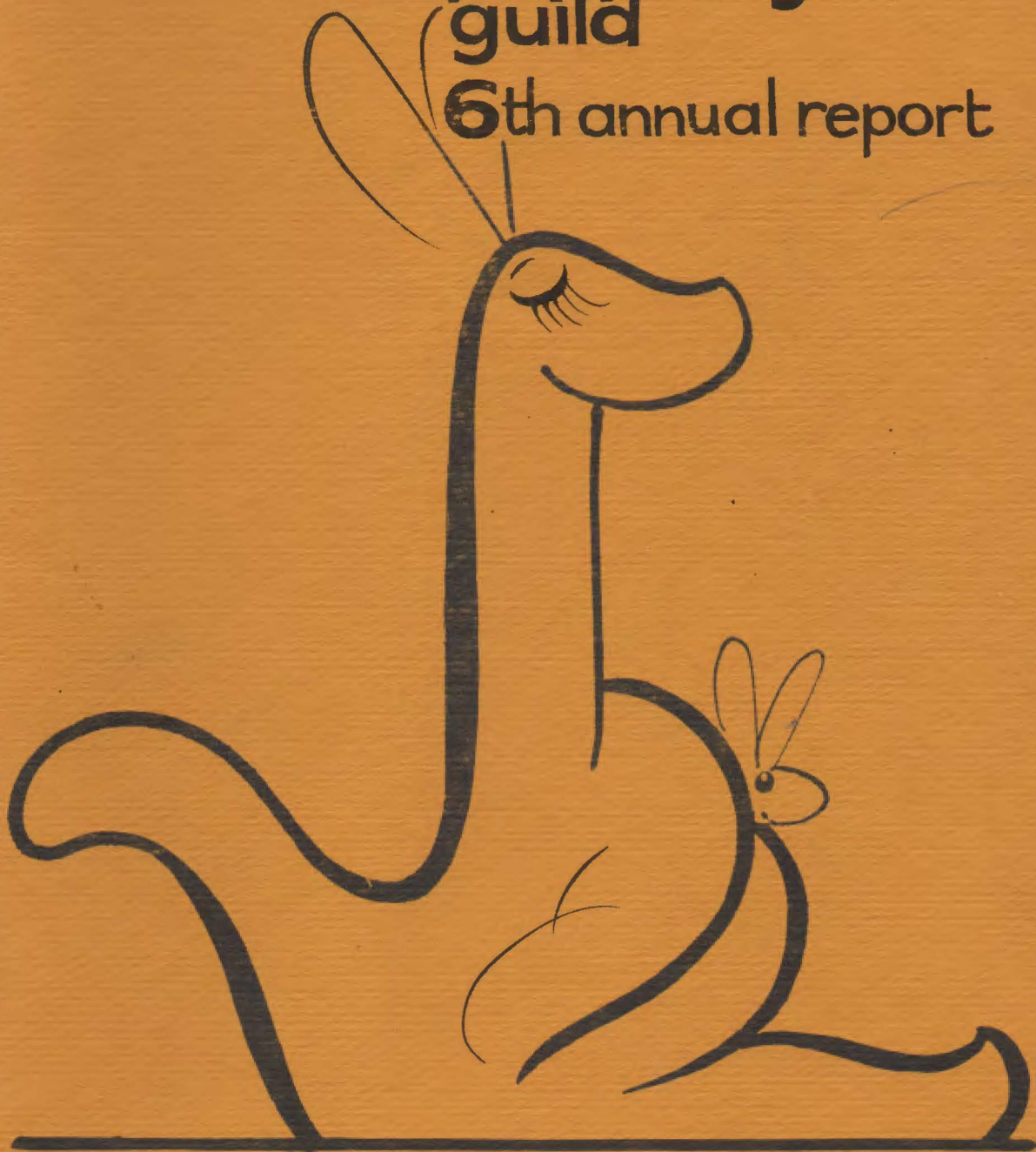


australian
puppetry
guild

6th annual report



CONTENTS

1974

Puppets at a College of Adult Education	7
A Puppet from Japan	11
The Journal of E. V. Toner	14
Online Meetings in U.S.A.	17
Practical Puppets, Bruce Bennett	18
Practical Puppets, Graham Morley	22
Puppetry Festival in Hungary	23
Gazette - Czechoslovakia	24
It's happening Everywhere!	25
Struggles of puppets	27
For the Commercial Market	31
Domestic Puppets	31
Therapeutic Use of Puppets	32
Puppets	32
Report from U.S.A.	35
The Dethroned	36
The Stringalong	37
P.L.	38



CONTENTS



U.N.I.M.A.	4
Congratulations Clovelly!	5
The Macquarie University Experiment	7
Puppets at a College of Adult Education	10
A Puppeteer from Japan	11
The Legend of H.V. Tozer	12
Guild Meetings in N.S.W.	17
Practical hints, Bruce Barratt	18
Practical hints, Graham Morley	20
Puppetry Festival in Hungary	22
Chrudim - Czechoslovakia	24
It's happening Everywhere!	26
Strangled by tape.	27
For the Commercial Market	28
Newcastle News	31
Therapeutic use of Finger Puppets	32
Report from W.A.	33
The Nutshell	35
The Stringalongs	36
F.S.	38



"U N I M A (Union internationale de la marionette) is an organization in which those people in the world who are concerned with the Art of Puppet Theatre associate voluntarily in order to serve through their art the idea of Peace, and of the mutual understanding of peoples without distinction as to race, political ideas, or religion."

(Preamble to the UNIMA Statutes.)

Among the Aims of UNIMA :

To promote contacts between puppeteers of different countries and nations . . .

To help in developing the puppet theatre on a world scale.

To propagate the puppet theatre as a means of moral and aesthetic education. . . .

National Centres : ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA, BELGIUM, BULGARIA, CANADA, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, FRANCE, GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC, GREAT BRITAIN, HUNGARY, JAPAN, YUGOSLAVIA, POLAND, ROMANIA, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, U.S.A., U.S.S.R.

Australia now has 41 individual members, and 2 group members.

Congratulations Clovelly!

25 years...



* Clovelly Puppet Theatre (one of the Centres run by the Creative Leisure Movement) was opened on Saturday 28th May, 1949. The intention was to have an eight-week Season of Shows, using sets of marionettes on loan from W. D. Nicol of Melbourne. But so popular did the weekly shows prove, that "the season" lasted until the heat of summer became unbearable (in the tin Army hut, given by Randwick Council, and erected by volunteers in a corner of Burnie Park). For nine years a show was presented each Saturday from Easter to November. In 1958 the Theatre was re-organised, and since then shows are given on the first Saturday of each month from April to November. On other Saturdays in the month children over five years come to learn to make puppets or to enjoy other creative activities - painting, clay-modelling, collage etc. - and to do impromptu puppet shows themselves in a special small theatre.


Clovelly can thus claim to be the oldest established continuously-running Puppet Theatre in the British Commonwealth (London's "Little Angel" and Colwyn Bay's "Harlequin" being twelve and seventeen years respectively).

cont. over....

.. Clovelly(cont.)

Until recently, the Theatre has been run on a voluntary basis, giving training in return for service, and over the years many local folk, both adults and children, have enjoyed giving their time and talents, and sharing experiences with their fellows. During the earliest years, Isobel Ferguson wrote many plays and made many puppets for the Theatre, many of which are still in use. The native genius of Richard Bradshaw was apparent in his boyish experiments in the early 50's at Clovelly, until now he is acclaimed for his Shadow Puppets, at International Festivals in Europe and in U.S.A.

From the beginning, children have been encouraged to participate, not only as spectators, but in creating plays, designing and making puppets. "Sea Fantasy", with its background music of Debussy's "Sunken Cathedral", and a Scottish "Cockle Gatherers' Song", is an early example, still as popular with adults and children as when it was "created" by a group of children, more than 20 years ago. In 1971 "The Moon Play" was invented and designed by three twelve year olds, and the making of puppets and scenery involved many children (from nine to twelve years) for many weeks. Glove Puppets, Rod Puppets, Puppets from "junk", as well as some very effective Marionettes have been made by children, and are used continuously in the Theatre, as well as the hundreds made by the Director, Edith Murray over the past thirty-five years.



