

# The GILBERT & SULLIVAN

SEPTEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

SOCIETY OF AUSTIN

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Libby Weed

*Welcome to a season of musical enjoyment presented by the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin!* Please join us Sunday, September 11, at 3:00 pm at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church for a very special occasion to inaugurate the new season.



This day marks the tenth anniversary of a tragic day in our nation's history. We wish to mark the occasion by spending some time remembering the events of September 11, 2001, reflecting on the heroism and selflessness displayed by emergency responders on that day, and presenting patriotic music along with G&S classics. It never hurts to feed our souls with beautiful music.

The September Musicale is free to the public, but we will be passing firefighters' hats during part of our program, giving all the opportunity to contribute to the Austin Fire Fighters' Outreach Fund. You will be able to contribute to making a difference to many in our community, families of firefighters and of others identified with needs by this benevolent organization.

G&S board member (and UT voice faculty member) **Leonard Johnson** is planning this special event along with frequent G&S principal **Janette Jones**. Janette and Leonard have invited some of our finest G&S musicians to sing songs ranging from patriotic numbers ("God Bless America") to songs about or reminiscent of the Big Apple ("New York, New York") and finally to G&S standards (we will surprise you on those).

When you come, bring some delectables to spread on our table and share. Any items are welcome, but we think it will be fun to enjoy New Yorkish things such as bagels and cream cheese, deli meats and cheeses, Reubens, New York pizza, cheesecake ... that sort of thing.

Next in our musicale season will be "Stars from the G&S Chorus" in November. This will be a sizzling musicale featuring outstanding solo voices that make our chorus one of the richest in Texas theater. Featured singers will be people who make our shows outstanding but who, at least to this point, have not played principal roles. Watch our website for more information about that.

Until September 11,

## Send Us Your News!

The next newsletter should arrive in early November; the deadline for submissions is October 21. Please send your news to [news@gilbertsullivan.org](mailto:news@gilbertsullivan.org). Thanks!

**2011-2012 SEASON OPENING MUSICALE**  
*Patriot Day Musicale and Benefit:*  
 *An afternoon of remembrance and joy*  
Sunday, September 11, at 3:00 p.m.  
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church - 8134 Mesa Drive

## September Musicale

### in memory of September 11, 2001

Our season opening musicale will be held on Sunday, September 11, at 3 pm at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 8134 Mesa Drive (see map on page 6). Please see the President's Message for more details. Members are asked to **bring munchies** to share - New York delicacies will be especially appropriate.

### *The September Musicale will Benefit*



The Austin Fire Fighters' Outreach Fund provides immediate financial assistance to firefighters and their families impacted by an unexpected injury, illness, or death. Additionally, the Fund provides assistance to citizens of Travis and surrounding counties who experience a major catastrophe involving fire, flood, tornado and other natural disasters. For more information: [www.austinfirefightersfund.org](http://www.austinfirefightersfund.org)

## In This Issue

Letter to <i>The Mikado</i> Company .....	p. 2
News of Members .....	p. 3
Wand'ring Minstrels .....	p. 3
GSSA 2011-2012 Season .....	p. 3
Photos of <i>The Mikado</i> .....	pp. 4, 5
Winners of <i>The Mikado</i> DVDs .....	p. 5



RALPH MACPHAIL, JR.  
POST OFFICE BOX 14  
BRIDGEWATER, VIRGINIA 22812 - 0014

## ***To My Dear and Valued Friends and Colleagues in Austin,***

The other day some sleeves of photographs arrived from Austin, and I opened them with great anticipation. Sure enough, they reinforced one of my memories of our production of *The Mikado* in June: it really *was* a beautiful show! (Now I must wait for audio and video reinforcement of two *other* memories of the production: it was a treat of laughing song and merry dance from start to finish.)

