

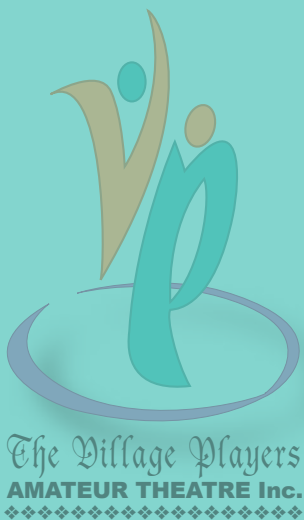


The Village Players

Members Newsletter · Spring 2013

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From the President

Welcome to our Spring 2013 Newsletter. The past year has seen The Village Players stage two very different productions. The first of these was a pantomime, *The Enchanted Forest*, staged at the Woodburn-Evans Head RSL Club on the two weekends prior to Christmas 2012. This was a very successful venture, showing to an average 70 people for each of four performances. The cast wrote the play and directed it themselves – a great team effort lead by Helena Rousova and Marty Castaneda. We look forward to producing more pantomimes for the young children of our region.

Our second production was staged in July. *The Last Tempest* was written and directed by our own Paul Johnson, who also took the lead male role – no mean feat! It was performed over two weekends at the Evans River K12 School, receiving rave reviews from many patrons. Exciting techniques were used for the staging of this play, including many visual and sound effects. Special thanks must go to John Southon for his continued support of our productions.

We have had a huge improvement in our ability to store costumes, props and other equipment. The RSL Club has generously given us a storage room to use, allowing us to keep most of our gear in one place. Thanks to the RSL and the group of members who cleaned the room, built shelving and sorted out all the stuff! Also, special thanks to Tony and Pauline Haney for giving us some shed space to house larger items of set.

We were once again involved in the Beef Meets Reef Parade selling tickets and our band of volunteers handed out flyers for *The Last Tempest*.

Read on to learn more about The Village Players' activities and contributions to the cultural life of residents of the Richmond Valley.

Leslie Carroll - President

Member Profiles

Jo Walton



Jo played Penny Prospero - Empress, Sorceress in the recent production *The Last Tempest*. She started acting at age 32 in Central Victoria's Castlemaine Theatre Company where she played many roles over 8 years. She moved

to the Northern Rivers 12 years ago but found she had no time to commit to theatre. Now, with thanks to The Village Players and *The Last Tempest*, she is making up for lost time and also combining the love of art and family together. Joanna plays along side her soul mate and husband Peter, her daughter Kimberly and nephew Kane. Since the production in July she has enjoyed spending time in her big garden on weekends and can be spotted either at the beach or river in Evans Head.

Peter Boucher



Peter played Lars Sole - Pirate: the fisher king and Polly Spinner - the politician in the recent production of *The Last Tempest*.

It was his first foray into the performing arts so with the help of a supporting cast, which included his wife Jo, and The Village Players' encouragement, Peter embraced two roles in the production and relished the challenge. Peter has worked in the visual arts industry for over 25 years.

Kimberly Walton



Kimberly played Miranda - Prospero's daughter in the recent Village Players production of *The Last Tempest*. She has always had a flair for the performing arts and has been singing since a young age. This is her

first time acting in a play since high school and it was a challenge she enjoyed and would love to do again. Kimberly is also a mother to Mia who had a cameo role as a fairy in the play.

She is currently the lead singer in a rock'n'roll band called Bourbon & Ink. She graduated from Southern

Cross University in Lismore with a BA and a Grad. Dip. Ed. making her a qualified English teacher. She much prefers the stage, so expect to see more of her whether it be singing or acting.

Kane Walton



Kane played the role of Caliban - the original man in the *The Last Tempest*. He is an energetic and charismatic new addition to The Village Players. Since moving from Melbourne in April 2013, he has

opened up to the world of performing arts. This was Kane's entry into acting, however he has always been in other performing arts - such as singing and dancing. Kane is hoping that this is a start to what will hopefully be an opening of the performing arts world, and wishes to one day become a triple threat like Hugh Jackman himself.

Two Special Member Presentations Pat Waldron And Mona Warrener



pictured (L) Mona and Pat (R) receiving their certificates of appreciation

From the first day that Pat and Mona were advised that an amateur theatre was being considered, both warmed to the idea and were committed from that day on.

