

The

GILBERT & SULLIVAN

SEPTEMBER 2008 NEWSLETTER

SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

OUR NEXT MUSICALE



Join us for an afternoon of frisky fairies, professional peers, and utter fantasy. Musical selections will include a preview of next summer's production of *Iolanthe*, as well as other whimsical songs from both classical and musical theatre repertoire. Performers include Lisa Alexander, Patricia Combs, Arthur DiBianca, Andy Fleming, David Fontenot, June Julian, Eva Laskaris, Katherine Saar, and Jay Young accompanied by Martha Dudgeon. Location: Harris Bell Hall in Westminster Manor, 4100 Jackson Avenue (see map on back page).

Please bring your favorite munchies to share. We look forward to seeing you there!

Wand'ring Minstrels

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin's Wand'ring Minstrels are the ambassadors for the Society to the Central Texas community. Their programs serve as an educational outreach tool that provides an introduction to the genre that is distinctively Gilbert & Sullivan. Programs range from a lively recital of Gilbert & Sullivan's most popular tunes to interactive, mini-productions of the Society's full summer productions. The Wand'ring Minstrels are available for private parties, school shows, and corporate events. NEW THIS FALL: Fairies in the Schools, an interactive mini-production of *Iolanthe* for all ages. For bookings or additional information, please contact Eva Laskaris by email at info@gilbertsullivan.org, or at 512-350-4935.

COMING EVENTS

Annual Business Meeting and Musicale
January 2009

IOLANTHE
or the Peer and the Peri
June 2009

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends:

Thank you to all who attended our performances of *The Pirates of Penzance* this summer. If you were among the thousands that came to see this timeless treasure, you were part of one of our most successful productions in GSSA's history. It was a splendid show - well received by large audiences, delightful in every respect, and described by many as one of the best productions our Society has ever mounted.

The success of *Pirates* was due in no small part to the hundreds of hours poured into this effort by our cast, crew, orchestra, volunteers, Society members, directors and board. We are thankful to you all for your dedication and hard work which was reflected in the glorious music, staging, beautiful voices, costuming, etc., that emanated from the stage; the playful pirates concessions; the children's day activities - the list goes on and on. We are also most grateful to our media sponsors, grantors, *Pirates* contributors and Society members for their generous donations that helped fund all these activities.

I am so proud to have been a part of this organization over the last 5 years, first as a performer, and now as a member of the Board and GSSA President. It is truly a unique experience to work with so many talented people from all walks of life, and a testament to what the operas of Gilbert & Sullivan bring to our community and beyond. As this summer's Grand Production has come to a close, it also brings with it a "changing of the guard." As I work a full-time job and pursue other musical interests, it is difficult to contribute the time I feel the presidency needs and that the Society deserves. I step down from the Presidency but will remain involved with other GSSA activities, and look forward to helping to build GSSA's continuing relationship with its members and the Austin community. I leave the Society in good hands, as our bylaws provide that Executive Vice President Libby Weed will assume the duties of the President until our annual meeting in January 2009.

In closing, I encourage you to volunteer and create your very own unique experiences with GSSA. Get involved in our Musicales, our performing troupe *The Wand'ring Minstrels*, fundraiser galas, planning committees, publicity, etc. Whatever your interest or talent, the Society will be most grateful for your involvement. And finally, auditions for next summer's production will be held on February 28 and March 1. Watch our website for more information, www.gilbertsullivan.org. Then, mark your calendars for *Iolanthe* in June 2009!

All the best,
June Julian

May 12, 2008 Musicale

by Reba Gillman

Long ago in May we held our last Musicale of the season. The small but enthusiastic audience enjoyed a delightful Piratical Party Sequence put together by our President, June Julian. As we arrived at the Jays' lovely home, Marti Dudgeon was playing piano background music, excerpts from our then upcoming show *The Pirates of Penzance*, of course.

June welcomed us all and made announcements about money: the many advance tickets already sold, and the generous response to a fund-raising letter. We were invited to sing along with "I am a Pirate King," sung by David Fontenot, and "Come friends who plough the sea." Arthur DiBianca sang the part of Samuel and Frank Delvy sang the part of Major-General Stanley. We gave a toast to Frank, happy to see him at the Musicale.

June invited us to move downstairs for movie clips and sound clips, which she played. The Anvil Chorus from *Il Trovatore* accompanied us as we descended the stairs. Next we heard "La Pastorella," a part song by Schubert, and then Jesse Dangerously singing a rap version of "The Elements" (words by Tom Lehrer set to the tune of "I am the very model of a modern Major-General"). June regaled us with a few choice bits of trivia, including the fact that Joseph Papp's 1981 revised and tremendously popular production of *The Pirates of Penzance* reintroduced theater goers to the joys of Gilbert and Sullivan. More movie clips followed, including *The Pirate Movie*, a Rocky Mountain sequence and the Major General, and scenes from *Kate and Leopold*, *Beautiful*, and *Pretty Woman*.

