

THE  
**TRUMPET BRAY**

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW ENGLAND GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY



∞ NEGASS EVENTS ∞

**NEGASS+GWO=LMLO of *The Gondoliers***

NEGASS and the Greater Worcester Opera did a Last Minute Light Opera performance of *The Gondoliers* on Saturday, March 5 at 65 Briarwood Circle in Worcester, MA. This is one of Gilbert & Sullivan's funniest shows about kings, switched babies, star-crossed lovers, and Venice. Musical conductor for the event was **Katherine Engel Meifert** and piano accompaniment was provided by **Kamilla Irving Isanbaeva**.



Appearing at *The Gondoliers* LMLO were (from left): Susan Larson, Tom Frates, Kaori Emery, Richard Monroe, and Elaine Crane singing "Here is a case unprecedented."

Included in the array of talented performers were many NEGASS Ensemble members which recently appeared on the national public radio show *Says You!* Among the artists appearing were:

- The Duke of Plaza-Toro: **Tony Parkes** (cover **Randy Glidden**)
- Luiz: **Benjamin Morse** (cover **Laurence Weissbrot**)
- Don Alhambra del Bolero: **John Healy** (cover **Tim Daughters**)

- Marco Palmieri: **Richard Monroe**
- Giuseppe Palmieri: **Tom Frates**
- Antonio: **Michael Gondek**
- Francesco: **Jon Saul**
- Giorgio: **Tim Daughters**
- Annibale: **Larry Millner**
- The Duchess of Plaza-Toro: **Lisa Pierce-Goldstein**
- Casilda: **Elaine B. Crane** (cover **Elisabeth Gondek**)
- Gianetta: **Kaori Emery** (cover **Christine Petkus**)
- Tessa: **Susan Craft Larson** (cover **Angela Jajko**)
- Fiametta: **Connell West Benn** (cover **Leslie Leedberg**)
- Vittoria: **Carolyn Kelly Schwartz**
- Giulia: **Paige Crane**
- Inez: **Betsy Fiedler**

**NEGASS and Longwood Opera to hold a LMLO of the *Mikado* Sunday June 5**

NEGASS and Longwood Opera are teaming up for a Last Minute Light Opera production of *The Mikado* Sunday, June 5 at 2:30 p.m. The venue will be at Christ Episcopal Church at 1132 Highland Avenue, Needham MA. Admission is free. Bring your own scores.

IN THIS ISSUE

NEGASS Events.....	1
G&S Events.....	2
G&S News.....	3
Recent Productions.....	4
Communications.....	6
Calendar of Events.....	7



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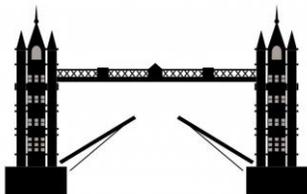
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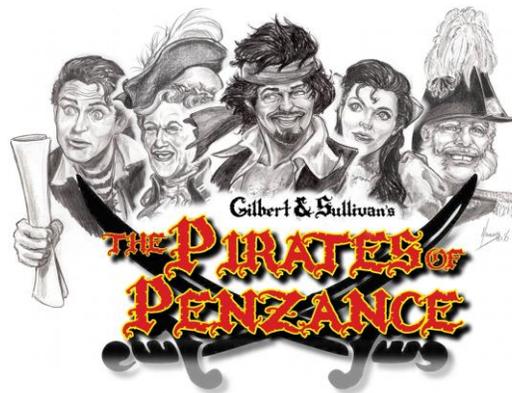


**MIT G&S players are offering *Patience* beginning on April 29 in Cambridge**

*Patience* will be presented by the MIT G&S Players at the MIT Student Center, Sala de Puerto Rico at 84 Massachusetts Avenue in Cambridge beginning on April 29. Performances will run through May 7. This two-act comic opera, also known as *Bunthorne's Bride*, will be fully staged and accompanied by a full orchestra. The plot revolves around two poets - one a narcissist fraud, the other a true believer - who vie for the very practical and unpoetical heart of *Patience*, a village milkmaid, but their feverish rivalry upsets a whole community, drawing affection and ire from all who are swept up in their poetic fads!

**Longwood Opera to present *An Evening of Gilbert and Sullivan on August 9***

As part of their 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Concert Series, Longwood Opera will present *An Evening of Gilbert and Sullivan* on Tuesday evening, August 9 at 7:30 p.m. The event will be held at Christ Episcopal Church at 1132 Highland Avenue, Needham MA.



