



~ NEGASS NEWS ~

NEGASS now has a YouTube channel

By Ann Ferentz

NEGASS now has a YouTube channel ("New England Gilbert & Sullivan Society") where videos of events will be shared. If you missed last fall's Thespis symposium or any of our recent virtual events (*Tom Cobb*, Sullivan's hymns and anthems, *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern* and *The Bab Ballads*), you may catch them whenever it's convenient!

Two programs by Gilbert: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern* and *The Bab Ballads*, recently offered by NEGASS on Zoom

By Jacqueline Haney

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern was presented by NEGASS via Zoom on August 15, 2020. The production was billed as "A Tragic Episode in Three Tableaux." Participating were **Ben Morse** as King Claudius of Denmark, **Martha Birnbaum** as Queen Gertrude of Denmark, **Thomas Dawkins**



A sketch by Moyr Smith of a November 1891 performance of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern* in Prince's Hall.

as Hamlet, Queen Gertrude's Son – betrothed to Ophelia; **Natan Zamansky** as Rosencrantz,

a Courtier, in love with Ophelia; **James Cooper** as Guildenstern, a Courtier; **Marion Leeds Carroll** as First Player, an Actor; **Juliet Cunningham** as Second Player, an Actress; and **Kitty Drexel** as Ophelia.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, A Tragic Episode, in Three Tableaux is a short parody of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* by W.S. Gilbert. Gilbert's play first appeared in *Fun Magazine* in 1874 after having been rejected for production by several theatre companies. The first performance of the work was not until June 1891, at a benefit matinee in London. The play finally ran for about 77 performances from April to July 1892.

By Jacqueline Haney

On Saturday evening, September 12, NEGASS presented a program of "Interpretations of 'The Bab Ballads'" on Zoom. The intention was to present a selection of these comic poems in a variety of ways.

Martha Birnbaum started us off with a reading of "The Three Bohemian Ones." "To Phoebe" was performed as a musical setting by **Ben Morse** and then as a reading by a Wise Owl puppet assisted by Ann Ferentz. **Jim Cooper** read "The Captain and the Mermaids" with the Bab illustrations.

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Do You Have a Favorite G&S Song?

Write us an article about your favorite G&S song in 750 words or so. Send your nominee to the editor at dpdevries01@gmail.com



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Badge of the Yeomen Warders

Jacqueline Haney had prepared a simple animation "To the Terrestrial Globe," then Michael Blum presented "Gentle Alice Brown." Elaine Crane sang "The Wooer's Way of Wooing" in a musical setting, accompanied by Paige Fowler. This was followed by Juliet Cunningham who gave us a fine rendition of "Thomas Winterbottom Hance." The evening was completed with a paper puppet interpretation of "The Ghost to his Ladye Love," created by Mark Leibold.

There was sufficient interest from people who did not have time to prepare offerings this time that NEGASS will certainly present another program of Bab interpretations at a later date. Video of this program will be available on the NEGASS YouTube channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRTjyy6PZbC8KI0OXEiSEqw>.

≈ G&S NEWS ≈

Catherine Leuba is presented first annual Phraner-Unsworth Memorial Scholarship by CG&SS

By Dr. John Dreslin

The Connecticut Gilbert and Sullivan Society is pleased to announce the winner of its first annual Phraner-Unsworth Memorial Scholarship is **Catherine Leuba**. Catherine recently graduated



Catherine Leuba (Photo courtesy of CG&SS.)

from the Marine Magnet High School. She has been in three CG&SS productions: *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Princess Ida* and *Thespis*. She told us that in performing with us she has learned many important theater skills and techniques and that "Gilbert and Sullivan has made a huge contribution to my life and had a great part in shaping who I am today." She went on to say (a bit tongue in cheek) that "as an added bonus, I now know precisely what is meant by commissariat." (a military department for the supply of food and equipment.) Ms. Leuba is also

part of the Youth Choir at her church and has participated in the Eastern Regional Choir Festival for the past three years. Her plans include studying architecture and music in college, possibly as a double major. Given her many talents we hope to have her return for future productions with CG&SS.

