

Director's Message

Blithe Spirit is a droll comedy about death, but the story and characters are a little more complex than is immediately apparent. This is because Noël Coward wrote and produced it in 1941 as escapist fare from the pain and fear of Nazi invasion. I believe that Coward's social commentaries on people in particular situations are still relevant, and seek to present their very human complexities with Coward's legendary style and wit.

I would like to thank Daryl Ganter for his unfailing and immeasurable practical and moral support. Many thanks also to Graham Vale for his advice and support, Howard Oxley and the excellent cast, the back stage troops, notably Ros Ellis and Wendy Potter, and all participating WDG members for their collaboration in achieving our goals.

- Denise Cooper

About the Director

In an earlier life, Denise was a singer in a rock and roll band and lived and worked around South East Asia for several years. She was one of the many entertainers in Vietnam, remaining committed to the Vietnam Veterans' Association and marching annually to this day.

Denise loved the theatre, but avoided having a go herself until her creativity clock blew up seven years ago and she embarked upon a part-time Bachelor of Arts degree, with a major in Drama at Newcastle University. Proving that age and circumstance are no barrier to success, Denise was among the recipients of The Pro Vice Chancellor's Award 2001 for outstanding academic performance, and graduated this month.



Denise has previously done props for WDG, stage managed for CCTC and Peggy Thompson, and is grateful for the opportunities afforded her by WDG to direct. Her first effort was *Darlings you were Wonderful*, part of the *Comedy Trio* in 2002.

Behind the Scenes

Director	...	...	...	Denise Cooper
Assistant Director	...	...	...	Graham Vale
Set Design/Construction, Props				Daryl Ganter
Stage Manager, Props	...	...	...	Ros Ellis
Production Manager, Prompt	...	...	...	Wendy Potter
Hair Design	...	...	...	Lyn & Simone Guyatt
Sound/Lighting	...	...	...	Craig Lawton Darlene Cole Ron Baker
Wardrobe/Costumes	...	...	...	Nan Hawtin Daryl Ganter Wendy Potter
Makeup	...	...	...	Helen Schumann
Set Construction/Decoration	...	...	...	Bob Potter Barry Sampson Millie Sampson Hagen Heinrich Robert Donohoe
Photography	...	...	...	Peter Santangelo Mathew Richards
Front of House	...	...	...	Peter Deane Jenny Newman
Bookings	...	...	...	Julie Bailey Gwen Clarke
Suppers/Front of House	...	...	...	Millie & Barry Sampson Robert Donohoe WDG Members
Foyer Decoration	...	...	...	Mark & Jeanne Gerlach WDG Members.

Extra special thanks to Beverley Willsher in the UK for *The Times*

Many thanks to all the other WDG members who have lent a hand: ushers, ticket sellers, set painters, and so on. You are indispensable and very much appreciated.

Would YOU like to join WDG?

For the princely sum of \$2, you can join Wyong Drama Group. It doesn't matter if you're not interested in acting – there are literally dozens of interesting activities to become involved in. There's Set Construction, Lighting, Sound, Props, Production Management, Costume Co-ordination, Catering, Set Design, Direction and many other equally challenging fields. The group produces three major productions during the year, plus a number of smaller projects, and regularly participates in competitive festivals throughout the state.

We meet in the Green Room at the rear of Wyong Memorial Hall on the first Tuesdays of each month at 8pm. Come along and say hello, or to find out more about us just ring Bonnie on:

4392-3441

Coming Events

- We will be presenting *Encore! a Festival of One-Act Plays* in August this year. This event will see drama groups from all around the state (and often beyond) competing in a weekend of sheer heaven for theatre buffs. We get stiff competition and some absolute gems being produced.

A preview of the WDG entries for *Encore!* will be held on **Saturday 1 August**. *Encore!* itself will be held over the weekend of **7th, 8th & 9th August**. For interested parties, entries close on 4 June 2004. Our co-ordinator is Ruth Jordon on 0408-810-763 (bh) or 02-4971-0795 (ah).

- WDG's **Seventeenth Annual Bush Bash** will be held on **Saturday 26th June**. This year it is the normal Dinner-Show-Dance format, with members of Outback providing the musical entertainment. Cost is \$30/head. Bookings close 11th June. Book by mail to PO Box 359 Wyong 2259, enclosing a cheque/money order and your details (including phone number).
- We still need a Director for the **November** production. Discuss your intentions at the next meeting: **Tuesday 6 May** at 8pm in the Green Room or let a group member know if this is for you.

