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• **Message from your President** •

• Plan now for March: our monthly musicale will be held on Tuesday, March 7th. We decided to give Tuesday gatherings a three-month try. If this is really keeping you from attending please let me know: 327-2277.

**• Patron: Harry & Shirley Ellison, Al & Celeste Evans, Loel Graber, Maudi Greenwood, Enid Hallock, Bob & Helen Jones, Carolyn Jones, Frances Lockhart, Katharine Shields, Kent Smith, Linnea Smith, David White, Ronald Wylls, and new members Sylvia Bonnell and John Eason.**

\* \* \* \* \* Robert Mellin \* \* \* \* \*



I would love to see all our friends at this Gala - a Society tradition which has become our most joyous Gilbert & Sullivan gathering. Robert Mellin, President

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2/951 6/10

• Annual Meeting and Musicale •  
Tuesday, January 10, 1995

28 people gathered at Pearl Amster's to tend to Society business and enjoy a program featuring cast members from *Gondoliers*. There were 18 Society members with guests: Pearl Amster, Patrick Bennett, Wally Ellinger (welcome to first time at our Musicale!), Jeff Fischer, Reba Gillman, Maxine Hairston & David Cooper, Ray Howard with guest Sylvia Bonnell (who joined on the spot - welcome!), Matthew Kaplan (also in the cast), Advisory Board Member Bob Kusnetz, Allen Lawshae with guest Kay Novak, Robert Mellin, Lucy Shoe Meritt, Bea Polomé, Al Rellstab, Lord High Pianist Bob Wall, Libby Weed, and Terri Wilson with her mother Lydia Storey. From our *Gondoliers* were directors Matt Buchanan (Drama) and Richard Short (Music), performers soprano Amy Baker and tenor Marty Schwebel, with guests John Stinson and Catherine Schwebel, and chorus member Kelly Blacknall.

Matt Kaplan opened the program singing his solo as Antonio in the long opening scene from *Gondoliers*: "For the merriest fellows are we", with lots of tra-la-la's.

Plunging into our business, President Robert asked Pearl to read the slate of officers for 1995, since Enid Hallock, Chair of the Nominating Committee, was unable to be present. Elected by acclamation, the officers are:

|                           |                 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| President                 | Robert Mellin   |
| Executive V.P.            | Allen Lawshae   |
| Production V.P.           | Patrick Bennett |
| Publicity V.P.            | Bill Hatcher    |
| Secretary                 | Reba Gillman    |
| Treasurer                 | Diana McAlpin   |
| Historian-Parliamentarian | Libby Weed      |
| Member-at-large           | Loel Graber     |

In the absence of Treasurer Diana McAlpin, Reba read her report, giving the beginning balance January 1994, the income and expenses for 1994, and the end of the year balance. Robert announced that we had just received our first corporate donation for *Gondoliers*: \$600 from LCRA.

Robert then introduced Bob Kusnetz, a member of the first honorary Advisory Board of Directors. Bob had not been able to attend the Inaugural Installation of the Advisory Board in March 1994, and had never received his glass memento. Robert now presented the handsome gift, designed and made by Renaissance Glass, and Reba spoke briefly, "Bob Kusnetz was President of the Society for a long time [7 years]. He brought us through hard times. We wouldn't be here today without him."

Robert mentioned that some of our members couldn't be present because they were involved in final rehearsals for the Austin Lyric Opera's *Rigoletto*, opening on Friday January 13th. He introduced Matt Buchanan, Stage Director, and Richard Short, Music Director, and principals Amy Baker, Marty Schwebel, and Matt Kaplan, all from our production of *Gondoliers*. Since intensive rehearsals will begin on Thursday, January 12th, we won't see them at our gatherings again until after the show is over.

The musical program proceeded with Amy Baker, our Gianetta, singing "Kind Sir, you cannot have the heart", which opens the first act finale of *Gondoliers*. Our Marco, Marty Schwebel, then sang the magnificent tenor solo from the second act, "Take a pair of sparkling eyes". Departing from Gilbert & Sullivan, Amy and Marty sang "All I ask of you", a duet from *The Phantom of the Opera* by Andrew Lloyd Webber. Matt Kaplan returned us to G&S singing "A more humane Mikado" from *The Mikado*. Bob Kusnetz asked if anyone knew which line of the song had been changed from the original. [ See Note.]