* Reprinted from "Puppets of Australia"
an Australian Council for the Arts
publication.

^ From "Sea Fantasy", a Clovelly favourite

by Gerda Prior.



The Macquarie University Experiment

Would you expect to find a group of puppeteers on an Australian University campus ? Probably not. If not, the main reason is that in Australia puppetry is seen as an entertainment for children, and adults feel they need to be accompanied by their off-spring before they may permit themselves to be entertained by a puppet show. In other words, to start such a venture on a university campus sounds like showman's suicide, and it probably would have been, had it not been for the "educational" content of our show. For our puppets were not only to address a young adult audience, they were to do it in French and German ! And since our puppet show followed in the university tradition of dramatic performances, in the foreign languages concerned, aimed at student and Senior High School audiences, we had no worries. Our aim then was educational, but we also succeeded in surprising students who hadn't been to a puppet show since they were kids, and who found that it was entertaining as well as enjoyable.

In Europe, of course, puppetry is established as a sophisticated form of entertainment enjoyed

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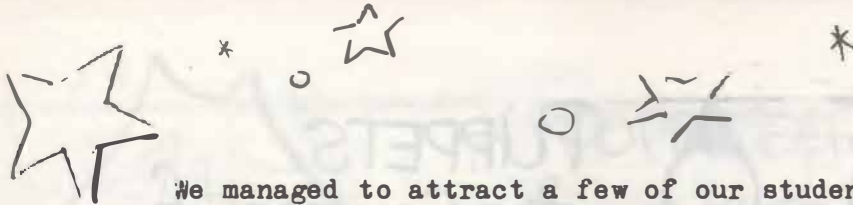
.. Macquarie (cont.)

by small but regular and dedicated audiences, so for us, the three members of staff in the School of Modern Languages who guided the experiment, it wasn't such a strange idea. To our minds a puppet show had distinct advantages over the usual student amateur dramatics. We were only too aware of the limitations of student actors, and the problems of learning a part in a foreign language. Puppetry as a medium is in fact ideal for the shy, inhibited performer, who may have all the sensitivity needed to identify with a part, without having the actor's ability to express it. Also, one can separate speech from action --- an advantage with a foreign language, which requires a good speaker with a good accent, both qualities one may not be able to find in students who can act.

To find suitable plays was no problem. From the wealth of material available in French and German, we chose three plays : the German Morality Play "Jedermann" (Everyman), in Denneborg's version, which was produced by Marlene Norst; "Le petit prince" (The Little Prince), after the story by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, the script written and produced by Guy Neumann; and "Böhmische Schneider" (Bohemian Tailors) by Günter Eich, which was produced by Gerda Prior. "Jedermann", like its model, was a glove puppet play, and the other two were plays for marionettes.

The next problem we had to tackle was making the puppets, and having no experience ourselves, this meant following the advice of a few books, and generally finding things out by trial and error.



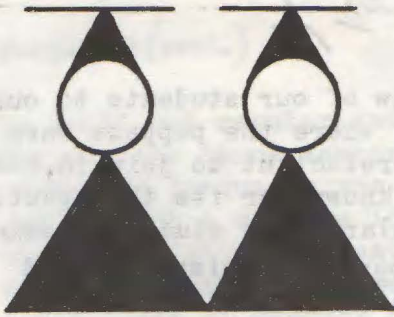


We managed to attract a few of our students to our Friday afternoon sessions, where the puppets were made. At first, they were reluctant to join in, but soon this activity became known for its therapeutic value and became very popular. Some students began to identify with "their" puppet, finished it and clothed it, and in some cases joined the team of manipulators. For the sound tracks we picked students with suitable voices and good accents, and recorded the whole play on tape. For each play we had a team of manipulators, who then had to practise with the tape. The end result was satisfying for all concerned.

Although our circumstances were special, (and part of this was due to the fact that we were fully subsidized by the Modern Language School, and our performances were free), the experiment has shown the interest of young adults in this type of entertainment, especially if they are given the opportunity of sharing in it.

Surely this should make the heart of every keen puppeteer beat faster !






PUPPETS at a COLLEGE of ADULT EDUCATION

In a recent letter from Chris Burfield, in South Australia, the Puppetry Course at Torrens College of Adult Education is described : "The Course commenced back in 1965, and is one of a number of options in Art A,B,and C, which in turn are subjects in the Liberal Studies area of Teaching Diplomas offered at the College. Students who elect to study Puppetry spend 5 hours per week for a year at each level of the subject. Most of this time is spent in the studio ---designing, making and using puppets,(hand, rod, shadow and string puppets, as well as masks.)

An important part of the evaluation of students' work is based on their ability to use puppets --- to perform for an audience of children. For this experience, we recently spent four days touring country Primary Schools, to give performances and demonstrations of shadow and rod puppets. The plays were the original work of the students in the group, and were very successful. It was quite exciting to "feel" the response and involvement of the child audiences of Grades 1 -7. I believe this does much for the cause of Puppetry, motivating children and teachers alike. I am, at present, making arrangements for the group to give an end-of-year show, in a suitable hall, generously made available to us for this kind of work by the South Australian Institute of Teachers.

This is all very encouraging— and children these days are getting more opportunities to make and use puppets creatively."





A PUPPETEER from JAPAN

Early in 1974 we were honoured by a visit from Mr Akitoshi Okasaki, a distinguished producer from the Puppet Theatre PUK of Tokyo, who, with his translator (Mrs Rowena Myasaki) came to survey Puppetry in Australia. Unfortunately, they came at a time when there was very little of quality that we could arrange for them to see.

However, puppeteers in each State gave them hospitality, and visits to "The Nutshell" in Perth, to a Teachers' College in Adelaide, to see the commencement of a Puppet Series being filmed in Tasmania, to Channel 7 in Melbourne, and to the ABC in both Sydney and Melbourne were arranged for our guests; while in Sydney they were able to see performances by five differing groups, using a variety of puppets.

Mr Okasaki brought to show our members a puppet film in colour, as well as a very interesting film showing many of the technical possibilities of colour T.V., some unusual Glove Puppets (two-handed) and a beautiful Rod Puppet, details of which were explained through his translator. Fortunately, they were able to see "The Three Pigs", done by the members of QTOP, while they were on the Gold Coast; and in New Zealand were delighted to see Jim and Edna Burton present their show in a country school.

Australian puppeteers visiting Japan can be sure of a very warm welcome by members of Puppet Theatre PUK and their Director, Mr Taiji Kawajiri.

The Legend



H.V. TOZER

by Richard Bradshaw

Born in Paraguay. Educated in England. Has lived in Barcelona since 1925.

There is hardly a puppeteer worth his salt who hasn't met up with the name of H.V.Tozer. There were the articles on puppetry in Spain which appeared in the yearbooks of the Puppeteers of America in the '30's and '40's. There were the various technical articles which have appeared in publications of the British Puppet and Model Theatre Guild. (Somewhere along the line I came across an article on a folding puppet theatre and used the information when I made my last shadow puppet screen.) It was Tozer who introduced the world to the "Catalan-Type" hand-puppet, where the three middle fingers are held inside a shoulder section made in one piece with the head. Photos of his own beautifully made marionettes have graced publications from time to time.

On my way to Barcelona from Sydney I pause for a day in England. "Give our regards to Tozer," Jan Bussell and Ann Hogarth tell me. Tozer himself recalls a visit from John Wright on holiday some time ago. "Remember me to Roser when you see him," Tozer asks me and in Stuttgart Roser is delighted to receive the greetings of a respected colleague. A puppet enthusiast teaching in a British school in Düsseldorf produces a letter H.V.Tozer once sent him. "Yes, I remember the name," Rufus Rose tells me at his home in Connecticut, "but that's from a long time ago." And just before I leave San Francisco to return to Sydney Lewis Mahlmann says to me: "When you were in Barcelona, I don't suppose you met an old English puppeteer there, H.V.Tozer? He showed me around Barcelona and helped me to find a Spanish model theatre I could buy."

