



## ≈ NEGASS NEWS ≈

While we continue to hope for an in-person celebration of our 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the 2021 NEGASS Annual Meeting will still be a Zoom get-together. It will take place on June 13 at 7:00 PM.

In conjunction with the meeting, we will have a “fantasy day.” We will include some NEGASS archival videos, and invite members to perform live or to submit their videos – new or from prior performances – to share. See our website or Facebook page, and contact Jacki Haney if you wish to participate.



David DeVries

## ≈ IN MEMORIAM ≈

Once again it is our sad duty to report the death of a beloved member of our NEGASS community. David DeVries, former editor of *The Trumpet Bray*, died on April 29 at the much-too-young age of 72. You may find his full obituary at <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/telegram/name/david-devries-obituary?pid=198520388>. For over 5 years, **David DeVries** steered our flagship publication, *The Trumpet Bray*, with style, class, attention to detail, and never missing a deadline. He introduced puzzles, interviews, and scholarly articles on G & S history, enriching our readers with little-known yet fascinating facts about his beloved theatrical duo. David will be sorely missed.

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#### GENERAL NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS AND REVIEWS

Send to [editor@negass.org](mailto:editor@negass.org)

MEMBERSHIP: NEGASS membership dues are \$25. Please join NEGASS online at [www.negass.org](http://www.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](http://www.negass.org)

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



## ANNUAL MEETING



Join us for the 2021 NEGASS Annual Meeting followed by Fantasy Day -- perform "live" or share a video of a song or role you have always wanted to do! Sunday, June 13, 2021, 7 pm. Join us on ZOOM.

## TRIAL BY JURY Sing

NEGASS is excited to announce our first IN-PERSON meeting in over a year. Sunday, July 25, 2021 at 3:00pm, NEGASS board member Elaine Crane will host a get-together and sing-through of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial By Jury* at her home in West Boylston, MA. NEGASS board member John Dreslin will accompany on piano.

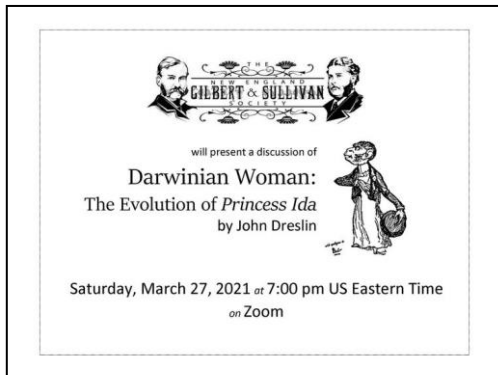
We'll have vocal scores available, but bring your own if you have one. If you would like to attend, RSVP through our website at <https://www.negass.org/contact.html> or send an email to [contact@negass.org](mailto:contact@negass.org). Directions and parking information will be sent to responders.

If you are interested in singing one of the lead roles in *Trial By Jury*, please include that when you RSVP. Preference for lead roles will be given to NEGASS members in good standing. We will Zoom the event as well, so anyone who would like to sing along over (muted) Zoom will be able to participate!

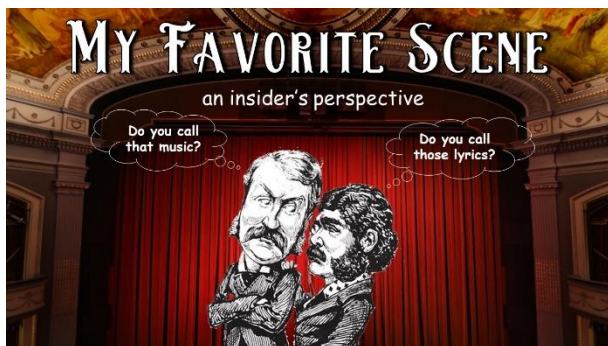
## RECENT EVENTS

We reported on this last issue. The video of John Dreslin's excellent presentation on 'Ida' is now available on the NEGASS YouTube page: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wF\\_XX92eBLI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wF_XX92eBLI)

Video extra! We have added the program of the Oberlin "Three Princesses Project" to our video.



The Connecticut Gilbert & Sullivan Society has been very active putting out programs to keep their membership active and involved. The latest was "My Favorite Scene. An Insider's Perspective." This was an original virtual performance, featuring five of their cast members: Allan Church, Karla McClain, John Freedman, Tim Throckmorton, and Kathleen Thompson. Each person presented one of his or her favorite scenes from the G&S canon. It was interesting to get the personal take on each scene and, for those of us who saw these performances as they originally occurred, to be able to relive the beauty, comedy or magic.



View the video online or downloaded to computer, cell phone, or tablet by going to the "Events" tab at [facebook.com/ConnecticutGilbertAndSullivanSociety](https://www.facebook.com/ConnecticutGilbertAndSullivanSociety), or by going to [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and entering ConnecticutGilbertAndSullivanSociety in the search box at the top of the page.

