

THE

GILBERT & SULLIVAN

SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

FEBRUARY 2000 NEWSLETTER

TOPSY-TURVY

Topsy-Turvy tells of the making of *The Mikado*. It is a movie which has achieved critical acclaim as one of the best films ever made about the theater. (Note: This film has been rated R; it is a long picture, about 2-1/2 hours.) It was voted the Best Picture of the Year by the New York Film Critics Circle and has been praised in *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker* as well as by many other critics, including Roger Ebert.

We have obtained passes for our members and their guests (each pass will admit two). If you would like one or more passes, please call our office (first come, first served). If time permits, we will mail them to you; if not, we will have a table set up in the theater for you to pick them up.

This film promises to be one of the year's major films, and if you do not have a chance to see the preview, please do come during its regular run, which will begin February 4.

Preview screening of Topsy-Turvy

in lieu of our Musicale for the beginning of February

7:00 pm, Tuesday 25 January 2000

The Arbor Theater

in the Arboretum

next to Barnes & Noble, 10000 Research Blvd.

Free passes for our members and their guests

call 472-GSSA (472-4772)

or pick up your passes at the theater

We will meet afterward at a nearby coffee house for "dutch treat" refreshments and our usual conviviality — place to be announced at the theater.

Message from Your President

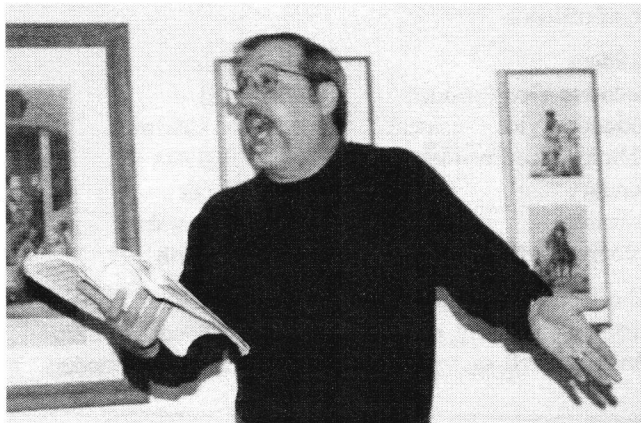
Larry Shepley • President

Hello. Thank you for electing me your new President. Fortunately, my predecessor **Libby Weed**, who has done such a great job, is now Executive Vice President (we switched places), ready, willing, and able to give advice and help me when I flub up. Returning Board Members are **Reba Gillman**, Secretary, **Dave Wieckowski**, Treasurer, and **Leland Smith**, Historian & Parliamentarian. **Sue Ricket Caldwell** is our new Production Vice-President, and **Lucian Chimene** our new Publicity Vice-President. The Board of Directors has selected **Paula Tyler** and **Allan Longacre** to be Directors at Large. In all, this is a great Board (so was the past one!) — expect a lot from us.

I am a retired Physics professor (from UT Austin). My research specialty is the theory of relativity and relativistic cosmology, a great background for appreciating G&S. My first encounter with G&S was in high school in Washington, D.C., where I played flute in *H.M.S. Pinafore*. I've also played in *Princess Ida* and *Iolanthe* and was the arquebus in *Yeoman of the Guard*. I would like to see the orchestra for our productions expanded enough so that I could once again play in an opera (I'm not very good, so the orchestra would have to be large enough to have two flutes), but this is a long term goal, indeed. I like teaching and for many years I taught the Physics Department's course aimed at teaching Teaching Assistants how to teach; so I'm much interested in strengthening our in-school program.

Like most professors, I am not shy about asking others to do things, so I will be calling on you to volunteer. **Mary Roche** is our Volunteer Coordinator, and I will be working with her to encourage more member participation in a variety of projects.

Finally, please do let me know your ideas, your hopes, your concerns. My home phone is 327-1511, and my e-address is larry@helmholtz.ph.utexas.edu.



