

~ NEGASS NEWS ~

NEGASS holds 2016 Annual meeting; elects new board member and six incumbents

The NEGASS 2016 Annual Meeting was held on June 5, directly following the NEGASS/Longwood Opera LMLO performance of *The Mikado*. The main order of business was the election for six seats on the NEGASS Board of Directors. Our six incumbents were re-elected, and we welcome a new Member-at-Large, Shannon Lebrun.

Congratulations and welcome to our new elected officials.

- Vice President: Connie Benn (incumbent)
- Secretary: Martha Birnbaum (incumbent)
- Member-at-Large: Shannon Lebrun (new member)
- Member-at-Large: Kaori Emery (incumbent)
- Member-at-Large: Carolyn Schwartz (incumbent)
- Member-at-Large: Elaine Crane (incumbent)
- Member-at-Large: Tom Frates (incumbent)

New England Light Opera and NEGASS continued Summer Concert collaboration

NELO and NEGASS continued their Summer Concert Series collaboration on the four Wednesday evenings in July.

Kicking off the series was "Here's a Howdy-Do" which featured songs and scenes from each of the Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas from *Trial by Jury* thru *The Grand Duke* and everything in between!

Artists appearing for "Here's a Howdy-Do" included **Connell Benn, Adrienne Boris, Jonas**

Budris, Art Dunlap, Tom Frates, Anne-Louise Klaus, Kim Lamoureux, Susan Larson, Ben Morse, Tony Parkes, Lisa Pierce-Goldstein, Matt Tragert, Johanna Shriver, and Letitia Stevens. Piano accompaniment was provided by **Thomas Dawkins.**



Thomas Dawkins at the piano with **Ben Morse** and **Connie Benn** performing "Prithee pretty maiden." (Photo supplied by *Angela Jajko.*)

Ensuing concerts highlighted Broadway shows and other operas and operettas. Closing out the series was "Cabaret Nights," devoted to an intimate evening of jazz standards and torch songs.

The Hamilton-Wenham Community House in Hamilton hosted the events.

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THE TRUMPET BRAY is published six times a year on the 1st day of February, April, June, August, October, and December by the New England Gilbert and Sullivan Society (NEGASS), 28 Royal St., Waltham MA 02452.

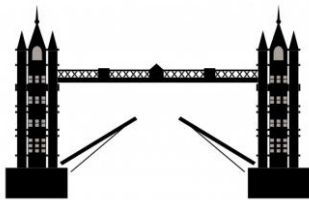
GENERAL NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS AND REVIEWS may be sent to editor@negass.org.

MEMBERSHIP NEGASS membership dues are \$25. Please join NEGASS online at www.negass.org, or contact memb@negass.org.

THE TRUMPET BRAY Members receive the Bray as a PDF email attachment. All editions including the current one are available at www.negass.org.

DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL: 15th of the months of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

www.negass.org



↻ G&S EVENTS ↻

An Evening of Gilbert and Sullivan continues Longwood Opera's summer concert series

As part of its 26th 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.

Harvard-Radcliffe will present *The Mikado* as their fall 2016 production

The Mikado is scheduled to be the fall 2016 offering of the Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Players. One of the most popular of the G&S light operas, *Mikado's* opening night will be on Friday, October 28 and will run through Sunday, November 6.

Opening night is a "Creative Black Tie" event. "Milk and Cookies" matinees will be held on Saturday, October 29 and Saturday, November 5.

Stage director is Zachary Mallory and Music Director is Sydney Mukasa. Performances will be at the Agassiz Theatre, 5 St. James Street, Cambridge MA.

The Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Players are an independent, nonprofit student theater group, dedicated to performing comic operas. Their fall shows are the most attended, the highest-budgeted, and the largest cast-crew-and-orchestra involved productions on campus. (In the spring they are second only to the Hasty Pudding Theatricals.) While HRG&SP is an undergraduate organization, its productions are open to anyone qualified by audition, and their casts, musicians and crews frequently include students in Harvard's graduate and professional schools, students from other universities and conservatories, the occasional alum, and members of the Boston community in general.

