

The hills are alive with the sound of Martina



By Ivy Wise

OUR very own Martina Richardson will this weekend take to the stage as fun-loving governess Maria in Shepparton Theatre Arts Group's (STAG) production of *The Sound of Music*.

In her first show with STAG, the Moama Anglican Grammar School music teacher has been busy making the 45-minute commute three times a week for rehearsals.

And over the past two days, Mrs Richardson, along with the cast and crew, bumped in to the theatre.

"The next few weeks it will really come to life and I'm looking forward to finally being in the theatre," Mrs Richardson said.

She will be joined on stage by fellow STAG newcomer Simon Rennie, who plays Captain von Trapp.

The pair will lead a 45-strong cast including two sets of von Trapp children.

"Because we have a double cast of kids, they rotate each night which means we have to double up our rehearsals to get enough scenes in with each group, which is good practice," Mrs Richardson said.

"We just did a run through over the

OUR STAR: Echuca-Moama's Martina Richardson will play Maria in Shepparton Theatre Arts Group's production of *The Sound of Music*. Photo: submitted

weekend with costumes which is always exciting to see how quickly you have to change.

"It was fun to see each character come to life though and some of the costumes are so fun, especially the kids' curtain and festival costumes. The team has done a great job.

"The sets also look amazing. We are hoping to get lots of people to come out for it."

The 1965 award-winning classic is set in Austria on the eve of the Anschluss in 1938, when Nazi Germany annexed Austria.

Inspired by the real-life adventures of the von Trapp family, the musical tells the story of novice Maria who changes the lives of the widowed Captain von Trapp and his seven children with music, laughter and love, culminating in the family's daring escape from the Nazis.

"Everyone has put in a lot of hard work and it's going to be such a fun show," Mrs Richardson said.

Locals Cathy James and Heidi Williams also star in the show as nuns.

The *Sound of Music* will be held at Westside Performing Arts Centre, Mooroopna, from Friday, June 2, until June 10.

Tickets are available through Riverlinks on 5832 9511 or www.riverlinksvenues.com.au