



*Radley Then & Now*

# *The Marionette Society*



To avoid disruption, please keep your microphone on mute during the event. Questions and comments are encouraged. Use the Q&A function below or let us know you want to speak by putting up your (real or virtual!) hand.



1941 & 1942 – *The Sword in the Stone*, TH White



King Pellinore

1941 & 1942 – *The Sword in the Stone*,  
TH White





1941 & 1942 – *The Sword in the Stone*,  
TH White



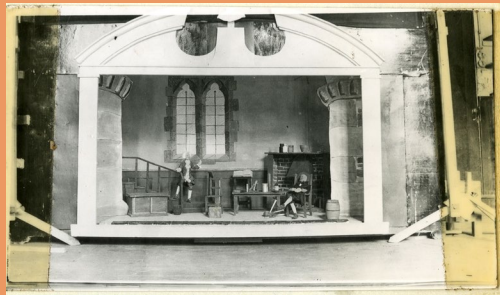


1941 & 1942 – *The Sword in the Stone*,  
TH White





1946 – The Magic Flute, Mozart



1946 – *The Magic Flute*, Mozart

The outstanding performance of the evening was undeniably that of D. G. Bass as the operator of Colas.

The gestures of the head and hands of a marionette doll could never be more lifelike. This was clearly the work of a highly accomplished performer.

Mention must also be made of the Marionettes themselves which were made by D. G. Bass, charmingly "made up" by Mr. Ellis and most beautifully dressed by Miss Kirrage.

## 1947 – *Bastien and Bastienne*, Mozart

### Prefects 1949



B. G. D. CLARKE    F. H. JACKSON    J. M. W. ROBINSON    G. S. HUXLEY    G. EVERY    R. M. JORDAN    D. G. BASS  
G. M. PETRIE    B. W. OPIE    A. N. MARSHALL    THE WARDEN    J. H. PRYTHORN    S. N. PRINHAM-WALSH    R. M. VAN OSS



Since the play *Hansel and Gretel* is a fairy story, the whole production is being run with a view to giving a show for children; so spectators must not be unduly dismayed if Humpty Dumpty puts in an unexpected appearance.

1949 – *Hansel & Gretel*,  
Humperdinck



The producers plead that they are trying to produce a puppet show, not merely a show performed by puppets. Too often in the past have marionettes been given parts to act which were quite beyond their capabilities.



**1949 – *Hansel & Gretel*,  
Humperdinck**

In the early 1950's I painted the stage of the Marionette's production of The Beggars Opera. I did so at the recommendation of Chris Ellis the most relaxed and likeable of Dons.

### **John Antony (Tony) Heath (1950, E)**

The feeling remains that one has seen a peep-show into the eighteenth century. The effect seems in a sense more valid than that of a "live" performance. It is strange how quickly one becomes adjusted to the scale, as in television, and how well-rounded is the result.

