

Our profits support these charities. They thank you for your help.

World Vision of Australia

In the time it takes you to read this paragraph twenty children will die of hunger or related diseases. That shocking statistic and the fact that 800 million people are hungry all the time, are the reasons that World Vision wants to stop hunger around the world. This can be achieved in many ways, but particularly by setting up self-help projects. We are supporting one such project through this production. It is a centre to assist the street children in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Such projects are set up in areas where poverty is worst, to help overcome the problems that lead to hunger. Supporting World Vision through involvement in the 40-hour famine, child sponsorship, or attending this performance is a concrete practical action to save children's lives. We're grateful for your support.

Open House Christian Involvement Centres

Open House, which began in Ivanhoe some 25 years ago, maintains a program of support for needy people in the community. The work is wholeistic in nature and seeks to provide care, friendship and (informal) training in a supportive and encouraging atmosphere at three centres: Ivanhoe, where there are clubs and a drop-in, activities centre for adults and young people, open till 11:00 pm

Hurstbridge, where eight young people live in two houses while recovering from alcoholism, drug dependency and mental illness. They learn living skills, undertake re-training programs and work, before reentering the community

Seymour which is a base for a small group camping program for teenagers and young adults.

Dozens of people provide thousands of hours of labour and personal support to all aspects of the work. Open House is grateful to Diamond Valley Singers, the DVECO and their patrons for their support. For further information, contact George Farrington, director on 9497 1855.



The Merry Widow

from Bluegum Creek

Director's Notes - Graham Ford

Choosing a version of "The Merry Widow" to perform was a minefield, with so many translations available, all having their own twist. With the music now out of copyright, it was just the matter of which translation, and we even found one that was in the public domain.

However, the Diamond Valley Singers has always prided itself on being innovative, so eventually "The Merry Widow from BlueGum Creek" won the day, and there have been no regrets. While remaining faithful to the original conception, the added Australian humour has created an extra layer, which the cast has found most enjoyable.

The direction has been to play it fairly straight and allow the humour to come out of the dialogue and the situations. There are many humorous characters, and plenty of "straight" ones to keep the balance.

The Diamond Valley Singers have had a ball with this production and hope the audience enjoys it just as much.

LIBRETTIST'S NOTE

Franz Lehár's, 'The Merry Widow,' (1905) is unchallenged as the most popular operetta of the twentieth century. Derived from Henri Meilhac's 1861 comedy, 'The Ambassador's Attaché,' The operetta's original German libretto was written by Leo Stein and Victor Léon, and some of their realistic love scenes caused a stir. There have been many, English translations and 'versions' since, mostly lightweight & tedious for today's audiences, who wait impatiently for the next song, wondering why Lehár's passionate music has been yoked to such pantomime frolics.

The setting is Paris, but most of the characters come from the invented Balkan kingdom of Pontevedrina. At the Pontevedrinian embassy, we meet the ambassador, his impressionable wife, and various attachés and diplomats, all doing their best to represent their ancient, unsophisticated country in highly-cultured 'Gay Paree.'

The notion behind, 'The Merry Widow from Bluegum Creek,' is simple. It's still turn-of-the-century Paris, but the main characters come from that new, unsophisticated, not-so-mythical country Australia. As Federation happened in 1901, it seems fair that Australia might have opened its first continental embassy around that time, and, that the Battling Aussie Ambassador and his staff are fiercely proud of their far-off homeland, and wary of the stuck-up Frenchies. That twist accepted, everything falls into place. In fact, the story seems to regain some of its buried life and, most importantly the passions of the players begin to match the glorious, sensual throb of the music.

SYNOPSIS

It is 1901, the federation of Australia is newly formed, and the new Australian ambassador to France, Sir Zacariah Wentworth, is understandably nervous about his first official function. Apart from his own staff, there would be an array of guests and a mysterious recently widowed Australian who happened to be in the area and "thought she'd drop in" To add to his woes the PM had sent a telegram telling him that the widow should not marry a foreigner or they'd all be looking for new jobs - the new federation could not afford to lose that amount of money.

However, things do not go as planned. The widow, Anna, turns out to be quite young and pretty, with typical Australian contempt for the protocol Zac had been so carefully trying to acquire. His assistant attache, Danny, seems to be nowhere in sight whenever he's needed and the other two attaches appear to be losing the battle to keep their wives away from various amorous Frenchmen. At least his young wife, Valerie, was no trouble - he had so much to do, it was a pleasure to have her escorted by the nice young Count Camille de Rosillon.

