

THE
GILBERT & SULLIVAN
SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

FEBRUARY 2001 NEWSLETTER

Message from your President

• Larry Shepley

In a somewhat weird Board meeting January 15th (held at an accommodating coffee house), we received the year-end financial report from our Treasurer. I apologize for not having copies available at our business meeting on January 8, but for those who are interested, I'll be glad to send a copy — just call the office at 472-4772. It shows that we lost just under \$12,000 last year, a figure we of course are trying to reverse for this year. Our in-school program, to start off with performances at PlayFest, February 20–25 is proceeding well. Directors Kelly Zinge and Jeffrey Jones-Ragona have a good script, condensed from *The Pirates of Penzance* by Frank Delvy, and a good cast. We mainly discussed on-going concerns, including plans for *The Sorcerer* and our office problem. After the meeting, Brian Gaston and I met with the owners of Bark n Purr Pet Center, and the office they have to rent is so ideal (and so reasonable) that we snapped it up (see the notice elsewhere in this Newsletter). We also decided to continue the experiment of having Musicales on the first Sunday afternoon of each month — our January meeting was on Monday evening since that has always been our traditional business meeting time. Finally, we clarified one important privilege for members: Each member is entitled to a 10% discount on all tickets purchased, not merely on one for each voter. We want each and every member to come to our productions and to bring their family and friends!

Looking ahead, I would like to see more involvement with other arts organizations in Austin. In the past we have had indirect relationships with various other groups; for example, we have long shared singers with the Austin Lyric Opera, and a few months ago we held a reception for Rafe MacPhail in their wonderful new facility. If you have contacts with a group who may be interested in working with us, please let me know. I think the G&S Society, with its history of popular productions, with its expertise on always-enjoyed works of light opera, and with its commitment to education, can work well with others.

During the production of *The Mikado* three years ago, I thought it would be a nice gimmick to have a survey to help us decide on our next production. The choices included *Patience* and *The Sorcerer*, and the winner (by two votes) was *The Sorcerer*. However, for other reasons we decided on *Patience*. But now we are honoring popular sentiment, and *The Sorcerer* will appear next June. This is one of G&S's lesser known operas, in spite of having won the survey. Nonetheless, it is delightful. Perhaps the Gilbertian barbs are not as pointed as in later works, and Sullivan's music is not as sophisticated, but the fact that we end each Musicale by singing "Now to the banquet we press" from *The Sorcerer* shows how tuneful it is.

One of my favorite arias is Dr. Daly's ballad in the first act. With a few changes, it can even be adapted to academia:

(Enter Dr. S____, Professor of Antiquities at The University)

Recitative

The air is charged with amatory numbers—

Soft madrigals, and dreamy lovers' lays.

Peace, peace, old heart! Why waken from its slumbers

The aching memory of the old, old days?

• Next Meeting •

• Our monthly Musicale •

Sunday February 4, 2001, at 3 pm
At Paula Tyler's: 4400 Balcones Drive
459-4639

• Please bring munchies •

Len Gillman will call on his extensive knowledge and experience in sprightly analyses of Sullivan's music, branching out to remarks about Gilbert's libretti. Some trivia about both S and G will round out the picture.

The March Musicale will take place on Sunday, March 4, 2001, at 3 pm. We are invited to meet at the home of member Marjorie Saad, at the corner of Jefferson and Westover. Save the date. Director G'ann Boyd will provide the program and promises to involve us in Acting Exercises.

BALLAD

Time was when Love and I were well acquainted.

Time was when we walked ever hand in hand.

A saintly youth, with worldly thought untainted,

None better-loved than I in all the land!

Time was, when coeds of the noblest station,

Forsaking even athletic men,

Would gaze upon me, rapt in adoration—

Ah me, ah me, I was a Teaching Assistant then!

Had I a headache? sighed the coeds assembled;

Had I a cold? welled forth the silent tear;

Did I look pale? then half a class would tremble;

And when I coughed all thought the end was near!

I had no care—no jealous doubts hung o'er me—

For I was loved beyond all other men.

Fled chaired professors and learned deans before me—

Ah me, ah me, I was a Teaching Assistant then!

As you can tell, I identify with Dr. Daly, but alas, I do not get to marry a pretty ingenue at the end of Act II.

