

The Little Big Grin Guide to PUNCH & JUDY

Punch and Judy – like pantomime characters – are in a world of their own.



A crocodile, a baby, a ghost, a clown, a policeman and a madcap mix of other puppets are all part of a story told differently by each performer.



That's just the way it's grown over the years – 350 years at least.



It all began for Mr. Punch in 1662. Samuel Pepys was out for a stroll in London's Covent Garden when he stopped to watch a new puppet show from Italy. It was so good that he wrote about it in his diary.

The star of the show was a puppet on strings.

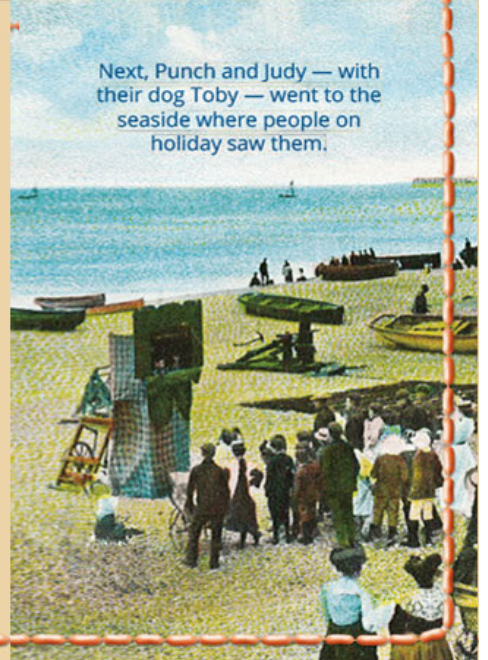
He was dressed in white and called 'Punchinello'.

He was cheeky, squeaky, and made people laugh.

They began to call him Punch for short.



Next, Punch and Judy — with their dog Toby — went to the seaside where people on holiday saw them.



Soon Punch started dressing more like a jester and, with his wife, became the most famous puppet at fairgrounds all over the country.



After about a hundred years they were changed into glove puppets and became street entertainers.

The show soon became known as 'Punch & Judy'.



Punch and Judy stayed at the seaside for a long, long time.



Today there are Punch & Judy shows in many places. Sometimes still at the seaside, but also at street festivals, carnivals or parties.

Mr. Punch's stick is a clown's slap-stick from long ago.

The knockabout fun of clowns and comic actors is still called 'slapstick comedy'.

