcohol on a gig was never again to occur whilst in costume. I can safely say Nic, that Greg and I have refrained from this practice. Not sure if I can say the same about the Pig though.



1\ BIG SMILES AND ENERGY FROM GIDDY UP –MELBOURNE CUP PARADE 2\ NO LION AROUND HERE – KEEPING THE JUNGLE IN ORDER AT COLES TEAM MEMBER CHRISTMAS PARTY 3\ MELBOURNE AQUARIUM FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT - AHOY, ME HEARTIES! 4\ DIGIT, PIG AND THE CAPTAIN LOOKING GOOD IN SPARKLIES 5\ HIDDEN TALENTS – RICHARD TAKES UP TRUMPET FOR SPARKLIES PHOTOSHOOT 6\ BIRCHIP BULL 7\ GETS A PHOTO WITH A WACKY STAR 8\ THE BOYS AT THE FLEMINGTON RACE COURSE MEMBERS GATE FOR MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL – DIGIT SHOW CASING THE TYPICAL 'BIG MOUTH' WACKY SMILE 9\ FEATHERS, FRILLS AND FINERY WITH SOME FINE FILLIES AT FLEMINGTON (SAY THAT FAST 5 TIMES) 10\ DIGIT AND THE ROCK GOD SEAN MCLEOD A LITTLE LOST – THE ANACONDA STORE LAUNCH IS BEHIND YOU... ITS BEHIND YOU!





1\ A HUNKA, HUNKA, HUNKA BURNING LOVE – ELIVS LEAVES GRACELAND FOR FLEMINGTON DURING SPRING RACING CARNIVAL  
 2\ WE'RE NOT SURE IF THIS IS BEFORE OR AFTER MAKEUP FOR CIRQUE  
 3\ A FOOTY FLAVOUR AT THE MOONEE VALLEY NIGHT RACES  
 4\ WAVING THE FLAG ON AUSTRALIA DAY AT DOCKLANDS PRECINCT  
 5\ RACE DAYS AT FLEMINGTON ARE ALWAYS FUN, COLOURFUL AND EXCITING... ESPECIALLY DURING MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL

### ROID MAN

A case of the funniest moment ever on a gig but a definite case of you had to be there. Nic, Pig and I were performing at a Festival of some description at Port Melbourne. Our job was to rove up and down the Esplanade playing to virtually no one. Despite this, we were assigned with our own security guard. I felt particularly at ease with this because robbers are always wanting to steal a tuba or a gold sparkly jacket. As we roved around (to no-one) our security guard had not opened his mouth once. I was asking myself, 'Does he think we are terrible? Is he deaf? Is this gig beneath him? Or, was he a new character that Nic was trialling?'

If you look at the two photos to the right, our security guard was a cross between these two characters and he must have been 7 foot tall.

So as the gig rolled on, we still hadn't heard a peep out of Mr Security. I think we even sat on our first break discussing his lack

of speech. Eventually the suspense became too much. I don't even know what prompted him to speak but when he did, if you can imagine a 7 foot tall giant with the voice of Lisa Simpson, that's what we were treated to.

I think for the next 15 minutes the three of use cried with laughter, the whole while trying to disguise it for fear of not embarrassing our security guard who from that moment on became known as Roid Man.

### NUMBER 23

Croxton Park Hotel was the venue on a duo gig with Nic. Another case of had to be there but we got talking to another security guard. We had no idea of his name but at the end of the gig as we left, the security guard, who was identified by a security badge with the number 23 said, thanks for the music guys, to which Nic replied no worries 23. Believe me, if you were there you would have laughed. To this day, Nic often out

of the blue sends me a photo from a gig he is on standing next to a security guard with an id number.

### DON'T PLAY SING

The pressure of trying to play an unrehearsed bass line on a gig sometimes becomes too much for Nic. As he has been known to politely say, don't play, just sing. It's a subject called 'Self esteem101'.

### IF YOU COME ANYWHERE NEAR THAT SAXOPHONE

On a Christmas gig in Leongatha with Nic for the Leongatha Council. It was a cross section of people. One table contained the admin staff, another featured office workers. As we roved around the tables we could see the road workers had their own table. I was slightly apprehensive about the reaction they would give us. And they didn't disappoint. As we approached the table of testosterone, one of Leongatha's finest road workers said,





6.



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*"If you come anywhere near me with that saxophone I'm going to shove it up your arse."*

This got massive laughs. But not as big as the laughs when Nic went up to him and said *"Bend over I'm going to shove it up yours."* The table erupted with laughing and the guy with the big mouth was put in his box.

#### STRIPPERS ON LYGON

Years ago did a gig on Lygon Street with Nic, Col and Tom at a pokies venue. Not long after the gig started we noticed a punter who was extremely tired and officially pissed! She loved the music we were playing and proceeded to gyrate and dance provocatively. She was almost stripping. So of course we launched into playing the stripper. She then went off. Following this, we would play another tune followed by countless more renditions of the stripper as she gave us and the punters a great show.

#### YARRAVILLE GARDENS

On a Xmas gig with Nic and Col. I was the pudding, Col, the cracker and Nic, the turkey. After getting into our cossies, we were all laughing at the description punters gave to the costumes over the years. Eg the pudding (shit in shoes) cracker (hot dog, punching bag and letterbox).

As we were just about to play a delightful and respectful elderly lady came up to Nic and said *"What are you dressed as, an Angel?"* After laughing hilariously, Nic saw red and replied *"An angel! I can recommend the number for a good optometrist. I'm a turkey, you are a fool madam!"* Harsh but fair if you ask me. Nic obviously channelled Tony Abbott and made a captain's call with that line.

#### WHAT WACKY MEANS TO ME

I have always felt privileged to be a member of the Wacky family. Playing in Wacky has allowed me to travel to all parts of Australia and even the odd overseas trip. I get to hang out with a terrific bunch of guys. I get to laugh a lot and I get to perform with excellent musicians.

Aside from all of the laughs, I think there is always the undertone of performing to our best ability on a gig and I think that is a sign of the respect that I and all of us have for Nic.

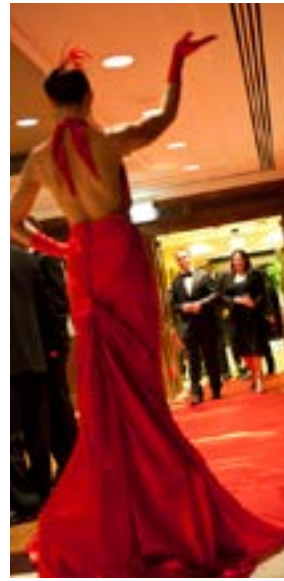
Nic, I really admire you for what you have created. You deserve everything that you have achieved and long may it continue.

Many thanks,  
No.23

P.S Maybe one of these stories could make it to the HQ wall Nic!

6\ LATINO SOMBRERO READY TO SALSA AT A SPOTLIGHT STORE OPENING 7\ WINDY KILTS AT THE PRESIDENTS CUP COCKTAIL RECEPTION 2011 8\ WACKY MAD SCIENTISTS AT THE BANK OF MELBOURNE FAMILY DAY









“ YOUR HUMOUR, STAFF ENGAGEMENT AND ENERGISERS WERE FANTASTIC AND RIGHT ON THE MARK WITH OUR THEME. ”  
— CASTROL





# Michelle Watt

– TUBA

Got three stories for you. Is that enough?? Not good with the years or probably even the undrunken version of each story.

1. Had to be your initiation ceremony Luke. We were somewhere in NSW or Brissy I think. Luke might remember specifics. Niccy and I became the high priest and priestess and we were saying "Lukey it's time". Can't remember a lot more except Luke was in bed and mildly terrified.

2. Have a lovely memory of Niccy and I watching Makybe Diva win a Melbourne Cup in the rain. All the punters had left and it seemed like it was just him and me. AAAAAH.