Frank Delvy — Photo by Maurie Ommerman

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Last Musicale and Annual Meeting

Reba Gillman * Secretary

Like everybody else the G&S Society survived the Y2K weekend. On Monday, January 3, 2000, at Paula Tyler's home, 31 people gathered to do the Society's business and enjoy a pleasant evening of mostly Gilbert and Sullivan. The lights were on and water flowed from the faucets. People's extra Christmas goodies provided the refreshments. Present were Lord High Substitute Pianist Leslie Salas, and members Chris & Jean Buggé, Lucian Chimene, Sue Ricket Caldwell, Frank & Donna Delvy, Len & Reba Gillman, Loel Graber, Enid Hallock, Bill Hatcher, Allan & Barbara Longacre, Lucy Shoe Meritt, Maurie Ommerman (with his trusty camera), Joan Pearsall with her friends Carla Cerisa, Marcela Kourkova, and Linalice Carey, Steve & Eve Schwartzman with guests Jonathan & Evelyn Curtis, Bob Sharron, Larry Shepley, Leland L. Smith, David Tampke, Paula Tyler, Dave Wieckowski, and Theresa Wilson. Linalice Carey was indeed the founding mother of the G&S Society, when in 1976 she convened the interested parties in her old Creek Theater, hanging over Waller Creek and now long gone.

Executive Vice President Larry Shepley opened the meeting, telling us that unfortunately President Libby Weed was ill, so he would preside, which he did and very well, too. He reported that information on the exciting new film about Gilbert and Sullivan, *Topsy-Turvy* was still skimpy [but see the notice on the front page]. However, we do expect to get word of a special early showing on Tuesday January 25th and will keep the membership informed. This raised the question of our scheduled Musicales, and how we might have to rearrange some dates. One consideration is the important fact that this is leap year so we could celebrate Frederic's Birthday on February 29th — a Tuesday [more current information is elsewhere in this Newsletter]. Frank Delvy then took over the program with a little quiz, asking us if anyone knew who had played the key roles in the movie *Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Sullivan*, which appeared some time in the 1940's. No one had the least notion, so Frank told us that Robert Morley had played the part of Gilbert, Maurice Evans played Sullivan, and the part of Richard D'Oyly Carte was played by Peter Finch. Frank then launched into a sturdy "When I was a lad" from *H.M.S. Pinafore*, backed by the audience as chorus and Leslie Salas at the piano.

Turning to the business of the evening, Larry introduced Bill Hatcher, Chair of the Nominating Committee, who presented the slate of officers:

President	Larry Shepley
Executive Vice-President	Libby Weed
Production Vice-President	Sue Ricket Caldwell
Publicity Vice-President	Lucien Chimene
Secretary	Reba Gillman
Treasurer	Dave Wieckowski
Historian/Parliamentarian	Leland L. Smith

Bill remarked that Larry had served on the Board for several years, most recently as Executive Vice President. He introduced Sue Caldwell, saying that she had been one of the founders

of the G&S Society in Austin. She had come to Austin from California where she had been an active member of the Los Angeles Savoy Artes. Her father was British and used to quote Gilbert around the house, and Sue only learned much later that there was music to those words. Bill introduced **Lucian Chimene**, who was born in Austin but moved to New York City, where he had a long career in radio. When he retired a few years ago he returned to Austin, where he joined the G&S Society, and has been an active member in the A. Mozart Fest. He has made recordings for the blind, and volunteered at KMFA and other local arts organizations. Steve Schwartzman moved that we accept the slate as proposed; Maurie Ommerman seconded the motion, which passed. Larry asked if there were any other nominations, and when there were none Loel Graber moved that we elect the slate by acclamation. Enid Hallock seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Returning to the musical program, Frank introduced "Willow, Tit-Willow" from *The Mikado*, and asked if anyone knew what famous movie icon bellowed "Tit-Willow" in his last movie. The answer turned out to be John Wayne in *The Shootist*, when co-star Lauren Bacall was singing "Willow, Tit-Willow." Frank then asked us what famous opera star was a direct descendant of Sir Arthur Sullivan. The answer to that was soprano Kiri Te Kanawa. Len asked how she could be a "direct descendant" since Sullivan was never married and had no children. Frank's only reply was to sing "Willow, Tit-Willow."

