

PINES PARK ARCHERS NEWS & FEATURES

ANOTHER TAKE ON ROBIN, VAMPIRES AT PINES PARK or MAYBE AT SANSOM WOOD?

HE left Sherwood six years ago. Now Rob Locksley has staggered back, worn and weary, to find his hometown in uproar.

And the no-good Sheriff is the least of his problems.

For the town has been taken over by vampires!

This blood-sucking take on the Robin Hood myth has been dreamed up by Liverpool-born filmmaker John Regan.

He describes his vision as "a contemporary set re-imagining of the Robin Hood legend – with bite!"

Sadly, although the setting for John's gory flick Sherwood Horror is, in fact, a town named Sherwood, he's decided to steer clear of Haydn Road and its environs for filming purposes.

"The film will play fast and loose with the legend as it's set in the modern day American South," says John. "This may seem like sacrilege to some, but I just feel there have been so many traditional takes on the legend that it wouldn't hurt to try something new and different with it."

In John's version of the myth, an ex-con called Rob Locksley (played by actor DJ Perry) returns home to find his town run by vampires. He must join forces with his old roughneck hunting buddies to wage war against the evil Sheriff and his blood-sucking horde.

Traditional characters Maid Marian, Friar Tuck, Kings John and Richard, Alan a Dale and Much the Miller's son will all feature in the film, as well as a character with the name "Nottingham".

"Some of their names will be slightly altered but the characters should still be immediately recognizable," says John.

"Rob Locksley will have no special powers, outside of his deadly aim with a bow and his sharp wits."

Costumes, says John, will be contemporary. And there will be no green tights.

"Rob will probably be wearing a green hoodie," he says. "Although it probably won't be Lincoln green!"

John spent the first nine years of his life in Liverpool, before his father got a job in the US.

Now 33, he lives in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Struggling to follow his film-making dream., he has worked as a pizza delivery driver, a waiter and has directed public access TV shows.

He co-wrote a Ninja action fantasy named Full Circle that won the grand prize out of over 1,200 screenplays from around the world in the Creative Screenwriting Magazine's AAA contest.

He has written six drafts of Sherwood Horror so far and it will be his feature film directing debut.

"I've always loved the Robin Hood myth," he says. "It's something that has been with me since childhood and has never lost its appeal."

"My favourite film version has to be The Adventures of Robin Hood with Errol Flynn. It's completely cheesy, but the dialogue crackles, makes me laugh and its energy is infectious. Not to mention the gorgeous technicolor! I watched it many times growing up."

He has researched the film by reading up on the ballads.

"I've done my research on the legends and characters," he says, "and I will be touching on many of the more famous moments that define the characters, yet will presenting them in a different light. My version will be faithful in certain ways and then verge wildly off the path in other ways."

Which, presumably, is where the vampires come in.

"This is actually my first horror screenplay," says John. This is an action-horror, more in line with something like Predator or Aliens."

John is aiming for a 2011 release.

"It's all speculative at the moment until financing is secured," he says. "We are still a long way off filming at the moment."

"We are looking at Louisiana as a potential shooting location, but nothing is firm yet."

He's hopeful it will play in England, hot on the heels of that other Robin Hood epic by Ridley Scott, which is due to be released next May.

"I think everything comes around in cycles," says John. "You have whole new generations that are unaware of the myth. I can't speak for why others want to tell their Robin Hood stories, but I just find the character fascinating."

Of Scott's film he said: "Besides both being based on Robin Hood, I think the similarities stop there. I have a feeling the ratings will be different."