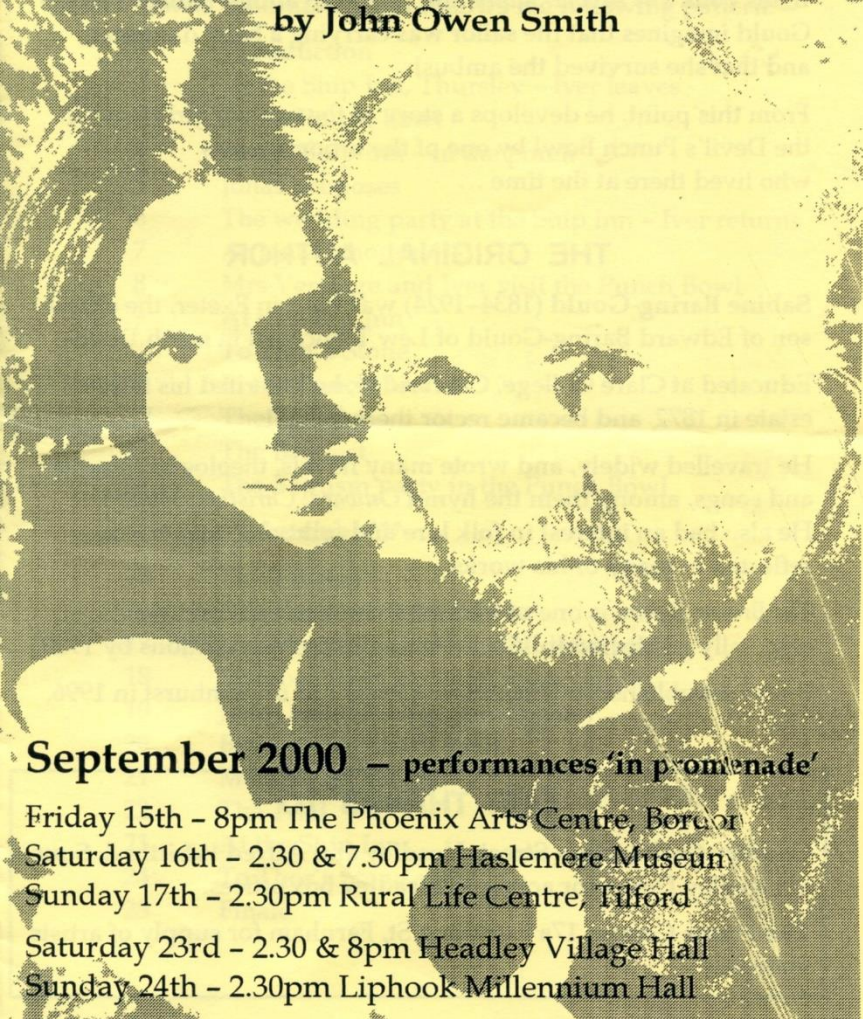


The Punchbowl Players present

THE BROOMSQUIRE

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



September 2000 – performances 'in promenade'

Friday 15th – 8pm The Phoenix Arts Centre, Bordon

Saturday 16th – 2.30 & 7.30pm Haslemere Museum

Sunday 17th – 2.30pm Rural Life Centre, Tilford

Saturday 23rd – 2.30 & 8pm Headley Village Hall

Sunday 24th – 2.30pm Liphook Millennium Hall

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

Country Crafts, High Street, Headley and **Alfred Whittle & Sons** at Headley Down for acting as Headley box offices.

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

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
Chorus	Linda Daruvala, David Irwin

THE MUSICIANS

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

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 was most recently on display as *Widow Twankey* in 'Aladdin'.

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! In real life, she is 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' this year, 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 most 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* in CADS production of 'Aladdin', 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 for over twelve years, and has played 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.

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COMING SHORTLY

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.