

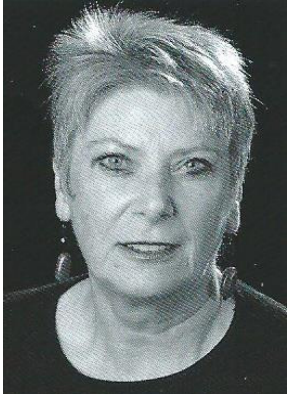


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Farewell Robyn



It is with great sadness that we have to report that our great friend and absolute Peridot stalwart Robyn Kelly has resigned from our Board of Management, bringing to an end her magnificent involvement with our Company over the past 25 years. She has undeniably made a pivotal contribution to the fine success of Peridot and we and many in Melbourne's theatre community owe her a great debt of gratitude.

For many recent years Robyn's roles have been as our Artistic Director and Coordinator of the Monash One Act Play Festival which we have successfully held for the past seven years, but, because of her vast experience, enthusiasm, love of theatre generally and her great font of common sense, her contribution goes way past those two important but also taxing responsibilities. In recent times she has felt the burden more onerous; she has suffered some ill health and has also recognized a desire to have a life beyond the demands of Peridot, including the opportunity to travel in 2015 with her husband John and to enjoy even more her two beautiful grandchildren.

Robyn became involved with the Company in 1989, the year she made her first appearance on our stage in *My Friend Miss Flint*, which was the first and only time she performed on stage with her sister Tarit. The play was directed by Gaye Gay and was the beginning of a great collaboration and friendship between the two. She went on to appear in eight further full scale productions and a host of One Act Plays; she also successfully directed five OAPs for us. She came on the Board of Management in 1994, where she held the position of Chairman for several years and as Artistic Director for the past seven years. Robyn was deservedly made a Peridot Life member in 2000 in recognition of her great contribution to our company.

When asked what are her greatest memories or moments in the years she has been involved with Peridot, she said there were so many it was hard to say, but she specifically loved:

*The absolute privilege to be a cast member in *Minefields and Miniskirts*, the brilliant play depicting the experiences of five women in Vietnam during the war there that we presented in 2009. Robyn says "It was an emotional experience for me due to John having served in Vietnam as a conscript. This play will stay with me for the rest of my life."

(*Minefields and Miniskirts*, directed by Gaye Gay, surely ranks as one of the finest production we have ever done -Ed).

Continued in the next column...

*Establishing the Monash One Act Play Festival and giving the opportunity for local playwrights to have their work performed.

*Making fantastic friendships along the way and sharing together our love of theatre.

*Being made a Life member of Peridot.

*Doing the lovely two-hander *Love Letters* and sharing the stage with my great friend Paul Sedgwick.

We are all truly in Robyn's debt for her enthusiasm and skills over so many years and we sincerely give her and John all our love and best wishes.

*

We need an Artistic Director to replace Robyn. See page three for more information.

Our Gaye's at it again!

In our March 2012 edition of *Gems* we sadly told you that our long-time Peridot stalwarts Grant and Gaye Gay were retiring and heading for new horizons and a spot of peace and quiet in Queensland. In their time at Peridot Gaye had directed no less than 23 plays between 1988 and 2010, and Grant had appeared in more productions than anyone else in our history. We know they have settled very happily there and have also done a great deal of overseas exploring since then, but it comes as no surprise to us that Gaye could not, in the long term, help herself. Yes, she's directed a play at a local theatre company in nearby Nerand! She's got herself carefully back into gear by directing a lovely English comedy which she earlier had directed at Peridot in 2004, *Mr Wonderful*, and we're sure she won't mind if we print the review from the local newspaper.

"Mr Wonderful" by James Robson at the Javeenbah Theatre, Nerand, Queensland Sept 26- Oct 11

Mr Wonderful explores the relationship between a bedridden, meddling mother Phoebe Green, beautifully played by Virginia Leaver, and her middle aged, spinster daughter Norma, sympathetically portrayed by Naomi Thompson and the occasional males that she and her mother pick out of a catalogue of "lonely hearts".

The male "love interests", Trevor Love and Michael Denny, trying (unsuccessfully) to find a mate by trawling through the same catalogue, meet with Norma with varying comic results. Meanwhile Phoebe's constant companion is an oversized teddy bear who is privy to her various schemes.