In another diversion from G&S, Marty sang "Lonely house" from the opera *Street Scene*, music by Kurt Weill, words by Langston Hughes, from the play by Elmer Rice. He followed this with the plaintive aria "Joanna" from *Sweeney Todd*, by Stephen Sondheim. Then back to G&S, with Matt Kaplan singing the wonderfully operatic "When the night wind howls" from *Ruddigore*. When Matt came to the refrain in the first verse he pointed at Robert Mellin, who obliged by singing the ominous "ha ha's" required. For the following verses Robert conducted the assembled audience to help him out each time with resounding "ha ha's". Amy finished off this portion of the program singing the coloratura "Glitter and be gay" from Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*. Pearl Amster provided a helping hand by turning pages for Lord High Pianist Bob Wall. At the conclusion Pearl spoke up, "I must put in a word for accompanists. They do lots more than the singers." Bob Wall took a bow, and Robert Mellin asked "How can we top that?" Matt replied, "We don't have to, it's time for 'Hail Poetry' and 'Now to the Banquet we press'."

Allen Lawshae took the floor to sing the introduction and to lead us in a lusty rendition of "Hail Poetry" from *Pirates*. We finished up by singing "Now to the banquet we press" from *The Sorcerer* which is the official invitation to retire to the dining room for refreshments.

Note: In Gilbert's original the Mikado sings "The lady who dyes a chemical yellow, Or stains her grey hair puce, Or pinches her finger, is blacked like a nigger With permanent walnut juice." Since 1948 this line has been performed "is painted with vigour", but not changed in the Schirmer score.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin Dues Structure

|                          |                     |                            |                       |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Member - \$10.00         | Patron - \$25.00    | Lord High Patron - \$50.00 | Grand Duke - \$100.00 |
| Major General - \$250.00 | Pooh Bah - \$500.00 | Savoyard - \$1,000.00      |                       |

## The Gondoliers

### or The King of Barataria

The opera opens on a happy scene in Venice. Peasant girls (contadine) are weaving garlands of flowers and awaiting the arrival of two handsome gondolieri, who are to choose their brides. The music flows in Italianate style, unbroken by dialogue. Marco and Giuseppe arrive with their comrade gondoliers, and the singing continues, sometimes in Italian, through a game of blind man's buff in which Tessa and Gianetta are chosen as the happy brides.

The Duke and Duchess of Plaza Toro arrive with their beautiful daughter Casilda, and their attendant Luiz. Impoverished gentry, they have travelled their sea-sick way "From the sunny Spanish shore". In the first spoken words of the opera they explain to Casilda that she was married in infancy to the baby son of the King of Barataria, who was soon after stolen away during an insurrection. The King of Barataria has just died, so they have come to Venice in search of the stolen Prince. When they find him he will become King, and their daughter will be Queen. Casilda complains "Was I consulted?" She agrees to honor her infant commitment, although secretly she and Luiz are in love.

The plot thickens when Don Alhambra, the Grand Inquisitor of Spain, appears to explain that it was he who stole the Prince, and left him in Venice in the care of a highly respectable gondolier, "Who promised the Royal babe to rear, And teach him the trade of a timoneer With his own beloved bratling." Unfortunately the gondolier had a taste for drink, confused the identity of the two boys, and died leaving no indication which was the Prince. Don Alhambra sings that it is therefore absolutely clear that the prince is either Marco or Giuseppe "Of that there is no manner of doubt - No probable, possible shadow of doubt - No possible doubt whatever."

In order to clear up the mystery Don Alhambra proposes to bring the Prince's nurse Inez, to Barataria's court. In the meantime he sends Marco and Giuseppe to rule together as King, and tells their wives to remain in Venice.

The second act opens three months later in the egalitarian court of Barataria set up by the good Republicans Marco and Giuseppe. They sing of "A despotism strict, combined With absolute equality!" Their happiness is marred only by the absence of their dear little wives, left behind in Venice. At this point the contadine run in singing "Here we are at the risk of our lives, From ever so far, and we've brought your wives - And to that end we've crossed the main, and don't intend to return again!" After joyous explanations, they all join in "Dance a cachucha."

At the height of the revelry Don Alhambra appears. He is astonished and displeased at the Monarchy remodelled on Republican principles. As Marco and Giuseppe explain, all departments rank equally, and everybody is at the head of his department. Don Alhambra attempts to explain that in every Court there are distinctions that must be observed. To prove his point he sings "There lived a King", describing a court where Dukes were three a penny and everything was silver and gold, concluding "When everyone is somebodee, Then no one's anybody!" The situation grows rapidly more complicated as Don Alhambra explains that the Duke and Duchess of Plaza Toro are arriving with their daughter Casilda who was married to one of the two gondoliers in infancy. Tessa and Gianetta join Marco and Giuseppe in a delightfully complicated quartet on the subject.