**1948 – *The Beggar's Opera***

**1954 – *The Beggar's Opera*, John Gay**

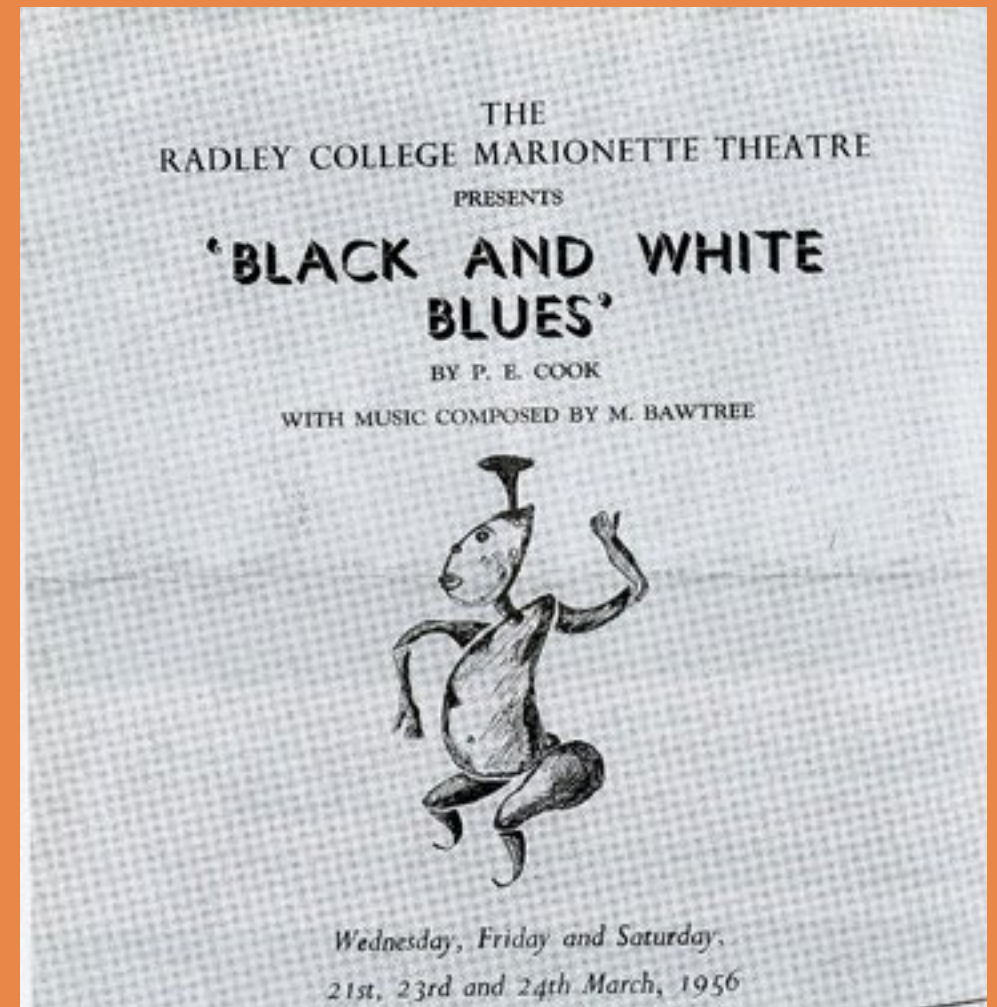
The tape of my sister Diana singing in the Black and White marionette show written by Peter Cook and Michael Bawtree

the theme tune-"I could live on love"- sung with the ideal blend of mirth and nostalgia by Miss Diana Llewellyn Jones and A. E. M. Britten.

**Liz Arkell, nee Llewellyn-Jones**

We are in a position to deny foul rumours that the Marionette Society used four separate scripts, according to which dons were present. Only three were employed. The method seems to have been successful, for as one Social Tutor remarked, "nobody who *mattered* was offended".

**1956 – *The Black & White Blues*,  
Peter Cook and Michael Bawtree**



I think it was a performance of the Yeomen of the Guard, G & S. I had invited an eminent lady from Oxford University, later Lady Florey.

