

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Libby Weed

Our last newsletter introduced you to **Sue Ricket Caldwell** and **Michelle Vanecek**, who were elected to the board at the annual meeting in January. Since that time one of the continuing board members, **June Julian**, has had a change in her professional life that necessitates her stepping down from the board.



June's important role on the board for some time has been as the producer of our musicales. She and **Janette Jones**, who writes scripts and directs the musicales, have worked closely in the creative process and in every phase of the preparation of these wonderful events that bring such joy and entertainment to central Texans. Replacing June could never be an easy process.

But after consultation with June and Janette, the board invited **Leann Fryer** to join our team and take on June's position. After all, Leann had been in Gilbert & Sullivan Austin summer productions since 2012 as well as mid-season shows and musicales throughout the past seven years. You have seen her often on our stage—and you might also have seen her in Georgetown Palace or Spotlight on Opera productions.

Leann grew up in California, where she received her university degree from CSU Monterey Bay in Teledramatic Arts and Technology, with a minor in music. Immediately after graduation, she moved to Austin, drawn by the strong music scene. When not performing or rehearsing, she works for a family firm called Villa Rosa Designs, a quilt pattern business started by her mom that now has many employees, including numerous family members scattered across three states. You might check out the fascinating website, created and maintained by Leann.

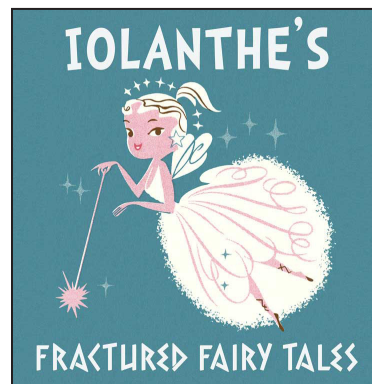
In spare time, Leann plays various musical instruments for fun, works out at the gym, and preps for half-marathons; in true down time, she curls up with a book and a cat or two.

Leann says, "I love the community that is GSA. I felt a warm welcome when I did my first show, and I really enjoy continuing to work with everyone, from fellow cast mates to the production team." And then she adds, "It also helps that we put on such delightful shows—it's hard to feel grumpy singing G&S!"

Leann has already shown herself to have a quick grasp of issues at board meetings and to be the perfect person to coordinate with Janette in planning and producing musicales. You'll enjoy their first collaboration on November 10, so watch for news about the coming season.

Yours for innocent merriment,

Libby Weed



Iolanthe's Fractured Fairy Tales

GSA presents an original production of a delightfully twisted fairy fable along with fantastic music. *Iolanthe*, a loving mother, always tucked her son Strephon to bed with fairy tales—just as any mother would. But since *Iolanthe* actually is a fairy and one with a broken heart, her take on fairy tales might be just a bit different from what you've heard in the past. Come and hear our *Iolanthe* tell her version of the fairy tales that loving mortal mothers and fathers use as bedtime stories....

Hear selections from *Iolanthe* starring the outstanding cast that will perform in our June Grand Production. Romance, suspense, and comedy will provide an enchanted afternoon of entertainment.

Written and directed by **Janette Jones**. Co-produced by **Diane Radin** and **Leann Fryer**. **Jeanne Sasaki** is accompanist.

Admission is free.

Please bring munchies to share. *No meat or shellfish, please.*



Sunday, May 19, 2 pm
at the Jewish Community Center
7300 Hart Lane
Co-sponsored by Shalom Austin
Jewish Community Center

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H.M.S. Pinafore – in Concert

by Mary Hendren



Could it be done? Could G&S Austin put on two lively performances of *H.M.S. Pinafore* without sacrificing the resources dedicated to the full-scale summer production of *Iolanthe*?

Yes, it could be done. The entire *H.M.S. Pinafore* operetta, *in concert*, brought delight to nearly-full-house audiences on March 2 and 3. Exit polling of people leaving the shows? Smiles and words like *great, fantastic, loved it*.

