

THE

GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

DECEMBER 1997 NEWSLETTER

Order Tickets

December 6 All-Star Revue
Holiday Gala Fundraiser
Please call 499-TIXS (499-8497)
Credit Card reservations accepted
Price: \$30 (children half price)

All-Star Revue to be held Dec. 6

Things are looking real good for the Annual Holiday Season All-Star Revue Champagne Buffet Fundraiser. We have put together a stellar cast of Austin stars from many performing disciplines: Grand Opera, Jazz, Shakespeare, Broadway, Cabaret and most importantly, Gilbert & Sullivan. Director Michael McKelvey promises that this year's shows will present some exciting staging and songs new to our revue.

Jess Walters – A world renowned operatic baritone, Jess is an Austin favorite and an active member of the Society.

Dan Sullivan – A matinee idol of Austin theatre, Dan played Sky Masterson in this summer's production of *Guys and Dolls*.

Amy Stinson – Most recently performing as Dulcinea in *Man of La Mancha*, Amy has also played several parts for the Society: Gianetta in *Gondoliers* and Mabel in *Pirates*.

Tickets can be purchased from The Box Office by calling 499-TIXS (499-8497) for \$30, half-price for kids. Credit card reservations accepted without service charge.

The show will start at 8 p.m. at St. Stephens School. Before it begins, the Society will host a silent auction and wassail bowl at 7 p.m.

Bob Sharron is in the process of putting together some hot packages which include

evenings of dining and theatre as well as other exciting combinations. Some magnificent single items, like Deacon Crain's donation of an autographed special two-volume edition of Michener's *Texas*, will be available for bidding too.

However, we still need more items. If you have any items – or services – you wish to donate, please contact the G&S office at 472-4772 or Bob Sharron at 837-7072.

Katharine Shields – Katharine is an active Austin singer and Gilbert & Sullivan soprano.

Jim Robinson – A regional director of Rotary International, this superb tenor is a longtime fan and performer of Gilbert & Sullivan.

Ann McKelvey – A local music teacher and talented actress, Ann last performed in the recent production of *The Man of La Mancha*.

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Robert Mellin, executive director, to leave post

Robert Mellin has announced that he will be leaving the post of executive director effective January 1, 1998. He says that he needs a change and would like to provide the opportunity for someone with fresh ideas and energy to take his place.

Robert has worked for the Society with energy, enthusiasm, and dedication. His love for the wonderful works of Gilbert & Sullivan has kept him going through thick and thin.

Before serving for two years as executive director, he was the Society president for four years. Previous to that, he helped in the areas of production, development and promotions as well as a stage performer.

During his time at the helm, the Society grew in membership and in the size of its productions. Robert initiated the Monthly Musicales, Holiday Season All-Star Gala shows, scholarships and the In-School Concert program.

But Robert is not going away. He will still be a part of Gilbert & Sullivan and the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin.

If you have suggestions for a new executive director, please call Robert Mellin at 472-4772.



Last Meeting and Musicale

REBA GILLMAN, SECRETARY

For the enjoyment of Gilbert & Sullivan, 30 people gathered on Monday November 11, 1997 at Pearl Amster's. Present were members Pearl Amster, Lucian Chimene, Deacon Crain, Reba Gillman, Loel Graber, John Gregory (Carolyn came in later), Bill Hatcher, Ed Kluth, Stuart Inglis, John Mast, Nancy McQueen, Robert Mellin, Lucy Shoe Meritt, Bob Sharron, Larry Shepley, Andrée Sjoberg, Leland L. Smith, Paula Tyler, Lord High Pianist Bob Wall, Jess & Emma Walters, Libby Weed, Lord High Photographer Ernie Welch, Benné Willermann and Theresa Wilson. Guests Sue Bilich, Jim & Sandy Gaston and Shirley Koeller were also present.

Robert welcomed us all, saying it was a small group so he assumed people were saving up to attend the December 6 Gala All-Star Revue at St. Stephens. He said there had been some additions and subtractions from the announced list of performers, and we were lucky to get Jim Robinson to sing. Jim is a fine tenor and longtime Society member, but he's a busy man and we don't often see him. We have also added Sue Bilich, who is widely known as a Jazz singer, and who will sing for us tonight. Some had to drop out because they were cast in other shows. Robert had a few handsome flyers for the Gala, which he showed us and then passed out to anyone who could post one in a strategic spot. More will be available soon.

