

Bringing Live Theatre to Local Rural Communities



a Sub-Committee of the Kyogle & District Arts Council

## VHP Vagaries

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# KYOGLE ACTOR HITS THE BIG TIME

By the time Laura Hogan auditioned for her first role with VHP at the age of 18, she was already a seasoned performer.

Throughout high school, Drama was always Laura's favourite subject and she loved performing in her school's annual Showcases and doing skits with classmates. After graduation, Laura did a full time dance course with Jarrad Cramp to gain her Certificate III in Performing Arts. "Dancing has always been a huge part of my life," Laura said. "I studied a lot of styles including Classical Ballet, Jazz and Contemporary dance".

"In 2011, I successfully auditioned for a role in the VHP production of *Grand Tour* by John Summons where I learnt a lot about acting from the director [Lynette Zito], cast and everyone involved, and had such a great experience with the Village Hall Players that I decided to explore and pursue the industry further," Laura explained.

Early this year, Laura auditioned for the Sydney Theatre School and was accepted into a class of

only 12 to undertake a two year diploma course in theatre and screen performance. She is very excited and so far loves her classes in Sydney.



Laura Hogan as Young Ruby in *Grand Tour*

Laura will be performing in her first production with the Sydney Theatre School at the Sidetrack Theatre, Marrickville 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> April. Break a leg, Laura!



## EASTER – VHP STYLE

If you were in Kyogle on Easter Saturday, you may have seen a six foot rabbit and his band of helpers handing out Easter Eggs. VHP member, Paul Worsnop, donned the bunny suit and, with Louise



(front row), Andy (back row left) and Angus (back row right), made a lot of kids happy and a lot of adults shopping a bit more fun!

VHP participated in this community project in conjunction with the Kyogle & District Chamber of Commerce and if you missed us this year, keep your eyes peeled in 2014!



## ROUS MILL IN PICTURES



*Rick Broomhead (on ladder), Veronica Cooling (holding ladder), Paul Worsnop (with back to camera) and Lynette Zito setting up for opening night at Rous Mill Hall.*

## Playwrights' Competition News

Patron: John Summons

The Kyogle & District Arts Council, of which VHP is a sub-committee, will sponsor the prizes for the Open Section of VHP's inaugural Playwrights' Competition.

The Council has also nominated Ms Debb Mills as a judge for the competition. Debb, herself an artist of note in the local area who has had a number of showings at the Kyogle Roxy Gallery, has been involved in a number of theatre companies, including the Murwillumbah Theatre Company. Until February this year, Debb was a member of VHP and had worked as a director and actor, as well as behind the scenes for the company.

VHP is also pleased to advise that Mr Michael Donnelly, well known local businessman and community leader, has joined the Playwrights' Competition & Festival Committee. With his wife, Shun, Michael has owned the Kyogle Motel for the past 15 years and was a journalist, political press secretary and public relations manager for 25 years prior to that. He has worked for such organisations as the NRMA and the Association of Consulting Engineers. Michael's daughter, Louise (see photo above right) has been a DIRT kid since the inception of the program and is also the only junior member of VHP. Welcome, Michael, and thank you for your commitment.



*Lighting checks – and the audience is already starting to arrive!*

## Upcoming Productions

***Laugh Your Dreams Away*** is our first touring production for 2013 and is produced by Veronica Cooling.

Two one act plays make up the show which runs for approximately two hours including interval.

***Can You Hear the Music?*** by British author David Campton looks at the dreams of six individual mice living in a loft. Their dreams are conjured up by music, as each one hears and must respond to a different tune played by the invisible Piper.

***Farmer Will Swap Combine Harvester for Wife***, by Australian author Hugh O'Brien, is the hilarious but very touching story of a man who needs an heir so that he can pass on the family farm.

***Light & Dark*** combines three, short one act plays, with a thought provoking drama sandwiched between two comedies. Produced by Lynette Zito, the theme of the production is the power of language and each play illustrates a different aspect of this central theme.

***He Said and She Said*** is a comedy with a sting by American playwright, Alice Gerstenberg. Set in the first months of WWII, Mrs Packard, a dinner guest at the home of wealthy socialites and a terrible gossip, causes havoc before dinner is even served!

