

Southport Dramatic Club

My Boy Jack

By David Haig

A Wartime Drama

Directed by David Davies

22nd February - 2nd March 2013

7.45pm



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Language**

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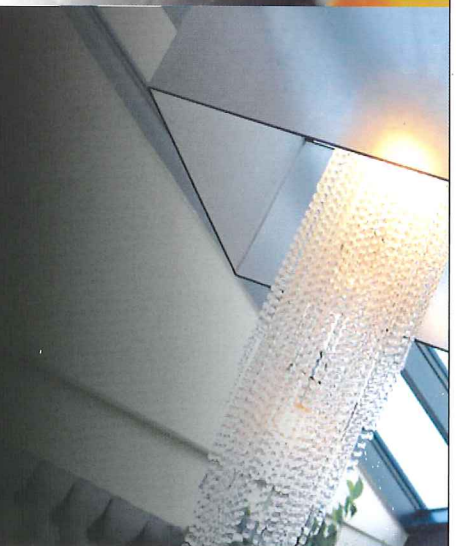
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Director's notes

Apart from childhood memories of the 'Just So' stories and Korda's 1942 enthralling film 'Jungle Book', which I saw as a wide-eyed little boy, Rudyard Kipling had largely remained unknown to me. I knew of his love of Empire, especially India, and his famous poem 'If' which was voted the nation's favourite poem in 2009: but of hero-worship by the working-classes of his day, his dazzling journalistic and creative writing career culminating in a Nobel prize for literature in 1907, alleged offers of the poet-laureateship and a knighthood (both of which he declined) I was ignorant. As a loving father who



David Davies
Director

played constantly with his children, enjoyed singing music-hall songs (badly); and with family ties to famous Pre-Raphaelite artists, cousin to Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, friendship with King George V, and his final

resting place in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, his life it would seem was perfect. But a darker side existed, which caused George Orwell to write of Kipling: "There is a strain of sadism in him...[he]...is a jingo imperialist, he is morally insensitive and aesthetically disgusting". How could these opposing qualities exist side by side in this national hero? It is a question which 'My Boy Jack' seeks to explore in the molten domesticity of Kipling's household and which has largely drawn me to direct this fine play.

David Davies
Director





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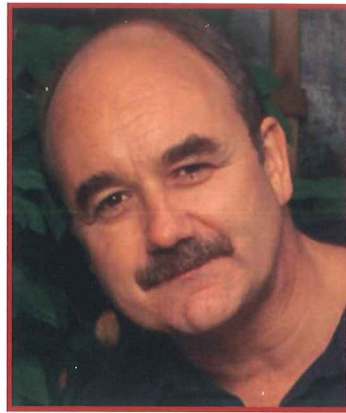
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David Haig

The actor and playwright David Haig, who wrote *My Boy Jack*, was born on 20th September, 1955 in Aldershot, Hampshire.

Over the past 25 years Haig has starred in the West End, TV and films. In 1988 he won the Olivier Award Actor of the Year in a New Play for his role in *Our Country's Good* at the Royal Court in Sloane Square. Haig starred in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994). He played the bridegroom, Bernard, who is caught in bed with his new bride Lydia by Hugh Grant.

From 1995 to 1996, Haig could be seen on BBC One as Inspector Grim in the comedy *The Thin Blue Line*. Haig wrote the play *My Boy Jack* in 1997. It tells the story of Rudyard Kipling's son, John, who fought in World War I. The play was performed in London and was made into a TV



David Haig
Author

programme (starring David Haig as Kipling and Daniel Radcliffe as John). It was first broadcast on ITV on Sunday, 11th November, 2007 (Remembrance Day).

In 2002 Haig appeared with Hugh Grant and Sandra Bullock in the film *Two Weeks Notice*. Three years later (2005), he received an Olivier Award nomination for playing Mr Banks in *Mary Poppins* the stage musical, for which Julian Fellowes provided the dialogue. In

2006, the actor again received an Olivier Award nomination for his role in the West End production of *Donkey's Years*. He starred with Julie Walters in the drama *Mo*, which was about the late Labour MP Mo Mowlam (2010). Haig played Jon Norton, Mo's husband and Walters was Mo.

Haig could be seen in the West End at the end of 2010 in *Yes Prime Minister* at the Gielgud Theatre following a sell-out season at the Chichester Festival, where he played the Prime Minister (Jim Hacker). This year he reprised the same role in the series *Yes Prime Minister*, which has been shown on satellite television; the programme is a re-make of the 1980s show. Haig, who now lives in South London, is married to the actress and professional cook Jane Galloway and has five children.



