

2017 musical

# MARY POPPINS



Image from the Australian stage production

## GENERAL INFORMATION

We are very excited to be bringing Mary Poppins to the stage in May, 2017. This pack provides summary information about the show, major roles, summary of audition processes, and brief information about how rehearsals will run.

## ROLES (please see further on for some description of main roles)

For this show, we need:

- **Lead roles:** performers with the capacity to act, move and sing / present musical numbers confidently.
- **Other named roles:** performers with the capacity to act, move and sing as part of a chorus.
- **MS/SS Chorus:** performers with the capacity to act, move and sing as part of a chorus.
- **Junior School chorus:** performers with the capacity to act, move and sing as part of a chorus for specific musical numbers.
- **Specialist dance troupe members (specific auditions will be held):** performers with specific dance skills to perform solo and ensemble pieces across the show. Ideally, some dancers who can form a chorus of tap dancers to support the musical number 'Step in Time'.

## OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Backstage roles and responsibilities are a crucial part of the production and include:

- Operators of sound / lighting equipment
- Stage crew
- Support for costume making, set making and painting



## AUDITIONS

In Week 10, Term 3, more specific information about the audition pieces for each role will be available, following a meeting.

- For the acting / singing audition for lead and major named roles (auditions will be held in Weeks 1 and 2, Term 4), students will be asked to learn a short piece of script and part of a song depending on the role/s that students are interested in auditioning for.
- For MS/SS Chorus members, students will be asked to undertake a group audition later in Term 4.
- For JS Chorus, Mrs Matena and Mrs Bentley will conduct an audition process in Week 2, Term 1, 2017.
- For the dance audition for the specialist dance troupes, dancers will be asked to attend one or both group auditions. For the tap troupe, students will need to provide their own tap shoes and come along prepared to learn a short sequence of tap choreography which will be performed in small groups. Dancers from both tap and non-tapping backgrounds are also welcome to audition for the general specialist troupe which will involve learning Broadway-style jazz choreography to perform in small groups. Auditions for the specialist dance troupes will take place later in Term 4.

Auditions will be held in front of a panel. The panel will look for strengths of each performer and offer roles accordingly. It may be that you are offered a role that is not one of the ones you audition for. Please keep an open mind, as the panel can sometimes see strengths and capabilities in you, and potential for excellence in certain roles.

## REHEARSALS

In Term 4, 2016 rehearsals and vocal work will begin with lead roles and some specific parts / numbers.

Scripts will be available before the Summer holidays, and students will be asked to begin the line learning process over the break.

In Term 1, 2017 the rehearsal process will be as structured as possible to efficiently use the out of hours time commitments. For specialist chorus groups, dance troupes and leads there may be after school or lunch time rehearsals throughout the duration of term 1. It is an expectation that cast members attend all relevant rehearsals.

Rehearsals will be held on Sunday afternoons beginning February, 2017.

A more specific schedule of times and cast requirements will be sent out in the new year, but rehearsals will run from 2pm-5pm to begin with and in the weeks leading up to the performance may extend outside of these hours.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

There will be a \$50 fee per student for participation in the musical. This fee helps to cover the cost of script hire and costuming.

Cast T-shirts will be available to purchase for an additional cost. Buying a t-shirt is an optional extra, and not a requirement of involvement in the show.

## PRODUCTION DATES:

Week 1, Term 2, 2017: May 1<sup>st</sup> – May 6<sup>th</sup>.

### Important Dates to note

			Who is required
Auditions (Round 1)	Term 4, Week 1		
Auditions (Round 2)	Term 4, Week 2		
Rehearsals (Part 1) 2017	Term 1 Weeks 1-5	Sunday Afternoons 2 - 5pm	Cast Orchestra (?)
Rehearsals (Part 2) 2017	Term 1 Weeks 6 - 9	1 – 5pm	ALL
Holiday Workshops		April 24 – 27	ALL
Bump In		April 28 / 29	Crew

Production Week	Week 1, Term 2	May 1 – May 6	ALL
-----------------	----------------	---------------	-----

## SYNOPSIS OF “MARY POPPINS’ (with songs in brackets)

### Act One

Bert, a man of many professions, introduces the audience to Cherry Tree Lane ("[Chim Chim Cher-ee](#)/Cherry Tree Lane- Part 1") in Edwardian London. Number 17 is where the Banks family lives: George and Winifred Banks, their two naughty children Jane and Michael, their cook, Mrs. Brill and their odd-job man, Robertson Ay. Things are not going well for Jane and Michael. They are out of control and as the show starts, their latest nanny, Katie Nanna, storms out. After that, Mrs. Brill and Robertson Ay complain about living in a "madhouse." The children decide to write the advertisement for a new nanny ("[The Perfect Nanny](#)"), but George Banks has a very different idea of what constitutes the perfect nanny and he tears up the piece of paper and throws it in the fireplace. Within moments Mary Poppins arrives and takes charge of the Banks children, having every confidence in her own qualifications and merits ("[Practically Perfect](#)").