Zac has also been fortunate enough to find a Frenchman, Michelin, to translate for the embassy staff, but he appears to understand little of the English that Zac and his staff use and tends to spend most of his time organising everything else. This includes Zac's favourite item - the flag competition for his new country.

Eventually Zac manages to motivate Danny to try and keep the others away from Anna, not knowing that Danny and Anna had been childhood sweethearts. When Zac is not around Danny and Anna spend some time together during that first evening, although Danny does not appear to be having his usual success. Maybe things will go better the next night, when Anna has invited everyone to an Australian fancy dress ball at her rented mansion.

Things just seem to go from bad to worse. Zac's Ned Kelly costume is just a bit tight, and he ends up getting lost, missing Anna's lovely song, and not being able to see where he is going with his head jammed in a tin bucket.

But there is plenty of beer so all is not lost. Then there is some real

fun, when he discovers one of the French men in the summer house with one of the wives. However, as the Australian women appear on the scene, Zac is heartbroken when he thinks that it is his beloved Valerie in the Summerhouse.

Again Zac is embarrassed when it is Anna who steps out of the summer house and there is consternation all round. Danny deserts the party to go back to his favourite haunt, Maxim's, while Anna organises for it to be shut for the evening and the women to present their equivalent for the men when Danny returns.

The men are mightily impressed with this, and, in spite of all the problems encountered during the evening, Danny and Anna finally get together

PRODUCTION TEAM

Conductor	Mary Wright
Director	Graham Ford
Vocal Coach	Ian Lowe
Chorus training	Ian Lowe
Drama coach	Lynne Counsel
Choreographer	Jane Eisenbise
Producer	Dianne Richter
Stage manager	Merri Saltmarsh
Lighting design	Martin Karklins
Lighting operation	Anita Wilton,
Front of House	Irene Hayes, Gael Shearer
Publicity	Diane Morgan
Program	Geoff Vaughan
Photos	Paul Derrnnelly
Make-up	Lynne Counsel
Costumes	MadMess, Norma Turnbull-Smith
Set Design	Lynne Counsel
Set Construction	Geoff Collier
Ticket Sales	Verna Turnbull-Smith
Rehearsal Pianists	Ian Lowe, Roger Peck, Beth Barnett

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Music by Franz LEHÄR
Lyrics by Frank HATHERLEY

ACT 1 (A Reception Room at the Australian Embassy, Paris, 1901)

1. **Australia in Paris** – *Sir Zackariah Wentworth and Chorus.*
2. **A Respectable Wife** – *Lady Valerie & Viscount Camille De Rosillon.*
3. **The Only Frenchman** – *Michelin, Olga Crompton, Sylvia Boggins and the Embassy Secretaries.*
4. **Gentlemen G'Day** – *Anna Gladstone (Merry Widow) and Ensemble.*
5. **Maxim's** – *Danny Macquarie.*
6. **It Only Seems Like Yesterday** – *Anna and Danny.*
7. **Ladies' Choice – Finale Act 1** – *Ensemble.*

ACT 2:

Scene (I) (Anna's Rented Mansion in Paris)

8. **Intro. Bush Dance and 'Bluegum'** - *Anna and The Ensemble.*
9. **Riding in the Horse-'n'-Cart** – *Anna and Danny.*
10. **Women, Women, Women** – *Danny, Zack, Cascada, St. Brioche, Crompton, Boggins and Michelin.*
11. **Flirtation** – *Anna and Danny.*
12. **Soon As Cold Winter's Ending** *Valerie and Camille.*
13. **Not Anna and Camille** – *Ensemble.*

ACT 2:

Scene (II) (The New Maxim's)

14. **The New Maxim's** *The Cake Walk.*
15. **The Ladies of Paris** – *Anna, Valerie, Olga, Sylvia, Marjorie, Sheila, Mabel and Ensemble.*
16. **I Love You** – *Anna and Danny.*
17. **Finale – Women, Women, Women (Reprise)** - *Ensemble.*

CAST

The Australians:

Mrs Anna GLADSTONE, 'The Merry Widow.'	Yolande SUFFERN
Danny MACQUARIE, Junior Ambassador	Michael TRY
Sir Zackariah ('Zack') WENTWORTH,	
Ambassador	- Malcolm WILTON
Lady Valerie WENTWORTH	- Lesley WALTON
Captain Bruce CROMPTON, Military Attaché	- Geoff COLLIER
Mrs Olga CROMPTON, his wife	- Ann CALLAHAN
William BOGGINS, Cultural Attaché	- Geoff VAUGHAN
Mrs Sylvia BOGGINS, his wife	- Anne-Maria PLEVIER
Marjory PRESCOTT }	Liza MILLER
Sheila DAWSON } Embassy Secretaries	Dianne RICHTER
Mabel TOMKINS }	- Robyn FORD

The French:

MICHELIN, Official Embassy Linguist	- Gerard FULLARTON
Vicomte Camille DE ROSILLON	- Darren ROSENFELD
The Marquis DE CASCADE	- Daniel BELLIS
Monsieur DE ST. BRIOCHE	- Paul DERNELLY
	- Jane SMOLENAERS
Dancing Girls (Maxims)	- Anna SMOLENAERS
	Heather WRIGHT

Plus: Yvette and the band

CHORUS

Jennie Barrett, Martha Cacciattolo, Carol Hobbs, Dianne Morgan, Norma Turnbull-Smith, Kevin Pye, Robert Riddiford, James Lewis, Mairead Dundas, Lucas Richter

Children as Waiters:

Esther Counsel, Ashley Richter, Benjamin Richter, Catherine Wilton, Louise Wilton, Susan Wilton

Diamond Valley and Eltham Community Orchestra

Violins; Franz Spangler Mark Lvov, Ethel Newton, Wilma Ezard, Don Yool Courts, Patrick Russell-Young, Kevin Mullins, John Axon, Pierre Carroll, Eleanor Archibald
Violas; Geoff Gloster, Erik Pool, Mary Axon
Cello; Gemma Aldred
Double Bass; Briony Hammond

Flutes; Betty Martin, Len Johnstone, Tanya Roberts, Carol Galea

Oboe; George Rome
Clarinets; Derek Wright, Geoff Oakes
Bass Clarinet; Nada Cahill
Bassoon; Michael Taylor

Trumpet; Jane Doornbusch
Trombones; Bob McIntosh

Percussion; Daniel Richardson'

About The Orchestra;

The orchestra has been in existence for twenty-five years and celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with a concert in the Eltham Community Centre in May this year. It performs three or four programs annually including symphonies, concertos, ballet concerts and children's performances as well as one show and one oratorio with the Diamond Valley Singers. The orchestra is always keen to welcome new players, particularly of string instruments. As part of its role in encouraging new musicians, the orchestra also supports a feeder, string orchestra which caters for beginners to grade 4 string players, training them in the art of orchestral playing.

Practices are scheduled weekly, on Wednesdays, at Briar Hill Primary school commencing with a beginners' group at 6.30 p.m. followed by the full group at 8 pm. For any further information, call Mary or Derek on 9434 2147.

Diamond Valley Singers

In 1985 Ian Lowe approached Mavis and Graham Ford for help in staging Trial by Jury with the Eltham Community Orchestra (as it was then called) for a concert in aid of World Vision. Rehearsal began and 'Valley Musical Society' (later to become the Diamond Valley Singers) was formed to provide local singers with opportunities to be heard in public and to raise money for charity.

So far, well over \$60,000 has been donated to organisations such as World Vision, Community Aid Abroad, Eltham/Diamond Valley Housing Service, Harrison Youth Services, Eltham Emergency Relief fund and Open House.

Since the initial production of Trial by Jury, Diamond Valley Singers and the DVECO have combined in most Gilbert and Sullivan productions, as well as Strauss' Die Fledermaus, and Offenbach's Orpheus in the Underworld. They also annually perform one major oratorio which have included Handel's Messiah, Haydn's The Seasons and The Creation, Vaughan-Williams' Fantasia on Christmas Carols, Spohr's The last Judgement, Mendelssohn's Elijah, Bach's Magnificat, Mozart's Requiem and his Mass in C minor

New members are always welcome. There are no auditions for chorus parts. We rehearse on Wednesday nights at the Diamond Creek Uniting Church. Contact Graham Ford (Artistic Director) on 9439 3267

COMING ATTRACTION

Bach's Christmas Oratorio

Preparations for this presentation will commence soon after the completion of the season of 'The Merry Widow from Bluegum Creek.'