For future reference, what does the term “in concert” mean? Artistic Director **Ralph MacPhail, Jr.**, commented, “There’s a lot of leeway in interpreting what is meant by a concert performance. To me, it means that the singers will be singing with music in their hands. The singers, wearing the suggestion of costumes, will move, sing, and speak dialogue in a theatrical context. I will ask them to act the piece with vocal variety, movement, stance, and facial expression.”

When asked if there’s a plus factor for an “in concert” production, Rafe stated, “There’s an accent on the music, I think, and even Gilbert’s subtleties of humor.”

The accent on music and subtleties of humor found a match in the intimacy of the Worley Barton Theater. Everyone could see the gestures, facial expressions, and imagine the props: the invisible boat cloak under which Captain Corcoran (**Robert Le Bas**) concealed himself, the undetectable portrait of the First Lord of the Admiralty that so dismayed Josephine (**Chantal Freeman**).



Captain Corcoran hides behind cloak

Facial expressions? Sir Joseph Porter (**Arthur DiBianca**, master of the expectant pause) displayed with penetrating gaze his “amazement and surprise.” With vocal variety, Buttercup’s (**Bonnie Bogovich**) lovely voice was waltzing, flirtatious, challenging, mysterious, and remorseful.

High hilarity? Boatswain’s Mate (**Bruno César Barbosa**) producing and removing a “hand gun” that in Ralph Rackstraw’s (**Jeffrey Jones-Ragona**) hands sent the crew, the cousins, and the aunts ducking for cover. Dick Deadeye?

What a resilient bad guy (**Reagan Murdock**)! Stooped, hated, kicked off the deck multiple times, never deterred from thwarting romance. Cousin Hebe’s (**Abigail Adams**) frequent interruptions of Sir Joseph—always satisfying to see pomposity punctured, even if momentarily.

The Carpenter’s Mate (**Scott Poppaw**) comically labored with



Ralph with the “hand gun” from the Boatswain’s Mate

the requirements of the British Tar—if he could sing it, he’d believe it.

There aren’t enough good words for the cast—their singing and acting, for **Jeanne Sasaki**’s skilled accompaniment with help from page-turners **Zimm Davis** and **Hanna Akita**, for Rafe MacPhail’s direction and staging, for Music Director (as well as principal singer) **Jeffrey Jone-Ragona**’s delightful musical pace, and for **Bill Hatcher**’s production expertise.



(l-r) Carpenter’s Mate, Boatswain’s Mate, Ralph, and sailors confront Dick Deadeye

Bravo to the sailors: **Whit Allee, Bradley Boatright, Garrett Cordes, Andy Fleming, Gary Hallock, Jake Jacobsen, Ian Stilwell, and Jay Young**.

Kudos to the sisters, cousins, and aunts: **Corinna Browning, Patricia Combs, Leann Fryer, Erica Hernandez, and Janette Jones**.



Cousin Hebe will never leave Sir Joseph Porter, but orders that the sisters, cousins, and aunts must be gone



Captain Corcoran said “damme” to Ralph, causing Sir Joseph Porter pain and distress



dastardly Dick Deadeye

Gilbert & Sullivan Austin presented a concert version of *H.M.S. Pinafore* in March 2019

photos here and on pp. 2, 7 courtesy David Little

see more at gilbertsullivanaustrin.smugmug.com



"Refrain, audacious tar"



*Buttercup's
remorse*



"Never mind the why and wherefore"



*Buttercup claims the former
Captain Corcoran*



Boatswain's Mate



*Carpenter's
Mate*



"... goodness me, now what was that?"



*Josephine dreams of
Ralph*



"When I was a lad"



*"Things are seldom
what they seem"*



*Ralph tells messmates
he loves Josephine*



the finale

A Ten-Question Quiz on *Iolanthe*

by Ralph MacPhail, Jr.