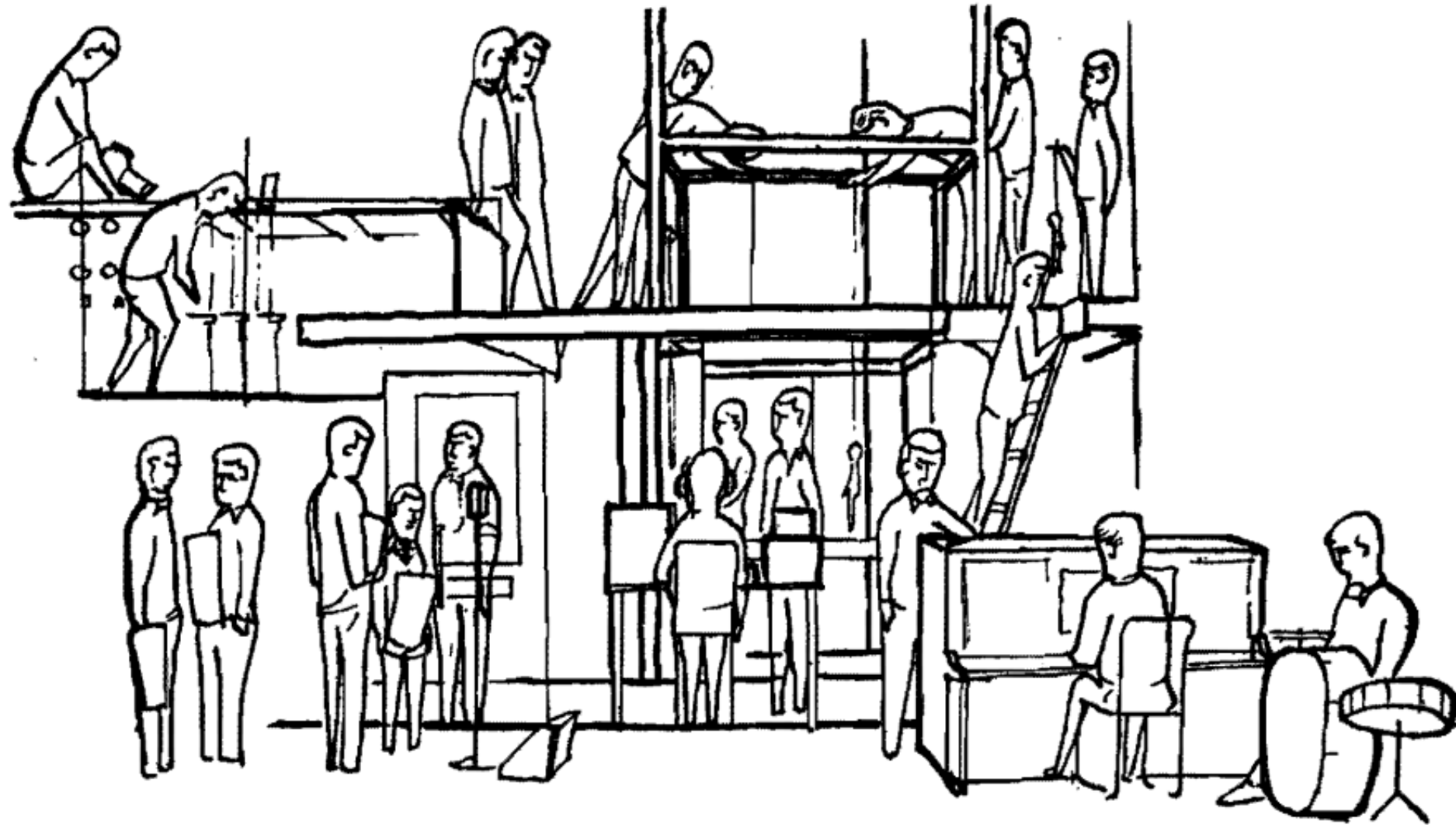
She fortunately enquired about the dress code. It was meant to be black tie and she asked whether it was tiaras! It wasn't. Thank heaven she did not come in full fig.

**Roger Anthony Henderson KC (1956, B)**

Some of Point's footwork, engineered by R. D. Grist, would have impressed even Fred Astaire with its virtuosity and grace. though his final collapse was perhaps a shade abrupt.



**1958 – *The Yeomen of the Guard*,  
Gilbert & Sullivan**



**R.C. MARIONETTE THEATRE**

*MONDAY AT MANDOLINO'S*

I was interested to see the photo used mentioning Monday at Mandolino's as it is a record of the show that happens to be mine! My name is written on the sleeve as you will see. Not sure if I can find the record but it must be somewhere!