Not long after the photos came, a listing of the feedback given by our audiences on surveys arrived, and it was clear that the artistic and financial success of the endeavor was a result of audience delight. *Congratulations to all!*

I also offer deepest Titipudlian thanks for the valuable roles each of you played to make this production speak so well for the verbal delights of Gilbert, the melodic gifts of Sullivan, and the ability of the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin to fulfill its mission of providing the public with innocent merriment. I'll be specific, within the confines of one page:

**President Libby Weed and her wonderful Board** (it's criminal for me not to mention each by name) brought their considerable and disparate strengths to the show so selflessly and efficiently and well. Those of us more directly involved with what happens on stage need to be reminded that none of our activities would be possible without the year-'round groundwork of planning, fund-raising, and promotion handled so well by you, our friends. *Thank you!*

**Production Manager Bill Hatcher assembled another staff of first-class theatrical specialists backstage** (again, it's criminal for me not to mention each by name) and worked tirelessly himself to ensure that our artistic goals were met. I so enjoyed working with you, Bill, and your staff of faithful Savoy veterans.

**Music Director and Conductor Jeffrey Jones-Ragona** is my valued friend and colleague. I've often said, "Blessed is the staging director with a strong and sympathetic m.d.," and I'm very pleased to note that Jeffrey and I have been working together now for nearly a dozen productions. Jeffrey, your magic with the vocal and orchestral underpinnings of the show are deeply appreciated by your tone-deaf collaborator, who also appreciates the orchestral personnel you marshal and conduct yearly. (I hate not mentioning each member of the orchestra by name.)

**Our cast of principals and chorus** (I know and you know—it's positively *heinous* for me not to mention each by name) conveyed the airy persiflage and the ballads, songs, and snatches so wonderfully. You, of course, are the faces of the production, and while you're supported by many others, so much of our success is due to what you did behind that theatrical fourth wall. Your talent, sense of fun, and attention to the detail of your o/c stage director led to audience delight. I do hope you're still savoring that applause, for you deserved it so well.

**Our corps of front-of-house volunteers** dealt graciously and efficiently with record houses and all of the challenges such large audiences bring. Your kindness and hospitality did not go unnoticed in the audience evaluations, and we are grateful for your involvement.

**Russell [H.\*] and Kay [H.\*] Gregory** are mentioned by name for providing hospitality for this wand'ring Savoyard, for putting a roof over his head, linking wi-fi to his computer, providing a twenty-first century Texas stallion, and for a not-so-little list of other kindnesses. Thank you, dear friends. (\* "Hospitality" *should* be your middle name.)

Our work is so ephemeral. After our performances, all we have to show for them, except for the programs and clippings, notes and schedules, photographs and recordings (which never fully capture the magic of the moments), are our memories and friendships.

I have many happy memories of Austin through the years, of our work and play together. But equally important to me are the friendships formed as we strive to delight the public with this wonderful, timeless material.

So finally Alice and I thank you for the friendship you shared with us along the way. Isn't it a wonderful blessing to be able to work so hard while having so much fun?

Yours very sincerely,

## NEWS of our MEMBERS

On Thursday, July 28, **June Julian** and **Marti Dudgeon** performed at a Central Presbyterian Church Noonday Concert, as part of **Martha MacDonald's** Austin Chamber Ensemble series of concerts. The program, entitled "What Women Want," consisted of a selection of arias by Puccini, Previn, Gounod, Gershwin, and others, that offered possible answers to the subject, delightfully sung by soprano June. Marti provided her usual fine accompaniments and a solo of the Eighteenth Variation from Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsodie on a Theme of Paganini*. It was a lovely musical interlude on a hot summer day.

A number of Society members, performers, etc., have spent time this summer recreating the Golden Age of Radio in the form of an episode of the early 1930's Canadian show, *The Challenge of the Yukon*. Led by **Richard Summers** (a past stage manager for GSSA), the cast and staff include **Mandy Summers, Arthur DiBianca, Jennifer Tucker, Derek Smootz, Jake Jacobsen, Katy Fontenot, and David Fontenot** (who also served as Assistant Director for the project). The show, in post-production at press time, will be podcast on the Sonic Society's 2011 Summerstock Series ([sonicsociety.org](http://sonicsociety.org)). Richard, a.k.a. Captain Radio Productions, will be doing other original audio drama productions; if interested, contact him at [richard@captainradio.com](mailto:richard@captainradio.com).

