### The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin September 1993 Newsletter

• Next Meeting - Our Monthly Musicale •

- Tuesday, September 7th, 1993 at 7:30 pm. at Pearl Amster's, 2304 Hartford Road, 472-7028.
- Come and enjoy our informal Gilbert and Sullivan with some good performers; bring munchies to ensure the usual high quality refreshment while we socialize after the music. Everyone Welcome, especially old friends, new members and first time attenders! (That means everyone!)
- Note change in date. The Austin Circle of Theaters has announced their B.Iden Payne Award festivities for Monday, September 13th, when we had expected to meet. Now you can plan to go to that affair, too!

Editorial Note: This Newsletter is being written way ahead of time, because I will be out of the country for the last two weeks of August. So please forgive anything out of date.

#### INTERESTING NEW IDEA

There is talk about a two or three-day Gilbert and Sullivan Seminar, to include members of the Austin and Houston Societies, and possibly some people from Dallas and San Antonio. It will feature musical performances, G&S discussions and lectures, visual displays, and meetings for exchange of practical organizational ideas and possible mutual assistance between the Societies. Any interested person will be welcome to attend.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin probably could offer to host and organize this event. Ideas?

Call Robert Mellin, 345-5950

### THANKS •

Thank you to those faithful members who sat in the lobby selling T-shirts and books, dispensing information, and taking in memberships during the run of *Iolanthe*: Reba Gillman (5 times), Bill Hatcher (3½ times), Susie Jacobson (2 times), Pearl Amster (1½ times), and once each for Dawn Bezviner, Ruth & Hugh Eckols, Loel Graber, Enid Hallock and her son Gary, Kate Hendricks, and Terri Wilson.

### • Message from your President •

As I have stated previously, our *Iolanthe* was a success, pleasing I'm sure, most who saw it. Financially we broke about even, which is O.K. too. Those involved in the production had a good time, and we raised the awareness and appreciation of Gilbert and Sullivan and our Society to a higher level. And I do welcome all of you who have become new members as a result of our production.

Recently I left Austin to view other Gilbert & Sullivan productions. One was H.M.S. Pinafore at the Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos,. I found parts to enjoy, despite what appeared to be a general lack of respect and understanding for the work. Then in July, our friends the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Houston presented The Pirates of Penzance directed by a D'Oyly Carte alumni Alistair Donkin. He also played the part of the Major General. (I would love to bring him to Austin, and I'm trying to find out if it's feasible.) Houston traditionally mounts a massive production with a full orchestra and a chorus of 40. They now perform in Wortham Center, a magnificent new state of the art theater. Again, I had a good time, even with some definitely non-traditional pieces of business. Our Allen Lawshae performed with the Houston G&S in the past, as did our member Jim Robinson and our new member Mary Metz of Houston. She is an important guiding light of that Society.

Now to the future. We plan to do *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The time will probably be late spring or early summer of 1994, depending on what space is available. My dream is to play the McCullough Theater at UT [formerly the Opera Lab Theater]. I have made contact and they seem amenable, but there are many bridges to cross. Live Oak Theater should be a logical possibility, but more work needs to be done on this. I have been contacted by a person about the possibility of performing in another space, but for the time being this is only exploratory so I can give no details. As a back up, dates have been penciled in for the Dougherty Arts Center for July 1994.

Wherever we play look for a *Pinafore* that will stress its strongest points, and those are simply the words and the music. The words will be understood and the music will be done beautifully. This is my promise to you.

Even now our friend Scott McAfee and his collaborators at GSD&M Advertising are designing various graphics and advertising concepts for *Pinafore*. Which reminds me, their donated posters for *Iolanthe* have recently come to me and they are so exquisitely produced and so beautiful that

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they are, in and of themselves, truly works of art. There are three versions, each certainly worthy of framing. We will be selling the posters for \$10 a piece.

A new friend, Mike Guarino, is helping organize fund raising efforts, and will prepare a grant proposal. He is a professional.

See you at our first Musicale of the Season, Tuesday September 7th.

### • Last Gathering and Musicale •

On Monday, May 10th, 27 people gathered at Pearl Amster's, including four visitors and two children. They were members Pearl, Patrick Bennett, Frank & Donna Delvy, Harold Gilbert, Reba Gillman, Doug Glenn with son Topher, Loel Graber, Enid Hallock with son Gary of Pun-Off fame, Noel Koran, Bob Kusnetz, Allen Lawshae and friend Barbara Schepman, Robert Mellin, Bee Polomé (from the *Iolanthe* orchestra), Isobel Stevenson, Jean Tolman, Lisa Tolman and her son Jacob, Paula Tyler, Lord High Pianist Bob Wall, and Jess and Emma Walters; and guests John McLean (Music Director of *Iolanthe*), and Zheng Wei-cong (a young Chinese pianist who was staying with Pearl).