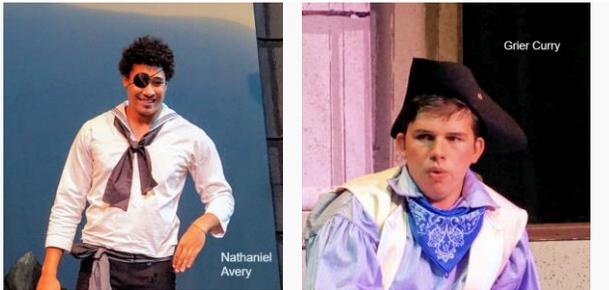
The Phraner-Unsworth Memorial Scholarship is named in honor of **Leighton Phraner**, a founder of



(Left) **Leighton Rand Phraner, 1930-2017** (photo from Princeton Alumni Weekly), and **Constance Unsworth, 1927-2018**.

the Society in 1980, who was a renowned character actor and vocal teacher, and **Constance Unsworth**, a CG&SS Board member and a performer in many of the Society's productions. The scholarship is intended to support the education of talented youth who have participated in and contributed to CG&SS shows.

Talented runners-up for the scholarship include **Nathaniel Avery** and **Grier Curry**.



Nathaniel Avery (left) and Grier Curry. (Photos courtesy of CG&SS.)

Nathaniel performed with us in *The Mikado* and *Thespis*. He has also appeared in four musicals in his high school, in a praise choir and in an a capella ensemble. Nathaniel said that participating in CG&SS has taught him the intricacies of working in more professional environments as well as developing his singing, acting and dancing ability. He said "it taught me to have an appreciation for older works of art and that opera is truly a timeless genre."

Grier performed with us in *Thespis*. He envisions

advancing his education in performance and theater/drama. He has extensive experience with high school theater, both drama and musicals. He also was a member of the marching band. Grier is planning on returning to the UK soon and hopes to find G&S productions to continue his acting inspired by CG&SS.

We thank Catherine, Nathaniel, and Grier for performing with us and their dedication and hard work in contributing to our shows. We will miss them and wish them all the best.

RECENT PRODUCTIONS

Mostly young singers present a lively *Trial by Jury* in Goffstown NH

By **Laurie Weissbrot**

On August 9, 2020 Piccola Opera of Concord, New Hampshire presented a live production of *Trial by Jury* to a live and lively audience at the Gardens at Uncanoonuc in Goffstown, NH.

In late June, they contacted me to ask if I was interested in the role of the Learned Judge. As I was sick of quarantine and never pass up the opportunity to perform, I accepted. The cast comprised mostly young singers, all students of Jane Cormier, a noted New Hampshire impresaria. None of the others involved in this production was familiar with the comic operas. Most had never even heard of Gilbert or Sullivan. This gave me the great joy of watching a group of young, talented singers grow to appreciate the music and comedy of our beloved duo.

Katherine Proulx was an expressive Angelina, with a vibrant, beautiful voice. **Jake Erdody** was a last-minute recruit when the original tenor decided it was too dangerous to venture up from Boston to the wilds of New Hampshire. Jake learned the part quickly, and sang as fine an Edwin as I have ever heard (and I have heard many). At only 17, he has a long and promising G&S future ahead of him if he wants to continue, which I hope he does. **Jadon Shi**, a 16-year-old with a wide range, did justice to the role of the Usher. With only five rehearsals, we cut most of "A Nice Dilemma."

A challenge for all the singers was the necessary social distancing. No fainting on the Foreman's shoulder, embraces by Angelina and the Judge,



Left, Katherine Proulx, (Angelina), Laurie Weissbrot (The Judge), and Jadon Shi (Usher).

or linking arms for “Trial-la-law.” Audience size, too, was limited by Covid rules, and the 50+ attendees were mostly friends and family of the cast.

The audience was new to G&S. It is always fun to hear the reaction to Gilbert’s humo(u)r from people who haven’t heard the jokes dozens of times. It was also fun to be able to share some insider information with the cast, such as the name of Edwin’s new girlfriend (Anne Other) or the only named member of the jury (juryman O’Neill). The setting was a beautiful rose garden, giving me the opportunity to explain “concentrated otto” (a misspelling of attar, the base of many perfumes, distilled from rose petals).

This group has currently fuzzy plans to do *Pirates of Penzance* next year. If they do, I hope to be able to sing with them again.



≈ A MOMENT IN TIME ≈

Remember the days when groups did snail mailings?

From the October 1990 Trumpet Bray
 BRAY-STUFFING: The Creme of High Society gathered at the fashionable Leeds-Carroll Gallery in East Somerville on September 15, 1990 where Act II of *Patience* was mutually imparted by a circle of assiduous Bray-stuffers.



