



# Butterflies are Free

by  
Leonard Gershe

presented by



**S.T.G.**  
Sunnybank Theatre  
Group Inc.

by arrangement with  
Dominie Pty Ltd

11th July - 26th July 2008  
Sunnybank Theatre Group  
[www.stg.org.au](http://www.stg.org.au)

Director

Assistant Director

Stage Manager

Lighting & Sound

Set Construction

Program

John Arbery

Ann-Marie Grey

Loretta Donnelly

Ian Platell

Mark Zoethout

Paul Marshall



## Coming Soon to STG

Come Blow Your Horn  
a comedy by Neil Simon

Director: Deirdre Robinson  
12th - 27th September

Bookings open at 10:00 AM,  
Saturday 16th August

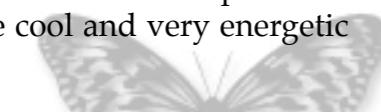
## Director's Notes



It was well over a year ago that I was approached by the past president of our theatre, Jim Cliff, to direct *Butterflies are Free*. At first I was not sure how such an intimate play would be able to hold an audience when there is a danger it may lose its heart - even in a theatre of our size.

As it turned out, our rehearsal schedule was interrupted by some major reconstruction of the stage and green room and the theatre was not able to be used for several weeks. The uncertainty associated with any major building project created many challenges for the cast and crew, but it also created the opportunity to try something new at STG and bring the intimacy of this show just where it was needed - right at your feet!

As a result *Butterflies are Free* has been brought out into the audience where you will witness a very traumatic and explosive day in Don Baker's life. You will not only be seeing the play - you will be surrounded by it. I am sure you will chortle at Don's mother's lovely satire, soar with Jill Tanner's free spirit and get up close with the cool and very energetic Ralph Austin.



*Butterflies are Free* deals with many of life's hurdles that we all face, but they are made all the more intense for Don. Everyone will be able to relate to the struggles of trying to become independent and break free of the confines of home when what your family expect you to do in life is not quite what you want.

To my very talented cast and crew, a very big thank you! You have had some very difficult working conditions but you never dropped your energy or spirits. I know it made you even more determined to bring this show to life and that is a determination the audience will most certainly benefit from. Finally, a special thank you to Paul and Kayleen and Mark for your huge support when others thought bringing *Butterflies* to life was impossible.

*John Arbery.*

## Don Baker - John Arbery

John began his acting career over fifteen years ago. His first rehearsed role was Don Baker in *Butterflies are Free!* Unfortunately due to production problems the show never got to stage.

Since then John has moved into many roles in theatre, including lighting and sound, stage manager, actor and director. Many of our regular patrons will remember John playing roles in shows like *Cat's Cradle*, *Oklahoma!*, *Puss in Boots* and, more recently, *House Guest* and the one act play *Careful Rapture*.

This is John's seventh time as director and fifth with STG, where he will finally bring to life the fantastic character of Don Baker - a blind man living in New York.



## Jill Tanner - Eilannin Dhu

Eilannin grew up in the theatre watching her parents and older sisters perform from under the grand piano until the age of six, when she was considered old enough to join in. Since then Eilannin has been involved in excess of forty productions, ranging from Gilbert and Sullivan operettas to *Super Hero Murder Mysteries* as the ever crossed-legged Chastity Girl.

Eilannin is also involved in dance, having trained in classical ballet, jazz and tap since age 11 and she choreographed *The King and I* in 2006. This is Eilannin's second production in Queensland, having moved to the Smart State from Western Australia in 2007 to study Law and Business.

Eilannin hopes you enjoy *Butterflies are Free* and that you stick around for a coffee after the show.



## Show Synopsis



Set in the mid seventies, *Butterflies are Free* is about love, determination and overcoming some of life's hurdles.

Don Baker is a young blind man who has recently broken the apron strings of his very controlling mother and set up a new life in the heart of New York City.

Don has been away from home for just one month and is starting to enjoy his freedom when he discovers a free spirited young woman moving into the adjoining apartment. Jill Tanner is living the kind of carefree life that Don has previously only dreamed about.

Unfortunately for Don his mother turns up a month earlier than arranged in their "stay away" agreement. When she finds her son and Jill together almost naked, the trouble for all is only a breath away.

This story has something for everyone. Don works hard in an attempt to gain his independence and learn a little about life. While Jill has a huge amount of life experience, she has no understanding about commitment or true love. Don's mother struggles to accept that her son is growing into a man and needs space to move out into the world.

This is all before Jill's boyfriend Ralph appears on the scene and is none too pleased with what he finds. They all have some very hard lessons to learn.

*Butterflies are Free* is a fast-paced comedy that will have you searching your own memories of what it was like to take those first tentative steps out on your own.

It doesn't matter who you are - sighted or blind - growing up is never easy.



## Florence Baker - Stephanie Ellis

Stephanie has been involved in amateur theatre for many years and has undertaken a wide range of "jobs" within the theatre framework.



Having directed three plays for STG (See *How They Run*, *Fringe Benefits* and *Steel Magnolias*), Stephanie is taking the stage for the fifth time at the theatre in the role of Florence Baker.

## Ralph Austin - Ben Daley

Ben has performed in numerous shows, most recently playing the King in *The King and I* at Murray Music and Drama Club in Western Australia. Before that, he enjoyed the roles of Gepetto in *Pinnochio*, Delilah in *Samson & Delilah*, and other support and chorus roles.



Stephanie believes the many different aspects of presenting shows makes theatre an interesting and, at times challenging, pastime and she hopes to be part of STG well into the future.

Being brought up with a musical background, Ben is thoroughly enjoying his first show in Queensland with the friendly cast, crew and members of Sunnybank Theatre Group and hopes you enjoy this performance of *Butterflies are Free*.