It is not hard to like Barcelona when Tozer shows you his adopted city, although he tells me how one Australian he'd shown around thought it was too old and dirty. There

cont. over....

is a glint in his eyes as he says this and watches for my reaction. I'll learn to look forward to catching that glint after a while, and the smile that goes with it, because more often than not they'll accompany an amusing anecdote, or a piece of fascinating information. Tozer's interests are not limited to the puppet world. He told me how his father knew William Lane the Australian who set off with others, including Mary Gilmore, to build a new Utopia in South America. He'd been in correspondence with the author of a recent book about it, because the author couldn't explain why a certain Englishman suddenly withdrew his support for the scheme. Apparently the explanation is that Lane tried to seduce the man's daughter on a visit to London!

It was a joy to visit museums, churches, public buildings with him, as he indicated things that especially appealed to him. ("You haven't been here since last year," a museum attendant remarks to him in English. Tozer speaks fine Castillian but has never been able to master the Catalan spoken in Barcelona.) "Notice how the Child gradually turns to face the Virgin as the date of the carving gets later."..."There's one of these carvings that looks just like one of John Wright's heads."..."It always amazes me how they were able to transfer the frescos this way. They were Italians that did it."..."The legend is that Christ twisted like that to avoid a cannon-shot in the sea-battle - but you'll see figures with the same pose elsewhere."

Tozer's initial contact with outside puppeteers was through the Puppeteers of America and not as would be expected through an English group. On one visit to England he made puppets as a student with Waldo Lanchester, but he still prefers the American-type of knee-joint to the more obvious standard English-type. He uses upright controls and the little rod for the shoulder and back strings folds ingeniously against the main support for easier packing.

There was a time when Tozer's marionette company had ten people in it. His fit-up had two overhead bridges, the one over the proscenium being slightly higher, so the operators on that bridge sat on small stools running on tracks. When two boxers fought on stage a sheet of clear plastic was dropped between the operators on the two bridges so that the controls could come close without fouling each other. The show had variety and plays. He is still puzzled and amused by the nun who sent a note backstage after Valse Triste saying : "Don't do any more items like that!"

One of Tozer's dreams was to have a permanent puppet theatre and he came very close to getting it once...too close. There's a "model" village in Barcelona with full-scale replicas of typical buildings from different parts of Spain. It was built for a trade fair years ago and kept up for tourists. Tozer showed me where his theatre was to be; an ideal spot. Plans were drawn and the theatre was almost completed when there was a change of Mayor. The new Mayor had other ideas and puppets had no part in them. That was in 1956.

It is hard to appreciate the severity of this blow to Tozer. He gave up puppetry. The marionettes were packed away in boxes. "Eventually the Puppeteers of America stopped sending me their Journal, and I was glad. They used to remind me."

Then in 1972 the Director of the Institute of Theatre in Barcelona went to the International Festival at Charleville-Mezieres, France. He returned to Spain with the idea of setting up a puppetry department. This was at first in the hands of one of the finest of modern puppeteers, Joan Baixas, but is now looked after by a Catalan novelist, Jordi Coca.

The new department contacted Tozer. The boxes of puppets were brought out of storage. The marionette theatre was set up again. Tozer began to instruct students who are now making their own figures. And the nice thing is that they seem to know how lucky they are.

Of course, there is a lot of work to be done to get the puppets back into good condition, and many were badly affected by damp. Tozer is busy doing this in his

cont. over....

characteristically painstaking way but doubts that the work will ever be completed. It was very exciting to see and handle puppets that I knew from a 1947 Yearbook of the P.of A. especially because they are such fine marionettes.

Tozer and his gracious Polish wife live in a pleasant villa on a hillside overlooking Barcelona. Their married daughter lives in Madrid. In a small, well-equipped workshop on the sun-roof lies the neatly carved body of the marionette Tozer is at present restoring.

At the outbreak of the Civil War the hydro-electric company for which Tozer worked recalled its employees to England. Tozer decided to stay on in Spain because the sun was better for his wife's health. From their house the Tozers watched soldiers running away. "It gives you the strangest feeling to see soldiers throwing away their guns."

He sent me a card from Mallorca recently : "It is nice for an old has-been like me to be remembered by such outstanding exponents as Rufus Rose. We were a much more tightly-knit ...because smaller ...group of enthusiasts in those far distant days and were by way of being household words to each other. "

H.V.Tozer is still one of the great names in puppetry.



"Her! I remember when she was nothing but a plastic detergent bottle. "



GUILD MEETINGS IN N.S.W.

by UNA VINCENT

Let's talk about Puppetry Guild meetings.---
What sort of programmes should be included ? Who is willing to provide a programme ? Is Entertainment really necessary ? Should we strive for more practical evenings ? Of course, meetings are one way of keeping members aware of what is happening in the Puppetry world ---both inside and outside our own area.

The programmes this year have been of wide variety. Mr Owen Shelley, who has worked with the C.of E. Children's Special Service Mission for many years, showed us his work with puppets in the religious sphere, and his "parables" were very entertaining and enlightening. Two 3rd Year Students from the Occupational Therapy College gave us a fresh look at presentation with their adaptation of Prof. Tolkien's story "The Hobbit". An evening with Richard Bradshaw and his Shadow Puppets proved hilarious, as only Richard could make it. The humour and originality of his work gives delight whenever we are fortunate enough to see it. Puppetry Film evenings have not so far been very successful. It is hard to obtain any new and up-to-date films on this subject ---but we are still trying ! Another night when all were asked to bring a puppet, and join with others to invent a small play, proved great fun. Ramzy Mishriky provided an interesting display of his puppets from Cairo, including a Belly Dancer.

As the purpose of the Guild is to foster the Art of Puppetry--- all's grist that comes to our mill.

PAPER BAG MONSTER WITH MOVING MOUTH.

I

Practical hints....



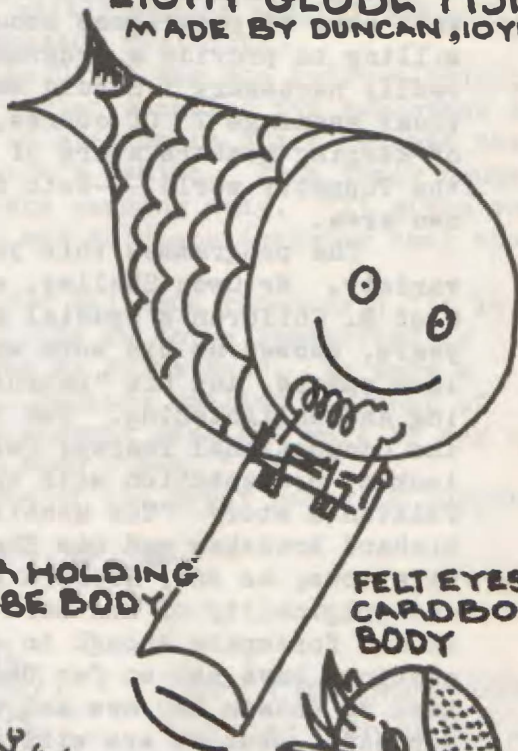
CORNERS OF BAG
ONE PUSHED IN & STAPLED.

MADE BY ALISTAIR, 9YRS.

LIGHT GLOBE FISH

MADE BY DUNCAN, 10YRS.

