

October 2016

The

Artful

DODGER

1.*n.* roystering young pickpocket from Charles Dicken's *Oliver Twist*. 2.*n.* Printed handbill full of tidings from the W.M.I&A.A. with a closing date for contributions of 25th of each month to David Tynan on 98445727 or davidtyn@gmail.com



Ken fleeing the coup? I doubt it.

Its been a month of thank-you celebrations for our long-time President Ken Virtue, seen here with Potter legend Marjorie Beecham and a few of his new girlfriends.

A sumptuous luncheon and presentation was made in Ken's honour, who has finally retired from the WMI&AA committee after more than 25 years. He will always be welcome around here!

For more details, see Marjorie's Pottery Group report inside.

*Ken & Marjorie pose for our proposed 'Living Legends' calendar series.
[Inset: As you would expect, Ken & Libby have already installed the coup in their Thornbury digs!]*

Gail Macrae - a member for life!



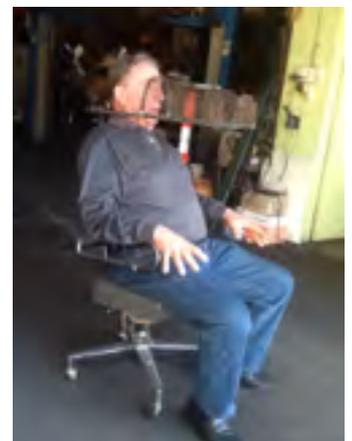
Gail's contributions over the last 30 years.

At our recent celebration dinner for Ken Virtue, there was also time for a little surprise. Yet another WMI&AA legend Gail Macrae was inducted as a life member. How genuinely surprised she looks! See inside for the official citation which summarises some of

Did you know (Part 1)?

The hideous rat torture mask and chair used in the production of "1984" was crafted at Bruno Fink Motors (Hawthorn), lovingly constructed by Simone Kiefer, ably assisted by her father Jurgen Kiefer. In this photo Jurgen roadtests the mask for comfort and stage-readiness.

Umm - any ideas what we could use it for now the show has finished?



Warrandyte Mechanics Institute & Arts Association Inc. 0009153X

warrandytehallarts.asn.au

Group reports



We trust our chooks are not awakening Lib & Ken too early. We had a fun luncheon on Tuesday last to say a formal thank you to Ken for his many improvements to the studio over the years. The Tuesday potters made him a set of laying

hens as a thank you present. We set up a chook run outside the studio with an imported A-frame nesting box



made from 100 year old galvanised iron made by my grandson-in-law James. So thank you James. Brenda supplied the fences, Sally (my daughter) brought down straw from Mansfield and a cackling battery-run chook, which certainly helped to create the right atmosphere. Manda and Peter Sgourakis supplied the wine and soft drinks. Every Tuesday potter made one or more chooks so all in all it was a group effort.

Thank you to everyone involved. The food was delicious, the decor great, and the company outstanding!

Marjorie Beecham



With Adrian in the wilds of Myanmar, fresh from the successes of 1984, we have a guest report from Susan Rundle, who directs the final WTC offering for 2016, *Speaking in Tongues*, by Andrew Bovell.

In the notes that follow, Susan provides some background to the play.

Speaking in Tongues

The year 2001 produced one of the best Australian films of all time - *Lantana* directed by the talented Ray Lawrence with a mega cast including Anthony LaPaglia, Geoffrey Rush, Vince Colosimo, Barbara Hershey, Rachel Blake and Kerry Armstrong. *Lantana* picked up 36 awards and received a further 22 nominations.



What many people may not know is that *Lantana* is the film adaptation of *Speaking in Tongues* by award winning Australian author Andrew Bovell. Originally published in 1998, *Speaking in Tongues* continues to be produced throughout Australia, Europe and the US.

Speaking in Tongues is a mystery, a thriller, but it is also about human relationships. About connection or the lack of it. About trust or the lack of it. About fear, about loss, about love. This is a play full of intersecting lines. It is about husbands and wives and strangers. Life is screwed-up and wonderful - all at once.

Speaking in Tongues stars Gemma Porter, Chris Farrell, Gabby Llewellyn Salter and Michael Fenemore. The play is being performed in its original format of 4 actors playing 9 Characters.