I'm sitting in the Gilbert & Sullivan room here in Bridgewater, keenly anticipating a return to Austin to stage *Iolanthe*. As I reflect on this beautiful and funny show, I also think of its history, some aspects of which make it unique in the G&S canon and some of which tie it to other works.

And I thought it might be fun to offer a little quiz. *Now don't panic!* I recall from my teaching career that quizzes are good not only for assessment of new learning but also as aids to learning new material. I am, therefore, appending the answers, and offer this dispensation for peeking. (Hint for a couple of questions regarding other operas: reflect on our recent "concert production.")

1. What does the name *Perola* have to do with the history of *Iolanthe*?
2. Gilbert & Sullivan second acts usually begin with a chorus; however, several of the operas start with solos. Lady Jane opens Act I of *Patience* (though an off-stage chorus precedes a bit of dialogue before her famous solo with cello accompaniment). The second act of *Ruddigore* begins with a duet. Two of the operas begin second acts with male solos. *Iolanthe* is one. What are the first words of this solo? Who sings it?
3. Which other opera begins Act II with a male solo? Who sings it? What is the lyric's first line?
4. *Iolanthe* has at least two nods to Richard Wagner: one in costuming (in the original production, anyway) and the other in music. What are they?
5. *Iolanthe* contains at least one sung stage direction. What is it?
6. An ebullient trio in *Iolanthe* reads as if Gilbert plundered *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, for in his lyric, he strings together a number of well known expressions. List at least three of these expressions, worded as you've heard them stated.
7. Gilbert did the same in a duet from another opera. What are the first words of the lyric? In which opera does it appear? Who sings it? List at least five of the expressions from this duet, worded as you've heard them stated.
8. In the Lord Chancellor's famous "nightmare song" we learn details of the singer's stockings (at least those he was wearing in his dream). Of what material are they made and how are they decorated?
9. Although many actual persons are referred to in passing in the libretti for the Savoy operas, one real person is actually apostrophized at some length in *Iolanthe*. Who is this person? What was his profession? And where was he, usually, on the nights of Gilbert & Sullivan premièrès?
10. In the Act I finale of *Iolanthe* the Fairy Queen threatens the Peers with "dire revenge." How does she threaten to reform the hereditary Peerage?

EXTRA CREDIT. The doyenne of Gilbert studies, the Late Jane W. Stedman, wrote about what she called Gilbert's "invasion motif," where a realistic setting is established, only to have it "invaded" by personages one would hardly expect to find present in such a setting (bridesmaids in a court of law; ladies aboard a man-of-war; a

London sorcerer at a village betrothal, etc.). Discuss at length (or at least ruminate on!) how *Iolanthe* might be regarded as a more-than-usually skillful use of this motif—different in each act. Corroborative detail welcome!

Answers may be found at the bottom of page 5 (opposite).

GSA Offers Scholarships

GSA intends to offer \$1,000 scholarships to two recipients for the 2019-20 academic year. Payments will be made directly to the student's school of study or program. GSA reserves the right to modify the amounts and number of recipients based on the recommendation of the GSA Scholarship Committee.

Applicants must:

- Be pursuing a professional career in music or musical theater (preferably vocal performance)
- Be enrolled or enrolling in a professional course of study in the United States (university, college, or conservatory music degree program, apprenticeship program, Young Artist Program, etc.)
- Have an affiliation with Central Texas (resided, studied, or performed in the Central Texas area)
- Be at least a graduating high school senior

Preference will be given to applicants who have performed Gilbert & Sullivan.

To apply, please visit our website at www.gilbertsullivan.org, select About, then Scholarships. Applications must be submitted by **Friday, May 3, 2019**, to be considered.

Ad Space Available in the Playbill for *Iolanthe*

Consider purchasing an ad for your business, practice, service, etc., in the playbill for *Iolanthe*. It will be seen by several thousand G&S aficionados.

Ads come in several different shapes and sizes, all at reasonable rates:

- Full page 4½"x7½" @ \$300,
- Half page 4½"x3¾" @ \$150, and
- Quarter page - vertical or horizontal - 2¼"x3¾" or 4½"x1⅞" @ \$75.
- The one and only Full Back Page (in color!) can be yours for \$500.

