# The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin January 1997 Newsletter

Reba Gillman, Editor

### Annual Meeting and Musicale

- Monday January 6, 1997 at 7:30 pm at Pearl Amsters, 2304 Hartford Road, 472-7028. Please bring munchies.
- In addition to a musical program there will be a short business meeting 1) to elect officers; 2) to vote on amendments to the Bylaws.

The proposed amendments will be available at the meeting. Or you may ask for a copy earlier by calling the Society office at 472-4772. An abstract appears inside this Newsletter. The nominating committee will propose the following slate of officers, who have all agreed to serve another year:

President	Libby Weed
Executive V.P.	Paula Tyler
Production V.P.	Chris Buggé
Publicity V.P.	Edward O. Kluth
Secretary	Reba Gillman
Treasurer	Bill Hatcher
Historian-Parliamentarian	Larry Shepley
Directors-at-large	to be selected by the
	Executive Board



Rep. Lloyd Doggett, Libby Weed, Bill Hatcher

### • Message from your President •

There wasn't a better show in town Sunday night, December 8. Hands down, the Gilbert & Sullivan Society's bash was the way to usher in the holiday season!

Beginning with our wassail hour, we had a marvelous time. The silent auction, our first such venture, was a success because of the incredible dedication and boundless energy of our Executive Vice President Paula Tyler. Paula and her committee (Bob Sharron, Allise Burris, and Kay Novak) took on a difficult task and made it great fun for us.

Janette's beautifully choreographed show, with sparkling performances by Susan, Stacey, Cynthia, Mary Alice, Frank, Allen, Dan, David, and Jess was a delight to the ears and eyes. Then there was Pepe--Jose Greco II--bringing the audience to its feet with his powerul and moving flamenco dances. After the encores, there was a sumptuous champagne buffet, with delectable main dishes augmented by our own members' wonderful side dishes and desserts.

All of that was enough to constitue a full and wonderful evening, but there was still more! We sang, talked, and enjoyed the lovely sounds of John Gregory's piano stylings in a lively social hour after the performance.

To add to all of this, we had the presence of our very special guest, Representative Lloyd Doggett of the U.S. House of Representatives. He just had to be there on such a history-making occasion, after all it was the efforts of his office that had tipped the balance and led to the unprecedented decision by the IRS to open a padlocked theatre and allow our show to go on.

Toward the end of the evening, we even had the presence of a few IRS agents, reminding us that we had to clear the theatre by the designated hour and remove every dish and paper we brought in before the padllocks were put back in place. Talk about adding drama to an already dramatic event!

Perhaps you followed some of this exciting story in the newspaper and on television in the days leading up to our gala, but very few know the scope of Robert Mellin's heroic efforts to preserve the evening. He was determined when nearly anyone else would have been hopeless, and he persevered until the Gilbert & Sullivan Society was assured that it would indeed be the closing act for Capitol City Playhouse. Some day, I hope you all get to hear the story of the week that led up to the Miracle on 4th Street.

\* \* \* \* \* \* Libby Weed \* \* \* \* \* \*



## • The Miracle on 4th Street • by Robert Mellin, Executive Director

Everyone knew that the Gilbert & Sullivan Society was to have our annual All-Star Revue Fundraiser at Capitol City Playhouse on December 8. It was to be the last show ever in that historic theater. Even world famous Flamenco dancer Jose Greco II agreed to be in the show so he could dance one more time on the stage at Cap City. Suddenly on Monday, December 2 the IRS seized the theater for non-payment of taxes. What to do? The nightmare of trying to change venues at the last moment forced me to attempt the impossible. I wanted the IRS to open the theater if only for our one performance. After all, the G&S Society didn't owe the government any money!