↻ We Have a Little List ↻

We wish to thank those who contributed in any way to this issue of *The Trumpet Bray* including: Martha Birnbaum, Angela Jajko, and Sudbury Savoyards (Susan Beckett). (Please forgive any omissions!)

The CLOC is ticking towards the August production of *The Yeoman of the Guard*

The College Light Opera Company has scheduled *The Yeoman of the Guard* beginning on August 9. Performances will run through the 13th at Highfield Theatre in Falmouth on Cape Cod. This is the second of two G&S productions being mounted by this year's CLOC.

***Pirates of Penzance* will be "sailing" around the campus of MIT this Fall**

The MIT Gilbert and Sullivan Players have announced that their fall 2016 production will be *The Pirates of Penzance*. Performance dates begin on December 2 and run through December 10.

Music to Cure MS next scheduled concert will be on Sunday, October 30, 2016

The next scheduled concert by Music to Cure MS is scheduled for Sunday, October 30 from 3-5 p.m. The concert traditionally includes pieces from the Gilbert and Sullivan repertoire.

The venue for the event is Park Avenue Congregational Church, 50 Paul Revere Rd, Arlington MA. This year's concert is supported in part by a grant from the Arlington Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency and benefits the Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis.

***Ruddigore* ancestors will be stepping out this autumn on the VLO stage**

Courtesy of VLO

For their 42nd annual fall production the Valley Light Opera will present Gilbert & Sullivan's *Ruddigore*. Though it is not currently among the best-known of the G&S comic operas, in its day it was every bit successful as the "Big Three."

Ruddigore is considered a favorite of many G&S aficionados due to its beautiful score, macabre plot, arguably the best patter song in the canon, and its potential for lively, creative staging, period costumes and high melodrama. The production also features the oft-imitated, show-stopping chorus of ghostly ancestors emerging from their portraits as the original "walking dead."

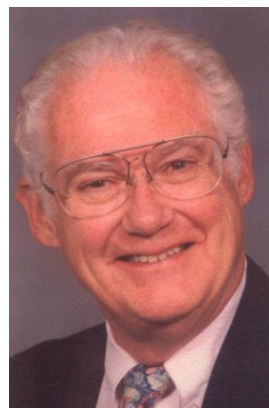
Some of the most musically challenging G&S pieces, as well as some of their funniest character roles are featured in this, their ninth collaboration. A classic story of curses, crime, flirtation, and madness, this comic opera is a parody of melodrama and horror - two of the major literary and theatrical movements of their time. *Ruddigore* will be performed at the Academy of Music in Northampton MA on November 11-20, 2016.

∞G & S NEWS∞

Sudbury Savoyards announce passing of Will Ford and E. Anne Vasenka

Courtesy of Sudbury Savoyards

The Sudbury Savoyards are sad to have lost **Will Ford**, one of their treasured "Yeomen of Regard," who passed away in February of 2016 at his home in Connecticut. Starting in 1966, and for nearly two decades, Will steered the company behind the scenes as Chairman, a position that included all of the current business operations of producer, technical director, and the dozens of assistants and department heads that accomplish these tasks today. The majority of his volunteers were members of SUMC and their families, all of whom were recruited, cajoled, and guided by Will and his passion for the Savoyards.



Mr. Ford and Ms. Vasenka.

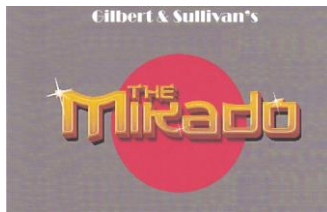
E. Anne Vesenka of Harvard, Massachusetts passed away on April 21, 2016. Anne sang and acted on stage for more than 40 years, instilling a passion for performance in both her children and her grandchildren. She defined the Gilbert & Sullivan comic alto roles and was a long-time member of the Maynard Savoyards. Anne joined the Sudbury group in 1976 as Lady Sangazure in *The Sorcerer* and as Queen of the Fairies in the 1977 production of *Iolanthe*.