There are 8 performances: Nov 18,19, 25, 26 Nov (including matinee on 26 Nov), and Dec 1,2, 3

Upcoming events for your diary

- **Follies 2017 Writer's Meeting:** Friday Oct 7 (7:30 pm)
- **Working Bee:** Sunday 23 October at 10.00am.
- **Christmas party:** Sunday 11 December at 4.30 at Stiggants. Bring salad, sides and tipples of choice.



Watching Big Brother - a review

The easy way for an amateur theatre group to go is to put on a nice comedy. Preferably one that you've already heard of. "Allo, Allo," I'm told, is a sure-fire bet around the amateur traps at the moment.

It's pleasing then to see our local thespians tackling something more serious. Especially when this brave new direction is initiated by its juvenile arm, the Warrandyte Youth Theatre, and all the more satisfying to see it attracting such strong audiences.

Orwell's 1984, of course, is an important work, still chillingly relevant, which is why it remains firmly on the school syllabus.

Although penned in 1949, and set in a far-flung future we have long since overtaken, we don't have to look far abroad to see thriving examples of institutionalised hatred, rigid party control, brainwashing, citizen spies, re-education programs and all the insidious manifestations of totalitarianism so vividly imagined here. The debasement of language into shallow slogans and soundbites has become de rigueur even within our own political system - and don't get me started on email and twitter-speak. OMG!

So the storyline was immediately compelling, and guaranteed to provide that much-vaunted 'something to think about long after the final curtain'. It unfolded smoothly under sure-footed direction from Adrian Rice and crisply effective staging as party apparatchiks pivoted a sequence of stark backdrops into position like flipping through the pages of the book itself.

Our doomed innocent, Winston Smith, was excellently portrayed by Matthew Freeman whose passion and control provided a convincing journey from subversive to submissive. Nicola De Rosbo-Davies was equally strong as the seductively rebellious Julia, playing the part with innocence and restraint. Nick Vanderhaar in the demanding role of O'Brien managed to suck the audience in as effectively as he did the young couple until unleashing his true colours with frightening force. Matt Wallace as Syme, Lydia Phelan as Parsons, Georgina Topp as the Landlady, Emma Withoff and Renata Levin-Buckland in multiple roles and Jaz Harwood as the fanatical fourteen year-old played their roles for the team with good effect.

I was also impressed to hear that the evocative background score was an original effort from the multi-talented Matt Wallace.

Warrandyte's Youth Theatre is one of the most exciting theatrical developments we have seen in recent years and we can only hope the momentum established can be maintained. It's a difficult challenge as the first wave of exceptional talent we enjoyed in the first 4 years is already outgrowing the youth label. But if 1984 is any indication, the next crop of young performers is well up to the task.

Next up for the company is Speaking in Tongues on which the highly-acclaimed movie Lantana was based. It opens on 18 October.

Alan Cornell

Warrandyte Music Concerts

My name is Lisa and I have been running monthly concerts at the Warrandyte Hall for the past year now. Pheeew!! and what a year.



I was inspired to organise these concerts through my friendships with a number of highly talented musicians, many of whom live in the greater Warrandyte area.

I was hearing wonderful, unique and exciting compositions from these creative individuals and ensembles and also seeing how difficult it can be to find a venue to share your music and also be remunerated for your creativity.

You may be aware of the lower number of music venues that there are across Melbourne now than there used to be. There are still a number of venues especially hotels who support the music scene which is great ... but what if your genre of music doesn't fit into the pub scene.

It was my wish to create a venue where beautiful music is played, the atmosphere of the evening is warm, intimate and friendly, healthful food and beverages are served, is local, and the musicians are remunerated as deserved for their much needed contribution to society. The Arts support our soul life and in today's often stress filled lifestyle we need just as much as ever to experience the depth, beauty, contemplation and joy the Arts can offer us. The Warrandyte Hall for this "venue creation" is the perfect location as the hall has wonderful acoustics, an inviting, relaxed atmosphere and may I say a great committee who have been extremely helpful whenever I have needed it. The location of Warrandyte is also very special as I always encourage our music goers to come early and enjoy a walk by the river and one of the many lovely cafes/restaurants.

