Austin Gilbert & Sullivan Society March 1989 Newsletter

Next Meeting: March 13th, 1989, the second Monday of the month, at 7:30 pm at Enid Hallock's: 4001 Cherrywood; 477-0858. It will be ONE MONTH before H.M.S. Pinafore opens. There's lots of work to be done. Roll up your sleeves and come to hear what's going on!!! Munchies welcome. We're still collecting DUES.

Last Meeting: Fourteen members met at Enid's house on Monday, February 13th. They were Sue Ricket Caldwell, Jacki Chapman, Reba Gillman, Sheila and Doug Glenn (with Topher, who at 5¹/2 months is starting his Gilbert & Sullivan apprenticeship early), Enid Hallock, Carla Hammock, Jan Jones, Bob Kusnetz, Allen Lawshae, Joan Pearsall, Judy Scott, Katharine Shields, and Bob Mellin. We were particularly happy to welcome Bob Mellin, who has never attended a meeting before, and Sue and Jan, whom we haven't seen in a long time.

There was a round of applause for the Newsletter aw shucks, folks, and Thank You.

President Bob K. told us about the auditions, held first on the cold, cold Saturday, February 4th at Hyde Park Theatre. It was 60° inside the theater. The next day was even worse, and icy, too, so the auditions were postponed to Saturday, February 11th. Call-backs were to be on Wednesday, February 15. We were reminded that our Music Director, Jerry Peperone, was directing a production of *West Side Story* in Georgetown, and were urged to go see a performance that coming weekend. Bob said he would make sure that everyone who wasn't called for the call-back was personally notified that s/he was not cast.

Jacki reported that despite the weather problems the auditions went well, and about 30 people tried out. She was still looking for tenors. Any suggestions welcome. The first full rehearsal was to be on Monday, February 20th, at Enid's. Anyone working on the show was invited.

Susan Norwood will do the costumes, and Robin McGee will help. Bob Mellin will help build sets, and Doug will work on lights. The scores have come in. Allen is working on procuring the changes in the part of *Hebe*, used in the Colorado production he saw last summer. Bob K. asks that anyone spending money on the show keep a record so we can make up a budget for the show.

Report on plans for the Gala: Katharine has spoken to Virginia Kerr, who catered last year's Gala. She said she has no conflicting commitment and would be glad to work with us again. Katharine told her about the idea of extending the Gala over the entire first weekend, and also described the small available space. She added that we would be able to provide people to help pass trays, etc. We need names for the Gala mailing list. (All you members, it is still not too late to get names in. Call Bob Kusnetz and leave names on his machine: 836-1853).

Judy Scott, our new Treasurer, reported that she was still trying to get together with former Treasurer, Keith Larson, to close our old account, so that she can open two new ones at Bank of the Hills. It was moved and seconded and approved that this organization votes to close the account at Southwest Savings without the need for the ex-treasurer's signature.

Bob K. reported we have the opportunity to run a booth at the First Annual Riverfest in celebration of 150 years of Austin history. It will be Saturday and Sunday, April 1st and 2nd, and 8th and 9th from 11 am to 8 pm. We could sell something, but no food or drink. Think about it.

Jacki announced that she was planning to give a cast party at the end of the run: "Come As A Song". We then adjourned for food and conversation. Thank you, as always, Enid, for your warm hospitality.

H.M.S. Pinafore

We set sail on Thursday, April 13.

Calling all hands to join in the fun of working behind the scenes.

We need lots of help. Now is the time to get involved!

What are your talents? Can you sew, hammer and saw, paint, gather props? Work on the Gala?

Call to volunteer: Jacki Chapman, 478-0645; Bob Kusnetz, 836-1853.

Hyde Park Theatre, 43rd and Guadalupe, April 13 - May 14, 1989

.... Pinafore

Message from Jacki Chapman, the Director:

Hail Ye Gilbert & Sullivan Lovers:

Give three cheers and one cheer more for the cast and production crew of this year's production of H.M. S. Pinafore. We are off and running and the cast promises to bring an exciting new spirit to the wonderful Pinafore refrains we all love so much.

Because of that icy bout in the first part of February, we had some audition complications but all of that has been ironed out. Because our performance space is an intimate one (Hyde Park Theatre), this year's production is being scaled down to miniature size. (A ship in a bottle.) The cast consists of 16 people. WOW! you say: How can this show be done with such a small cast? Come and find out. You will be pleasantly surprised.

A unique development in this production is the fact that the role of Hebe is being expanded. Gilbert originally had made this role more of a speaking part, but as fate would have it the original actress became ill before the opening and the singer who took her place refused to do the lines because she wasn't an actress. Gilbert consequently cut the lines. We have expanded the role also, through some research notes and communication with the University of Colorado at Boulder, which did a production of H.M.S. last summer (1988) that was directed by John Reed, who also expanded the Hebe role to what he conceived may be close to Gilbert's original intention.

First Rehearsal: On February 20th the cast of sixteen gathered, with two absent. Under the direction of Music Director Jerry Peperone, they got right to work on the Finale to Act I, the most difficult ensemble of the entire opera. Also present were Director Jacki Chapman, Reba Gillman, Enid Hallock, and Bob Mellin, who chatted quietly while the others sang. Enid told me that the casting had been harrowing, with difficult choices among good singers and good friends. The result was the casting of only five members: Frank Delvy (Captain), Michael Drousche (Sir Joseph), Bill Hatcher (Sailor), Jan Jones (Hebe), and Allen Lawshae (Bosun's Mate). The parts of Ralph and Josephine were double cast, which will strengthen the chorus. The full cast listing will appear in next month's Newsletter, when I know how to spell all their names.

All aspects of production are in progress. About 30 people are actively involved in on-and-off stage production activity. But we can always use more assistance. We are still looking for some specific prop pieces and some help in costumes and set building. If you would be interested in assisting, even if just for one or two work sessions, please call me at 478-0645.

There is going to be a fun-filled opening date weekend. More information will follow soon. If you want to know more, call the above number.

Pinafore Mania is striking us and soon it will be striking you. Please waste no time in getting involved or getting your tickets.

I will leave you with an anecdote I found that you may appreciate.

When Pinafore first came to the US, everyone who saw the show was struck with a Pinafore Mania. Everyone was repeating the Pinafore refrains. As the story goes ... One American newspaper editor is said to have called all his reporters into his office and complained that *the phrase* had appeared twenty-five times in the previous day's paper. "Never let me see it again," he ordered. "What, never?" came the inevitable reply. "Well, hardly ever," he found himself responding.

Pinafore Mania will be here for you to be a joyful part of in April!!!!

Little Buttercup



News of Members:

Thanks to Jan Jones, who is now a Patron.

<u>Keith Larson</u> has moved to Fort Worth. <u>Liz Opal</u> now lives in Falls Church, Virginia.

Reba Gillman, Secretary