Last Musicale and Annual Meeting

Reba Gillman • Secretary

On Monday January 8, 2001, we gathered at Paula Tyler's home for our Musicale and annual business meeting. Present were 25 members and guests: Lucian Chimene, Len & Reba Gillman, Loel Graber, Bill Hatcher, Allen Lawshae with JoAnn Reeves, George & Nancy McQueen, Robert Mellin, Lucy Shoe Meritt, Joan Pearsall, Bob Sharron, Larry Shepley, Leland L. Smith, Bob & Catherine Tull, Paula Tyler, Emma Walters, Libby Weed, and Theresa Wilson with Cindy Brandt and Bob Jeffrey, and General Manager Brian Gaston, and Director of *Sorcerer* G'ann Boyd.

President Larry Shepley introduced the current Board members, except for Sue Ricket Caldwell and Dave Wieckowski who at the last minute found they were unable to be present. He then introduced Bill Hatcher, who had served as the chair of the Nominating Committee, with members Allan Longacre and Theresa Wilson. Bill said that the current Board members had all agreed to continue in their jobs and that the committee therefore recommended that they be re-elected to continue the work they had been doing so well. There were no nominations from the floor. Allen Lawshae moved that we accept the slate as presented; George McQueen seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The slate:

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

Larry explained that he did not have the year-end financial report, but went over a few figures comparing those of 1999 with those for 2000. In broad terms the income for 1999 was about \$51,000, whereas the total income for 2000 was about \$50,000. Our expenses are exceeding our income and the deficit in 1999 was about \$7,400; for 2000 it was about \$9,500. In response to questions Larry stated that our main expenses were 1) Administrative; 2) Newsletter; and 3) Production. Questioners wanted more specific information and were told that the year-end Financial Report would be mailed to them as soon as it was available. Copies will also be available at the next Musicale for anyone interested. [Or call the office to request a copy.]

Larry explained the new dues and donor structure (see page 3). He also explained that the In-School program will be using a 1-hour reduced version of *The Pirates of Penzance* written by Frank Delvy, and will play their first date for the PlayFest at the Dougherty Art Center, February 20 through 25, 2001 (see announcement on page 3). There will be five performers; Kelly Zinge will be the Stage Director, and Jeffrey Jones-Ragona will be the Music Director. Larry displayed a tentative version of a study guide for teachers to use with their students. Copies will be left out for interested members.

Larry announced that Jeffrey Jones-Ragona would be the Music Director for this year's production of *The Sorcerer*, but that our stage director Ralph MacPhail, Jr. has asked for a year off. We hope he'll be

back in 2002 for our proposed production of *The Pirates of Penzance*. Meanwhile G'ann Boyd will serve as stage director for the 2001 production of *The Sorcerer*. Our General Manager Brian Gaston came up to introduce G'ann, a former teacher and long time director both here and in Houston. G'ann told us "I don't pretend to be a knowledgeable G&Ser. but I promise to do the show with proper respect for how Gilbert and Sullivan would have liked it." Brian hastened to add that G'ann had worked with the Houston G&S Society and was not a complete neophyte. G'ann will lead our February Musicale in Acting Exercises, which promises to be an interesting experience. She said the goal is to help participants be comfortable on stage, and advised the ladies to wear pants and comfortable shoes.

Our new office location is temporary, and will soon be replaced. Lucian Chimene, Vice President for Publicity, said he will urgently need help on publicity, and requested volunteers from the membership (call him at 328-4810).

Larry introduced Len Gillman to do a "warm-up" on the Tribute to Jess Walters (postponed to an unknown date). Since the hi-fi equipment was downstairs Brian was pressed into service to operate it, and Len played us a CD of Jess singing a duet from *Aida* with Maria Callas. This was followed by a recording on the same CD of Jess singing "I'll tell you how I came to be a judge" from our 1982 production of *Trial by Jury*. These excerpts from the past were very impressive. Len also played an excerpt from the cassette of our *Trial* featuring "the defendant" (Edwin), played by Bruce Douglas. Len then illustrated how "Tink-a-tank, tink-a-tank, tink-a-tank," the refrain of Edwin's song "When first my old, old love I knew" could be heard as "Happy Birthday to you." He had been reminded of this by someone's birthday — whose? His!

Len also displayed some magnificent pictures of Jess and others in this performance of *Trial by Jury*, as well as one of Jess advertising a moped. These were laid out for people to view afterward. A few people expressed interest in ordering copies of the CD and also the cassette of our production of *Trial by Jury*.