Pat and Mona worked tirelessly on the first production “Robin Hoodwink”, Pat sourcing props and wardrobe and working backstage, Mona keeping the very big cast and crew fed with sandwiches, cake, tea and coffee. Both had a wide circle of friends and acquaintances in Evans Head and were instrumental in ‘talking up’ the production. “Robin Hoodwink” was a box office success, playing to over 600 patrons. From this production, both were hooked on working in amateur theatre.

They attended the very first meeting and have continually been involved for the past 10 years in all productions and meetings. Both volunteered to do almost any job that was asked of them. Mona has been a ‘boon’ to the Village Players selling raffle tickets, coercing people to buy more tickets than they intended. She is the ‘face’ that people first see when entering the performance area and has become a mascot of The Village Players.

Pat’s roles included sourcing props and wardrobe, backstage crew member, making soups and other goodies for the cast and crew, prompt, stage mother (to the many children that have appeared in the plays) and finally, agreeing to take on an acting role in “The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll”. Since then she has appeared in several plays and yet, still manages to take on other tasks.

The recent certificate of appreciation given to both Pat and Mona recognises their invaluable input over the past ten years. They have remained loyal and are totally dedicated to The Village Players and whilst they have breath in them will continue to be the staunchest of supporters.

Maureen Follers

Post Production Reports

The Last Tempest

The Last Tempest was an experiment for me as I have written past plays with an Evans Head audience in mind. I was hoping this production would be a chance to pull audiences from outside the district, with the hope of inspiring further productions.

With nine challenging parts to fill, I was not

confident that we would be able to cast this play from a small catchment area. However, despite numerous hurdles and with some parts being backed up by our versatile cast, I believe that the final production was a credit to all involved and was the result of a harmonious teamwork with virtually no apparent interpersonal difficulties over the six arduous months of rehearsal. And we managed the innovative technical demands with people who had no previous experience. Congratulations to everyone who contributed; I felt honoured to be a part of this process.

I believe the message of the play was radically confronting, yet no-one so far has objected. Nevertheless there is every chance we offended some of our audience. But that surely is one of the purposes of theatre.

My main disappointment was that we did not attract the audience numbers we would have wished. At least part of the explanation lies in the fact that outside Evans Head we received no support from the press, despite the fact that almost every other local production is well covered. I think it was a good story – an original production on a highly contentious topic! I think the hard working team deserved better – maybe next time.

Paul Johnson



Post Production Reports... continued

The Enchanted Forest

Last year in December just before Christmas The Village Players were staging a pantomime called *The Enchanted Forest*. The play was written by Helena Rousova and Martin Castaneda. The main topics of the pantomime were friendship, tolerance and looking after our environment.

The Enchanted Forest introduced two children to the stage, Bibi Stevens and Caleb Elley. They acted as two best friends in the play. They opened and acted entirely for the whole Act 1 and they did so without a single hesitation in their voices. Maybe we have future actors for The Village Players secured! Other actors included Martin Castaneda, Helena Rousava and Samantha Elley. The play was staged at the RSL club and was positively received by the kids audience.

The Village Players would like to focus more on the little audience and perform more plays for kids. Kids love the interaction of the live theatre and learn a lot from the messages it delivers to them.

Helena Rousova



Scenes from The Enchanted Forest

Helena Rousova Leaving

Helena became a member of The Village Players in 2011 soon after she moved to Evans Head. She grew up in the Czech Republic and has always been interested in literature and theatre. She spent her formative years in Prague surrounded by all sorts of theatre groups and movements. At a very young age she participated in an amateur theatre group doing mainly improvised plays. Then she joined a local amateur theatre group and became involved in costume making and props. Later on Helena and another theatre friend founded a kid's theatre group. They performed a piece by a well known Czech kid's author and combined it with live music. This performance was shown at numerous preschools in the area.



Within The Village Players, Helena has taken part in acting, costume making, props making and later in technical support producing a slide show for *The Last Tempest*. She also introduced theatre to her three kids. Her daughter Bibi took part in last year's pantomime *Enchanted Forest*. Her son Boris joined Bibi when they acted as fairies in the latest performance *The Last Tempest*. Helena and Bibi have also rehearsed a play about parenting with Paul Johnson. Helena says: "It was great fun, because Bibi had a role of a totally spoiled brat and I was a hysterical mother on the verge of a mental breakdown. Something totally opposite from what we are in real life... "

Helena and her family are going back to Europe to travel and to connect with her family overseas. She wants her kids to be able to have roots in both countries so they can choose where to live when they are old enough to do so. Her position as treasurer of The Village Players will be available at our AGM in November, so don't hesitate to jump aboard. Helena will be greatly missed by The Village Players.