Sketch by N.H. Illustrator Don Higgins for the Community Players.

**Community Players in Concord NH to present *Pirates of Penzance* in May**

By Douglas Schwarz

In May 2016, in a production that will blend tradition with innovation, the Community Players of Concord NH, will cap its 88<sup>th</sup> season with a production of *The Pirates of Penzance* – the first G&S show this venerable group has staged in over 70

years! (For the record, the last one was *The Gondoliers* back in 1939.)

It was veteran director Karen Braz who proposed the show to the organization's board. Braz is the founder and director of the Players' 20-year-old Children's Theatre Project, and has also directed several of the group's "grown-up" productions – including *Peter Pan* in 2002, and *Big: The Musical* in 2010.

Braz and Music Director Tony Bonjorno have chosen to use the traditional D'Oyly Carte score rather than the modern "Kevin Kline-Linda Ronstadt" version – partly for economic reasons, but also to stay closer to the Victorian roots of the show. In a similar vein, designer Jim Webber has crafted a set depicting the type of Victorian theatre in which *Pirates* would originally have been performed, using a visit to Pollock's Tot Theatres in London as his inspiration. It helps that the show will actually be performed in an ornate, quasi-Victorian style theatre, the 100+ years old Concord City Auditorium.

Casting took place in mid-February. In keeping with the Players' longstanding policy of being open to non-traditional casting choices, some of the police and pirates are women – including Samuel, the pirate lieutenant.

The Community Players production of *The Pirates of Penzance* will be performed Friday and Saturday May 6 and 7 at 7:30 p.m., with a matinee Sunday May 8 at 3:00 p.m. Tickets are \$18 (\$16 for juniors and seniors), and are available online at [communityplayersofconcord.org](http://communityplayersofconcord.org).

### **Assumption College to stage *The Pirates of Penzance* at Worcester's Hanover Theatre**

**By Elaine Crane**

Assumption College will present "The Pirates of Penzance" on April 22, 23, and 24 at the Hanover Theatre in Worcester. Performances are at 7:30 pm. on Friday and Saturday with a matinee on Sunday at 2 pm. The production is using the Joseph Papp orchestrations and added music from the 1981 New York revival, although all of Mabel's songs will be sung in their original keys - as opposed to the transpositions created for Linda Ronstadt. Tickets are \$ 20 general admission and \$15 for seniors and students. Tickets may be purchased online at [www.hanovertheatre.org](http://www.hanovertheatre.org) or by calling the box office at 877-571-SHOW (7469).



**The ladies chorus of *The Pirates of Penzance* in the Assumption College production in Worcester.**

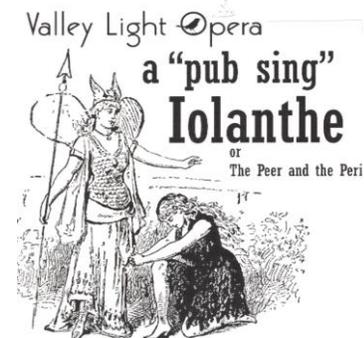
### **Connecticut G&S Society to hold auditions in June for *The Pirates of Penzance***

The Connecticut Gilbert and Sullivan Society will be holding open auditions for principals and chorus members for our 2016 production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*, and you are invited! Auditions will be held at Congregation Adath Israel, 8 Broad Street, Middletown, CT on Sunday, June 5 at 7pm and Tuesday, June 7 at 7pm (Please don't arrive before 6:30 pm). Please bring a copy of the music you will sing. An accompanist will be provided. Those trying out for a principal role will also be asked to read from a scene in the show.

### **∞ G&S NEWS ∞**

#### **VLO does a "pub sing" of *Iolanthe***

Valley Light Opera held a "pub sing" of *Iolanthe* on March 10, 2016. VLO's community sings are usually in a local pub but this year they moved to



Mi Tierra Restaurant on Route 9 in Hadley. Dinner was available prior to the beginning of the sing and other food and drinks were available throughout.

Singing the male leads were **Steve Morgan** (Lord Chancellor), **Robin Parsons** (Lord Mountararat), **Steven Williams** (Lord Tolloller), **Michael Budnick** (Private Willis), and **Stephen Atkinson** (Strephon). The female leads were sung by **Donna Griffen** (The Fairy Queen), **Lorie Healy** (Phyllis), and **Nina Pollard** sang the title role of Iolanthe. As is customary in sings, the audience fulfilled the role of the chorus. One of the original members of the VLO, **Glen Gordon**, provided the piano accompaniment.

