

GILBERT & SULLIVAN

JUNE 2001 NEWSLETTER

SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

The Sorcerer

June 8-17, 2001

Helm Fine Arts Center, St. Stephen's School

Director	G'ann Boyd
Chorus Master	Jeffrey Jones-Ragona
Music Director	Pamela Stout
Producer	Brian Gaston
Production Manager	Cheryl Borden
Costumer	Star Costume & Clothier
Set Designer	Dwayne McFarland
Magician	Gus Davis

Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre, an Elderly Baronet

Eric Peabody

Alexis, of the Grenadier Guards — his Son

Holton Johnson

Dr. Daly, Vicar of Ploverleigh

Arthur DiBianca

Notary

Gary Hallock

John Wellington Wells, of J.W. Wells & Co.,

Family Sorcerers

Frank Delvy

Lady Sangazure, a Lady of Ancient Lineage

Catherine Bartoli

Aline, her Daughter — betrothed to Alexis Janet Coker

Mrs. Partlett, a Pew-opener

Christina Dahlberg

Constance, her Daughter

Christine Walsh

Hercules

Michelle Girardot

Chorus of Villagers: Nancy Arnold • Jayna Freeborg

• Andrew Hallock • James Lavender • Boyd Lawrence •

Christiana Little • Becca Lopez • Brad Merrell • Sue

Sewell • Derek Smootz • Sarah Stevens

• Next Meeting - Save the date •

Our Monthly Musicale

Monday

September 10, 2001, at 7:30 pm

Note that this is the second Monday of the month, because Labor Day falls on the first Monday. You will receive further information in our next Newsletter, the September issue.

• First Musicale of the New Season •

Hilly St. Stephen's

A golf cart will be available at the parking lot of St. Stephen's School to ferry our members up to the theater. Thanks to Chris Buggé for providing the cart.



Message from Your President

• Larry Shepley

Ticket sales are strong for our upcoming production of *The Sorcerer*, and Patricia Combs is doing a great telephone and internet job of handling sales. Libby Weed and Paula Tyler are arranging the opening night champagne Gala (and thank you **H-E-B**, a most generous sponsor). The show promises to be lively and Veddy Victorian, thanks to G'ann Boyd's direction — we are most lucky that we could obtain the services of Cheryl Borden (née Boyd!) as production manager. The full Company is listed elsewhere.

As I write this column, I've just read that the nominations for the Austin Critics Table Awards include Claire Vangelisti as Actress and Dan Girardot as Actor in a Musical, and Jeffrey Jones-Ragona in the category of Other: Music Direction, all for their work in *H.M.S. Pinafore* last year. Congratulations!

It's wonderful that they are being recognized; I feel that the rest of the Company, led by Rafe MacPhail and supported by chorus, orchestra and crew, all deserve awards. They definitely deserve our thanks for a great opera, one which was musical and entertaining — just what I expect *The Sorcerer* to be!

Leland Smith is continuing work on the History of our Society; it should be ready for our Fall Fundraiser. In it I note that the Houston G&S Society has put on *The Sorcerer* only once in 50 years. Our production will be our third in 25 years; *The Sorcerer* was our third show, in 1977 (Gary Hallock was the Notary in that production and will be the Notary again this year). I don't know why it isn't put on more often, for the music and words are delightful — no wonder we close each Musicale with a *Sorcerer* chorus.

At our May Board meeting, we heard that the In-School program is starting to take off, with performances at a couple of elementary schools. We request schools to contribute to the cost of this show, but definitely do not demand a contribution if the school lacks resources. Over the summer we will be soliciting more engagements, and I anticipate that the *Pirates in School* company (Jeffrey Jones-Ragona, Lara Britton, Craig Fezer, Janette Jones, Russell Prickett, and Davis Tucker) will be much in demand. Try to see them interact with kids! Frank Delvy and Kelley Zinge have designed an operetta which is just plain fun, aimed at elementary school students — though I would think that high-schoolers would enjoy in, too; certainly a grown-up kid like me enjoys it.