Bob Sharron, in charge of the silent auction, then spoke to us. He said we had some good gifts already pledged, notably from Deacon Crain, but needed many more. He's looking for two or three people to help him, some to line up quality donations, and some to help with setting up and running the auction. Please speak to him if you're interested.

Jess then started off the musical proceedings by singing "When I, good friends, first came to the bar" from *Trial by Jury*, with everyone singing the chorus. Loel Graber sang "I shipped, d'ye see," the hornpipe from *Ruddigore*, followed by "When a felon's not engaged in his employment" from *Pirates*, with all enthusiastically singing the choruses for both songs. Robert then asked Bob Sharron to sing, and he obliged with a touching rendition of the old ballad "Danny Boy," accompanied impromptu and

without any visible music by the fantastic Bob Wall. Robert then reminded us that one reason we buy tickets to the Gala is to support our In-School concerts. These bring to school children an opportunity to hear and enjoy a type of music they may not have heard before.

Robert then gave the floor to Sue Bilich, who serenaded us with her specialties (no G&S among them, but she's learning "Silvered is the raven hair" from *Patience*). First came "Stormy Weather" by Ted Kohler and Harold Arlen, then "I'll take romance" by Oscar Hammerstein and Ben Oakland, then a Billie Holiday favorite "Beautiful" by Johnny Biche and Jimmy Van Heusen, and finally "Close your eyes" by Bernice Petkere.

We returned to G&S with Bill Hatcher singing an affecting "Willow, tit willow" from *The Mikado*, followed by the rousing "When Britain really ruled the waves" from *Iolanthe*, with everyone joining in the choral refrains. All then sang lustily "With cat-like tread, upon our prey we steal" from *Pirates*. Upon which Robert invited Jess to "do his thing," which proved this time to be the Negro spiritual "Go down Moses." This brought back memories to Robert, who proudly stated that as a boy he had sung this

piece in Philadelphia with Eugene Ormandy. (No doubt with many other school children in some city-wide event.)

President Libby Weed then rose to remind us that "Tis the month of November" which means that it's time to appoint a nominating committee, who will make up the slate of officers to be voted on at the January annual meeting. She urged anyone with ideas on the subject to speak to her or other members of the board and to suggest nominees — self-nomination is allowed. She then asked each board member present to rise and identify him/herself. Only Chris Buggé was missing.

Robert then produced several bags of bread, courtesy of Texas French Bread, and invited G&S trivia questions to be rewarded with bread. Questions, answers and the bread were freely tossed about amid laughter from all. Our guests introduced themselves (Sandy Gaston and her husband are new in town); and Loel Graber volunteered to sing all the parts of a quartet, "The flowers bloom in spring" from *The Mikado*. To conclude we rose to sing "Hail poetry" from *Pirates* and "Now to the banquet we press" from *The Sorcerer*, before passing on to the munching and chatting in Pearl's dining room. A delightful evening as usual.



ERNE WELCH, PHOTOGRAPHER

Michael McKelvey, Sue Bilich, Kathryn Findlen, Katharine Shields and Dan Girardot are members of the cast of the Gilbert & Sullivan Holiday Season All-Star Revue and Champagne Buffet Gala.



*Gilbert & Sullivan Holiday
All-Star Revue
Champagne Buffet Fundraiser*

With Unique Silent Auction & Wassail

Featuring Jess Walters and

**Sue Bilich ☆ Mary Alice Carnes ☆ Frank Delvy ☆ Kathryn Findlen ☆ Dan Girardot
Russell Gregory ☆ Cynthia Hill ☆ Janette Jones ☆ Karen Kuykendall ☆ Ann McKelvey
Jim Robinson ☆ Katharine Shields ☆ Amy Stinson ☆ Dan Sullivan**

Director: Michael McKelvey

☆

Music Director: David Mead

Saturday December 6
Silent Auction & Wassail at 7:00 PM
Show at 8:00 PM, Followed by the Reception

St. Stephens Helm Fine Arts Center
Donations \$30 (children half price)
Call 454-TIXS (454-8497)

12/17

Dec. 6 Gala All-Star Cast

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Karen Kuykendall – A veteran stage actress, Karen is widely regarded as the Queen of Austin cabaret.

Janette Jones – A Gilbert & Sullivan veteran, Janette has played Hebe, Katisha, Buttercup, The Duchess of Plaza-Toro, Ruth and Little Phoebe for Society productions.

Cynthia Hill – A popular Austin soprano, Cynthia played Elsie in this year's production of The Yeomen of the Guard.