On the children's first outing to the park, they meet Bert and, despite their reservations about his ragged clothes and dirty face, Mary teaches them that they must learn to look past appearances. To illustrate the point, Mary brings the park statues, including a mythological figure named Neleus, to life ("[Jolly Holiday](#)").

While Mary manages the children, other problems lie with their parents. Winifred Banks is aware that she is somehow disappointing both her children and her husband ("Being Mrs Banks"). George Banks, on the other hand, can't understand why she finds the role of wife and mother so difficult ("Cherry Tree Lane (reprise)"). In an effort to please her husband, Winifred sends out invitations for a smart tea party. Mrs. Brill makes the preparations, while telling an eager Robertson Ay to keep his hands off. The children inadvertently sabotage the kitchen preparations, but Mary Poppins sorts it out with a lesson ("[A Spoonful of Sugar](#)"). However, it is then revealed that none of the invitees are coming.

Mary takes the children to visit their father at the bank where he works ("Precision and Order"). There George is busy dealing with possible investment clients: first an ambitious man named Von Hussler who has an elaborate money-making scheme, and then a middle-class man named Northbrook who has a simple factory project. George is furious when Mary turns up with the children, but an innocent question asked by Jane (What's more important, a good man or a good idea?) makes him realise how much his values have changed ("[A Man Has Dreams](#)") since he was an idealistic young man. He then decides to accept Northbrook's project, and rejects Von Hussler's, but unfortunately things take a turn for the worse afterwards.

Outside St. Paul's Cathedral, Mary introduces the children to the Bird Woman ("[Feed the Birds](#)"). Jane is suspicious of her, but Michael responds to the Bird Woman and throws crumbs for the birds. On the trip home, the children meet the enigmatic Mrs. Corry who runs a magic sweet shop that also sells words ("[Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious](#)").

The children return home in high spirits, unaware that things have gone wrong for their father. Unknown to them, George's decision to reject Von Hussler has cost the bank dearly, and he is suspended without pay. George explodes with rage at the children and they are sent to the nursery. Reacting to her father's outburst, Mary Poppins briefly points out that other members of the family are rarely there to take care of the parents, before Jane and Michael get into a fight over Jane's doll, prompting a displeased Poppins to order them to bed and enchant them to sleep. The frightening consequence of Jane's anger becomes apparent moments afterwards, as Jane and Michael's disgruntled toys come to life and join Mary in teaching them a lesson in how to take better care of their belongings and toys (formerly "Temper, Temper", now "Playing the Game").

Believing that Jane and Michael need personal growth, Mary decides to leave Cherry Tree Lane ("[Chim Chim Cher-ee – Rooftop Duet](#)"), to bring them to their senses. Her distraught charges find a note saying that perhaps they will see Mary Poppins again eventually.

## Act Two

In a misguided attempt to please her husband, Mrs Banks arranges for his childhood nanny, Miss Andrew, to take over from the suddenly departed Mary ("Cherry Tree Lane (Reprise)"). At the sight of her, a terrified Mr. Banks flees, exclaiming "the Holy Terror!" To everyone's shock and dismay, Miss Andrew is a brutal and cruel [tyrant](#), quick to administer her own terrible elixir ("Brimstone and Treacle Part 1") and discipline by threatening to split Jane and Michael up through boarding school.

Terrified of their new nanny, the children escape to the park and find their good friend Bert, who cheers them up and helps Michael fulfill his dream of flying a kite ("[Let's Go Fly a Kite](#)"). This marks the return of Mary Poppins. Jane and Michael are thrilled to be reunited with her, and then quickly tell her of the changes that have gone on at Number 17.

Also hiding in the park is George, who is depressed over his supposed lack of achievements ("Good For Nothing"). Searching for him is Winifred, who at last understands her husband and the damage that was done to him by Miss Andrew ("Being Mrs Banks (Reprise)").

When the children return to Number 17, Mary sets Caruso, Miss Andrew's lark, free from his cage. This leads to confrontation between the two nannies, ending with Miss Andrew having a taste of her own medicine as she is put in a large birdcage and vanishes [down below](#) ("Brimstone and Treacle Part 2"). Winifred and then George return at this point, surprised but pleased that Miss Andrew has "left".

On their next adventure, Bert introduces the children to his friends the chimney sweeps ("[Step in Time](#)"). The sweeps' dance eventually enters the house, causing chaos. As the sweeps quickly exit, George receives a telegram from the bank requesting his presence there. George assumes that it is to seal his fate, and decides it's time to sell the family heirloom. However, the vase is shattered accidentally by Mrs. Brill, who goes into a despairing shock since she had been cleaning it from the top of the shelf. When she is being led away for comfort, George goes to clean the broken pile himself, to find it reveal a collection of gingerbread stars from his childhood. This leads to a brief moment of reflection for George ("[A Man Has Dreams/ A Spoonful of Sugar \(Reprise\)](#)"). After shaking hands with Bert, George leaves to meet the Chairman of the Bank.

