



The Punchbowl Players present

# THE BROOMSQUIRE

adapted from the novel of Sabine Baring-Gould  
by John Owen Smith

**September 2001** – performances 'in promenade'

Friday 14th – 8pm Grayshott Village Hall

Saturday 15th – 1.45pm Grayshott Village Hall

Sunday 16th – 2.30pm Liphook Millennium Hall

Friday 21st – 8pm Thursley Village Hall

Saturday 22nd – 2.30 & 7.30pm Churt Village Hall

Sunday 23rd – 2.30pm Rural Life Centre, Tilford

## THE STORY OF 'THE BROOMSQUIRE'

In September 1786, a lone sailor was murdered on Hindhead Common by three men. This much is common knowledge. But was the sailor alone?

In his book *The Broom-Squire*, the Victorian author Sabine Baring-Gould imagines that the sailor was carrying a baby daughter, and that she survived the ambush.

From this point, he develops a story of the orphan girl found in the Devil's Punch Bowl by one of the broomsquires who lived there at the time ...

## THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR

**Sabine Baring-Gould** (1834–1924) was born in Exeter, the eldest son of Edward Baring-Gould of Lew Trenchard in north Devon.

Educated at Clare College, Cambridge, he inherited his father's estate in 1872, and became rector there in 1881.

He travelled widely, and wrote many novels, theological studies and songs, among them the hymn *Onward, Christian Soldiers*. He also had an interest in folk lore and folk song, and this is reflected in many of his works.

*The Broom-Squire* is one of his best-known novels, and was originally published in 1896, running to thirteen editions by 1929.

It was republished by Blackdown Press Ltd of Fernhurst in 1996.

## OUR THANKS TO

**The Frame Centre**, 17a Downing St, Farnham for supply of artists materials.

**The Phoenix Arts Centre**, Bordon for the gunshot sound.

## THIS PRODUCTION

Following a series of four successful local ‘community plays’ which have depicted real-life characters and events, playwright **John Owen Smith** this time chooses to dramatise a fiction — though a fiction which includes some well-observed local characters, and is based on factual observations in and around Hindhead and Thursley by the original author, Sabine Baring-Gould.

Director, **Steve White**, was educated with the idea that theatre should naturally be played ‘in promenade,’ with audience and actors sharing the same space — and was then surprised to find that this is not the normal way of doing things either in the professional or in the amateur theatre.

In this production he is given leave to go back to his roots, ignore the proscenium arch, and mix you in with the action ...

*Are you ready for a new experience?*

The casting of this play brings together a number of talents from across the local area, some of whom are working together for the first time. In particular, it marks a welcome first joint effort by members of the Churt and Headley amateur dramatic societies — neighbouring villages too often divided culturally by a county boundary. May the link we have forged grow stronger!

## THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Director .....	Steve White
Producer .....	John Owen Smith
Wardrobe .....	Dil Williamson
Properties and effects .....	The Cast

## THE CAST

Matabel .....	Mel White
Jonas Kink, the Broomsquire .....	Tony Grant
Simon Verstage, landlord of The Ship Inn .....	David Irwin
Susanna Verstage, wife of Simon .....	Wendy Downs
Iver Verstage, their son .....	Peter Christopherson
Sarah Roccliffe, sister of Jonas .....	Pru Harrold
Giles Cheel, an elder broomsquire .....	Stan Sharp
Betsy Cheel, his wife .....	Linda Daruvala
Markham, a solicitor .....	Nick Webb
Barelegs, an attorney .....	Rod Sharp
Judge, at Kingston Crown Court .....	David Irwin
Defence Counsel .....	Linda Daruvala
Puttenham, Guardian of the Poor in Thursley .....	Stan Sharp
Doctor, staying at The Ship Inn .....	Linda Daruvala
Vicar of Thursley .....	Rod Sharp
The Sailor .....	Nick Webb
Casey, a murderer .....	Stan Sharp
Marshall, a murderer .....	Pru Harrold
Lonigon, a murderer .....	Linda Daruvala
Labourer 1 .....	Rod Sharp
Labourer 2 .....	Stan Sharp
Boy .....	Peter Daruvala
Serving Wench .....	Rachel Whittaker
Chorus .....	Linda Daruvala, David Irwin

## THE MUSICIANS

Peter Christopherson, Linda Daruvala, Tony Grant, Jo Smith,  
Nick Webb, Steve White, Dil Williamson

# SCENES

The production takes place 'in promenade' – the space shared by actors and audience represents locations in and around the Devil's Punch Bowl and Thursley at the end of the 18th century.

