

The GILBERT & SULLIVAN

SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Libby Weed

Gilbert & Sullivan Austin is thrilled to open its 2016-17 season. We promise that it will be a great one!

Our very active board of directors has been planning for months—even while we were overseeing the production of *The Gondoliers*—for this rich season of music, laughter, and entertainment.

We are very pleased that our season will open with a musicale on Patriot's Day, September 11, *The Yeomen's Salute to First Responders*, benefiting **The 100 Club of Central Texas**. You can find out more about The 100 Club at its website, www.100clubcentex.com. This admirable charitable organization not only provides emergency assistance but also honors first responders and their families annually with awards and provides higher education scholarships to first responders who wish to continue their education. Representatives of the organization will be present to enjoy the afternoon with us and will accept donations to their worthy cause. The program will salute these heroes with memorable songs and scenes from *The Yeomen of the Guard* and some patriotic numbers as well.

We hope you will join us at 3 on Sunday afternoon, September 11. We'll enjoy eating and drinking, visiting with friends, and participating in a meaningful benefit event.

By all means, mark your calendar now also for October 20, when our gala 40th anniversary celebration at Chez Zee will honor new inductees to the Gilbert & Sullivan Austin Hall of Fame and present some of our most celebrated stars in a delightful musicale program. All of this plus a silent auction, a buffet, and a cash bar will make this an evening to enjoy and remember.

I hope to see you soon and often in the coming months!



In British history, the Tower of London signifies a place of gruesome lore and tyrannical monarchs, where many suffered under the hand of an oppressor. In a similar vein, the fall of the Twin Towers at the World Trade Center in New York City signifies for most Americans a gruesome image: a day of death, despair and destruction. Though it has been 15 years since that terrible massacre, and though some of those pains have been soothed by Time's solemn hand, we must not forget the atrocities that happened then, as well as those that have happened in more recent days.

We must also recognize the strength, courage, tenacity and the confluence of community that have emerged from these events. On Sunday, September 11, the Gilbert & Sullivan singers will raise their voices in honor of many brave men and women, the first responders, who have given their lives to help those in need. Our company will take you on a heroes' journey through the eyes of the soulful patriot, emanating that spirit of determination and endurance, and will regale you with a lively musical revue of *The Yeomen of the Guard*, Gilbert & Sullivan's eleventh opera (a story set in the Tower of London in the 16th century).

Performers include **Erica Lizette Salinas, Jamieson Taylor, Rosa Mondragon Harris, Maurine McLean, Danny Castillo, Patrick Wright, David Fontenot, and Robert Schneider**. Narration is by **Janette Jones**; the accompanist is **Jeanne Sasaki**.

This concert will benefit The 100 Club of Central Texas, a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization devoted to providing immediate assistance, both financial and emotional, to injured or killed first responders and their families. Donations will be accepted at the door. A reception will follow the performance. *Please bring your favorite dish or treat to share!*

where: Worley Barton Theater at
Brentwood Christian School
11908 North Lamar
(see map on back page)

when: Sunday, Sept. 11, at 3 pm
length: 1 hour 15 minutes

Donations Accepted For



In This Issue

A Look Back at <i>The Gondoliers</i>	pp. 2, 3
Summer 2017: <i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	p. 2
Wand'ring Minstrels	p. 2
GSSA to Perform at B. Iden Payne Awards	p. 2
40th Anniversary Gala	p. 4
Roberta Long Memorial Concert	p. 4
Winners of <i>The Gondoliers</i> DVDs	p. 4
GSSA Scholarships Announced	p. 5
GSSA on KUTZ Radio	p. 5
News of Members	p. 5

A Look Back at *The Gondoliers*

by Rosa Mondragon Harris



Once again, The Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Austin delivered a musical summer treat to audiences with the twelfth comic collaboration by Gilbert and Sullivan, *The Gondoliers*. This year's production, under the direction of **Michelle Haché**, included an assortment of gems throughout the show. The

first such gem came in the overture, where the audience was first introduced to many members of the cast. While the orchestra played, various personalities and dynamics were displayed for viewers and listeners, from a young man adoringly dancing with a broom to a group of ladies wishfully trying on a bridal veil to a husband whose eyes were wandering a little too much for his wife's taste.

