



Sweeney

Todd

The Barber

By Brian J. Burton

An amateur production in
association with Samuel French

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Fraped Knot Theatre Company



Matthew Homes Limited



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Prices & Opening Times correct at time of publication. Please check before travelling.

Frayed Knot Theatre Company

Why not join us ?

We're on the look out for

Actors

Actresses

Those technically minded

Back-stage crew

A warm welcome awaits anybody who fancies getting involved

We have lots of interesting ideas for the future, but would like more members

Previous experience in Theatre is not required

Why not give one of us a ring

Membership is only £5.00 a year

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Graham Double (01442) 825422 {Work}

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FRAYED KNOT THEATRE COMPANY

A Brief History

Frayed Knot Theatre Company was established in 1991 and is therefore now in its fifth year. The Tring area is remarkably well endowed with Amateur Dramatic societies and the nascent Frayed Knot had to work hard to establish itself. As we were an unknown company with very little working capital, customary wisdom may have suggested that our best course of action was to perform a very well-known play to attract the largest possible audience - 'fraid not ! The at-that-time unnamed Frayed Knot performed **Marreau and the Chocolate Policeman** an unknown play by an unknown author - with the help of Phoenix Theatre Company. The first performance being at Marsworth Village Hall, to an audience of about fifteen. The play was well received and the cast enjoyed performing it and so it was decided that the sequel, **African Moon** would be the next production. Frayed Knot produced this in Spring 1992 as the company's first solo venture. 1993 was an important year for the company, firstly because we performed two shows in the year, secondly because we performed our first "Course Acting" play, **Moby Dick**, and thirdly because we were able to put the show on at Pendley, something which would have been financially unthinkable a couple of years before. In 1994, as well as the now customary Marreau, we staged our first well-known play **Blithe Spirit**. The current year has seen the fifth of the Marreau sequence and now our first melodrama, **Sweeney Todd, the barber**. 1996 promises to be another crucial year for the company, as we will perform three productions, as detailed elsewhere, including the sixth - and probably final Marreau. The company is continuing to grow steadily, along I am pleased to say with our audience figures which have increased with every show.

I hope you will become one of our regular viewers and enjoy tonight's and all our future shows.

Rob Farrow, Chairman.

Our Next Production

**The Farndale Avenue Housing Estate
Townswomen's Guild Dramatic Society's
Production of**

Macbeth

(A Comedy !)

FRAYED KNOT THEATRE COMPANY

presents

SWEENEY TODD, THE BARBER

A melodrama with music by
Brian J. Burton

Previous Productions

1991

Marreau and the Chocolate Policeman
(A co-production with Phoenix Theatre Company)

1992

Marreau and the African Moon

1993

Marreau and the Curse of Cardiff
D.F.C. / Moby Dick : Double Bill

1994

Marreau and the Bloody Carpet
Blithe Spirit

1995

Marreau and the Sword of Carthage
Sweeney Todd, The Demon Barber

Forthcoming Productions

1996

17th - 20th April : **Farndale Avenue ... Macbeth (A comedy !)**

4th - 7th September : **Marreau and the Clouds of Death**

27th - 30th November : **Party Piece**

All at The Court Theatre, Pendley.

Sweeney Todd, the barber by Brian J. Burton

Directed by Stephen Gilson

The Cast

Sweeney Todd	The barber of Fleet Street	Gordon Bishop
Ezekiel Smith	A mechanic	Richard Cockbain
Mrs. Ragg	A poor woman	Jan Jones
Tobias Ragg	Her son, an apprentice boy	Jackie Farrow
Mark Ingestre	A mariner	Nigel Froment
Jean Parmine	A lapidary	Graham Double
Johanna Oakley	A young lady in love	Jacqui Hildreth
Colonel Eustace Jeffrey	of the Indian Army	Ian Wells
Jasper Oakley	A spectacle maker	David Waring
Mrs. Oakley	His wife	Iris Colley
Dr. Aminadab Lupin	A wolf in sheep's clothing	Colin Bryer
Mrs. Lovett	Todd's accomplice in guilt	Lynda Hunt
Jarvis Williams	A lad with an appetite	Mick Sane
Jonas Fogg	The keeper of the madhouse	Ken Hayes
Sir William Brandon	A judge	Roy Sane
Mrs. Poorlean	An unfortunate woman	Jenny Booth
Other roles	played by the cast plus	Tom Devonshire
		Matt Byron
		Regina Dobbs
		Claire Smith

Our director, Stephen, was taken ill about a week before the show, and is currently languishing in hospital. We all wish him a speedy and complete recovery, and thank him for his dedication in bringing this play about - even from his hospital bed !

