

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin

September 1996 Newsletter

Reba Gillman, Editor

• Next Meeting -- Our Monthly Musicale •

• **The Second Monday • September 9 1996 at 7:30 pm** at Pearl Amster's, 2304 Hartford Road, 472-7028. Please bring munchies as usual.

• Our next production will be *The Yeomen of the Guard*, perhaps the most serious of the G&S operas, and yet lots of fun. David Beussman, Katharine Shields, Frank Delvy, and Janette Jones, will sing excerpts from the opera to help us get acquainted with it.

• **Come and enjoy this wonderful music.**

• **Coming Events:** Mark your calendars now!
• Monday October 7th John Bustin Night
• Monday November 4th Musicale
• December 1st Our Annual Holiday Season All Star G & S Revue, and perhaps a special treat too.

• Message from your President •

The intermission for a Saturday evening performance of *Pirates of Penzance* had just ended. Groups of theatre-goers in summer garb had drifted back into the theatre from the moon-drenched patio, where they had been enjoying the breath-taking view of Lake Austin. Others had finished their cold drinks or had completed their purchases at the T-shirt table, and all had returned to their seats as the orchestra began the strains that introduce Act II.

Closing the doors to the lobby quietly, I went over to the soft-drink table where Robert Mellin was already beginning to tidy up and take stock. We talked about how many more Sprites and Dr. Peppers we needed to pack in the ice chest to be ready for the next day's matinée, and we began to fill the ice chests from our stock.

Suddenly Robert looked up from his packing and said, in those rather melodramatic accents we know so well, "This is a good thing we're doing, Libby!"

Prone to be a little short-sighted and focused on the immediate task, I wondered if he meant icing the drinks down early or choosing Sprites over Cokes for this chest. But his next sentence gave me to understand that he was speaking of something far grander than either of these.

"This is a beautiful show, and people are enjoying it thoroughly. The Gilbert & Sullivan Society is really making a lot of people happy with this show!"

Robert was absolutely right, and I heartily agreed. Seeing the smiling faces and hearing the cheerful voices after each performance, accepting congratulations and thanks from both first-time G&S attendees and long-time aficionados, I knew that *Pirates* was making a lot of people happy. I hope you were one of them!

Whether you were or not, as a member of the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin, you helped make this marvelous performance possible. Your dues, along with ticket sales and donations from our supporters, enabled us to produce a stunning show that, from its orchestra to its chorus to its principals, from its stage sets to its costumes to its props, brought beauty and enjoyment to our community for three weekends this summer. Over three thousand audience members were entertained royally over the course of the eleven performances.

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Gilbert & Sullivan Society Office • Phone: 472-4772

• Soon we will announce new fall office hours • In the meantime call any time and leave a message •
Newman Hall, Room 309, 2026 Guadalupe St., Austin TX 78705

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• Last Meeting and Musicale •

Jess Walters then sang a group of old favorites, with his guest Don Crandall at the piano, and Don's wife Cathy,

After this rousing dramatic scene we all joined in singing "Now to the banquet we press" (*Sorcerer*) and adjourned to the dining room for food and conversation. The evening provided a delightful close to one more season of G & S.

Call 472-4772



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We will do a program for them.**

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• *Pirates* • Most Successful Run •

It appears that our recent production of *The Pirates of Penzance* at Saint Stephen's was probably the most successful in our 20 year history. More people saw this show than any before, and most agreed on its high artistic merit.

Thanks partly to our individual member contributors, who made a special financial donation to the production, we showed a modest profit. We are also very appreciative of our generous corporate sponsors. And a big bravo to our performers, directors, and designers for their great work -- to all the staff and volunteers mucho gracias.

*** Robert Mellin, Executive Director ***

Many Thanks to the loyal members who helped out in the front of the house during the run of *Pirates*: Wren Andersen with Joy and siblings; Chris Buggé; Reba Gillman; Susie Grubbs (formerly Jacobson); Bill Hatcher with Nan, Lisa and Lauren, and friend Carolee Poschman; Ed Kluth; Paula Tyler; and Libby Weed.

Thanks to Jean & Chris Buggé for the use of their Mac, while mine is in the hospital. Thanks also to LCRA who will print this Newsletter.

G & S Executive Board

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Executive V.P.	Paula Tyler	459-4639
Production V.P.	Chris Buggé	834-7766 (w)
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Treasurer	Bill Hatcher	892-3722
Hist. & Parl.	Larry Shepley	327-1511
Dir. at large	Robert Mellin	345-5950
Executive Director		Robert Mellin

• FLASH •

Amy Baker Stinson, most recently our Mabel in *Pirates*, will appear as Johanna in *Sweeney Todd*, which opens Friday September 6th at the Live Oak Theater. Congratulations, Amy! (For tickets call 499-8497)

Joe York will play the Demon Barber, and Jackie Roach will play Mrs. Lovett. As some may recall, this somewhat gruesome opera was done a few years ago at Capitol City Playhouse with Michael Lucas (the Grand Inquisitor in our *Gondoliers*) as the Barber, and Kristina Havenhill (Josephine in our *Pinafore*) as Johanna. Linda Nenno was a fine Mrs. Lovett in that production.