Another gem was the intricate choreography woven into this year's show. Those familiar with *The Gondoliers* anticipated the lively "Dance a cachucha," my personal favorite. In Act II, the contadine were reunited with their gondoliers in Barataria and broke into the Spanish dance, beautifully choreographed by **Christine Jean-Jacques**. This production included the most choreography of any GSSA show in recent years, as several scenes were sprinkled with dance sequences. The cast enthusiastically embraced every number and showed great depth in each and every performance.

A few of the survey comments received regarding what audience members said they liked best about the production included:

"Singing - excellent. Staged overture - unique & fun."

"Music, singing, choreography, costumes. Well-staged."

"The entire production was a delight. The actors were perfectly cast."

"Choreography was amazing this year!"

Perhaps you've heard the saying, "The show must go on"? Although audiences were unaware, this summer's production saw its share of surprises behind the scenes. Three unexpected events occurred: **Rosa Mondragon Harris** stepped into the show for an injured chorus member just a few days before opening night; chorus member **Andy Fleming** served as the orchestra's maestro when **Jeffrey Jones-Ragona** fell ill during the second weekend of performances; and stage manager **Monica Kurtz** and assistant stage manager **Adam Gunderson** took over the sound booth for the second act when sound designer _____ became sick during an intermission. Regardless of the circumstances, the cast and crew displayed teamwork, professionalism and resolve.

Audiences and all involved with the show left with musical earworms and memories of the vibrant songs, dialogue, sets and costumes presented in *The Gondoliers*. Planning is already in flight for GSSA's next summer adventure. We look forward to seeing you on the coast of Cornwall next year with *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Wand'ring Minstrels

The Wand'ring Minstrels are looking forward to the school shows of the 2016-17 schol year.

If you would like to have the Wand'ring Minstrels perform at your school, retirement center, civic club, business meeting, or private party, please see the web site, www.gilbertsullivan.org, for information.

Summer Production:

The Pirates of Penzance

June 15-25, 2017

Worley Barton Theater at Brentwood Christian School

Can't you just see those flashing swords and hear the pirates' menacing growls right now? We are all excited that it is time for this beloved, hilarious, and melodic opera once again!

The Pirates of Penzance; or, The Slave of Duty premiered not in London, but in New York City on December 31, 1879. Its London premiere was not until April 3, 1880, after it had already run for three successful months in New York, drawing elated audiences and glowing reviews. Gilbert and Sullivan made the decision to open the show in America rather than in Britain because, at that time, American law did not provide copyright protection to foreign entities. *H.M.S. Pinafore* had achieved great success in London in 1878, and scores of American companies had quickly mounted unauthorized productions. Angered by this copyright piracy, Gilbert and Sullivan decided to open their next show in America, in an attempt to secure copyright protection.

A delightfully witty and tuneful farce, *The Pirates of Penzance* is set on the coast of Cornwall during Queen Victoria's reign. Young Frederic, a pirate apprentice, announces to his pirate gang that he will be leaving them, as it is his twenty-first birthday and his apprenticeship is at an end. He is leaving not because he doesn't love them, he explains, but because he loathes what they do; and as a slave of duty, when he is no longer a pirate, it will be his duty to eradicate them. The pirates are sadly sympathetic; they somehow are not able to make piracy pay anyway.

We soon meet Ruth, the partially deaf nursemaid who apprenticed Frederic to a pirate rather than a pilot; the pirate king to whom she apprenticed him; a bevy of beautiful (and marriageable) sisters; their father, the modern Major General who sings one of the most memorable and most parodied of the G&S patter songs; and a bumbling crew of policemen who are even less effective in their role than the pirates. The cleverness and humor of the libretto and the beauty of the music are unsurpassed in the G&S canon.

Hurrah for the return of *The Pirates of Penzance*!

