

Herein you will find explanations of The plot, the players and other matters pertaining to:

# THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

Being performed in this delightful theatre by a gang of Thespians who jointly perform under their official title of:

## RAMSGATE OPERATIC SOCIETY

Now to some more details of which we need to advise you as a necessary adjunct to our licence to perform this piece before you.

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### THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*An amateur production by arrangement with Warner/Chappell Music Limited*

*Libretto and Lyrics by John Gay*

*Music selected by J.H.C. Pepusch and arranged by Benjamin Higgins*

*Adaption by David Turner*

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### RAMSGATE OPERATIC SOCIETY

*Founded in 1960, Registered Charity 1091538*

*Affiliated to the National Operatic and Dramatic Association,*

*Thanet Arts Council and D'Oyly Carte Opera Trust*

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### THEATRE ROYAL MARGATE

ESTABLISHED IN 1787 REGISTERED CHARITY 279015/R

CHAIRMAN	SIR ALISTAIR HUNTER
SECRETARY TO THE BOARD	MRS. SHEILA COLE
GENERAL MANAGER AND LICENSEE	MR. MICHAEL WHEATLEY-WARD
CO-LICENSEE	MRS. VERONICA COX
CO-LICENSEE	MR. MICHAEL VICKERS
MARKETING MANAGER	MR. DAVID RANKIN
FINANCE MANAGER	MR. PAUL ASTBURY
TECHNICAL CONSULTANT	MR. RICHARD THOMAS
TECHNICAL STAGE MANAGER	MR. JUSTIN THOMAS
FOH AND BOX OFFICE MANAGERESS	MRS. YVONNE ARAFFA
FRONT OF HOUSE MAINTENANCE	MR. BRIAN WALLIS

*Plus both our backstage staff and our front of house volunteers who give up their free time so that you can enjoy yours. We would also like to give special thanks to the British Red Cross, for their excellent first aid cover that they provide at every show in this theatre. Please help them by putting a donation in their collection bucket at the end of the performance-*

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### WARNING

It is a condition of our licence with Warner/Chappell Music Limited that we do not permit the taking of video, digital, photographic or sound recordings of any of the productions. In addition the theatre has asked us to remind you that:

**Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building.**

**The use of mobile telephones (that new fangled invention of the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century) is not permitted.**

**PLEASE SWITCH YOURS OFF NOW!**

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*Pray take the opportunity to avail yourselves of the PLOT before our Stage Manager assembles us on stage for the opening scene.*

*The opera, written by a beggar, is meant to depict the distinction between the manner and extent of the punishment regularly meted out to the poor as opposed to the rich. Mr. Peacham, the fence, buys and sells on booty robbed by highwaymen from stage coach travellers but he is also very likely to betray them to the authorities for a £40 reward without any compunction. His accomplice in these nefarious deeds is Lockit, the jailor of Newgate prison. Polly Peacham declares to Mrs. Peacham that she is already married to MacHeath, the leader of the highway men. The Peachams decide to betray MacHeath, who then finds himself in Newgate jail.*

*In Act 2, Lucy Lockit discovers MacHeath in jail. She loves him too. The fact is, MacHeath loves all women and associates frequently with the whores in the local tavern. Lucy obtains the keys from Lockit and frees him. However MacHeath is re-captured by the simple device that Peacham uses frequently, namely palming money to his collaborators. At the conclusion of the opera, MacHeath is reprieved from the gallows, just in time, much to he*



*However MacHeath is re-captured by the simple device that Peacham uses frequently, namely palming money to his collaborators. At the conclusion of the opera, MacHeath is reprieved from the gallows, just in time, much to the chagrin of the beggar. However even he becomes corrupted when Peacham points out to him that the play could be repeated and royalties would be payable, much to the financial advantage of the beggar. So the beggar is no better at moralising than any of the other characters in the play.*

## THE CAST OF PLAYERS

ACTOR	MISS SYLVIA BLOGG
BEGGAR	MR. ROBERT DRYWOOD
PEACHAM	MR. IAN ULRICH
CAPTAIN MACHEATH	MR. DUDLEY GORE
POLLY PEACHAM	MISS. DELYSE HAYWARD
MRS PEACHAM	MISS PAMELA HAYFIELD
FILCH	MR. EDWARD DRAPER
BEN BUDGE	MR. WILLIAM BENNETT
MATT OF THE MINT	MR. JAMES SMITH
CROOK FINGERED JACK	MR. DONALD POTTER
JEMMY TWITCHER	MR. ROBIN SMITH
NIMMING NED	MR. MAVERICK HAYRE
WAT DREARY	MR. MICHAEL REED
ROBIN OF BAGSHOT	MR. JOHN RELFE
JENNY DIVER	MISS ERIN PRICE
MRS COAXER	MISS POLLY LOCKIE
MRS SLAMMERKIN	MISS PATRICIA DRYWOOD
SUKY TAWDRY	MISS SARAH DAVIES
MRS VIXEN	MISS ELIZABETH REID
DOLLY TRULL	MISS HELEN MURRAY
TAVERN MAID	MISS DONNA LEE
MOLLY BRAZEN	MISS HANNAH RUSSELL
BETTY DOXER	MISS FRANCES SHAW
LOCKIT	MR. MIKE KENDRICK
LUCY LOCKITT	MISS SAMANTHA GAMBRILL
MRS DIANA TRAPES	MISS PATRICIA BOWLING