Wyong Drama Group Incorporated Proudly Presents

by Special Arrangement with Dominic Proprietary Limited



Blithe

Spirit

by Noël Coward

Directed by Denise Cooper

At Wyong Memorial Hall

April/May 2004



Premalata Carpenter as Edith

Prema is one of the youngest members of WDG, but still has a wealth of experience. She first appeared in *The Music Lovers*, a WDG entry in *Wyong Theatrefest '98*. She has since been seen in *Picasso at L'Apin Agile*, *Us* (WDG's 50th Anniversary show) and *Darlings, You were Wonderful*. Prema has also directed *A Visitor from Hollywood*, part of Neil Simon's *Plaza Suite*.

John Pastor as Dr Bradman

This is John's third play with the group and he intends to perform in many more over the ensuing years. John thoroughly enjoys the challenge of the stage, in front of a live audience, taking direction and guidance excitedly. You may remember him in *Plaza Suite* in 2000 or in *US* in 2002. He uses his acting skills to enhance his public speaking engagements across Australia and the world.



Cathy Stone as Ruth

Cathy has been in amateur theatre on the Central Coast over the past 5 years or so, appearing in a number of Woy Woy Little Theatre productions. Her past credits include *You Can't Take it With You*, *The Anniversary*, *After the Ball* and *Murdered to Death*. This is Cathy's first role with WDG. *Blithe Spirit* has always been a favourite of hers, since she played the part of Madame Arcati in a high school production at age 14!



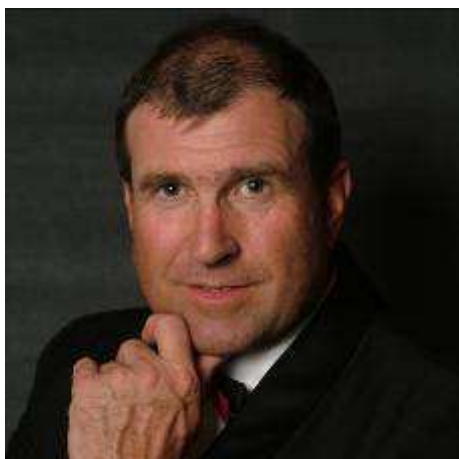
Jenny Sharrock as Mrs Bradman

Jenny has been with WDG for six years. Her skills were first used as prompt for *Sweet Caroline Sweet*, which won a Drama Award at the Gulgong Theatre Festival. She was also behind the scenes in *Love's a Luxury* in 1999. She played Agnes the Cook in *Wanted One Body* and was later seen as Miss Hackett in *Running Riot*, the Olympic Play in 2000. Jenny is having a ball playing Mrs Bradman in *Blithe Spirit*.



Howard Oxley as Charles

Howard is the larrikin of theatrical productions. He has been made a life member of WDG, but he denies he's old enough to have achieved this feat. He has, however, appeared in over thirty WDG plays in the last twenty years, so there might be something in it. Howard reckons that the lines are a bit harder to learn these days, but it's still just as much fun as it was twenty years ago.



Joan Dalglish as Madame Arcati

Joan began her acting career with the Independent Theatre. She raised a family, wrote children's books and (naturally) kept busy in theatre. After moving to the Central Coast, she has been very active, appearing in *Rumours*, *Cinderella*, *The Cemetery Club*, & *The Dresser* for WWLT, *Steel Magnolias*, *Agnes of God* & *Equus* for Ad Hoc & *Dinkum Assorted* for CCTC. Joan was last seen with WDG as Minna in *Life Goes On*.





Christine Vale as Elvira

Christine's first role, when aged 10, was Fredrick in *The Sound of Music*. (She was at an all-girls school!) Since then, she has been involved in over twenty different productions including musicals, pantomimes and plays. She previously played Elvira in a Brisbane production of *Blithe Spirit* and so is delighted to play the role again with WDG, as she has recently moved to the Central Coast.

Graham Vale
Assistant Director



Wendy Potter
Production Manager



Ros Ellis
Stage Manager



Our Crew



Wyong Drama Group Incorporated



Proudly Presents

Blithe

Spirit

by Noël Coward

Cast (in order of appearance)

Edith (a maid).....Prema Carpenter
Ruth Condomine (Charles's 2nd wife)..... Cathy Stone
Charles Condomine (a writer) Howard Oxley
Doctor Bradman (a visitor).....John Pastor
Mrs Bradman (a visitor) Jenny Sharrock
Madame Arcati (a medium) Joan Dalglish
Elvira (Charles's 1st wife).....Christine Vale

Notes

The play is set in Charles's country house in Kent. The play is quite long, with a running time of two and one-half hours. In addition, there will be one fifteen-minute interval.