Member **Sue Caldwell** recently kicked and punched her way to fourth degree black belt in taekwondo at Master Martial Arts.

Immediately following his role as Go-To in last summer's *The Mikado*, **Spencer Reichman** took off with his father in his 2-seater car to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in Gettysburg, June 24 to July 3, and perform the title role for the Festival's youth production of *The Mikado*. He also performed there in *The Pirates of Penzance* and sight-read the part of the Usher in two spur-of-the-moment productions of *Trial by Jury*. In his "spare" time aside from rehearsing and performing, he saw performances of *Ruddigore*, *The Sorcerer*, *Iolanthe*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, another version of *The Mikado*, as well as *Cox & Box*, *The Zoo*, and *The Pivettes of Penzance* (a gender-swapped version of *Pirates*). He was sorry to miss the symposium, but did meet up with our artistic director, **Ralph MacPhail, Jr.**, and was able to attend most of Rafe's pre-show discussions. He was fascinated by the opportunity to join in discussions with the many scholarly attendees about the various interpretations of roles. He looks forward to the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Gettysburg Gilbert and Sullivan Festival and to our production of *Patience* next summer, and says "long life to you, till then!"



*Spencer Reichman as The Mikado, flanked by Ralph and Alice MacPhail, in Gettysburg*

**Ralph MacPhail, Jr.** will host a conference devoted to "Gilbert & Sullivan and *H.M.S. Pinafore*" at Incarnation Center in Ivoryton Connecticut, October 9-14. For further information, including a daily schedule, go to [www.incarnationcenter.org](http://www.incarnationcenter.org) and click on the "G&S" graphic; conference director Amy Barrow ([gsivoryton@gmail.com](mailto:gsivoryton@gmail.com)) will be pleased to respond to questions, as will, of course, Rafe: [RafeMacPhail@Yahoo.com](mailto:RafeMacPhail@Yahoo.com).

## Wand'ring Minstrels

Start the school year off right with a visit from the Wand'ring Minstrels of the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin. They will make your school concerts or private parties entertaining and fun. Guaranteed to get the audience laughing and singing along to favorite Gilbert and Sullivan and Broadway musical numbers.

Contact **Robert L. Schneider** ([bigdaddymusic1@gmail.com](mailto:bigdaddymusic1@gmail.com)), or see our website ([www.gilbertsullivan.org](http://www.gilbertsullivan.org)) for further details.

## G&S Austin 2011-2012 Season

Our Board has planned an exciting year for us. Date, time, and place may sometimes be unknown, but delightful music is certain to be involved. Here are the details we have so far:

**September Musicale in Memory of September 11, 2001** – Sunday, September 11, 3 pm, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 8134 Mesa Blvd. Please see the President's Message (p. 1) for more details. Please bring munchies to share – New York delicacies will be especially appropriate.

**"Stars of The Mikado Chorus"** (November 6, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church) – This event will showcase the magnificent talents of several of the stellar members of last summer's *Mikado* chorus. Featured singers will include Tai Collins, Zendel Hernandez, John Hooker, Daytha Hulion, Jake Jacobsen, Karlyn McCutchan, and Jennifer Tucker. Each will sing both a G&S aria or ensemble and a solo number from another musical source. You will understand why our chorus is so spectacular when you hear these solo voices.

**Annual Business Meeting and Sing-Along** (early January, Genesis Presbyterian Fellowship Hall) – Our membership will meet to elect a slate of officers for 2012. G&S board member, UT voice professor, and long-time choral director Leonard Johnson will lead us in some sing-along choruses from the G&S canon.

**"Happy Birthday, Frederic!"** (Sunday, February 26) – Three days before what would be Frederic's 39<sup>th</sup> birthday, we will feature outstanding voices from the past two decades of G&S grand productions singing love songs from the Gilbert & Sullivan repertoire. Think back to some of the greatest G&S productions since the early nineties, and look forward to hearing reprises of some memorable romantic solos and duets.

