

*Pack of Lies* was first performed in 1983, first at the Theatre Royal, Brighton and subsequently at the Lyric Theatre, London starring Judi Dench and Michael Williams as Barbara and Bob Jackson.

The same author had originally written *Act of Betrayal*, which was a more factual portrayal of events and this had been screened as a TV play in 1971 to critical acclaim.

### Chairman's message

Many thanks for your support tonight. As the regulars amongst you will know, we like to try and produce a variety of entertainment during each season and having done several comedies it is now time for the 'serious' piece, which is, hopefully, nonetheless entertaining.

As actors, we need to stretch ourselves periodically and certainly among the principal characters there have been several 'pulled muscles' during a relatively short rehearsal schedule! On a personal level, I would like to welcome Ray Evans (playing Bob Jackson) back to where he belongs - centre stage - in a very demanding role, it has been long overdue.

My sincere thanks to all involved in the production, but especially to you for your continued support. Looking forward, we hope to be producing another 'summer spectacular' in the Guild Hall Gardens this year; look out for announcements, or visit our revamped website.

*Phil Walker*

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For more information about forthcoming productions, or how to become more involved in the Society, please speak to a member or visit our website for contact details on [www.hads.org.uk](http://www.hads.org.uk)

## Henley-in-Arden Drama Society

presents

# "Pack of Lies"



a play in 2 Acts by Hugh Whitmore

directed by  
**Tony Capps**

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Henley Memorial Hall

26 - 29 March 2008

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Programme 50p

## Cast

Bob Jackson	Ray Evans
Barbara Jackson	Rosie Hammond
Julie Jackson	Rebecca Shaw
Helen Kroger	Carol Robson
Peter Kroger	Phil Walker
Mr Stewart	Rob Ison
Thelma	Tracy Humphreys
Sally	Sheila Dalman

## Backstage

Director	Tony Capps
Stage Manager	Sue Tootill
Set design/build	Kevin Allen Phil Walker Rob Shaw
Artistic direction	Sue Evans
Props	Alan Nicholls Eunice Bagshaw
Lighting	Tony Capps
Sound	John Shuttleworth
Prompt	Mandy Key
Refreshments	Marijana Bainbridge & the 'A' Team
Front of House	Alan Harrison
Business Manager	Alan Nicholls

*plus, members of the Society who have given their support*

## The Scene

All the action takes place in the Jackson's house in Cranley Drive, during the autumn and winter of 1960-61.

There will be a 20 minute interval between Acts 1 and 2  
Refreshments will be available

## Background to the story

In March 1961 five people, a Russian, two Americans and two Britons - the so-called Portland Spy Ring - were convicted at the Old Bailey for espionage. For several years they had been passing secrets to the Soviets from the Underwater Weapons Research Establishment at Portland.

Peter and Helen Kroger came to live at 45 Cranley Drive in Ruislip in 1954 and developed a deep friendship with their neighbours across the road. The play focuses on the dramatic and painful impact on the lives of these unsuspecting people when, against their will, MI5 used their house for 2 months to keep watch on the Krogers.

After their arrest, it transpired that the Kroger's real name was Cohen, who were not Canadian as they purported, but Americans who had fled the US in 1950 to avoid arrest as spies. They had disappeared to the Soviet Union before re-emerging with their new identities. Morris Cohen was a lifelong communist, who had fought in the Spanish Civil War and recruited by the Russians in 1941, the same year he married Leontina Petkas whom he subsequently converted.

Their role in the Portland Spy Ring was to transmit information, using sophisticated radio equipment, or dispatching material under cover of the antiquarian books mail order business that Peter ran.

In 1969 the Krogers/Cohens were exchanged for a Briton being held by the Soviets. After a spell in Poland they lived out their lives in Russia on KGB pensions- she died in 1992 and he in 1995.

From these facts Hugh Whitmore has written a powerfully moving fictional account of the events leading up to the Kroger's arrest, centred on the Jackson family. It was written with the full cooperation of the Search's, who were the real family involved.

If you want to know more about this fascinating story, go to:  
[www.ruislip.co.uk/kroger](http://www.ruislip.co.uk/kroger)