

# GILBERT & SULLIVAN

FEBRUARY 2002 NEWSLETTER

SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

## • Next Meeting and Musicale •

♥ Celebrate Early  
Vanlentine's Day with Libby  
Monday February 4, 2002, at 7:30 pm

At Paula Tyler's: 4400 Balcones Drive;  
459-4639 ♥

♥ Please bring munchies, especially  
those suited to the occasion

Enjoy a program of Gilbert and Sullivan  
songs related to love  
Planned by Libby Weed ♥  
Faith DeBow at the piano

Next Board Meeting  
Tuesday February 12, at 7:00 pm ♥  
at Paula Tyler's ♥

Looking Ahead • Save the Date  
Monday March 4, 2002, at 7:30 pm

The do-it-yourself *Princess Ida*  
At Westminster Manor  
Directions in the March Newsletter  
See the Cast & Crew Call on the last page

## Plan a Musicale

- April 1 and May 6 dates are available
- Bring your interests and talents to the monthly gathering.
- Find ways to involve the audience.
- Plan a sing-a-long. Depart from the beaten track.
- Invite new performers.
- Give a talk about something you know.
- Volunteer!**
- We can suggest accompanists, etc.

## Ida Adamant — from Your President

• Larry Shepley

For the past half year the Board has been struggling with how to run The Society in an efficient, business-like manner, as we reported in our business meeting January 7. Unfortunately, coporate and government funds have not been forthcoming — we are working on these sources — but on the positive side, our office expenses have been brought down sharply. We are also reconsidering our production plans. As a consequence, for various reasons (not all financial), we shall not hold auditions on the weekend of March 2-3 as previously planned. Plans for *Pirates* and other productions will be discussed at the next Musicale and at our next Board meeting.

At our Board meeting of January 14, we spent much of our time discussing publicity and fund-raising. A major production such as *The Sorcerer* does bring in a lot of money in ticket sales, but these funds are not enough to meet production costs. We had a budget for *Sorcerer*, and we stuck to it, at least as far as expenses went — and although the theater, sets, costumes, cast, and orchestra were all first rate, we got them at bargain prices. The difficulty was that donations and grants did not meet our expectations. We are not alone with these problems. Many arts companies are having to postpone or even cancel plans in this year of economic retrenchment. Nonetheless, Austin audiences have shown a great interest in theater, and in Gilbert and Sullivan theater especially. Expect to see more publicity about our Society and our productions in the near future, and expect to hear about more aggressive pursuit of grants and corporate donations.

At the Board meeting, we reappointed Chris Buggé and Paula Tyler as Directors at Large; we left one slot open in hopes of finding a younger member. We want to thank Frank Delvy for serving this past year.

— Let me break this narrative with a special word of thanks to Frank for doing such a good job with the Gala. Concentrating on the chorus was a wonderful way to recognize this most important aspect of G&S operas. Jeffrey Jones-Ragona did a superb job as Music Director, with Karl Logue as an excellent accompanist. Those of you who know me know that I appreciate very much the quality of the lavish buffet which Libby Weed, Paula Tyler, Chris Buggé, and Sue Caldwell produced. Thanks also are due to Jean and Ed Smootz, Derek and his friend Jennifer, Chuck Antonie, and Reba Gillman. I know I am forgetting to thank others, and I apologize if I have left anyone out, for the Gala on January 12 was truly a night to enjoy.