This is a good time to mention polo shirts: Chris Buggé is underwriting Society polo shirts, which we will be selling, hopefully at *The Sorcerer*. They will be high quality, but not high in cost, and will feature a Yeoman of the Guard (rather than a Sorcerer).

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66 6/10

Last Musicale

Reba Gillman • Secretary

The last Musicale of the season was held on Sunday, May 6, 2001, at 2 pm in the pleasant recital hall at the Armstrong Community Music School, 901 Barton Springs Road. 28 people attended, including most of the principals from the cast of our production of *The Sorcerer*. Members present were Arthur DiBianca (Dr. Daly) & Elana Wakeman, Harold Gilbert, Reba Gillman, Enid Hallock, Andrew Hallock (chorus), Gary (Notary) & Chris Hallock, Bill Hatcher, Nancy McQueen, Robert Mellin, Lucy Shoe Meritt, Maurie Ommerman, Mary Roche, Owen Russell, Larry Shepley, Andree Sjoborg, Leland Smith, Libby Weed, and Roxanne Williamson, and our General Manager Brian Gaston. Others present were Jeffrey Jones-Ragona, who has been directing the music rehearsals, G'ann Boyd the stage director, Cheryl Borden the production manager, and singers Catherine Bartoli (Lady Sangazure), Janet Coker (Aline), Holton Johnson (Alexis), and Eric Peabody (Sir Marmaduke).

President Larry Shepley welcomed us and introduced our stage director G'ann Boyd. He told us he had a quiz for us: to identify the opera for each drawing done by Gilbert and signed "Bab" after his childhood nickname. Larry told us he had thirteen such drawings, one for each opera except *Thespis*, some of which he intended to project for us to view. The audience did not do very well on this quiz, although a few members knew the answers. The first drawing proved to be from *Trial by Jury*; the second from *The Grand Duke*, which is certainly little known to most of us. Larry then introduced our General Manager Brian Gaston, who told us that starting on Monday the Society office would be taking ticket orders over the phone. Brian then introduced the cast members who were present, and explained the absences. Frank Delvy (John Wellington Wells) was taking a much needed vocal rest. Christina Walsh (Constance) and Christina Dahlberg (Mrs. Partlett) were also unable to be with us.

With Jeffrey Jones-Ragona at the piano, the program began. Arthur DiBianca as Dr. Daly sang "Time was, when Love and I were well acquainted." Janet Coker as Aline sang "Oh, happy young heart!" Next Catherine Bartoli as Lady Sangazure sang "In days gone by," an aria which a communication from Rafe MacPhail told us has been rediscovered and is available on the internet. It does not appear in the current score, and may or may not be included in our production. There followed the delightful and agitated duet between Lady Sangazure and Sir Marmaduke (sung by Eric Peabody). Parents respectively of Aline and Alexis, they had loved each other long ago, although each married another. In this duet they alternate between restrained polite remarks and wild expressions of passion. Next Holton Johnson as Alexis sang "Love feeds on many kinds of food, I know; Some love for rank, and some for duty; Some give their hearts away for empty show, And others love for youth and beauty. To love for money all the world is prone; Some love themselves, and live all lonely: Give me the love that loves for love alone — I love that love, I love it only!" This sentiment is what drives Alexis in his proposal to use a love philtre on the entire village, so that all can enjoy a bliss like his.

Here Larry interposed another section of his quiz, displaying drawings of 1) Buttercup practicing baby farming in *Pin-afore*; 2) "Silvered is the raven hair" from *Patience*; 3) The Lord

Chancellor "Giving agreeable girls away," from *Iolanthe*; 4) Darwinian man, from *Princess Ida*; and 5) A girl holding a cricket bat, from *Utopia (Limited)*.

