

R

The Austin Gilbert & Sullivan Society

February 1990 Newsletter

Next Meeting

Note changed date: Monday, February 12th, at 7:30 pm at Enid Hallock's: 4001 Cherrywood, 477-0858. Agenda:

- 1) Election of Officers
- 2) Plans for the future

Please come on time and bring munchies. Slate of Officers:

President	Bob Kusnetz
Executive Vice President	Allen Lawshae
Vice Pres. for Production	Jacki Chapman
Vice Pres. for Publicity	Bill Hatcher
Secretary	Reba Gillman
Treasurer	Carla Hammock
Historian	Michael Drousche

Last Meeting

On January 15th members gathered at Enid's house while Pearl Amster entertained us with her spirited piano playing. Eighteen were present: members Pearl Amster, Bob Bobo, Jacki Chapman, Michael Drousche, Reba Gillman, Sheila Glenn, Loel Graber, Enid Hallock, Carla Hammock, Jan Jones, Bob Kusnetz, Allen Lawshae, Bob Mellin, Janita Robbins, Rosemary Russell-Vines, and Anne Smith; new member Susan Adams-Johnson; and guest Elaine McKannan. Instead of corrections to the minutes there was a round of compliments for the Newsletter. Thank you all.

• I. Report on *The Sorcerer*: Final accounts are not yet all in hand. President Bob K. reported that soon after our December meeting he had met with Don Toner to talk about the show. In a two-hour meeting Bob went first, and summarized the discussion and criticism from our meeting. Don was pleased that we had such an accurate perception of our needs, strengths and weaknesses. He agreed that we need a technical director, better volunteer co-ordination and to hire a set carpenter who can work during the day, not just evenings after another job.

Considering that *The Sorcerer* is a little known work, and that the very busy Fall time slot set up severe competition, Don was impressed that we had done so well. A total audience of nearly 1200 people is not bad. He liked how we work together and pool our strengths. We have a loyal, faithful group of G & S followers that we work to maintain. We have a good mailing list and keep people informed with our Newsletter. He thought the preshow

announcements made by President Bob were excellent. He said that the way we handle our audiences and maintain a base in the community is better than any other local group. In the future he would like to combine our strengths:

- G & S work on audience development
- Live Oak work on production

There were still some *Sorcerer* T-Shirts remaining for sale to members at \$5. Five were bought at the meeting. We still have some: White, Extra Large only.

SAVOY THEATRE
SOLE PROPRIETOR & MANAGER R. D. O'LY CARTE



MUSIC BY
ARTHUR SULLIVAN
WORDS BY
W.S. GILBERT.

THE SORCERER.

George Grossmith as John Wellington Wells

• II. Nominations for the slate of officers were read. See above. There were no nominations from the floor. The election will be held at our next meeting. Nominations from the floor may still be made at that meeting, but any one nominated must have agreed to serve if elected.

Next Meeting: Will be on Monday, February 12th.

Dues: We are still collecting dues for September memberships; others will become due in March. If yours are due now there will be an insert in your newsletter. Also look on your label for DUES in red ink. Please pay, or tell me you wish to drop.

290-1

• **III. Plans for the Future:** Bob K. reported that he had held two meetings with Don Toner, and expected to meet with him again soon. Don wants to have final plans for his 1990-1991 season set in February. Don wants to continue to work with us, and Bob needs to go to him with our plans and goals firmly stated. Don is definitely interested in doing *The Pirates of Penzance* as a co-production.

Bob outlined the options. One possibility would be to put on the September 1990 opening show at Live Oak Theatre. Another would be to do the closing show there late in the spring of 1991. Bob thinks we should do one large show a year, as a bare minimum, possibly at Live Oak Theatre. He thinks we should also aim to do a smaller production every year, probably in a smaller theater. Bob would like to see us develop our audience following, our own staff (Director, Musical Director, designers, technical crew, etc.) and a cast which would perform in repertory style (the lead in one show would sing in the chorus in another).

