

THE

GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

NOVEMBER 1997 NEWSLETTER

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Guest stars for Dec. 6 Gala named

ROBERT MELLIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Some of Austin's very best performers are donating their talents as part of the Dec. 6 Gilbert & Sullivan Holiday Season All-Star Revue and Champagne Buffet Fund-raiser.

They are (in alphabetical order): Kirk Addison, Sue Bilich, Mary Alice Carnes, Frank Delvy, Kathryn Findlen, Brian Gaston, Dan Girardot, Russell Gregory,

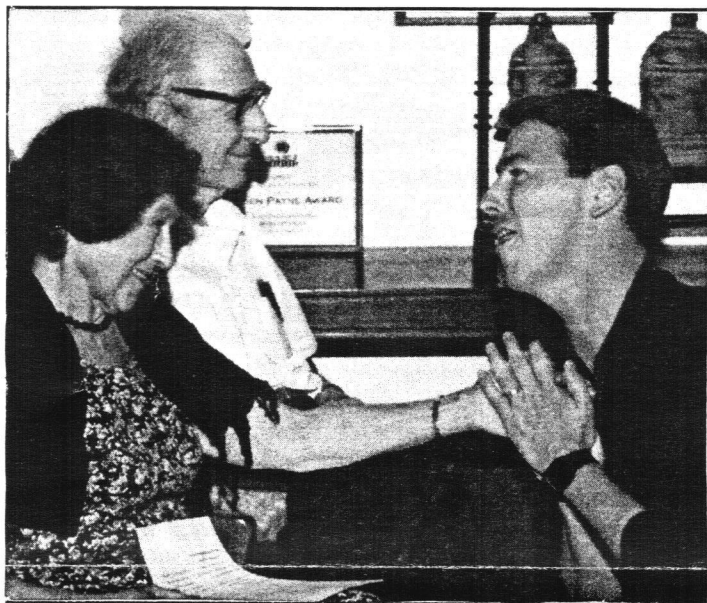
Cynthia Hill, Janette Jones, Karen Kukendall, Ann McKelvey, Scott Schroeder, Katharine Shields, Julie Slim, Amy Stinson, Dan Sullivan and Jess Walters. The stage director is Michael McKelvey and the music director is Dr. David Mead.

Although these artists are quite busy and some have commitments elsewhere which prevent them from performing in regular

full-run productions, they have graciously agreed to be in this one time only Gala.

These performers span the spectrum of performing disciplines, including Shakespeare, grand opera, liturgical, Broadway musicals, cabaret, jazz and even folk. And for this event, however, they will all be performing Gilbert & Sullivan!

Mini bios on these stars will appear in next month's newsletter.



ERNIE WELCH, PHOTOGRAPHER

Dan Girardot serenades Reba Gillman at the October musicale while husband Len pretends not to notice.

Pre-reserve your Gala Tickets

Here is an opportunity for our good society members to assure themselves the best seating for the Dec. 6 Holiday Season All-Star Revue Champagne Buffet before the regular reservation service begins. Simply send a check directly to the G&S office and we will set aside your good seats in the front center section of the theater. But, you must do it now because we need to begin selling tickets to the general public soon. Ticket prices for the Fundraiser are again only \$30 per person (half price for children – how much can they drink?) Write on your checks "For Gala" and send it to us at 2026 Guadalupe, #309 78705. For more information call the office at 472-4772. The public may later buy tickets by calling 454-TIXS (454-8497). Credit cards will be accepted at that time.

Ralph MacPhail, G&S expert, to fly in to direct *The Mikado*

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society is pleased to announce that a guest director will be coming to Austin to direct our spring production of *The Mikado* which will be played at St. Stephens. He is Ralph MacPhail, stage director, teacher of English and theater and internationally recognized expert on the subjects of Gilbert & Sullivan and the D'Oyly Carte Opera Co. A professor at Bridgewater College in Virginia, Ralph is one of our Society's long-distance members and has been for some time.