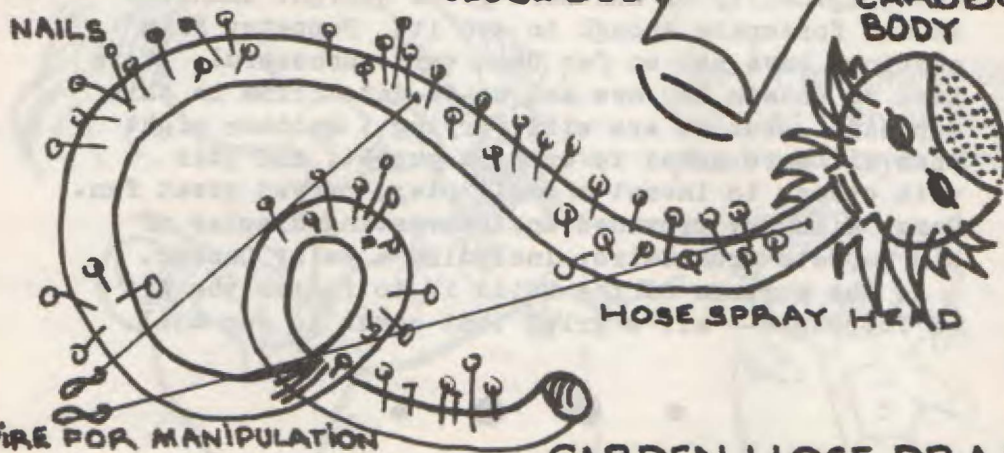
II



TUBE FOR HOLDING
GLOBE BODY

FELT EYES
CARDBOARD
BODY

NAILS



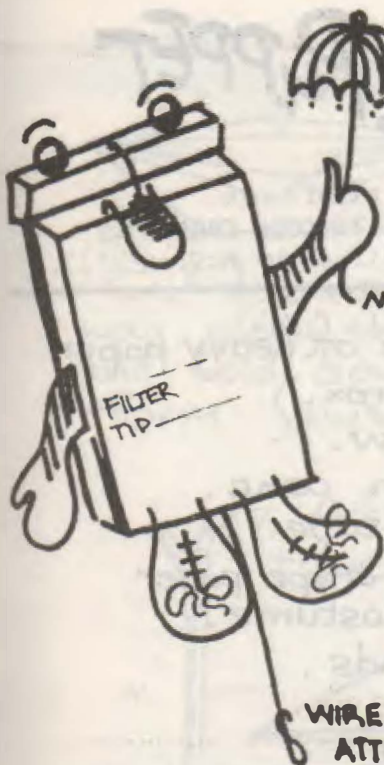
HOSE SPRAY HEAD

WIRE FOR MANIPULATION

III

GARDEN HOSE DRAGON

MADE BY PETER, 11YRS.



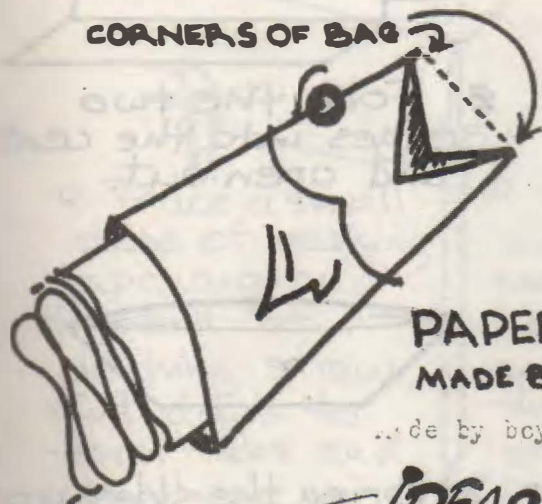
FLIP TOP BOX HEAD WITH MOVING MOUTH.

IV

MADE BY JULIAN, 10 YRS.

WIRE THROUGH BASE
ATTACHED TO LID
TO OPEN MOUTH

CORNERS OF BAG



PAPER BAG BIRD MADE BY ANGUS, 8 YRS.

VI

MADE BY BOYS FROM KNEX DRESSER SCHOOL, SYDNEY.

MATCH BOX SLEEPING BIRD.

V



MADE BY JONATHAN
9 YRS.

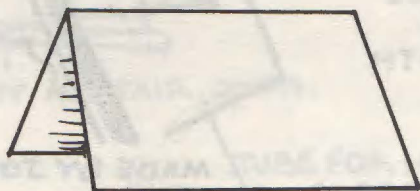
WIRE TO PUSH & PULL

IDEAS by BRUCE BARRATT

To make an ANIMATED PAPER PUPPET

This puppet and many others are included in "LEARNING THROUGH CRAFT" by Graham B. Morley, published by McGraw Hill.

- MATERIALS:** (i) One square piece of heavy paper. (10" square approx.)
(ii) a drinking straw.
(iii) a piece of 3mm cane.
(iv) some masking tape
(v) a large piece of crêpe paper or fabric for costume.
(vi) two rubber bands.



1. Fold in half.



2. Fold the two edges into the centre and open out.



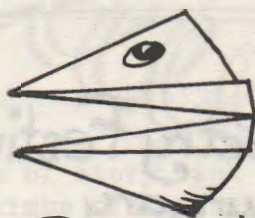
3. Fold all the corners at 45°.



4. Bring the sides up and turn the paper upside down.



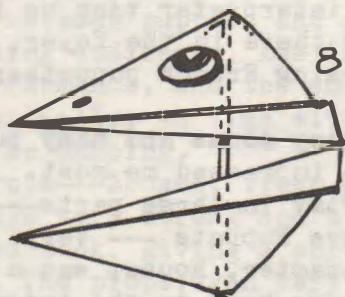
5. Cut down 2cm mid way along the edges and fold down to form jaws.



6. Bring the two ends together to form the head.



7. Attach two small strips of masking tape onto the end of a piece of cane.

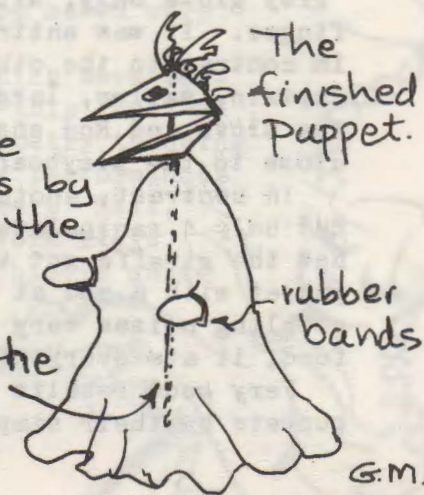


8. Push the end of the cane through the corner of the bottom jaw and attach the tape inside the top jaw.



9. Place a small piece of masking tape around the end of a drinking straw. Cut down to form tabs and use these to attach the straw to the bottom jaw.

10. Operate the jaws by pushing the cane up and down through the straw.



Puppetry Festival in Hungary

Kay Littler.



On 24th June, 1974—a dark and rainy night --- Kay Littler and Gerda Pinter arrived at the little town of Békéscaba, in Eastern Hungary. Kay writes :

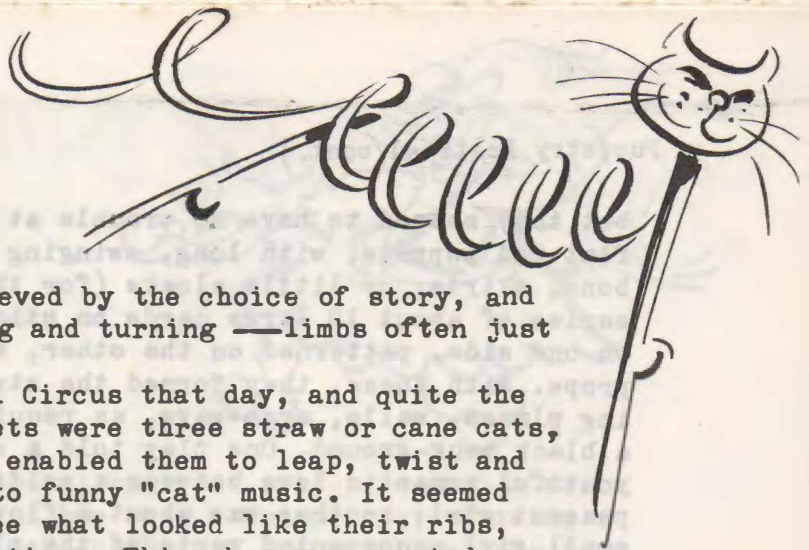
"As the train halted, we leaped on to the railway track and a group of people came hurrying to meet us, bearing a large sign, in English : "WELCOME PUPPETEERS. " Our friendly interpreter took us in a combi van to our hotel, and there in the foyer, we were introduced to the charming French puppeteer, Lucien Caron.

During the week we saw many shows and many puppets but here are the ones which impressed me most.

"The Squeaky Mouse"—a Play in three parts— 16 manipulators— Rod and Glove Puppets — Very lively action. The main character, Mouse, was a plain grey glove only, with a mouse head on the index - finger. It was entirely sufficient as such, even in contrast to the other well-constructed characters : Captain, sailor, large whale and ship. In most of the Glove and Rod shows, the acting took place close to the playboard or front screen.