Consulting with our legal advisor Judy Frederick of the law firm of McGinnis, Lochridge & Kilgore, and the helpful people at Bank One, we tried to assure the IRS of the security of the contents of Cap City during our use. Even though the IRS was at least listening to us, we needed more clout. Then I realized that we were to do a mini concert on Wednesday for the West Austin Democrats at the home of Society member Wally Ellinger. I called him and he quickly contacted our Congressman Lloyd Doggett and soon I was part of a conference call with his staff. That started things moving. All the organizations and individuals concerned, including the Board members of Gilbert and Sullivan and Cap City, began talking to one another, trying to see if some sensible way could be found to get the theater opened. Even Ex-congressman Jake Pickle was interested in helping us. But the status of negotions moved up and down and in and out. At some point, the IRS wondered out loud why should they even consider doing this. What's in it for them? There had never been a precedent for temporarily opening a premises after it had been sealed. And I was beginning to fear that the financial guaranties they were asking might be too risky.

However, a meeting was called for 12 noon on Friday at the IRS office, which is normally closed on Friday. They opened it just for us and they were not smiling. Present were the 2 IRS agents, myself, Society Treasurer Bill Hatcher who had with him a special security check obtained from Bank One, our attorney Judy Frederick, and 2 staff members from Congressman Doggett's office, Richard Arellano and Patti Everitt.

We were joined later by Cap City Board member Sue Bilich. Hope of success rose and fell. At one point I said I had to know for certain by three o'clock. There was to be a show some place in 48 hours and I had to let the world know where it would be. At last, at 3 pm the technical details were agreed to and signed. Our "Miracle" had been

achieved. But I had to get the word out. There were people with paid reservations and those that would like to make them who weren't sure of where the show would be!

At 4 pm Saturday the door to Cap City was opened for us. Immediately Cap City interim volunteer manager and technical wizard Richard Brown with his crew, entered the house, struck the set of *The Glass Menagerie*, cleaned, painted, and made the theater ready for Sunday. They too performed a miracle.

And you know the rest of the story. We had our show with the successful silent auction (the first time we had one), and the delicious Champagne Buffet. People were made happy and our Society raked in money to pay for our varied programs. And we had the distinction of being the last to perform at Capitol City Playhouse. It was a show that almost wasn't, a fitting closure. I think Michel would have approved.

### Goodbye to Cap City; Goodbye to Michel by Reba Gillman, Editor

There must have been many in the audience on Sunday December 8th who felt the mixture of joy and sorrow I felt. This show could not have happened anywhere else. Out of love Jose Greco II danced for Michel, and Capitol City Playhouse, and Robert Mellin had worked his heart out to make it possible. I sat there and remembered countless shows I had seen in that theater, and the spirit of Michel hovered over all. Our performers were wonderful; and Greco is a magnificent artist. He electrified with his focus, his concentration, his incredible technique. It was a wonderful farewell.

### ▼ ▼ ▼ Many Thanks ▼ ▼ ▼ to

Natalie Thompson from Randall's
She and her crew did a fantastic job and provided wonderful
food for the Gala Champagne Buffet

### Thanks Also to John Gregory

His easy piano style brought clusters of people to sing the old favorites around the piano after the show

#### And Thanks to Ernie Welch

His ubiquitous camera shots captured the whole event with professional quality photos

\* \* \* \* \*

### Abstract of Proposed Revisions to

### **BYLAWS**

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin, Texas, Inc.

Section 1 - NAME - No change.

Section 2 - PURPOSE - Deletes reference to distributions to organizations and maintains reference to educational purposes, including production and encouragement of production of G&S operas.

Section 3 - MEMBERSHIP - Connects two paragraphs into one and specifies that categories of membership are established by the Executive Board.

Section 4 - MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS - Modifies statement about regular meetings to indicate that they might not be held in every summer month; states that the officers of the Society shall apprise members of actions of the Board at monthly meetings.

Section 5 - ELECTED OFFICERS - Gives the President the authority to appoint an interim officer to serve until the next regular meeting of the Society in case of a vacancy; maintains the authority of the Society to elect the new officer at the next regular meeting. States that the Executive Board will appoint a nominating committee at least two months before the Annual Meeting each year.