CG&SS also continued with their "Take Two Review and put up their 2014 production of The Gondoliers.

Finally, on May 26 they hosted a G&S trivia contest on ZOOM. Some of these events are announced too late to make it into our semi-monthly Bray calendar, so check the Connecticut Gilbert and Sullivan website or Facebook page regularly so you never miss one of their events.

## NEGASS Programs

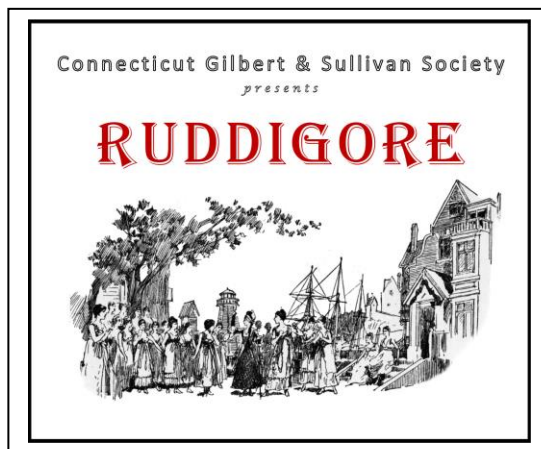
Gilbert's one-act farce *Allow Me to Explain*, his first "straight play," opened on November 4, 1867. NEGASS presented a Zoom reading of it on Saturday evening, May 15, 2021, at 7:00PM at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81718224024?pwd=N1cwTjNhTkI5d2NlMVRtbWExVUJWZz09>. It is available on the NEGASS YouTube channel.

The cast comprised Matt Tragert as Mr. Cadderby, Elaine Crane as his wife Mrs. Anna Maria Cadderby, Kitty Drexel as his daughter (by an earlier marriage) Amelia Ann, Brad Amidon as Boker, and Ben Morse as John Smith. Connell West Benn played Mrs. Simpkins of the Simpkins Commercial and Family Hotel. Jacqueline Haney coordinated the production.

Connie was a last-minute fill in, and did a fine job as Mrs. Simpkins. Live comments during the performance were not all positive, such as "Mildly amusing" and "His comic genius had not quite fully developed." Still, it is good to see some of Gilbert's works outside the comic operas.

## G&S NEWS

The CG&SS will have a live memorial service for Bob Cumming on June 2, 2021 at 8:00 PM via Zoom. The meeting ID is 861 5729 0219.



The Connecticut Gilbert & Sullivan Society will be holding auditions on Sunday, July 11th 6PM-9PM and Tuesday July 13th 7PM-9PM for its November 2021 production of Ruddigore. Auditions will be held at Congregation Adath Israel, 8 Broad Street, Middletown, CT.

There are many special precautions and restrictions to protect the cast and crew from COVID-19, including a proof of vaccination



requirement and mask wearing. For further information about The Connecticut Gilbert & Sullivan Society please visit their website, Facebook page, or YouTube channel. If you have questions or require further information regarding the show or auditioning, please call 860-554-1256.

If you are not auditioning for a principal role but plan to be in the chorus, please send an email to John Freedman (jfreedman@snet.net). Please cc John Dreslin (musdent@aol.com) and Spencer Reese (spencer.matthew.reese@gmail.com).

The show will be performed at either the Valley Regional High School, Deep River, CT or the Santo Fragilio Performing Arts Center at Middletown High School. Tentative dates and times are: Saturday, November 6th at 2PM and 7:30PM and Sunday, November 7th at 2PM.

## ∞ CAST SPOTLIGHT ∞

**Elaine Crane**, Secretary and Past President of NEGASS

**The Bray: How did you get involved with G&S?**

**Elaine:** After graduating from the Boston Conservatory (where I never heard of G&S) and performing in the choruses of several operas, the voice teacher with whom I studied was producing *The Mikado*, and I was offered my first role. After experiencing the wonderful music and brilliant lyrics and dialogue – I was hooked! The fact that G&S productions are (in the New England area) more plentiful than those of “grand” opera was the icing on the cake for a light lyric soprano like me.

**The Bray: Tell us a little bit about your background in G&S.**

**Elaine:** At this point, I’ve been involved in every G&S except *Utopia, Ltd.* The groups with whom I’ve worked (Valley Light Opera, Lowell Opera, Sudbury Savoyards, Longwood Opera, MassTheatrica and others) have not only provided wonderful, meaningful opportunities, but also, lifelong friends.

**The Bray: What do you love about G&S?**

**Elaine:** There is so much to love! Brilliant dialogue, soaring melodies, lush choral music, truly operatic moments in the music, wit, humor, truth, beauty – it’s all so lovable. The fact that my kids can all sing the tunes, know the stories, and we have many family “quotes” from G&S is a fabulous bonus!