NOTICE: Date on mailing label indicates when your membership expires.
If you are receiving the Newsletter on an introductory basis the date on the label indicates the last free Newsletter. We welcome contributions, upgrades, and dues from ALL our readers.



If you like Gilbert and Sullivan, and want to support our efforts ...
... you can do so by becoming a member of our society for a mere ten dollars.
Members receive a monthly newsletter with information about G&S, our activities and our members.
Our monthly informal G&S musicales are open to the public at no charge.

• Your tax-deductible contribution in any of the other categories are welcome and will help us mount our yearly productions and pay our monthly expenses •

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2026 Guadalupe Street, #309
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• Report on G & S International Festival •
by Robert Mellin

In July I had the pleasure of attending the eight-day G&S International Festival in Philadelphia, which was as enjoyable as any lover of G&S could hope for. I got to see nine properly staged productions performed by mostly very accomplished groups from various places, including Australia and the U.K. I even saw *Ruddigore* and *The Sorcerer* staged by former stars of the D'Oyly Carte company. It was quite a treat! The remaining G&S repertory that was not staged, I got to hear (and sometimes participate in) in "Sing Throughs" of the works later in the evening at "Cabaret". These works included *Pirates*, *Mikado*, *The Grand Duke*, and *Utopia Limited*. Sometimes the "Cabaret" didn't finish until 1:30 or 2:00 in the morning. Did I get a little tired from all this G&S? Not really, and the fact that I stayed practically across the street from the hotel where the "Cabaret" happened could not have been more convenient. I was a guest of my brother Ray and sister-in-law Bernice, who live in a high rise in down town Philadelphia. I thank them for their hospitality.

As good a time as I had I think the things I learned and contacts I made were even more important. For example, most society productions are performed and mostly financed by society members, as opposed to ours where casting is open to all. But most G&S groups have their own unique characteristics. I also got to meet and talk with many interesting and knowledgeable people from the world of G&S, including Ian Smith, the Englishman who founded these festivals that can only become more popular and grow by leaps and bounds each year. I talked with Harry Benford, the G&S authority whose "Lexicon" was so popular with our members. (There will not be any more available until he gets around to making planned revisions.) Stanton Taylor, a member of our Society from Louisiana, appeared as a peer in the festival production of *Iolanthe* (put together in a week). Both he and the production were quite commendable.

Another of our out of town members, Ralph ("Rafe") McPhail from Virginia, I learned is a stage director as well as a highly regarded expert on G&S. He told me to say hello to Reba for him.

Seeing and hearing how other societies present their shows gave me valuable ideas about costuming, sets, casting, and staging. I am hoping for more communication with some of these individuals and groups, probably using the SavoyNet. But I must say, as much as I enjoyed what those groups did, I truthfully feel that our productions on the whole are as good as and sometimes surpass what I saw in Philadelphia. Maybe some year we will be eager and ready to present our efforts at an international festival.

Many thanks to the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin for paying my way to this exciting festival.

• Welcome to Our New Members •

29 new members have signed up as a result of their pleasure in our production of *Pirates*. That is always one of the exciting bonuses of putting on a good show.

Welcome!

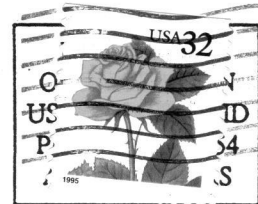
Grand Duke: William & Greta Curtis, Bob & Cynthia Hormell, M.D. Levy, Jr. MD, and Pat Wedel.

Lord High Patron: Susan Lubin, Mary & Edward Munzer, Bernadette Tasher, and John F. Yeaman.

Patron: Allise Burris, Yvonne & Doug DeLay, Brian & Diane Haight, Mr. & Mrs. Robert C. Howe, Mr & Mrs. Eugene Ripperger, Leland L. Smith, Mary C. Turbiville, Darrel & Donna Webber, and Carl & Mary Woodring.

Members: Vaughn Alexander, David Beer, Rachel Dolan, Henry & Norma Fischer, Scott Guthery, Richard Hartley, John E. Oliphant, Bob Pendleton, Elizabeth Smith, Mrs. Dale Tucker, Ernie Welch, and Arthur R. Woods.

The
Gilbert & SULLIVAN Society
OF AUSTIN
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Monday, September 9 1996 at Pearl's
7:30 pm

2026 Guadalupe Street, Suite 309 • Austin, Texas 78705