The Duke and the Duchess enter with ducal pomp and explain how their fortunes have improved. All assemble waiting to hear the truth proclaimed by Inez, the Prince's foster mother. "Speak, woman, speak!" they cry. She speaks: the King is neither Marco nor Giuseppe, but Luiz, whom she had raised as her own son to disarm suspicion. And so the opera ends happily with each pair of lovers content.

#### • The Chief Justice Has New Clothes •

*The New York Times* reports (1-22-95) that Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist appeared recently on the bench of the Supreme Court in Washington, wearing a black robe adorned with four gold stripes on each sleeve. The explanation: "The Chief Justice had designed the robe after one worn by the Lord Chancellor in a local production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe*, and he intended to keep on wearing it."

With sorrow I report the death on January 15, 1995 of Eryk Markham at the age of 44. Some of us knew Eryk as Mark Welch, when he sang in the chorus in the original Zach Scott production of *H.M.S. Pinafore* in 1976. He loved theater, and especially opera. He tried to found an opera company, and had great plans. Later as Eryk Markham he directed and performed frequently for Different Stages. The last show he directed was *Jacques and His Master*, which some of you may have seen.

His death did not come as a surprise since on June 25, 1994 *The Austin American Statesman* carried a feature article interviewing Eryk, and describing his courageous battle with AIDS.

Do you have some interesting news? A spicy comment? A bit of G&S lore?

Other voices are very welcome additions to this Newsletter. Please call me at 327-2277.

Complaints accepted, too. Let me hear from you! Reba Gillman, Editor

2/95-2

**Helm Fine Arts Center  
St. Stephen's School, 2900 Bunny Run**

**How to get there:**

From the north, go south on Loop 360. Turn right onto Cedar Street, the first traffic light after the bridge over Lake Austin.

Turn left onto Bunny Run, which runs into the St. Stephen's campus.

From the south, go west on Ben White Blv'd, and north on its continuation, Loop 360. At the last traffic light before the bridge over Lake Austin, turn left onto Cedar St.

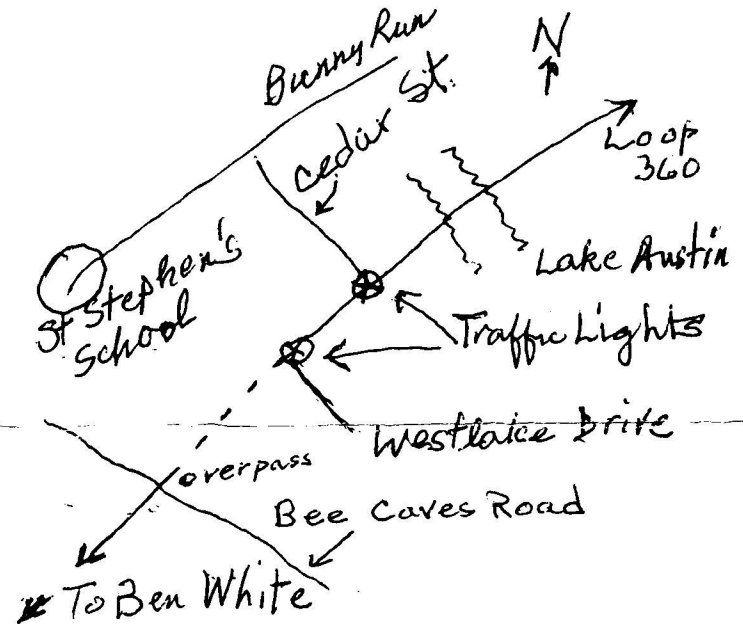
Turn left onto Bunny Run, as above.

Notes: Cedar Street is not a cross street. Neither is Westlake Drive.

Loop 360 runs roughly north-south, curving down to go east and become Ben White Blv'd, which runs roughly east-west.

There are several ways to reach Loop 360 from north Austin. Rte. 2222 is one way. Another way is Anderson Lane, which becomes Spicewood Springs Road at Mopac.

**Advice:** If Loop 360 is unknown territory to you, look at an Austin map for orientation.



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**Come to Our Musicale on Tuesday,  
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