3. Last one is the time my tuba got left in Armidale after a Kransky gig and I was meant to be doing a trio with Niccy and chubby drummer with beard (can't remember his name. Lovely guy). We improvised and they did a duo with me using a mop or broom that we found as a drum major's stick thing. I remember that we had a blast and that my name was 'Private Parts' and his was 'General Waste'. Fun times.



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# Debbie Skewes

– EVENTS EDGE

Congratulations Nic on WACKY'S 21 years!

What I love about WACKY is their absolute professionalism, highly talented individuals with a huge artistic imagination verging on the ridiculous! They always make me feel good, put a smile on my face, make me laugh, and I enjoy being in the moment, no inhibitions!

Every time I have booked WACKY to entertain it has been a talking point for my clients and their guests and of course it therefore flows on and makes me look like the best event producer ever!

**W** A C K Y  
**A** R T I S T I C  
**C** R E A T I V E  
**K** R A Z Y  
**Y** A T E S

The most memorable moment for me was when the boys performed at my birthday party! How fantastic that these gorgeous boys could share my special day with me and not only that, I could showcase to my family and friends why I love working in the industry when you have talented crazy people like this who I adore working with. Nic's support, standing beside me while I made my speech gave me strength, mind you he couldn't escape I had him in a head-lock!

Their imaginative creative ideas for new acts and performances keeps WACKY evolving. Wow I am always totally in awe when I see their new creations and feel I need a function to showcase the latest.

Nic I met you 10 years ago at an ISES function, and from there we developed our working relationship, however the most important for me is that our friendship evolved and I am honoured to call you my friend.

Never ever stop being WACKY!!

Love you lots.  
Debbie

1\ SILLY HAT SEASON – MICHELLE, BERNIE & ADAM  
 SOME WAYS INTO THE 2005 WACKY CHRISTMAS PARTY 2\ THE TALLEST JOCKIES YOU'VE SEEN – MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL, FLEMINGTON 3\ MRS WACKY AND "WATTY" SHARE A MOMENT AT THE 2005 WACKY CHRISTMAS PARTY 2\ IT'S MORE FUN IN THE CENTRE OF THE DANCE FLOOR – WACKY CHRISTMAS PARTY 2005 RIGHT\ TWO PEAS IN A POD. NIC SHARES A TOAST AT DEBBIE'S 60TH BIRTHDAY PARTY IN PORT MELBOURNE





1.

1\ BUSH BOY AND BOTTLE BRUSH BABY AT DOCKLANDS PRECINCT ON AUSTRALIA DAY 2\ PLAYING ELF AT THE 2015 COLES CHRISTMAS ROADSHOW 3\ CITY OF MELBOURNE - BREATHE EASY IN THE CITY ACTIVATION 4\ COLES FAMILY DAY CHRISTMAS PARTY -CHRISTMAS CRUSTACEAN ON THE MENU

# Lydia Mocerino

– ACTOR

Well firstly, how can I thank both Wacky and Nic enough? I think I can speak on behalf of all the entertainers here at Wacky when I say that being a struggling performer, whether it be dancing, singing, acting, playing an instrument, MC'ing, mascot'ing, painting, modelling - anything and everything that comes with being Wacky we can all thank Nic for.

The company has helped me with getting to know Melbourne and its awesome creatives, pay rent and put food on the table! As an actor there's nothing more that you want to do than be your craft and Nic + Wacky allow me to be just that.

My first gig with Wacky was doing some live entertainment at the MCG and I spent the evening dancing around to funky tunes at the entrance to the MCG with Nic.

The best moments I've had on a gig is meeting a new member of Wacky in each gig, getting to know their background either through the carpool to the gig or on our breaks, it's amazing to hear the perspective of how in that very moment we, performers, came together to do what we love. A funny moment for me was



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when I was so excited to be painted as a bush baby because I love being painted and I fainted on dear Laurie! Which could also be remembered as a catastrophe but 'the show must go on' and it did!

We are always taken care of and that's what matters - we're a part of a big family, looking out for each other. If there are happy moments we embrace them and if there's funny moments - we make them last! Nic's dream of Wacky may have started small, but the Wacky family he has created is big.

Truly, thank you Nic and Wacky!  
Lyds



# Greg Clarkson

– SAXOPHONE

Wacky the business is a tailor made suit that perfectly fits Nic. He has a unique skill set both socially and professionally. Apart from the skill to play any tune at any time in any key (and sometimes over another tune), two of his more prominent skills were *"rallying the troops"* and crossing the *"imaginary line"* and having nearly everyone be ok that he did.

I met Nic at the tender age of 15. On the first night (of which there were to be thousands) that Nic and I hung out together, we also met the boys in blue and they wondered if just perhaps we may have been on the wrong side of that 'imaginary line' but after a little chat they saw that we probably weren't. Then as far as rallying the troops many people would have missed the opportunity to funnel beer and champagne if it wasn't for Nic's finely developed charismatic organizational skills. They were often put to good use.

At a young age, Nic turned the ability to stuff around and have a good time into an art form and we around him had a truck load of fun while he practiced his art. Then later at Wacky it was the only place I can remember being given *"play a few tunes and stuff around and have a good time"* as a job description.

I was Santa Sax in 38 degree heat, travelled to Singapore business class, got to be Bad Santa at the Wacky Xmas party, ate lashings of seafood at the Athenaeum Club, dressed up as a football, turkey, Xmas cracker, dodgy bookie, deep sea diver complete with water pistol, Xmas tree, 1920's bather, Rudolf the reindeer, Xmas pudding just to name a small portion of the cossies from the warehouse at wacky headquarters.

Thanks for allowing me to body surf (with floaties) on the entertainment tsunami that is Wacky.

Much congratulations

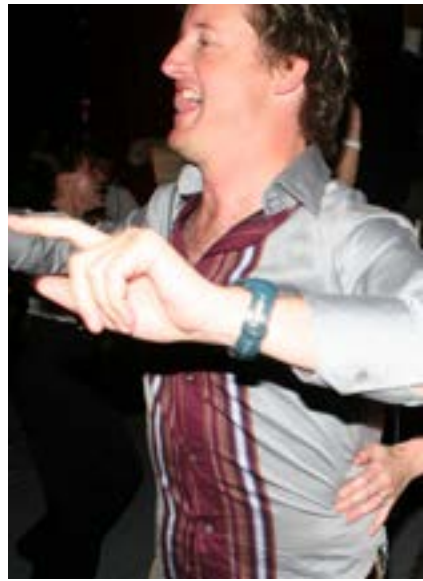
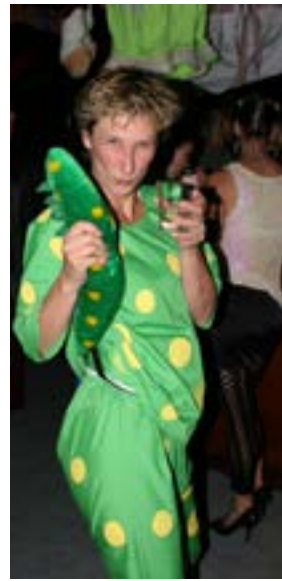


5\ WACKETY SAX  
PHOTO SHOOT AT DR  
SAX 6\ MORNING SUITS  
GET READY TO ADD COLOUR  
TO THE MELBOURNE CUP  
PARADE 7\ LOVE IS IN THE  
AIR – SPREADING THE LOVE,  
LITERALLY, AT A SHOPPING  
CENTRE ON VALENTINES  
DAY 8\ WHO DO YOU GET TO  
PLAY SANTA AT THE WACKY  
CHRISTMAS PARTY – THE  
ONE WITH THE MOST STYLE  
OF COURSE



# dogs & daiquiris '05

WACKY AND DEJA VU COMBINE TO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS AT WACKY HQ FOR A THEMED NIGHT OF DOGS, DAIQUIRIS AND ULTIMATELY... DEBAUCHERY.