In contrast, another play "The Gluttonous Giraffe" had only 4 manipulators. The theme of the play was how the giraffe got its long neck. It was a simple puppet with a rod at head and tail end, its hungry, gobbling noises very well done. In its search for food, it ate everything. —hats, washing on the line.

Very good results were obtained from these rod puppets by their simple construction, and the max-



imum movement achieved by the choice of story, and the clever twisting and turning —limbs often just suspended.

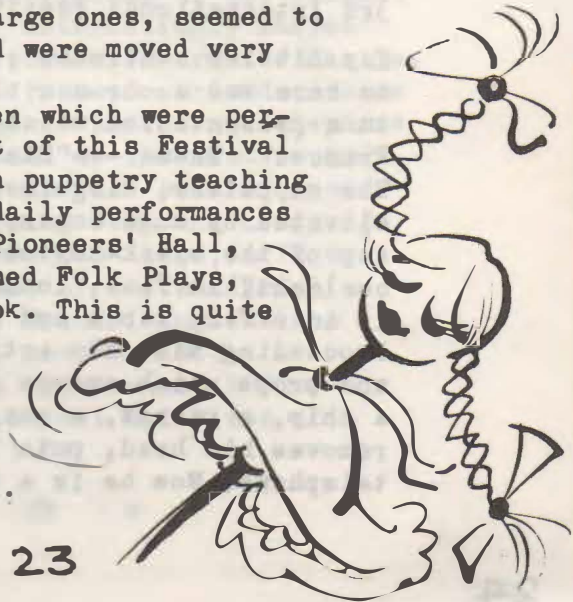
I saw an Animal Circus that day, and quite the most amusing puppets were three straw or cane cats, on two rods which enabled them to leap, twist and move rythmically to funny "cat" music. It seemed even funnier to see what looked like their ribs, in action all the time. This show was enacted above a black screen, with more use of space between it and the black backdrop; large, bright puppets; and a man in ringmaster costume as part of the show, a "tie-up" between puppets and audience.

Regarding audiences, the large hall was filled every performance, and the audience clapped most enthusiastically, in time with any puppet singing, marching or dancing.

The props—houses, trees, clouds, fences, etc.--- were always very strong and simple in design, with a stylized look, giving a sort of post-card impression. The props, even very large ones, seemed to be held by the manipulators, and were moved very smoothly.

I loved the plays for children which were performed by children. A great part of this Festival was devoted to children — with puppetry teaching in the park every morning, and daily performances by children in their own Young Pioneers' Hall, where we saw beautifully performed Folk Plays, based on the music of Bela Bartok. This is quite serious music, especially for children to understand,

cont over.....



... Puppetry Festival(cont.)

but they seemed to have no trouble at all. They used flat rod puppets, with long, swinging plaits, ribbons, skirts, or little cloaks (for the boys). A series of about 10 large cards on sticks—plain on one side, patterned on the other, served as props. With these, they formed the structures, hiding places, walls, arch-ways, as required, against a black back-ground. One play told a story of youthful romantic love between a soldier and a peasant girl; another was about a flower-queen. A small girl accompanied parts of the play on a flute. At all times, the children in the audience gave their complete attention and enthusiastic applause."

* * * * *

Chrudim — Czechoslovakia

3rd International Festival of Amateur Puppeteers.

Kay Littler continues ; - "The show which thrilled me here was a one-man show by a talented Frenchman, in a presentation which won the UNIMA prize in France. Theme — "Man searches for his real self." The puppeteer, disguised as a giant-sized man, elevated by huge boots, a big man-head resting on top of the black-costumed frame of his "one-man concealment"; in fact, looked every bit a giant. There is an office table and a telephone on stage. Proceeding with his act, he has various puppets and props which emerge from his robe—including a ship, a parrot, a seagull; and at one stage he removes his head, puts it on the table with the telephone. Now he is a headless giant, and it





becomes clear that his real self is escaping from the pressure of his city existence to a faraway island paradise. In the end, he cannot escape his fate; he replaces his head and answers the telephone.

Then there was a show by a Belgian group (our first experience of humans and puppets being involved in a full play together.) It was a lively farce, called "Snowwhite and the Seven Dwarves and the Five Men "; and it was wonderful fun.

An actor, the Prince riding a ridiculous red Pantomime Horse, big obvious black braces keeping the horse attached to him. Snowwhite and the dwarves were the puppets ; a live actress was the wicked Queen ; the other men friends of the Prince. Stage decor was a series of interestingly shaped modules, which were moved around to form the castle, court-yard, etc. When the "Prince" arrived outside the castle, he took out a giant-sized red telephone from inside the horse, to call up the castle staff. When he was ready to sleep, he just settled down inside the horse, after leaning over and clapping down the horse's eyelids over the large, wild eyes.

Of course, during the rest of our wonderful tour---in Austria, Germany, France, England and New Orleans, we saw a great many varieties of puppets, their construction and presentation --- but nowhere, any just like ours ! Which was a quite exciting discovery ! ! "

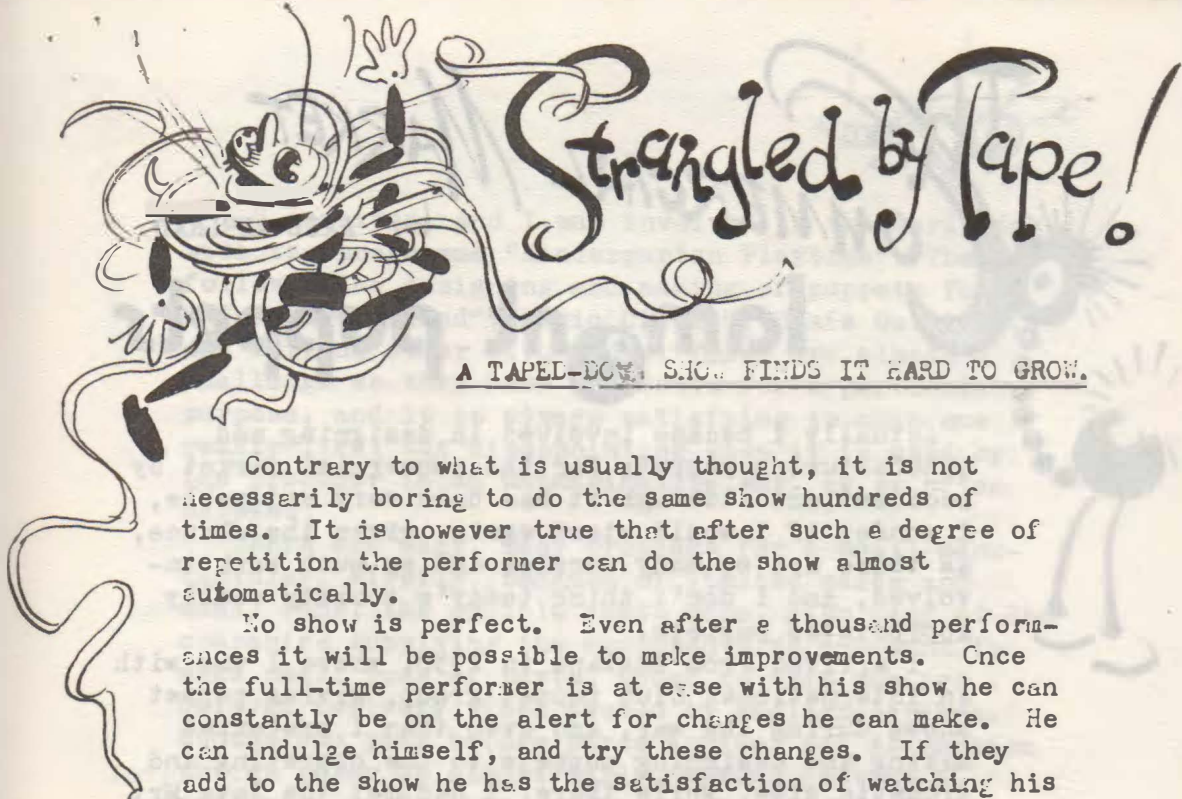
IT'S HAPPENING EVERYWHERE!