GSSA to Perform at B. Iden Payne Awards

Our Society has received an email from Kate Meehan, Executive Director of the B. Iden Payne Awards Council. We have been invited to perform at their awards ceremony on October 24. Of course we happily agreed, as it will be an honor to present our beautiful music and talented singers at this important event. Kate requested we sing "From the Sunny Spanish Shore," a quartet from Act I of *The Gondoliers*. Our singers will be **Bob Beare** as the Duke of Plaza-Toro, **Patricia Combs** as the Duchess of Plaza-Toro, **Corinna Browning** as Casilda, and **Jerry Cordova** as Luiz. For those wishing to attend, please find information about the ceremony at www.bidenpayneawards.org.

This year, the only way to vote for the B. Iden Payne awards is to be **signed up for their newsletter by August 31**. If you navigate to the link above you will find a place at the bottom of the website to sign up for the newsletter.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin presented *The Gondoliers* in June 2016
photos courtesy Cecily Johnson

see more at gilbertsullivanatx.smugmug.com



"Bridegroom and bride"

Marco & Gianetta Giuseppe & Tessa
*(Holton Johnson & Priscilla Salisbury,
 Derek Smootz & Angela Irving)*



Don Alhambra
(Arthur DiBianca)



"From the sunny Spanish shore"
 Luiz, Casilda, the Duke and Duchess of Plaza-Toro
*(Jerry Cordova, Corinna Browning,
 Bob Beare, Patricia Combs)*



"List and learn"



"We sing as one individual" (Act I Finale)



"Speak, woman, speak" (Act II Finale)
 Duke and Duchess



Inez *(Janette Jones)*



"Dance a cachucha"



*the ushers joined in
 the spirit of the show*



Luiz and Casilda reign as
 King and Queen of Barataria



The Gondoliers production team:
*(back, l-r) Pam Fowler, Bill Hatcher, Pixie Avent,
 Monica Kurtz, Adam Gunderson, Libby Weed;
 (front, l-r) Christine Jean-Jacques, Grace Rogge,
 Chandler Alberda, Michelle Haché,
 Jeffrey Jones-Ragona, Tim Ervin*



Here is the fall social and musical event that you simply must not miss! An all-star cast of G&S singers presents a program of music and brief scenes from some of the most beloved Savoy operas in an intimate, cabaret-like setting at Chez Zee American Bistro. A silent auction brings the opportunity to secure surprising treasures.

- Delight as the incomparable **Lisa Alexander**, **Michelle Haché**, **Janette Jones**, and **June Julian** bring their musical and dramatic talents to soprano and mezzo favorites.
- Laugh and be touched by emotion as **Arthur DiBianca**, **Russell Gregory**, **Holton Johnson**, and **Jeffrey Jones-Ragona** stir the crowd with their acting and singing flair.
- Join the G&S faithful in recognizing the remarkable contributions of the newest inductees to our *Hall of Fame*:
 - o **Monica Kurtz**, the extraordinary, steel-nerved and velvet-gloved stage manager
 - o **Holton Johnson**, our legendary, award-winning tenor lead for numerous operas
 - o **David Little**, the publicist who brought us into the public eye as never before
 - o **Dave Wieckowski**, the financial chief who has steered our fiscal ship into clear waters

Seating is limited for this elegant and festive event, so get your tickets today! **For your \$40 ticket**, you take part in celebrating 40 years of continuous performance of the works of Gilbert and Sullivan by one of the premier G&S societies in the world—right here in Austin, Texas. **For a \$100 patron-level ticket**, you get all this plus reserved seating and recognition in the program.

Revel in the performances and interact with the cast. Savor a bountiful buffet of hors d'oeuvres, enjoy a cash bar, and relish an assortment of Chez Zee's delicious desserts. Join others who love music, laughter, and fun as much as you do in the event of the season!

Don't delay—get your tickets today at
www.gilbertsullivan.org.



Roberta Long Memorial Concert

Please join us for a tribute concert honoring **Roberta Long**, member of Agudas Achim, music lover, and supporter of Gilbert & Sullivan Austin. The concert will be held on Sunday, September 11, at 6 pm in the sanctuary of Congregation Agudas Achim on the Dell Jewish Community Center Campus, 7300 Hart Lant.