**Charles Comins (1958, E)**

<https://radleyarchives.co.uk/browse/audio-recordings/miscellaneous-recordings/1483721-monday-at-mandolinos-by-radley-college-marionette-society-1959-side-a?>

**1959 – *Monday at Mandolino's***





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**SUPERMARIONATION**

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I thought you might be interested to know that I was the secretary, I think in 1966 and 1967, possibly 1968 as well. My memory fails me! I remember doing the Mikado and the Mystery of the Red Barn. One other fact (or supposedly) we were meant to have the longest marionette strings in Europe!

**Mark Holford (1964, B)**

**1966 – *The Mikado*,  
Gilbert & Sullivan**





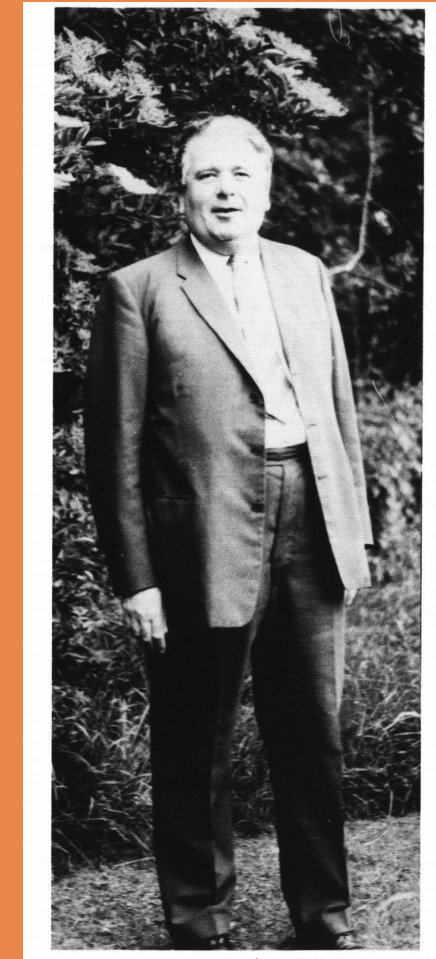
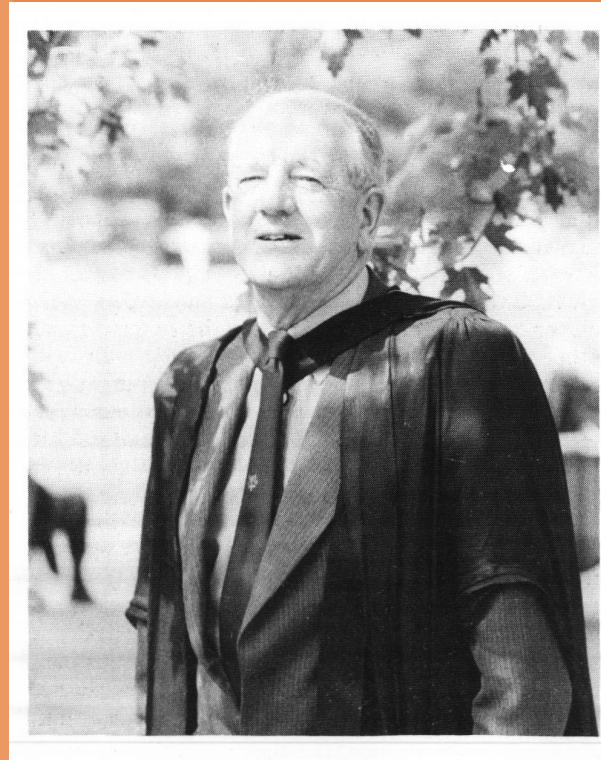
GILLMAN & SUMME

The climbers, under the guidance of Doc Bedford and Tom Ryder



1969 – *Toad*

Some of the animal characters were based upon Dons; Toad – Goldsmith, The Stoat - Stoughton Harris, Badger- DTMB whose puppet had an OR tie! Badger was eventually given to Diana Birks, who helped with the Wardrobe and I can remember it sitting in a large cabinet amongst her Doll collection!



*1969 – Toad*



1969 – *Toad*



1971 – *Potted Lobster*



HANDEL

SINGER

W.H.E.L.?