He and Executive Director Robert Mellin have been meeting the past two years at the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Philadelphia. Ralph is a true Savoyard and believes that productions are the best when they are performed in the manner that Gilbert and Sullivan explicitly intended.

Robert told Ralph that he wished the professor were in Austin so he could direct for us because many of our members would like

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

November Musicale

Monday, Nov. 3, 1997 at 7:30 p.m.

The home of Pearl Amster

2304 Hartford Road

Phone: 472-7028

Come enjoy the fun – bring munchies

Free – everyone welcome

Call the G&S office for more information — 472-4772

66110

Reba's Musicale – October 6th at Paula Tyler's

LARRY SHEPLEY, HISTORIAN

Welcome by Paula, who pointed out that the bathroom was down a rather lengthy corridor ("A long haul to the bathroom," Gary Hallock). Then welcome by President Libby Weed, who asked for a moment of silence to think of John Bustin and wish him a speedy recovery.

Welcome by Robert Mellin, who announced the Holiday Season All-Star Gilbert & Sullivan Champagne Buffet Fund-raiser; It will be on Saturday, Dec. 6, 1997 at St. Stephens' Helm Fine Arts Center.

Our friend, Dr. David Mead will again be the music director. Michael McKelvey will be the stage director. There will again be a silent auction, though with more space than at Capitol City Playhouse. He asked for donations. ("A silent auction? But auctions speak louder than words," Gary. "Will McKelvey puntificate?" Bill Hatcher. "Maybe the puntiff in Rome will let him," Gary. "Stop," Reba).

Robert also thanked our Lord High Photographer Ernie Welch. Patrick Bennett presented a special award to Reba from the Austin Circle of Theaters – a recognition that she had been nominated for a B. Iden Payne award as Outstanding Board Member ("I hope she doesn't sit on it, for she could get a Payne in the butt," Gary).

The first musical number was "Schafe können sicher weiden," by Johann Sebastian Bach, with Len Gillman, piano, Larry Shepley and Bill Hatcher, flutes, and Katharine Shields, soprano. Len then told a few stories: Shortly after their marriage, Reba and he were living with his parents. One day, a phone call came in for Mrs. Gillman. "Which Mrs. Gillman?" asked Reba, "The young Mrs. Gillman or the old Mrs. Gillman?" A bit later, when they were living in their own place, they were having a minor tiff, when Reba exclaimed, "Don't talk to me like that or I'll go home to your mother."

About 15 years later, they were at Purdue; things were bad in the math department and Len wanted to leave. Reba was discussing the situation with a colleague of Len's who was less eager to leave. He explained, "Every University has its garbage. The advantage of the Purdue garbage is that I know it and understand it." Reba replied, "Lenny feels quite differently. He's look-

ing for fresh garbage."

In the 1960s, they were at Rochester, where Len was chairman, making slippery deals. After one long day, he came home and said he felt like a slimy politician. "Politician, yes," said Reba, "but not slimy." Lenny asked us, "Now isn't that just about the nicest thing a loving wife can say to her husband when he comes home after a hard day's work."

His final story took place when their last child had left for college. They were alone in the empty nest. They were finishing dinner when Reba asked from the kitchen if Len wanted anything. He replied "A cup of coffee and a girl of about 22." Reba came prancing in wiggling her hips, "What's your definition of about?"

Bob Wall then took over the piano. The next number was by Frank Delvy, who said that he had sung at perhaps 30 to 40 G&S musicales. "And Reba's been at most of them. But here is something I don't think she ever heard me sing:" Gershwin's "I got plenty of nothing."

Gary Hallock got up to read a poem in Reba's honor, but he said that she had asked him to leave out puns. He said he felt like Jack Benny, who, when accosted by a thief demanding his money or his life, paused a long time: "The silence of the hams." He was reminded of the time when he was keeping bees and told his wife that he was going out to collect some honey. She said, "Honey comb your hair, and behave yourself." However his "Rhymes with Reba" was punless.