Frank Delvy served as Voice for President Robert Mellin. who was recovering from recent surgery to correct his crushed larynx (an injury sustained when he was on vacation in Peru a year and a half ago). Messages: Iolanthe was a success! Robert wishes to thank everyone who helped with it. The next project is *Pinafore*. Robert dreams of producing it in the UT McCullough Theater. Raising money for the new production is the major task at present. "It is the horse that must come before the cart." You all can help by finding companies that will match gifts. We have just received a check for \$4,000 from IBM. This is a double matching grant for the \$2,000 that Bob Kusnetz contributed to the production of The Mikado last year. It went through ACOT, with a 5% cut to ACOT. In a month we will be designated a Matching Fund organization by IBM, and will be able to receive matching grants directly hereafter.

Harold said Robert really did a bang up job of putting together a good production team. Bob K. announced that he had Coke and Sprite left over from the *Iolanthe* concessions - for sale tax free, a 6-pak for \$2. Please buy!

After introductions all around the music began, with stalwart Bob Wall at the piano. And what a feast! Frank sang "I've got a little list" from The Mikado with text changes as written by our own Anne Collins Smith. Frank explained that this is one song from the G&S canon that it is considered ok to rewrite with topical references. He then sang "Rising early in the morning" from The Gondoliers with the men singing along vigorously at appropriate spots. Our new member Noel Koran consented to "give it a try", and sang the Captain's song "Fair moon to thee I sing" from Pinafore. Allen Lawshae gave us a rousing rendition of his solo from Iolanthe, "When Britain really ruled the waves". We all joined in on the choruses. Bob K. then sang us a fourth verse, which he wrote himself, including the resounding lines, "The schools went down the drain in '93's abysmal reign".

The music continued with Frank singing "Why am I moody and sad?" from *Ruddigore*. Harold Gilbert, Frank, Loel Graber and Allen joined in singing "The Glee" from *Pinafore* ("A British tar is a soaring soul"). Frank, Loel and Allen gave us "I am so proud" from *The Mikado*, and Frank and Enid sang the duet from *Pinafore*, "Things are seldom what they seem". Harold sang "When a felon's not engaged in his employment", and Frank sang "Oh, better far to live and die", both from *Pirates*. And to finish off in a burst of glory Frank sang "The Nightmare Song" from *Iolanthe*, spitting out the words as clear as a bell, and absolutely right. With our by now traditional "Now to the banquet we press" (*Sorcerer*), we adjourned to the dining room for food and conversation.

#### News of Members

Allen Lawshae recently returned from a one week sojourn in Estonia. He went with a group from the Covenant Presbyterian Church choir, to perform in the Olivetsi Church in Talin on Sunday July 25th. He reports that the trip was very educational, both fun and depressing. Now he's back and rehearsing for his appearance in the world premiere of a new musical Where There's A Will ... to play September 17 through October 23 at the Dougherty Arts Center: Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8 pm, with some Sunday matinées. Call 482-1770.

Allen has retired (again) from his regular job and will be available to help out with various G&S chores.

Mark Graber and Julia Frank, are leaving Austin, and thank the Society for several delightful years.

On August 19th, <u>Len</u> and <u>Reba Gillman</u> are off to the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland. It's COOL there.

"Deacon" Crain continues to be a generous supporter of the theater scene in Austin. He has just received the first "Deacon" Crain Award, which has been created in his honor by The Friends of the Summer Musical. We are proud to count him among our members, and a Savoyard at that!

Acknowledgments: Additions to the list in the June Newsletter: New Grand Duke Scott McAfee; New Lord High Patrons Benard Laves and Bee Polomé; New Patron Richard Witek. Upgrades: Russell Gregory to Grand Duke, Harry & Shirley Ellison to Lord High Patron, and J. Bert Neely and Larry Shepley to Patron. Omission: Al & Celeste Evans Patron.

And now for the promised list of Regular Members, both old and new: Pearl Amster, Wren Andersen, Lyn Atkins, Joann Bardin, Patrick Bennett, Marjorie Berens, Dawn Bezviner, Larry & Irene Black, M.P. Blaylock, Alistair & Molly Campbell-Dick, C.J. & Glenda Carl, Sarah Chodow, David & Karen Collier, Barbara Lee Cook, Raymond L. Cook, Rebecca Cowgill, Frank & Donna Delvy, George & Barbara Douglas, Michael Drousche, Allan Eastwood, Tom Eisenhour, Douglas & Kathy George, Harold Gilbert, Douglass M. Green, Cindy Hager, William P. Haight, James G. Hall, David & Carla Hammock, Sean & Anna Hand, Kristina Havenhill, Howard Hayden, Kate Hendricks, Ann Herbert, Elena Hinderer, Ray Howard, Earl Hunt & Lorre Weidlich, Carolyn Jones, Marcia Kelley, Noel Koran, Patricia Lane, Betty Ligon, Tim & Susan Lovett, Ralph MacPhail Jr., Ruth A. McCully, Jessie McGrew, Susan Norwood, Joan Pearsall, Michelle Perris, Kim Pyle. Al & Judy Rellstab, Jeanie Roberts, Pat Roeder, Rosemary Russell-Vines, Pam Sabrin, Paul Shapiro, Sania Shaw, Marcie Shepherd, Diane Simpson, Anne Collins Smith, G.H. Sprinkle, Katherine Staples, Isobel Stevenson, Constance Thompson, Jean Tolman, Lisa Tolman, Robert & Catherine Tull, Paula Tyler, Sherry Vance, Ljubomir Vilickovic, Kelly Wagner & Steve Harsch, Libby Weed, Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein, Terri Wilson, Chris Wing, Arthur Woods, Deborah Zallen, and Martha Ann Zivley.