Jacki Brūyn was a foundation member of Q.T.O.P., and evidently well-taught by Kay Littler. She and her husband now live at Mullumbimby, and won the 1st Prize of \$100. for the "best work of art" in the recent Spring Festival there. What was it? It was a Puppet Show!

Jacki wrote the script, made the puppets (QTOP method) and new curtains for the stage, composed music and songs, then realized she couldn't handle all the puppets herself. Four friends helped out with rehearsals and making of tape on Friday night, and on Saturday "Zigeuner Theatre" was launched! "Alfie Pfeffer" (a little red-headed, freckle-faced boy) and his friends (Wonkle the caterpillar, Jenny the kookaburra, and Bartholemew the toad) will continue their adventures in a series of 15 minute plays which Jacki has created, and the gypsy format will introduce each new play.

She has now bought 2 dimmers, and the timber for an "open-top" playboard, and the black material for kiminos to work in. "We have been invited all over the place — to schools, and festivals, and people keep offering me their help. . . Some interested folk are coming on Friday. . . I'll talk a bit about theatre production, then give them a story/action outline and they will make their own script, puppets etc. We are fortunate that we all live fairly close and most people here are farmer/craftsmen/artists/writers etc. We should finally come up with something unique."

— Three Cheers! —



A TAPE-DOWN SHOW FINDS IT HARD TO GROW.

Contrary to what is usually thought, it is not necessarily boring to do the same show hundreds of times. It is however true that after such a degree of repetition the performer can do the show almost automatically.

No show is perfect. Even after a thousand performances it will be possible to make improvements. Once the full-time performer is at ease with his show he can constantly be on the alert for changes he can make. He can indulge himself, and try these changes. If they add to the show he has the satisfaction of watching his show grow.

A higher standard of puppetry will result if puppeteers allow sufficient freedom in the constraints of their shows for growth.

Here is the main objection to the recording of a show. Usually this is done before even one performance in front of an audience. What a terrible restriction on growth! Re-editing, re-recording, pause buttons, segments of live dialogue are all ways of lessening the restriction.

If you find that your taped-down puppet show is beginning to bore you, spare a thought for your audience.

...R.E.




Not everybody can do everything. But puppeteers often try to.

The COMMERCIAL MARKET

by AXEL AXELRAD.

lament puppets

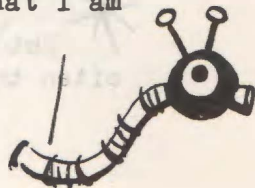


Actually I became involved in designing and manufacturing puppets for the commercial market by accident, and although it has been very enjoyable, I wonder if I would start again, given the chance, as there are so many worries and so much work involved, and I don't think today's society really appreciates puppets.

I arrived from England in 1950, where I was with an International Club puppet group, giving puppet shows during the war, and even then I preferred making and designing puppets to the operating and dramatic side. While there, I had met the late Mr. Whanslaw, co-founder of the British Puppet Guild, and had worked in one of his groups.

Looking round Melbourne, I could see that there weren't any puppets available in the shops that not only looked good, but worked well, so I designed some. Farmers in Sydney were our first customers, and then followed so many orders that I had to give up my engineering job and make puppets only. To be sure, my knowledge of engineering has helped in designing and working out mechanical movements, in particular for special displays such as some for Myers Toy Department.

We are trying for a complete range of all types of puppets, as a firm specializing in puppets, and not just as one of our lines. So far we have made every type except a Shadow Puppet, and that I am working on now.





T.V. arrived, and I was involved in the early days with the programme "Kindergarten Playtime". Then followed the designing and making of puppets for "Adventure Island", "Magic Circle", "Ossie Ostrich", and various other T.V. shows. These are always a challenge as they have movements for a particular purpose, and it is always satisfying to make one I really like; but disappointing when it is used by the producer in an unimaginative way, as so often happens.

There are many, many problems for a small manufacturer. Firstly, because of limited sales and small runs, the article costs more. Also many of the companies supplying the components do not want to make small runs of parts. Added to this now are delayed delivery times caused by endless strikes. Months can pass before parts arrive; not to mention prices going up almost daily, making costing a problem, and freight rates too. However, we have always managed to sell our puppets to selected shops in cities and suburbs, though the country towns do not seem to have a demand for puppets yet.

One of my hobbies is exporting our puppets, and we have had quite a success in Europe, and especially in America. But the revaluing of the dollar, and the de-valuation of the American dollar have now made our puppets too dear for America, so that market is lost for the time being. Of course, we, like the textile industry, have also found that cheap imports are undercutting the market.



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.. Lemont (cont.)

Our puppets have been accepted by the Industrial Design Council for good design, which is indeed an honour, but has little value in Australia as most people are not design conscious.

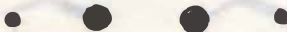
The carton is a very important part of the presentation of a product; so, as I could not find a carton designer to make one to suit me, I designed my own. The carton manufacturer persuaded me to enter it in the annual Packaging Award; to my surprise, one year the design won a Merit award, and the next year a First.

Our puppets are used by the Victorian and Queensland schools; also by the Acoustic Laboratory and by School Supplies in Sydney. They were also featured as an Australian toy at EXPO 70, in Japan.

At present we make 44 different characters, and this includes two Do-it-yourself Construction sets, and three different puppet stages. Next year, we shall have been making puppets for 25 years. At several thousand puppets a year, that adds up to quite a lot of puppets, which have originated in our factory at beautiful Olinda, in Victoria.



Keep it simple. The realistic figure of Abraham Lincoln at Disneyland, a technological masterpiece operated by a computer, is almost life-like. The character created when Jay Marshall, an American puppeteer, wraps a handkerchief around his left hand is alive.





Marti McClelland conducted a Puppetry Course for the Newcastle Young People's Theatre during 1st Term, and in 2nd Term she was joined by Beryl Piggott, as assistant tutor. The Y.P.T. were very delighted to receive a grant from the Council for the Arts, part of which was used to build a new portable, multi-purpose puppet theatre, incorporating marionette section, shadow section, and a glove /rod run-around, which would allow several children to work together. Part of this grant was to be used for lighting this fit-up adequately.

During 2nd Term, Marti lectured at Newcastle Teachers' Resources Centre, one evening a week, on Puppetry. Several kinds of puppets —Glove, Rod, Shadow, and "junk" --- were made by those in class; lectures and discussions on play-making, production, speech and movement, therapy and co-ordination, etc. were included, as some of the teachers involved in the group were dealing with sub-normal and spastic children. It is gratifying to know that through this class, Puppetry will reach a great number of children and young people.

Several experienced puppeteers in the area are co-operating with Y.P.T., and they hope, by joint efforts, to establish a permanent Puppet Theatre in Newcastle in the not-too-distant future. I'm sure all Guild members will wish them success.

Therapeutic use of FINGER PUPPETS

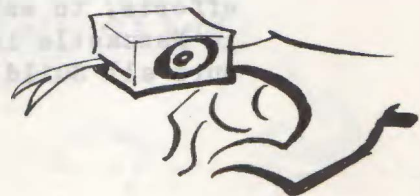
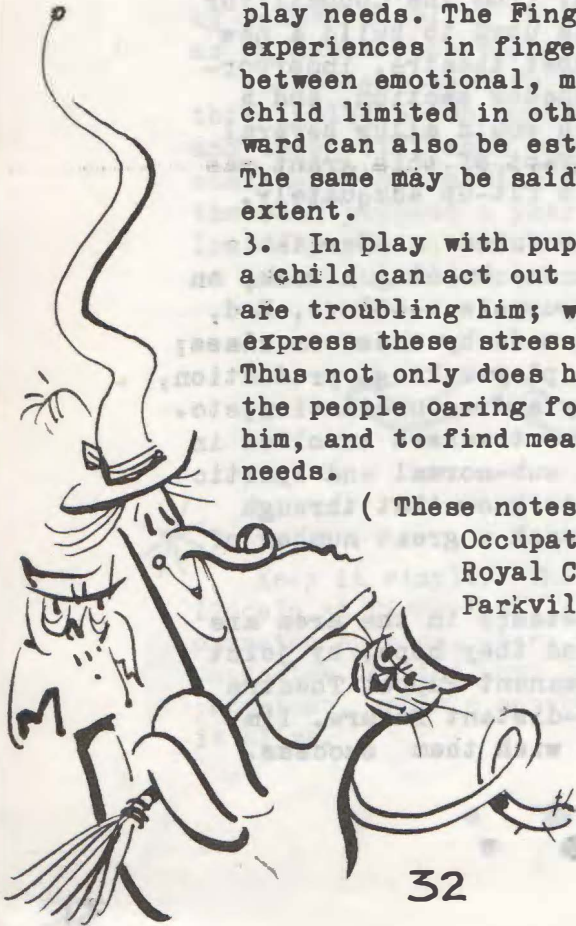
1.(a) Play with Finger Puppets motivates a person to use their fingers. This applies to both adults and children who are suffering from muscle weakness including arthritis. It aims to produce muscle and joint mobilization.