*Princess Ida* was also discussed at the Board meeting. It is proving very popular. The venue, the auditorium at Westminster Manor, will be ideal for this concert version, and we could even have an overflow crowd. Please see the cast call announcement elsewhere in this Newsletter; or if you are interested in helping

(Continued on page 3)

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## Last Musicale

*Libby Weed • Substituting for Reba Gillman*

A group of 24 gathered at Paula Tyler's house on Monday, January 7, 2002, for the Society's Annual Meeting. When the absence of secretary Reba Gillman was noted, a few people questioned whether we could legitimately hold a meeting or musicale; but after Libby settled into Reba's chair and promised to do her best, the questioners graciously gave her the benefit of the doubt. Present were members Libby Weed, Allen Lawshae, Harold Gilbert (with guest Cheryl Youngberg), the Smootz family (Derek, Jean, and Ed), Leland Smith, Sandra Grimes, Arthur DiBianca, Martha Schumacher and Errol Olson, Chris Buggé, Robert Mellin, Bee Polomé, Nancy McQueen, David Wieckowski, Bill and Nan Hatcher, Charles Antonie, Enid and Gary Hallock, Larry Shepley, and hostess Paula Tyler.

Larry first gave brief accounts of his travels since the Norwegian trip. He enjoyed a stay with Rafe and Alice MacPhail in Bridgewater, Virginia, and an Antarctic tour. At Bridgewater, he toured the city's interesting but unkempt museum and Rafe's own scholarly, orderly, and utterly fascinating collection. Larry says Rafe's assemblage of G&S memorabilia is far greater than even the wonderful displays he has brought here might indicate. On the Antarctic trip Larry did suffer a touch of seasickness between the Falkland Islands and the southernmost continent, but he also got in close proximity to a number of penguins and observed them stealing pebbles from each other's nests.

Larry then called the annual business meeting to order. Robert Mellin asked to speak first, and he expressed displeasure with recent Society activities and a desire for more ongoing opportunity for the membership to have their voices heard by the board. Robert suggested that each musicale be divided between business and entertainment and that all members be invited to all board meetings. Allen Lawshae countered that he would personally like to let the board do the work of the board, and that he certainly did not want to see entertainment give way to dry business discussions at the monthly musicales. Larry thanked them both and asked if we could proceed with other items of business, promising to return to this discussion.

Treasurer Dave Wieckowski presented the year-end financial statement. The worst news was that the Society lost approximately \$17,000 during 2001, about \$11,500 of that on our production of *The Sorcerer*. This was largely because of (1) a lack of solicitation of corporate and other funding and (2) inadequate publicity. The better news was that since restructuring of Society activity so that we no longer had paid employees, the second half of the year we stayed in the black. Financial statements were made available to members.

Bill Hatcher, who headed the nominating committee that included Allan Longacre and Theresa Wilson, presented the proposed slate of officers for 2002: Larry Shepley, President; Libby Weed, Executive Vice President; Reba Gillman, Secretary; David Wieckowski, Treasurer; Sue Caldwell, Production Vice President; Charles Antonie, Publicity Vice President; and Jean Smootz, Historian/Parliamentarian. Board members from 2001 who had asked to be relieved of their posts were Lucian Chimene and Leland Smith. Both have made wonderful contributions and will be sorely missed on the board.

Before a vote was called, Chuck Antonie surprised the gathering by asking to speak a few words. He said wryly that since board elections were so hotly contested, he would like to make a campaign speech. He then launched into his own version of the Major General's patter song:

I am the very model of Publicity Vice President.  
I like the plays immensely and of Austin I'm a resident.  
At meetings Board I will work hard to move  
the bidness work along;  
At musicales, have wine and cheese and  
maybe off-key sing along.

When meeting members (high and low), I'll try  
to learn the many names  
Of G-S rogues and gentlemen, sweet ladies and majestic dames,  
And at productions, drive the cart or usher  
folks or help with drink.  
I've watched for years and loved it all, and  
now it's time to help (I think).

Tho' clueless of the job details, I have a pulse (it's evident)—  
The minimum requirement of Publicity Vice President.  
I need your vote to win this job, reminding  
you—I'm pleased to say—  
I am the very model of the VP of Publicity.

After wild applause for what may have been the first campaign speech of a G&S Austin board election, Larry opened the floor for other nominations. Bee Polomé then moved and Nancy McQueen seconded that we elect the proposed slate by acclamation, and the group promptly did this.

