

The

GILBERT & SULLIVAN

FEBRUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER

SOCIETY OF AUSTIN



GSSA 2008 Board of Directors, left to right: Jean Smootz, Eva Laskaris, Nanci Jay, Pat Hobbs, Dave Wieckowski, Reba Gillman, June Julian, Allan Longacre, Libby Weed, David Little, Nancy McQueen (absent: Byron Arnason, Chris Buggé), photo by Loel Graber

FREDERIC'S BIRTHDAY

Friday, February 29th - Leap Day!

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society Celebrates the Birthday of Frederic –

The Paradoxical Hero from the Lighthearted Musical Comedy Classic, *The Pirates Of Penzance!*

On Leap Day this year, the Gilbert and Sullivan Society (GSSA) will do its part to "Keep Austin Weird" in a hilariously entertaining evening of merriment for Frederic, the hapless reformed pirate from *The Pirates of Penzance*, whose birthday – in a paradoxical twist of fate - is Leap Day.

The evening will feature a delightful mix of entertainment, including a magic show by GSSA Artistic Director Ralph MacPhail, Jr., and live musical performances. Musical selections will be sung by GSSA performers past and present, including Holton Johnson as the dashing Frederic, Janette Jones, Russell Gregory, Rose Taylor, GSSA Music Director Jeffrey Jones-Ragona and many more. Revelers will also enjoy a lavish dessert buffet and refreshments, silent auction and balloon raffle.

7:30pm, Friday, February 29th

Chateau Bellevue / The Austin Woman's Club

708 San Antonio Street

\$25 in advance / \$30 at the door

Purchase tickets online at www.gilbertsullivan.org, or call 1-800-494-TIXS

Seating is limited; purchase your tickets today!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends:

Thank you to all who attended the January Business Meeting and Musicale. We had an enjoyable time together, from the musical presentations and sing-a-longs, to the reception that followed. Of course we did actually have some serious "business" to attend to: the election of our Board members for 2008. The new slate of Board members was passed, and the following week our new Board elected its officers. However, since that time, Pat Hobbs, who has served on our Board for the past year, has had to unexpectedly resign due to health reasons. While we will miss her involvement on the Board, we know that she will continue to support the Gilbert & Sullivan Society in other activities as her health permits. Best wishes to you, Pat!

The vacancy on our Board was short-lived, however, as I am now pleased to announce that Chris Buggé will be rejoining our Board. Chris served previously on the Board for a number of years. Through good times and bad he was a loyal and dependable member. He is also our token Britisher, always eager to lead us in singing "God save the Queen." We are happy to have him back on the Board, and with Chris returning, our slate is now complete:

- June Julian, President
- Libby Weed, Executive Vice President
- Nancy McQueen, Secretary
- Dave Wieckowski, Treasurer
- Byron Arnason, Director At Large
- Chris Buggé, Director At Large
- Eva Laskaris, Director, Community Outreach Programs
- Reba Gillman, Newsletter Editor
- Nancy Jay, Office Manager
- David Little, Webmaster & Publicity
- Allan Longacre, Grants Writer
- Jean Smootz, Director At Large

I am so glad to have the opportunity once again to work with such an enthusiastic and dedicated group. We hope to see you all on Friday, February 29 at the paradoxical birthday party for our favorite pirate, Frederic, and co-horts. And please remember to encourage your singer and actor friends to audition that same weekend (March 1 & 2) for *The Pirates of Penzance!*

Sincerely yours,
June Julian

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AND MUSICALE

Report by Reba Gillman

At 7:30 PM on Monday January 14, 2008 24 members and 2 guests of the Society gathered in the familiar and welcoming activities room at Harris Bell Hall in Westminster Manor to do our annual official business. It was an enjoyable gathering of friends, people we used to see regularly in the old days when we met monthly for assorted entertainments, and we felt a real warmth for the conscientious members who made the effort to be present. Our President June Julian made opening announcements to remind us of our big show coming up in June (*The Pirates of Penzance*), the Big Bash celebration of Frederic's Birthday on February 29th, and the doings of our educational out-reach group, The Wand'ring Minstrels. Treasurer Dave Wieckowski gave the financial report for 2007.