Then we moved back upstairs, with Marti playing the piano. The winner was selected and announced, of the very successful raffle which we had conducted in the Paramount Theatre lobby at the April production of *The Mikado* by the touring Carl Rosa Company of Great Britain. The prize was tickets to our June production of *Pirates*. We closed the program as usual by enthusiastically singing "Hail, Poetry," followed by "Now to the banquet we press," and enjoyment of the delicious munchies our members always bring to our gatherings.

Those present were: Byron Arnason, Frank & Donna Delvy, Arthur DiBianca, David Fontenot with Katy, Reba Gillman, Loel Graber, Benny & Nanci Jay, June Julian, Steve & Eve Schwartzman, Andrée Sjoberg, Libby Weed, and Lord High Pianist Martha Dudgeon.

Donors

We wish to thank the following contributors whose generous support helped to make our 2008 production of *The Pirates of Penzance* a resounding success!

Ken & Emily Ashworth • Ola Bell • Stanley Bullard • Barbara & Jerrold Buttrey • Mary Alice Carnes • Patricia & David Davidson • Marion DeFord • Mr. & Mrs. Douglas M. DeLay • Jewell Ellis • Leonard & Reba Gillman • Roslyn & David Gutman • James A. Hitt • Blain & Debbie Keith • Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Kellogg • David & Peggy Little • Allan & Barbara Longacre • Alice & Ralph MacPhail, Jr. • Norman & Emilia Martin • Randall McIntyre • Col. George & Nancy McQueen • Gerrell D. Moore • Diana Phillips • Eugene & Betty Ripperger • Lawrence Shepley • Greg & Katharine Shields • Grace & Gary Silcott • Jean & Ed Smootz • Earl R. Hunt & Susan C. Spruance • Bernadette Tasher • Trudy Tommeraasen • William & Mary Weaver • Libby & Michael Weed • Carol Whitcraft Fredericks • Ingrid & James Yapple and family • David & Vanessa Young



We are grateful to our media sponsors,
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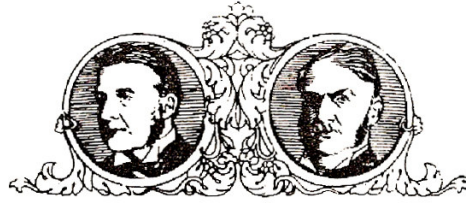
This project is funded and supported
in part by the City of Austin
through the Cultural Arts Division
and by a grant from the Texas
Commission on the Arts and an
award by the National Endowment
for the Arts which believes that a
great nation deserves great art.



Below, the Artistic and Music Directors, cast, orchestra, and crew of
our highly successful production of *The Pirates of Penzance* 2008.

(photo by Benny Jay)





RALPH MacPHAIL, Jr.
Box 114 Bridgewater College
Bridgewater, Virginia 22812-1599

August 2008

***To All Members of GSSA who Contributed to bringing
about The Pirates of Penzance in June,***

Thank you—each of you, for your contributions to the success of this summer's production:

Thank you, President June, and everyone on the GSSA Board, for your leadership in more ways than I could ever enumerate. You're the foundation of the entire enterprise, and while (like any foundation) you're often taken for granted, we *all* need to be reminded of your year-round work that undergirds all that happens on stage. Your dedication to our cause is appreciated by all.

Thank you, Cast, for your never failing enthusiasm during an intense rehearsal schedule, for your wonderful voices and movement and acting talents, and for once again falling into the unique world of "traditional G&S"—this time to the delight of record audiences.

Thank you, Jeffrey, for your enthusiastic love for Sullivan, for bringing his melodies and harmonies to life once again, **and for assembling another wonderful orchestra.**

Thank you, Jessica, Monica, Ann Marie, Jason, Emily, and the Entire Production Crew for bringing the physical side of production to reality.

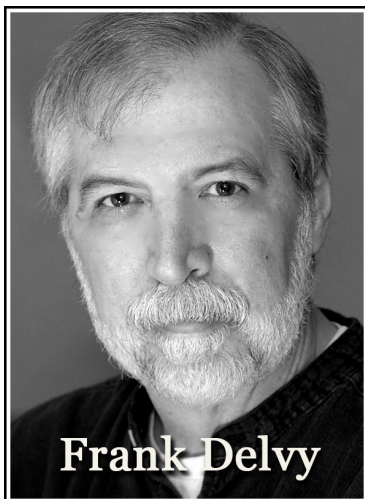
Thank you, Society Volunteers, backstage and at the front-of-house, for making our show such a welcoming place to be.