## Marc Matthews

– TROMBONE

My first ever Wacky gig was in 1996 with Nic, Sean McLeod, and Vinnie Bourke who was playing tuba with a trombone mouthpiece!! It was Victoria's Open Day & we were at the Fed Square site. Sean's dad bought us all icecreams! (Sorry if it sounds like we were all just 12 years old, but mentally we probably were!)

From the outset, the gigs were generally a lot of fun, I learnt a lot watching Nic & Col (it took years to be able to verbally compete with them!) and Nic was always gently (and at times not so gently) pushing you to extend yourself a bit.

I would come in as a B teamer, whenever Tom was unavailable. Eventually some solo gigs, then a solo character gig as a film director at the Myer Music Bowl for some mob's Xmas party. You learn why it is people in entertainment generally always wear dark pants.

I got into this so much, I even tried a bit of stand-up for a while. I must say I would never have got to that stage without Nic hiring me and pushing me, but Col has been fantastic over the years with helping me with comedy stuff, particularly the time I was doing the stand-up. Col has worked very hard at his art and deserves all the success he gets.

Anyway, enough of the boring, gushy shit; here are some of my more memorable Wacky gigs/moments:





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### VIRGIN STILT-WALK AT THE GRAND PRIX 2004

Like I've said, Nic was always pushing me to do new things, and this time it was: "Col's away for the Grand Prix, how about you learn to stilt walk for a rove through the crowd on the Sunday?" Never knowing how to say no, I agreed, my first lesson was at the Yates' in Clifton Hill with Nic and Luke guiding me. Can't say I was a natural, but I took the stilts home and persevered. I felt ok, after all it was just an easy rove amongst the crowd behind the scenes at the GP.

Come the day of the gig, we had just done our 1st ground level set when Nic comes back to me and says: "Sorry about this but the agents changed their plans, we're roving through the pits." Immediately my mind starts thinking of oil patches on the ground and the hard asphalt compared to the soft grass of the park ... but, I had agreed to stilt-walk so steeled myself for the experience.

### “THE IMAGE THAT KEPT GOING THROUGH MY HEAD WAS ME ON TV IN A CRUMPLED MESS ON THE GROUND SURROUNDED BY GRID GIRLS...”

Then, about half an hour before the walk, just before I'm getting ready to stilt up, Nic comes back again: "You're gonna hate me, change of plans again, we're in the main parade down the straight pre-race!!"

It was good I was wearing the dark pants as I seriously started shitting myself there and then. I lined up with Nic and Luke and the whole way down the straight I kept saying to myself: "Don't fall over! Don't fall over!" with every step. Funnily, I wasn't worried about hurting myself (which you certainly can do on stilts), the image that kept going through my head was me on TV in a crumpled mess on the ground surrounded by grid girls, my fall being replayed constantly around the globe as the 'play of the week.'

I was so panicked, my breathing was so shallow, I could hardly play a note. So, somehow I mimed my way all the way to the finish. According to Nic, my face was a ghostly white, something he found very amusing and seemed to like sharing with others. I made it, but I'd never felt so mentally and physically exhausted after any gig before or since.

### STONNINGTON XMAS CAROLS 2005

Personnel; Myself, Rockpig, Lukey & Bernie Hickey.

This gig itself was nothing remarkable but for the stage show we had to put on to finish.

Stonnington pride themselves on being only second to the official Carols By Candlelight I think as they had a stellar line-up of operatic performers. Denise 'Ding Dong' Drysdale was the MC and we had to go on stage for 5-10 min and entertain the masses, including singing!!!

In typical Wacky fashion, we were extremely well-rehearsed... read not... 3-4 Xmas songs; play head, sing, play head again. Please note the personnel again when you consider the vocals, we were not John, Paul, George, Ringo or the Beach Boys!

So, it was a great surprise (to me at least) that we were the hit of the night!! Halfway through the 1st playing chorus, streams of kids come running down the hill and almost storming the stage! For 10 minutes of my life I knew how it felt to be a Wiggle!!

Coming off the stage, we were buzzing like nothing else, considering how shit we all thought we would go. I still remember walking back into the Green Room (a tent) still, buzzing, yapping away, into the stony silence of all the 'real' trained singers haha!!

They had heard us play, but particularly sing, and seen us get the best crowd reaction all night, whilst their best efforts had rarely raised the crowd beyond a murmur and polite

applause. "Ding Dong" then tried to ease the tension by offering sandwiches around...

### COMMONWEALTH GAMES VILLAGE FAMILY CHRISTMAS PARTY 2005

I have to mention this one as I've never had a gig with such vastly different halves to it; one incredibly easy, the other incredibly daunting.

I was with Marty Macaulay and Adrian Violi (I think??) The brief was, it was a family Xmas party for the workers building the Comm Games village, all food, drink and entertainment supplied.

First set, we were at the gate for an hour and basically, about 3 people came in so we just talked for most of the time. This is so easy I was thinking.

Second half we're entertaining the crowds in the main area, dressed as pudding, cracker, turkey, etc. Yeah, kids will love this...

Problem was if you say to your average building worker; "free party with free food, entertainment and DRINK, ..... what was that? Free booze?" not many will actually bring their partner and kids along.

We arrive back at the main venue to find a couple of wives, a handful of kids and about 500 pretty rough looking and already well-inebriated building workers!

Some performers refused to even go out, but remembering Nic's adage: "Go to the toughest corner and win them over, it's the only way to win the whole room" so we gaily traipsed out in our Xmas gear.

I still remember the roar that greeted us when we walked in. Again, I think I had dark pants on. But, we did win them over or maybe my idea of winning them over was not getting beaten up...

1\ WACKY PAPARAZZI ON THE RED CARPET WITH SUZIE WILKS – PALLADIUM CROWN CASINO 2\ AUSTRALIAN F1 GRAND PRIX – MARC'S FIRST GIG ON STILTS... IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE OF MILLIONS 3\ DOORMAN ON STILTS – NO AUDIENCE OF MILLIONS, BUT ALSO NO STRESS ON THE STILTS 4\ MANHEIM TRUCKS EVENT – SECRET SERVICE KEEP AN EYE OUT





1.

- 1\ THE MEN OF THE FLIPPERDANCE – 6 PIECE SHOW AT CROWN PALLADIUM
- 2\ DODGY BOOKIES TAKING NAMES AND KICKING...THEMSELVES – ATRIUM, FLEMINGTON RACECOURSE
- 3\ ONE OF MARC'S FAVOURITE FAMILY & WACKY MEMORIES – ROXBURGH PARK SHOPPING STRIP WITH HIS KIDS
- 4\ VIVA LAS VEGAS IN ACTION AT ROXBURGH PARK
- 5\ THE HANS BROTHERS KEEP GUESTS ENTERTAINED AT A CORPORATE EVENT – ROD LAVER ARENA CENTRE COURT
- 6\ AUSSIE OSBOURNE MAKES AN ENTRANCE AT THE LOGIES RED CARPET – CROWN CASINO



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**FLIPPERDANCE!**

Nic has a way of cajoling you into things you wouldn't normally try (the Flipperdance routine is one) but often doesn't reveal the true nature of a gig until you're well and truly committed.

Scotty Rice and I were brought on board with the A team for a corporate night featuring the Flipperdance routine. We were shown a video of Spence doing it so figured anyone could....

It was Col's baby and we had a couple of weeks rehearsal under his tutelage. (Windscreen wiper, etc., etc...) As far as we knew, that was our sole commitment for the night and we felt reasonably confident. The day before, Nic goes through the running sheet for the night and there's a roving set, but the Pig and I aren't doing that says Nic: "No, while we're (the A Team) doing that, you two are side of stage waiting to walk Lawrie Laurence on... wearing these..."