At the children's encouragement, Winifred decides to follow her heart and be at George's side at the bank ("Anything Can Happen"). Unseen to anyone else, Mary takes Jane and Michael to follow, where they watch the unfolding events.

At the bank, George is shocked to learn the truth about his choice: far from ruining the bank, he has made a fortune by both rejecting Von Hussler and approving Mr. Northbrook's loan. They ask for the word that made them so successful, which George admits to be Mary Poppins' word, ("[Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious \(Reprise\)](#)"). Winifred, arriving to defend her husband, finds instead he is the hero of the hour. After she mentions Miss Andrew's name to the Bank Manager, the old man too relates his experience under "the Holy Terror". George apologizes for underestimating her, and together they return to the house ("Anything Can Happen (Reprise)").

Mary realizes that with the family reunited and happy, her task is done. With regret, she says goodbye to Bert with a kiss, and sets off ("[A Spoonful of Sugar \(Farewell Reprise\)](#)"). Jane and Michael accept that Mary is leaving them and they tell Mary Poppins that they'll never forget her. The two children watch as their parents waltz happily together and Mary flies high above the audience, disappearing in a flash.

## MAJOR CHARACTERS

- **Mary Poppins** – the namesake and lead female character. Her last name describes her behavior, because she tends to "pop in" and "pop out" of children's lives whenever she pleases. She has the ability to fly and perform magic. She moves into 17 Cherry Lane to help the Banks Family.
- **Bert** – the **narrator** and leading man. He is a song and dance man, charismatic and charming. A "**jack of all trades**", it is hinted he possesses some magic ability as well, or at least knows all about the magical world that Mary Poppins comes from. It is mentioned Bert has known Mary before the story starts, but no details of how are mentioned.
- **Winifred Banks** – the wife of George Banks, and mother to Jane and Michael. In the musical, she is a former actress. Winifred is shown to be confused and overwhelmed with her family and her role in it. It is hinted that she did not grow up in the same strict manor as her husband.
- **George Banks** – the husband of Winifred, and father of Jane and Michael Banks. George grew up in a very strict and stern household. He mentions hardly ever seeing his mother and father, who did not believe in public displays of affection. George works at a bank in London, and it is hinted that his father did as well. George had a nanny named Miss Euphemia Andrew as a child, who was also very strict. George is often away at work and rarely spends time with the children. As the story goes on, he learns lessons about being more affectionate to his family and is taught that they are more important than work.
- **Jane Caroline Banks** – the eldest of George and Winifred, she is described as being messy and having a bad temper.
- **Michael Banks** – the son of George and Winifred. He is a mischievous little boy who likes to play pranks on his nannies and not follow the rules. He longs for more attention and time with his father, which is most likely the cause of his behavior.
- **Mrs. Clara Brill** – the **maid** for the Banks family. She is overworked and often stressed due to the behavior of the children and the demands placed on her by Mr. and Mrs. Banks.
- **Robertson Ay** – the **houseboy** for the Banks family. He appears in the original books, but not in the film. His background and family are never mentioned. He is described as being lazy and sleepy. He often is the cause of chaos and is not very helpful, however the Banks family puts up with him. A comedy role.
- **Miss Euphemia Andrew** – George Banks' former nanny. She is a very mean and strict nanny, the **antagonist** of the story. In the musical, after Mary Poppins leaves, Winifred contacts her and asks her to come to Cherry Tree Lane, which ends with a duel with Mary Poppins that ends with Mary defeating her and sending her off.
- **Mrs. Clara Corry** – Mrs. Corry is a **magical** woman who operates a magical **pop-up** "Talking Shop". Her shop is in the park and she is helped by her two daughters, Annie and Fannie. In the musical, she leads the chorus, along with Mary and Bert, in singing and spelling out "**Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious**".
- **The Bird Woman** – The Bird Woman is a **beggar** woman who is dressed in rags and looks disheveled. She sits on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral in London everyday, selling bags of crumbs for a **tuppence**. The cathedral is near the bank where George works, and after their visit, Jane and Michael meet the woman and Michael purchases a bag from her with the money he was given from Mr. Northbrook. Mary Poppins tells the children not to look down on her and respect her through the song "Feed the Birds". In Act II, George Banks, for the first time, stops at the steps and gives the Bird Woman money.

There are also a number of other characters who have smaller speaking /singing /dancing roles. These include a statue in the park and dolls in the nursery that come to life, characters in the bank, park and shop.