Sweeney Todd, the barber by Brian J. Burton

Scenes

ACT I Scene 1	<i>Fleet Street outside Sweeney Todd's shop</i>
Scene 2	<i>Interior of Sweeney Todd's shop</i>
Scene 3	<i>Breakfast parlour in house of Jasper Oakley</i>
ACT II Scene 1	<i>The parlour behind Mrs. Lovett's pie shop</i>
Scene 2	<i>Interior of Sweeney Todd's shop</i>
Scene 3	<i>Interior of Mrs. Lovett's pie shop</i>
Scene 4	<i>The Bakehouse</i>
= = Interval of 20 minutes = =	
ACT III Scene 1	<i>Interior of Sweeney Todd's shop</i>
Scene 2	<i>A chamber in the madhouse</i>
Scene 3	<i>Temple stairs</i>
Scene 4	<i>A Court of Justice</i>
ACT IV Scene 1	<i>The entrance to Newgate Prison</i>
Scene 2	<i>The Bakehouse</i>
Scene 3	<i>Temple Stairs</i>
Scene 4	<i>Sweeney Todd's shop</i>

For the production

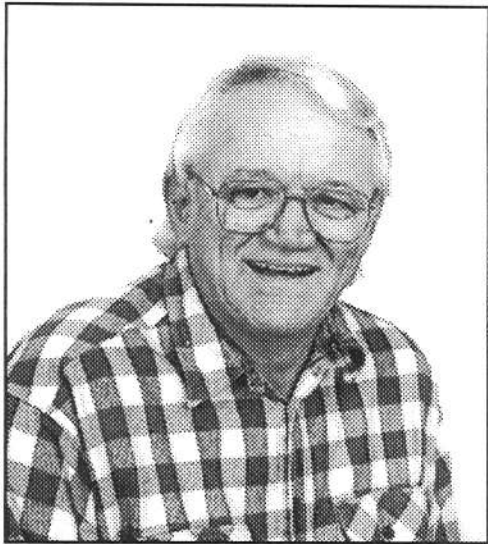
<i>Musical Director</i>	Julie Stanley
<i>Set Design</i>	Ron Bull
<i>Stage Manager</i>	Johann Meadows
<i>Lighting</i>	Geoff Yates
<i>Props.</i>	Sue Fuchter
<i>Performance pianists</i>	(29th, 30th Nov.) Julie Stanley
	(1st, 2nd Dec.) David Booker
<i>Costumes</i>	Gillian Liddell
<i>Programme production</i>	Rob Farrow



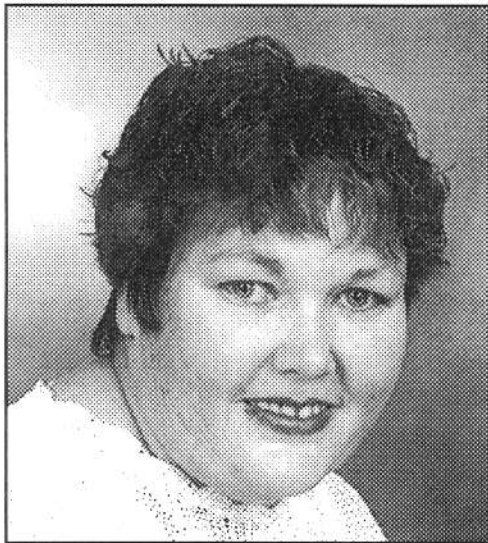
Director : Stephen Gilson



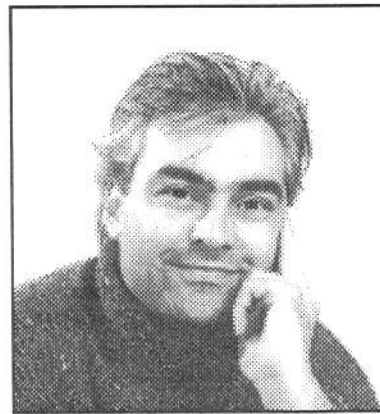
Musical Director : Julie Stanley



Sweetet Todd : Gordon Bishop



Mrs. Lovett : Linda Hunt



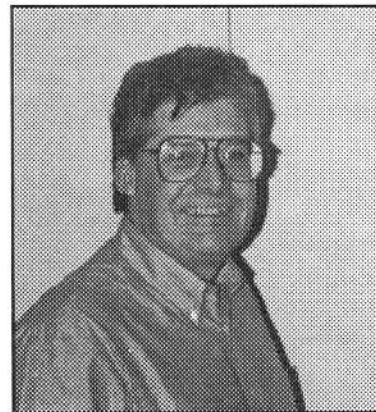
Mark Ingestre : Nigel Froment



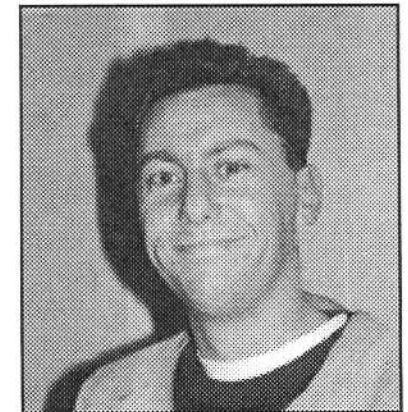
Johanna Oakley : Jacqui Hildreth



Tobias Ragg : Jackie Farrow



Dr. Lupin : Colin Bryer



Jarvis Williams : Mick Sane

Sweeney Todd, the barber

Welcome to the show !