He holds up two one-piece women's bathing costumes.

Nic seemed to like me in a one-piece as it wasn't the last time he booked me as such...





## OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

I haven't mentioned above working with the amazing Richard De Bolfo; the easiest tuba player to make crack up and stop playing. Some highlights with Digit: *"Oh When The Saint Kitts and Nevis and Vincent and The Grenadines Go Marching In"* (Comm Games Village '06)

Moonee Valley moments - the ice cream man who couldn't recognise Fur Elise, and the trad jazz lady who hated our version of Georgia so much she had to conduct us out of it!

Good times at Melbourne Aquarium including 'Rum' (Tequila) & many other 'bad' pirate jokes!

Mentioning the Aquarium, must start with Farrugia, who always had a knack for selecting some of the worst candidates for the kids show there.

Memories of the Melb airport gigs and the original Bad Santa, whom Luke dealt with better than anyone else. As you remember he would follow the Wackys around as kids were scared of him. One day, Luke announces mid-set we're having a break, leads Bad Santa to and into lift, lets door close on him, and we go back and finish our set sans Bad Santa.

Bloody hilarious!! And how does he pack up so damn quickly? I've just wiped the sweat off my brow and he's standing at the door, in civvies and ready to go.

Another memorable gig involving Luke was up north in Echuca one steaming hot January weekend. Elmo turned up very late to the outdoor stage so Col (& us) had to work overtime in the heat waiting and working the crowd. Was hilarious to see how Col punished Elmo when he finally showed, making the fur-costumed performer dance to Wipeout about 3 times in the 38 degree heat! A great night was had out with Spency and Luke that evening ("*Elmo!!*" private joke — only Greg & Luke will understand).

Ryan McCluskey was another one who would often crack up mid gig; had a great 'gangsters' gig with him in a warehouse which Nic will remember as I got Wizz Fizz all over his nice pin striped suit!

Ryan, Michelle Watt and I were the Lost Tourists at Flemington one year; I gave Wattie a map of Tasmania which she delighted in whipping out from her shorts to any request all morning long!!

Have had a few good gigs with Sharni Page as well over the years, but none more memorable when I was brother-in-law to her grieving Mafia widow in the Foxtel building one day

(promoting 'The Godfather') I think I still have some bruises from her hitting me with her umbrella! These real actors take it so seriously!

In more recent years, some fun times with Andy Pobjoy (Dr. Bellows). As well as the Old Melbourne Gaol murder mystery we did an amazing dual stand up routine at the Aus Open tram stop one day. I'm sure the only reason we weren't lynched was the tracks between us and the audience!

Also have enjoyed the many fun interactions at the Wacky office, particularly when both Juliet and Caz were there, and I would play 'Capt. Peacock' to Nic's 'Young Mr. Grace', Caz's 'Miss Brahms' & Juliet's 'Mrs Slow-Cum'.

I've learnt a lot from working with Nic and Wacky. For example, I have even learnt to say no sometimes now.

Nah, have really learnt what performing is all about and confidence in dealing with punters; a skill set that will never leave me as long as I have my marbles!

Thank you Nic, and if there are any more gigs coming up, may I always say "*I'm freeeee!*"

7\ UNIVERSALLY THE MOST  
FUN GIGS ARE PLAYING  
IN A LARGE GROUP! –  
MELBOURNE AIRPORT  
8\ BUMPING INTO 'BAD  
SANTA' ON A COMMUNITY  
EVENT 9\ MELBOURNE  
AQUARIUM – SCHOOL  
HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT  
10\ MORE BANANAS THAN  
THOSE HE'S WEARING. MARC  
IN FINE FORM AT THE 2008  
AMWAY CONFERENCE



# Juliet Taylor

– OFFICE MANAGER

Memorable moments:

## THE ELVIS PINK

The day (and might I point out it was only my fifth day at Wacky) that I was told to wash the "Elvis Stuff" and sort of, accidentally, died the white elvis pink. I received some constructive feedback from my new boss... "How could you be so f\*cking stupid?" I took it as a rhetorical question. All was restored (both the costume and our fledgling relationship).

## BOBBY

I guess my Wacky highlight was the day Nic lured me back onto the stage in the role of 'Bobby' the Spring Racing Carnival mascot. My NIDA training proved invaluable. I delved deep into character, and for hours practised the non-verbal cues necessary in a non speaking role. My performances were short lived, but the memories of sweat and limited oxygen supply are cherished.

## DAILY OFFICE CHALLENGES

Wacky helped me develop many new loves and skills. I was never a lover of coffee before I joined Wacky, but finally relented after being harassed on a daily basis by Nic, and his outrageous coffee machine. I always thought I was fairly open minded but the lovely, blue, lewd repartee of the Wacky boys on emails, contracts and the like was always such a delight. I became an expert in laundry services, gardening, shopping at spotlight and much more. But in the end, I will always remember the lovely fun gentleman who worked across the room. Always made me laugh, always forgave me for mistakes big and small, always generous with his concern over family and life stresses. Loved working for Wacky. Forever indebted.



1\ CELEBRITY SPOTTING AND INTERVIEW CHASING AS A WACKY PAPERAZZI – REGENT PLAZA BALLROOM 2\ WACKY ENTERTAINMENT CLIENT DINNER AT LA LUNA – EACH CLIENT PAIRED UP WITH A MATCHING HAT PERSON FROM WACKY 3\ JULIET TOASTS /ROASTS NIC AT HIS 40TH BIRTHDAY DINNER 4\ NIC, COL, SHARNI AND JULIET (BOTTOM FRONT) ON OFFICIAL DUTIES AS JIM'S MOWING CELEBRANTS FAR RIGHT\ MARKETING COLLATERAL FOR WACKY MUSIC COMEDY – SHOWCASING IMAGES FROM TATTERSALLS ENTERTAINMENT WITH 'CRAZY AL'









1.

## Scott Rice

– DRUMS

### POTTY MOUTH

So apparently I have an issue, well I did a few years ago with my potty mouth.

I never had a deep dark desire to use the word "Fuck" in front of the client which I did quite frequently so I have been told, but as it seems I did.

I do remember one time we were in a lift with the client (so nowhere to run) in a hotel in Brisbane for an event and I apparently let loose to which I was then promptly reminded in front of the client that I had said such word.

Client said she didn't mind.

### GIANNI WHO

I was booked for a gig and noticed that a new fella was on the run sheet and that more importantly, he was made leader.

Now I had no idea who this guy was but I had been doing wacky gigs for near on 10+ years and never been a leader, then this guy gets a guernsey and 1st gig up is made leader.

So I promptly called the captain and put my view of disdain forward of "GIANNI WHO".

Captain's answer was "We generally make the melody instrument the leader as they know what songs they can play". My response "Well that's crap, as Colin is a leader and he plays drums, so why cant I".

Sooky bub moment over.

### WEDGIE

Many years ago at the Crown palladium room we were to entertain the masses of ladies who turned out for a special fundraising lunch. As I found out very urgently on the day the gig was to be done in 2 parts.

Firstly there was the usual table service and entrance tunes to be played and the 2nd part was not something I normally get asked to do via the Captain but always put my hand up as these are treasured moments that will never be repeated.



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So the second part consisted of Mark Mathews and myself walking Laurie Lawrence out to the lectern while wearing a special outfit. Nic promptly hands me two choices of ladies one-piece bathing suits to try on to see which colour looks best. I personally loved the white one with the frilly material around my breast area as it really showed off my cleavage and masculine curves.

So there we were at the side of the stage approaching Laurie from behind (as he had no idea what we were doing) and each of us grabbed an arm then walked him out to the lectern to his surprise.