## THE MUSICAL INTERLUDES

*(A necessary part of the story to achieve a proper understanding of the events that take place)*

### ACT I

MY HEART WAS SO FREE  
 WHEN GOLD IS AT HAND  
 THROUGH ALL THE EMPLOYMENTS OF LIFE  
 IF LOVE THE VIRGIN'S HEART INVADE  
 VIRGINS ARE LIKE THE PURE FLOWER  
 OUR POLLY IS A SAD SLUT  
 CAN LOVE BE CONTROLLED BY ADVICE  
 OH POLLY YOU MIGHT HAVE TOILED AND KISSED  
 THE TURTLE THUS  
 THROUGH ALL THE EMPLOYMENTS OF LIFE  
 PRETTY POLLY SAY  
 MY HEART WAS SO FREE  
 GREENLAND  
 OH WHAT PAIN IT IS TO PART  
 OH WHAT PAIN IS TO PART (REPRISE)  
 FILL EVERY GLASS (HIGHWAYMEN)  
 FILL EVERY GLASS (COMPANY)  
 LET US TAKE THE ROAD  
 IF THE HEART OF A MAN  
 YOUTH'S THE SEASON  
 WHEN GOLD IS AT HAND  
 WOULD YOU HAVE A YOUNG VIRGIN  
 BEFORE THE BARN DOOR CLOSES  
 THOUGH WOMAN BE A PRETTY CRAFT  
 FINALE: IN PIMPS AND POLITICIANS

### ACT II

THE FOX MAY STEAL YOUR HENS SIR!  
 HOW CRUEL ARE THE TRAITORS  
 WHEN YOU CENSURE THE AGE  
 IS THEN HIS FATE DECREED SIR!  
 YOU THINK ERE MANY DAYS ENSUE  
 WHEN WE'VE GOT A LOYAL FRIEND  
 IF YOU AT AN OFFICE SOLICIT YOUR DUE  
 HOW HAPPY COULD I BE WITH EITHER  
 CEASE YOUR FUNNING  
 WHY HOW NOW MADAM FLIRT  
 NO POWER ON EARTH CAN ERE DIVIDE  
 I LIKE THE FOX SHALL GRIEVE  
 WHEN YOUNG AT THE BAR  
 THUS GAMESTERS UNITED IN FRIENDSHIP ARE FOUND  
 THE MODES OF THE CITY  
 ORCHESTRAL: FUNERAL MARCH  
 WHAT GUDGEONS ARE MEN  
 IN THE DAYS OF MY YOUTH  
 THRO' ALL THE EMPLOYMENTS OF LIFE  
 THOUGH WOMAN BE A PRETTY CRAFT  
 ORCHESTRAL: I'M LIKE A SKIFF  
 I'M LIKE A SKIFF IN THE OCEAN TOSSED  
 COME SWEET LASS  
 WHEN HE HOLDS UP HIS HAND  
 THE CHARGE IS PREPARED  
 OH WHAT PAIN IT IS TO PART  
 ORCHESTRAL: THE CHARGE  
 OH CRUEL, CRUEL, CRUEL CASE  
 SINCE LAWS WERE MADE FOR EVERY DEGREE  
 WOULD I MIGHT BE HANGED  
 ALL YOU THAT BEHOLD THIS TERRIBLE SIGHT  
 ORCHESTRAL: WILLIAM TELL  
 FINALE: THUS I STAND LIKE A TURK  
 CURTAIN CALL: GREENLAND'S COAST