New NEGASSer **Elizabeth Johnson** was Saphir, **Patricia Brewer** was Angela, and **Rebecca and Nancy Burstein** were, respectively, Ella and Jane, while hostess **Marion L-C** was the eponymous milkmaid. **Peter Cameron** doubled as Bunthorne and the Major, with **Phil Young** as both Grosvenor and the Colonel, while Dick **Freedman** was satisfied to portray only the Duke. **Mike Bromberg** “the Indefatigable” was the accompanist.
 --- HEDDA HOPPER

[Re. Pseudonyms: If you wish to contribute to the Bray while preserving your anonymity, that's fine with Us - but We're getting bored with King Paramount's pseudonyms - so, if you don't come up with ones of your own, be prepared to accept whatever we call you! - ed.]

≈ A PUZZLEMENT ≈

He who laughs last, laughs best

Gilbert must have had this 1608 English expression in mind when he wrote the lyrics of two patter songs that appear in two of their shows. Can you name these two shows using the clues that follow?

The first show was written in 1882 and was their fourth consecutive hit. The ending of the song where Gilbert has a little fun goes: “But the darkness has passed, and it’s daylight at last, and the night has been long – ditto, ditto my song – and thank goodness they’re both of them over!”

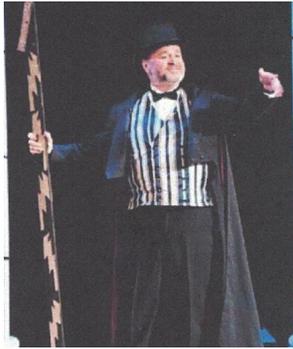
The second show was the tenth in the G&S series. In this show Gilbert pokes fun at his libretto. The ending of this trio goes: “This particularly rapid, unintelligible patter isn't generally heard, and if it is it doesn't matter! ... If it is it doesn't matter, matter, matter, matter, matter!”

Answers are on the next page.

CAST SPOTLIGHT

Craig Martin has played many roles with the Connecticut Gilbert and Sullivan Society

Craig Martin is enjoying his 7th season with CG&SS. He performed the role of Thespis in their 2019 production. He has previously sung the role of Pish Tish in last year's *Mikado*, King Hildebrand in *Princess Ida*, Pirate King in *Pirates of Penzance*, Lord Mountararat in *Iolanthe*, and Counsel for the Plaintiff in *Trial by Jury*.



Craig Martin in *Thespis*

Craig was born to a musical family in Northern Pennsylvania. He grew up singing in church choir with his father as organist and choirmaster. He has sung with madrigal groups, rock bands and in musicals. The father of two girls, Craig lives in Higganum, and in his "spare time" is President of Reality Interactive, a software development firm located in Middletown.

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, Jacqueline Haney, Dr. John Dreslin, Laurie Weissbrot, Ann Ferentz, and the CG&SS websites. (Please forgive any omissions!)

OPINION

Another G&S generation prepares to "carry the torch"

By David DeVries

We (I and my fellows at NEGASS) are very much encouraged by the article by Laurie Weissbrot wherein he writes that there were many young people participating in the Piccola Opera presentation of *Trial by Jury*.

We would take this opportunity to encourage all like-minded high schoolers to seek colleges that offer programs with curriculum in acting, singing and all manner of stagecraft including musicians and set and costumers to further their craft. In having done so, then apply for positions in summer stock programs such as that provided by the College Light Opera Company in Falmouth, Mass. CLOC is a summer program accepting college-level applicants performing two G&S shows and about seven other operettas or Broadway musicals in a ten-week period.

Again, we applaud this next generation of G&S performers.

A PUZZLEMENT Answers

He who laughs last, laughs best

The first was the nightmare song by the Lord Chancellor in the second act of *Iolanthe*.

The second was a trio by Robin, Sir Despard, and Margaret that appears in the second act of *Ruddigore*.



NEGASS Events

The Grand Duke

October 17, 2020
A Presentation by Tony Parkes

Time and Zoom information to be announced

A Day at the Savoy
Viewing Party

November 21, 2020

Further details TBA

Sullivan's Christmas Music

December 2020
A Presentation by Tom Dawkins

Further details TBA

G&S Events

Ruddigore
CT G&S Society

October 2020 cancelled
ctgands.org

Santo Fragillo Performing Arts Center, Middletown High School
200 LaRosa Lane
Middletown CT 06457

Pirates of Penzance
Simsbury Light Opera Co.

Postponed to spring 2021
sloco.org

Eno Memorial Hall
754 Hopmeadow Street
Simsbury CT 06070