

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin

June 1995 Newsletter

Reba Gillman, Editor

• Special Last Musicale Until September •

Featured Guest Performers

Aimee Hurst at the piano, with
Tenor, Scott (Ralph Rackstraw) Ferrell
Tenor, Leonard (Dr. Daly) Johnson
and our own Jess Walters

Plus our regulars

The Lord High Baritone, Frank Delvy and
The Lord High Everyone else, Janette Jones
accompanied by

The Lord High Substitute, Susan Finnigan

• and more •

• Monday • June 5, 1995 at 7:30 pm at Pearl Amster's,
2304 Hartford Road, 472-7028.

• Come join the fun (and please bring munchies,
as usual).

♪ G&S Concert Group Forming ♪

A long-time goal of the Society has been to form a small, paid professional band of G&S performers in order to present our music in schools and elsewhere. At last, it's happening. So far positive responses have been received from Frank Delvy, Janette Jones, and Amy Baker (Gianetta in our recent *Gondoliers*). By the time the next school semester begins we should be ready to go.

Tell your school, business, or club about this very special, first class travelling show.



Our Next Production
The Pirates of Penzance
or
The Slave of Duty
Place and time to be announced

• Message from your President •

Many Society members take their vacations at this time of the year. That is why there is no monthly Musicale or Newsletter during July and August. However the Society does not take a vacation. Brenda and I, along with others, will be at the Society office doing good Gilbert and Sullivan things. Some are still in the brainstorming and research phase, so I do not want to reveal too much. Some things are coming along apace, such as the small G&S Concert group. A place and date for *The Pirates of Penzance* is still not finalized. A publicity program promoting Gilbert and Sullivan will happen. And our yearly All-Star Revue Champagne Buffet Fund Raiser is planned for the first of December. But this year there is a possibility that it might be only a part of a whole weekend of Gilbert and Sullivan important and novel events, with people attending from far and wide. But I will say no more. However, if this excites your imagination you may contact me at home (345-5950) or the G&S office (472-4772).

Those of you who have attended our monthly Musicales, particularly this past year or two, know how much fun they are. Our last Musicale in May was very special because of our excellent group of performers. You will read a full review of it in this Newsletter. When Jess Walters did his number "The Flea" Bob Wall accompanied him without benefit of any rehearsal. This is a very tricky piece as Jess performs it, and as fine a musician as Bob Wall is there were a number of problems. Jess turned each one into a hilariously funny bit. The audience laughed like I had never seen before. Jess Walters is a very funny man. He is Austin's answer to Victor Borge. It was obvious that no one could follow this act, so we wisely concluded the musical part of the evening and adjourned for refreshments.

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

COMING
A Gilbert & Sullivan
Awareness and
Appreciation Campaign
and Membership Drive
WHAT WILL YOU DO
TO SPREAD THE WORD?

Gilbert & Sullivan Society Office • Phone: 472-4772

Brenda Tharp • New Hours: Mon, Tues, Thurs 1 - 5 pm; Wed & Fri 11:30 am - 3:30 pm
Newman Hall, Room 221, 2026 Guadalupe St., Austin TX 78705

• Last Meeting and Musicale •
Monday, May 1, 1995

Good music and good Gilbertian sociability were enjoyed by 24 people at Pearl Amster's. Members present were Pearl, Byron Arnason, Frank & Donna Delvy, Reba Gillman, Loel Graber, Janette Jones, Matt Kaplan and Alexa Maurer, Allen Lawshae, Robert Mellin, Lucy Shoe Meritt, Kay Novak, Lord High Physician Blair Protzman (Joyce joined us later), Virginia Storey, Lord High Pianist Bob Wall, Jess & Emma Walters, and Theresa Wilson; and new members Don Alhambra the Grand Inquisitor Michael Lucus, Maurice Ommerman (this was his second meeting), LaDelle Fuller, and Charles Thomas, and guest Amy Baker, our Gianetta from *The Gondoliers*.

First up was Frank Delvy singing "the other song" from *Iolanthe*, "The law is the true embodiment of everything that's excellent." At President Robert's request Frank read Jerry Conn's review of *The Gondoliers* from the West Lake Picayune. Robert said this was the best review we got, but unfortunately it didn't appear until after the show had closed.

Amy Baker, fresh from her role as Adele in the UT production of *Die Fledermaus* by Johann Strauss, sang charmingly "The laughing song" from Act II, and another aria from Act III. Matt Kaplan sang "Willow, tit-willow" from *The Mikado*. Next came Janette Jones, back from her trip to New York City, where she rejoined an old friend and sang with the Arcadian Ensemble, performing *The Yeomen of the Guard* for the monthly meeting of the New York Gilbert & Sullivan Society. Janette met Ann Kirschner when they both sang Gilbert and Sullivan with the Light Opera of Manhattan (LOOM, now apparently defunct). Ann recently formed the Acadian Ensemble and invited Janette to sing with them for this occasion. For us, Janette sang two of Phoebe's songs from *Yeomen*: "When a maiden loves" and "Were I thy bride", in which she played off our President, using him as Wilfred, the jailer.

Next, President Robert introduced Michael Lucus who played Sweeney Todd at Capitol City Playhouse, and the Grand Inquisitor in our *Gondoliers*. "Treat him very nicely, he works for IRS." Robert quoted from a thank-you letter from a Brooke Elementary School child who had enjoyed attending our *Gondoliers*, "especially when the man dressed like the pope came out and started to sing, and the end when the little drummer boy came out with his drum." Michael sang "There lived a King" from *Gondoliers*, assisted by Frank and Matt singing the parts of Marco and Giuseppe. When we begged for more Michael dusted off a one-time role, and sang "A more humane Mikado", complete with chilling laugh.