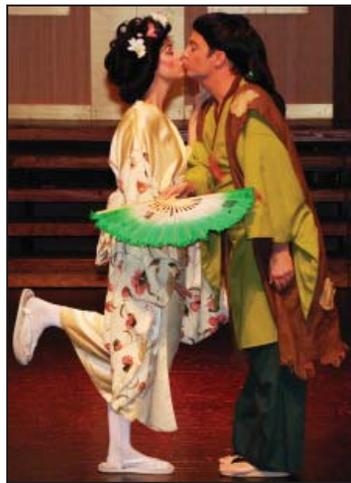
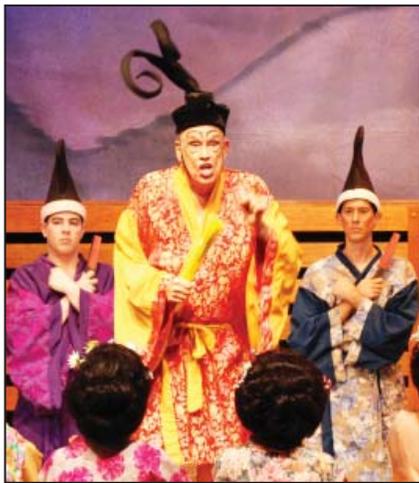
**May Patience Preview** (Sunday, May 13) – For a special Mother's Day musicale, we will present a preview of delights to come in our June grand production of *Patience*. Every mother in attendance will receive a long-stemmed rose, and members of our cast will entertain us all with entrancing songs and snippets of dialogue to hint at the treat that awaits us in June.

**June Grand Production** (June 7-17), as mentioned, will be *Patience*. Renew your acquaintance with the Rapturous Maidens and the Officers of Dragoon Guards!

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin presented *The Mikado* in June, 2011

photos courtesy Nanci and Benny Jay

see more at [gilbertsullivanatx.smugmug.com](http://gilbertsullivanatx.smugmug.com)



## 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:



### Winners of *The Mikado* DVDs

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

- |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Hugh Brady          | George Kennebeck |
| Robert & Jan Ellzey | Susan Kinningham |
| Douglas Field       | Pat Maples       |
| Cynthia Hale        | Thurman Pylant   |
| Kathleen Kelly      | David Treadwell  |

# Armstrong Moving & Storage

is the official moving and storage company of The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin. Many thanks, Armstrong!



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

SEPTEMBER 2011

**2011-2012 SEASON OPENING MUSICALE**

*Patriot Day Musicale and Benefit:*



*An afternoon of remembrance and joy*

**Sunday, September 11, at 3:00 p.m.**  
 St. Matthew's Episcopal Church - 8134 Mesa Drive



*See details on page 1!*

**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: **1507 Wilshire Boulevard, Austin, TX 78722**  
 Mailing Address: **P. O. Box 684542, Austin, TX 78768-4542**  
 Phone: (512) 472-4772 (GSA-GSSA)  
 Our web site: [www.gilbertsullivan.org](http://www.gilbertsullivan.org)  
 E-mail: [info@gilbertsullivan.org](mailto:info@gilbertsullivan.org)

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 from the National Endowment for the Arts which believes that a great nation deserves great art.



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**  
**Roberta Long**  
**Dave Wieckowski**  
**Michael Meigs**  
**Byron Arnason**  
**Chris Buggé**  
**Janet Forman**  
**Reba Gillman**  
**Pat Hobbs**  
**Leonard Johnson**  
**David Little**  
**Robert L. Schneider**

President  
 Executive Vice President  
 Treasurer  
 Secretary and Bursar  
 Special Projects  
 Special Projects  
 Office Manager  
 Historian  
 Volunteer Coordinator  
 Musicale Coordinator  
 Publicist and Webmaster  
 Wand'ring Minstrels Coordinator

Database Manager  
 Newsletter Editor

**Arthur DiBianca**  
**Sue Ricket Caldwell**