

SOUTHERN
COUNTIES
DRAMA
FESTIVAL

THE 39 STEPS

THE
MITRE
PLAYERS
www.mitreplayers.org.uk

ADAPTED BY
PATRICK BARLOW
FROM THE NOVEL BY
JOHN BUCHAN



CLUBHOUSE PERFORMANCES

20TH AND 21ST
FEBRUARY 2025

FESTIVAL PERFORMANCE

24TH FEBRUARY -
1ST MARCH 2025

TICKETS AVAILABLE FOR BOTH PERFORMANCES FROM
TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/MITREPLAYERS

THIS PRODUCTION IS BY ARRANGEMENT WITH STAGESCRIPTS LTD

THE
MITRE
PLAYERS

www.mitreplayers.org.uk

Jerri-Lee McManus - Director



Louise Gauntlett- Production Manager/props



TECHNICAL TEAM



Del Lee – Stage Manager



Ziggi Szafranski – Lighting



Jon Lee - Sound



Southern County Drama

Southern county drama festival is a one-act play competition, held at the barn theatre in Oxted.

Over the week beginning 24th February there are adjudicated performance. After all performances on the night, an adjudication is given to all plays from that night in front of the whole audience.

As we won the the best adult play last year we know that our performance will be held on Saturday 1st March. After the performance this evening there is an awards ceremony held.

- The fun of the festival is only having a 30 min slot to plot the lights in, no tech run at The Barn and only 10 mins to completely set your stage and then just 5 mins to clear at the end. Running over timings can loose you points.

- If Mitres win best Adult play of the Southern Counties round (like Heavens Above earlier this year), there will then be a further performance for the semi final round (this is usually a Saturday sometime in May). Further rehearsals would then be scheduled to keep the play ticking over and any adjustments made before performing again. Anyone auditioning should bear this in mind for their availability.



Play History

The 39 Steps is quite well known because it has a long history that includes a novel, a movie, a West End production, and a Broadway run:

- **Novel**

Scottish author John Buchan's 1915 adventure novel *The 39 Steps* inspired the plot for the movie and the stage adaptation.

- **Movie**

Alfred Hitchcock's 1935 film adaptation of *The 39 Steps* is considered a classic and one of the best British films ever made. The movie stars Robert Donat as Richard Hannay, a Canadian civilian in London who tries to stop a spy organization from stealing British military secrets.

- **West End production**

The West End production of *The 39 Steps* was a hit and moved to Broadway, where it won two Tony Awards and other awards.

- **Stage adaptation**

Patrick Barlow's stage adaptation of *The 39 Steps* is a fast-paced whodunit that some say is a lot of fun. The play features the same spy plot, romance. 45 mins long.





SYNOPSIS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5WpVzKW_qY



The 39 Steps: The even more abridged version

It is a fast paced comedic adaptation of the original. A classic spy thriller that condenses the story line of the original even further.

The plot centres on Richard Hannay, an ordinary man drawn into the world of espionage after a chance encounter with a mysterious woman who is later murdered in his apartment. On the run, Hannay must evade both the police and enemy agents as he uncovers a dangerous spy ring known as “The 39 Steps”.

Along the way, he meets an array of quirky characters including Pamela, his love interest, in his quest to clear his name and foil the spies’ sinister

CHARACTERS

Written for 4 actors.

Richard Hannay – Played by a man throughout

Hapless hero of the play. An ordinary Man who has led a pretty hum-drum existence, finds himself fleeing from the wrongful accusations of murder through a series of improbable adventures.

AnnaBella Schmitt and Pamela – both played by one woman

Annabella is the beautiful mysterious German spy who he met at the London theatre. Pamela is the attractive woman Hannay meets on the train to Scotland as he runs from the police.

Clowns - 2 actors to play several characters (2 men or 1 woman and 1 man)

Compere	voices
Mr Memory	Sheriff
Heavy 1 and 2	Mr and Mrs McGarrigle
Business Man 1 and 2	Mr Dunwoody
Paper boy	Mr McQuarrie
Porter	Super intendant Albright
Professor Jordan and Mrs Jordan	Police man 1 and 2

Clear differentiation between characters as they will be required to show multiple characters in one scene. Scottish and German accents needed!



VISION

Comedy – So comic timing very important, quick wit, slapstick humour, exaggerated accents. Comedy comes from the speed of the action.

High energy performance – rapid costume changes, speedy action, fast-pace dialogue (even says in the script not to pause, unless it explicitly says)

Minimal set and props – luggage for train seats, moving window frame with blind, rooms gestured with doorways.

The play captures a sense of old-fashioned adventure whilst also poking fun at spy thrillers. The streamlined nature of this adaptation should leave the audience laughing as they follow Hannay through the absurdly over the top whirlwind adventure.



AUDITIONS

Date: Sunday 24th November
Time: 6pm – 9pm

Group audition style depending on how many people attend.

Having people swap in and out of acting with each other.

I will be looking for...

Comic timing

Accents – Scottish and German

Relationships between characters

Hannay – Pages 6-7, 22-23, 50-51

Annabella – Pages 6-7 Pamela – Pages 50-51

Clowns: Mr memory and compere – Pages 2-3 Professor – Pages 22-23



REHEARSAL DATES

January							February						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
		1	2	3	4	5						1	2
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28		
6:☉	13:☉	21:☉	29:☉				5:☉	12:☉	20:☉	28:☉			

Rehearsal times: Thurs- 7-10 Sun- 3-6

Festival performance – Saturday 1st March

May need to add more rehearsals nearer the time. These will be on a Tuesday.

NOTE: Membership must be paid if a part is offered.
Performance fee - £20