Six or seven performances of the oratorio are planned at a range of metropolitan and country church venues, commencing mid-October and going through to mid-November

Chorus rehearsals commence at Diamond Creek Uniting Church at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, 19th July with a warm welcome for all interested participants. No auditions are necessary for chorus members. Open auditions, for soloist parts, are to be held during August, on a date still to be determined.

Yolande SUFFERN

Mrs Anna GLADSTONE

(The Merry Widow)

Yolande is a versatile singer, fortunate to be vocally suited to many musical styles, including baroque, classical, oratorio, lieder, art song, opera, light opera and musical comedy. She studied singing with David Ross-Smith for eight years and has performed in many concerts and soirees. She has competed in several eisteddfods and was a finalist at Bendigo in 1999. Yolande's other performances include 'Suor Angelica' and Dido and Aeneas,' with Eastern Metropolitan Opera, 'The Marriage of Figaro' and 'The King and I.' She was also a member of the St. Francis Choir for nine years as chorister and soloist.

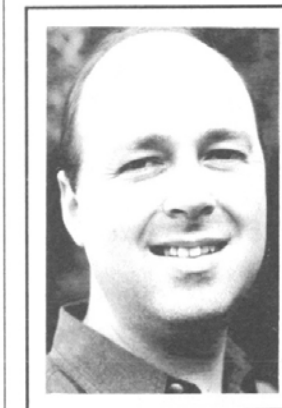
Yolande is delighted to be performing with the Diamond Valley Singers. The Merry Widow from Bluegum Creek is their fourth collaboration, following the title role in 'Patience,' in 1994 and solo contributions to 'Creation' and their first sing-along 'Messiah.'



Michael TRY

Danny MACQUARIE (Junior Ambassador)

This is Michael's seventh show with DVS and he considers Danny to be his most-challenging role yet! His previous roles include Nanki Poo, 'Mikado,' Ralph Rackstraw, 'HMS Pinafore,' Fairfax, 'Yeoman of the Guard,' Bunthorne, 'Patience,' Strephon, 'Iolanthe,' and Luiz, 'Gondoliers.' He has sung numerous tenor solos in DVS's oratorio works including Messiah, Elijah, Creation, The Seasons and Last Judgement.



Michael is currently a member of the Opera Australia Melbourne Chorus and, in 1998, completed his Bachelor of Music, at the Melba Conservatorium of Music.

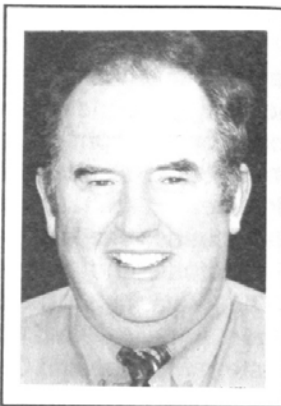
Malcolm WILTON

(Sir Zackariah Wentworth – Ambassador)

Malcolm first took to the stage with the Sandringham Light Opera Company in 'Showboat.' He joined the Diamond Valley Singers in 1994, with the performance of 'Patience.'

The following year, he played the Learned Judge in 'Trial by Jury' and he then performed in 'HMS Pinafore.' In 1997, he was the NCA Inspector (ex-sergeant) in the 'Bankers of Penzance.'

In 1998, he played the role of Jupiter in 'Orpheus in the Underworld,' and in 1999 was Pooh Bah in 'The Mikado.' Malcolm hopes that audiences will enjoy his character of Zack in this year's production, one of his most challenging roles to date.



Gerard FULLARTON

(Michelin, Official Embassy Linguist)

Gerard grew up singing in choirs, from local school efforts, then the Sacred Heart Cathedral Choir in Bendigo and onto St. Patrick's Cathedral Choir in Melbourne. When living in Bendigo, Gerard was involved with the Bendigo Operatic society, mainly in a production and support role, with some minor excursions onto the stage.

This is Gerard's first principal role since joining the Diamond Valley Singers four years ago as a hobby, although he has participated in the chorus for, 'A nice Dilemma,' and last year's 'Mikado,' as well as his involvement in the various oratorios produced during his time with the group. Gerard has a busy time combining rehearsals, study children and three jobs, but is looking forward to a successful season with 'The Merry Widow.'

