

THIS SEASON

70th Anniversary Season

Alan Ayckbourn's Comedy "Bedroom Farce"

15-18 October 2014

"Four couples, three bedrooms, one unforgettable night!"

Hugh Whitmore's Thriller "Pack of Lies"

4-7 Feb 2015

"How well do you REALLY know your neighbours?"

John Buchan's "The 39 Steps" Adapted by Patrick Barlow

22-25 Apr 2015

"Murder has never been this funny"

Bram Stoker's "Dracula" Adapted by Jane Thornton & John Godber

15-18 Jul 2015

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HUGH WHITEMORE's



PaCK of LiES

70
YEARS of THEATRE
1945 - 2015



Feb 2015

Welcome on this chilly February evening in 2015. We hope the second production of our 70th Anniversary season will make you forget the cold as you enter the nightmare of the Jacksons, whose lives are shattered as the truth about their much loved friends is gradually revealed to them. The spies next door, the Krogers, are the centre of this dramatized version of real events that occurred in the 1960s during the cold war.



This is our second staging of *Pack of Lies*. We first performed the play 26 years ago at The College Theatre, directed by one of our founder members, Nevill Turner. Nevill is still an active member of the society today (as are most of the cast and many of the backstage crew). Tony Neale, who played the inspector, has moved North and is still involved with theatre in Newcastle-on-Tyne, as is Ruth Sullivan, who played *Julie*. Ruth is working professionally in theatre as a Foley artist and has had contracts with The National Theatre, as well as touring abroad. This production of *Pack of Lies* was well received by audiences in 1989. We hope you enjoy this new production as much.

Following *Pack of Lies* is John Buchan and Alfred Hitchcock's *The 39 Steps* - with a difference. Adapted by Patrick Barlow, just four talented actors will entertain you with 100 hilarious minutes of theatre - another production not to be missed - do join us for the mayhem in April!

Finally I would like to thank our sponsors for their support in this our 70th Anniversary season. Our first venture into sponsorship by the Banbury business community has proved a success and, with their and your continued support, we will strive to produce high quality theatre for Banbury and the surrounding areas.



Enjoy your evening and we hope to see you again very soon.

Jem Turner
Chairman

The Portland Spy Ring was a Soviet spy ring operating in England from the 1950s until 1961 and one of the most famous examples of using illegal residents - spies who operate in a foreign country without cover of their embassy. Members included Morris and Lona Cohen aka Peter and Helen Kroger.

In 1959, the CIA received letters from a mole saying information was reaching the Russians from Portland, England, where the Royal Navy tested warfare equipment. These letters were passed to MI5.

Suspicion fell on Harry Houghton, a former sailor and now civil servant at the base, who had just bought his fourth car and a house and MI5 put him under surveillance. He and his mistress (Ethel Gee) often went to London to meet a Canadian businessman identified as Gordon Lonsdale. He was frequently at 45 Cranley Drive, Ruislip, visiting an antiquarian bookseller and his wife, Peter and Helen Kroger. The Krogers were also put under close but discreet watch.



In January 1961, Houghton, Gee and Lonsdale were arrested by Detective George Smith. Gee's bag contained photographs of classified material, including details of Britain's first nuclear submarine, HMS Dreadnought. Smith then went to Ruislip to see the Krogers, claiming to be investigating local burglaries, but once inside, identified himself as Special Branch and took the Krogers to Scotland Yard for questioning. Before leaving Helen asked to be allowed to stoke up the boiler. Before she could, Smith checked her handbag which was found to contain microdots. Smith, a veteran spy catcher, had guessed her intention to destroy them.

The Kroger house was full of spying equipment, photographic material, large sums of money and a long-range radio transmitter-receiver. It took several days to unearth all the equipment and over the years, during subsequent renovations, several other radio transmitters were unearthed.

The Krogers/Cohens were sentenced to 20 years in prison but were exchanged for British citizen Gerald Brooke in 1969. As part of the process the Soviets confirmed they were spies.



The Kroger Story Re-told

- *Ring of Spies* (1964) - film, directed by Robert Tronson
- Hugh Whitmore's *Pack of Lies* (1987) - CBS television drama
- Hugh Whitmore's *Pack of Lies* (2006) - BBC Radio 4's *Saturday Play*
- *Longford* (2006) - film for TV, Channel 4

THE COMPANY

Director
Terry Gallagher

Stage Manager
Janice Lake

ASM
Marilyn Fairbairn
Samantha Giles

Lighting
John Hicks
Robin Williams

Sound
Mark Neale

Props
Sue May
Ann Westcott

Costume
Helena Boughton

Make Up
Jenny Tustian

Hair
Kim Nicholls

Prompt
Anne Bloor

Production Manager
Jem Turner

Set Design
Peter Bloor

PaCK of CAST

Bob
Barbara
Julie
Helen
Peter
Stewart
Thelma
Sally



Andy Crump
Kate Fricke
Scarlett Primrose
Sarah Lonton
John McCormick
Philip Fine
Kate Groves
Helen Watson

A small semi-detached house near London 1961

Patrons are requested to switch off mobile phones before the performance begins and are reminded that photography and video recording is strictly prohibited.

Emergency exits are to the left of the stage area and to the rear of the auditorium.

In case of emergency, please follow instruction from Front of House staff.



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Clare Lester

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staffed Front of House

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