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My Boy Jack...



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My Boy Jack

'My Boy Jack', a play in two acts, was written by David Haig. It was first staged at the Hampstead theatre, London in 1997.

A television drama filmed in 2007 featured Daniel Radcliffe, of Harry Potter fame, as the eponymous 'Jack', with Haig playing the lead role of Rudyard Kipling. Haig's physical resemblance to the famous author and poet is uncanny as is borne out in the television film. Haig was attracted by the dramatic possibilities arising from Kipling's patriotic

involvement in the First World War through the writing of newspaper articles and the public speeches aimed at exhorting the nation's youth to enlist. Kipling's patriotic fervour extended to his only son, John, who, although myopic and turned down by the Army Medical Board, received his father's help to obtain a commission in the Irish Guards, much to the consternation of his mother and sister.

Public duty and family responsibility provide the

essential dramatic conflict at the heart of this moving play; one which I have been privileged to direct. The drama whisks you back to that late Edwardian period of idyllic upper middle-class England set against the savage inhumanity of the 'Great War'.

David Davies
Director



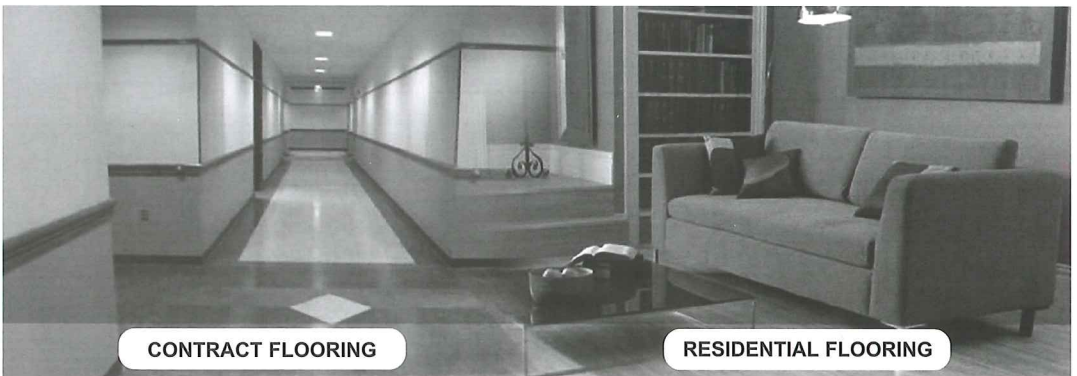


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Synopsis of Scenes

Please note: Scene endings will be marked by 'blackouts' during which furniture and stage-properties will be changed.

Act 1

- Scene 1 Batemans Mansion House, Sussex. September 1913. The drawing room. Morning
- Scene 2 The Army Medical Board in London. Later the same day.
- Scene 3 Batemans. The drawing room. The same day, late at night.
- Scene 4 A Recruitment Hall. 1914. The First World War is six weeks old.
- Scene 5 Batemans. The drawing room. Two weeks later.
- Scene 6 The battlefield, Loos, France. Eleven months later. Noon on 27th September, 1915.
- Scene 7 The battlefield, Loos, France. A few hours later.
- Scene 8 The battlefield, Loos, France. Five minutes to Zero hour 4 p.m.

Act 2

- Scene 1 Batemans. The drawing room. Four days later. 1st October, 1915. A telegram has been delivered.
- Scene 2 Batemans. A 'memory' scene in which Rudyard remembers John and Elsie as children.
- Scene 3 Batemans. Two years later, September 1917.
- Scene 4 Batemans. Seven years later, 22nd October, 1924. Elsie's wedding day.
- Scene 5 Batemans. Nine years later, 1933.

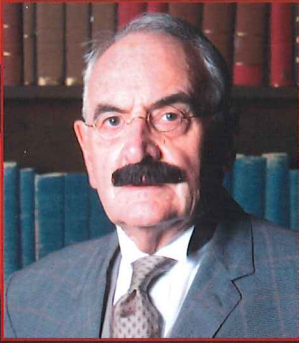
There will be a 20 minute interval between Acts 1 and 2

We recommend that you beat the rush and pre-order your drinks in the bar prior to the performance.

Please note: The play contains strong language and stage actions which some patrons might find offensive. While efforts have been made to reduce some of the more offensive aspects, the 'war-scenes' reflect the true horrors of trench warfare and to sanitise them would be inappropriate and a disservice to the playwright and the victims of World War One.