All of which prompted Lenny to tell of the middle-aged couple walking in the woods where they were wont to court when they were young. At a creek, the man gave his wife his hand to help her across. She said, "You used to carry me across. You were more gallant when you were a boy." "Ah," he replied, "but you were more buoyant when you were a gal."

Gary now has a cable TV show, channel 10 at 10 p.m., Fridays. He said that a mushroom walked into a bar and asked for a drink. "I'm sorry," said the bartender, "but we don't serve mushrooms." "But why not?" replied the mushroom, "I'm a fun guy."

Cynthia Hill, Elsie in *Yeomen*, and stand-in for Mabel in our *Pirates*, who will be in our Gala (as will Frank Delvy, Katharine Shields, and others), then sang Mimi's aria "D'onde lieta" from the third act of *La*

Boheme by Puccini.

Three generations of Hallocks, assisted by Bill Hatcher, then performed. Enid Hallock sang "A lady fair of lineage high" from *Princess Ida*, with the chorus provided by Enid's son Gary, his son Andrew and Bill. The song's premise is that a fair lady was loved by an ape, who, to make himself more presentable, christened himself "Darwinian Man." But his scheme fell through, for "Darwinian man, though well behaved, at best is only a monkey shaved." Afterward Larry Shepley pointed out that October 23 of this year is the 6000th anniversary of creation, as determined in the 17th century by Bishop James Ussher (he counted all the begats in the Bible).

Dan Girardot, tenor and stand-in for Frederic in our *Pirates*, usually can't come to our musicales, for Monday is his scout night. But he made a special trip to sing for Reba. He sang "Take a pair of sparkling eyes" from *The Gondoliers*. And then "I shipped d'ye see in a revenue sloop" from *Ruddigore*.

Frank Delvy, who said that the first show he did with Reba and Len was *The Gondoliers* in 1983, sang "Rising early in the morning" from it. Frank, Dan and Enid then joined for the paradox trio from *Pirates*, beginning "When you had left our pirate fold." Cynthia Hill and Dan Girardot then sang a scene from *Pirates* starting with the recitative "All is prepared," continuing with the duet "Ah, leave me not to pine," and concluding with "Here is love and here is truth."

Bob Mellin then presented Reba with an engraved silver tray in honor of her service to the Gilbert & Sullivan Society. ("She can see herself in it and so will reflect on her years of service," Gary). Reba replied in part, "I get so much out of what I do that I thank the Society for letting me do it."

Libby announced that Jess Walters had called to apologize for not being there, for he had an important meeting on campus. We had just sung the traditional "Hail, poetry" from *Pirates*, when Jess walked in. He sang a song written for him by Roberto Rodriguez, A UT graduate in musical composition, "Pralines and fudge" (recitave and aria, which is marked "allegro glucoso").

We pressed on to the banquet after promising to do so by singing same from *The Sorcerer*.



ERNIE WELCH, PHOTOGRAPHER

Enid Hallock entertains at the October Musicale with the assistance of grandson Andrew Hallock and son Gary Hallock, as well as treasurer Bill Hatcher.

Ralph MacPhail

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to see G&S staged in the traditional manner. It certainly would be refreshing! Ralph responded that he would love to have an opportunity to come to Austin to direct. Mmmnn! It's a great idea, but with serious logistical considerations. But after thinking and discussing, we have developed a plan and it will happen!

Look forward to a very rich and exciting production of *The Mikado* in the spring. You will be learning much more about Ralph (Rafe) MacPhail in the coming months.

In-school concerts continuing, dates to be set soon

We are now actively setting dates for our in-school concert program. The interest and response to these shows is gratifying.

Several music directors and primary and secondary schools around the Austin area have contacted us and expressed a desire for our troupe of professional G&S performers to put on a program.

