

GILBERT & SULLIVAN

SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2006 NEWSLETTER

We have combined the October and November Newsletters because information about our big 30th anniversary celebration was slow to firm up. The original plan has changed so please read on.

30th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, November 5, 2006, 3:00 to 6:00 PM

Chateau Bellevue (Austin Woman's Club)

710 San Antonio Street

(Directions at right)

Our Music Director, Dr. Jeffrey Jones-Ragona, is in charge of the musical program and will feature some Cabaret-style pieces as well as familiar excerpts from Gilbert & Sullivan. Our Artistic Director, Ralph MacPhail, Jr., will fly in to serve as Master of Ceremonies. We will invite and honor early and long-time members and performers. We hope to organize a silent auction to raise money. Light refreshments and desserts will top off the party and we expect that a grand good time will be had by all.

Tickets \$25

A colorful post card will be mailed with more detailed information. As you can understand there is a lot of work involved in these plans and we eagerly invite anyone to volunteer to help. Please call Nancy Jay at 343-8408, or email her at nnj@hotmail.com. This is your party, too!



Directions to Chateau Bellevue

From IH-35, take the 6th Street exit and head west towards the Capitol. At Nueces Street turn right. From Loop 1 (Mopac), take the 5th Street exit and head east towards downtown. At Nueces Street turn left. In either case, go through the traffic light at 6th and Nueces and straight at the stop sign. The back of the Chateau is on your right. Turn right into the parking lot; enter the building, and take the elevator up one floor.

President's Message

Dear Fellow G&S Aficionados,

Our very competent and extremely busy Acting President, Allan Longacre, has delegated to me the honor of addressing the GSSA membership and friends. I am a relatively new member of the Board of Directors (BOD) and have gained some renown for attending nearly all of the GSSA's summer performances. And it is NOT because of any disingenuous "sense of duty" that I attend. I am a true G&S zealot and derive a particularly exquisite bliss from viewing the Austin performances. Indulge me, and allow me to present a few of my perspectives of the BOD, our loyal members and the charisma of G&S and the GSSA.

During the last BOD's meeting, Nancy Jay gleefully announced the receipt of a \$1000 donation. All BOD members expressed delight and surprise. After the meeting, Nancy, Allan and I looked at the name on the check. Virtually no one on the BOD knows this donor. But I know him. I, by chance, sat next to him during one of our last *Mikado* performances. Then, this past summer, I had the pleasure of introducing him to our

illustrious Artistic Director, Ralph MacPhail, Jr. at one of our *Pinafore* performances. This donor expressed a desire to meet and thank Reba and Len Gillman for their critical financial support of the *Pinafore* orchestra.

My stern Icelandic grandfather would occasionally state that, "It is better to be trusted than loved." Allan, upon seeing the check, mentioned to me that donors will continue to fund the Society as they sense that the leadership continues to efficiently and wisely reinvest their donations in order to produce a truly superb product. Such is the faith of this relatively unknown donor who trusts (and rightly so) that the GSSA leadership will manage his hard-earned funds in a wise and prudent manner. "How say you," as Robin asks Old Adam in Act II of *Ruddigore*, "is it not a scheme well planned?"

Our donors are a rare breed and a blessing to us all. They not only help to subsidize the price of other's tickets but their donations are a genuine expression of trust and faith that the BOD will competently manage the finances to produce a superb

(Continued on page 2)

Last Musicale

Reba Gillman

The Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Austin began its 30th-year in style on Monday, September 11, 2006, when we gathered in the Jays' beautiful and welcoming home. Thank you Benny and Nancy for your generous and gracious hospitality. Long-time member Libby Weed planned the interesting and effective program, which showcased old favorites and new talent from last summer's *Pinafore*.

We were pleased that President Bill Hatcher arrived to preside, and introduce the evening's guests. He also asked if anyone had a birthday that day, and we all joined in singing Happy Birthday to Nan Hatcher. He then introduced the Board members and spoke about our financial success with *H.M.S. Pinafore*. He said this was partly as a result of group sales far beyond what we have achieved in other years, and hoped we could continue this with our next production, *Ruddigore*, in June, 2007.

Libby Weed then took over, and introduced the ten performers with the charming and informative thumbnail sketches she is so good at. See program at right. The accompanist, Brett Bachus, arrived and admitted it was *his* birthday, so we enthusiastically sang another Happy Birthday. And then the fun began.