Invite the people with whom you do business to purchase an ad and help support this production.

You can see previous playbills on our website (www.gilbertsullivan.org): Click Shows, then select a show under Past Productions and click on the Playbill.

To reserve ad space in the playbill for *Iolanthe*, or to ask questions and get more information, please contact **Saundra Ragona** at saundra@gilbertsullivan.org.

The deadline for ad commitment (both size and format) is May 5, and final copy is due by May 20.

A Time for Love; or, Somewhere in Bastrop by Libby Weed

How would you like to enjoy, with someone you love, a three-course dinner followed by a romantic stage performance in a beautiful and historical theater on Valentine's Day? And what if the stage show happened to be filled with the music and wit of Gilbert & Sullivan?

Several couples from Austin's G&S group thought such a production was the recipe for a perfect Valentine's evening, and we were right! We were intrigued by the invitation to "experience love and time travel in Bastrop" along with the music of Gilbert & Sullivan, and we reveled in the idea of a play in which a lead character travels back in time to 1940s Bastrop and finds himself in a westernized version of *The Mikado*.

A Time for Love; or, Somewhere in Bastrop was produced by **June Julian** and scripted and directed by **Janette Jones**, with music direction and accompaniment by **Jeanne Sasaki**—three of

our own shining stars. The cast included, in addition to Janette and June, **Bethany Ammon**, **Angela Irving**, **Sam Johnson**, **Steven Long**, **Robert L. Schneider**, and **David Treadwell**—all of whom have trod the boards with Gilbert & Sullivan Austin and several of whom will appear in this summer's production of *Iolanthe*.

A performer named **Dalton Flake**, playing the lead role of Billy, was new to GSA folk in the audience. His fine tenor voice and strong stage presence caused at least one of us to seek him out after the show and encourage him to audition for *Iolanthe*. He did that just ten days later, and the result is that we will all get to see him in the role of Earl Tolloller this summer.

My advice is to keep your eyes open for Bastrop Opera House productions. The three or four I have seen have all been enjoyable, and the theatrical experience is enhanced by the ambience of this restored historical venue. If Gilbert & Sullivan music is part of the picture, you surely won't want to miss it!



performers in *A Time for Love* included (l-r):
David Treadwell, Jeanne Sasaki, Robert L. Schneider,
Dalton Flake, Sam Johnson, Angela Irving, Janette Jones,
Bethany Ammon, Steven Long, and June Julian

Answers to The Ten-Question Quiz on *Iolanthe* (page 4)

1. Gilbert called the opera *Perola* in rehearsal, ostensibly to fool the theatrical pirates hoping to steal the work, but probably because another play with the title *Iolanthe* had been on the London stage several years earlier, and WSG wasn't on good terms with the manager who produced it. (It is sometimes thought that *Perola* was superstitiously used for the successor to *Pinafore*, *Pirates*, and *Patience*, which *Perola*—*Iolanthe*!—followed.)

2. They are, of course, "When all night long a chap remains," sung by Private Willis to banish the monotony of sentry-go (and to delight us).

3. Aboard *H.M.S. Pinafore*, her commander, Captain Corcoran, sings "Fair moon, to thee I sing."

4. The Fairy Queen was dressed in garb reminiscent of Brünnhilde, and the Lord Chancellor is introduced musically several times by an orchestral *leitmotif*.

5. "Enter all the little fairies/ To their usual tripping measure" (in the Act I Finale). (Is there another?)

6. "Faint heart never won fair lady," "Every journey has an end," "Make hay while the sun shines," "None but the brave deserve the fair," "Nothing ventured, nothing gained," "Blood is thicker than water," "Love makes the world go 'round" (and others!).