Section 6 - DUTIES OF OFFICERS - Deletes reference to each officer serving ex officio as a committee chair; indicates that committees may be formed and officers may chair them as needed to perform their duties. Defines the Production Vice President as chief production liaison to the Executive Board. Stipulates that one of the duties of the Secretary is to be responsible for the publication of the newsletter. Indicates that the Treasurer shall oversee receipt, deposit, and dispersal of all funds through office staff and the Executive Director; stipulates that the Treasurer shall make a financial report to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

Section 7 - EXECUTIVE BOARD - States that if the Executive Director serves as a member of the Board, he or she shall not participate in discussion or vote on matters concerning his or her position. Section 7A - ADVISORY BOARD - No change.

Section 8 - DAILY OPERATIONS - Substitutes this name for "Committees" and states that the Board may be assisted in its duties by such committees as it may establish. States that the Board may secure the services of an Executive Director to perform the day-to-day business activities of the Society, conduct fund-raising activities, and serve as production manager under the supervision of the Board; also stipulates that the Executive Director shall report on activities at each Board meeting and shall consult with the Board on all activities.

Section 9 - FINANCES - States that membership dues shall be set by the Executive Board for each fiscal year and that dues are payable on each member's anniversary of membership. Indicates that checks may be signed by the Treasurer, President, or Executive Director.

Section 10 - PROCEDURE - No substantive change; clarification in wording.

Section 11 - AMENDMENTS - States that members may propose amendments to the Executive Board at least two month prior to the Annual Meeting; that amendments must be introduced in abstract form in the newsletter immediately preceding the Annual Meeting; and that amendments must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting at the Annual Meeting.

Section 12 - IMPLEMENTING BYLAWS - No change.

Man



Robert Mellin with Cristina and Jose Greco II



At the end everyone was happy



Beverly Seffel, of LCRA Executive Director Robert Mellin and Executive Vice-President Paula Tyler

### The Gilbert & Sullivan Society

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin is organized for educational purposes, including production of the G&S operas in the traditional manner. We produce one large show a year. Our monthly G&S musicales are free and open to all. Our monthly newsletter is sent to our many members and friends. We bring small, quality concert groups to the schools. Students from Adopt-a-Schools are invited guests at our large productions. We award musical scholarships.

### **Executive Board**

President	Libby Weed	837-5441	
Executive V.P.	Paula Tyler	459-4639	
Production V.P.	Chris Buggé	834-7766 (w)	
Publicity V.P.	Edward O. Kluth	476-6209	
Secretary	Reba Gillman	327-2277	
Treasurer	Bill Hatcher	892-3722	
Hist. & Parl.	Larry Shepley	327-1511	
Dir. at large	Robert Mellin	345-5950	
Executive Director Robert Mellin			

#### • Wish List •

#### A Volunteer Costume Mistress

To help organize costumes all year round; our small Concert Group performances need Victorian costumes

Volunteer Office Workers to help with the bulk mailing and other chores

A Volunteer Technical Worker Laser Printer TV VCR

Call 472-4772

G&S Concerts in Schools continue to enchant school audiences. We'll have news of more performances in our next Newsletter.

### • FLASH •

Two of our members are celebrating Christmas by acting in Austin shows. Robert Rudié plays Scrooge in the Zach Scott production of Dicken's A Christmas Carol, and Allen Lawshae has an important role in The Christmas Schooner, produced by Austin Theatre for Youth.



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 ... Join our society for a mere \$10.

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.

- → Please use this form to join, to renew, or for change of address (and help us keep our mailing list up-to-date).
  - 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 •

Savoyard \$1,000 Grand Duke \$100 - \$249	O Pooh-Bah \$500 O Lord High Patro	n \$50 - \$99	O Major General \$250 - \$499 O Patron \$25 - \$49
O Member \$10 Name	O I prefer to keep my identity an		O I do not wish to receive the Newsletter
Address		Phone	Zip code
Do you work for a co	ompany that matches contributions?	Company Na	ame:



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Come to our Musicale and Annual Meeting Monday, January 6, 1997 At Pearl Amster's