An Aussie Shepherd's Christmas

By Deborah Wassenberg

It was nearly Christmas. At the last minute my husband and I were asked to fill in at Kid's Church. What to do? We dressed up as a couple of Aussie shepherds and I wrote a skit based on the shepherd's story in Luke 2:8-20. I've since made some alterations to the script so children can be added to the cast.

Cast: Shorty the shepherd (Leader/Volunteer)
Sheila the shepherd (Leader/Volunteer)
Shepherds (Children)
Sheep (Children)
Angel of the Lord (Child on box or step ladder)
Extra angels (Children)

Shepherd Costumes: Jeans, shirts or singlets, Akubra hats and boots.

Song to Learn: Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Scene: Campfire with billy hanging over it. Two mugs. Shepherds can sit on tree stumps for added height.

Shorty is tending the campfire. Suddenly, he hears a familiar sound. Sheila calls from the rear of the room.

Sheila: Cooee!

Shorty: ***(Standing and looking out into the bush, Shorty answers)***
Cooee!

Sheila walks in carrying her swag. She shakes Shorty's hand.

Sheila: G'day Shorty.

Shorty: G'day Sheila.

Sheila: It's good to be home.

Shorty: It's good to have you back.
How about a cuppa?

Sheila: Don't mind if I do.
I'm as dry as a kookaburra in the Simpson Desert.

Sheila drops her swag on the ground and accepts a mug of tea from Shorty.

Shorty: Where have you been?

Sheila: I've been in New Zealand for the World Shepherding Conference.

Shorty: Sounds beaut!

Sheila: I had a bonza time.

Shorty: What happens at a World Shepherding Conference?

Sheila: Shepherds from all around the world get together to talk about sheep.

Shorty: You don't say?

Sheila: There were lots of interesting Guest Speakers, too.
Professor **Baa**-ber talked about the latest shearing technology.

Shorty: He sounds like someone who's had a few close shaves!

Sheila: Yep, and there was great financial advice from the
Wool Street Journal.

Shorty: Well, I never!

Sheila: The best thing about the conference was meeting shepherds
from all over the world. I met shepherds from a country called Israel.

Shorty: What did they have to say for themselves?

Sheila: Turns out there's been shepherds in Israel for thousands
of years. You know Adam and Eve?

Shorty: I've heard of them.

Sheila: They had a son named Abel.
Guess what he did for a living?

Shorty: What?

Sheila: He was a shepherd.

Shorty: Fancy that!

Sheila: Listen, Israel had a famous king, right? His name was David.
Guess what his first job was when he was just a little fella?

Shorty: Don't tell me.

Sheila: A shepherd.

Shorty: Stone the crows!

Sheila: He even killed a lion and a bear to keep his Dad's sheep safe.
I tell ya, shepherds in Israel, go way back.

Shorty: That's impressive, Sheila.

Sheila: You haven't heard anything yet. Have a seat.

Shorty and Sheila both sit at the campfire, stage right.

Sheila: Get an earful of this…

Children dressed as shepherds and sheep enter from the wings and stand stage left.

Sheila: One night, long ago, shepherds out in the fields were setting up camp for the night.

Shorty: Just like Aussie shepherds.

Sheila: They'd had a busy day keeping track of the sheep.

Some sheep wander. Shepherds gather them and keep them close.

Sheila: The shepherds had to protect them and make sure none of the sheep got injured or lost.

Shorty: Just like Aussie shepherds.

Sheila: The sheep were a bit jittery because of all the crowds.

Shorty: Just like Aussie…no wait a minute.
There's no crowds out here, Sheila.

Sheila: Nah. Our closest town is four hours away. But these shepherds were near a town called Bethlehem. It was full of people because the local bigwig was counting how many people he had.

Shorty: Just like Aussie shepherds. Count sheep, I mean. Not people.

Sheila: The shepherds had just settled down by the campfire…

Sheep 'sleep' and shepherds sit.

Sheila: When suddenly…

Angel enters from stage right and appears to the shepherds.

Sheila: An Angel of the Lord appeared out of nowhere!

Shorty: Strike a light! That must have given them a bit of a turn.

Sheila: The shepherds were terrified because angels are big bonza lookin' fellas.