Larry Shepley then took over to lead us in his choice for the Sing-A-Long: a piece from the little-known Gilbert & Sullivan opera *Thespis, or The Gods Grown Old*, first produced in London on December 26, 1871. As Larry explained to us this first joint effort of Gilbert and Sullivan was not up to later standards, and the music long ago disappeared. Gilbert rather liked his story and published the words, but Sullivan destroyed most of the music so the opera cannot be performed as originally written. Part of what remains is well known as the women's chorus which Sullivan later used for *Pirates*, "Climbing over rocky mountain." Not so well known is an affecting song that Sullivan liked to perform throughout his career, "Little Maid of Arcadée." And it was this piece that Larry introduced us to. As we sang through it several times we enjoyed the simple, rather standard piece. I was glad to have the experience of learning more about little known *Thespis*. The libretto is available on the internet.

Next Libby Weed came up to lead her choice from *The Mikado*. She reminded us that as the opera winds toward a close it is necessary for Ko-Ko and Katisha to marry each other, although neither wishes to. "There is beauty in the bellow of the blast, There is grandeur in the growling of the gale, There is eloquent out-pouring When the lion is a-roaring, And the tiger is a-lashing of his tail" expresses the formidable strength of the lady, and the complying acceptance by Ko-Ko. It was fun to sing through these challenging statements, and end up happily "If that is so, Sing derry down derry! It's evident, very, Our tastes are one. Away we'll go, And merrily marry, Nor tardily tarry, Till day is done."

And finally, June Julian led us in "Strephon's a member of parliament" from *Iolanthe*, saying it seemed to suit our election year. Fairies and Peers voice their responses to "Strephon's a Member of Parliament! Carries every bill he chooses. To his measures all assent — showing that fairies have their uses. Whigs and Tories Dim their glories, Giving an ear to all his stories — Lords and Commons are both in the blues! Strephon makes them shake in their shoes!"

This led quite properly to the business of the evening: Libby Weed rose to offer the slate of Directors as presented by the Nominating Committee (Libby Weed, Chair; Bill Hatcher, and Nancy Jay). She mentioned a few interesting facts about each candidate as she named them: returning Board members Byron Arnason, Reba Gillman, Pat Hobbs, Nancy Jay, June Julian, Eva Laskaris, David Little, Allan Longacre, Nancy McQueen, Libby Weed, and Dave Wieckowski, and new member Jean Smootz. Theresa Wilson moved that the slate be accepted by acclamation. This was seconded and passed. The new Board will hold its first meeting in one week, and elect officers.

We then sang "Hail Poetry" and "Now to the banquet we press," to close the formal proceedings, before we gathered around the refreshment table to sample the goodies. I thought everyone had enjoyed the sing-a-long, and I think we get a deeper feeling for the words and music when we do it ourselves. My first acquaintance with several of the operas came when I sang the music in a choral performance in a public program.

Those present were: Arthur DiBianca, Reba Gillman, Loel Graber, Chris, Gary, and Enid Hallock, Pat Hobbs, Nancy Jay, June Julian, Eva Laskaris, David Little, Allan & Barbara Longacre, Vivian Mansell, John Mast, Nancy McQueen, Glay Posch, Larry Shepley, Andrée Sjoberg, Jean Smootz, Libby Weed, Dave Wieckowski, Frank Wicker with guest Bonny Gardner, Terri Wilson, and Lady High Pianist Marti Dudgeon. Special thanks go to Glay Posch for coming from Houston; and we regret that Byron Arnason could not attend. He was following his professional calling in the wilds of Nevada.

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

All dues-paying members are eligible to be our "Member of the Month." The "Member" (who is randomly selected) is entitled to receive a CD of our 2005 *The Mikado*, or 2006 *HMS Pinafore*. The Member of the Month for this month is:

Betty Hatcher

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

WAND'RING MINSTREL NEWS

The Wand'ring Minstrels will be touring this spring with the "Pirates in the Schools" program. This educational show will be a mini production of *The Pirates of Penzance*. Students will have the opportunity to be part of the cast as the Major General's daughters, policemen, or even pirates! In addition, the Wand'ring Minstrels will continue to offer customized programs for special events and community outreach that encompass music from various Gilbert and Sullivan works.

