



Wyong Drama Group proudly presents
by special arrangement with Hal Leonard Australia Pty Ltd



CHASE ME, COMRADE!

by Ray Cooney
directed by Millie Sampson



Wyong Memorial Hall - November 2011



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Setting

The action of the play is continuous and takes place in the living room of Commander Rimmington's English country house on a Saturday afternoon in late summer. The period is the 1960s.

The Cast

Nancy Rimmington	Jessica Armitage
Commander Rimmington	Andy Kabanoff
Hoskins	Laszlo Weidlich
Alicia Courtney	Madeline Parker
Petrovyan	Scott Russell
Gerry Buss	Duncan Mitchell
Mr Laver	Stephen McDonald
Constable Pulford	Les Besseney
Janet Rimmington	Julie Bailey
Bobby Hargreaves	Cameron Oxley

President's Note



The end of another year for our Drama Group but the beginning of a new era for the Memorial Hall. Before the new Arthouse is hopefully started, WDG, along with the Musical Theatre Company, hopes to improve our present venue for a better experience of theatre and music.

Enjoy *Chase Me, Comrade!*, another Cooney comedy, and brace yourself for 2012.

Happy Xmas.

Howard Oxley

The Director



Millie Sampson came to the Central Coast from Kempsey in 1995 after appearing in or directing numerous shows for Kempsey Singers. She has directed junior shows such as *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* and *Puss in Boots* for Gosford Musical Society. For WDG Millie has directed several plays including Ray Cooney's *Two Into One*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *The Farndale Ave Murder Mystery* and *Dearly Departed*. She has also directed one-act plays for WDG's annual Theatrefest. Awards

included: Best Set and Best Ensemble for *Hewers of Coal* (2005); Best Set and Best Direction for *Repent at Leisure*; and Best Production for *The Cage Birds* (2008). Millie has always loved comedy and has no doubt that Ray Cooney is the Master of British Farce.

The Playwright



Ray Cooney OBE, one of Britain's most popular and prolific comic playwrights, is known as the Master of Farce. WDG has performed many of his plays over the years including *Move Over Mrs Markham*, *Not Now Darling*, *There Goes the Bride* (all co-written with John Chapman), *Two Into One*, *Run For Your Wife* and its sequel, *Caught in the Net*, the November 2010 production. We are proud to present another Cooney Classic, *Chase Me Comrade*, which was inspired by the defection to the West of Rudolf Nureyev, the famous Russian ballet dancer. Only Cooney

could take such a situation and turn it into a farce. Throughout Ray's hectic, productive, theatrical career he has always found time to continue acting, often appearing in his own plays.

We hope you enjoy our performance of this very funny play.



JESSICA ARMITAGE

With a love of performance and a penchant for the dramatic, taking to the stage was inevitable for Jessica, whose acting debut as Nancy in *Chase Me, Comrade!* is a chance for her to channel her talents. After learning the basics as a teenager with the Mad Cow Theatre Company, Jessica majored in performing arts while studying at the University of Newcastle. A primary school teacher by day, drama is an important part of Jessica's classroom as she passes on her love of acting to her students. Jessica is thrilled to play Nancy in Wyong Drama Group's production of *Chase Me, Comrade!* and hopes this delightful role is the first of many more to follow.



ANDY KABANOFF

Andy, a retired English and Drama teacher, has recently moved to the Central Coast and appears in his first role for WDG. He has written seven plays which have been produced in the Blue Mountains and Western Sydney. Andy has directed many productions and acted with a range of companies. Most of his work has been dramatic - Shakespeare, Chekhov, Arthur Miller, Dorothy Hewett et al. Being a masochist he has on several occasions written, directed, designed and acted in the same production - which probably prepares him well for the madness of *Chase Me Comrade*.



LÁSZLÓ WEIDLICH

Recently László has revelled in the character of Roy, the revved-up, über-enthusiastic manic-depressive busy-body in Louis Nowra's *Così*. Another favourite part was the withdrawn, delusional father in the Theatrefest 2010 award-winning one-act play, *The Boat*. His most recent roles, in Theatrefest 2011: Hamlet's bombastic, fratricide uncle, Claudius, in the tongue-in-cheek *Ruby of Elsinore* and the dark, introspective, yet at times ebullient, ageing Russian actor in the Chekhov two hander *Swansong*.

László likes the leery larrikinism and physicality of the role of Hoskins and has enjoyed the rehearsals with a fresh, eager young cast who worked hard to overcome lots of challenges.



MADLINE PARKER

At only sixteen years of age, Madeline's acting career is enjoying a head start with her role as the gushing Alicia in *Chase Me, Comrade!*. In what is her first major role with Wyong Drama Group, Madeline is drawing on knowledge gained in her years in XtrAct Drama Academy. After XtrAct, Madeline broadened her experience with the Ad Hoc Theatre Company, Jopuka Productions, Abyss Entertainment and in NIDA's prestigious 2010 youth production of *Want2tlk*. Working with the cast and crew of *Chase Me, Comrade!* is a valuable and enjoyable experience for Madeline, who hopes the audience has a 'bijou' time witnessing the hilarious and farcical play!