1973 - *The Ghosts of Berkeley Square*

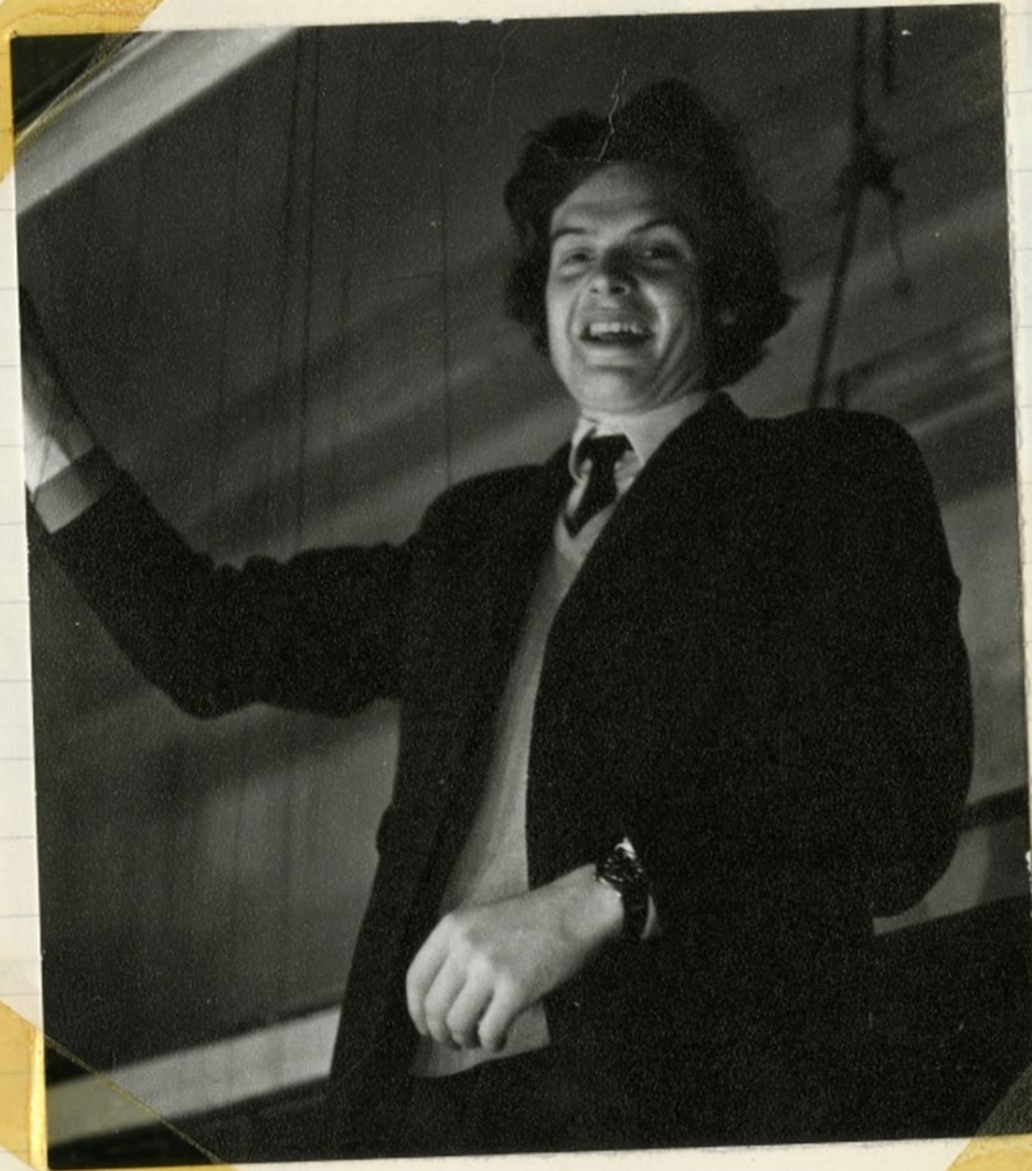


1973 - *The Ghosts of Berkeley Square*, with don Hugo Langrish

High above the proscenium arch within the eaves was an area resembling an artist's garret, littered with half built props, paint pots and odd limbs of half naked puppets.