Continued on page three...

OUR NEXT PRODUCTION

Peridot Theatre presents



Our Fourth Production for 2014

To finish off another year of fine theatre at Peridot, we are delighted to present a terrific English comedy *Key for Two*, written by two of the finest writers of farce, John Chapman and Dave Freeman. The action centres around Harriet, a divorcee living in an elegant flat in Brighton, on the south coast of England. She solves her financial problems by entertaining two married gentleman callers on different days of the week. Each man thinks he is the only one in Harriet's life and she orchestrates their comings and goings with elegant artistry. However, the scheme faces collapse when her friend Anne, whose marriage is failing, arrives at the flat hotly pursued by her husband. The confusion that ensues builds to a rich complexity of mistaken identity splendidly farcical situations and a climax of comic wizardry – just what you need to wrap up another Peridot year.

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For this production we have one of Melbourne's finest directors of comedy,

Directed by Bob Bramble

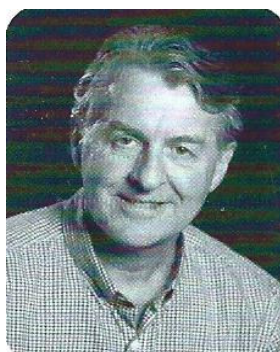
Bob Bramble (remember his terrific *Caravan* a couple of years ago?) directing a fine play by two terrific writers, and Bob has gathered an excellent cast around him. So if you like comedies verging on farce and based on infidelity, misunderstanding and plain mayhem, then you'll love this!

*

Key for Two will run from November 14-15, 19-22 and 26-29 at 8pm, with Matinees on Sunday 16 and Saturday 22 at 2.15pm plus a Twilight Matinee on Sunday the 23rd at 4.00pm. Office hours are 10am-5pm Monday to Friday plus, (during season performances only) 10am-5pm on Saturdays.

Bookings can be made on 1300 138 645 (toll free) or 9898 9090 (if using a mobile) or by email to peridotboxoffice@yahoo.com.au.

Damian Stars at 1812



As well as being Peridot's President, terrific Set Builder and all round good guy, Damian Jones is also a very fine actor, as was seen in the 1812 Theatre's lovely production of *The Guys* which ran until November 1 in 1812's Bakery, under Christine Grant's excellent direction. With another splendid actor, Kathy Lapan-Walker, they took us on a moving journey in the true story of a New York Fire Department Captain who had to give a eulogy for all the eight members of his team who were killed at the 9/11 World Trade Centre tragedy but simply could not find the words. A sympathetic journalist offered to help and their collaboration and understanding was beautifully unwrapped before us and led to a satisfying and emotional conclusion. Sad, moving, sometimes funny, it was a beautiful work and both players deserved all the generous applause they received at the play's end.

Our Gaye's at it again! Continued from page one



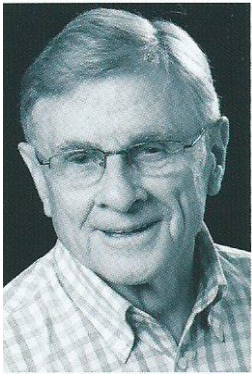
Phoebe (Virginia Leaver) berating poor Norma (Naomi Thompson) in "Mr Wonderful"

Laughter comes thick and fast throughout the play, especially when Phoebe slips into her 'Queen Mother' characterizations.

Norm Strambini's clever set easily allows for the "dating scenes" and Phoebe's home to be presented with minimum delay and the occasional "bike riding" interludes added to the fun. The intimate atmosphere of Javeenbah's theatre was well suited to this style of show.

Director Gaye Gay made good use of the combined talents of this dynamic company and gave the audience a fun night.
Roger McKenzie

Horrie's Getting In Early!



Our great friend Horrie Leek is directing two plays, both of which he also wrote, at next year's One Act Play season and wants to hold his auditions nice and early.

First up, he is directing *The Cylinder*, the synopsis of which is: "In an unnamed country, living under a brutal regime, all sources of water have been exhausted. The last remaining cylinder of this precious liquid becomes the

centre of a deadly battle of wits between a woman and two men.