## RECENT PRODUCTIONS

### Sudbury Savoyard's *The Sorcerer* featured a strong cast and was "time well spent"

By **Martha Birnbaum**

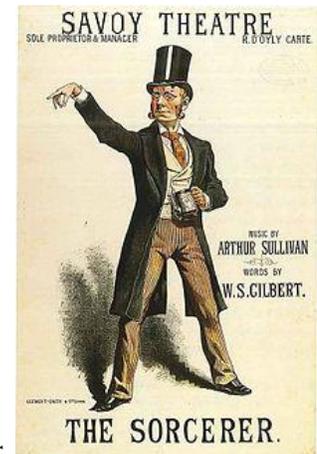
On Sunday, February 27 I had the afternoon pleasure of attending Sudbury Savoyards' rendition of *The Sorcerer*. Sudbury performs in the auditorium of Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School. That venue's ample space and raised stage provided a perfect vista for watching a show that was charming throughout.

Many in the cast were NEGASS members: **Brad Amidon**, **Jamieson Cobleigh**, **Art Dunlap**, **Randy Glidden**, **Ed Fell**, **Ann Ferentz**, **Graham Daley**, **Tony Parkes**, **Susan Robinson**, **Carolyn Schwartz**, and **Marla Zucker**.

The audience was greeted by **Laurel Martin's** English garden sets conveying English country charm and enhanced by the well-placed and well-paced lighting sequences of designer **David H. Silber**. Adding to a pleasing opening was the 27-piece orchestra under the baton of Maestro **Craig Tata**. Craig's varied tempos and attention to musical detail ensured a well-paced production and a good synchronization between musicians and singers. **Tony Parkes'** stage direction filled the stage with nicely blocked movement and a lively chorus of dances and dancers.

**Lucy Dean's** costuming had eye-catching allure. Chorus maids and lads were arrayed in colorful and varied 19<sup>th</sup> century country outfits. Mrs. Partlet's and daughter Constance's simple but respectable attire was in nice contrast to the elegant upper-class clothing of Aline and Lady Sangazure. Sir Marmaduke's outfit was quite baronial; his son Alexis's quasi-military duds needed some tailoring for a tighter fit.

In *The Sorcerer*, a well-meaning but naïve young nobleman, Alexis, is so happy at his betrothal to the lovely and high-born Aline that he wants the whole county to fall blissfully in love as he has done. He hires a professional sorcerer, J. Wellington Wells, head of an old and reputable family firm of magicians, to provide a philter (not a filter - ha ha) with which to spike the wedding punch. The philter does its trick, with predictable ensuing mayhem - people paired off in passionate love with



An 1884 theatre poster

the most unsuitable partners - Lady Sangazure with the tradesman J. Wellington Wells, Sir Marmaduke with the lower-class Mrs. Partlet. Aline drinks the punch to please her husband, and forthwith falls in love with the superannuated vicar Dr. Daly. The only way to lift the philter's power and return things to their original (class-conscious) state is for the sorcerer Wells to sacrifice himself and disappear, which he does.

The strong cast featured **Graham Daley** as Aline, with a rich, clear soprano and great dramatic sense. **Art Dunlap's** Sir Marmaduke had noble bearing and vocal strength. **Ann Ferentz** was a splendid Lady Sangazure, with a posh delivery, warm and regal contralto, and wonderful comedic timing. **Ben Morse** played the vicar Dr. Daly with quiet but sly wit, and fully engaged the audience with his fine vocal and dramatic talents. Mrs. Partlet and Constance, played by **Pamela Ryba** and **Carolyn Schwartz** respectively, were a delightful duo, Ryba's broad humor playing off Schwartz's melodramatic lovelorn village maiden. Carolyn's "When He is Near" was a vocal standout.

As the bridegroom Alexis, **Tom Ostrowski's** clear and pleasing tenor played well with his misguided idealism. **Ed Fell** as J. Wellington Wells with his

bag of tricks was an obliging sorcerer to his social betters.

Although the singers were miked, acoustics was at times uneven, and this occasionally muted Alexis' and Wells' solo vocal lines. The chorus cavorted and danced pleasingly on stage, although weaknesses existed in diction and vocal volume. *The Sorcerer* was an afternoon well-spent with a wonderful theater company.

