The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin October 1994 Newsletter

Reba Gillman, Editor

• Next Meeting -- Our Monthly Musicale •

- On Monday, October 10th, 1994 at 7:30 pm. at Pearl Amster's, 2304 Hartford Road, 472-7028. Please come and bring munchies.
- The program is being organized by the capable Allen Lawshae. Our new stage director Matt Buchanan will be on hand to meet us all and contribute a song for our enjoyment.



• Director selected for Gondoliers •

Matt Buchanan sang in our recent production of *Pinafore*, but we're going to get to know him now as a fine stage director, who knows and loves Gilbert and Sullivan. He is at present in his second year at UT working on his MFA with emphasis on playwriting for youth. He grew up in Massachusetts, and got his Bachelor's degree at Harvard, where he was involved in the rich music and drama extra curricular offerings. Among other things he directed the Harvard-Radcliffe G & S Players' production of *Pinafore* and played the trombone in the pit for some of their other shows. In between he took a year off to study practical theater at Moorhead State University in Minnesota. He has had extensive experience directing musicals, including other G&S operas, as well as a lot of experience as music director, choreographer, set and light designer.

Matt spent last summer in Chicago's inner city, where he directed "Free Street Programs" at the notorious Cabrini Green public housing project. For three weeks he worked with a group of young people paid by the city in a jobtraining program, writing a play which they then took on tour for the rest of the summer.

Matt is involved in many projects at UT, but his time is flexible and he looks forward to committing a large block of it to *Gondoliers*. Already he is immersing himself in the score, and hearing and viewing video performances.

We are soliciting sponsorships for our production of *Gondoliers*

Corporate or Individual • Call Robert Mellin, 345-5950

• Message from your President •

Since last we met I had the pleasure of taking a short holiday, visiting family and touching my past in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and Atlantic City. It was in Atlantic City, a many years ago, that I first experienced Gilbert and Sullivan when my oldest brother was cast in a high school production of *The Mikado*. Now, in Philadelphia a version of *The Pirates of Penzance* is being played at a dinner theater. Hmmm!?

I have a very good feeling about the prospect of Matt Buchanan doing a superb job as stage director for our forthcoming production of *The Gondoliers*. His G&S experience, and eagerness to do research bodes well. Come say Hello to Matt at our October 10th Musicale. Because he is an experienced performer (he played Bill Bobstay in our recent *Pinafore*) he will even entertain us with a Gilbert & Sullivan selection. Brush up on the chorus part for "He is an Englishman". I hope to see you all there.

* * * * * * Robert Mellin * * * * *

OUR NEW OFFICE

The good work continues in our new office.

We have procured a non-profit bulk mailing permit and will soon be sending out the Newsletter by bulk mail. (Please let us know your correct current address!)

Many thanks to Susie Jacobson who gave us her old printer to tide us over until we got the new IBM equipment. We now have it to sell or give away to a worthy impoverished arts organization.

Thanks also to Susie for the disk containing the tremendous mailing list she had organized for us. And many thanks to the knowledgeable Dan Smith who will help Claudia get this material onto our new IBM equipment.

Many Thanks to Al Rellstab and Bob Wall

who each donated two Gilbert & Sullivan books to the Society library, which is now housed in our office.

G&S Executive Committee

On September 27th we welcomed Libby Weed and Loel Graber as our first "at large" Board members. The Committee has held regular meetings during the summer. Look for a report in the November Newsletter.

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Season's First Musicale Monday September 12, 1994

To open the season with a bang, 32 people gathered in the Paulist Hall at St. Austin's at 2026 Guadalupe. They were members Pearl Amster, Wren Andersen, Byron Arnason, Patrick Bennett, Frank Delvy, Reba Gillman, Enid Hallock, Bill Hatcher, Janette Jones, Matthew Kaplan (just joined), Allen Lawshae with Kay Novak, Diana McAlpin, Robert Mellin, Lucy Shoe Meritt, Ben & Carmela Nardone, Denise Parker, Bee Polomé, Blair Protzman, Al Rellstab, Bob Wall, and Theresa Wilson with her mother Ginger Storey. Other guests were Jeffrey Fischer, a newcomer to town, and performers Scott Ferrell with Aimee Hurst, Gary Hallock, Ellsworth Schave, and Juan Zalles, and Julia Lawshae, recipient of our first Scholarship. Our new employee, Claudia Olson, was present briefly, but had to leave to attend a rehearsal.

The program opened with Lord High Pianist Bob Wall at the electric piano, borrowed from the Austin Civic Chorus, thanks to Diana McAlpin. He accompanied Frank Delvy who sang "Rising early in the morning" from Gondoliers. President Robert introduced Claudia Olson. He then honored the five nominees for the ACOT B. Iden Payne Awards for their outstanding work in Pinafore. Only three were present: Scott Ferrell and Frank Delvy each nominated for Lead Actor in a Musical, and Janette Jones nominated for Lead Actress in a Musical. Robert gave them the ACOT citations, which he had had framed.

Third Annual One Time Only Holiday Season All-Star G&S Revue

Sunday December 4th • Capitol City Playhouse

Freddy Carnes will direct, and is already hard at work.

More Information Later

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin Reba Gillman, Secretary 1606 The High Road Austin TX 78746 Robert then asked Julia Lawshae to come forward to receive the scholarship, a check for \$1,000, to help her defray expenses at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City. Julia thanked us eloquently, "I just want to say that without this I would not be able to go to New York. I've been having loan problems."

Next came excerpts from the O. Henry Musical, directed by Allen Lawshae, written by Ellsworth Schave, and performed by them and Gary Hallock, Denise Parker and Juan Zalles, with LHP Bob Wall accompanying. This proved to be an amusing interlude, finished off by the gift from Gary of an Oh Henry candy bar for each person present.

Gilbert & Sullivan continued with Scott Ferrell singing "The nightingale" from Pinafore, followed by Frank and Janette singing the duet "Things are seldom what they seem". Julia Lawshae sang Katisha's aria from Mikado, "Alone and yet alive". We all sang "Hail Poetry" (Pirates) twice, with vigor. Frank and Janette performed their delightful duet "I once was a very abandoned person" from Ruddigore. From Iolanthe Matt Kaplan sang "When all night long", and Frank sang (guess what!) the Nightmare song. Janette brought the program to a close with the opening song from Yeomen of the Guard, "When a maiden loves". We all joined in singing "Now to the banquet we press", while Pearl and Theresa brought the goodies in from the kitchen. Several tours were conducted, taking people up to see our new office. This interestingly varied program was enjoyed by all. Many Thanks to President Robert who put it together.

• Gala Opening Night • The Gondoliers •

Saturday March 18, 1995 Fine Arts Center at St. Stephen's School

Auditions will be in mid-November • See next Newsletter