Matt then sang "Stars", which is sung by Javert in Act I of *Les Misérables*, music by Claude-Michel Schönberg and lyrics by Herbert Kretzmer. Frank Delvy brought us back to G&S with the dramatic aria "When the night wind howls" from *Ruddigore*, saying "This is for Donna. It's become our Halloween carol."

And finally Jess Walters brought out his well-worn music for Moussorgsky's "The Song of the Flea", which he had sung as "a guest" in Act II of *Die Fledermaus*. Of course it was delightful, but as Jess shouted orders to pianist Bob Wall, we understood what an awesome task the accompanist has, especially without rehearsal. Bob was good natured about his problems, and Jess was hilarious as he guided his unaccustomed partner; we were all rolling off our chairs with glee. All agreed there was no topping that performance, and with the traditional "Now to the banquet we press", we made our way to the refreshments in the dining room. What a rousing Musicale!

Editor's Note: You missed a really good show (albeit a trifle long), if you didn't see UT's *Die Fledermaus*. Amy Baker (our Gianetta) was a delightful Adele on two nights, and on two other nights Michael McKelvey (Giuseppi in our *Gondoliers*) played Dr. Falke. Both were fine productions, but the absolute high spot was our own Jess Walters cutting up in Act III as Frosch, the drunken jailer. He raises an eyebrow or shrugs a shoulder, and brings down the house.



• Wish List •

- 1) An attorney who is a friend of Gilbert and Sullivan and is willing to contribute legal advice to the Society.
- 2) An accountant or CPA, also a friend of G&S and willing to contribute bookkeeping expertise to the Society.

Also Needed

- Storage Space. Does anyone have an empty garage, warehouse, or other space where we could store sets, lumber, costumes, props, etc.?

Call the office, 472-4772; or Robert Mellin, 345-5950.

• Do You Like to Cruise the Internet? •

We need someone to monitor Gilbert and Sullivan on the Information Superhighway. Request a free subscription from <SavoyNet-Request@Bridgewater.Edu> • Or make your own connections • Keep us posted • G&S Office, 472-4772.

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	

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- The Annual Austin Mostly Music •
Marathon
A Benefit for AIDS Services of Austin
Saturday June 3, 1995
First Unitarian Church • 4700 Grover
Noon to Midnight

We are pleased to be able to take part in the seventh annual Marathon to benefit AIDS Services of Austin. The musical talents of Austin turn out in droves to raise money and to memorialize the artists our community has lost to this dread disease. In recent years dancers have also joined the musicians, and the menu is as varied as Austin's community: from Esther's Follies; dancers Heloise Gold & Jean Fogel Zee, and Tapestry; through Susanna Sharpe & Friends; Capital City Men's Chorus; Austin Area Community Philharmonic; and many other community artists; to the talents of the UT Music School, with our own Jess Walters a high spot. It is indeed a "marathon", starting at Noon and ending at Midnight, with two hours off for dinner. Admission costs \$25 - Benefactor, \$12 - General, \$6 - Students (with ID). Audience members may come and go at their leisure; hands will be stamped at the door.

We will be well represented by Frank Delvy, Janette Jones, and Pianist Susan Finnigan, whom we found thanks to Katharine Shields. (Bob Wall is in Denmark!) Program:

"Love, unrequited, robs me of my rest" *Iolanthe*
"Cheerily carols the lark" *Ruddigore*

Our presentation is scheduled for 12:20 pm. So come early or you'll miss it. You can then study the program and find out when Jess will perform, and plan to take in whatever else interests you.

We had to set this up hurriedly, and are allotted only 10 minutes TOTAL. Therefore ambitious plans for lusty chorus and other attractive presentations were abandoned, and no one else was asked to be on the program. Maybe next year ...

• News of Members •

• Mary Lu Barras writes from Lubbock, TX where she is pursuing a year-long study in Clinical Pastoral Education at the Methodist Hospital. After another year she may finally be ordained and looking for a ministry. It's a long haul! She enjoys her studies, but misses us all in Austin.

• Noel Koran is the new Artistic Director of the Austin Shakespeare Festival. He will direct their production of *Twelfth Night* to run weekends September 7 - October 8, 1995 outdoors at Zilker Park's Rock Island.

• With sorrow we report the untimely death of Marion Elizabeth Eason. She was the daughter of our members Mr. & Mrs. John H.G. Eason and the niece of member Marion Deford. We extend our sympathy to the family.

**Gilbert & Sullivan '95
International Festival of the World's
Most Popular Comic Operas**

July 30 - August 12, The Opera House
Buxton • England

From all accounts this was a wonderful event last summer. G&S groups from all over the world, including several from the U.S., went to perform and enjoy, and plans are already under way for next year. [As this notice is very late you might want to start planning now to attend in August 1996. I have the information for '95. Call me at 327-2277.]

Some of the choice bits this year will be *The Sorcerer* performed by original D'Oyly Carte principals, *Iolanthe* by the Hancock County Maine G&S Society, and *H.M.S. Pinafore* by the Houston G&S Society. Also representing the U.S. will be The Savoy Players of Philadelphia. Founded in 1901 this is the oldest amateur G&S society in the U.S.A.

Save the date!

- Monday, September 11, 1995 • The second Monday • because of Labor Day •
The First Musicale of the New Season • 7:30 pm at Pearl's