Horrie will be looking for one female and one male both 25-40, and one male 40 plus.

His second play is *The Portrait*, where two women, strangers, are locked together in an art gallery after closing time. But, are they alone and will they survive until morning? For this play, Horrie needs one male and one female 30 plus, one female mid 20s and two females (no dialogue) age open.

Open Auditions will be held at the theatre on Monday December 8 at 7.30pm and rehearsals will commence in March.

If you wish to contact Horrie beforehand you can find him on 0412 474 255 or email him on ingehos@hotmail.com.

*

The season will run Thursday April 30 and Friday May 1 at 8pm, Saturday May 2 at 2.15 and 8pm and Sunday May 3 at 2.15pm.

We're Looking for a new Artistic Director

Following the resignation of Robyn Kelly after many years of being a wonderful and creative Artistic Director, Peridot is seeking expressions of interest in this important and creative position.

The successful candidate will have an extensive knowledge of theatre and a clear vision for the future direction of the company. Responsibilities include recommending a well balanced program suitable for our audience; organising production rights and awards submissions; and liaising with directors, production coordinators and members of the Board of Management.

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Artistic Director Portfolio Duties

The Artistic Director sets the tone and direction of the Company and is responsible for seeing that the mission statement reflects audience interests. This covers two areas:

• **PRODUCTION PLANNING**

- Contact Directors as suggested by the Company and request they submit plays for production.
- Check with appropriate bodies if the rights are available for these plays.
- Organise the reading of these submissions by appropriate Board members.
- Bring final recommendation to Board for annual programme.
- Liaise with Directors as to the Board's decision and supply them with the Director's Guidelines with production specific information.
- Arrange with school that the dates are available for each season.
- Arrange with Business Manager to apply for rights.
- Collate the copy for the annual subscription form and liaise with the Artistic Designer, Printer and Ticket Manager.
- Maintain liaison with each Production Coordinator during each production period.
- May represent the Board at auditions and production meetings.
- **MANAGEMENT DUTIES**
- Prepare monthly report for each Management Meeting.
- Coordinate PERI Award adjudicators and discuss guidelines, ensuring that adjudicators have necessary skills and information to perform their functions.
- Oversee Lyrebird and VDL Award matters.
- Coordinate Peridot's involvement in One Act Play Festivals.
- Source new plays and encourage new play writing talent.

Applicants should send a résumé and vision statement to Damian Jones, President, at damianjones1@gmail.com by 30/12/14.

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Peridot is an excellent, well organised and successful company and the role of the Artistic Director can be both challenging and stimulating. He or she can be assured of complete assistance from everyone involved in this fine Company.

Odd Spot

The Brontë book *Wuthering Heights* has apparently kept trembling on the brink of becoming a musical for years. Cliff Richard (!) was rumoured to be keen to play the brooding Heathcliff. More bizarrely, Producer Cameron Mackintosh swears he was once sent an American script which combined *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre* under the inspired title *Jane Heights*.

Helen's Happy Acting Classes!



The ever popular Actor and Director Helen Ellis conducted a hugely successful acting workshop over three sessions in September at Peridot. Here are some comments from three grateful participants:

"Helen facilitated a fun acting workshop that increased my awareness of body, voice, character and script. She made me feel comfortable when challenged to work on characters/techniques outside my comfort zone, by providing feedback in a very encouraging manner. Helen has a wonderful warmth and energy and I thoroughly enjoyed the second of Helen's workshops I have attended".

Lillian Liu.

*

"I absolutely loved Helen's Acting workshop and wouldn't hesitate participating in another next year! As a newcomer to Acting, Helen provided the critical advice to get me started including peeling off the layers and truly understanding a character I am reading and auditioning for. Her warm spirit and delightfully jovial approach to teaching made the workshop a relaxed and enjoyable one. In my opinion, Helen is a repository of Acting knowledge and I wouldn't hesitate recommending her workshops to others contemplating Acting or brushing up on their existing skills".

Michelle Whiteford.

*

"I've been a member of Peridot since 2008 and I've been involved as assistant to director, assistant stage manager, front of house, plus I've done a couple of Helen Ellis's workshops and landed a couple of cameo roles in Peridot plays. Now, thanks to all of this experience, I have a role in a play which is being presented by a new theatre company - Tangled Web. The play is 'Other People's Money' and will be performed at the Doncaster Playhouse in December. Thanks so much, Helen".

