

What the Dickens! Miriam Margolyes befriends Carers NSW

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Carers NSW, the peak body for unpaid carers in the state, is excited to announce that UK actress Miriam Margolyes OBE*, who is currently appearing in the play *Dickens' Women*, has become an official 'Friend' of Carers NSW.

Having previously cared for both her elderly parents and as patron of the UK carers' charity Crossroads, Miriam has a very strong commitment to carers and the issues they face. She has strong links with Australia and has been coming here for many years.

Miriam said she was very excited about the opportunity to help support the estimated 750,000 carers in NSW by contributing her skills and experience to Carers NSW in an honorary capacity as a 'Friend'.

"Having been a carer myself I have a personal understanding and deep commitment to the issues carers face. I know how tough it can be and I hope that by becoming a 'Friend' I can use my experience to help support some of NSW' many carers," said Miriam.

CEO of Carers NSW, Elena Katrakis, said Miriam's contribution to the organisation would be invaluable.

"Miriam's personal experience as a carer and dedication to the carer cause in the UK means she brings a unique international perspective to our organisation. Her contribution will be invaluable in helping advance our goal of ensuring governments and communities recognise, value and support carers," said Ms Katrakis.

Miriam is a character actress who is best known for her film appearances in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of the Secrets* (in which she played Professor Sprout), Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* (in which she played the nurse), Martin Scorsese's *The Age of Innocence* (winning the Best Supporting Actress BAFTA for her performance) and *Little Dorrit* (winning the L.A. Critics' Circle Award for Best Supporting Actress).

In *Dickens' Women* Miriam takes a trip into history through the lives of the women in Charles Dickens' life, both real and fictional. Among the 23 different characters (male and female) brought to life by Miriam are *The Old Curiosity Shop's* Little Nell, loyal Mrs Micawber from *David Copperfield* (inspired by Dickens' own mother) and the cold embittered Miss Havisham from *Great Expectations*.

Dickens' Women has been acclaimed around the world, with the West End season in London's Duke of York Theatre earning Miriam an Olivier Award nomination. The Australian and New Zealand tour is scheduled to finish in December 2007. For more details please visit www.amckinnon.com.au

In January 2008 Miriam will head to Broadway where she will appear in the musical *Wicked*, which tells the untold story of the legendary witches from L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

*Miriam was awarded an OBE (Order of the British Empire) in 2002 for her services to drama.

Media contact

Helen Clarke, Marketing Communication Coordinator, Carers NSW, 02 9280 4744

About carers

Carers are relatives and friends who are caring for people with a disability, mental health problem, chronic condition or who are frail aged.

About Carers NSW

We are the peak body for carers in New South Wales and the only statewide organisation that has carers as its primary focus.