### **An enjoyable *The Sorcerer* brought "to vivid life" by the Sudbury Savoyards**

#### **By Tom Frates**

The Sudbury Savoyards recently performed "The Sorcerer" as their 2016 production. It proved to be a most enjoyable and well performed show. This particular show was a mixture of new and old talents. New at the directors helm was **Tony Parkes**, and he proved to be an excellent choice. While this was Tony's first time at bat as stage director, he is anything but a novice when it comes to Gilbert and Sullivan. His depth of knowledge and respect for this material greatly benefited this particular production. Also new at the helm was **Craig Tata** as music director. His work was polished and effective.

After a well performed overture the curtain opened to reveal a truly attractive set (design by **Laurel Martin**). This was one of the group's most effective sets in recent years. It combined a professional backdrop with newly constructed, well crafted set pieces. The overall effect was, in my opinion, a great improvement over prior productions (with the notable exception of David Allen Prescott's wonderful set for 2014's "Pirates of Penzance"). The attractively costumed chorus sang well and assuredly. We then met the animated and lively Mrs. Partlett (a funny **Pam Rhyba**), and her lovely daughter Constance (**Carolyn Schwartz**). Schwartz sang so beautifully in her opening number that many newcomers to the audience were probably surprised to see she was an equally excellent comedic actress and dancer. Next up we met Dr. Daly, played by local favorite **Ben Morse**. You may get some idea of the degree of skill Morse possesses when I tell you that on his entrance, before even uttering a single word, he had the entire audience laughing merely by raising his eyebrow. He came very close to hijacking the show, and he and Schwartz turned out to be a wonderful onstage pair.

The main romantic pair of Aline and Alexis were played by **Graham Daley** and **Tom Ostrowski**. Ostrowski winningly displayed his fine tenor voice as well as his comedic timing. He was particularly effective during the scenes in which he tried to make sense of the muddled situations occurring in his midst. It was also refreshing to see Alexis played as a straightforward and generally well-meaning young man. There has been a recent trend to try to turn Alexis into the villain of the piece. I sincerely doubt that was Gilbert's intent, and I'm glad that this production bucked that unhealthy trend. As for Daley, this production marked her first time out as Sudbury's female musical lead, and she made a picture perfect heroine. She sang well, moved well, and delivered her lines most effectively. She and Ostrowski were well partnered, both in their dialogue scenes and their duets. Their dialogue could have easily come across as too knowingly comedic had they been less adeptly handled. Kudos to them as well as Tony Parkes on that score.



Other performers included the always wonderful **Ann Ferentz** as Lady Sangazure, and **Art Dunlap** as Sir Marmaduke. Dunlap was self-possessed and assured in both his singing and acting, and was in excellent voice. As for Ferentz, I was initially surprised that her Lady Sangazure was so composed and restrained during her opening scenes. This was of course correct, but knowing Ferentz's comedic talents I was sorry to see her playing such a composed character. I needn't have worried. Once her character had partaken of the love potion she took full advantage of her opportunity to display her considerable comedic talents. Her passionate matron was a wonder to behold, and contrasted beautifully with the restrained dowager she had portrayed in Act One. Her character's transformation between the two

acts proved to be the most effective one in the show.

Now as to the sorcerer himself. He was portrayed by Sudbury regular **Ed Fell**. His was atypically subdued but effective performance of this character. The advantage to making Wells a more restrained character was that the play as a whole now seemed more balanced between all the characters. The disadvantage of this approach is that I was not sure just how much of the ensuing mischief Wells actually intended, and the character's ultimate fate seemed somewhat unwarranted. This is a minor quibble, and something that comes down to personal preference. I should also add that in terms of vocals, I've never heard Fell in better voice.

There were some other minor details that I felt could have been handled differently. The musical tempi during some of the recitatives seemed to drag a bit at times. This was especially noticeable during the incantation scene. As a result, it diminished the dramatic tension just when it should be building. The costumes were beautiful but a greater contrast between the different classes might have helped underscore the comedic effect the love potion had on the villagers. Likewise, the makeup for **Randy Glidden** as the "very deaf old man" did not make him look old enough, and he ended up looking like a viable romantic partner for Constance. Truth be told, this really did no damage as his good performance made up for that fact. Overall, these are minor quibbles, and certainly did not detract from this most enjoyable show. The overall impression I had was that it was a well paced, well acted and well sung show in which all the participants seemed thoroughly comfortable in their parts. The Sudbury Savoyards should be proud of their very successful efforts to bring one of the lesser known Gilbert and Sullivan shows to vivid life.