Loel Graber came up to sing the Pirate King's introduction and we all rose to sing "Hail Poetry" from *Pirates*, followed by "Now to the banquet we press" from *The Sorcerer*. Len had left his music reading glasses home, but he obliged with the accompaniment. Thereafter all enjoyed the delicious nibbles provided by our members, and the refreshing drink provided by our gracious hostess, Paula Tyler.

* * * * *

News of Members

With sorrow we report the death of Virginia Storey. She was Terri Wilson's mother and used to come regularly to our Musicales.

* * * * *

The Tribute to Jess Walters

There is still no date for this postponed event. We will pass on the word whenever we get it. We have been asked to provide a "rousing chorus" for the event - the sequence with police and young ladies from Act II of *The Pirates of Penzance*, which starts "When the foeman bares his steel" has been suggested.

* * * * *

Trial by Jury • Audio Cassette

Copies can be made from Len Gillman's high quality original of our 1982 production with Jess Walters as The Learned Judge. Price will depend on number ordered.

To order, call Len at 327-2277.

New Office

At the end of February, we will move into a nice, new office, above the Bark n Purr Pet Center at 4604 Burnet Road. We are especially pleased that Eddie & Carol Floyd, the owners, have become supporters of our Society! Our phone number is still 472-4772, and it is best to write us at our Post Office Box:

P.O. Box 684542, Austin, Texas 78768-4542

PlayFest

Austin Circle of Theaters and Dougherty Arts Center will present its ninth annual PlayFest, the nation's only ten week professional festival of performance for children. Six companies will launch the winter portion starting in January. PlayFest 2001 includes Austin's favorite children's theater troupes and story-tellers. The G&S Society is well represented in their winter schedule:

Jan. 23-28: *Alice in Wonderland* (Second Youth Family Theater)
Jan. 30-February 4: *The History of Art in Forty Minutes or Less* (Austin Children's Theater Company)

Feb. 6-11: *Aladdin and His Magic Lamp* (The Harms Marionettes)
Feb. 13-18: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Project InterAct and the Rude Mechanicals)

Feb. 20-25: *The Pirates of Penzance* (The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin)

Feb. 27-March 4: *Hold On to Your Dreams* (Carl Anderson, Ph.D.)

PlayFest will be at Dougherty Arts Center, 1110 Barton Springs Road. Times will be 10 am Tuesday - Friday and 3 pm Saturdays & Sundays. Prices are \$5 per person; PlayPasses (8 tickets) are \$36; larger group rates available. For tickets/info call: AusTix, 454-TIXS (454-8497); group sales: 312-2095 (8-5 pm, M - F).

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H.M.S. Pinafore Video

Now Available

\$25 Including Shipping and Handling
Send check and order to the G&S Post Office Box
P.O. Box 684542, Austin, TX 78768-4542

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Many thanks to IBM for a generous donation.

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Membership and Donor Levels

The Board has decided to set membership dues, voting privileges, donor levels, and other benefits as follows:

Individual	\$20	One vote
Family or Group	\$30	Two votes
Youth, aged 18 & under	\$10	One vote
Senior, aged 65 & over	\$10	One vote

Benefits of membership include a regular Society Newsletter and 10% discount on tickets. Donor levels & benefits:

Grand Duke or Duchess	\$100-\$249
Membership; listed in programs	
Major General	\$250-\$499
Membership; listed in programs; 2 performance tickets	
Pooh-Bah	\$500-\$999
Membership; listed in programs; 2 performance tickets; 2 tickets to opening night reception; donor party	
Pirate King	\$1000-\$2499
Membership; listed in programs; 4 performance tickets; 4 tickets to opening night reception; donor party	
Savoyard	\$2500 & up
Membership; listed in programs; 8 performance tickets; 8 tickets to opening night reception; donor party	

Many Thanks to the following corporate sponsors of our production of *H.M.S. Pinafore*:

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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
P.O. Box 684542
Austin, Texas 78768-4542 Phone: 472-4772 (472-GSSA)

Name (as you want it to appear) _____

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- ☐ Individual: \$20
☐ Family/Group: \$30
☐ Youth (18 & under): \$10
☐ Senior (65 & over): \$10

- ☐ Please contact me for a donation
(For donor levels & privileges,
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☐ I'm interested in becoming a
business sponsor. Please call me.
☐ I'm interested in volunteering.

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Newsletter Editor

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

E-mail: gilbsulv@altavista.com

The Sorcerer

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