Roberta was a member of G&S Austin for more than two decades and served as a G&S board member from 2010 until her passing this spring. She will be long remembered as a wonderful friend and colleague, and her influence will continue to be felt throughout the coming years.

Roberta's husband **Mark Long** has performed in the cast of almost every summer production for more than 20 years, and their son **Steven** has also appeared in G&S productions here and in Israel.

This memorial concert will feature Hebraic vocal music, as well as a solo clarinet recital of "Viktor's Theme" by John Williams, played by Susan Yee Klein, a Hebrew student and friend of Roberta Long. Gilbert & Sullivan singers will also offer selected pieces, adding to the evening of music in Roberta's honor.

Winners of *The Gondoliers* DVDs

These ten lucky people completed a survey at the theater after viewing a production of *The Gondoliers* in June, and their names were drawn to receive a DVD of the production. We extend our hearty congratulations to these fortunate audience members:

Sergio Ajuria of Cedar Park
Angela Boone of Lancaster, CA
Jennie Chao of Austin
Cornelia Cole of San Antonio
Andrew Donoho of Austin
Ginny Nials of Burnet
Jim Nicks of Cedar Park
James Parks of Fredericksburg
John Sharp of Austin
Bethany Wharton of Austin

We appreciate our patrons, and are delighted to share the pleasures of Gilbert and Sullivan.

GSSA Scholarships Announced

Please join us in congratulating the 2016-17 GSSA scholarship recipients: **Michelle Girardot** and **Cody Ireland**.



Michelle is a Vocal Performance major at the University of Houston. Her connection to GSSA goes back to her musical debut as a midshipman's mite in our 2000 production of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. She utilized her scholarship to attend the 2016 Lingua e Canto intensive Italian immersion course for opera singers in Italy this summer.

Cody will be a freshman at Baylor University this fall, where he will begin work on a degree in Piano Performance. He has been studying with **Jeanne Sasaki** since 2005 and has served as her page turner for several GSSA musicales. He will be applying his scholarship towards his first year at Baylor so that he can further expand his knowledge of music to share with others.



We wish Michelle and Cody the best in their future endeavors!

GSSA on KUTX Radio



Members of the cast and production staff of *The Gondoliers* appeared on John Aielli's Eklektikos program on KUTX 98.9 FM. Shown here are (l-r) **Jeanne Sasaki**, **Arthur DiBianca**, **Priscilla Salisbury**, **Michelle Haché**, **Corinna Browning**, **Jeffrey Jones-Ragona**, and **Bill Hatcher**.

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)
- ☐ **Family/Group** (\$30-\$49)
- ☐ **Patron** (\$50-\$99)
- ☐ **Grand Duke or Duchess** (\$100-\$249)
- ☐ **Major General** (\$250-\$499)
- ☐ **Pooh-Bah** (\$500-\$999)
- ☐ **Pirate King** (\$1000-\$2499)
- ☐ **Savoyard** (\$2500 & up)

Name _____
 Address _____
 State _____
 Phone number(s) _____
 E-mail address _____
 Employer _____
 Does your company match donations? _____

☐ 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: ☐

NEWS of our MEMBERS

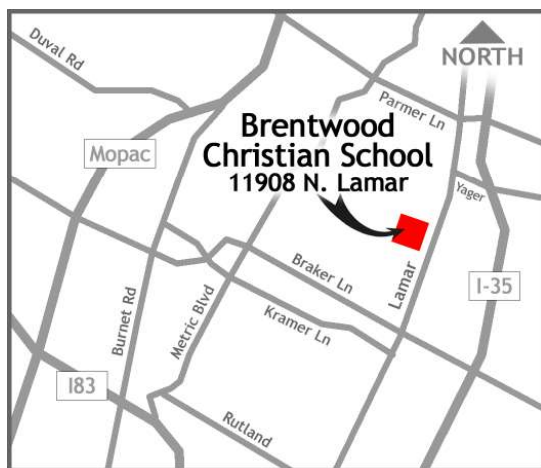
Congratulations to **Spencer Reichman** on winning Best Male Vocal at the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Harrogate, England. Spencer received a GSSA scholarship for 2015-16. He appeared as Go-To in our 2011 *The Mikado* and as Scynthus in our 2013 *Princess Ida*, and in the chorus of our 2010 *The Yeomen of the Guard* and 2012 *Patience*.