Shorty: What did the Angel of the Lord say, Sheila?

Angel mimes to Sheila's words.

Sheila: He said, 'Do not be afraid.'

Shorty: Bit late for that, wasn't it?

Sheila: Anyway, he said, 'I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people.'

Shorty: What? **ALL** people? Not just for the people in Israel?

Sheila: Nah. Aussie's too. The Angel of the Lord said, 'Today, in the town of David (that's Bethlehem)…'

Shorty: I've heard of it.

Sheila: 'A Saviour has been born to you. He is Christ, the Lord. This will be the sign to you. You will find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes…'

Shorty: What do you mean, ‘swaddling clothes’?

Sheila: Apparently, strips of nice, clean cloth that keeps the baby bundled up.
‘You will find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and laying in a manger.’

Shorty: What do you mean, ‘manger’?

Sheila: Food trough.

Shorty: That’s a pretty unusual place to put a baby.

Sheila: Yeah, but they were living a bit like us out here on the sheep station, Shorty. They were making do. They were in a stable. There was so many people crowded into the town there was no room in the inn.

Shorty: What’s an inn?

Sheila: Motel.
Suddenly, the sky opened up…

Shorty: What? Rain to break the drought?

Sheila: No, more angels.

Shorty: Heavens!

Angels enter stage right.

Sheila: They were singing…

Song: ***Angels and children sing the Christmas Carol: Hark the Herald Angels Sing***

Shorty: That must have been a sight to behold, Sheila.

Sheila: When the angels left…

Angels exit stage right.

Sheila: The shepherds said to each other…

Shepherds mime Sheila’s words.

Sheila: 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.'

Shorty: Too right.

Sheila: They hurried off…

Shepherds exit stage left, but sheep and two shepherds, stay near the campfire.

Shorty: What happened next, Sheila?

Sheila: The shepherds went to the stable and saw baby Jesus, just as the angels said. The first people to see Jesus, the Saviour of the world, were *shepherds*, just like you and me.

Shorty: Well, I was never prouder to be a shepherd!

Sheila: And Shorty, the baby Jesus grew up and when He was teaching people, you'll never guess what He called himself.

Shorty: What, Sheila?

Sheila: **The** Good Shepherd!

Shorty: Ridgy-didge, Sheila?

Sheila: Ridgy-didge Shorty! He's **THE** Good Shepherd because you won't find a kinder, lovelier, more trustworthy shepherd anywhere. And we're his flock.

Shorty: You're saying we're the sheep, Sheila? I like the idea of someone watching over me.

Sheila: Yep, we're sheep alright. And if even one of us got lost, the Good Shepherd would search high and low for us. He protects us from the thief who comes to kill, steal and destroy. *(John 10:10)*

Shorty: That's what a good shepherd does, alright.

Sheila: But the most amazing thing about Jesus is that He laid down His life for all us sheep.

Shorty: What? The Good Shepherd died for His sheep?

Sheila: Yep, for each and every one of them.

Shorty: Not just the sheep in His local paddock?

Sheila: Nope, for ALL sheep. For every person anywhere in the world.

Shorty: Tell you what, Sheila. Jesus isn't just the Good Shepherd. He's the most ripper bonza beaut shepherd the world has ever seen!

Both: Ridgy-didge!

Shorty and Sheila are joined by the entire cast who re-enter and stand around them. The congregation is asked to stand for a Christmas Carol.

All: Sing 'O Come Let Us Adore Him.'

Glossary

Shorty	nickname for a tall person
Sheila	slang for female
Billy	pot for boiling water (usually for brewing tea)
Akubra	iconic Australian broad brimmed hat
Cooee	a call used to attract attention especially at a distance
Swag	a travellers bundle of personal belongings
G'day	(good day) hello
Cuppa	cup of tea
Kookaburra	native bird (largest kingfisher)
Simpson Desert	desert in central Australia (143,000 square km)
Beaut	a fine example of something
Bonza	excellent, first rate
Fancy that	surprised to hear it
Stone the crows	exclamation of surprise
Aussie	person from Australia
Jittery	nervous and unable to relax
Bigwig	important person
Strike a light	surprise
Too right	enthusiastic agreement
Ridgy-didge	genuine