(b) It is also a useful tool for developing muscle power and for isolating movements in persons with missing digits.

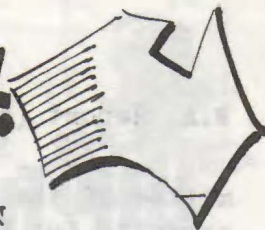
2. Imaginative play with Finger Puppets for a child confined to bed and unable to expend energy through the usual avenues, releases inhibitions and meets play needs. The Finger Puppets encourage play, and experiences in finger play help to develop a balance between emotional, mental and physical states in a child limited in other ways. Communication across a ward can also be established through finger puppets. The same may be said of adults, but to a lesser extent.

3. In play with puppets (including Finger Puppets) a child can act out any worries and problems that are troubling him; whereas he may be too young to express these stresses through ordinary conversation. Thus not only does he express these feelings, but the people caring for him are enabled to understand him, and to find means of attending to his special needs.

(These notes kindly supplied by Miss V. Angliss
Occupational Therapy Department,
Royal Children's Hospital,
Parkville, 3052 Victoria.



Report from W.A.



by NANCY JOHNSTON

Our year of 1974 opened enthusiastically and very happily with two meetings to welcome and entertain visitors from afar. The first, in January, came from Puppet Theatre PUK, of Tokyo —Mr Akitoshi Okazaki, and his charming translator, Mrs Rowena Miyazaki. The crocheted and cloth Glove Puppets, and the beautiful Rod Puppet, "Snow", which he brought to show us, were very interesting; and the film of "Eleven Cats" was much enjoyed by all members.

The second visitor, Pandam Guritno, came from Indonesia to lecture and demonstrate the Wayang Purwa of his country at our W.A. Institute of Technology. He visited the Guild, accompanied by Mr Hardjowardojo, whose dissertation on this subject was in last year's Report. This gave us more depth of understanding when the Dalang spoke and demonstrated the great traditions of this oldest form of puppetry.

In April an evening was spent with our fellow member from N.S.W., Mr Richard Bradshaw, who was in Perth to present a season of his Shadow Puppets for The Nutshell. He spoke of Puppetry abroad, and the need for puppetry education in Australia.

Later in April, Mr Peter Oldham and his company were welcomed to W.A. by the Guild; but it was a bitter blow that his Performing Puppet Co., who were doing a Rod show : "A Journey by a Cobb & Co. Coach", in country districts, could not be seen in Perth.

At the Annual Meeting a new President, Mr Ted Wilkinson, of "Stringalong Puppets", took the chair and infused new life into our meetings. It was decided to ask N.S.W. to become the Federal Com-

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.. W.A. Report (continued.)

mittee of the A.P.G. after W.A. having acted in this capacity for the past two years. This has since been agreed to.

In June, our member David Kirby gave a talk and demonstration of his puppet work at the Fremantle Art Centre.

The meeting in July was addressed by Peter Hartland, Puppetry Adviser to our State Education Department, on his professional experiences.

We appreciated the relaxation of a Punch and Judy show given by Mike Hayles in August, and the lively discussion on this old tradition, afterwards.

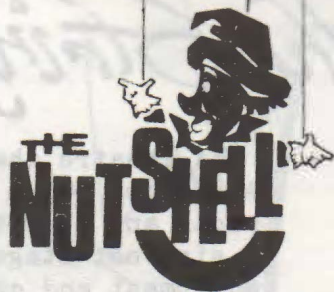
In September we welcomed Kenneth Martin, from America, who told us of his experiences while studying Puppetry at the University of Connecticut where, under direction of Professor Ballard, he took part in an immense production of Ibsen's "Peer Gynt". (An article on this production appeared in EPA's "Puppet Post" for Autumn, 1973.)

To complete the year, we will show the French film "Le Marionnettiste", and have a Christmas show given by members and friends.

Our membership now stands at twenty-five, and we look forward to another successful year in 1975.



The audience arrives with certain expectations. If your show falls below these you have disappointed them. If your show lives up to these you have satisfied them. If your show is better than their expectations then you can be satisfied too.



For the first part of 1974 , we were busy making a success of the visit of Richard Bradshaw, who spent five weeks with us before leaving for overseas. During that time he gave 28 performances with his Shadow Puppets---19 at "The Nutshell".Arrangements were also made for visits to three Teacher Training Colleges, and several schools in suburban centres. Everywhere, he was received with great enthusiasm. Both Channels 2 and 7 came to our theatre to record him at work, for later segments, in T.V. A word of thanks to Vera Piesse for help with Front-of-House, and to all who supported us in various ways.

For several reasons it was not possible to have a season of public performances in the second half of the year. While this was regretted, it did not mean aperiod of inactivity. The numbers using "The Nutshell" increased during the year, and this resulted in work with both Gloves and Shadows, as well as Marionettes. Recently, a request came from the Occupational Therapists at Fremantle Hospital for help inaugurating work with Finger Puppets. We are grateful to both Mrs Murray (N.S.W.) and Mrs Fitzgerald (Victoria), for letting us have the benefit of their experience in this type of work.

It gave us great pleasure to entertain Mr Peter Scriven and members of the Puppetry Panel of the Australian Council for the Arts, who visited us while in Perth for their meeting in July.



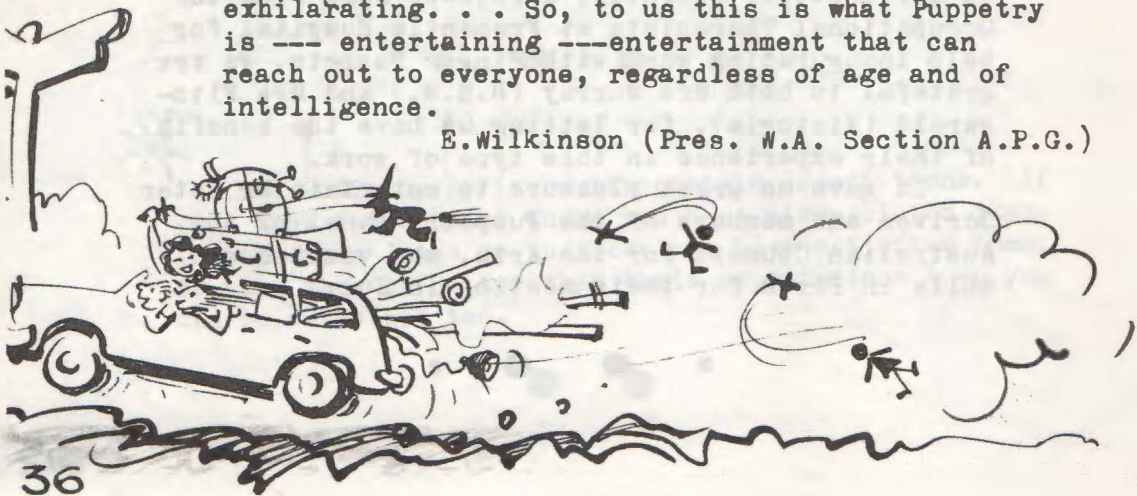
"The Stringalongs..."