Larry next gave a preview of the Gala Fund-Raiser to follow on Saturday night, promising a great show. The group planned to do some last-minute publicity by posting flyers, contacting Michael Barnes, and contacting KUT. Derek Smootz reported that two performances of our Pirates In-School program have been scheduled for the spring semester. Larry reminded the group that Art DiBianca, Gary Hallock, and Derek Smootz are directing our March 4 *Princess Ida* performance and invited members to contact them to volunteer to take part.

The group returned to a discussion of issues raised by Robert Mellin. Allen reiterated his defense of keeping musicales entertaining and free from business; he reminded Robert that Robert himself was the one who had encouraged the Society to make its monthly meeting enjoyable musicales rather than boring business meetings. Robert agreed but stated that he still wants members of the Society to have more say in its business, as he did not think the current problems would be solved under the present leadership. Harold Gilbert suggested the use of more committees to do the work of the board, involving more people. After extensive discussion and participation by many members, Paula Tyler moved and Robert Mellin seconded that we reemphasize that our board meetings are open to the membership and publicize them well in newsletters; that we continue to hold board meetings from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. but that the period from 7:00 to 8:00 or no later than 8:30 be devoted to agenda items and that a period from at least 8:30 to 9:00 be an open discussion involving any in attendance; that each speaker would be given a designated amount of time to speak; and that no meeting could last beyond 9:00 p.m. except upon a vote of the assembled group.

It was then announced that the next board meeting would be held at Paula Tyler's house on Monday, January 14, at 7:00 p.m. Harold Gilbert, Allen Lawshae, and most of the other men then took the Pirate King's part in leading us into "Hail, Poetry," while Paula gamely manned the piano. We finished with a mostly a cappella version of "Now to the Banquet We Press" and enjoyed another feast. There was so much good food that several items were held back for Saturday night's buffet.

(continued from page 1)

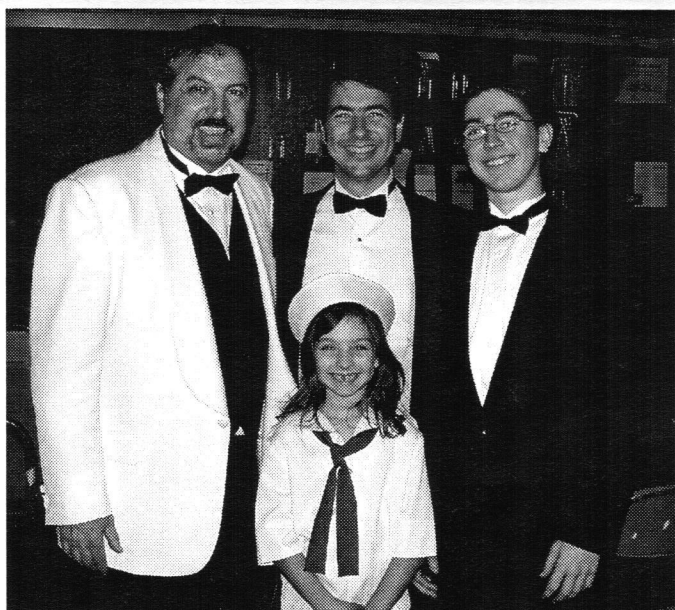
in a non-performing role, please do volunteer. The costumes and sets are minimal, but they still need the enthusiastic hands of our members to materialize.

I hope that *Ida* will provide a model for future Musicales devoted to a G&S (or other) opera in concert form, condensed and with a varied format to allow our members to participate as much as possible.

### History of The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin — 1976-2001

by Leland Smith

Now available for sale, only \$10. Please call the office (472-4772) to purchase your copy, or look for it at the next Musicale.