## ACT I

SCENE I	OPEN STAGE
SCENE II	PEACHAM'S DRAWING ROOM
SCENE III	POLLY'S BEDCHAMBER
SCENE IV	THE TAVERN

## ACT II

SCENE I	NEWGATE JAIL
SCENE II	PEACHAM'S DRAWING ROOM
SCENE II	OUTSIDE
SCENE IV	LUCY'S BOUDOIR
SCENE V	OUTSIDE

DIRECTOR  
MRS MAXINE BURROWS

MUSICAL DIRECTOR  
MR ROBERT DRYWOOD



# NATIONAL OPERATIC AND DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION

PATRON: THE LORD LLOYD WEBBER



*Mostly more familiar to those who know as NODA, the Association has over 2800 amateur theatre groups in membership across Great Britain and Northern Ireland as a whole. It acts as the representational body for non-professional theatre in all areas that affects its activities: political lobbying, health and safety, legal and technical issues, provision of training courses in abundance and so on. Its activities contribute more than £80,000,000 to the national and regional economies. It is also a self-help organisation in that it has a very good networking arrangement whereby groups stuck for props, scenery, costumes and so on can readily find what they want through the local and national contacts. Our secretary is currently the Councillor for SE England and Sylvia Blogg is the local regional representative (both perform their functions in an honorary capacity), as is the case with everyone involved in amateur theatre-*

## THANET ARTS COUNCIL

Under its Chairman, Marion Evans, TAC is a lifeline and promoter of ARTS in Thanet. It stages a series of exhibitions, courses and events throughout the year intended to bring ART in all its forms to the people of Thanet. Its ARTS SHOWCASE, which is a major exhibition of art in Thanet, is an event that we support. TAC meets once a month and we are active members of it.

## D'OYLY CARTE OPERA TRUST

The Trust keeps alive the works of Gilbert and Sullivan. It is also a source of scores and band parts for many Societies across Great Britain. Regionally it supports a number of Gilbert and Sullivan Societies, the nearest of which is based in Brighton. We support the Trust financially and in return we receive a regular newsletter and access to the hire department for scores, band parts and libretti.

## JOHN GAY AND THE OPERA

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA IS ONE OF THE GREAT SUCCESS STORIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE LONDON STAGE. THE ORIGINAL PLAY OPENED AT THE PLAYHOUSE IN LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS ON 29<sup>TH</sup>. JANUARY 1728 AND RAN FOR 62 PERFORMANCES IN THE FIRST SEASON, SMASHING ALL PREVIOUS RECORDS. IT WAS REMARKABLE AT THE TIME FOR ITS ORIGINALITY. THE TITLE "OPERA", TO AN AUDIENCE IN THE 1720S, MEANT THE ITALIAN OPERA WHICH FIRST APPEARED IN LONDON IN 1705 AND WHICH HAD BEEN MUCH IN VOGUE EVER SINCE. THE ITALIAN OPERAS WERE KNOWN FOR THEIR SUMPTUOUS COSTUMES AND THE SOPHISTICATION OF THEIR "SPECIAL EFFECTS", THE CREDIBILITY OF THE STORY LINE COMING A POOR SECOND. THEIR PLOTS WERE USUALLY TAKEN FROM MYTH OR LEGEND, WITH THE HERO TRIUMPHING OVER EVIL TO EFFECT A HAPPY ENDING. NOT SO THE BEGGAR'S OPERA, WHICH, BY CONTRAST, HELD A MIRROR TO THE LOW LIFE AND SEEDY UNDERWORLD OF CONTEMPORARY LONDON.

ALL THE CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY ARE EITHER HIGHWAYMEN, CROOKS, PICKPOCKETS, FENCES OR WHORES (SOME BEING A COMBINATION OF MANY OF THESE). EVEN POLLY KNOWS FULL WELL THE PROFESSION OF HER "HUSBAND" AND PARENTS. THE PUNISHMENT FOR HIGHWAY ROBBERY WAS, AT THE TIME, DEATH BY HANGING. IN FACT CAPITAL PUNISHMENT WAS DEALT WITH FOR OVER EIGHTY OFFENCES, INCLUDING STEALING MORE THAN A SHILLING FROM A PERSON, FIVE SHILLINGS OR MORE FROM A SHOP, FOUR SHILLINGS OR MORE FROM A HOUSE OR ANY SMALLER AMOUNT IF THE OFFENCE WAS CARRIED OUT WITH MENACES. IN 1706 AN ACT WAS PASSED ENCOURAGING CRIMINALS TO INFORM ON THEIR ACCOMPLICES- IF THEY TURNED THEM IN AND A CONVICTION WAS ACHIEVED, THE INFORMER RECEIVED A FREE PARDON AND A REWARD. THIS HAD THE EFFECT OF BRINGING INTO BEING A CLASS OF PROFESSIONAL INFORMERS CALLED "THIEF CATCHERS". PEACHAM IS ONE OF THESE.