Leslie then changed gears and accompanied herself singing her favorite song from *The Phantom of the Opera*. Near the end of the opera Christine is visiting the grave of the phantom, realizing that she never knew how much she would miss him. Frank then joined Leslie to sing "I have a song to sing, O!" from *The Yeomen of the Guard* with Leslie accompanying as well. Frank commented that there were lots of substitutes tonight: Larry instead of Libby, Leslie in place of Bob Wall, and Frank taking over the program at the last minute from Allen Lawshae who wasn't able to do it.

Frank told us of one more G&S-movie connection. In the 1993 movie thriller *The Hand that Rocked the Cradle*, all the background music came from G&S, mostly *Pinafore*. Loel Graber then came forward as a volunteer to sing with Frank "There lived a king" from *The Gondoliers*. At Paula's request Leslie sang the torch song "I'm gonna love you". Then Loel sang the Captain to Frank's Dick Deadeye in "Kind Captain, I've important information." Len Gillman was then prevailed upon to sing Tom Lehrer's "The Elements" as set to the Major General's song in *The Pirates of Penzance*. He accompanied himself at the piano. After singing this complicated, tongue-twisting patter song, listing over 100 elements, he remarked that the list of elements in Aristotle's day had been a lot simpler: "There's earth, and air, and fire, and water."

To finish off the evening Frank sang "I am the Captain of the Pinafore." Loel sang the Pirate King lead-in to "Hail Poetry" from *Pirates*, which we all rose to sing. Then with an enthusiastic "Now to the banquet we press," from *The Sorcerer*, on to the goodies and good fellowship. Thank you Paula, for your warm hospitality!

News of Members

Andrew Hallock will spend the spring semester in Southampton, England as part of the UT Study-Abroad Program. He is especially interested in the emphasis on choral music there. He also hopes to connect with some G&S performances. His parents, **Chris and Gary Hallock**, are trying to figure out a way to find it essential to go over and escort him home in June.

It is with sorrow that we report the death of **Malcolm Russell Gregory**, the father of our members **Russell and Carolyn Gregory**. He was an eminent figure in the musical life of Austin, and will be sorely missed.

Topsy-Turvy Schedule of Musicales

Since we will be gathering the members at the January 25th special showing of the movie *Topsy-Turvy*, we plan to skip the usual February 7th (first Monday) meeting. For the Monday March 6th Musicale we will plan a special program for and by our visiting Director, **Rafe MacPhail**. This means that we have to skip any observance of February 29 — Frederic's Birthday. We suggest that you all remember him on that day.

Treasurer's Report

The annual treasurer's report is available upon request. If you are interested in seeing or obtaining a copy, please call our office at 472-4772

Newsletter and Bulk Mail

Are you getting your Newsletter after the Musicale it announces? or not at all? Please let us know by calling the office at 472-4772 and leaving a message. Bulk mail delivery is erratic and we're doing the best we can, but we need to know about the failures.

E-Mail

Would you like to receive announcements of Musicales, Productions, and Special Events by e-mail? If so, please send us a message at our e-mail address gilbsulv@altavista.com. (It may take us a short while to set up e-mail notification.)

Many Thanks to the following corporate sponsors of our production of *Patience*

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Many thanks to IBM for a generous donation.

New or renewal membership form

We encourage you to join our Society. If you are a member, please check your membership renewal date on the top 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, Texas 78705 Phone: 472-4772 (472-GSSA)

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The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin

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(512)472-4772 [472-GSSA]

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Arts Intern

Newsletter Editor

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Reba Gillman

Larry Shepley

Our web site: members.aol.com/mahitabel/gassa

E-mail: gilbsulv@altavista.com



Audition dates will be in early March.
For details see our next Newsletter.

Our next production • June 29 – July 8, 2000
One of the greatest — and funniest — operas ever staged!

H.M.S. Pinafore

or, The Lass that Loved a Sailor

Directed and Choreographed by Ralph MacPhail, Jr.
Music Director and Conductor: Jeffrey Jones-Ragona
Helm Fine Arts Center, St. Stephen's School



TOPSY-TURVY

Free passes to a preview — see page 1.

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