

**Reba Gillman, Editor**

• 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

• Last Meeting and Musicale •

We opened the fall season on Monday September 9, 1996 at 7:30 pm, with 38 people at Pearl's. Present were members Pearl Amster, Byron Arnason, Chris Buggé, Lucian Chimene, Frank Delvy, Reba Gillman, Loel Graber, Enid Hallock, Bill Hatcher, Joyce & George John, Janette Jones, Michael Lucas, John Mast, Robert Mellin, Lucy Shoe Meritt, Maurie Ommerman, Larry Shepley, Katharine Shields, Dan Smith, Leland L. Smith, Robert Spiegel, Lydia Storey, Bernadette Tascher, Paula Tyler, Lord High Pianist Bob Wall, Jess & Emma Walters, Libby Weed, and Theresa Wilson. Guests were David Beussman, Gerardo & Lupe Cardenas, Carolyn Gregory, John Gregory, Gary Hallock, Mandy Henderson, and DeAnne Pearson.

Executive Director Robert Mellin welcomed us warmly and asked for introductions, so we went around the crowded room giving our names. Frank Delvy and Janette Jones then opened the evening program singing "There is beauty in the bellow of the blast" from *Mikado*. Robert gave us a quick run down on the "geat big wonderful show *Pirates*". Everyone present either saw it or was in it! He said that it was a great success artistically, and also made a little money. He thanked all the performers, directors, techies, etc. who made it possible. Especial thanks to Bob Wall who played for every rehearsal as well as all the performances.

Robert then gave us a brief report on his trip to Philadelphia to attend the International G&S Festival. "It was a wonderful exposure to D'Oyly Carte performers and experts in the lore of G&S. I learned a lot. I have many ideas that may prove very fruitful for the Society. I'm looking forward to the new season". He then spoke of the December Fund Raiser, which will be a little different; and next month's Musicale on October 7th. This will be very special. John Bustin, Dean of theatrical reviewers in Austin, will be the guest of honor, and the program will highlight performers John likes.

Frank then took over as M.C. listing the cast for the evening's theme: *The Yeomen of the Guard*: David Beussman as Col Fairfax; Michael Lucas as both the jailor Shadbolt and Sgt. Meryll; Frank as Jack Point; Katharine Shields as Elsie; Janette as Phoebe; and Enid Hallock as Dame Carruthers.

Frank told us that the opera opens with Phoebe alone on stage, instead of the usual rousing opening chorus. Gilbert was so nervous about how this would be received that Jessie Bond, the original Phoebe, finally had to tell him to go away or she wouldn't be able to sing. Janette sang the plaintive "When maiden loves," and Enid followed with the grim and stirring song "When our gallant Norman foes," with the cast singing the chorus of yeomen.

In the Tower of London, young Col. Fairfax is impri-

soned, to be executed that day. A greedy relative has accused him of sorcery, and will inherit his wealth if he dies unmarried. Sgt. Meryll's daughter Phoebe loves Fairfax and hopes to save his life. David sang Fairfax's song "Is life a boon?" Fairfax asks permission to wed the first young woman who appears, in order to cheat his relative of the inheritance. Jack Point (a strolling jester) and Elsie (a strolling singer) arrive and sing "I have a song to sing, O!" with Frank and Katharine in these roles.



Frank told us that Sullivan was searching for a melody for this piece and asked Gilbert for help. Gilbert said "Only a rash man asks me to hum, but the situation was desperate" and he did contribute the tune Sullivan used. For 100 Crowns Elsie is asked to marry "a man who is about to die". Elsie agrees because she needs the money to help her sick mother. Elsie is blindfolded and led off to marry Fairfax. Katharine then sang Elsie's song "'Tis done! I am a bride!"

In a clever scene Phoebe flirts with Shadbolt, who loves her. She steals his jailor's keys, which Sgt. Meryll takes in order to set Fairfax free. Phoebe then returns the keys to Shadbolt, and runs off, without his guessing what has gone on. Janette sang "Were I thy bride" to Michael Lucas as Shadbolt.



Fairfax then enters beardless and dressed in the uniform of the tower warders (the Yeomen), a disguise which will keep him safe while he awaits the hoped for reprieve. There is great excitement when it is discovered that the prisoner is gone, and Elsie faints in the disguised Fairfax's arms.

Frank sang "Oh! a private buffoon is a light-hearted loon" followed by the duet with Michael "Hereupon we're both agreed" in which Point persuades Shadbolt to say he shot Fairfax, who then drowned in the river. In return Point promises to teach Shadbolt all the tricks of being a jester. There followed the quartet "Strange adventure" sung by

Note: The drawings in this Newsletter were done by Gilbert, and signed "Bab". He made several for each opera. He illustrated his book of comic verses "Bab Ballads" in a similar vein. Some of the Ballad plots reappeared in the Savoy operas (notably *Pinafore*).

Katharine, Enid, David and Michael, in which they sing of the plight of Elsie, wedded to a doomed man, whom she never saw, and who has now escaped. When Shadbolt announces that he has killed Col. Fairfax Jack Point, who loves Elsie, immediately presents himself to her. Fairfax, Elsie, and Phoebe then instruct Point in "A man who would woo a fair maid", sung by David, Katharine, and Janette. But actually the disguised Fairfax is wooing Elsie, who has fallen in love with him, and Point is beside himself.

Phoebe lets slip that she had helped Fairfax escape, and is obliged to promise to marry Shadbolt to buy his silence. Dame Carruthers overhears some of this and Sgt. Meryll has to promise to marry her to keep her quiet. Michael and Enid sang the duet "Rapture, rapture!" and as Enid sang "Joyful, joyful!" Michael sang "Ghastly, ghastly!" Elsie is united with her beloved, who of course turns out to be Fairfax, to whom she is already married. Frank and Katharine sang the reprise "I have a song to sing, O!" and as the opera ends in rejoicing Point falls senseless at Elsie's feet.

Robert asked us how is *Yeomen* different from the other G&S works? The words are funny, the music is beautiful -- Gilbert and Sullivan thought it was their best. But it is not really happy with everyone joining hands at the end. It's closer to grand opera. Does Jack Point die? He is a tragic figure. Frank pointed out that *Yeomen* is the only G&S opera that is not a satire on British life and mores. The comedy comes from within the characters.


To finish off the evening Bill sang the introduction and we all stood for a lusty rendition of "Hail Poetry!" And with "Now to the banquet we press" we were off to enjoy the delicious refreshments and friendly sociability.

Editor's Note: At our June Musicales three G&S songs referring to the moon were sung. I noted with interest that in "I have a song to sing, O!" in *Yeomen*, Jack Point starts off the famous duet with the words "It is sung to the moon by a lovelorn loon". Does anyone think of any other Gilbertian references to the moon? Let me know!

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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.

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• DECEMBER GALA •

Remember our traditional  
Holiday Season All Star Gilbert & Sullivan  
Revue

Coming in early December  
This is our yearly Fund Raiser

Place and exact time to be announced. We're planning  
to include some excerpts from *Cox and Box*.

We're also considering holding a **Silent Auction**.  
This would require space for display, and people willing  
to solicit donations for auction.

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**on the committee to run a Silent Auction**  
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**Honor JOHN BUSTIN**  
**Come to our Monthly Musicale**  
**Monday, October 7 1996 at 7:30 pm**  
**At Paula Tyler's (See p.1)**