It was good to have Frank Delvy and Janette Jones on hand again. They're both superb performers! Among other gems they gave us a delightful look at "I once was a very abandoned person," from *Ruddigore*, complete with some excellent choreography and an effective costume for Janette. Russell Gregory delighted us with several songs, wearing what are becoming his trade-mark hats to help set the scene for each. He brought along his sister, Peggy Brunner, to sing some of the songs they sang during the summer at the ElderHostel in Connecticut. Arthur DiBianca and June Julian did a very nice scene with dialogue from *Iolanthe*, singing "If we're weak enough to tarry, ere we marry." I won't describe each offering, but it was a lovely evening, and very good to have the talented newcomers doing their stuff. The last "performance" on the program was June Julian singing a beautiful Micaela from *Carmen*, "Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante." Then to close in our traditional way, David Fontenot sang the Pirate King's lead-in, and we all rose to sing "Hail, Poetry," followed by a lively "Now to the banquet we press," before we adjourned to the Jays' wonderful kitchen for refreshments and conversation. Through the entire evening, pianist Brett Bachus provided the excellent accompaniment.

For the record, those present were: Byron Arnason, Frank & Donna Delvy, Arthur DiBianca, David and Katy Fontenot, Todd Galbraith, Len & Reba Gillman, Russell Gregory and sisters Peggy Brunner and Mollie Tower, Bill & Nan Hatcher, Pat Hobbs, Janette Jones, June Julian, Bob Kieras, Allan & Barbara Longacre, Nancy McQueen, Alan Pochi, Steve & Eve Schwartzman, Larry Shepley, Libby Weed, David Wieckowski, and Theresa Wilson; and pianist Brett Bachus.

Member of the Month

All dues-paying members are eligible to be our "Member of the Month" (who is randomly selected). The Member of the Month is entitled to receive a CD of our 2005 *Mikado*. The Member of the Month for this month is:

Eve & Steven Schwartzman

Congratulations! Please call our office (472-4772) to let us know where we should send your CD.

(President's Message continued from page 1)

Ruddigore next summer. Rest assured that the funding of the productions is taken VERY seriously by the BOD. The BOD is extremely fortunate to have Dave Wieckowski as its treasurer, a relatively thankless, yet crucial job, requiring the kind of dependability and accuracy that he brings to everything he does for the Society.

The BOD presently has a powerful and unique group of present and past presidents including Reba Gillman, Bill Hatcher, Larry Shepley, and Libby Weed. Their continued devotion and dedication reflects positively on the Society. Todd Galbraith and Libby, our newest BOD members, are filling the BOD vacancies resulting from the regretted resignations of Ann Coltman and Jean Smootz. The BOD welcomes Libby (again) and Todd, and is very grateful for the many valuable contributions of Ann and Jean.

Several years ago, Reba overheard me proposing that exposure to G&S was more effective at elevating children's IQ than listening to Mozart. Reba responded, "There is room for both!" Expose your young'uns to the Masters, especially G&S! And NEVER (well, hardly ever) attend a G&S performance alone. Bring your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and of course, sisters, cousins, and aunts. And NEVER attend just one performance! Artistic Director MacPhail's staging is elegantly complex and brimming with traditional G&S "business," set off like a gem by the sensitive musical direction and conducting of Maestro Dr. Jeffrey Jones-Ragona. You will see, hear, and comprehend more magnificently unreasonable logic (referred to as Topsy-Turvydom) with each repeat performance. I certainly do.

Sincerely Yours, *Byron Arnason*

Musicale 11 September 2006

When I go out the door (Patience) Art & David

Alone and yet alive (The Mikado) Peggy

I'm a gigolo (Wake Up and Dream, Cole Porter) Frank

O, wie will ich triumphiren (The Abduction from the Seraglio, Mozart) Bob

If we're weak enough to tarry (Iolanthe) Art & June

I stole the prince (The Gondoliers) Russell

Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja (The Magic Flute, Mozart) Alan

There is beauty in the bellow of the blast (The Mikado) Russell & Peggy

When all night long a chap remains (Iolanthe) Frank

Toréador, en garde (Carmen, Bizet) Todd

When you're good to Mama (Chicago, Ebb & Kander) Janette

Fair moon, to thee I sing (H.M.S. Pinafore) Alan

When a felon's not engaged in his employment

(The Pirates of Penzance) Russell, with manly chorus

Love unrequited, robs me of my rest (Iolanthe) David

I once was a very abandoned person (Ruddigore) Frank & Janette

Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante (Carmen, Bizet) June

Hail, Poetry (The Pirates of Penzance)

The Company, led by David as Pirate King

Now to the banquet we press (The Sorcerer) The Company

Singers: **Peggy Brunner • Frank Delvy • Arthur DiBianca
David Fontenot • Todd Galbraith • Russell Gregory • Janette Jones
June Julian • Robert Kieras • Alan Pochi**

Pianist: **Brett Bachus**

A Little History by Reba Gillman

A production of *Pinafore* by Zach Scot Theatre in 1976 jump started our Society, but we did not initiate it. People who loved Gilbert & Sullivan gathered to sing in the 1976 production, and Felicity Coltman was the pianist. Our Society was formed early that fall. Linalice Carey, who then ran a tiny theater on 6th Street hanging over Waller Creek, issued the call and helped the eager responders organize. Sue Caldwell, Ann Coltman, Enid Hallock, Allen Lawshae, and Jim Robinson, are names we still know. Some original members soon moved away, but others remained active for many years before they disappeared. In that first season we produced *Ruddigore*, and *The Sorcerer*, and the following summer we joined with Zach Scott to co-produce *The Pirates of Penzance*.