My Bo

C



Rudyard Kipling
John Sharp



Carrie Kipling
Tracey Batchelor



John (Jack) Kipling
Nathan Colman



John (Jack) Kipling (as a child)
Thomas Corcoran



Elsie (Bird) Kipling
Catherine Leight



Elsie (Bird) Kipling (as a child)
Emma Atkinson

oy Jack

st



Major Sparks (Medical Board Doctor)
Norman Hope



Colonel Pottle (Board Advisor)
Brendan Gillow



Irish Guardsman - Michael Bowe
Nick Lloyd



Irish Guardsman - Jimmy Doyle
Adam Spencer



Irish Guardsman - George McHugh
Brendan Gillow



Mr. Frankland (Bowe's friend)
Simon Hawkins

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Staging

Stage Manager	Roderick Beardsell
Assistant Stage Manager (Prompt)	Fran Percival
Properties	Lynn Gosling, Julie Whelan, Gay Stowell and Brendan Gillow
Wardrobe	Sherel Coley and Margaret Horne
Lighting and Set Design	Syd Coley
Lighting	Team LX
Sound Design	Dr. Brian Hodge
Set Construction & Design	SDC Construction Team
Scenic Artist	Bob Jessamine
Photographs	Fletcherhill Photography
Programme Editor	Jacquie Bolshaw
Programme Sub Editor	Barry King
Programme Content & Research	Henry James
Programme Layout and Design	Mitchell & Wright (Printers) Ltd

Music in this production

Chanson de Matin, Op. 13 No. 2, Imperial March, Intro. to Symphony No. 1 in A flat Major - Elgar
Capriol Suite for Strings – ‘Bransles’ - Warlock
Suite for Strings – Intermezzo and Op. 29 ‘Ostinato’ - Holst
On hearing the first cuckoo in spring. No. 1 - Delius
Au Revoir but not Goodbye - Al Bowlly

Acknowledgements

The Director would like to thank: The Play Selection and Casting Committee, members of the Production Team and all who helped to bring My Boy Jack to the stage;

Peter Burroughs (BBC news broadcaster); Uniforms Flame Costumes Torbay;

Men's choir of Emmanuel Church, Southport. Ron Ellis, Ellen Campbell and local press for advertising.

Thanks to the Braemar Hotel, Bath Street, Southport for the loan of the Phonograph.

The Little Theatre - Home of the Southport Dramatic Club.

The SDC wishes to ensure that all our patrons enjoy a comfortable, enjoyable and safe visit to our theatre. We should be grateful for your co-operation in helping us to achieve this. Please note the following:

- Should you arrive after the performance has started, you will be guided to your seats when a suitable opportunity occurs.
- At the end of the performance, exits will be open at both the front and back of the auditorium.
- First Aid assistance is regularly provided by volunteers from the St. John Ambulance Brigade. Should you require help, please advise our stewards on duty in the Foyer.
- Patrons with hearing impairments should note that the auditorium has an Induction Loop System for your assistance. Hearing wands are also available from our stewards.

Designated Premises Supervisor,
Alan Newport



Kipling delivering a recruiting speech at Southport, June 1915.
(Inset) Second-Lieutenant John Kipling of the 2nd Battalion Irish Guards:
'My Boy Jack'

Photograph taken from *Rudyard Kipling - A Life* by Harry Ricketts

Battle of Loos

Kipling's son, John, had just turned eighteen when, as a 2nd lieutenant in the Irish Guards he led his platoon across 'no-man's land' near the town of Loos at 16.00hrs on 27th September, 1915. The battle had begun two days earlier with some minor achievements. John's objective was to take some old colliery workings near Chalk Pit Wood. The German lines had already been softened up with a one and a half hours' heavy bombardment, underground explosives and poisoned gas (the first time used by the British in the war). John's untried Irish soldiers, already exhausted after days of marching, hungry and footsore from the

waterlogged trenches (it was the officers' job to treat their men's feet with whale grease and talcum powder), were bowed down with 70lbs back-packs, spades, pigeon-baskets, mills-bombs, rifles and bayonets as they 'went over the top' to trudge 600 yards through heavy mud, bomb-craters and barbed-wire across a gas-polluted flat field of German machine-gun fire. After some initial success the attack petered out and the 'novice soldiers' in utter confusion retreated under a hail of German bullets. John was presumably killed during this sally (his body has only recently been found) together with many fellow officers and men. The result of the Battle of Loos

which the allied leaders had predicted would end the war was: British losses 60,000; total Allied losses 250,000; ground gained – nil. The battle was a disaster, described later by Lloyd George in his memoirs as "a futile carnage". The prevailing atmosphere during the battle was one of confusion, arising from personal animosities between generals, leading to indecisive command, inadequate resources and poor disposition of troops. A case of 'lions led by donkeys'. With our hindsight of these events, some may find Kipling's description in the play of John's death as the 'finest moment in his young life' perverse.