7. "Things are seldom what they seem" is sung aboard *H.M.S. Pinafore* by Mrs. Cripps (better known as "Little Buttercup"): "Black sheep dwell in every fold," "All that glitters isn't gold," "Only the brave deserve the fair," "Spoil the rod and spoil the child," "Don't count your chickens before they're hatched," "Men are just big babies" (and others!).

8. They're made of black silk and are decorated with gold clocks (and this information may be the most tongue-twisting phrase to articulate in the devilishly difficult "Nightmare Song").

9. Captain Eyre Massey Shaw was the leader of London's Fire Brigade, and a regular first-nighter at Gilbert & Sullivan premières. Recent research has suggested that the Fairy Queen's reference to Shaw as a "type of true love kept under" may have been Gilbert's sly dig at a rumor that Captain Shaw . . . well, this is a family newsletter, and I'd better let it drop (but see Ian Bradley's *Annotated Gilbert & Sullivan* for the juicy details!).

10. By throwing it open to—gasp!—competitive examination!

EXTRA CREDIT. Peers of the Realm in Court regalia visit "an Arcadian landscape" and supernatural fairies visit Westminster in Central London. (Brevity is the soul of wit!)

Mystery Poster



This delightful poster from a long-ago GSA performance of *Iolanthe* has been inhabiting our storage room. Do you know who created it? We'd love to give it proper credit! Please send information to news@gilbertsullivan.org.

Wand'ring Minstrels

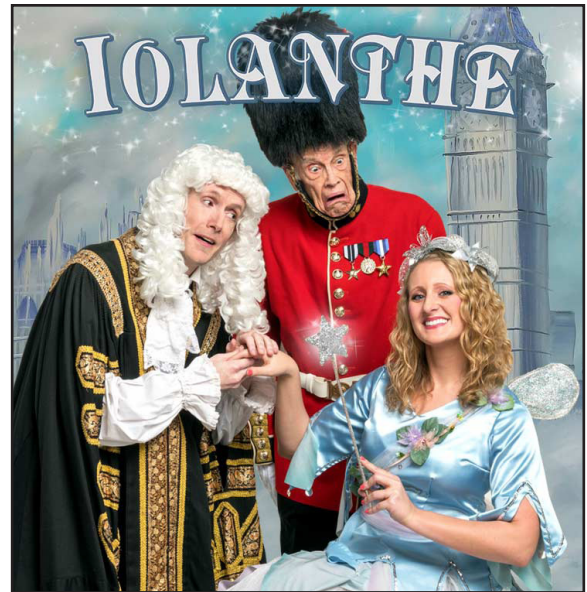
Gilbert & Sullivan Austin's Wand'ring Minstrels are planning their Easter show! If you would like to have the Wand'ring Minstrels perform at your school, retirement center, civic club, business meeting, or private party, please see our web site, www.gilbertsullivan.org, for information.



Wand'ring Minstrels: Marti Mortensen Ahern, Robert L. Schneider, Janette Jones, and Katie Schneider

Send Us Your News!

The next newsletter should arrive around the end of May; the deadline for submissions is May 16. Please send your news to news@gilbertsullivan.org. Thanks!



Iolanthe Cast and Staff

The Lord Chancellor – **Arthur DiBianca**

Earl of Mountarat – **Sam Johnson**

Earl Tolloller – **Dalton Flake**

Private Willis – **Russell Gregory**

Strephon – **Holton Johnson**

Queen of the Fairies – **Bethany Ammon**

Iolanthe – **Shelby Schisler**

Celia – **Corinna Browning**

Leila – **Janette Jones**

Fleta – **Leann Fryer**

Phyllis – **Angela Irving**

Lord Chancellor's Train Bearer – **Royanne Kelly**

Chorus of Fairies:

Abbie Brown, Chrishawn Michelle Floyd, Sofia Follman, Noelle Marie Forestal, Jasmine Groff, Tess Jackson, Courtney Katzmeyer, Linda Grace Perez, Amy Selby, and Stefanie Taylor

Chorus of Peers:

Frederick Bothwell III, Jeffrey C. Brister, Garrett Cordes, Andy Fleming, Gavin George, Brett Hardy, Matthew Leary, Ian Stilwell, Jay Young, and Julius Young

Artistic Director: **Ralph MacPhail, Jr.**

Music Director: **Jeffrey Jones-Ragona**

Production Manager: **Bill Hatcher**

Stage Manager: **Adam Gunderson**

Set Designer: **Ann Marie Gordon**

Lighting Designer: **Jennifer Rogers**

Costume Coordinator: **Pam Fowler**

Rehearsal Pianist: **Jeanne Sasaki**

Chorus Master/Asst. Conductor: **Andy Fleming**

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 "GSA," or call to join (512) 472-4772 (GSSA).

Please check a membership category:

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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

Spencer Reichman, last seen with GSA in 2013's *Princess Ida*, now performs around the country, including a recent solo with the Texarkana Regional Chorale. In December, he dropped in on the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of New York's concert performance of *Iolanthe*, and was persuaded to sing the Pirate King's song before the main event. He is shown here with Erica Rome, who accompanied all the evening's music at the piano, and Dan Kravetz, who conducted the audience in the chorus numbers, in a photo that appeared in the GASSNY's newsletter, *The Palace Peeper*.



Monica Kurtz, who has been our Stage Manager since 2005, will not be joining our *Iolanthe* team this year. She is a student at Concordia University - Portland, working on a Master of Education, specializing in Trauma and Resilience in Educational Settings. No need to worry; veteran stage manager **Adam Gunderson** will be stepping in to run *Iolanthe*. Monica plans to return to GSA for our grand production next year.

Iolanthe chorus members **Courtney Katzmeyer** and **Noelle Forestal** are appearing with Texas Concert Opera Collective in Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*, one of the most frequently produced American operas of all time. This fully-staged production will both entertain and challenge audiences. Shows take place on Friday, April 26, and Saturday, April 27, at 7:30 pm at Circle Arts Theatre, 124 Elizabeth Avenue in New Braunfels. Visit texasconcertoperacollective.com for tickets and more information.



Chantal Freeman, Josephine in our concert *H.M.S. Pinafore*, performed the song "Rise Up" during the public memorial service for the University of Texas former president, the late Bill Powers.

Founding member and current board member **Sue Ricket Caldwell** recently received her 5th degree black belt in taekwondo.

VIP Tickets for *Iolanthe*

Gilbert & Sullivan Austin is offering a special VIP package for our production of *Iolanthe*. The VIP ticket includes:

- reserved seat ticket
- reserved premium parking
- seat draping
- stage recognition
- access to the directors and cast at an exclusive rehearsal event

All this for only \$100 per ticket.

GSA appreciates the support of our VIPs!



Amplify Austin is the annual fundraising event for local nonprofits. GSA salutes all who contributed to our campaign. We exceeded our goal, raising \$2535 in just 24 hours! Your gifts will help bring the innocent merriment of Gilbert & Sullivan to schools and other area groups.



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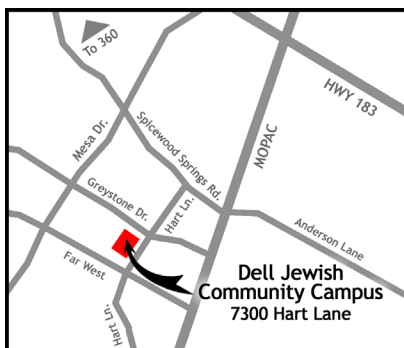
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APRIL-MAY 2019



Map to
*Iolanthe's
Fractured
Fairy Tales*
Musicale
(see page 1)

Coming Events

May 19 *Iolanthe's Fractured Fairy Tales*
Musicale
June 13-23 *Iolanthe* summer production

Gilbert & Sullivan Austin

Entertaining and educating Texas audiences since 1976, Gilbert & Sullivan Austin is dedicated to spreading the topsy-turvy humor and joyful music of W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan.

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

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