*The Trumpet Bray* welcomes reviews of recent G & S shows. The editor reserves the right to amend submissions to adhere to publication requirements.

**Topsy-Turvy.com**

Dare to share with your friends your original stories of mis-takes, mis-steps, mis-cues or other on-stage (or otherwise) embarrassing or memorable moments.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### MIT G&S Players seek master electrician and lighting crew for *Patience* production

The MIT Gilbert & Sullivan Players seek a master electrician and lighting crew members for our spring 2016 production of *Patience*. **Important dates:**

Load-In: Sun 4/24

Tech Week is Mon 4/25 - Thu 4/28

Performances: Fri 4/29, Sat 4/30, Sun 5/1, Thu 5/5, Fri 5/6, and Sat 5/7

How to apply: Please email [gsp-ec@mit.edu](mailto:gsp-ec@mit.edu) a statement of interest (who you are, which senior staff position you're interested in, and why you're interested in working on this show). No previous experience is required, but if you have a resume of related experience please include that as well.

Please note that MITG&SP is a student-sponsored organization and all positions in the production are volunteer. For more information, visit [gsp.mit.edu](http://gsp.mit.edu). If you have any further questions, please email us at [gsp-ec@mit.edu](mailto:gsp-ec@mit.edu)!

Sincerely,  
The Executive Committee of the MIT Gilbert & Sullivan Players  
Mary Spanjers, Publicity Officer

### NEGASS presence on *Says You!* applauded

I heard the magnificent music of NEGASS G&S on *Says You!* What a surprise! What a treat! *Says You!* appreciated your singing, too: You were on three weeks in a row! To my knowledge, you are the only group with this distinction. I was so proud of everyone.

Carl Weggel  
ex-NEGASS Member (and long-time Board Member), who is reminded what fun you all are.

### We Have a Little List

We wish to thank those who contributed in any way to this issue of *The Trumpet Bray* including: Mary Spanjers, Tom Frates, Martha Birnbaum, Carl Weggel, Douglas Schwarz and Elaine Crane. (Please forgive any omissions!)

	NEGASS Events	
<i>The Mikado</i> Last Minute Light Opera NEGASS and Longwood Opera	June 5, 2016 <a href="http://longwoodopera.org">longwoodopera.org</a> see article on page 1	Christ Episcopal Church 1132 Highland Avenue Needham MA 02494
	G&S Events	
<i>The Sorcerer</i> Simsbury Light Opera Co.	April 9-17, 2016 <i>sloco.org</i>	Eno Memorial Hall 754 Hopmeadow Street Simsbury CT 06070
<i>The Sorcerer</i> Troupers Light Opera	April 16 & 23, 2016 <a href="http://trouperlightopera.org">trouperlightopera.org</a>	Norwalk Concert Hall 125 East Avenue Norwalk CT 06851
<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i> Assumption College	April 22-24, 2016 See article on page 3	Hanover Theatre 4 Southbridge Street Worcester MA
<i>Patience</i> MITG&SP	April 29-May 7, 2016 <a href="http://gsp.mit.edu">gsp.mit.edu</a> see article on page 2	MIT Student Center Sala de Puerto Rico 84 Massachusetts Avenue Cambridge MA 02139
<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i> Community Players	May 6-8, 2016 <a href="http://communityplayersofconcord.org">communityplayersofconcord.org</a> see article on page 2	Concord City Auditorium 2 Prince Street Concord NH 03301
<i>Princess Ida</i> New York GASP	May 21-22, 2016 <a href="http://nygasp.org">nygasp.org</a>	NYU Skirbal Center 566 LaGuardia Place New York NY 10012
<i>The Sorcerer</i> <i>The Yeoman of the Guard</i> College Light Opera Company	June 28-July 2, 2016 August 9-13, 2016 <a href="http://collegelightopera.com">collegelightopera.com</a> 508-548-2211 (after May 11)	Highfield Theatre 58 Highfield Drive Falmouth MA 02540
<i>An Evening of Gilbert &amp; Sullivan</i> Longwood Opera	August 9, 2016 <a href="http://longwoodopera.org">longwoodopera.org</a> see article on page 2	Christ Episcopal Church 1132 Highland Avenue Needham MA 02494
	Auditions	
<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i> Connecticut G & S	June 5 & 7, 2016, 7 pm <a href="http://ctgands.org">ctgands.org</a> see article on page 3	Congregation Adath Israel 8 Broad Street Middletown CT
Volume XXXX No. 6	Check individual websites for details.	April 2016



