



# Not the Programme Notes

*Being sundry items of interest about our upcoming productions and the arts in general  
July 2009*

In our previous newsletters, I included profiles of singers so wonderfully portrayed in our production of *Little Voice*. I just didn't have room to include one of my favourites...

As a young girl she was so shy that when asked to perform, she would crawl under the table, hide behind the tablecloth – and then begin to sing. Rather like LV.

She is, of course, the Tigress of Tiger Bay....

## Dame Shirley Bassey

"I know nothing about music," she says. "I cannot read a note, I cannot play an instrument, but I know music in my head, and I was born with these vocal chords I didn't even know I had."

"Someone tried to tell my mother about my singing when I was young, and she said, 'She gets on our nerves sometimes,'" says Bassey. "So that didn't inspire me to become a singer at all. I would sing instead of crying, I remember, and my sister would say, 'Mum, Shirley's at it again. Tell her to stop, we're trying to sleep.' So I was not appreciated, I really was not. But the voice was always strong.

"It was like I was meant to do it because even when I had my first job in a factory, and I was wrapping up enamel ware for export, I'd just sing, and people would stop working. The supervisor would say, 'Bassey, what do you think you're doing? All of you, get back to work.' The whole factory would stop. I didn't realise what I was doing."

Shirley was born in 1937, the youngest of seven children, in Tiger Bay, Cardiff. The port of Tiger Bay, visited by sailors from all around the world, was a stimulating environment for musicians.

Her early career was in touring shows and cabaret, before signing with Philips Records – *Banana Boat Song* made the British Top Ten in 1957. *As I Love You* made number one in 1959.

In 1964 she recorded the theme to the James Bond movie *Goldfinger* – a big hit in the USA, but failing to make the Top Twenty in Britain. She subsequently recorded two more James Bond themes – *Diamonds are Forever* in 1971 and *Moonraker* in 1979.

She had stormy relationships with men – one of her boyfriends tried to stab her in a fit of jealousy. In 1961 she married gay film director Kenneth Hulme, who denied being the father of her daughter, Samantha. She divorced him, and had an affair with Australian actor Peter Finch – well, Finch was born in London of course, but his parents were Australian, and he moved to Australia when he was ten.

She was made a Dame at the age of 64, and is still going strong.

### Positions vacant

Want to be involved in a Valley Artists production? We are currently casting our end of year production, and as well as actors we need stage crew, a co-producer, and a singer for our barber shop quartet.

Interested? Phone Cordelia on 4998 8110. You'll learn a lot, and have fun in the process.

Why not get involved?

## Your chance to win...

Our readers, we know, enjoy the finer things of life, so we're sure that they will have little difficulty answering this question:

What do the following women have in common (besides their nationality)?

Here are their first names: Barbe-Nicole, Louise, Mathilde-Emile and Lily. Just to make it easier, we'll throw in a bloke: Jean-Remy.

A clue: Barbe-Nicole married Francois when she was 19. Both families were in the rag trade. And most of you are certain to be familiar with their products.

There will be a prize for the first correct answer – email to [info@valleyartists.org](mailto:info@valleyartists.org).

Here's another clue – the winner, in retrospect, will find the prize very appropriate. It is unique, the first of its kind and certified to be so, and will be personally signed by the makers.

ENTRIES ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED

Valley Artists Inc

# WOLLOMBI VALLEY SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

SATURDAY OCTOBER 3 2009  
LAGUNA HALL, 7PM

ANY GENRE TEN MINUTES OR UNDER

FIRST PRIZE \$1000  
SECOND PRIZE \$750  
THIRD PRIZE \$500

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD \$250  
KINDLY DONATED BY LAGUNA WINE BAR

CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES  
SEPTEMBER 12 2009

ENQUIRIES: EMAIL [filmfestival@valleyartists.org](mailto:filmfestival@valleyartists.org)

DOWNLOAD THE ENTRY FORM FROM  
[www.valleyartists.org](http://www.valleyartists.org),  
\$15 PER FILM TO ENTER

NOYCE  
THEATRE  
WINGS

## Dates for your diary

- July Rehearsals commence for *The Ugly Duckling*
- August Be watching for a series of workshops in basic acting skills
- October The Wollombi Valley Short Film Festival (October 3)  
Sponsors dinner. Phone Tim Williams on 4998 8244 to become a sponsor  
*The Ugly Duckling* opens October 29 through November 7

For further information visit our website: [www.valleyartists.org](http://www.valleyartists.org)

## Setting the scene...

Of course you'll recognize this as the set of *Little Voice*. How do you go about creating something like this in our hall, arrange for it to burn, but be miraculously restored for the next performance? No worry to those who construct these miracles of stagecraft which grace so many of our performances.



Hannie Rayson's play *Hotel Sorrento* is difficult to stage, having 41 scenes in two acts. The action takes place in three separate households – a flat in London, the Moynihan family home and a holiday house in Sorrento. Inside and outside, and in different rooms in each residence. Plus a jetty, a cemetery, a beach and a delicatessen/coffee shop. All this to be fitted inside Laguna Hall!

Richard Franklin directed the movie, and co-wrote the screenplay with Peter Fitzpatrick. They noted that the play was a natural subject for screen adaptation – the episodic structure 'seems to pre-empt a thoroughly naturalistic treatment on stage...' but 'lends itself well

to cinematic cross cutting...' and 'offered wonderful possibilities for the camera'.

But – forty one scene changes in a small community hall? No problem! Valley Artists produced the play, directed by Bob Philippe, in March 2001. The set was definitely one of the stars of the show – all the above elements, and other areas created by sound and light – allowing the play to proceed uninterrupted.

In May this was followed by the annual sponsors dinner directed by Janine Oliver – *The Wollombi Weekly World Discovery Tour*. Guests were welcomed aboard the *SS Drama Queen*, with drinks in the ship's reception area, complete with chandeliers that swung with the rolling motion of the waves as we set out to sea – as did the crew. Then ashore to an Asian bazaar, where various stores sold delicious food, and locals indulged us with a street parade, complete with traditional dragon dance. Back into the hall, which meanwhile had become the African jungle, complete with headhunters and the *African Queen*.

In future issues I'll be introducing some of the people behind the scenes – if that's an appropriate way to describe the people who actually create the scenes.

Meanwhile, if you have any photos you think might be worth sharing with our readers – especially, in this case, of the sets that have been built – please send them to me at [info@valleyartists.org](mailto:info@valleyartists.org).

## In the news...

A Lincoln couple who went to see a play billed as capable of making you "laugh until they throw you out" were thrown out for laughing.

Sharon Whitelaw, 41, took boyfriend Tony Priestley, 42, to see a production of *Bouncers* at Lincoln's Drill Hall for a birthday treat, reports the Lincolnshire Echo.

But at the intermission, they were told not to go back into the auditorium, as other theatre-goers had complained they were "laughing at moments that weren't funny, kicking the seats in front and being loud".

"I think the whole way we were treated was like children," said Miss Whitelaw, a taxi driver. "I wished the ground had swallowed me up at the time, I was so embarrassed."

The couple were led into the foyer, and spoken to in front of other theatre-goers who were enjoying their interval drinks.

"She proceeded to tell us they couldn't let us back in because three people had complained."

The couple received a full refund for the price of the tickets and their pre-ordered drinks. Manager Simon Hollingworth said he appreciated that the couple might not be happy, but insisted his staff did the right thing.