Laurie's reaction was well worth the effort as was the 1500+ ladies' reaction when I turned to walk to the back of stage with the swim suit firmly wedged between my cheeks.

#firstdecentwedgieinalongtime

### BRIS VEGAS, BEER, PRAWNS, NO CABS & FOOD POISONING

I remember going to Bris Vegas for the night a few years ago with the Captain, Luscious Luke & Greg Spent for a gig for Volvo Trucks.

As we arrived in the early arvo and the sun was shining we picked up 2kg of prawns and a carton of corona and sat on the balcony and hooked in. I was taught in WA from a young age

1\ WACKY WORKMEN AT THE JOB – PROBUILD CORPORATE EVENT  
 2\ WACKY RACERS AT THE MELBOURNE F1 GRAND PRIX  
 3\ WALK WITH THE ELEPHANTS NEW ENCLOSURE LAUNCH – SAFARI BROTHERS WELCOMING GUESTS AT THE MELBOURNE ZOO ENTRANCE  
 4\ MARC & SCOTT WARM (EACH OTHER) UP TO LEAD LAURIE LAWRENCE OUT AT CROWN





4.



5.



6.



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9.



10.



11.



12.

when eating prawns "Always remove the poo chute". Pity no one told the others this as they chomped away all arvo, mmmm.

The gig went very well and, as usual, we were funny, very entertaining and well liked by all = client happy.

**“NO MATTER WHERE, WHAT TIME, HOW MANY SETS, WHAT OUTFIT, HOW WE GET THERE OR WHO ELSE IS IN THE BAND (EXCEPT FOR DIGIT) I SAY YES IN A DRUMBEAT TO DO A WACKY GIG.”**

Getting back to the unit was a different story as there was a 2 hour wait for a cab with all our gear and then the next day my three companions had funny tummies probably due too much prawn poo, poor babies.

Not a funny story really but there are two very important mottos for life on tour on a Wacky gig.

1. Play hard or go home.
2. Poo is designed to leave the body, not go in.

#### COFFEE TABLE BOOK

I first met Nick in 1988 as we both played in the World Expo City Marching Band. That was an amazing year we had as 19 year olds playing for 100's of thousands of people all over the Expo site in many different formats of musical expression. That was all good but more importantly I think we like many of our counter parts drank at least 100,000 beers as well that year. A great start to a great friendship.

A few years later Nick asked if I would like to do a gig with Wacky at the Brighton Festival to which I said no probs. He dropped off the fantastic outfit which was yellow overalls (2nd most comfortable Wacky outfit ever) and met them the following day down at the beach not knowing any of the songs or what to expect at all. I tried my best to sound like a drummer using the now standard wacky drum kit on a harness, consisting of a snare drum, cymbal and a cowbell. I had worked out how to play two grooves on this new instrument being a swing feel and a straight feel but obviously over the last 17+ years I have now increased this to 4 grooves. I'm working on a fifth groove but this will take more time.

Now usually the drummer is stuck at the back of stage and stationary but this gig was a true breath of fresh air. It was on this

very first gig when I realised that Nic was onto something here as I only had to carry one drum to the gig, no carrying loads of gear up stairs from car parks, no finishing at 3am and no off their face punters hassling for Cold Chisel (actually this still does happen). So glad I said yes to this first gig which opened my eyes to a whole new world of fun as no matter where, what time, how many sets, what outfit, how we get there or who else is in the band (except for Digit) I say yes in a drumbeat to do a Wacky gig.

Without hesitation I can say I'm a very lucky man as it's not often you can experience life (within Wacky and outside of) with one of those great mates that you can rely on, look up to, laugh with, laugh at, do anything for and generally just be in man love with (did I just say that out loud?).

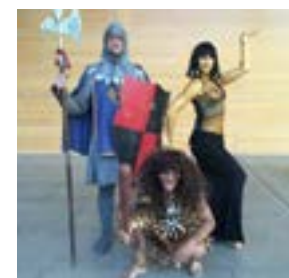
I've lost count of how many gigs I've done with Nic since 1998 and being involved in this book of memories has highlighted what an exceptional captain of #leadership he is.

I have a quote that I say quite often that perfectly sums up what it's like working with the legend that is Nic Yates which is,

*"I can't believe I'm getting paid for this".*

5\ DODGY ATHLETES  
SHOW HOW IT'S DONE -  
TOYOTA EKIDEN 2008  
6\ DJ WALKER LIGHT UP  
DOCKLANDS PRECINCT WITH  
SOME FUNKY GROOVES AND  
LIGHT MOVES 7\ BIG BRUCE  
MCAVANEY POPS IN FOR A  
PHOTO WITH THE BOYS ON  
CROWN OAKS DAY  
8\ PRAWNS AND POO  
CHUTES 9\ WELL EARN'T  
BREAK AND ICE COLD  
FRESHRESHER DURING  
THE AFTERNOON PARTY  
SET ON MELBOURNE CUP  
DAY 10\ SNOWMAN IN HIS  
ELEMENT DURING WINTER AT  
DOCKLANDS 11\ SCOTTIE  
CONFUSED ABOUT HOW  
TO PLAY THE TUBA  
12\ MORNING SUITS READY  
TO ROCK THE MELBOURNE  
CUP PARADE









“THE ENTIRE CROWD WAS ENTHRALLED WITH YOUR PERFORMANCE, THEY WERE UP DANCING AND SINGING ALONG.”  
— STEELINE







# Holly Johnson

– DANCER

Happy 21st bday to Wacky Creative, Nic and the team!!!

I can't even remember the first time I worked for wacky but every time I get a call or email from the team I'm excited of the possibilities..

From being paid to ride awesome bikes down Swanston St on Melbourne Cup or Australia Day handing out simple flags and sunscreen, to dancing 'Thriller' at a Coles head office Christmas party where the jelly shots are on hand... and from making up my friends so they are a living red carpet!

To Santa's helpers turned elf (under instruction from Nic to "Not be too sexy for the dads!"), it's always fun and always so well coordinated.

I love seeing the guys on tv and out and about with my own family while they are dressed up as 'oh god'... only as far as the imagination can take you!!

What will you guys think of NEXT??

Nic is such a great boss in the way he keeps his cool! Very admirable! Congratulations on 21 years.

I look forward to working with you all in the future and seeing what other crazy wacky adventures wacky gets up to.

Love Holly



1\ IT AINT A PARTY UNLESS YOU'RE GLAMMED AND BLINGED UP – HOLLY'S HAIR AND BEAUTY STATION – COLES STAFF XMAS PARTY  
 2\ BOOTSCOOTING DANCERS PUT ON A SHOW AT CENTRAL PIER  
 3\ HOLLY SHAKIN' AND SINGIN' HER THANG ON STAGE WITH DEJAVU WHILE WACKY KEEP THEM BUSY BETWEEN SETS  
 4\ DDAWAY CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY – THE WACKY ELVES AND SANTA POP IN TO MEET THE KIDS AND GIVE AWAY SOME PRESENTS  
 FAR RIGHT\ A COLES DOZEN (15) OF CHICKENS BEFORE A FLASHMOB PROMOTION AT COLES HEAD OFFICE

4.