I have tried very hard to get all this right, but if I didn't please let me know at 327-2277 (and forgive me).

# • The Iolanthe's Over Party • Pool & Barbecue Party at Harold Gilbert's Sing through of *Trial by Jury*

No, no, don't plan to go - it's over! But by all accounts it went off just splendidly, although I'm sorry to say I can't report as an eyewitness.

## • We Have Friends in High Places • or Ruth Bader Ginsburg will be a fine Justice

After her Senate confirmation the new Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg met the press in the White House Rose Garden. The New York Times reports (8/4/93):

Inviting questions, Judge Ginsburg got this one: "You've been called a conservative, you've been called a moderate. What are you?"

Borrowing pointedly from the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta *Iolanthe*, she replied, to the apparent confusion of the White House press corps, "I don't believe that every child that's born alive is either a little liberal or else a little conservative, except in Gilbert and Sullivan."

### • Meetings of G&S Executive Committee •

The Executive Committee met on June 1, 1993 at Robert Mellin's. All were present except Anne Collins Smith. We reviewed the reports on our production of *Iolanthe*. It was agreed that formal contracts should be signed by all members of the cast and crew. Bob Kusnetz agreed to work on making up contracts outlining specific job duties for future use.

We discussed plans for our next production. We agreed to alternate a well known G&S opera with a lesser known; *Pinafore* was the choice for 1994. The big problem is to find a space for next spring or early summer.

We agreed to set up a regular schedule of Executive Committee meetings so Board members could plan to attend. July 19th was acceptable to all for the next meeting.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee was held on July 19th, as planned, at the home of Diane Simpson. Present were President Robert Mellin, Secretary Reba Gillman and Treasurers Kate Hendricks and Diane Simpson. Robert reported on his investigations of possible performance spaces, and his meeting with Scott McAfee and colleagues from GSD&M Advertising. They are already working on publicity materials for *Pinafore*.

Kate, Diane and Robert went over financial matters, to bring the Treasurers' books up to date. Robert requested authorization to attend two conferences in August at the ex-

### Answer

1) Trial By Jury. There is no dialog in the entire short opera.

2) The very long opening scene of *The Gondoliers* is entirely music, with not a spoken word until p.74 (Schirmer Edition).

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pense of the Society: 1) Cultural Connections Conference, all day at the cost of \$60. 2) Corporate Fund Raising for Non-Profit Organizations, 2 hours at the cost of \$25. Granted.

Robert would like to get a grant to hire soloists, an accompanist, and a director, to produce a Gilbert and Sullivan program to take into the schools. We agreed that this is very important. Robert is looking into possibilities for a Fund Raising Event for the fall. This is needed to keep our name in the public eye, and to raise money.

### Officers

President	Robert Mellin	345-5950
Executive V.P.	Bob Kusnetz	836-1853
Production V.P.	Patrick Bennett	442-0528
Publicity V.P.	Donna Delvy	451-3710
Secretary	Reba Gillman	327-2277
Co-Treasurers	Kate Hendricks	371-7901
	Diane Simpson	343-0901
Historian	Anne Collins Smith	339-1086

### First Musicale of the Season

Tuesday 7:30 pm September 7th At Pearl Amster's, 2304 Hartford Road

Real Special: Barton Green, Frank Delvy and many other surprise performers.

Special Welcome to All our first time and new Members

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin Reba Gillman, Secretary 1606 The High Road Austin, TX 78746

### W.S. Gilbert's New Opera

Quixotic is his enterprise, and hopeless his adventure is, Who seeks for jocularities that haven't yet been said. The world has joked incessantly for over fifty centuries, And every joke that's possible has long ago been made. I started as a humorist with lots of mental dizziness, But humor is a drug which it's the fashion to abuse, For my stock in trade, my fixtures and the good will of the business

No reasonable offer I am likely to refuse.

And if anybody choose

He may circulate the news

That no reasonable offer I am likely to refuse.

Oh, happy was that humorist - the first that made a pun at all - Who, when a joke occurred to him, however poor and mean, Was absolutely certain that it never had been done at all - How popular at dinners must that humorist have been!

Oh, the days when some stepfather for the query held a candle out!

The doormat from the scraper, is it distant very far?

And when no one knew where Moses was when Aaron put the candle out,

And no one had discovered that a door could be a-jar!

But your modern hearers are
In their tastes particular,

And they sneer if you inform them that a door can be a-jar!

The above purports to be a little known piece by W.S. Gilbert. However, it may be just an inventive effort from the pen of O. Henry. Can anyone throw any light on this?

Anticipate a One-Time Only
Special G&S Musical Program .. Fund Raiser
followed by a Gala Champagne Buffet
Date and location: to be announced later