*"Life is jest; and all things know it. I thought so once; but now I know it"*

JOHN GAY'S IRREVERENT EPITAPH, PENNED IN HIS OWN WORDS, WAS A FINAL JIBE FROM A MAN WHO HAD SERVED LONDON AS POET, PLAYWRIGHT, SATIRIST, SOCIAL CRITIC AND JESTER-AT-LARGE. DEATH CLAIMED HIM PREMATURELY IN 1732 BUT NOT BEFORE HE HAD WRITTEN HIS BEGGAR'S OPERA, THE FIRST REAL ENGLISH BALLAD OPERA AND, BY ALMOST ANY MEASURE, THE MOST POPULAR ENGLISH THEATRE WORK OF THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY. THE WORK WAS ALSO INFLUENTIAL. VICTORIAN OPERETTA AND MUSICAL COMEDY REOPENED AND ENLARGED A PATH PIONEERED BY GAY A CENTURY AND A HALF BEFORE.

THE PLAY WAS REPUTED TO BE GEORGE WASHINGTON'S FAVOURITE STAGE WORK. IN FACT IN THE 1750S THE PLAY



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Source: Griffin, Benjamin Gay: *The Beggar's Opera* (Barron's Educational Series New York, 1962)

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

STAGE MANAGER MRS. A. VIGO  
DSM MR. M. HAYRE  
STAGE CREW MR. J. BURROWS AND CREW  
PROPS MRS A. VIGO, MRS. B. HEARNE  
AND MRS. B. REID  
COSTUMES CRESCENDO COSTUMES READING  
WARDROBE MRS P. HAYFIELD  
WIG HIRE SHOWBIZ!  
SCENERY BORDER STUDIOS/MR. G. MARTIN  
MAKE-UP MRS JANE GORE AND CREW  
LIGHTING/SOUND MR JUSTIN THOMAS  
PROMPT MRS. J. TILLEY  
FOH MRS. M. WOODS AND TEAM  
PROGRAMME MR. R. DRYWOOD./TRUPRINT  
PIANIST MRS. M. PATTEN  
FATHER KINNANE FACILITIES AT ST ETHELBERTS CHURCH  
BANNERS MR. D. MARTIN/MR M. KENDRICK

## COMMITTEE OF RAMSGATE OPERATIC SOCIETY

PRESIDENT MRS. M. WOODS  
CHAIRMAN MR. G. MARTIN  
HONORARY SECRETARY MR. R. DRYWOOD  
HONORARY TREASURER MR. W. BENNETT  
COMMITTEE MRS. S. BLOGG  
MRS. M. BURROWS  
MRS J. DANTON  
MISS S. GAMBRILL  
MR. D. GORE  
MR. M. KENDRICK  
MRS. B. REID  
SOCIAL COMMITTEE MRS. B. REID (CHAIRMAN)  
MRS. E. FRAMPTON  
MRS. P. MARTIN  
MISS S. MILES

*We offer our grateful thanks to all those who have contributed to the production and in particular:  
Mr. G. Martin, Scotts Furniture Mart and Toymaster*

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## WELCOME TO ALL YOU POTENTIAL THESPIANS AND HELPERS OUT THERE!

*We are a friendly company of players. Why not come along and see if you would like to join in the fun. Rehearsals are held every Thursday evening at St. Ethelbert's Church Hall, Herefson Road Ramsgate.*

*If you are not into singing or being on stage why not try your hand at one of the myriad other jobs that have to be done to stage a production: handyman (or woman), tea maker, seamstress, artist, dancer, carpenter, lighting or sound expert, stage crew etc. Go on drag yourself away from the pub or the box for an evening or two. We do socialise after the rehearsal at the local hostelry and on frequent other occasions!*

*In the first instance call our Secretary on 0870 774 3793 or speak to one of the our front of house crew wearing a Ramsgate Operatic Society badge.*

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## WE CRAVE YOUR ATTENTION FOR THE WISE WORDS OF OUR CHAIRMAN

Welcome to our Spring production. The piece is in marked contrast to the usual song and dance shows and the niceties of Gilbert and Sullivan. It depicts low life in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with thieves, fences, whores and Bow St runners. It provides scene after scene of Hogarthian vitality.

The Beggar's Opera is an opera for the people and you can feel free to join in the memorable choruses should you wish. Our Director/Choreographer (Maxine Burrows) and Musical Director (Bob Drywood) have worked tirelessly to bring out the comedy in the hilarious scenes. We hope that you find it a rewarding experience. Finally, my thanks to the cast and our rehearsal pianist Mary Patten for their total dedication.

On with the show and don't forget to support us next November for The Pirates of Penzance.

George Martin

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## The band of itinerant musicians engaged for the whole of the production

MRS CHRISTINE CHAPPELL FLUTE AND PICCOLO  
MR. HAROLD COOK DOUBLE BASS  
MRS MANDY COOK FRENCH HORN  
MRS. MARY MACLEOD CLARINET  
MRS MARY PATTEN HARPSICHORD, PIANOFORTE AND PIPE ORGAN  
MR. ROBERT SPOORE PERCUSSION