Lesley WALTON

(Lady Valerie Wentworth)

This is Lesley's fourth stage production with Diamond Valley Singers. Last year she appeared as Peep Bo in *The Mikado*, and, in 1998, as Diana in *Orpheus in the Underworld*. She was a chorus member in *The Pirates (Bankers) of Penzance* in 1997. Earlier this year she appeared as a chorus member in Eastern Metropolitan Opera's production of *La Bohème*. Lesley sings occasionally with the Eltham Concert Band, particularly over the busy Christmas season, and has recently also been singing with the Up a Lazy River Band which performs regularly at local retirement villages. She also enjoys singing oratorio and with Diamond Valley Singers has performed solos in Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's

Magnificat in D, Mozart's *Requiem Mass* and *Mass in C Minor*. This year Lesley has performed as a member of the Melbourne Chorale, Tippett's *Child of our Time* and the little known German work, *Jewish Chronicle*.



Darren ROSENFELD

(Vicomte Camille de Rosillon)

Darren has been with DVS since 1992. Previous roles with the company include Leonard Meryll 'Yeoman', The Duke, 'Patience', Alfredo, 'Die Fledermaus', The Lost Frederic, 'Bankers of Penzance' and Mercury, 'Orpheus in the Underworld'. Other credits include the roles of Frederic, 'Pirates' and Ralph 'Pinafore,' both concert versions, plus St Brioche, 'The Merry Widow.' Solos in oratorio works include The Creation (Hayden) The Last Judgement (Spohr) Magnificat (Bach) and Messiah (Handel) Darren

has also been a member of Savoy Opera, Eastern Met. Opera, Loyola, Intr'acte and is a current member of Savoy Singers' travelling show, '100 Years of Musical Comedy'. Darren is also proud to have directed, co-produced, co-written, and starred as Frederic, in a new operetta entitled, 'A Nice Dilemma', which is based on the music and characters of the famous Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. Darren hopes you enjoy this production of the Merry Widow.

Geoff COLLIER

(CAPTAIN Bruce Crompton – Military Attachè)

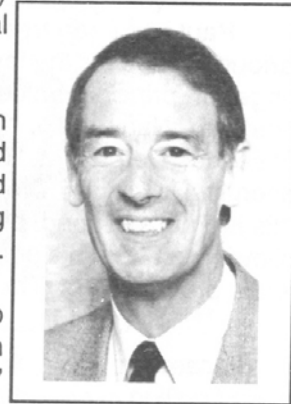
Geoff first performed professionally in 1951 at the Plaza Theatre, Northcote, followed by regular appearances on television and the cabaret circuit. Stage productions include, 'Bells are Ringing' and 'Guys and Dolls,' as well as an assortment of productions with several suburban companies. Geoff is also a member of 'Warrenwood Players,' which tours various metropolitan retirement villages entertaining resident groups. The role of 'Crompton,' is Geoff's first appearance with the Diamond Valley Singers.



Geoff VAUGHAN

(William Boggins – Cultural Attache)

Geoff commenced involvement in musical theatre as a chorus member in a teachers' college production of the 'Mikado' in 1963, following up with the role of 'Uncle Clam' in 'Salad Days,' the next year. In 1969, Geoff and a teaching colleague, co-produced and directed a primary-school production of 'Oliver,' featuring staff and students, in which he played 'Fagin'. Apart from minor dabblings in school productions, concerts and staff barber-shop quartets, Geoff had no further participation in musicals until joining the chorus for DVS' 'Mikado' last year. He trusts audiences will enjoy his role as Bill Boggins, in this year's production.



Anne CALLAHAN

(Mrs Olga Crompton)

Anne came to be a singer through church music. Her family is musical and Anne seems to have inherited many of the good genes from the family pool. Through her music teacher, Graham Ford, Anne was encouraged to join the Diamond Valley Singers. She first appeared with the group in the chorus of 'The Mikado,' last year and then ventured into a short solo piece in 'The Messiah.' Her latest role as Olga Crompton, is her biggest part to date and she is enjoying the challenge of



having a speaking part.

Anne-Maria PLEVIER

(Mrs Sylvia Boggins)

Anne-Maria dabbled in music in high school, but was side-tracked for some years until her thirties when she became a member of the Melbourne Women's Choir and the Melbourne Chamber Choir, conducted by Faye Dumont. She first joined the Diamond Valley Singers as a chorus member for last year's production of 'The Mikado,' for which she also contributed artistically to the areas of costumes and art work. In last year's 'Messiah,' Anne-Maria sang a minor solo piece, following up with participation as a chorus member in Eastern Metropolitan Opera's performance of Puccini's 'La Boheme,' earlier this year. The role of Sylvia is her first crack at a principal role with DVS.