***Two in a Room***, a drama by John Summons, deals with a bizarre encounter between two people – he's trying to buy love and she is simply selling sex.

***Call Girls***, by British playwright David Muncaster, is a very funny comedy set in an IT call centre where four women work. Laura, the new girl on the team, has raised the ire of her three co-workers with her low cut tops, short skirts and her unwillingness to be one of the team. The others speculate on the relationship between Laura and Gary, the boss.

***It's My Party and I'll Die If I Want To*** is by Australian author Elizabeth Coleman. This two-act comedy, produced by Veronica Cooling and directed by Paul Worsnop, tells the tale of Ron, a quintessentially Aussie family man who, due to an intractable illness, has been told by his doctor that he has only a short time left. He decides to hold a party so he can break the news to his wife and family and enjoy a few last quality moments with them. This is a comedy of anxiety, absurdity and occasional terror.

## 2013 VHP Calendar

Time & Date	Venue	Production
7 pm Saturday 20 April	Woodenbong Hall	Laugh Your Dreams Away
7 pm Saturday 27 April	Old Bonalbo Hall	Laugh Your Dreams Away
7 pm Saturday 10 August	KMI Hall Kyogle	Light & Dark
7 pm Saturday 17 August	KMI Hall Kyogle	Light & Dark
2 pm Sunday 18 August	KMI Hall Kyogle	Light & Dark
7 pm Saturday 24 August	KMI Hall Kyogle	Light & Dark
7pm Saturday 19 October	Rous Mill Hall	It's My Party and I'll Die if I Want To
7pm Saturday 26 October	Bundgeam Hall	It's My Party and I'll Die if I Want To
7pm Saturday 2 November	TBA	It's My Party and I'll Die if I Want To
7pm Saturday 9 November	TBA	It's My Party and I'll Die if I Want To

The first two performances of ***Laugh Your Dreams Away*** - on 6th April at Rous Mill Hall and 13<sup>th</sup> April at Mallanganee - were very well received by both audiences.

Don't miss seeing these two wonderful plays!





# Village Hall Players Committee

Village Hall Players meets monthly on a Tuesday. Committee and General Meetings are held throughout the year. In 2013, the dates for these meetings are:

7 May – Committee Meeting  
4 June – General Meeting  
2 July – **Annual General Meeting**  
13 August – Committee Meeting  
10 September – General Meeting  
8 October – Committee Meeting  
5 November – General Meeting  
3 December – Committee Meeting



## MORE ROUS MILL



*Cast of Can You Hear the Music? on the set getting last minute instructions from Director, Rick Broomhead.*

All photographs by Ian "Eden" Lister.



## Meet the Players

*(Each newsletter you'll meet one of the diverse group of amazing people who make up the Village Hall Players. We hope you enjoy meeting us! Ed.)*

VHP co-founder, Gordon Hook, (pictured above with friends) got involved with a big Scouts production called Showtime in Melbourne in 1970 and the seed was sown. School productions followed in Sydney at St Aloysius' at Milsons Point. These were mainly spoofs on old fairy tales and, luckily, did not involve singing, as Gordon readily admits that he is sadly lacking this talent!

It was not until he moved to Mullumbimby in the early 1980s that theatre returned to his activities list. The Pacific Players at the Old Drill Hall Theatre was a place where he rekindled his love for treading the boards and it was a place to hone his skills with a very supportive group. Many favourites were performed there, including *Travelling North*, Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* and George Hutchinson's *No Room for Dreamers*. All were made special by the brilliant casts and crews of locals.

"During a moment of madness, I became involved in local production *Genghis* after moving to Murwillumbah and the Murwillumbah Theatre Company was reformed," said Gordon. Then moving to Kyogle the process was repeated with Lynette Zito, Pat Anderson and Deb Mills, another mover from Murwillumbah, starting up VHP. "And here I am. I still love theatre and all the people involved."

"VHP is an exciting way of touring the local halls which helps communities keep these marvellous buildings in use and tests us as performers by presenting us with different stages to work on," Gordon explained.