Russell Gregory – In addition to his involvement in chorale groups around Austin, Russell has played several parts in our plays: The Mikado, Pirate King and Dick Deadeye.

Dan Girardot – Director of the music program at St. Theresa's Church, Dan was the alternate Frederic in our Pirates and has participated in most of our All-Star Revues.

Kathryn Findlen – Kathryn appeared as Edith in our Pirates of Penzance and is active with Austin Lyric Opera and in their Apprentice Program.

Frank Delvy – Frank is our main patter man. His roles include: Poo-Bah, The Major General, The Duke of Plaza Toro, Jack Point and The Lord Chancellor, a part for which he won the ACOT award as best performer.

Sue Bilich – Although known mainly for her work as a jazz singer, Sue also performs in theater productions as well.

David Mead – This year's music director, as well as last year's, David has a doctorate for conducting from the University of Texas. His specialties include chamber music, writing and coaching.

Michael McKelvey – Our stage director in this year's Gala, Michael played Giuseppi in our Gondoliers and teaches theater and voice. He is kept very busy as an actor, singer and stage director.

Message from the president

LIBBY WEED

Yes, Dec. 6 will be a grand glorious occasion. It will be the perfect event to usher in the season – guests in holiday apparel, a lavish buffet, and a lovely hill country setting on a bluff overlooking the lake.

Yes, it will be a captivating musical evening. Some of the most melodious voices in central Texas will entertain us with some of the most enchanting melodies and delightful lyrics ever written.

Yes, it will be a marvelous social event. People who savor good music will be together taking pleasure in one another's company, visiting with old friends and making new acquaintances.

But our Champagne All-Star Gala has another very important aspect – it is also an extremely important fund-raiser for the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin.

Ticket sales and proceeds from the silent auction will provide the foundation upon which we will plan for our grand production of The Mikado in June of 1998. As our shows have become more professional

and polished over the past few years, with elaborate sets, fine costumes, and top-notch direction, our expenses have risen. Judging from the many positive comments we continue to hear, we don't think any of you want to take a step backward.

That is why full-fledged support of the December Gala on the part of our member-

ship is critical to the coming year. Call today to reserve your ticket and give your support to a most important precursor of next year's opera.

We promise you that the practical benefit you are providing the Society will not detract from the glow of a wonderful evening.

January Musicale and Annual Meeting

January 5, 1998 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

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

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THE WISH LIST

A volunteer choral director

Donations for the silent auction

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

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DEC. 6 GALA G&S GIFT TABLE

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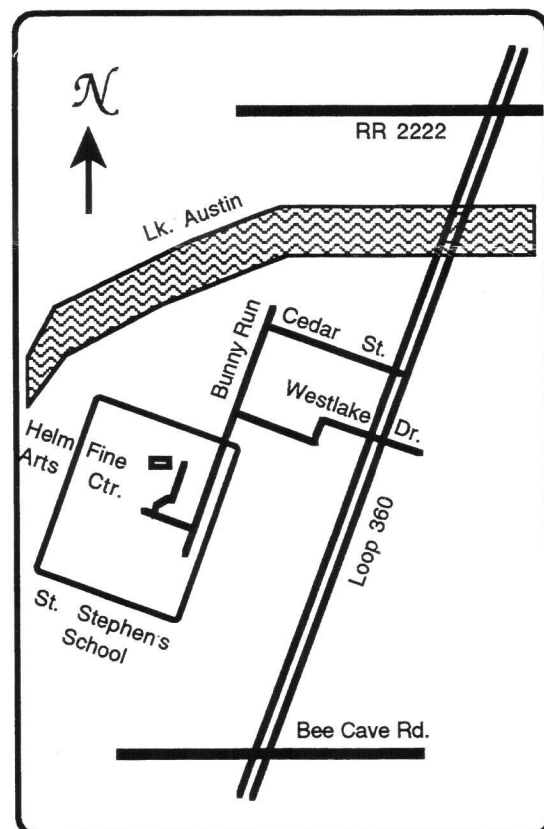
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**Thank you Beverly Seffel and
LCRA Employee's United Charities for
the printing donations.**

Map to Gala



THE GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

MISSION:

SINCE 1976, WE HAVE BEEN DEDICATED TO
SPREADING THE JOYS OF GILBERT & SULLIVAN
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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NEWSLETTER

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DECEMBER 6 HOLIDAY SEASON ALL-STAR REVUE CHAMPAGNE BUFFET
WITH SILENT AUCTION AND WASSAIL

THE
**GILBERT
&
SULLIVAN**
SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

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