Performers at our most recent engagement at the Bedicheck middle school were Dan Girardot, Janette Jones and Frank Delvy; Bob wall accompanied on the piano.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin remains committed to spreading the joys of Gilbert & Sullivan to Austin's children.

THE WISH LIST

Donations for the silent auction

Volunteers office workers who can work on short notice and are willing to help with bulk mailing and other chores

A volunteer Choral Director

For our office:
A television
An adding machine
A computer scanner

Thank you Beverly Seffel and
LCRA Employee's United Charities for the
printing donations.

Thank you to all those
corporations already committed to
Sponsoring our Gala:
LCRA, Radian, Fidelity investments
and Davis General Contractors.

October Musicale attendees

Those present were: Members Byron Arnason, Marilyn Babcock, Dona Brooks, Chris and Jean Buggé, Sue Ricket Caldwell, Lucian Chimene, Deacon Crain, Doug and Yvonne Delay, Frank and Donna Delvy, Ron and Louise Geil, Harold Gilbert, Len and Reba Gillman, Sheila Glenn, Enid Hallock with son Gary and grandsons Andrew and TObert, Bill Hatcher, Gerage and Joyce John, John Mast, Nancy McQueen,

Robert Mellin, Lucy Shoe Meritt, Maurie Ommerman and Katherine, Bee Polomé and Chuck Kraus, Diane Radin, Larry Shepley, Katharine Shields, Bob Spiegel, Bernadette Tasher, Paula Tyler, Lord High Pianist Bob Wall, Jess and Emma Walters, Libby Weed, Lord High Photographer Ernie Welch, Benné Willerman and Theresa Wilson; and guests Patrick Bennett, Dan Girardot, Cynthia Hill and Nell Trimble.

Pirates and Yeomen videos available

Good quality videos of our two most recent productions are now available. *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Yeomen of the Guard* can be purchased at the Gilbert & Sullivan office or the Nov. 3 Musicale. Call the G&S office for more information or for office hours.

On both tapes, while the overture is playing, the names of everyone connected with the production and the society are displayed: performers, staff, contributors, corporate and business sponsors and other individuals. Plus, the names of all society members are listed just like in the playbill program.

You must have a copy! If not to see the show, then at least to see your name on the screen! It will make a wonderful Christmas present or other gift for someone. Cost is \$20 for the *Pirates* video and \$25 for the *Yeomen* video, which comes on two tapes. In addition, there are the clever and handsome t-shirts available from most of our past productions (\$10-\$15).

Please check your mailing label

The purpose of this article is to explain how our mailing labels work and to remind our members to do two things: check their labels for their membership expiration date and pay their dues.

We must learn if members who have not paid dues still want information about society events or if they want to be dropped from our list. Most likely, many do not even realize that their yearly fee is past due. We must accept some of the responsibility because we haven't been sending special reminders to those in arrears. We were depending on people to read the membership and renewal form that is part of each newsletter.

The label is easy to use. It will tell you what level of membership you are at right now. For example, if you donated \$10 when your dues came up, you would be designated "Member" on the label. If you donated \$1,000, it would read "Savoyard."

If you are a member, the date on the label will tell you when you need to renew your membership. If your dues are already past due or soon to be due, please pay them as soon as possible.

If your label reads "Development," that means we have placed you in a category for prospective members. You will receive three monthly newsletters free. If you choose not to join our society at this time, you will only be contacted about our big shows. Remember that you can become a member of the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin for as little as \$10 a year.

If your label reads "Comp," we send you the newsletter for free. This applies to corporate institutions, sponsors, media and others.

