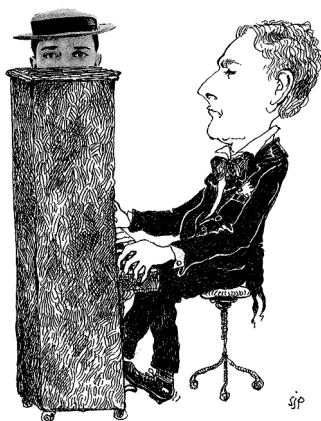


The Kangaroo Valley-Remexio Partnership presents:



The Tenth Annual Kangaroo Valley Buster Keaton Silent Movie Show

starring pianist **Robert Constable** and actor
Earle Cross with vocalist **Patsy Radic**

7.30pm Sat Sept 29 2012
Kangaroo Valley Hall

the program:

1. **The Man from Kangaroo** [1920/2012]
2. supper
3. Buster Keaton's **The General** [1926]

This is the tenth time that **Robert Constable** has come here – originally from Newcastle, these days from New Zealand – to help us raise money for our projects in Timor-Leste. Tonight he is joined by veteran actor **Earle Cross** and chanteuse **Patsy Radic** in a new version, by Peter Wesley-Smith, of a silent film shot partly in Kangaroo Valley. He then accompanies “the greatest train movie of all time”.

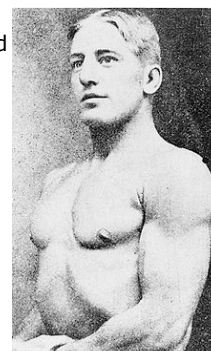
Robert is a well-known composer, pianist and music scholar. As a composer he has created music in a variety of forms and genres including orchestral, choral, solo and chamber music. It is perhaps for his film and theatre music that he is best known, particularly for his improvised accompaniments to classic silent films. As a silent film improviser he performs regularly in festivals in Australia and Europe including every year in Kangaroo Valley. In 2011 he presented silent films at the Klassik Musik Festival in Linz, Austria, and he is a regular participant in the Australian Silent Film Festival. His work with silent film is not mere background accompaniment; rather, his musical improvisations should be seen and heard as a live artistic partnership with the characters and scenes of the film. His aim is to create music which merges with the images of the film to such an extent that the whole is experienced by the audience as a single entity.

Renowned as a leader of music schools, Robert was for many years Dean of Music at the University of Newcastle, Australia, before taking up the headship at the School of Music at the University of Auckland in 2007. He is currently head of music at Canterbury University in Christchurch.

Earle Cross is an actor originally from Brisbane, where he began his long career on radio and stage. He went to Sydney in 1957, the start of television, to appear for five years on the ABC Children's Session (The Argonauts) on TV and radio. He played in two revues at the then-famous Phillip Street Theatre and appeared in several plays at the Independent and Palace Theatres. In 1964 he sailed for England, where he worked for fifteen years, appearing in the West End and touring in regional theatres. Since his return to his homeland he has played leading parts in many plays, including *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Whose Life Is It Anyway?*, *Pygmalion*, *Absurd Person Singular* and *Away*. Having made many appearances on ABC radio and television, he has now retired to a magic acre near Berry where he paints, writes, gardens, and dusts the furniture.

Patsy Radic is well-known as a performer in musical theatre and pantomime. She is a foundation member of Kangaroo Valley's Thirsty Night Singers.

The Man from Kangaroo, shot in 1919 in Kangaroo Valley, Gunnedah and the Theatre Royal in Sydney, stars renowned Australian sportsman Snowy Baker (right). It was the first of several films he made with the husband and wife team of director Wilfred Lucas and writer Bess Meredyth, who had both been imported from Hollywood by E. J. Carroll. Baker plays John Harland, a boxer turned reverend who falls in love with Muriel, played by Agnes Vernon. Muriel is a young heiress who owns Barrengarry House. Her guardian is the vile Martin Giles (Charles Villiers), who employs Red Jack Braggan (Wilfred Lucas) to kidnap her so he can wed her. Harland rides to the rescue!



The film is well-known to many people in Kangaroo Valley, and its use of local landmarks like the Anglican church, Barrengarry House, Hampden Bridge and what is now the fudge shop is intriguing to audiences nearly a hundred years on. I doubt anyone thinks it's a great movie, though, and we thought it could at least be tarted up a bit - so it's been edited down (some of the more boring sequences shortened or excised, many of the slides removed) and a somewhat subversive text added, read live by an actor. We've included a song, too. Some might feel all this is disrespectful; others might enjoy it as a process of renewal, the re-interpretation of a classic, a creative reworking in the manner of, say, nude Shakespeare. We're happy to let the audience decide, confident that the performance itself, with Robert Constable's inventive musicality, the orotund tones of Earle Cross, and Patsy Radic's maudlin rendition of the *Lovebirds* song, will at least entertain. It's not often that Kangaroo Valley hosts a world premiere. This is probably, like the decade-long Buster Keaton festival itself, the final performance.

At its original release, **The General**, an epic adventure classic, received poor reviews and weak box-office results. It is now considered by critics to be one of the greatest films ever made. Buster Keaton had a hand in the direction, production, screenplay and editing as well as playing the major character, Johnny, and doing all his own stunts, some very dangerous.

Many thanks to Earle Cross, John George, Kangaroo Valley General Store, Derek Lucas, Sue Prescott, Patsy Radic, Peter Stanton, Rosemary Stanton and all who contributed to supper, and Wesley-Smiths Martin, Peter and Rob.

Proceeds from tonight will be used for projects in the Remexio area of Timor-Leste.