Our next Concert on Saturday October 22nd is the wonderful Light Quartet who have played already in the Warrandyte Hall and are of exceptional calibre - David Jones - drums/percussion, Michael Johnson - harp, Evripides Evripidou - bass and Matthew Arnold - violin/viola. Music goers at previous Light Quartet concerts have commented at the end of the evening - "I have never heard music like that before" (in reference to the harp with drums etc), "stunning music", "I feel so relaxed after that concert", and "we are so lucky to have them play in Warrandyte".

For more information please see the concert flyer in the Dodger and if you are able to come to our next concert I look forward to meeting you and sharing our beautiful evenings of music.

Lisa Pearson

Gail Macrae – official citation for WMI&AA Life Membership

The Warrandyte Mechanics Institute and Arts Association is delighted to formally acknowledge Gail Macrae for her long and dedicated contribution to the life of the Association.

Gail has contributed in so many roles over so many years it is hard to be sure we remember them all. Her primary interest has been theatre, where she has been involved in a remarkable 50 plus productions. She has served on the Central Committee and has been a great friend to the Hall giving her time, muscle and love to its care and improvement.

Her first appearance on stage may have been as a cleaner in Resounding Tinker in the early 80s. She performed in Follies, Christmas pageants, and as a CWA lady in Dimboola serving up 120 meals every night! But it was offstage where Gail did her best work over 30 years up to 2012 before moving down to Ocean Grove.

Gail became the go-to Producer for the Warrandyte Theatre Company, being the person who knew what to do, where to go, who to ring and when to call a spade a fucking shovel – a strong right hand for any Director. If she wasn't producing she was Stage Managing and if she wasn't Stage

Managing she was operating lights or sound or painting or set building or costume making or prop gathering or Front of Housing or anything else that needed doing. She wrote sketches for the Follies, Co-directed the Follies and Assistant Directed a number of other shows.



In all that time her good humour and just get it done efficiency made her a stalwart of the group. Her antics from the bio box will be vividly remembered by many trying to be serious on stage, as will her lovingly personalised presents at after parties and her undisputed staying power in the supper room.

In recognition of Gail's distinguished contribution over so many years, we are delighted to confer on her Life Membership of the Association and thank her for everything she has done.



The Sharp End

THE SHARP END by Robert Black. It's gently twisted.



"Why'd the kids make this lid from a blackboard? Oh!"

One of our multi-talented members and WMIAA Web and all things digital guru Robert Black moonlights as a terrific cartoonist - you may have seen his work in other publications, including in the Warrandyte Diary. Robert generously permits us to publish one of his 'gently twist' cartoons each month - thanks Robert!

For more of Robert's cartoons work, go to

<http://www.robertblack.com.au/the-sharp-end>

A tale of three Kens.

[This is an edited extract of the President's thank you speech at a farewell dinner (held Mon. Sept. 19) for a living legend – Ken Virtue.]

I want to say a few words – well 3 words in particular about our Ken.

1. Kenveralls

We have seen Ken in many outfits on and off-stage, but the most enduring image I have of Ken will be him in a trusty pair of Kenveralls. I'm not sure Ken knew how to say 'no'. It's also fair to say he's no shirker when it comes to hard work, whether it involved: re-roofing, re-painting, re-pairing, clean-ups, set building, bump-ins and bump-outs, or working bees – Ken was always there – working and coordinating above and beyond the call, then sharing a beer, wine, memories and laughs with co-workers at the end of yet another job well done.



2. Ken-do

Creatively – Ken could do it all. Acting, directing, singing and dancing, in Follies, pantos, and plays.

(Ok the singing bit is a stretch) Countless videotapes and DVDs confirm our memories of Ken in character on stage – always present, focussed and submerged in his loveable characters.

The only time I wasn't quite convinced was when he played George in Life After George – maybe I refused to believe our Kenny could be the selfish bastard that George clearly was.

As a director, he was insightful, supportive and disciplined, and a master at the cattle-herding skills needed to manage large and unruly casts. He got the best out of his cast.

3. Kentor

Ken continues to be a supportive guide & mentor (Kentor), and many of us have sought Ken's guidance to help resolve issues that inevitably arise in community organisations.

He always leant a willing and empathetic ear, offering sage advice and actions where needed. He also ran a tight meeting, clearly knowing where the rails were. He made tough decisions when required, and brought us all with him. When the WMIAA was in the red for a couple of months, he even gave us a loan.