RECENT PRODUCTIONS

***The Mikado* LMLO “wonderfully presented” by Longwood and NEGASS**

By Martha Birnbaum

What a delightful way to open the summer! Longwood Opera & NEGASS' joint LMLO (Last Minute Light Opera) production of *The Mikado* drew an enthusiastic audience to Needham on June 5, and that audience was not disappointed.



Every person in the talented cast was a member of NEGASS or Longwood Opera, or both! Each role was covered, and the covers cleverly provided the chorus. As is customary, the audience also sang the choruses, enriching the afternoon with a big, warm, resonant rendition of all the choral numbers.

The sanctuary of Christ Episcopal Church was a good venue with its large, open, slightly raised, and well-lighted "stage" and side exits. Pianist **James Hay** provided a well-paced, lively accompaniment of Sullivan's beloved score, and **Tom Dawkins** rounded out the performance with skillful and insightful conducting of the singers and accompaniment.

As Nanki-Poo, the ardent lover, **Ethan Butler's** sweet tenor was tender and sincere. **Connie Benn** as Yum-Yum, his love interest, used her rich soprano to convey school-girlish frippery, amusing self-absorption, and tender love. Her schoolmates, **Shannon Lebron** as Pitti-Sing and **Angela Jajko** as Peep-Bo, were a saucy pair of "straight-men" to Yum-Yum's cluelessness.

The inimitable **Tom Frates** sang and acted the clever, conniving but still lovable Ko-Ko with flawless comic timing and vocal aplomb. The equally inimitable **Lonnie Powell** as Pooh-Bah was the epitome of smug self-satisfaction and self-granted impunity at any hint of wrongdoing. Tom and Lonnie's dialogues were a highlight of the afternoon.

Katherine Engel Meifert was, in a word, hilarious as the jilted Katisha, her warm mezzo belying the evil in her heart toward Nanki-Poo. **Tony Parkes** played The Mikado with outward calm but inward diabolicalness. Rounding out the lead performers, **Stephen Lebron** was an amusing and effective Pish-Tush.

Every lead singer had a cover, and these ladies and gentlemen provided the excellent chorus: **Art Dunlap** (Mikado), **Tom Ostrowski** (Nanki-Poo), **Jon Saul** (Ko-Ko), **Randy Glidden** (Pooh-Bah), **Tim Daughters** (Pish-Tush), **Linda Barbieri** (Yum-Yum), **Kaori Emery** (Pitti-Sing), **Lisa Pierce-Goldstein** (Peep-Bo), **Carolyn Kelly-Schwartz** (Katisha), and **Larry Millner**.

Last but not least, congratulations go out to Producers **J. Scott Brumit**, Director of Longwood Opera, and **Angela Jajko**, President of NEGASS, for providing local G & S lovers with the opportunity to see a great show wonderfully presented.

Summer season at College Light Opera begins with a sizzling *The Sorcerer*

By David DeVries

We used to think of summers on Cape Cod as lazy days at the beach and visits to ice cream parlors in the evenings. But now we look forward to the College Light Opera Company summer productions in Falmouth as the highlight of our sojourns on this Massachusetts vacation destination.

The Thursday, June 30 matinee of *The Sorcerer* was very ably conducted by **Alan Schlichting**, the associate conductor. He maintained a most acceptable tempo beginning with the overture and maintained it throughout the little more than 2 hours of the performance.

Stage Director **Mark Pearson** should be recognized for his unique use of "tableaus" during several duets, trios etc. featuring the principals against a backdrop of the chorus members as if "frozen in time." The scene where the townspeople were gathered prior to having "tea" resembled "The Last Supper." Congrats to all cast members for being able to "hold the pose" for what must have seemed a very long time.

As things begin, Mrs. Partlet (**Jody Lear**) talks with her daughter Constance (**Sara Neally**) about her

“depression.” It turns out she is “head over heels” in love with the middle-aged vicar, Dr. Daley (**Andrew Campbell**) who is unaware of her attentions. The scene is well-managed and the cast members performed very well. Campbell’s ballad “Time was when love and I were well acquainted” was exceptionally well done.