Members Christmas Party

It's party time !

Come along to our members' Christmas party on Thursday 21st November for a fantastic night of food, music and frivolity.

The night will start with entertainment from 6pm with a 3 piece jazz band. Then be ready for jammed packed evening of dancing, fun games (bring along a couple of gold coins), Lucky spot dance and more...

It's at 'Our Daily Bread Cafe' - Broadwater. 6.00pm starters, BYO drinks and a 7pm dinner - choice of 3 meals each for main and dessert, tea/ coffee and cheese platter all for \$20 for members and \$40 for non-members. If you have a friend you think may be interested in becoming a member of the The Village Players invite them along, encourage them to join so they can receive the discounted members' rate.

Final numbers are needed by November 14th. RSVP Contacts are:
Su 6682 5523 and Helena 0416 781 702

See you there!



2013 Annual General Meeting

It's that time of year again - our AGM will be held on Tuesday 26th November, 2013 commencing at 5pm in the Woodburn -Evans Head RSL Club Board Room.

Positions open for re-election are:

President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. Nominations are called for these positions. The official nomination form is attached and needs to be completed fully.

Your Current Management Committee

Your committee would love to have new members so anyone who could be interested, please contact one of the members below or email us on thevillageplayers1@gmail.com.

Our constitution allows for an unlimited number of members to sit on the Management Committee.

President (and Public Officer) - Leslie Carroll

6687 9889 or 0427832524

Vice-President - Su Dorland

6682 5523 or 0408418793

Treasurer - Helena Rousova 0416781702

Secretary - Vacant (Leslie Carroll is currently acting in this position)

Membership Secretary - Pat Waldron

6682 4430

Ordinary Members

Pat Waldron, Pauline Haney, Lorraine Pedder, Maureen Follers, Roz Redwood, Mona Warrenner, Vanessa Crisp, Willow Salathiel and Keith Power.



The committee enjoying dinner after a meeting

Storage Room Update

Thanks to the Woodburn - Evans Head RSL Club for donating a room for us to store all our props, costumes, hats, bags and shoes. Our members had them stored under beds, in spare rooms, sheds and under houses. Now everything is all together.

Tony Haney kindly donated his time to put up new steel free-standing shelves. Good job Tony !!

On 3rd August four members: President Leslie Carroll, Lorraine Pedder, Vanessa Crisp and myself sorted, cleaned and labelled everything into plastic storage containers. Everything is now neatly packed and all together on our new shelves.

We discovered a few things that we had forgotten about and it was a nice surprise to see them again.

Pat Waldron

Ritchies IGA Community Benefit Scheme

The Village Players is part of the Ritchies IGA Community Benefit Scheme. To be part of it get yourself a benefits card from the shop, link it to The Village Players and present it each time you shop at Ritchies IGA.

We have already received approx. \$250 this year in benefits. It doesn't matter how small your purchases are, every \$\$ spent by you in the shop will mean money in the bank for The Village Players.



Where Are They Now?

Dominic Bock - Does Opportunity Knock?

Dominic Bock, a former student of the Evans River K-12 School had the benefit of tutelage from a dedicated drama teacher at the school who introduced him to the basics and the joy of theatre.