**FEZMATIC, SWISH, SPORT, WINDY KILTS, WACKY GOLF, WACKY QUIZ, WACKY BOWLERS, DJ WALKER, PHOTOGRAZZI, TOUCANS, RING MASTER, GORILLAS, SKIN DIVE JIVE, FOOTY SUPER FANS, JUNGLE, FEATHERS FRILLS AND FINERY, SPRUIKERS, WACKY BASKETBALL, WACKY CHAIR UMPIRE, WACKY AIR, EASTER BUNNY, WACKY FOOTBALLS, WACKYWOOD, WACKY FBI, WACKY SUMO, SPEEDY STALLIONS, REMOTE INTERACTIVE, WACKY COCKATOOS, WACKY SANTA CLAUS, FOOD AND WINE, WACKY CHRISTMAS TOY SOLDIERS, RUDOLPH THE WACKY REINDEER, WACKY JUDGE, ROAMING ROMANS, WACKY CHRISTMAS TURKEY, WACKY PANTOMIME, WACKY CHRISTMAS TREE, AUSSIE, DRYER BROTHERS, WACKETY SAX, WACKY CHRISTMAS STAR, WACKY CHRISTMAS SNOWMAN, WACKY CHRISTMAS PUDDING, THANK GOD YOU'RE WACKY, WACKY CHRISTMAS PRESENT, WACKY CHRISTMAS ELVES, HOLLYWOOD, WACKY CHRISTMAS CRACKER, WHITE HONKIES, WACKY CHRISTMAS BAUBLE, BUSH BOY AND BOTTLE BRUSH BABY, WACKY CHRISTMAS CANDY CANES, CHINESE, ALL WRAPPED UP, COAT OF ARMS, CRACK THE CODE, FASHIONS ON THE FIELD, PAPER BOY, INTERNATIONAL, ROYAL STEWARDS, DANCE FEATURES, MURDER MYSTERY, AREIAL ORKESTRA, FLASHMOB, LUMINANCE, FAMILY DAY ENTERTAINMENT, EGYPTIAN GUARDS, FIESTA, LASER STIX, SWINGLE BELLS, LATINO SOMBRERO, TRAVEL, FAMOUS FACES, WACKY WONKA, STREETS OF MELBOURNE, BEACH PATROL, SHOW GIRLS, THE ART OF WACKY, YOU'VE GOT MAIL, MAKE AN**



**ENTRANCE, ROLLING RED CARPET, WACKY SECURITY, WACKY BLACKBOARDS, WACKY DOORMEN, NEW BALLS PLEASE, COOL BLACK, CHRISTMAS, WACKY RUGBY, SAFETY OFFICER, SHOE SHINE, WACKY CONDUCTORS, NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM, MELBOPOLY, WHITE, WACKWOOD, WACKY FRUIT, LASER CIRQUE, IT'S A GOAL, WATER, HEADS AND TAILS, DODGY ATHLETES, WACKY CYCLISTS, WACKY NURSES, WACKY DOCTORS, WACKY SCIENTISTS, HORROR, CROWD COACHES, FABULOUS FLAMINGOS, WACKY WINTERLAND, WACKY RACERS, WACKY FOOTY, TEAM BUILDING GAMES, WACKY STOCKMEN, CIRCUS, CRUISER BIKES, SPARKLIES, SAFARI BROTHERS, STEVE VERMIN, RED CARPET REVELATION, RACE STEWARDS, WACKY PIRATES, PRISONERS, WACKY PILOTS, PASS THE PARCEL, PAPARAZZI, HALLOWEEN, MORNING SUITS, MODELS AND PROMOTION, MEN IN SUITS, SHOWERMAN, LOVE BOAT, LETTER SCRAMBLE, WACKY LOVE HEART, MANGO TANGO, FANFARE RACE TRUMPETER, WELCOME ABOARD, EASTER, RED CARPET, WOBBLY WAITERS, LASER FUNK, KNIFE FORK AND SPOON, FLIPPERDANCE, WACKY MUMMIES, WACKY NETBALL, WACKY ZOMBIES, SNAKE GODDESS, PHANTOM HORSE RACE, GIDDY UP, GANGSTERS, HORSE RACING, VIVA LOST ELVIS, WACKY EASTER EGGS, TENNIS ANYONE?, CRICKETERS, CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, CIRQUE, WACKY CHEFS, EGYPTIAN, AUSSIE FLAG SUIT BAND, WACKY BINGO, DODGY BOOKIES, LIVE LOGOS, MASTER OF CEREMONIES, BLOOMING AWESOME, MUSIC AQUATICA, LAW ORDER AND SECURITY, CARNIVALE, ALE CAPONES**



# Penny Mc Donald

– EVENT LOGISTICS

The first thing I would want to say about Wacky is the joy that comes into my heart when ever I see your name on a run sheet, or hear that distinctive Wacky sound on a parade, at an event or even standing in the cue at the airport before Christmas.

I know that a Wacky performance will always be 100% fun.

My most memorable story would have to be the Rotary conference in Launceston. I was amazed that you could all be sound asleep on the dressing room floor and with a minutes notice bounce up, grab instruments and walk straight on stage and be very funny and focused.

My funniest story is seeing you play in the pouring rain at the Food and Wine Festival in your wet suits and flippers and kicking water over each other.

I love the Wacky ability to improvise and be creative on the spot. This speaks of a deep trust and love of your work and I have loved working with you for the last 21 years.



1.

# Simone Cockinis

– OFFICE ASSISTANT

I had a short, sweet time working with Nic in 2009.

Congratulations on 21 years of Wacky. It's a fantastic achievement, perhaps only surpassed by the smiles put on countless faces. Hip hip hooray!



2.



3.

1\ NIC, PENNY AND CITY OF MELBOURNE MAYOR DOYLE HAVING A GIGGLE WHILE TALKING THROUGH THE GIG – CENTRAL PEIR, DOCKLANDS  
2\ NIC, PENNY AND CITY OF MELBOURNE MAYOR DOYLE HAVING A GIGGLE WHILE TALKING THROUGH THE GIG – CENTRAL PEIR, DOCKLANDS  
3\ JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE WACKY OFFICE





3.



4.



5.

## John Yates

– ACCOUNTANT

### REGARDING NICHOLAS ANDREW YATES

1. So I (John Yates) was born before him and therefore have known him since he was born and that means: I was there from the start!
2. I was there when a dog beat him on Hey Hey It's Saturday!
3. Bourke Street Mall ... plying his trade as a busker. Had a reasonable crowd and as a fluke I happened to be walking past. He saw me and yelled out ... "Hey, you, stop... watch

*and then give me some money."* I turned and saw who was yelling at me; the crowd was all looking at me as a result of his screaming at an innocent passer-by. I said...*"Hey, you, I'm gonna keep on walking ... I'm not giving money to my family here ... I'll shout you dinner Saturday night"*.

The banter got pretty funny and went for a while after that as you would expect... the crowd had a pretty good laugh and I'm sure enjoyed that more than his show. I shoulda put a hat on the ground and gone halves.

**“SOMETIMES YOU JUST GOTTA SAY... WHAT THE FUCK!” AND HAVE A CRACK.”**

4. He has been my slave driver as I provided manual labour for him. Helped him out as a roadie at the original Grand Prix gigs

... mainly to get the free entry and corporate box attendance. Have been a trusted attendee at wig shops and the like over the years.

5. Love the way every gig which involves good looking women; I'm seen a selfie or shot of him with them! Apparently perks of the job!
6. Advice provided professionally and personally by me to him such as the wise advice provided by Tom Cruise's father in Risky Business ...:

*"Sometimes you just gotta say... What the Fuck!"* and have a crack.

It seems to have worked out pretty well... the credit might as well be mine!

3\ OKTOBERFEST ,  
BIRRARUNG MARR – GERMAN  
BEER MAIDS AND ONE  
VERY HAPPY JOCKEY ON A  
LEDER-HORSE-N 4\ ONE OF  
THOSE GIGS THAT INVOLVED  
"GOOD LOOKING WOMEN" –  
MELBOURNE F1 GRAND PRIX  
PROMOTION AT FLINDERS ST  
STATION 5\ 'UNCLE SAM'  
STYLE OUTFITS FOR THE  
SUPERBOWL LIVE SITE AT  
CROWN CASINO PROMENADE





1.