Paul DERNELLY

(Monsieur de St. Brioche)

Paul has been treading the boards with various groups for the last twelve years, playing a range of principal roles including Ralph, 'HMS Pinafore,' Nanki Poo, 'The Mikado,' Grovesnor, 'Patience,' Defendant, 'Trial by Jury,' and, recently, Dr Blind in 'Die Fledermaus.'

This is Paul's second, principal role with DVS, following on from his portrayal of Pish Tush in last year's production of 'The Mikado.'

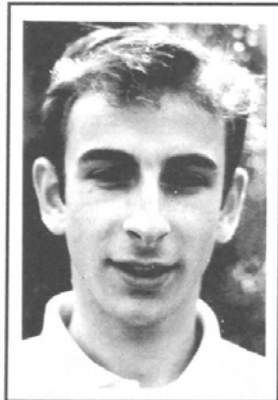


Daniel BELLIS

(The Marquis de Cascada)

Daniel is one of the younger of the Diamond Valley Singers, having joined the group last year for the production 'The Mikado,' as a chorus member. Earlier this year, he performed as a chorus member in Eastern Metropolitan Opera's 'La Boheme.'

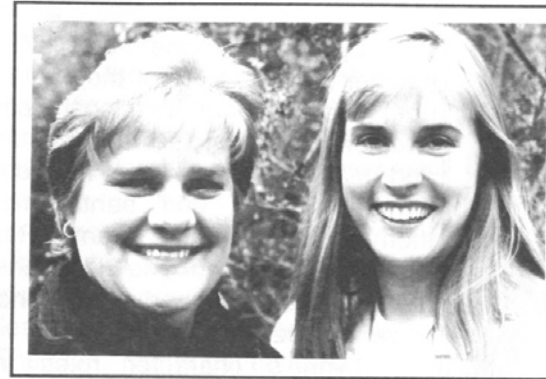
As the Marquis de Cascada, with the accompanying challenge of applying a French accent, Daniel is looking forward to his first principal role with DVS.



Special Thankyou To:

- * **Alliance Printing** – For the wonderful printing job on our advertising posters.
- * **Kerry Killeen & Rod Wilson** – For the loan of the hay bales to add authenticity to our set.
- * **Heidelberg Repertory Company** – For the loan of furniture.
- * **Joshua Counsel** – For make-up assistance.

Embassy Secretaries



Robyn FORD (Mabel Tompkins)

Robyn first performed 'The Merry Widow' with Opera Melbourne. She sings with Ashton Smith Singers and Victoriana Concert Singers and has competed in many eisteddfods. This is her second stage show with DVS, having performed in 'The Mikado,' last year. She also sang a solo part in last year's 'Messiah.'

Liza MILLER (Marjory Prescott)

Liza spends her days pulling heads off defenceless fly larvae and her nights singing up a storm with Diamond Valley Singers. Last year, Liza played a petulant schoolgirl in the Mikado and now she has grown into an indignant secretary from Box Hill where she fights hedge burners and plays with various Frenchman in her spare time.

Dancing Girls

Anna SMOLENAERS Jane SMOLENAERS Heather WRIGHT



Lynne COUNSEL

Drama Coach



Lynne, a former art/craft and drama teacher has worked for the past thirty years in both amateur and professional theatre as a director, performer, set and costume designer and make-up artist. She has directed many plays, musicals and pantomimes, amongst them, 'This Old Man Came Rolling Home,' 'Calamity Jane' and 'The Hobbyahs,' as well as numerous school productions, including, 'The Wizard of Oz' and 'The Hobbit.'

Lynne's character roles include Aunt Abby, 'Arsenic and Old Lace,' Elvira, 'Blythe Spirit,' Harry the Horse, 'Guys and Dolls,' Meg,

'Brigadoon' and Eliza 'Pigmalion.' For seven years, she appeared regularly in theatre-restaurant productions.

Norma



Carol



Mairead



Kevin



Martha



The Chorus



Lucas



Jennie



Diane



Robert

The Children

Catherine



Benjamin



Esther



Louise



Ashley



Jane EISENBISE

(Choreographer)

Jane is one of the newest additions to the Diamond Valley Singers' team, as this is her first show with the group. She is currently studying her second year of arts at Melbourne University and, after dancing for sixteen years, has recently begun a career as a choreographer. Jane has performed in several amateur theatre productions including 'Godspell,' 'HMS Pinafore,' 'Les Miserables,' 'Cats,' 'The Phantom of the Opera' and 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe.' She has also taught ballet for about five years and choreographed several school productions, including 'Godspell' and 'Fiddler on the Roof.' Jane is enjoying the challenge of working with our enthusiastic cast members.



