

# CURTAIN UP ON A THRILLER



**DOWNHAM** Stage 2 Players tackle their third production in the village next week with an ambitious thriller, "A Pack of Lies," by Hugh Whitmore.

This tells the true story of Peter and Helen Kroger, two Americans

convicted of spying for the Russians in 1961, while living in a London suburb.

The scene is set across the road from the Krogers, where the police move in on the couple's best friends to spy on

them, and moves towards a thrilling climax.

Tickets are still available for the four productions on Wednesday to Saturday evenings at 7-30 p.m. and can be obtained on the door or from Downham Post

Office, Hammond's Cake Shop or Vision Dress Hire of Clitheroe, or by ringing Pat Hargreaves (Clitheroe 27296).

Our picture shows the cast of eight players, taking a break from rehearsals.



A scene from Stage Two Downham's production of "A Pack of Lies".

## Downham stages a pack of lies

**WHAT do you do when you discover that your best friend is really a Russian spy?**

This was the dilemma facing members of the 'Stage Two Downham' amateur dramatic society during their recent production of "A Pack of Lies" in Downham Village Hall.

The plot revolves around the Jackson family, who discover the neighbours they have been friendly with are really American spies, after an investigator turns up at their house wanting to watch the movements of the seemingly innocent fami-

ly.

Set in the Autumn and Winter of 1960/61, the main events of the play, written by Hugh Whitmore, are true.

### RECEIVED

"A Pack of Lies" was directed by Barbara Price and was well received by audiences throughout its three-day run.

The cast comprised of Bob Cleeve, Christine Thompson, Theresa Alty, Lesley Knight, David King, Derek Green, Julia Smythe and Samantha Cleeve.

## Players stage 12-4-90

### 'A Pack of Lies'

LAST week saw the third production by members of Stage Two (Downham) — formerly the Waddington Drama Group — at their new venue.

The players' choice was "Pack of Lies" by Hugh Whitmore and directed by Barbara Price.

This play first appeared on the West End stage about five years ago, with Dame Judi Dench in the leading role.

Since its initial success, it has been the choice of many amateur societies.

However, it is a play which could not be tackled by some, as it calls for skilful acting in handling emotive situations.

Downham rose to the occasion and the audience obviously appreciated the fact.

The story is based on facts surrounding the case against Gordon Lonsdale, the early 1960s KGB agent, and his accomplices, Helen and Peter Kroger, all subsequently arrested.

It was headline news at the time and the events have been cleverly woven into a fascinating play seen through the eyes of the Krogers' friends and neighbours — a simple suburban family.

The devastating effect on the family was gradually built up by the cast and director, and the tensions and emotions handled with sensitivity.

It was extremely well cast. Lesley Knight and David King played the Krogers, a smart outgoing pair, precisely as the author intended.

In complete contrast are their neighbours, the Jacksons, played by Bob Cleeve, Christine Thompson and Theresa Alty.

Bob played the "ordinary man" to perfection and gave us a beautifully rendered piece at the end of the play.

Christine was faced with a tremendous challenge in her role, which calls for a range of emotions which she portrayed very well indeed. In the role of the daughter, it was good to see newcomer Theresa Alty again in such a different part from her previous one. She played it naturally and with feeling.

Derek Green, the liaison

official in charge of enquiries, was suitably firm and authoritative. The two small and lighter parts of the policewomen were well played by Julia Smyth and Samantha Cleeve.

Barrie Wood constructed an interesting composite set, not easy on such a small stage, but good use was made of all the areas by the director. It also conveyed a typically suburban home by the careful dressing of the set.

Congratulations to Barbara Price and her cast and to everyone behind the scenes for giving us a moving production.

B.T.

**IN LINE** for another successful production are the Stage Two Downham Players.

Their latest play "Pack of Lies" begins on Saturday in Downham Village Hall.

It is a play by Hugh Whitemore based on true events in a London suburb in the early 60s, asking the question: "Do you know your neighbours?"

And the cast are queueing up to get to know what is going on next door. From left are Lesley Knight, David King, Christine Thompson, Bob Cleeve, Theresa Alty, Samantha Cleeve and Derek Green (M1304).

# In line for success ...



Citizen 29-3-90

## Playing I-spy with next door

**A DRAMA** based on events leading to the Portland spy trial is being presented by Stage Two Amateurs at Downham village hall from tomorrow.

**A Pack Of Lies**, by Hugh Whitmore, tells how the Jacksons reluctantly helped the security services to mount a surveillance operation on their neighbours, Helen and Peter Kroger.

At first the Jacksons can hardly believe it, but as the story unfolds they realise almost everything about the Krogers has been a sham.

Bob Cleeve and Christine Thompson play the Jacksons, with Theresa Alty as their daughter, Lesley Knight and David King as the Krogers, Derek Green as Stewart of MI5 and Julia Smyth and Samantha Cleeve as the investigators. Barbara Price is director.

The play runs until Saturday at 7.30pm and tickets are available from Downham Post Office, Visions, Castlegate, Clitheroe, Hammonds Bakers, Clitheroe or by ringing Clitheroe 27296.



■ From the left are Teresa Alty, Bob Cleeve, David King, Lesley Knight and Christine Thompson.