Thank you, Eva and Gary, for making our children's matinees so much fun and so memorable for the next generation of theatre-goers.

And thank you, all Contributors to the Society whose financial investments in our productions make their realization on stage possible.

Finally, and on a more personal note, Alice and I thank Russell and Kay Gregory for their hospitality—and so many others for making our stay in Austin so pleasant and rewarding. We're so looking forward to *Iolanthe* next summer.

Yours very sincerely,



Frank Delvy

FRANK DELVY DAY in AUSTIN, TEXAS

**Singing Through the Years
Laughter Through the Tears
A Celebration of a Life Well Spent**

Report by Reba Gillman

On Saturday, August 2, over 150 people gathered in the McFadden Auditorium at Seton Hospital to celebrate with Frank Delvy and his family. What a wonderful party it was, bringing together old friends from Frank's first days in Austin back in the 1970's, people he had performed with in many capacities through the years, colleagues from his current job acting in the City of Austin's Water Conservation Douser Dan program, and many who have rubbed elbows with him as Gilbert and Sullivan lovers and performers. As in a G&S Musicale, delicious refreshments were brought by the guests and enjoyed by all, especially the festive champagne. Many thanks to Janette Jones and Donna Delvy who planned the event, with assistance from friends and relatives.

The room was decorated with many photos of Frank in costume in his many various roles. Ken Johnson provided two beautifully framed displays of Frank's activities at The Hyde Park Theatre. The Master of Ceremonies was Gary Hallock, who opened the program midway in the afternoon by reading the poem he had written in Frank's honor (read it on the G&S website, www.gilbertsullivan.org). Austin City Council Member Lee Leffingwell presented the official proclamation that, in recognition of all he has done, August 2, 2008 would hereby be known as Frank Delvy Day. Then Janette joined Frank to perform three short scenes, highlights of their long theatrical career together: 1) "Nobody's Perfect" from *I Do, I Do*, by Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones; 2) "I once was a very abandoned person" from *Ruddigore* by Gilbert and Sullivan; and 3) "Things are seldom what they seem" from *H.M.S. Pinafore*, also by G&S. Like the old pros they are, Frank energetically sang without apology from his wheelchair and Janette moved with animation beside him, together perfectly establishing the dramatic scene. Videos of the performances were taken by Mark Wieland and are available on the G&S website.

Those present had been invited to sign up to speak, and there followed an outpouring of old memories and humorous stories from a variety of people. We were introduced to Frank's earliest connections in Austin – his friends from the old Armadillo World Headquarters, now long gone. When Frank first arrived in Austin, carrying pretty much only a guitar, he started working at the old Armadillo – the details came flooding in. Frank made the popcorn, Frank ran the bar, Frank sold T-shirts, Frank sang and played his guitar, and no doubt a lot else that wasn't mentioned. He began performing in plays and musicals – I saw him in many, and he was always good. He did great shows at Michel Jaroschy's Capitol City Playhouse (for instance the lead in *South Pacific*) and Ken Johnson's Hyde Park Theatre (lead parts in *I Do, I Do* and *Man of La Mancha*, among others). And then, in 1983, he tried out and was allotted a small part in our production of *The Gondoliers* at Zach Scott, and we've been enjoying him ever since.

As this informal program was ending, Janette asked that we all join in singing the Gilbert and Sullivan official anthem. Frank sang the Pirate King's lead in, and we all stood to sing lustily, "Hail, Poetry," energetically expressing our over-flowing feelings. Frank's family came up to stand behind him: oldest brother Donald with wife and daughter, down from the Philadelphia area; Ronald and his wife from the Baltimore area; and beloved wife Donna, who has supported Frank with vigor in all of his endeavors. Don spoke movingly of his brother and the family's appreciation of the loving Austin family that has grown up around Frank. Frank said "I am much moved – I never expected this." And then urged all to eat, drink, and be merry, and so they did. Thus moved to a close an amazing emotional experience for us all. Whatever our love gave to Frank, he gave us all back just as much.



Frank Delvy and June Julian
photo courtesy June Julian



Frank Delvy and Janette Jones in last year's *Ruddigore*
photo by Benny Jay



Russell Gregory and Reba Gillman
photo by June Julian

Jeffrey Jones-Ragona
Music Director

Our Music Director is conducting a performance of the Mozart Requiem on Saturday, October 11, 8 pm at the Cathedral of St. Mary, 203 E 10th St. Many of our orchestral friends will be playing in the orchestra and the Chorus is an all-star cast of Austin vocalists, many of whom have appeared onstage in our productions. Tickets are \$25 until September 30, then go up to \$30 and sell for \$35 at the door. To reserve tickets, please call 472-4540. Jeffrey is giving a lecture about the Mozart Requiem at 7:30 pm in the Cathedral Sanctuary.