**The Bray: What is your favorite G&S show?**

**Elaine:** That’s a hard one! *Mikado* for its personal meaning to me, *Pirates* because my kids (and of course I) all have it memorized, *Yeomen* because it’s the most beautiful operatic wonder of the canon. At least I’ve narrowed it down!

**The Bray: Any anecdotes you care to share?**

**Elaine:** During a production of *Pinafore*, in the Act II finale, I was singing Josephine’s line “Ah! Stay your hand! I love you!” and a man in the chorus (the man who knows every line of every song... he’s always there!) sang along with me one night during a performance! It was so much a part of his thinking and psyche that it just came out, without him even realizing it. During that same production, I had a costume with a huge hoopskirt, and during the final dress rehearsal (as I couldn’t see my feet nor the steps below) I missed the first step and took a tumble, with my enormous hoop skirt pointing up to the ceiling!

**The Bray: Do you want to give credit to a mentor?**

**Elaine:** I credit the voice teacher (Margaret Tartaglia) who gave me my first lead in a G&S and bless her from my heart. After that, the many learned G&S folks at Valley Light Opera raised me in their nursery and gave me so many of the tools I have today.

**The Bray: If someone wants to get started in performing or working in back of the house, what would be your recommendation?**

**Elaine:** Dive in! The folks who do G&S are wonderful people, have a great sense of humor, and will teach anyone what they know, and how to do what they do. But be warned... don’t change any words or notes! That is sacred ground!

**The Bray: If G&S is your avocation, what is your occupation?**

**Elaine:** I am a professionally trained musician and performer, and I teach, direct, produce, costume, and educate among a long list of smaller tasks.



A *Gondoliers* vignette with Elaine at far left.

## ✧ EDITOR'S CORNER ✧

Continuing with my theme of Dickens' influence on Gilbert, in this issue I present irrefutable proof of my assertion. Unfortunately, only those familiar with *Thespis* will recognize the borrowing. Fortunately, with quite a few recent local productions, many of our readers are familiar with this first collaboration.

In *Great Expectations*, the protagonist, Pip, is being taunted by the young helper of the town tailor. Here is the excerpt from the book (page 233 in the volume I own):

I had not got as much further down the street as the post-office, when I again beheld Trabb's boy shooting round by a back way. ... He wore the blue bag in the manner of my great-coat, and was strutting along the pavement towards me on the opposite side of the street, attended by a company of delighted young friends to whom he from time to time

exclaimed, with a wave of his hand, "Don't know yah!" Words cannot state the amount of aggravation and injury wreaked upon me by Trabb's boy ... passing abreast of me ... drawling to his attendants, "Don't know yah, don't know yah, pon my soul don't know yah!"

For those of you without a copy of the *Thespis* libretto open in front of you, here is the scene when the title character first meets Jupiter, Mars and Apollo:

THESPIIS: As a man I am inclined to fraternize with the pauper - as a manager I am compelled to walk around like this: Don't know yah! Don't know yah! Don't know yah!

JUPITER, MARS, APOLLO: Presumptuous mortal!

THESPIIS: Don't know yah! Don't know yah!

I believe it is possible Jane Steadman left out this obvious use of Dickens by Gilbert because she was unfamiliar with *Thespis*.

- Laurie Weissbrot

### ✧ We Have a Little List ✧

The editor wishes to thank those who contributed in any way to this issue of *The Trumpet Bray* including Ann Ferentz, Martha Birnbaum, John Freedman, Ed Kerrigan, and the CG&SS website.

## ☞ CALENDAR ☞

### NEGASS Events

NEGASS Annual Meeting and Fantasy Day	Sunday June 13, 2021 7:00 pm	Zoom; see page 2
NEGASS <i>Trial by Jury &amp; Picnic</i> West Boylston, MA	July 25, 2021	Details to follow; see page 2

### G&S Events

Connecticut G&S Society memorial service for Robert Cumming	June 2, 2021 8:00 pm	Zoom Meeting ID 861 5729 0219.
<i>G &amp; S Summer Concert</i> Greater Worcester Opera	July 14, 2021 6:30 pm	West Boylston, MA Bandstand
<i>International Gilbert &amp; Sullivan Festival</i>	July 31 - August 8, 2021 August 8 - 22, 2021 September 7 - 11, 2021	Buxton Opera House Royal Hall Harrogate Malvern Theatre
<i>Ruddigore</i> Connecticut G & S Society Middlefield, CT	November 2021	Auditions July 11 & 13, 2021; see page 3 for more information
<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i> Valley Light Opera Northampton, MA	November 2021	Auditions in August Date tbd
<i>The Grand Duke</i> Sudbury Savoyards, Sudbury, MA	February 2022	
<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i> Simsbury Light Opera Co Simsbury, CT	Spring 2022	
<i>The Gondoliers</i> Troupers Light Opera Norwalk, CT	TBD	