✓ Bob Mellin asked permission to state his views. He began by congratulating everyone associated with the production of *The Sorcerer*. "Despite some deficiencies it was a wonderful show. It was a little bit of a miracle that we did it." He then said that we are the caretakers of the G & S tradition in Austin. Either we use it or we lose it: if we don't put on a G & S show soon someone else will. He wants to see if we have enough energy and imagination to do a show this spring. What we need is:

1. A Place
2. Key People (Directors, etc.)
3. Financing

He then talked especially about the need for developing corporate support, and showed us G & S programs from groups in other cities, listing banks, and businesses as contributors. He reminded us that Gilbert and Sullivan are a hot item and that G & S fans lurk on the boards of large corporations as well as among the general public. He pointed out that if we had Money we could hire directors and technical crew. We also could afford the best in costuming, including two jackets for a double-cast character. (So we wouldn't force a short Alexis and a tall Alexis to use the same jacket.) Bob M. finished by saying that he wanted to check out whether we could gather the people, find the place and raise the money to do a show this spring.

There followed a thorough and often heated discussion. Bob K. pointed out that we need to decide 1) can we do two major productions a year; and 2) can we do a show this spring? There was general agreement that we should do two shows a year but many thought one should be a small production; We also agreed that we should plan now for several seasons ahead. Loel asked: Does the Society want to put its energy into doing a show this spring, or does it want to put that energy into planning for the 1990-91 season and those to follow?

Questions were raised as to what a "co-production" with Don Toner meant. We would like to take advantage of the organization already in place at Live Oak Theatre, but we are concerned about giving up the right to make artistic decisions. Would we have to use the Live Oak staff directors and designers? Another question concerned the Live Oak policy of paying staff and performers. Bob K. said that we might be asked to pay actors, even if only a small amount like \$50 for a complete run. Enid said some actors would rather volunteer their services than feel they were bought for a mere \$50. Enid also said, "What we need to worry about is quality, not size." Michael reminded us that Ken Johnson is still interested in a G & S show at Hyde Park Theatre, which might be a good place for a smaller show.

Finally, Bob K. asked for a show of hands on two questions: 1) How many people in this room want to work on a show this spring? Votes: 5 For; 9 Against.

2) How many people want Bob Mellin to explore the possibilities of doing a show in May? 11 For. Bob M. was therefore empowered to investigate as outlined, and to report back to President Bob K. in ten days.

Carla then moved, and Bob Bobo seconded this motion: Bob K. is authorized to meet with Don Toner and say that we are interested in collaborating with him in producing *Pirates* at Live Oak Theatre in Spring 1991. We will work out the details later. If Live Oak can offer production only in Fall 1990 we are still interested. Vote: 15 For. Some abstained.

There was also a motion that we pursue doing two shows: one in Fall 1990, and one in Spring 1991. Votes were: 11 For; 1 Against.

Bob K. said he would not commit the Society to anything without coming back to the Society for a decision. If it became necessary to call a special meeting we would notify all members who were at this meeting (January 15). Bob Mellin stated that even if we did not do a show this spring he was still committed to work for us, and especially to work on developing funding sources.

• **IV. Amster Soirée:** Jacki is in charge, and reported that she already had 8 or 9 women and 4 men lined up. Bob Bobo and Susan A.-J. also volunteered. Bob Wall will be the accompanist. The first rehearsal will be on Thursday, January 18th at 7:30 pm at Enid's. The program and two other rehearsals will be set then. Everyone was invited to attend the Soirée at 7 pm Sunday, January 28th at Pearl's: 2304 Hartford Road, 472-7028.

• **V. Next Meeting:** We will meet on Monday, February 5th at Enid's. **Update:** Changed to Monday, February 12th, to avoid conflict with the ACOT Producers Meeting which has been scheduled for February 5th. We then adjourned for delicious food and good conversation.

FURTHER REPORT

• On Discussion at the December 11, 1989 meeting:

I. Questions were raised concerning the decision to order 144 *Sorcerer* T-Shirts to sell in the lobby at performances as a money-raising activity. Sales were very slow at first and we resorted to selling shirts at a cut-rate to finally just break even. We should have ordered only half that number. Good points were: 1) Wearing the T-Shirts around town provided good publicity (done mostly by cast members).

2) Volunteers who came to sell shirts got in to the show free, which is a nice option to offer poorer members.

3) The stand where they were sold also provided a place to hand in donations or membership dues.

II. Questions were asked about the two-sided "calling cards" printed for publicity purposes, with information about place, times and prices. 2000 were printed, and 1700 were distributed. Several people thought that was a good idea. It was also agreed that getting Hyde Park Theatre and Capitol City Playhouse to insert *Sorcerer* flyers in their programs provided another easy way to get out the information.