Gary Hallock then came forward and said that as the only living member of our original cast of *The Sorcerer* who appears in our present production, he considers himself understudy to the entire cast, and therefore authorized to sing "My name is John Wellington Wells" in the absence of Frank Delvy. This he proceeded to do, to the astonishment of Jeffrey at the piano. Gary said, "Jeffrey didn't hear me sing this for my audition for the part of the Notary, and he doesn't know that I sing it under my breath at every rehearsal. I learned it all from Allen Lawshae!" Skipping forward to Act II, Janet sang "It is my darling's will, and I obey!" as Aline yields to Alexis's demand that she drink the love potion. Art sang Dr. Daly's lament "Engaged to So-and-so," followed by the rejoicing duet "Oh, joyous boon! oh, mad delight!" between Dr. Daly and Aline when they see each other and fall madly in love as a result of the love potion. Alexis enters and responds angrily to this state of affairs, although Dr. Daly explains "Some extraordinary spell, O'er us has cast its magic fell."

Larry then said "We'll leave it in suspense — how does it come out?" G'ann stepped forward to explain that *The Sorcerer* was called an opera comique, and was a spoof on comic operas and Victorian customs. She said it was her theory that Gilbert & Sullivan are like Shakespeare — they're universal, No matter how they are changed and redone they survive and bring something to today's audience.

There were some questions from the audience about the cast (list appears elsewhere in this Newsletter), the magical effects (Gusto the Great, a local magician, has been consulted), and recordings (a video is available as part of a series — call the office to inquire). Larry announced that Jeffrey will teach a two-hour class on Gilbert & Sullivan on June 30 at the Armstrong Music School. Jeffrey told us that he has given this class several times in two two-hour sessions, and will have to find ways to revise this shorter version. Jeffrey also remarked that many people don't know that without Richard D'Oyly Carte there would have been no G&S. Carte recognized the potential of this team and brought them together. He was himself a composer, although not of Sullivan's caliber, and made no attempt to write music for Gilbert's words.

To finish off the afternoon we all rose to sing "Hail Poetry" from *Pirates*, followed by the final chorus of *The Sorcerer*, which happens to be our favorite "Now to the banquet we press." We were then invited to partake of refreshments at the back of the room, with our usual congenial conversation.

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As I've mentioned before, finances dictate that we will be getting along without a General Manager after June. When I think of all that **Brian Gaston** has been doing for us, I somewhat dread the learning curve which we'll be experiencing. However, several people have already volunteered, and more will follow, so even if it takes a bunch of folks to replace Brian, I think we'll do well. Our immediate projects will be our Fundraiser in the fall, *The Pirates of Penzance* next summer, and of course, our on-going work with schools.

News of Members

Frank Delvy is finishing out his second full year in the *Dowser Dan* program. He appeared in about 250 performances in elementary schools all over Austin. He says it's been strenuous but fun.

Marjorie Saad is leaving Austin to live next door to her daughter in Virginia. Her new address:

c/o Julie Sterzing
4475 Lee Avenue
Virginia Beach, VA 23455

David Tampke came to our Open House and says he is enjoying living in Marble Falls near his daughter. His address is:

930 Via Viejo 7W
Marble Falls, TX 78654

Theatrical News from Members: **Allen Lawshae** has just finished a Round Rock run in *Chicago*. The Austin Musical Theater production of *Oliver* is just ending. In its cast were **Colin** (the oldest son of **Chris Buggé**) and **Sheila Glenn**. Sheila is moving soon with her family to Middletown, NY. Several other members of that cast are not G&S members, but have appeared in our shows.

Jeffrey Jones-Ragona will conduct a class "An Introduction to Topsy-Turvydom" on the lives and works of Gilbert & Sullivan on Saturday June 30, 10:00 am-Noon. It will take place at the Armstrong Community Music School of the Austin Lyric Opera; phone 474-2331 for details.

Thanks to



for their support of our Opening Night Gala.