### The Sorcerer

In Shreveport, Louisiana, March 14, 15, 16, 2002, at 7:30 pm  
Matinée on Sunday March 17 at 2:30 pm

Our member, Stanton Taylor, was long the President, and is now Secretary, of the Shreveport Gilbert and Sullivan society, which was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization in 1971. They put on two shows a year, one G&S, the other a popular Broadway musical. This is a membership society with irregular and infrequent membership meetings. A Board of Governors runs their business. This production will be held in a 300 seat theater; tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for Seniors (62 and over), and \$9 for Youth (17 and under). They use a "reduced orchestra" (synthesizer, piano, a few instruments, and percussion). Tickets may be ordered one week in advance from the Box Office: (318)429-6885, or earlier from Stanton Taylor at (318)868-1429. Or for other information call Reba (327-2277).

### FLASH

A new book was published last November by Oxford University Press: **A Most Ingenious Paradox: The Art of Gilbert and Sullivan** by Gayden Wren. Mr. Wren is the entertainment editor for the *New York Times* Syndicate and a dramatist and director. The book examines the increasing complexity of the Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas as the partnership matured — different from the usual approach which focuses on production and the sometimes stormy personal relationship of the collaborators. An added attraction is a quotation on the back of the dust-jacket from a prepublication review by Ralph MacPhail, Jr.

#### Scene from the Gala

Frank Delvy, Dan Girardot, Michael Girardot, and Michelle Girardot

## 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) \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (Day) \_\_\_\_\_ (Night) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
What company do you work for? \_\_\_\_\_

Please check membership category:

- ☐ Individual: \$20  
☐ Family/Group: \$30  
☐ Youth (18 & under): \$10  
☐ 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**: **Patron** (\$50-\$99), **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

Since 1976, we have been spreading the joys of  
Gilbert & Sullivan through

**Annual Grand Productions**

**School Outreach Concerts**

**Free Monthly Musicales**

**Musical Scholarships**

**Monthly Newsletters**

**Holiday Season Shows**

G&S Office

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### Executive Board

President	Larry Shepley	327-1511
Executive Vice-President	Libby Weed	837-5441
Production Vice-President	Sue Ricket Caldwell	343-7700
Publicity Vice-President	Charles Antonie	733-1006
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Historian & Parliamentarian	Jean Smootz	259-2373
Director at Large	Paula Tyler	459-4639
Director at Large	Chris Buggé	345-9551

Newsletter Editor

Reba Gillman

Layout

Larry Shepley

Our web site: [www.gilbertsullivan.org](http://www.gilbertsullivan.org)

E-mail: [info@gilbertsullivan.org](mailto:info@gilbertsullivan.org)

The Society holds non-profit status under 501(c)(3) of the IRS code.

## Cast Call—G&S's *Princess Ida or, Castle Adamant*

To be presented Monday March 4 by The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin at Westminster Manor to an appreciative audience! Be a part of an historic occasion: • Our first production of one of Gilbert & Sullivan's most controversial operas. • Our first do-it-yourself opera. • Our first mixed media — music & declamation — performance. Be part of the cast or chorus—ask your friends—no previous experience necessary —everyone is welcome—your talents will be put to good use, whatever they may be!

Cast includes:

King **Hildebrand** — stern but fatherly

**Hilarion** — his son, betrothed to Ida as a boy of two, and smitten with her

**Cyril & Florian** — Hilarion's friends, a bit like aggies or UT undergraduates

King **Gama** — a bitter, twisted old grump, Ida's father

**Arac, Guron, & Scynthius** — Gama's sons, warriors three

Princess **Ida** — a Victorian feminist, running a school for girls, excluding all males

Lady **Blanche** — the aging Professor, jealous of Ida

Lady **Psyche** — a Professor of Humanities, Florian's sister

**Melissa** — Lady Blanche's daughter

**Sacharissa, Chloe, & Ada** — students who know little of men

Choruses of **soldiers, courtiers, girl graduates**, etc.

Costumers needed for armor, masks, etc.



Condensed & ably directed by **Art DiBianca, Gary Hallock, & Derek Smootz**. Music Director: **Andrew Hallock**

To be part of the company, contact **Art DiBianca 707-2809**.

THE  
**GILBERT  
&  
SULLIVAN**  
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