III. Susie Jacobson volunteered to work anytime, but not to be a coordinator. Enid said that in this production we wore out some faithful volunteers because we didn't have other volunteers to relieve them. Karen Collier (one of the faithful) remarked that she wished there had been an opportunity for volunteers to get to know each other while they worked.

IV. It was agreed that this production got new people working with us, and cemented some older relationships. There was good spirit among the strong cast; we particularly welcome Leonard Johnson (Dr. Daly), who loved being in the show and lit it up with his enthusiasm. He has offered future help with choral coaching. Finally, Bob K. commented that we have built a valuable relationship with Live Oak Theatre. This was the best relationship we've had with a theater in the past six major Society productions Bob has been associated with.

AMSTER SOIRÉE

• The usual enthusiastic audience gathered at Pearl's on Sunday, January 28th, despite the rainy evening. Jacki out-did herself in getting this group together on very short notice, and putting on a spirited show. She had rounded up 8 men and 9 women: ten Society members and seven guests. A good time was had by all, and delicious desserts were enjoyed afterward. Especial thanks to Bob Wall, who played the piano for us.

NEWS OF MEMBERS and FRIENDS

• Member Jennifer Arndt is directing the musical *Good News* in performances at her church, on Friday and Saturday, February 16 and 17. That's the Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, 3525 Bee Cave Road. No charge.

• Friend Doug Schramm will sing a recital on Saturday, March 3rd at 7:30 pm, at the University Christian Church, 2007 University Avenue. No Charge.

• President Bob Kusnetz reports that *The Immigrant*, the new play at Live Oak Theatre, is excellent. Don Toner is offering a discount on ticket prices to any G & S member ... ask for it. If you're interested in serious contemporary drama go see this play. The willingness of Don Toner to present serious new plays is part of what makes Live Oak an important contributor to the local theatrical scene.



• New Members: Since *The Sorcerer* opened we have received dues from 20 new members. We welcome:

Lord High Patrons: Kenneth Gentle, and Leonard Johnson

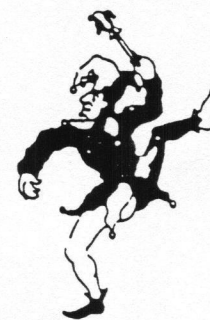
Patrons: Beryl & David Kendall, and Eugene and Elizabeth Ripperger

Members: Susan Adams-Johnson, Bob Bobo, W.G. & Marion Couch, Sidney Frost, Gary Giffen, D. & M.J. Gross, Marian Hampton, Michael Hydak, Ms. Jo Frances Leecraft, Mrs. Esther Magistrini, Ruth McCully, Diane Simpson, John & Margaret Taylor, Al & Judy Rellstab, Robert Vitray, and Doak Worley.

Reba

Reba Gillman, Secretary

2/902



The Austin Gilbert & Sullivan Society



AMSTER SOIREE

Janyary 28, 1990

Pianist: Bob Wall

Director: Jacki Chapman

The Ensemble

Susan Adams Johnson
Michael Drouchie
Sheila Glenn
Allen Lawshae
Joan Pearsall
Doug Schram

Bob Bobo
Norma Garza
Enid Hallock
Paul Linkletter
Susan Pauley
Jane Thurston

Yvonne DeChance
Loel Graber
Brad Koch
Robert Mellin
Janita Robbins



"If You Want to Know Who We Are".....Mikado
The Men
"Climbing Over Rocky Mountains".....Pirates
The Women
"Here's A Man of Jollity".....Yeoman
The Ensemble
"Poor Wandering One!".....Pirates
Jane Thurston
"Three Little Maids From School!".....Mikado
Janita Robbins, Jane Thurston
Susan Pauley

"Dear Friends, Take Pity on My Lot".....Sorcerer
Susan Adams Johnson, Robert Mellin

"Here's A Howdy Do".....Mikado
Susan Adams Johnson, Brad Koch,
Loel Graber

"Welcome Joy, Adieu to Sadness".....Sorcerer
Enid Hallock, Doug Schram

"When a Felon's Not Engaged in his Employment".....Pirates
Michael Drouchie, Ensemble

"Now for the Pirates Liar".....Pirates
Enid Hallock, Bob Bobo
Allen Lawshae

"Stay, Frederick Stay".....Pirates
Yvonne DeChance, Paul Linkletter

"For He's Gone and Married Yum-Yum".....Mikado
The Ensemble

If you would like to know more about the society or become involved
call 477-0858, 836-7599, 836-1853, or 327-2277..



24003