Thanks for handing over a healthy, happy and productive association.

As inadequate as this feels, thanks Ken for all of your efforts over many years to keep the local arts thriving, and our wonderful hall standing proudly. You have embodied the very best 'virtues' of the servant leader. In fact, thanks for doing so much over a quarter century that it's difficult for any future Presidents to match your achievements – thanks very much!



Most of all we want to thank you for being the humble, generous and gorgeous man that you are.

We are disappointed that we won't see you as regularly. It occurs to me that we could all be great referees for Ken – except that I don't reckon he is ambitious for any new jobs. Instead he is leaving one gang for another gang, coincidentally the character name his grandchildren have given him. This new role is not such an appalling calling.

And so Ken, I want to say farewell on behalf of the WMI&AA, and for you to know that, even though you have now left Warrandyte with your spunk of a sweetheart Libby, it consoles us that you have left a large part of yourself here.

Finally, we are aware that the bird life in Thornbury is not quite what it is Warrandyte, and so I had a word with a few local birds. They promised to visit your new digs, provided they could get a drink when they arrived. With this promise in mind, and the generous help of the Potter's, we have made something that might make that happen.

Thanks Mate.

David Tynan

WMI&AA President

Warrandyte Youth Theatre 2016: Orwell's 1984



All photos courtesy of Stephen Reynolds - bless him.

Craft group - rare sighting!

Far from being dormant, the Craft group still meets regularly at the hall. Although its numbers are small (about 7), they still manage time to meet, socialise and pursue their crafty endeavours.

Pat Anderson was despatched to find out whether the group was still active, and to report back. We are all pleased to report that it is quietly thriving!



Pictured here is Julie Ryan from the Craft group. She made this table runner, from a piece of hand dyed fabric (not very clear in the photo I'm afraid), in the morning before coming to the group meeting at the hall!

Did you know (Part 2)?

Following something Ken said about meeting the love of his life at WMI&AA, we wondered whether the same applies to the position of all Presidents?



The last 3 Presidents's Ken, Jack and David all meet their sweethearts via the Hall - a coincidence, or something about the mysterious power of the Hall?

Conspiratorial theories will now be entertained.

The Light Quartet

in Concert

Eviprides Evripidou, David Jones
Michael Johnson, Matthew Arnold



Saturday October 22nd 7.30pm

Warrandyte Mechanics Hall
Cnr Yarra St & Mitchell Ave. Warrandyte

Four Gentlemen, Friends and Masterful Musicians.

The Light Quartet produce extraordinarily beautiful sounds and textures from harp, piano, guitars, viola, violin and percussion that will bring Joy, Delight and a little bit of Bliss to your evening.

Bookings: please call 0401 167 223, warrandytemusic@gmail.com
www.rwdlightmusic.com.au

Tickets: Full \$25, Conc. \$21, Child \$10 (under 18)

Our cafe will be open on the evening for refreshments.



Warrandyte Historical Society

presents

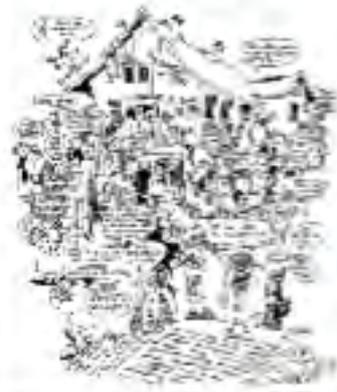
The Diary Duo

An evening talk about the early days of the Warrandyte Diary.

THE WARRANDYTE
diary

THE EARLY DAYS

Cliff Green & Jack Macneish



The Warrandyte Diary has played a pivotal role in the history of Warrandyte. It started in 1970 as a 12 page newsletter and celebrates its 500th edition in September 2016.

Come and hear about its early days and modest beginning and how it has become the Diary we all know and love today from:

Cliff Green – founder, writer, editor, mentor, and trustee.

Jock Macneish – cartoonist, contributor, mentor and trustee.

The talk will be held in the Balcony Room, The Grand Hotel, Yarra Street, Warrandyte 3113

7.15pm for 7.30pm
Thursday 20 October, 2016

A light supper and chat will follow at the museum.

For catering purposes please email info@whscc.org.au or phone 9844 3086 by 14 October if attending.