My Boy Jack

(poem) written in 1915 by Rudyard Kipling:

"Have you news of my boy Jack?"

Not this tide.

"When d'you think that he'll come back?"

Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

"Has any one else had word of him?"

Not this tide.

For what is sunk will hardly swim,

Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

"Oh, dear, what comfort can I find?"

None this tide,

Nor any tide,

Except he did not shame his kind –

Not even with that wind blowing, and that tide.

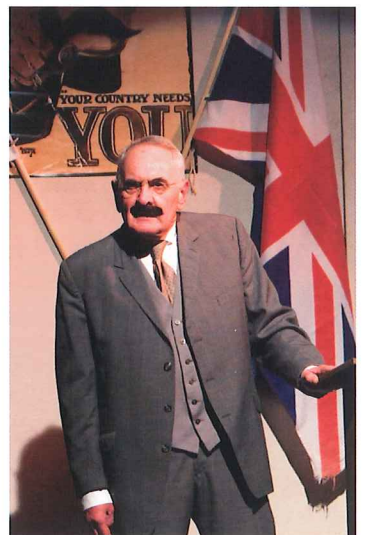
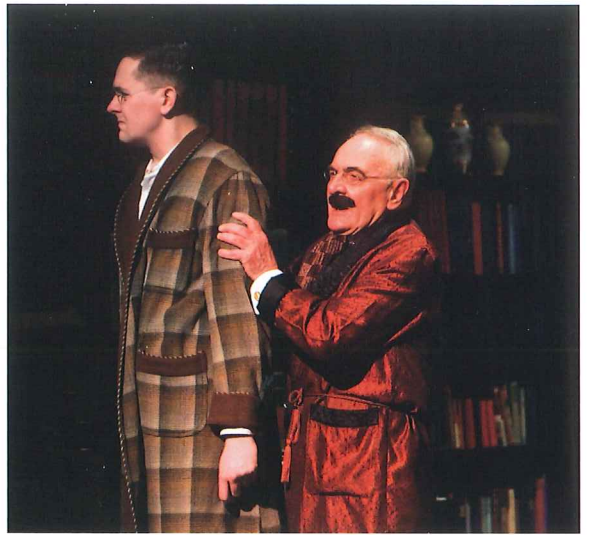
Then hold your head up all the more,

This tide,

And every tide;

Because he was the son you bore,

And gave to that wind blowing and that tide!





Marilyn Fletcher-Hill
Director

NOW IN REHEARSAL

Written by David Almond
Directed by Marilyn Fletcher-Hill
19th - 23rd March 2013

We hope you will come and support our next Youth Theatre production, the award winning 'Skellig' by David Almond.

A boy, Michael, and his parents move into a new house which is old and falling apart. They are all anxious as his new baby sister, born prematurely, is fighting for life. Michael discovers a strange creature living in their derelict garage. What is this creature? How can he help the baby? What will happen in the world when he, and his new friend, Mina, bring it out into the light?

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Celia Timmington
Director

NOW IN REHEARSAL

Entertaining Angels

Written by Richard Everett

Directed by Celia Timmington

12th - 20th April, 2013

Well done for reading all the way through the programme! The benefit is that you now have the chance to book for the April play; if you don't you will kick yourself when others tell you about it. Described as a "sharp edged comedy", it truly lives up to the words. As a director it is my job to ripen the characters and their lines into a performance that you enjoy and appreciate for the art that the writer has put onto paper. I'm working on it. Richard Everett's play '*Entertaining Angels*', is set in a garden by a stream.

There's a challenge! The character Grace, a vicar's wife, has spent a lifetime on her best behaviour. Now, after the death of her husband Bardolf, she can enjoy the new found freedom of being able to do and say exactly what she wants. You will have to wait and see for more! The cast are working so hard and at each rehearsal they shine a little more, delivering some hilarious script and wiping away the odd tear of laughter and emotion. At the same time set designers and builders are hammering away, music and lighting are being chosen and tested and the myriad of other work to be completed by our slaves before you come and relax back in our comfy seats is all underway. My thanks go to them. And all this in our spare time! Enjoy it in April.



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By David Almond

Directed by Marilyn Fletcher-Hill

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12th - 20th April 2013

Entertaining Angels

A Sharp Edged Comedy

By Richard Everett

Directed by Celia Timmington

**SDC
Production**



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Southport Dramatic Club

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By Richard Everett

directed by Celia Jimmington

12th April -
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