Artistic Director **Ralph MacPhail, Jr.**, will represent GSSA at a second "Gilbert & Sullivan Summit" in Chicago and Evanston in mid-October (before flying down to Austin for the 40th Anniversary Gala). This meeting of representatives of production companies throughout the U.S. will focus on the challenges such organization face and ways they can be met through discussion, exchanges, and future interactions. It is a follow-up to a similar gathering hosted by the Lamplighters of San Francisco almost two years ago where GSSA was one of 14 companies represented.

Austin Opera's production of *The Manchurian Candidate* on September 17 at The Long Center will include a number of GSSA performers: **Carol Brown**, **Danny Castillo**, **Patricia Combs**, **Jerry Cordova**, **Rosa Mondragon Harris**, **Angela Irving**, **Holton Johnson**, **Megan Sherrod**, and **Patrick Wright**.

GSSA's outstanding stage manager, **Monica Kurtz**, is currently managing *Agent Andromeda: The Orion Crusade*, which will run Thursday to Sunday, Sept. 9–24, at Sky Candy reVamped, 2400 Cesar Chavez.

Michelle Haché, director of June's *The Gondoliers*, will appear as Queen Solstra in the new puppet opera *Atlantis*, running Sept. 3–24 at The Vortex, 2307 Manor Road; see vortexrep.org for details. Michelle will also be joining in directing *Cyrano: the Musical* at the McCallum Fine Arts Academy in October.



Our opening musicale, *The Yeomen's Salute to First Responders*, will be presented at the Worley Barton Theater at Brentwood Christian School.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society
OF AUSTIN
The Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Austin, Inc.
P.O. Box 684542
Austin, Texas 78768-4542

Coming Events

- Sept. 11 *The Yeomen's Salute to First Responders* (see p. 1)
Oct. 20 40th Anniversary Gala (see p. 4)
Jan. 8 Annual Meeting and Musicale
Feb. 25-26 *The Pirates of Penzance* Auditions
Mar. 5 Mid-season production: *Cox & Box*
May 21 *The Pirates of Penzance* Preview Musicale
June 15-25 *The Pirates of Penzance* summer production

Send Us Your News!

The next newsletter should arrive in early October; the deadline for submissions will be September 26. Please send your news to news@gilbertsullivan.org. Thanks!

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage Paid
Permit No. 2054
Austin, Texas



Top line of mailing label is date when your membership expires.

SEPTEMBER 2016

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin

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

Annual Grand Productions
Educational/Community Outreach
Musicales
Musical Scholarships
Newsletters
Holiday Season Shows

G&S Office: 310 West 43rd Street, Austin, TX 78751
Mailing Address: P. O. Box 684542, Austin, TX 78768-4542
Phone: (512) 472-4772 (GSA-GSSA)
Our web site: www.gilbertsullivan.org
E-mail: info@gilbertsullivan.org



This project is funded and supported in part by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts and in part by the City of Austin Economic Development Department/Cultural Arts Division, believing that an investment in the Arts is an investment in Austin's future.
Visit Austin at NowPlayingAustin.com



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

Artistic Director
Music Director

Ralph MacPhail, Jr.
Jeffrey Jones-Ragona

Board of Directors

Libby Weed	President
Dave Wieckowski	Treasurer and CFO
Michael Meigs	Secretary and Bursar
David Little	Publicist and Webmaster
Rosa Mondragon Harris	Scholarship Coordinator
June Julian	Musicale Coordinator
Allan Longacre	Community Relations
Diane Radin	Grants Coordinator
Robert L. Schneider	Wand'ring Minstrels Coordinator
Sarah Slaughter	Volunteer Coordinator
Charles Smaistrila	Legal Counsel
David Treadwell	Historian

Database Manager
Newsletter Editor

Arthur DiBianca
Sue Ricket Caldwell