Alexis and Aline (**Daniel Terry** and **Claire Leyden**) are introduced to us together with the choruses of girls and men beginning with the men’s militaristic march “With heart and with voice.” The opening is followed by the wistful duet of Sir Marmaduke and Lady Sangazure (**Andrew Gilstrap** and **Whitney Robinson**) “Welcome Joy, adieu to sadness” where they explain to us that while they would have wanted to be an “item,” their upbringing would not allow them to openly display their affections.

In his stellar moment, **Christian Boyd** as The Notary presents a respectful signing ceremony, “All is prepared for sealing and for signing.” The chorus echoes “All is prepared” and Alexis and Aline sign “without a quiver.”



Alexis and Aline (right) react to J. W. Wells during the incantation scene with members of the chorus in background. This first public preview of the CLOC show was done at the Arts Alive Festival in Falmouth. (Photo courtesy of CLOC.)

Mr. Terry provides a creditable rendition of “Love feeds on many kinds of food” prior to the appearance of John Wellington Wells portrayed by **Dennis Wees**. Mr. Wees introduces his character to us in the excellently executed patter song “My name John Wellington Wells.” His incantation scene was highlighted by the adept use of a lightly colored screen used as a backdrop on which the shadows of “pallid ghosts” were projected from the rear of the stage.

Act 1 continues with the lovely duet “Oh love, true love” professionally provided by Aline and Alexis followed by Alexis, Wells, Aline and the chorus

bringing down the curtain with “Oh marvelous illusion” as all those affected by the laced tea “fall insensible” on the stage.

Act 2 begins with an orchestral lead-in which is reminiscent of a duet of Bunthorne and Jane in Act 2 of *Patience* as they “Sing hey to you-good day to you.” (Sullivan was not above borrowing his own music from one opera to be used in another. Another case in point is “Climbing over rocky mountain” from *Pirates* which was previously in *Thespis*.) Again the orchestra did an excellent job.

With the love potion working its havoc, we are entertained by the unexpected pairings of many of the town’s citizens such as Sir Marmaduke and Mrs. Partlet and Aline and Dr. Daly. In the latter, Mr. Campbell’s portrayal of Dr. Daly is one of high anticipation of his expected carnal relationship with Aline in which he begins to loosen his belt and pull out his shirt tails (need we say more?) that I felt was not necessary and borderline tasteless.

The finale’s highlight is the verdict of the townspeople that Mr. Wells must die in order that all may be set aright. Mr. Wells accepts his fate and immediately falls through a trap door on the stage - a complete attention getter! “Whoa!”

Everything considered, CLOC’s offering of *The Sorcerer* was an unqualified success in which Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Gilbert would have been very satisfied.

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

A Quick *H.M.S. Pinafore* Quiz

1. Who was an attorney’s office boy?
2. What lass loved a sailor?
3. What does “K.C.B.” stand for?
4. Who was the “tattle tale”?
5. Who engage in the duet “Things are seldom what they seem?”

Answers on next page.



❧ SOLICITATIONS ❧

We know that many of our members and readers are very busy with a host of activities be they work or G&S related, but in the off-hand chance that you find yourself with a spare moment, would you consider writing an article that could be published in *The Trumpet Bray*? Your most welcome submissions for the following columns may be sent to: editor@negass.org

FIRST CONTACT

How did you first get introduced to the fun of Gilbert and Sullivan? Share your recollections with other readers of *The Trumpet Bray*.

REVIEWERS REWARDED

Have you ever wanted to comment on your colleagues' hard work somewhere other than Facebook? Now is your chance! *The Trumpet Bray* seeks peer reviewers for local G&S productions. Plus, write a review that goes to publication, and we'll refund up to \$25 towards your ticket cost.

TOPSY-TURVEY.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.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

"Where Are They Now?" is an occasional feature spotlighting NEGASS members who have moved away but are still active G & S'ers on stages elsewhere.

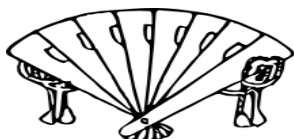
COMMUNICATIONS

Letters to the editor are always welcome.