Ralph MacPhail, Jr.
Artistic Director

Rafe is continuing to conduct G&S Elderhostels around the country, which our members are encouraged to attend. The next one is entitled "Gilbert & Sullivan and *Iolanthe*," and will be held on October 19—24 at The Incarnation Center in Ivoryton, Connecticut. This is clearly an ideal preparation for our production next summer. It is followed by "Gilbert & Sullivan and *Pira-Mika-Fore*; or, The Big Three" on October 26—31 at the same site. For more information, contact Rafe at RafeMacPhail@yahoo.com or call him at (540) 828-6656. To register, go to www.elderhostel.org, click on USA, then Connecticut, then Gilbert & Sullivan.

Sign Up For Our Email Newsletter

It's now easier than ever for you and your G&S friends to sign up for our Email Mailing List! Visit www.gilbertsullivan.org and click on *Join The Mailing List* to receive emails telling you about upcoming shows, special events, auditions, and more. Make sure you're connected by signing up today!

Send Us Your News!

We try (within space constraints) to include descriptions of members' performances (past and future) and other activities, and any information related to Gilbert and Sullivan. Please send your news to news@gilbertsullivan.org. Thanks!

Reba Gillman
Ex-Editor

Unfortunately, it is time for me to lay down many of my commitments and responsibilities. I have served as Editor of this newsletter for 25 years, but Len and I are 91 years old. Len is a victim of dementia, and I am supervising his full-time care at home and encountering many unexpected emergencies. Therefore, I have retired as Editor of the newsletter, and am very happy that Sue Caldwell has graciously agreed to take over.

Sue Ricket Caldwell
New Editor

Sue is one of our founding members and over the years has served the Society as board member, hostess of Musicales, faithful volunteer, and as a chorus member for several productions. She is a computer programmer by profession, an excellent writer, and experienced in publishing newsletters for other organizations. Sue has already adopted Reba's unspoken motto: "All the news that fits, we print."



scenes from *The Pirates of Penzance*

photos by Benny Jay



MEMBERSHIP FORM

We encourage you to join our Society. If you are a member, please check your membership renewal 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 with your check, payable to "GSSA", or call to join (512) 472-4772 (GSSA).

Please check a membership category:

- ☐ **Individual** (\$20-\$29)
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☐ I'd like to volunteer. I'm interested in: _____

We are proud to list our members in our programs, but if you would prefer NOT to be listed in our programs, please check here: ☐

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin

Since 1976, we have been spreading the joys of G&S through

Annual Grand Productions
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The Society holds nonprofit status under 501(c)(3) of the IRS code.

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Music Director

Ralph MacPhail, Jr.

Jeffrey Jones-Ragona

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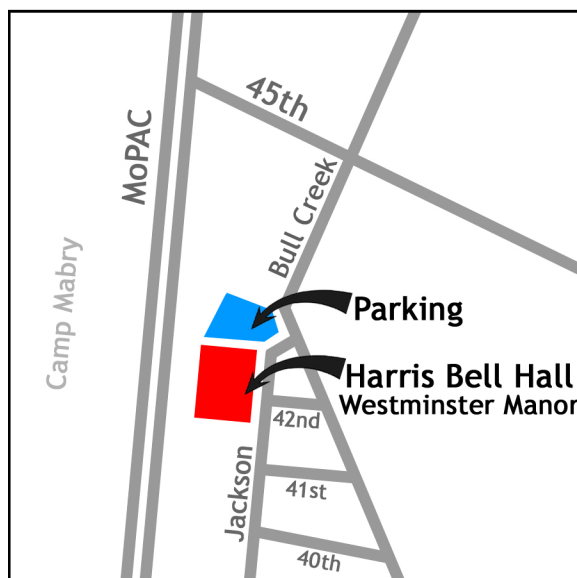
Fun, Fantasy, and FAIRIES!
September Musicale
Sunday, September 14th • 3pm
Harris Bell Hall at Westminster Manor



Directions to Harris Bell Hall, 4100 Jackson: From the north, take 45th Street to Bull Creek (second light east of MoPac); go south, turn right onto Jackson. From the south, exit MoPac at 35th Street, and continue north on Jackson.

Parking is available at the North Entrance.

Please enter through the Health Care Center.



see article on page 1 for details!

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