News of members

Bob Kusnetz, who was president of our Society for seven years, reports from Minnesota, where he now lives with his new family. He travels a lot for IBM, teaching Internet security. He is president of his synagogue and on the board of the Hewbrew Day School attended by his sons. He has attended some performances by the Minneapolis Gilbert & Sullivan Society and hopes to get more involved when he's not so busy. But he still wants to be a lifetime member of the Society in Austin, even though he hasn't been back since he left in May. And the BIG news is that he and his wife are expecting a

RHYMES WITH REBA

For Reba who seems to shun punning
Such word play as mine sends her running
So in spite of my wit I'll
Refrain for a bit while
I practice my poetic cunning

For I know Reba likes a good rhyme dear
So out on this limerick I'll climb here
Branching out, but not punning
Leaving my meter running
You can't knock 'em if you never try'em dear

There are many fine poets I like who
Write verses perverse, and they like to
Use double entendre
Which caused me to wondra
Would she rather I'd just take a haiku?

What a bad reputation I carry here
She asks Enid each month, "Is your Gary here?"
Now more looking, less leaping
And some distance I'm keeping
To keep foot prints from denting my derrière

'Cause she knows a punster's a person
With a penchant for language perversion
Who may daze and amaze you
Professing to praise you
While setting you up for a worse'n

Oh would that she weren't so distressed
By my witty words, so un-repressed
She might see that in spite of
My barbs, there's inside of
Me sentiments seldom expressed

Though aggressive attempts to engage you
In punny wordplay may enrage you
You shouldn't think ill but
Remember Sir Gilbert
Why, that thought alone should assuage you

So I'll offer tonight strictly straight line
In honor of her, six or eight line
I will swear on the gospel
"Sans pun," if that's possible
Don't ask me who wrote it, it ain't mine

BY GARY HALLOCK

The silent auction and you

Deacon Crain donated not only an antique zodiac pressed glass platter, but a valuable large-sized two volume limited edition, no. 33, set of the late James Michener's Texas. The set is signed by Michener and the illustrator, Charles Shaw. Beverly Seffel and LCRA United Charities will contribute a beautiful fancy gift basket. Linda Garrett and Motorola will provide a newfangled hi-tech telephone. Benard Laves of Benold's Jewelers promises a lovely item from his new store at 2900 W. Anderson Lane. Board Member Chris Buggé will again offer for auction the service of a chaffer-driven 1935 Rolls Royce for your special evening on the town.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Holiday Season All-Star Revue and Champagne Buffet Fund-raiser on Dec. 6 will feature a silent auction this year. Many items have already



ERNIE WELCH, PHOTOGRAPHER

Katharine Shields sings at the October Musicale with the accompaniment of Historian Larry Shepley and Treasurer Bill Hatcher on Flutes and Len Gillman at the piano.

been donated or promised, but more are needed. Please donate if you can. Goods as well as services are appreciated.

These are some very classy items. But, we need more to have a successful fund-raising event. Perhaps you can help. Do you have an interesting and desirable item or service that you could donate? Do you have

a business or have a friend that has a business that could contribute to the auction. Remember, prominent recognition will be given to all who donate and the value of items is tax deductible since the G&S Society is a nonprofit organization under section 503 [c] [3] of the Internal Revenue code. Call us for more information at 472-4772.

New or renewal membership form

Please check your membership level on the top of the mailing label. If you are in the "Development" category you will receive three complimentary newsletters. We encourage you to join our society. If you are a member, please check your membership renewal date on the top right corner of the mailing label. If expired or near expiration, your membership needs to be updated! To correct your address, renew your membership or become a member, complete this form and mail it to us at:

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin
2026 Guadalupe, #309
Austin, TX 78705 Phone: 472-4772

Name: (As you want it to appear) _____

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Please Check One:

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- ☐ Pooh-Bah \$500-\$999
- ☐ Savoyard \$1,000 and over
- ☐ I'm interested in becoming a business sponsor. Please call me.

THE GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

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THROUGH PERFORMANCES AND IN-SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

WHAT WE DO:

- Annual Grand Production
- School Outreach concerts
- Free monthly Musicales
- Musical Scholarships
- Monthly Newsletter
- Holiday Season Show

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2026 GUADALUPE STREET
SUITE 309
AUSTIN, TX 78705
(512) 472-4772

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