SCOTT RUSSELL

Scott returns to us after his delightful portrayal of the loveable Laurie in our April production of *Little Women*. Since then Scott has starred in Wyong Musical Theatre Company's *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *High School Musical*. Prior to *Little Women* he played Maurice in Gosford Musical Society Juniors' production of *Beauty and the Beast*. Scott has appeared in many WMTC shows including *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. This role as Petrovyan, the Soviet ballet dancer who defects to the West, presents a challenge of a different kind.



DUNCAN MITCHELL

Duncan has been with Wyong Drama Group for 14 years. In that time he has played many roles including dramas, Australian plays and of course British farce including *Two Into One* (2008) and *No Sex Please, We're British!* (2009). He always enjoys the frenetic pace of a good farce and is enjoying his role as Gerry, as well as working with some new faces to the group. Duncan recently made his first foray into writing and his play, *Shadow of Doubt*, won multiple awards at Central Coast Theatrefest 2011, including Best Unpublished Play. He hopes you enjoy the show.



STEPHEN MCDONALD

After being involved in theatre mainly at school and university, Stephen joined the Wyong Drama Group in 2009 and has enjoyed greatly the experience of working with such great cast members over the last two years. Having started with *Fawlty Towers* in 2009, he has had the opportunity to play lead roles in *No Sex Please, We're British!* and *Così* as well as the hilarious *Caught in the Net*. With a couple of stints in the musical theatre arena including the part of Judas in WMTC's successful production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, he is back with Millie Sampson again, this time playing the part of the increasingly intoxicated government official Laver.



LES BESSENY

Les has now been with Wyong Drama Group for 4 years and has appeared in just as many plays performed by the group, having acted in *Two Into One*, *Fawlty Towers*, *No Sex Please, We're British!* and *Così*.

He has also performed with Wyong Musical Theatre Company in the past in such shows as *Wizard Of Oz*, *Guys And Dolls*, *Oliver* and *Fiddler On The Roof*. Happy to be appearing in another farce by Ray Cooney, and directed by the beautiful Millie Sampson, he hopes you will enjoy *Chase Me Comrade*.



JULIE BAILEY

Julie has been an active member of WDG for over 25 years and is currently a Vice-President. She has enjoyed a variety of roles both on and off the stage, the most recent being Hannah, the March family's maid in *Little Women* in April and Mother Raphael in John Misto's *Harp on the Willow* in 2010. *Chase Me Comrade* finds Julie casting off the habit and the mantle of service as she plays Janet Rimmington, the Commander's wife, who finds herself unwittingly entwined in Communist intrigue and subterfuge amid resulting mayhem. It is a delight to be acting alongside fresh, new talent as well as audience favourites and long term WDG friends.



CAMERON OXLEY

This is Cameron's debut with WDG but he has trod these very boards before. Cameron is a graduate of XtrAct Drama Academy where he starred in a number of shows such as *Peter Pan* and *Cinderella* in which he portrayed that memorable character, Custard. His experience with XtrAct also includes the role of Albert, the father of two teenagers, in *The Sister, The Brother, The Parents* which was presented at WDG's Central Coast Theatrefest 2010. Cameron hopes his role as Bobby is the first of many in WDG productions to come.



Production Team

Director	Millie Sampson
Production Manager	Howard Oxley
Stage Manager	Barry Sampson
Assistant Stage Manager	Ian Abbott
Props/Stage Hand	Charles Styles
Prompt	Sue Bridge
Wardrobe	Wendy Potter
Lighting/Sound	Kahli Meredith
Make-up	Helen Schumann
Hairdressing	Kellie Mortimer
Set Design	Barry Sampson, Millie Sampson
Set Construction	Barry Sampson, Ron Baker, Charles Styles, Laszlo Weidlich, Ian Abbott, Marc Calwell, Duncan Mitchell, Fred Roome, Stephen McDonald
Set Painting	Madeline Parker, Jessica Armitage, Julie Bailey, Howard Oxley, Cameron Oxley, Sue Bridge, Les Besseny, Helen Schumann, Millie Sampson, Mathew Richards
Publicity	Julie Bailey, Howard Oxley
Program/poster	Graham Vale, Julie Bailey
Photography	Mathew Richards, Julie Bailey, Andy Kabanoff
Front of House	Cathy De Vries/Sally Bartley, WDG members
Bookings/Box Office	Robyn Weidlich
Kitchen	Sally Bartley, WDG members

Our Next Production

Fawly Towers, April 12-21, 2012.

Check the website for the details at www.wyong-dramagroup.com.au.

If you're not on our mailing list to receive advance notice of all shows, then add your name and details to the list in the foyer, or visit the web page www.wyongdramagroup.com.au/MoreInfo.htm and you can add your details there. Our website has over 450 pages, a copy of a program for every show since 1952 and nearly 1700 pictures.



Wyong Drama Group turns 60 in 2012!!

And we're getting ready to party all year long!

So check our website for updates on the plans for
our 60th Birthday Celebrations

www.wyongdramagroup.com.au

A special Thanks to:

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Would you like to join our group?

Wyong Drama Group holds meetings on the first Tuesday of each month (except Jan) at 7.30pm in the Green Room at the rear of this hall. New members are always welcome to join our dynamic team of actors, directors, technicians and willing workers. See the website or phone 4353-4353 to find out more.

www.wyongdramagroup.com.au

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