In the early history of our Society each monthly meeting dealt with the business of the Society with a little G&S thrown in to keep us amused and interested. Meetings hashed and rehashed every decision, were certainly inefficient, and often deadly boring. Later we got better organized and rewrote our Bylaws to conform with the accepted format of such membership groups. Perhaps some members do not realize that we hold one Annual Business Meeting a year — in January. That is when we present a slate of Directors to the membership to vote on. That is where you express your voice. The new Board of Directors is then responsible for electing the officers of the Society, and dealing with all Society business, including selecting and producing the annual Big Show. Any further expression of members interest and opinion is best accomplished by contacting individual Board members, or by writing or emailing the Society at the office. The annual meeting takes place on the first or second Monday of January — this year it occurs on January 8, 2007. Mark the date on your calendar and join us for the important event.

I think the chief reason GASSA members join the Society and flock to our Musicales and annual productions, is that we enjoy saying Gilbert’s words and singing and hearing Sullivan’s music. But there is an underlying basic purpose which our Vice President Allan Longacre has expressed:

The Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Austin is one of a number of Gilbert and Sullivan Societies in existence throughout the world. Our purpose is to preserve and present a specific theatrical tradition — the works of Gilbert and Sullivan as presented originally by the D’Oyly Carte Opera Company in the latter part of the 19th and the early 20th centuries. This is similar to how the works of Mozart and Shakespeare are preserved and celebrated in the myriad of Mozart and Shakespeare Festivals throughout the world each year.

We welcome any remarks and ideas from members, and will be happy to publish appropriate material in the Newsletter any time it is received. As President Bill Hatcher urged earlier in the year, “Get Involved! Volunteer! Tell us what you think!”

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Apology and Abject Grovel

Cecily Johnson takes very good photographs, but so does Benny Jay. He shot many of the pictures credited to Cecily in the September Newsletter. We are sorry we didn’t give him the credit he deserves.

Contributors to *H.M.S. Pinafore* 2006

Patricia Van Buren Almond • Richard & Jennifer Arndt • Ken & Emily Ashworth • Marilyn Babcock • James Black • Jim & Eleanor Cochran • Ray & Keena Cole • Peter & Felicity Coltman • Marion DeFord • Wanda Fisher & Maddie Renbarger • Loel Graber • Maudi Greenwood • Russell Gregory • Chris Hinds • James A. Hitt • Reba & Leonard Gillman • Brent & Una Jacob • Edward Kluth • Rafe & Alice MacPhail • Elaine Martens • Norman & Emilia Martin • Betty B. Morgan • P. S. Neff • James Plugge • Bee Harris Polome & Milt Weiss • Prudential Foundation Matching Gifts • Eugene & Betty Ripperger • Dorothy Rutishauser • Jane Dunn Sibley • Jean & Ed Smootz • Becky Stewart • Still Water Foundation, Inc. • Bernadette Tasher • The Voloch Family • Libby & Michael Weed • Joyce & Wayne Wilson • John Wood

Orchestra sponsored by Reba & Leonard Gillman



This project is funded in part by the City of Austin through the Cultural Arts Division and by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts.

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 with your check, payable to “GSSA”:

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin
P.O. Box 684542
Austin, Texas 78768-4542 Phone: 472-4772 (472-GSSA)

Name & Address (if different from label):

Phone(s): _____

E-mail address: _____

Employer: _____

Does your company match donations? _____

I’d like to volunteer. I’m interested in:

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)

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 • G&S in School
Musicales • Musical Scholarships
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E-mail: info@gilbertsullivan.org



The Society holds non-profit status under 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. We are pleased to receive funding from the City of Austin under the Cultural Arts Division and by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts.



Artistic Director
Music Director
Database Manager

Ralph MacPhail, Jr.
Jeffrey Jones-Ragona
Arthur DiBianca

Board of Directors

President	Bill Hatcher	892-3722
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Assistant to VP	June Julian	301-7316
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	Todd Galbraith	989-3317
	Nancy Jay	343-8408
	Libby Weed	837-5441

**30th ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION**

Sunday November 5, 2006, 3:00 PM
At the Austin Woman's Club, 710 San Antonio

(See information on page 1)

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Annual Meeting

Monday, January 8, 2007

(More information later)

Come and vote for your Board of Directors
Nominating Committee: Allan Longacre,
June Julian, and Larry Shepley

Our Grand Production in June, 2007

Ruddigore
Or, The Witch's Curse

Each Lord of Ruddigore,
Despite his best endeavour,
Shall do one crime, or more,
Once, every day, for ever!

This doom he can't defy,
However he may try,
For should he stay
His hand, that day
In torture he shall die!



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Return Service Requested

Are you the Member of the Month?
See inside!

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