



• Last Meeting and Musicale •  
Tuesday, March 7, 1995

This gathering was small, intimate, and fun. Present were members Pearl Amster, Byron Arnason, Deacon Crain, Reba Gillman, Russell Gregory, Maxine Hairston & David Cooper, Allen Lawshae, Robert Mellin, Lucy Shoe Meritt, Kay Novak, and Lord High Pianist Bob Wall.

The evening started off auspiciously with Russell Gregory at the piano accompanying himself in "Every day is lady's day with me" from *The Red Mill* by Victor Herbert. President Robert introduced Russell, who played *The Mikado* in our 1992 production, and thanked him for joining us despite another engagement. With Bob Wall back at the keyboard, Russell then sang a magnificent "A more humane Mikado", assisted by the audience as chorus. Unwilling to let him go, Robert asked for another sample of his art. Allen volunteered to play the Captain and he and Russell sang "Kind Captain, I've important information" from *Pinafore*.

President Robert told us he had just come from a publicity photo-shoot. He showed us Tessa's costume, and the Duke of Plaza Toro's coat from the first act - part of the Duke's "poor" costume. In the second act he has been "floated" under the Limited Liability Act, and become immensely wealthy. Robert reported that the production was coming along beautifully, and invited us to drop by the warehouse at Live Oak Theatre's office, to see the scenery being painted. Robert showed us the *Gondoliers* posters, and urged us to take some to post.

Robert explained the general production plan developed by the Executive Committee. It is to perform a major, well-known Gilbert & Sullivan opera every other year [*Pinafore*, *Mikado*, *Pirates*], and in the intervening years perform such operas as *The Gondoliers*, *Sorcerer*, *Patience*, *Iolanthe*, and *Ruddigore*. The Executive Committee would like to announce now the production next year of *Pirates*. He asked if there were any objections, and then asked for a show of hands to authorize the plan. The members responded favorably.

Robert then introduced Bob Wall, our Lord High Pianist, to play two "Songs Without Words" by Mendelssohn. Reba explained a connection: Sullivan was 5 years old when Mendelssohn died, but he grew up in an England that revered that composer. The talented young Sullivan, a child prodigy, won a scholarship established in Mendelssohn's honor, to study at London's Royal Academy of Music. After two years there he went off to Leipzig, "Mendelssohn's own hallowed ground", for two more years of study. This completed his musical education and he returned to England when he was

19, ready to earn his living as a musician. In homage to Mendelssohn he composed a full-length concert work of music to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

Bob played his pieces from memory and as he finished Pearl rose to give a little speech. Bob has been taking lessons from her, and prepared these pieces for her student recital on April 1st. "This is a very unusual man. He's a wonderful sight-reader, and does that all the time for G&S. He never looks at the keyboard. But to memorize music you have to look at the keyboard. You have to memorize the chords and the placement of the black and white keys." Bob's comment: "Pearl is a fantastic teacher!"

Robert announced that he had just received checks for the production of *The Gondoliers* from Lucy Shoe Meritt and Reba Gillman. "These are very welcome! We're running behind on raising money. It's my fault, I haven't been diligent enough."

Allen remarked that at the opera, *Madama Butterfly*, he had noticed the theme from *The Mikado* "Miya sama, miya sama" (the entrance of the Mikado and his troops). Did Puccini steal this theme from Sullivan? No, Robert replied, "that is a Japanese folk tune, used by both composers." Allen then set the scene for the Counsel's song from *Trial By Jury* "With a sense of deep emotion, I approach this painful case", and the audience joined in on the choruses. After that Allen passed out the music for "Dance the Cachucha" from *Gondoliers*, Bob Wall played the melody for us to hear, and all sang lustily. Robert showed off his *Gondoliers* T-shirt, and reminded us to listen to KUT-FM on Tuesday, March 14th, when almost the whole cast would be the guests of John Aielli at about 11:30 am.

Allen sang the pale young curate's song from *Sorcerer* "Time was when Love and I were well acquainted", and Robert mused, "You haven't heard that song until you've heard Leonard Johnson sing it. I told Leonard he could be in any production of ours." Reba showed announcements of the Berkshire Choral Festival this summer [call me for information]. The customary singing of "Now to the banquet we press" led us off to Pearl's comfortable dining room, where our small group could all sit at the table and munch and chat in friendly intimacy.

**Editorial Note:** The subject of how one memorizes is very interesting, with perhaps as many methods as performers. It becomes a burning issue when you're faced with learning a part: words and music, actions on stage, dance steps and whatever else the director requires. Some of our performers learn mostly by ear, listening to tapes; others report that they see the written music in their heads as they sing it. Think it over - what works for you?

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## The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin.

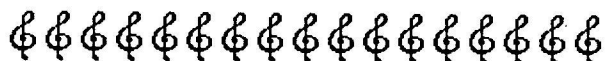
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And to the City of Austin, Commission on the Arts



4/95-2

### I stole the Prince

Don Alhambra's song from *The Gondoliers*  
[An example of absolute certainty]

I stole the Prince, and brought him here,  
And left him gaily prattling  
With a highly respectable gondolier,  
Who promised the Royal babe to rear,  
And teach him the trade of a timoneer  
With his own beloved bratling.

Both of the babes were strong and stout,  
And, considering all things, clever.  
Of that there is no manner of doubt --  
No probable, possible shadow of doubt --  
No possible doubt: whatever.

But owning, I'm much disposed to fear,  
To his terrible taste for tipping,  
That highly respectable gondolier  
Could never declare with a mind sincere  
Which of the two was his offspring dear,  
And which the Royal stripling!

Which was which he could never make out  
Despite his best endeavour.  
Of *that* there is no manner of doubt --  
No probable, possible shadow of doubt --  
No possible doubt whatever.

Time sped, and when at the end of a year  
I sought that infant cherished,  
That highly respectable gondolier  
Was lying a corpse on his humble bier --  
I dropped a Grand Inquisitor's tear --  
That gondolier had perished.

A taste for drink combined with gout,  
Had doubled him up for ever.  
Of *that* there is no manner of doubt --  
No probable, possible shadow of doubt --  
No possible doubt whatever.

The children followed his old career --  
(This statement can't be parried)  
Of a highly respectable gondolier:  
Well, one of the two (who will soon be here) --  
But *which* of the two is not quite clear --  
Is the Royal Prince you married!

Search in and out and round about,  
And you'll discover never  
A tale so free from every doubt --  
All probable, possible shadow of doubt --  
All possible doubt whatever!

♥ ♥ THANK YOU ♥ ♥  
Patrick Bennett for putting together  
the program for *Gondoliers*

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Needed  
Piano Accompanist to spell Bob Wall  
Here is a chance to try out your skills at sight-reading.  
Call the G&S Office at 472-4772

*The*  
**Gilbert**  
**SULLIVAN** Society  
OF AUSTIN

Meet the cast of *The Gondoliers*  
Come to Our Musicales on Monday,  
April 3 1995 at Pearl's