Mary WRIGHT

(Conductor)

Mary has studied conducting with Robert Rosen, Marvin Rabin and Jerry Nowak, leading to her present role as resident conductor of the Diamond Valley and Eltham Community Orchestra. The Merry Widow of Bluegum Creek is her second production involving the Diamond Valley Singers, following on from last year's highly-successful performances of 'The Mikado.' Mary has also performed many productions as violinist-leader of the orchestra. Other conducting roles have included school productions of 'Robin the Hood' and 'A little Dab'll do Ya.' In line with



her music-teaching background, Mary is in regular demand as a guest, string clinician for various music camps.

Graham FORD (Director)

Graham, a former student at the National Theatre Opera School and Sun Aria semi-finalist, has sung lead roles on many occasions with Diamond Valley Singers, as well as a number of roles with the semi-professional Globe Opera. He has previously directed or co-directed several DVS productions, Trial by Jury, Ruddigore, Pirates of Penzance, The Gondoliers, Princess Ida, Iolanthe, The Mikado).

Graham has also worked with Eastern Metropolitan Opera, directing The Magic Flute and performing the role of Masetto in Don Giovanni. A joint founder of DVS, he is currently their Artistic Director, as well as Secretary/Treasurer for Eastern Metropolitan Opera. He teaches singing in the local area. As a tribute to the DVS, Graham has been chosen to participate in the Olympic Torch relay.



Dianne RICHTER (Producer)

Dianne's involvement with Diamond Valley Singers began as Assistant Producer for Mikado in 1987, and she has been producer for all following productions and is currently President of DVS. Dianne has participated in numerous DVS performances including both solo and Chorus roles. She played the role of Cousin Hebe in HMS Pinafore in 1995, Kate in Pirate Bankers of Penzance in 1997 and Morpheus in Orpheus in the Underworld in 1998. She was a chorus member in last year's production of 'The Mikado.' Dianne has also performed in

numerous eisteddfods and concerts and with Elwood Theatre Company In this year's 'Merry Widow,' Dianne plays Sheila Dawson, one of the embassy secretaries.



Eastern Metropolitan Opera Inc.

Eastern Metropolitan Opera Inc. is an incorporated association run by a committee of opera enthusiasts, supported by a large number of volunteers who have a common commitment to:

- providing aspiring young opera singers with opportunities to gain the experience necessary for professional careers; and
- keeping opera alive and affordable in Melbourne

Our goal is to be a leading producer of opera in Melbourne and help to "fill the void" for young singers created by the demise of the VSO. We have high standards and a professional approach to producing excellent operas with the best available young talent. We eagerly promote all performances encouraging them to be well attended by a growing, ticket-buying audience, underlining our commitment and enthusiasm to sharing the opera experience with all levels of the community

Since founding in 1993, as Ringwood Opera, productions have included *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *The Magic Flute* (1994 & 1998) *Don Giovanni* (1995) *Figaro* (1996) *Così fan tutti* (1997) *Carmen* (1998) and most recently, Puccini's *La Bohème* at MLC, Kew, in May this year

EMO is a registered "Cultural Organisation" under the Tax Act and the EMO Trust Fund is run by a committee of "responsible persons" as prescribed by that Act. Donations to the EMO Trust Fund are tax deductible, and anyone interested in helping to keep opera alive in Melbourne should contact our Treasurer, Graham Ford, at 9 Pitura Place, Eltham Victoria 3095. Phone: 9439 3267

Coming Production:

Harem Scarem – a light-hearted version in English, of Mozart's 'The Abduction from the Seraglio.'

This is a FUN production and is directed by Hugh Halliday a highly-respected and experienced, professional, opera director At the piano and as Musical Director is Ian Lowe, driving force behind EMO for the first seven years of its existence.

This production will tour----- to country centres, Bendigo, Ballarat and Morwell and, within metropolitan Melbourne, to Whitehorse, Footscray and Doncaster

The season extends over six weekends from Aug 2nd to Sept 10th The cast consists of six outstanding young singers.

This performance will follow EMO precedents of producing opera of a professional standard at affordable prices.

For further information phone Diane on 9718 2035