During my time as Hon Sec we organized a visit by David Bass (OR) who presented his own puppet show. He had been in the Society with my father!

**1973 – NJ Haddon,  
Society President**



N.J. HADDON





1977 – *Toad of Toad Hall*,  
Kenneth Grahame. Reprise.

I was very impressed by the technical skills that they (later we !) used to create the marionettes themselves.

The mechanical bodies were the same from year to year but we made new caricaturised heads for each production.

They were modelled in clay and then covered in glass fibre which in turn was coated with fibre glass resin to make it very hard. When it was set the heads were cut in half to remove the plaster, stuck together again and attached to the puppet bodies.

I cannot remember who made the costumes.

**Peter Michael Demetriadi (1966, D)**

**Langrish collection**





*The Pirates of Penzance.*

Langrish collection

A tape recording of each of the songs for the production was to be created.

A number of us from the Chapel choir were drawn in. As my family had always enjoyed Gilbert and Sullivan operettas,...and would sing them at home... I knew many tunes.

**Tom Collville (1965 F)**

I may still have a script somewhere and even a tape recording.

**Richard Wilson (1958 B)**

**Backstage tapes**  
Langrish collection





Langrish collection

I can also recall becoming an unseen part of a Marionette production.

Singing rehearsals took place during Hugo Langrish's absence, within Donald Paine's apartment down off covered-passage. This *aromatic* room was where "Tiny" his huge St Bernard dog more usually lurked!

In the end my voice belonged to one of three little girls in 'the Mikado'.

**Tom Collville (1965 F)**



***The Mikado, Gilbert & Sullivan.***  
Langrish collection



Tiny the Newfoundland with the orchestra in 1966



**Unidentified.**  
Langrish collection

The speaking roles sat in what is effectively the wings of the theatre, where we could see the puppet operators on the four-sided gallery above the stage so we could co-ordinate our words exactly with the movements of the puppets.

I think we must have spoken into a microphone.

I yearned to be a puppet operator but such was the demand for those positions that it was only in my third year I became one and the year after the theatre sadly closed.

**Peter Michael Demetriadi (1966, D)**







*HMS Pinafore*, Gilbert & Sullivan

Langrish collection



**Unidentified.**  
Langrish collection

So the production, expensive in space, time and money, was certainly worth it.

I would say more worth it than the normal "live" play.

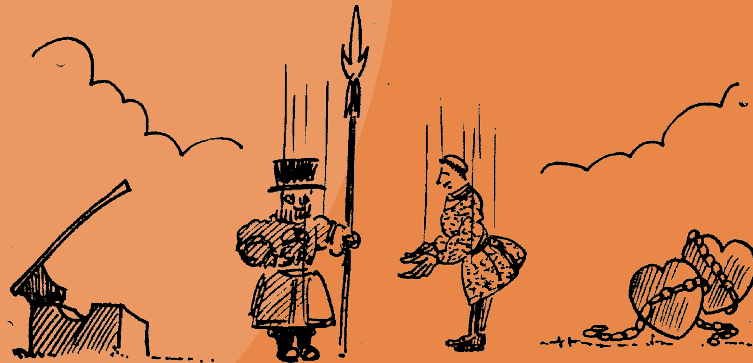
For the normal number of actors is at once doubled; so many skills are needed, so many artists are employed; the whole company needs such careful handling and has to be united by so much understanding and sympathy, that here, if anywhere, is a society worth its keep.

*Review of The Beggar's Opera, 1954*



*Over to you!*

Please share any questions,  
comments or memories of  
The Marionette Society



# *Coming up ...*

Early summer

Radley Then & Now: Olympians

Autumn:

Radley Then & Now: The 1960s