# Martin MacCaulay

– TUBA

- Earliest gigs I can remember are the gig at Caz Clarkson's school (Presentation Ladies College) and the Heidelberg Festival.
- Nov 95 – Gig at Nic's old School Assumption College Kilmore
- Aug 96 – King Island, working with their Concert Band and ending up playing at the pub for food and drinks.
- Tie Dying the Wacky overalls at Sean Coleman's mum's place.
- Being managed by Megan Coe (and Shaunagh??? – maybe not)
- Stephen Frisby playing guitar in the band. Great singer just couldn't hear the damn guitar.
- The Wacky tour of Sydney (Darling Harbour – was that the 1st Sydney trip???). Going out on Frisby's brother's expensive yacht and him crashing into the moorings and other boats in the harbour (and not caring less!)
- Marty – "*I'm just resting*" from eating his body weight in prawns and seamlessly moving on to the chicken.
- Early repertoire (Zorba, Eine Kleine, La Bamba – "*I Smella Your Socks Now...*", Ballet Medley, Sweet Georgia Brown.
- Auckland 2002 – New Year's Eve, Great gig but say no more.....
- 90's – Tennis gigs at the Australian Open – with change rooms right next to Pete Sampras, Mary-Jo Fernandes (and getting calls from Fenandes' coach). Getting free Nike shoes.
- Various Tabaret Openings, pokies being legalised in Victoria – The First & Last Hotel, The Eltham Hotel etc.
- Australian Grand Prix – doing a pit lane walk and saying 'good luck' to one of the teams only to realise that that particular team hadn't qualified for the race.



2.



- Spirit of Tasmania – Tom missing the boat. Vinnie Bourke doing some gigs (on tuba??), Coco being fairly mad about the way the bunks were situated in each cabin, relative the direction the boat was going. 'Googie Eggs' – I don't even know why that bloke was so angry...
- Melbourne Aquarium – Nic, Marty, Scott – Nic ends up IN one of the pools with some baby sharks. Marty and Scott in fits of laughter. At the end of the set, Nic debriefed us saying, "OK guys, great set – next time can you actually play the tunes!"
- March 2000, First gig in Singapore. Flew Emirates and got an upgrade to Business Class on the way over. Was there 8 (or 10) of us in two groups???
- Marc Mathews threatening to sue Nic because of retina damage and whiplash having to look at all the pretty 'fillies' arriving at Flemington.
- The 'Creative Entertainment Concepts' brand.
- Carlton Football Club – Wacky in Sparklies – Tom as Captain Carlton. The premise is that the Adelaide Crows mascot has stolen the Carlton Premiership Cup and Captain Carlton (Tom) would come out and save the day. He had nervously chain-smoked about 30 cigarettes to try and calm his nerves, guts hanging out of the lycra cozzie. When the crowd announcer said "Here comes Captain Carlton to save the day" Tom rushes out to chase the Crows mascot – without luck. He just couldn't catch up to the bastard! My strongest memory is the laughter coming from the crowd, and from the other Wacky team.
- Melbourne Aquarium – Marty as Santa, says to a child, "Look, you have four eyes just like Santa". Next thing is that the kid father turns out to be the head of Westpac or NAB – and makes a formal complaint to Nic. As penance, Marty was put on a solo 'Pudding' gig (no instrument) at Watergardens the week before Christmas. Marty goes up to the first customer and says "Merry Christmas! – What are your plans for the big day?" to which the lady replied "We don't celebrate Christmas – we are Muslim." Marty is thinking 'only 2 hours and 59 minutes to go...'



3.



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10.

- 1\ MARTY AND CHRIS AS THE EPIC ELF DUO – MIDLANDS SHOPPING CENTRE
- 2\ SOMETIMES GIGS ARE REALLY HARD WORK – THE RACING STEWARDS GETTING RACE PUNTERS EXCITED AS THEY ENTER DURING THE MELOURNE CUP CARNIVAL
- 3\ MELBOURNE CUP PARADE –ROYAL STEWARDS ADDING A TOUCH OF CLASS TO THE PROCEEDINGS
- 4\ CHRISTMAS SHINANIGANS IN THE BACK STAGE TENT
- 5\ SAFARI BROTHERS ON THEIR FIRST DAY JUDGING BY THE WHITES OF THEIR LEGS – MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL
- 6\ A BIT EXCITED, A BIT MORE GLAM – MEMBERS GATE FLEMINGTON RACE COURSE DURING THE MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL
- 7\ DDAWAY CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY – SANTA AND MRS CLAUS SAY HELLO TO ALL THE BOYS AND GIRLS
- 8\ AUSTRALIAN OPEN MEDIA LAUNCH – THE WACKY BOYS LEAD THE PARADE AND ENTERTAIN AT FLINDERS ST STATION
- 9\ 2016 CHRISTMAS RACE DAY – FLEMINGTON RACE COURSE
- 10\ MELBOURNE ZOO CORPORATE FAMILY DAY –THE LOST TOURISTS AT IT AGAIN... NOT SURE THOSE MAPS WILL HELP





WE TAKE

FUN

SERIOUSLY!





1.



2.



3.



4.



5.

## Sean McLeod

### – DRUMS

21 years have passed by so fast.

My earliest recollection stems back to the birth of WACKY, where after a Grand Wazoo gig at Brown Brothers Winery Milawa, curfew was called and we had to stop playing. Suddenly Nic pulls out his saxophone playing iconic TV show themes whilst roving through the audience. Tom grabs his boxing glove, sticks it on the end of his trombone and starts bopping everyone on the head. Other band members join the unplugged set and the place erupts... the crowd is going nuts. Everyone was singing, dancing and acting like hypnotised monkeys and WACKY ENTERTAINMENT was born.

There are too many funny and amazing stories to share from various WACKY gigs.

One that stands out is the famous Spring Racing Carnival circa 2004.

### “YOU GUYS ARE SO FUNNY I’VE PISSED MYSELF.”

Nic, Marty and myself were performing at the Elms on a warm Derby Day. A group of older women here from New Zealand arrive to join in on the fun. In no time Nic has them singing, dancing and in fits of uncontrolled laughter! One of the ladies turns around and says, “You guys are so funny I’ve pissed myself”.

Just then we stop to see her standing in a puddle of her own urine. She had been laughing so much she couldn’t control herself.

Nic, Marty, myself and all the VRC staff couldn’t believe our eyes, we had never seen anything like that. We laughed all day till our bellies ached.

It’s these unique experiences and the great friendships bonded through years of Wacky gigs that makes me be proud to be part of the WACKY family.

Thank you Nic Yates for having the vision and creative flare for bringing it all together.

HAPPY 21st BIRTHDAY!!

And here’s to many more to come.

Best wishes,

Sean “I’m under the Helicopter” McLeod

FAR LEFT\ PHOTOSHOOT FOR THE WACKY QUIZ AT TURNER ST HQ 1\ DODGY BOOKIES – MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL 2\ MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL – ENTERTAINING GUESTS AT THE ELMS GATE 3\ MELBOURNE STAR RE-LAUNCH – A BIG WHEEL NEEDS BIG ENTERTAINMENT 4\ YES THIS IS A LEGITIMATE GIG. PAID TO PLAY WITH REMOTE CONTROL CARS 5\ MORNING SUITS MEET AND GREET AT THE MEMBERS GATE – MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL 2010







# Sharni Page

– ACTOR / SINGER

Initially, I was working parallel with the Wacky crew. My first few gigs were not for Wacky but we were performing at the same events, the opening of Fountain Gate, where the dressing rooms were still construction sites and all the costumes and performers were covered in dust. I was supposed to be with 3 other performers but found myself working with Nic, Col and Luke. The second and most fateful was the 'RSPCA Pet Micro-chipping Day' in Frankston. I loved the joy, humour and talent of you all and felt a kinship that clearly was going to lead to something much more in the future. The rest is history. Who would have thought?!!!! Nic may have even been our matchmaker by grabbing my number that day in Frankston so he is clearly a man of many talents. Col and I will have been together 15 years this year, so I have been a part of the Wacky family for a really long time.