Gillian Holley.

WhatsOn*WhatsOn*WhatsOn

There are lots of plays around for your entertainment in November as Companies, just like us, are winding up their year, so you might also like to consider going along to:

Lilydale Athenaeum TC is doing the stage version of that great British TV lunacy *Fawlty Towers* by John Cleese and Connie Booth from November 5-22. Book for much merriment and mayhem on 9735 1777.

Mordialloc Theatre is offering another crazy comedy, *Bullshot Crummond* by six playwrights, from Nov.7-22. Bookings on 9587 5141 or www.mordialloctheatre.com.

The Basin Theatre Group is presenting *My Three Angels* by Sam & Bella Spewack from Nov.7-29; bookings on 1300 784 668 (7-9pm only) or www.thebasintheatre.org.au.

A couple of good old murders on offer: **Eltham Little Theatre's** *Murdered to Death* by Peter Gordon (0411 713 095 or on www.elthamlittletheatre.org.au) and **Brighton Theatre Company's** *Bloody Murder* by Ed Sala (1300 752 126 or www.brightontheatre.co.com) both coincidentally running from Nov.13-29. *Continued in next column....*

WhatsOn continued...

Our good friend Loretta Bishop is directing that perennial favourite, *Stepping Out* by Richard Harris, for the **Sherbrooke Theatre Company** from November 14-29 at its Doncaster home. Bookings on 1300 650 209.

Heidelberg Theatre is presenting *True Minds* by the terrific Australian playwright Joanna Murray-Smith from Nov 20- Dec 6. (9457 4117 or htc.org.au to book for this one.)

In Upper Ferntree Gully way you can catch the **1812 Theatre's** production of *Over the River and Through the Woods*, a lovely play by Joe DiPietro from Nov 20- Dec 13; give them a ring on 9758 3964 to book.

And finally, if that's not enough, the **Frankston Theatre Group** is offering the very interestingly titled *Whose Wives Are They Anyway?* by Michael Parker, from Nov 21 through to Dec 7. Bookings here on 1300 665 377.

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How about a nice traditional family Pantomime? The **Adelphi Players** are presenting, for six performances only, Fred Rome's *Old Mother Hubbard* at the splendid historic National Trust Mansion Labassa, in Manor Grove, North Caulfield. Dates are Saturday November 29, Sunday November 30 and Saturday December 6 at 1.30pm and 3.15pm each day. Tickets are \$10 Adults and \$8 Children; bookings essential on 9690 1593.

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And, following up Gillian Holley's letter in the column on the left, the Tangled Web's production of *Other People's Money* by Jerry Sterner will be performed at the Doncaster Playhouse, 679 Doncaster Road, in, believe it or not, Doncaster on December 10-13 at 8pm and December 13-14 at 2pm. Bookings on www.trybooking.com or, if you prefer by email on email@tangledweb.com.au.

Be Quick Now!

We are happy to report that 2015 Subscription Forms are already beginning to flow in a very healthy fashion, for which we sincerely thank you all. Our Ticket Manager John Kelly will begin processing them once "Key for Two" is finished but would like to reassure you that they will be handled in the same order as they are received. So, if you haven't sent yours in yet, you'd better buck up if there are specific dates or seating you prefer.

...the last word

A couple of Royal Boobs!

Sir Thomas Beecham, the founder of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, once ran into a distinguished-looking woman in the lobby of a hotel. Although he could not remember her name, he thought he knew her. When he engaged her in conversation, he vaguely recollected that she had a brother. Hoping for some clue to her identity, he asked her how her brother was and whether he was still working at the same job. "Oh, he's very well," said Princess Mary about George VI, "and still King."

*

In 1974, while taking a tour of Australia, Prince Charles attended a service at a small parish church. After it was over, the cleric apologized for the small turnout. "Being a Bank Holiday Weekend," he explained, "most of the parishioners are away." The Prince was vexed. "Not another Bank Holiday!" he exclaimed, and then asked sarcastically what *this* one was in honour of. "Well," the rector replied, rather embarrassed, "over here we call it the Queen's Birthday."