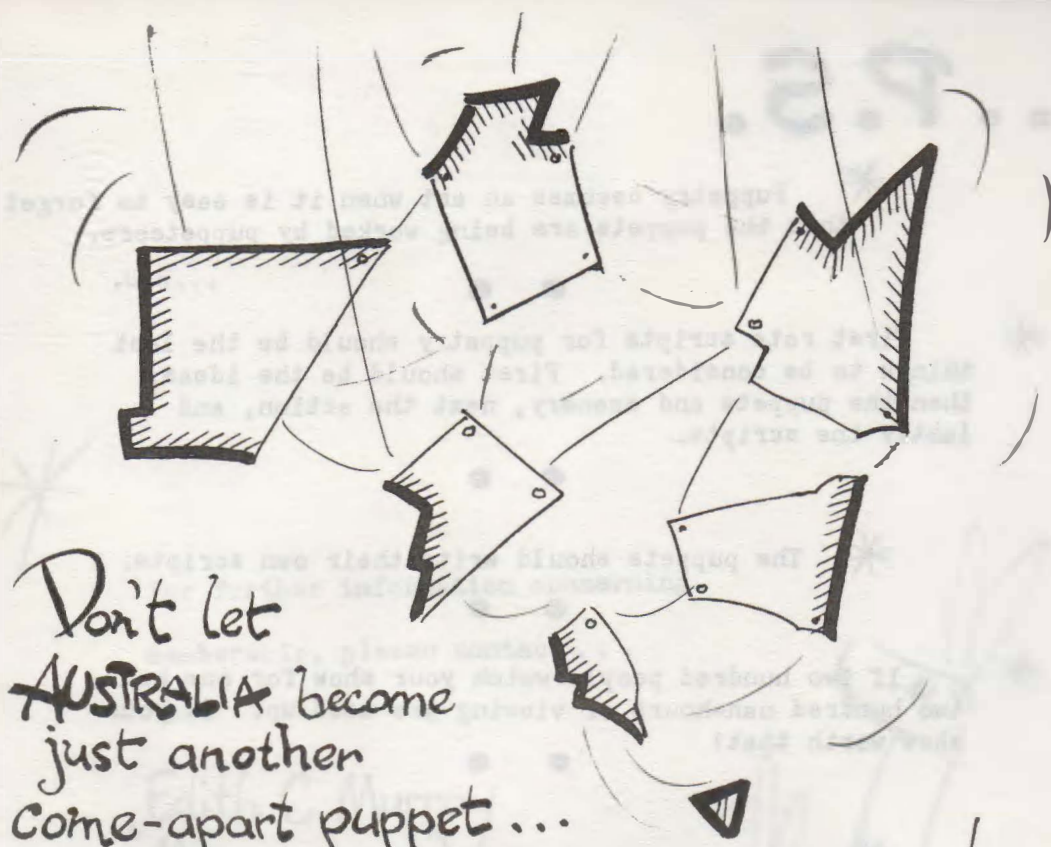
A Theatre that breaks all the rules !
A station wagon full of pieces of wood, cardboard, cloth and assorted junk becomes within 30 minutes a six foot stage, with curtains, lights, sound equipment and over forty 20" Pelham Puppets (Marionettes), using a 10'x6' floor area. There is no conventional bridge---but somehow it works.

Operators ? . . . It's a family affair. Chief weight of the hour's performance falls on our daughter Hilary (seventeen), with Darrell (thirteen) assisting, my wife and I helping where necessary. To maintain a high standard, we ensure that each performance is rehearsed down to the last detail, as we present a fast-moving, revue-type of show.

Age of audience does not seem to matter ---a slight change of basic items ---a different introduction --- and away we go. Our oldest audience ranged from fifty to ninety years. A mixed group of children and adults ---an easy one. The most difficult one was an audience of teenagers who came to scoff and stayed to enjoy. Our most enjoyable and satisfying audience ? . . . Sixty mentally retarded children. . The excitement . . The noise . . But our feeling of pleasure and of satisfaction in entertaining those children was exhilarating. . . So, to us this is what Puppetry is --- entertaining ---entertainment that can reach out to everyone, regardless of age and of intelligence.

E. Wilkinson (Pres. W.A. Section A.P.G.)

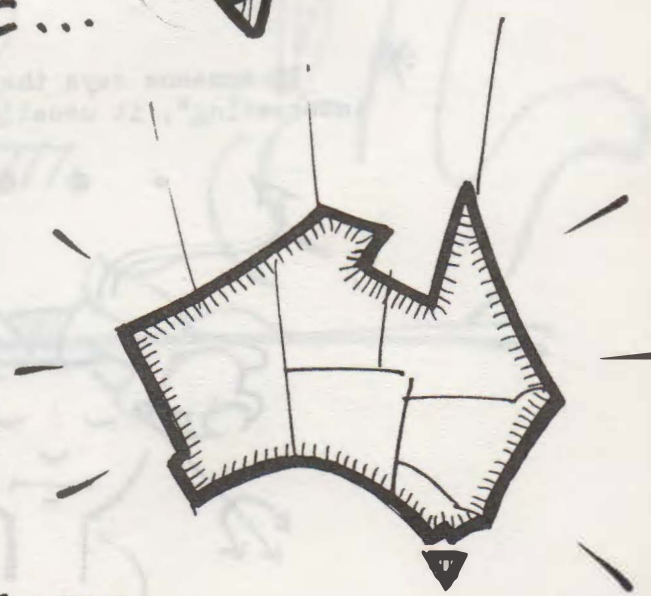




Don't let
AUSTRALIA become
just another
come-apart puppet ...

Let's all work
together.
**MELBOURNE
FESTIVAL**

Jan. 9th - 13th 1975



..P.S.

* Puppetry becomes an art when it is easy to forget that the puppets are being worked by puppeteers.

...R.B.

* First rate scripts for puppetry should be the last things to be considered. First should be the ideas, then the puppets and scenery, next the action, and lastly the scripts.

* The puppets should write their own scripts.

* If two hundred people watch your show for one hour, two hundred man-hours of viewing are used up. Is your show worth that?

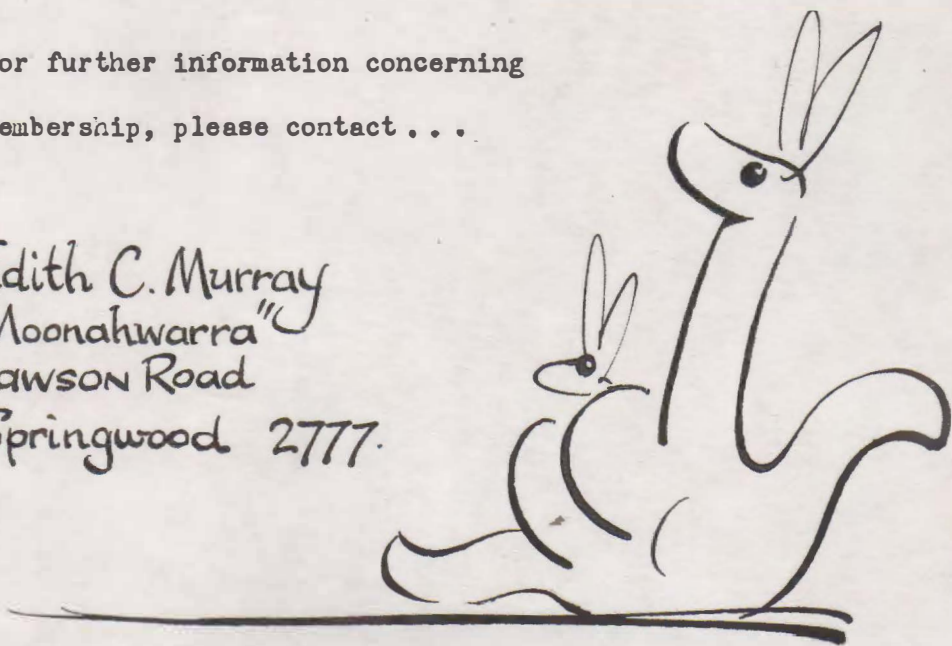
* If someone says they thought your show "very interesting", it usually means they didn't like it.





For further information concerning
membership, please contact . . .

Edith C. Murray
"Moonahwarra"
Lawson Road
Springwood 2777.





The "Self-Starter"