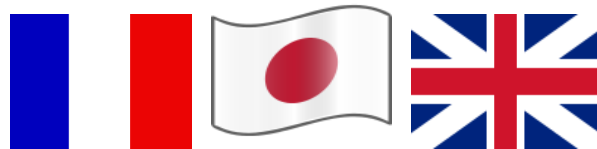
❧ A BIT OF G&S TRIVIA ❧

The French and Japanese could not find the "comic" in Gilbert & Sullivan operas

Gilbert for all his dexterity in writing satire, was able to get himself and his Savoy partners in at least two situations that we today call "international incidents." The first and the most widely reported was courtesy of *The Mikado*. The second was a song from *Ruddigore*. Both of these are documented in The Gilbert and Sullivan Archive.



At the 2006 International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in Buxton, the Tokyo Theatre Company gave only one performance of *The Mikado* and that being in Japanese. A review posted by Sean Curtin recounts the following: "Watching the lively performance you never would have imagined that Gilbert & Sullivan's world famous Mikado was actually banned in Japan shortly after its 1885 premier. It was considered too disrespectful towards the Emperor to be performed in Japan and Japanese elites who saw it in European capitals were highly critical of the Chinese sounding names of the lead characters and farcical depictions of Japan which seemed to confirm their view that Westerners could not distinguish between Japan and China. In fact, the light opera caused a number of headaches over the years for Anglo-Japanese relations. British diplomats did their best to ensure it was either not performed in Japan or if it was that only a revised production staged with all references to the Emperor deleted. When Prince Fushimi visited London in 1907, all performances were temporarily suspended. It was not until after WWII that it was performed properly in Japan and even then it received a very cold reception from Japanese audiences."



The second had to do with an apparent snub of the French with the inclusion of a song in *Ruddigore* sung by Richard Dauntless. This character is a "man-o'-war'sman" whose ship, the Tom-Tit, has just come into port. He greets the bridesmaids by singing the amusing song, "I shipped, d'ye see, in a revenue sloop." The French misunderstood the song and caused quite a gale across the Channel. In reality, the song poked fun at the British who, as recounted by Dauntless, ran away from "the bold Mounseer" finding the French ship to be a frigate instead of a merchantman. While British bragging was being made fun of in the song, the French could not find the humor in it.

A Quick H.M.S. Pinafore Quiz answers

1. Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B.
2. Josephine
3. Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath.
4. Dick Deadeye
5. Little Buttercup and The Captain

G&S Events

The Yeoman of the Guard
College Light Opera Company

August 9-13, 2016
collegelightopera.com
508-548-2211
See article on page 3

Highfield Theatre
58 Highfield Drive
Falmouth MA 02540

Gilbert & Sullivan & More
Greater Worcester Opera

August 3, 2016
greaterworcesteropera.org

Briarwood Auditorium
65 Briarwood Circle
Worcester MA 01605

An Evening of Gilbert & Sullivan
Longwood Opera

August 9, 2016
longwoodopera.org
see article on page 2

Christ Episcopal Church
1132 Highland Avenue
Needham MA 02494

The Pirates of Penzance
MITG&SP

December 2-10, 2016
gsp.mit.edu
See article on page 3

MIT Student Center
Sala de Puerto Rico 84
Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge MA 02139

The Pirates of Penzance
CT G&S Society

October 15-16, 2016
ctgands.org

Valley Regional High School
256 Kelsey Hill Road
Deep River CT 06417

The Mikado
Harvard-Radcliffe G&SP

October 28-30, 2016
November 4-6, 2016
617-496-2222
hrgsp.president@gmail.com
See article on page 2

Agassiz Theater
Radcliffe Yard - 5 James Street
Cambridge MA 02138

Music to Cure MS
Concert

October 30, 2016
Music to Cure MS
See article on page 3

Park Avenue Congregational
Church, Arlington MA 02476

Ruddigore
Valley Light Opera

November 11-20, 2016
vlo.org
413-584-9032 x105
See article on page 3

Academy of Music
274 Main Street
Northampton MA 01060

Check individual websites for greater
details.