The action is continuous, and follows the following pattern: –

- 1 Introduction
- 2 At the Ship Inn, Thursley - Iver leaves
- 3 In the Punch Bowl
- 4 At the Ship Inn - in the porch
- 5 Jonas proposes
- 6 The wedding party at the Ship Inn - Iver returns
- 7 At Jonas's house
- 8 Mrs Verstage and Iver visit the Punch Bowl
- 9 At the Ship Inn
- 10 To Thor's Stone
- 11 In the Punch Bowl
- 12 The Birth
- 13 The Bequest
- 14 The Baptism party in the Punch Bowl
- \*\*\* Interval \*\*\***
- 15 The Trustee
- 16 Markham visits Matabel
- 17 Jonas visits Iver in his Guildford studio
- 18 Matabel takes the baby to see Sarah
- 19 Jonas sees Barelegs the attorney
- 20 Back at the Punch Bowl
- 21 Matabel on the run
- 22 The Trial
- 23 At the Ship Inn
- 24 To Thor's Stone again
- 25 Finale

## CAST NOTES

**Peter Christopherson** [*Iver Verstage*] has produced and directed four pantos for CADS, for whom he is secretary, as well as some farces and comedies. His acting career has been seen on display as *Widow Twankey* in 'Aladdin', and he recently directed CADS in 'Allo, Allo'

**Linda Daruvala** [*Chorus, Doctor, Defence Counsel, Lonigon, Betsy Cheel*] tells us she is starting her stage career in this production, so we have made sure she is well involved by giving her more parts to play than anyone else! She was until recently warden of the Youth Hostel in the Devil's Punch Bowl.

**Peter Daruvala** [*Boy*] has acted once before in the Wintershall 'Life of Christ'. He is currently at St Polycarps school.

**Wendy Downs** [*Susanna Verstage*] has played in a number of roles with Headley Theatre Club, and was *Louisa Tyndall* in the NT Centenary play 'A Balance of Trust'.

**Tony Grant** [*Jonas Kink*] is familiar for his appearances with many local dramatic organisations, and has also taken lead role in the film 'Friday Knight'. He played *Peter* in the Wintershall 'Life of Christ', but is perhaps best loved for his roles as a pantomime 'baddie'. In his spare time he is the NT Warden for Frensham Little Pond.

**Pru Harrold** [*Sarah Roccliffe, Marshall*] has played many and varied parts in pantomimes, comedies and more serious plays. She played *Thwackum* in 'Tom Jones,' *Octavia Hill* in 'A Balance of Trust,' and was recently seen in 'The Barchester Chronicles' at Chichester.

**David Irwin** [*Simon Verstage, Judge, Chorus*] says he began showing off officially in the year 2000. Four decades after his last role at school, as a guard, he has played *Abanazer* and the *Dame* in CADS pantomime productions, and the decrepit butler *Guest* in 'Inspector Drake's Last Case'.

**Rod Sharp** [*Vicar, Barelegs, Labourer*] has played many parts over the years in roles as diverse as the mysterious *Inspector* in 'An Inspector Calls' and the *Giant* in a production of 'Jack and the Beanstalk.' He was *John Thompson* in 'Flora's Peverel.'

**Stan Sharp** [*Giles Cheel, Puttenham, Casey, Labourer*] has been active in many different kinds of amateur entertainment and in a variety of places over the years. Played *Mr Foreshaw* in 'Flora's Heatherley.'

**John Owen (Jo) Smith** [*Author/Producer*] is a local historian and author. This is the fifth of his historical community plays to be produced locally, the others being 'This Bloody Crew' (1993); 'A Balance of Trust' (1995); 'Flora's Peverel' (1997); and 'Flora's Heatherley' (1998).

**Nick Webb** [*Markham, Sailor*] has played a variety of roles both on and off the stage. He was Stage Manager for 'A Balance of Trust,' doubled that role with the *Corporal* in 'Flora's Peverel,' and played *Walter Chapman* in 'Flora's Heatherley.'

**Mel White** [*Mehetabel*] has been active in local amateur dramatics since 1985, and playing various roles, both front and back stage. Previous roles included the title role in 'Sinbad the Sailor,' *Louie Woods* in 'Flora's Peverel,' and *Flora Thompson* in both 'A Balance of Trust' and 'Flora's Heatherley.'

**Steve White** [*Director*] is a man of many talents, knowing about lights and most things electrical as well as turning in a stirring performance on the range of whistles which he hauls into folk club sessions. He is also the Town Crier of Whitehill.

**Dil Williamson** [*Wardrobe*] is the current chairman of Headley Theatre Club, for whom she also acts, sings, dances, directs, back-stages, front-of-houses, and stops bucks from passing.

**Rachel Whittaker** [*Serving Wench*] has joined the cast for the first time this year - welcome, Rachel.

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*Headley Theatre Club*

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Headley Village Hall

18/19/20 & 25/26 January 2002

Enquiries: (01428) 712892

**Headley Theatre Club** was founded in 1952, and is celebrating its Golden Jubilee during 2002. For further details of the Club and its activities, contact Dil Williamson on the phone number above, or see [www.headley-village.com/drama](http://www.headley-village.com/drama)

**Who was the sailor murdered at Hindhead in 1786?**

### ***A search for his identity***

A new book about the Sailor's Murder on Hindhead. Written by PETER MOOREY, who is himself descended from a renowned line of local broomsquires.

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