Biggest mishap gig and therefore one of the most memorable was when I was performing Wobbly Waiters with Simon Russell. We were hired to do a private function in Port Melbourne. As team leader I liaised with the venue manager upon arrival as to where we were to store props and get dressed etc. I talked through what we would need from the drink staff from time to time so that it looks like we are legitimate staff members. No problem so far. I also chatted with the client and she was completely on board with our ideas and had some suggestions of her own. Everyone was responding as we would expect. As we were getting ready, a balloon man arrived with huge amounts of balloons to theme the space, the client politely let him know that he was at the wrong venue and that he was probably meant to be next door at the Port Melbourne Life Saving Club, not the Port Melbourne Yacht Club (which is where we were). Simon and I were laughing about how someone could be at the wrong venue as we were getting ready. We began. The staff did everything we said, the client watched us as we became more and more ridiculous and we thought we had done the best gig ever. Everyone loved it, we finished with a bang and then packed up and left.

A little while later I got the strangest call from Nic. He explained that the client called 'wondering where the Wacky Wobbly Waiters were'. I was completely confused because they must have been joking. Firstly I spoke to the client, and there was NO way they could have missed us, we went all out. Everyone knew we were there, we had vacuum cleaners, grandpa undies and safety tape

everywhere for goodness sake!!! Nic asked us which venue we were at, and we told him The Port Melbourne Yacht Club as the gig sheet said. Silence from Nic. He realised he had made a mistake and had accidentally sent us to the wrong venue. We were supposed to be at the Port Melbourne Life Saving Club!!!!!! Oh no!!!! Here we were laughing that the balloon man was at the wrong venue and WE WERE ALSO AT THE WRONG VENUE!!!! Nic in his typical professional manner gave that client a complimentary gig for a future event (because it was too late to go there now), apologised to us, because "these things happen" (although they hardly EVER happen with

**“A LITTLE WHILE LATER I GOT THE STRANGEST CALL FROM NIC. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE CLIENT CALLED ‘WONDERING WHERE THE WACKY WOBBLY WAITERS WERE’”**

Nic, he is always so thorough), and although we were all in a bit of shock, we all laughed and were amazed at how Simon and I managed to do an entire gig without one person stopping us and asking us what on earth we were doing and who we were!! It was an unbelievable comedy of errors and one to be remembered forever!

I guess my other memorable moment was definitely a personal one with Wacky playing such an important role at our wedding. Col and I felt so incredibly lucky to have the gang with us on the day, entertaining guests, creating such a special atmosphere, to ensure a magical day was had by all. Wacky navigated guests to the various locations with consummate ease, played so beautifully during the ceremony, and of course paved the way for AJ, Michelle and Marcus to take the baton and propel our wedding to the next level. I LOVE how you guys partied on with your endless playlist at the reception joining Dejavu on the little stage in the hall, and on the train ride back home. There was one carriage for the guests who wanted some peace and quiet to reflect on the day and doze on the way back to their accommodation, and another carriage for the guests who were swept up in the moment; who sung and danced along to ACDC, Bon Jovi, Choir Boys and countless more songs at the top of their lungs. (Note: most guests packed into the party carriage!) Wacky truly made our wedding the momentous occasion it was. Thank you Nic, Luke, Greg, and Adrian and the extended Wacky family of Simon, AJ and Michelle. What a day!!!

Sharni x

## OTHER MEMORABLE GIGS

- Tattersalls training videos
- Harry The Hirer
- Mazda launches including CX9 with the Mazda Bunch and Leo Sayer
- The Sound of Music with glowsticks for Mazda Foundation
- Eat Street Greek girl
- Commonwealth Games in those amazing white costumes
- Being fully body painted as an Aussie Flag, Tennis motif
- Driving the Rolling Rubbish Bin including the bin's last outing (With Simon Russell)
- Red Carpet Revelations - With Dick Power of course!
- Aquarium Quiz Show

1\ AIA AWARDS NIGHT – THEY ARE A RED CARPET REVELATION, AND EXCITED FOR PEOPLE TO BE INTERVIEWED BY THEM  
 2\ WHITE PERFORM AT THE 'STEP INTO THE LIGHT' THEMED 2008 AMWAY CONFERENCE  
 3\ SHARNI AND SIMON DURING THE MAZDA CX-9 LAUNCH PANTOMIME  
 4\ AUSTRALIA POST ENTERTAINMENT DURING THE MELBOURNE COMMONWEALTH GAMES  
 5\ MYER'S NYC PROMOTION AT THEIR FLAGSHIP STORE IN MELBOURNE  
 6\ LIVE LOGOS AT MASTERCARD'S CORPORATE GOLF DAY  
 7\ AT IT AGAIN, RED CARPET REVELATION AT THE LEND LEASE AWARDS NIGHT  
 8\ THE FOOD AND WINE TEAM – ATE 2009 PLAY MELBOURNE  
 9\ WELCOME ABOARD CHECK GUESTS IN – 2006 IMG MASTERCARD MASTERS TOURNAMENT DINNER  
 10\ STREETS OF MELBOURNE EVENT – AN ATHENIAN CHICK PROMOTING THE GREEK CULTURE ON OFFER IN MELBOURNE





ACTORS



BODY & FACE PAINTERS



MAGICIANS



BALLOONISTS



CARICATURISTS



EVENT ORGANISERS



EVENT MANAGERS



AGENTS



PHOTOGRAPHERS



DANCERS



COSTUME DESIGNERS



BUSINESS SUPPORT



STILT WALKERS



MUSICIANS



ADMINISTRATION TEAM



MULTI-SKILLED PERFORMERS



CLIENTS



FAMILY



SUPPLIERS



FRIENDS



# Thank you

We would like to thank so very kindly the ongoing support and friendships of the people, companies and organisations, performers, suppliers and clients that we have creatively collaborated with for over 21 years.

Many of these people appear in this book.

Thank you to those agents, who in the very beginning put the group forward for events, allowing us to begin developing Wacky's foundation, and to those agents who continue to represent and support us.

To the event organisers and their teams, thank you for entrusting us time after time in delivering enriching experiences at events the world over and, we hope, exceeding always your expectation and that of your clients.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a thousand pictures are worth our deepest gratitude. Thank you to those photographers that have worked with us to capture with incredible skill the special Wacky moments on events. We hope we've made your job a little easier and have appreciated your generosity of images... many of these showcased within these pages.

To the Wacky staff whose efforts in the office have allowed the company to work so effortlessly and efficiently over the years. Thank you for putting up with all the wackiness, and joining in with it. Though you don't receive the audience adulation, you've never been forgotten about by the performers you send out.

We would especially like to thank the performers that we worked and collaborated with on events over the many years. Whether it is working with or for us, or as one of the 'Wackies', your passion, quality of work and performance is unparalleled and is always wonderful to experience. Whether you have been there from the start or jumped into our Wacky world at different stages throughout the journey, we thank you for your professionalism and exceptional level of expertise, your friendship and camaraderie, and most importantly for taking fun as seriously as we do.

A big thank you also to the families that so generously allow us the precious time of their partners and parents to join in the fun with the Wacky team. We hope we haven't sent them back too unrecognisable from gigs over the years.

It is only with each person's and organisation's ongoing support and belief in our creative pursuit of taking fun seriously, that we have enjoyed this amazing 21 year journey. Filled with wonderful events, very special moments and memories... and most importantly, meeting and developing incredible relationships and friendships with people, both professionally and personally.

We can not wait for the next 21 years and what the journey through it will offer.

We look forward to continually striving for creative perfection and with your support, pushing the limit of where fun can be taken for, and with, you.







Thanks for all the  
memories Captain