This production came to me as an idea in the summer, as it fills the Frayed Knot criteria of being amusing (I hope) and having a large cast list giving lots of people the chance to take part in a variety of roles, large and small.

The show is set in mid-Victorian East London and chronicles the activities of Sweeney Todd (who kills people for profit) and his henchwoman Mrs. Lovett who makes a tidy living nearby from a pie shop. Their downfall is tracked through with some deeds of derring-do and of course, a love interest.

So come on in and experience a ride through some of the less salubrious parts of London and see justice prevail.

Do not try anything you see on stage at home !

I am indebted to the cast for their unfailing enthusiasm, and to lots of friends who have rallied round to help with costumes, music, props and all the items which will, I hope, give a faithful reproduction of Brian J. Burton's work

Stephen Gilson, Director.

Frayed Knot Theatre Company would like to thank Arthur Hyatt Studios for generously taking cast photographs which appear in this programme.
(excluding C. Bryer & M. Sane's photographs)

We would also like to thank our new sponsors, Matthew Homes Limited.

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FRAYED KNOT

THEATRE COMPANY

every success with their production of

Sweeney Todd the barber

Sweeney Todd was born in early 1756 in Spitalfields, London. The son of Henry Todd, a knife-grinder and jobbing pickpocket, and his common-law wife Alice. The family led a hand-to-mouth existence, with Sweeney often going days without any real food, subsisting instead on discarded mouldy crusts soaked in Thames water. Little Sweeney would often act as a distraction to aid his father's sideline, and it was thus that first led him into a life of crime. By the time he was nine, he was a dab hand at relieving people of their possessions himself, being particularly attracted to fob-watches although ironically he could not tell the time until he was twelve. This addiction was to stay with him throughout his life, as the grisly haul discovered at his shop was to attest, containing as it did, over two hundred watches. However, the young Sweeney had also been earning a small amount of honest income assisting a local butcher, the skills he learned here were to prove very useful later in his life. Henry abandoned the family in 1767, taking up with a local lady of ill repute, he died around 1773 in Manchester after a brawl in an inn. Alice, then was left to bring up the 11-year-old Sweeney on her own, though in truth, Sweeney provided more to the household than she. Getting blind drunk one night on red biddy - a cocktail of the cheapest red wine and methylated spirits - Alice fell unconscious on the stone floor of their dwelling. When Sweeney found her the next morning she was dead from exposure. An orphan at the age of twelve, Sweeney had to make the most of his pitiful position. Redoubling his pocket picking exploits he was at first successful, a local pawnbroker by the name of Hawkins acting as fence for his ill-gotten gains. Unfortunately an argument with Hawkins over the value of a trinket he had brought him led to a violent fight, Sweeney picked up a razor from amongst the pawned items and with one slash brought Hawkins' life to a bloody conclusion. It was his reaction to this first murder that was to prove pivotal, for far from fleeing terrified from the scene, Sweeney calmly collected up every bit of cash from the shop along with those items that he considered most valuable. He then left the shop and Spitalfields and with the money purchased the freehold of a barber's shop in Fleet Street. It is not known precisely when and where Sweeney had learned his skills as a barber, but it is believed that he used to shave his father as the latter was often too drunk to hold the blade steady enough. Custom at his new shop provided Sweeney with a reasonable income and had it not been for an unfortunate accident, he may never have embarked upon his evil reign. About seven months after opening his shop he was shaving a man called Barnard when a child in the street catapulted a stone through his shop window. At that moment Sweeney was perilously close to his client's jugular vein, the noise made Sweeney jump and blood gushed from the unfortunate Barnard as his life ebbed away. With the same calmness he had shown before, Sweeney robbed the man and took his body down to the cellar, dismembering and disposing of it. This incident gave Sweeney the idea of murdering selected clients for their possessions. So began his nefarious career; a chance encounter a few months later with Mrs. Lovett, who owned a small pie shop, afforded him an easy - if revolting - method of "losing" corpses, for she was pleased of the meat supply. For sixteen years Sweeney plied his trade, dispatching about one poor soul a month the rest, as they say, is history.