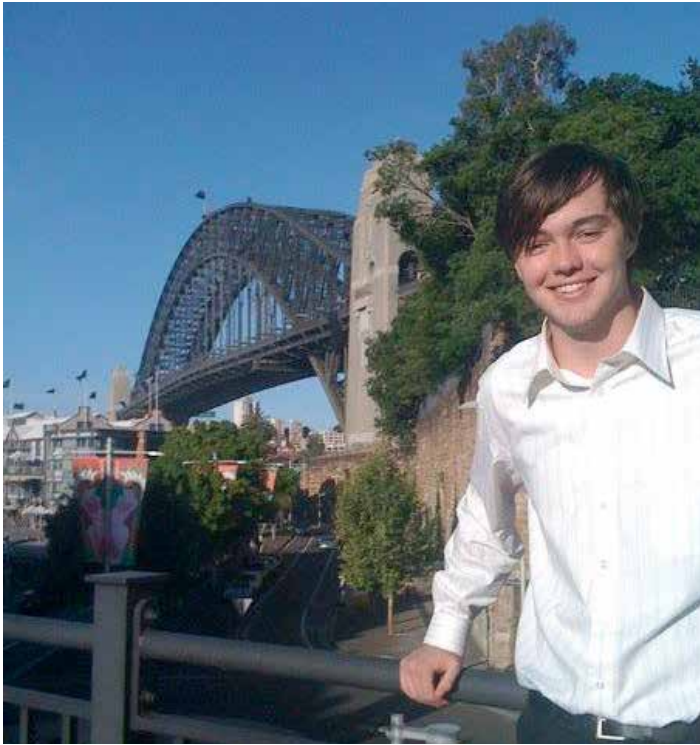
From Year 7 to 12, Dominic was a part of the student body who studied theatre under the direction of John Clayton. It was during this period that Dominic came to the attention of The Village Players. John encouraged his students to take an active role in the amateur theatre productions assisting with sound, lighting and other tasks and Dominic took on these roles with enthusiasm; even being cast for a leading role in a play that unfortunately did not eventuate.

After completing his HSC, Dominic went to Sydney to undertake a Bachelor's degree in Industrial Design. During this period, part of his degree included set design courses which became a serendipitous moment for Dominic as it re-ignited his interest in theatre.

Dominic is now completing the Bachelor of Dramatic Arts degree at the Australian Institute of Music. He was appointed to the Sydney Theatre Company's Youth Advisory Panel and has since had his first taste of 'proper' theatre appearing in the Sydney Theatre Company's production of Leviathan. But Dominic hastily adds, "We (the students) worked as a supplementary addition to the cast and filled up the stage, but I had a small role". Readers may recall that the Artistic Directors of the Sydney Theatre Company are the famed Cate Blanchett and Andrew Upton. Illustrious names to be working alongside.

He has since worked on several theatrical pieces created by the ensemble or student body one being "After Shocks" which is based on the after effects of the Newcastle Earthquake.

His course covers all aspects of theatre, from directing, lighting, acting, set and costume design and creating a body of his own work and collaborative exercises with other students. Dominic will complete



his course at the end of next year.

*H*is goal? It is wide open to speculation at the moment as he is experiencing all facets of theatre and has time to decide what direction he will take.

*T*he Village Players would like to think that they had some influence on his decision to pursue the dramatic arts as a career, but it is just whimsical thinking. Maybe we nurtured his interest a little; maybe John Clayton imbued a sense that a career path in this field was not unattainable. Maybe when opportunity knocked, Dominic simply opened the door to let the world in.

Maureen Follers

Jacky Hopgood - Living the UK life

*F*irstly to say I am enjoying life but missing all my friends in Evans Head and Woodburn plus all the lovely beaches.

I have joined a local U3A and within that organisation have joined several other groups; The Amblers where we do a 3-4 mile walk across the Kent Countryside with a pub lunch to follow; London Studies where once a month we visit places of interest in London, so far we have done the Chelsea

Physic Garden and the Chelsea Pensioners Home, plus the Portrait Gallery and various churches and homes of interest. This coming year I hope to join the Village Studies whereby we go to various villages in Kent.

I am still going dog training once a fortnight, Dusty is such a good girl now, walks beautifully on the lead and when off the lead comes when she is called, she has also done some agility.

*L*ooking after foster babies with my daughter, this keeps me busy. She has also adopted one little girl (Lilly) who she has had since birth, she is now 2 years old and is a constant delight to me and the family. We had her final celebration of adoption in the Court last week.

*A*part from all the above we have just had my youngest son Simon's wedding recently which took place in the lovely setting of Hampton Court Palace. It has been a big build up to this event.

*L*astly but not least just to mention that we have had a lovely Summer this year which has been enjoyed by all and is continuing into Autumn.

Jacky Hopgood



Our Website!

*T*he Village Players has its own website at: <http://thevillageplayers.com.au>
Check out the photo galleries and any feedback is welcome.

This newsletter has been compiled by Vanessa Crisp of Butterfly Signs & Graphics, Evans Head.