Gilbert & Sullivan Elderhostels

It is not too late to sign up for one of the July Elderhostel sessions in Connecticut run by our very own Rafe MacPhail. Cost for one week, room and board included, \$450.

Held at the charmingly rustic Incarnation Center in Ivoryton, Connecticut: There are walking trails in the woods, a lovely lake with swimming and boating, and total immersion in G&S.

First session: July 8 through 13, concentrates on *Patience*.

Second session: July 15 through 20, concentrates on *Pira-Mika-Fore; or, The Big Three*.

For further information, contact Rafe either by e-mail (RmacPhail@Bridgewater.edu), by phone at 540/828-5342 (office) or 540/828-6656 (home and FAX), or by mail:

Ralph MacPhail, Jr.
Box 114 Bridgewater College
Bridgewater, VA 22812

Or look up the Elderhostel website at www.elderhostel.org

Open House

On Friday May 11, 2001, from 5-7 pm, the Society's new office was open to visitors. 22 people enjoyed the friendly gathering and simple refreshments. Present were members Chris & Jean Buggé (with their three young sons), Lucian Chimene, Frank & Donna Delvy, Len & Reba Gillman, Kay Hill, Allen Lawshae & Jo Ann Reeves, Robert Mellin, Joyce Protzman with guest Mac Payne, Mary Roche, Owen Russell, Rosemarie Schwarzer, Larry Shepley, Leland Smith, and David Tampke with a friend. General Manager Brian Gaston was there to welcome us and introduce our temporary ticket seller Patricia Combs. Patricia is a graduate student at UT studying voice with Rose Taylor. She sat at the computer responding pleasantly to the sociability while taking ticket orders over the phone.

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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Please check membership category:

- ☐ Individual: \$20
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☐ Senior (65 & over): \$10
Membership benefits include our Newsletter & 10% discount on tickets.
☐ My donation of _____ is enclosed.
(For levels & privileges, see below.)
☐ I'm interested in becoming a business sponsor. Please call me.
☐ I'm interested in volunteering.

Please consider contributing to The Society at one of the following **Donor Levels**: **Grand Duke or Duchess** (\$100-\$249); **Major General** (\$250-\$499); **Pooh-Bah** (\$500-\$999); **Pirate King** (\$1000-\$2499); **Savoyard** (\$2500 & up). Donors receive various benefits, including membership, listing in programs, and other benefits. Please call our office for further information.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin

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The Sorcerer

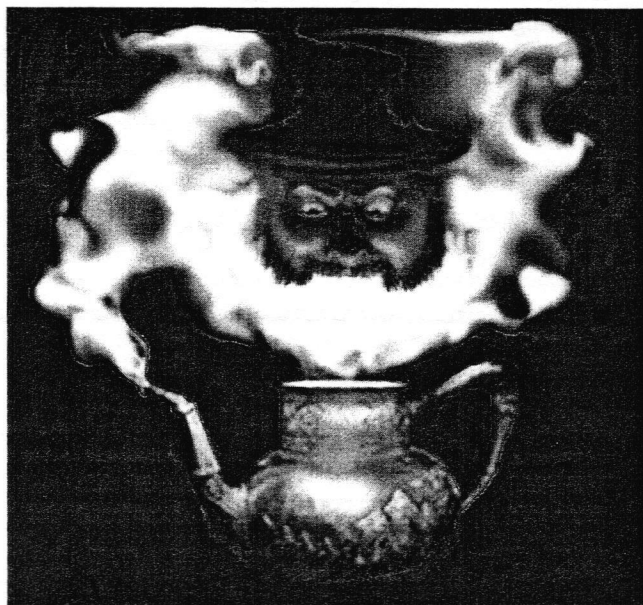
June 8-17, 2001

Helm Fine Arts Center, St. Stephen's School

Tickets (reserved seats):

On-line: <http://www.gilbertsullivan.org>

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