If you are interested in booking the Wand'ring Minstrels for an upcoming event or educational program, please contact **Eva Laskaris** at (512) 350-4935, or email us at info@gilbertsullivan.org.

News of Members

June Julian and **Claire Vangelisti** with pianist Martha Dudgeon, did a wonderful program on Friday February 8 at the First Presbyterian Church, called "Moonstruck by Movie Music and More," and presented by **Martha MacDonald's** Austin Chamber Ensemble. Marti Dudgeon put together this unusual program, which drew heavily on Puccini arias for which sopranos Claire and June were in excellent voice. Don Weeda, accordion; P. Kellach Waddle, bass; and Koji Kodama, drums, added interesting musical variety.

Frank Delvy is back home and doing well after surgery to remove a recurring cancer. He has to take it easy for a while but looks forward to being able to sing one song at Frederic's Birthday Party on February 29th. Way to go, Frank!

Contributors to Ruddigore 2007

We wish to express our thanks to the following donors, whose generous support helped to make **Ruddigore** a resounding success!

Charles Antonie • Richard L. Black • Stanley G. Bullard • Barbara Buttrey • Lucian Chimene • Candice Clark • David & Patricia Davidson • Marion Wier DeFord • Douglas & Yvonne Vautier DeLay • Frank DiBianca • Jewell Ellis • Charlotte Flynn in memory of Bill Flynn • Carol Whitcraft Fredericks • Len & Reba Gillman • David & Roslyn Gutman • Cecil Hale • William & Naomi Haight • The Hallock Family, Enid, Chris & Gary • Tom & Barbara Hamff • James A. & Mary Hitt • Dudley & Mari Houghton • Earl Richard Hunt • Benny & Nanci Jay • Blain & Debbie Keith • Layton B. Keith, Jr. • Donald & Mary Lindholm • Norman & Emilia Martin • Col. George & Nancy McQueen • Ms. Mary Metz, MBE • Austin H. & Irene Phelps • Diana Phillips • William & Susan Reid • Ida C. Scott • Ernest & Lenoir Seelhorst • Katharine Shields • Andrée Sjoberg • Susan Spruance • Patricia Spurr • Becky Blake Stewart • Eileen Crain Sullivan • Jill Thomas • William R. Trutna • Mary & William Weaver • Patrica Wedel • Michael & Libby Weed • M. Wayne Wilson • Cleve H. Tandy Foundation



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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)
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- ✧ Pooh-Bah (\$500-\$999)
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- ✧ Savoyard (\$2500 & up)

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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

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Phone: (512) 472-4772 (GSA-GSSA)
Our web site: www.gilbertsullivan.org
E-mail: info@gilbertsullivan.org



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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

June Julian	President	627-3482
Libby Weed	Executive Vice President	837-5441
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Allan Longacre	Grants	301-5611
Byron Arnason		(801) 558-8041
Chris Buggé		834-7766
Jean Smootz		259-2373

Database Manager Arthur DiBianca

The Pirates of Penzance Auditions

Saturday and Sunday, March 1-2, 2008
Harris Bell Hall at Westminster Manor
4100 Jackson Avenue, Austin, Texas
Call-backs will be held in the evening on March 2.
A small honorarium will be paid to all performers.
Call Chuck Antonie at (512) 733-1006 to reserve a 10-minute audition time slot, or visit our website at www.gilbertsullivan.org.



See page 1 for more details.

Principals of this opera include:

- RICHARD, THE PIRATE KING bass-baritone
- SAMUEL (his lieutenant) baritone
- FREDERIC (A Pirate Apprentice) tenor
- MAJOR-GENERAL STANLEY (of the British Army) baritone
- EDWARD, SERGEANT OF POLICE bass
- MABEL (General Stanley's youngest daughter) soprano

- KATE (General Stanley's daughter) mezzo-soprano
- EDITH (General Stanley's daughter) mezzo-soprano
- ISABEL (General Stanley's daughter) speaking role
- RUTH (A Piratical Maid-of-all-work) mezzo-soprano/contralto

Also casting chorus of General Stanley's daughters, pirates, police, etc.

The
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