

# THE TRUMPET BRAY

NEGASS  
The New England Gilbert and Sullivan Society  
P.O. Box 367, Arlington, MA 02476-0004

Vol. XXIX No. 1  
August 2004

~ Pour, oh pour the pirate sherry ~

**PICNIC MEETING**  
**Sunday, Aug 29 at 4:00 PM**

\*\*\* R E N E W A L I S S U E \*\*\*

**PICNIC MEETING:** On **SUNDAY, Aug 29**, we'll return to the scene of our former triumph: the home of **Dr. and Mrs. David Sheldon**, last year's hosts, who live at **281 Fairmount Avenue, Hyde Park**, just south of Boston.

We'll begin at 4 p.m. with a complete sing-through of **PIRATES** (on book, of course), accompanied by **Juliet Cunningham**, followed by feasting and general merriment. All **NEGASS** members, prospective members, and their guests are cordially invited.



All those attending the picnic are asked to bring their own entrees and beverages and one item (salad, vegetables, dessert, etc.) to share. Grills (with fuel) will be available for barbecuing, and there will be condiments and paper plates available as well.

## Roles in **PIRATES**

Major-General Stanley (comic baritone)	Mabel (soprano)
Samuel (tenor or baritone)	Edith (soprano or mezzo)
Frederic (tenor)	Kate (mezzo)
The Pirate King (baritone)	Ruth (contralto)
Sergeant of Police (bass-baritone)	Isabel (speaking role)

**Note:** The roles of the Pirate King and Major-General are taken, and We know that at least one other role has been requested, so act soon! - contact Program Chair **Dave**

**Leigh** at (781) 984-3009 or [programchair@negass.org](mailto:programchair@negass.org) to tell him which role you want.

**HOW TO GET THERE:** **281 Fairmount Avenue, Hyde Park, MA** (A bluish, gray-green Victorian house on the corner of LeSeur Street – phone the Sheldons at (617) 364-5810 or email [dssdds@msn.com](mailto:dssdds@msn.com) if you have trouble finding your way.)

**From the center of Boston:** Go to Forest Hills. From Forest Hills, take Hyde Park Ave. heading southeast about 3 or 4 miles to Cleary Square. There will be a police station on the right, and then a Papa Gino's on the left. Turn left at the Papa Gino's onto River Street. Go about 2 blocks and then bear right onto Fairmount Ave. Go over the bridge above the railroad tracks to the light at the Truman Highway. Continue straight, through the lights, on Fairmount Ave. Go to the top of the hill. Number 281 Fairmount Ave. is on the corner of LeSeur Street.

**From Route 128/Route I-93:** Take the exit in Canton for Route 138 North (Exit 2). Head northeast on Route 138 into Milton a distance of about 2.5 miles. Go to the fourth set of traffic lights. You will know you are approaching them when you see Curry College on your left. At this intersection, where there is a firehouse, turn left onto Bradlee Street (to the right of the firehouse) -- **DO NOT** make too sharp a left turn, as this would take you onto Atherton Street instead. Take Bradlee Street about 1/4 mile to the first street on your right, and turn right. Then take the first left. You will be on Fairmount Ave. Go up 2 blocks to #281, at the corner of LeSeur Street.

RECENT MEETINGS

**ELECTIONS AND FANTASIES, MAY 2:** Another fun Fantasy Day, following another satisfactory Election Meeting! Members-at-Large **Linda Silverstein, Janice Dallas** and **Marion Leeds Carroll** were re-elected handily, as were Vice President **Tony Parkes** and Program Chair **Dave Leigh**. The abdication of our previous Secretary led to a new arrangement: MAL **Carl Weggel** became our new Secretary (isn't this the *third* position he has held on the Board?), and new Bray Apprentice **Skyler Wrench** took Carl's place as Member at Large.

**FANTASIES:** Thank you to **Tony Parkes**, who collected the names of all who performed that afternoon - it was quite a day!

We started with the Act I Finale of *PATIENCE*, featuring **Dave Leigh** (Duke), **Peter Cameron** (Major), **Eric Schwartz** (Colonel), **Tony Parkes** (Bunthorne), **Skyler Wrench** (Grosvenor), **Marion Leeds Carroll** (Patience), **Deborah Sager** (Angela), **Janice Dallas** (Ella and Saphir), and - not least - **Dave Leigh** (Jane).

We then moved on to solos and ensembles:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Silvered Is the Raven Hair  | <b>Isabel Leonard</b>  |
| Modern Major General  | <b>Dave Leigh</b>  |
| Oh, I Have Wrought/The Family Vault   | <b>Allegra Martin</b> (J.W. Wells),<br><b>Dave Leigh</b> (Lady Sangazure)<br>[yes - that was the casting! - mlc] |
| Hereupon We're Both Agreed  | <b>Allegra Martin</b> (Point),<br><b>Skyler Wrench</b> (Shadbolt)  |
| So Go to Him and Say to Him   | <b>Deborah Sager, Dave Leigh</b>   |
| There Lived a King  | <b>Eric Schwartz</b>   |
| I Am the Captain of a Whale Watch Boat ( <i>the only altered lyric of the day</i> ) | <b>Isabel Leonard</b>  |
| Oh, Gentlemen, Listen   | <b>Carl Weggel</b>   |
| Long Years Ago  | <b>Marion Leeds Carroll, Deborah Sager</b>   |
| When the Night Wind Howls   | <b>Skyler Wrench</b>   |
| Take a Pair of Sparkling Eyes   | <b>Carl Weggel</b>   |
| In a Contemplative Fashion  | <b>Skyler Wrench, Tony Parkes, Deborah Sager, Isabel Leonard</b>   |



Tentative Meeting Schedule, 2004-2005	
August 29	Picnic meeting / <i>PIRATES</i>
September 12 or 19	Tentative informal <i>PATIENCE</i> sing - Watertown, MA (please contact Bray Apprentice <b>Skyler Wrench</b> , owlsnest99@yahoo.com or 617-924-5303 for more information)
October 17	<i>IDA</i> sing-through, Arlington, MA
December 11	Christmas party, Lexington
January 23 or 30	Newton film viewing: <i>IOLANTHE</i> ?
March 13	LMLO <i>PINAFORE</i>
April 17	Potpourri: <i>TRIAL</i> /Bab Ballads/ G without S
June 5	Elections/Fantasy meeting

**NEXT BRAY COPY DEADLINE: Sept 26, 2004**

**Next Bray Stuffing: Sunday Oct. 3, 2004 at 3:00 PM. Call Us at (781) 646-9115, or send email to marion@leedscarroll.com, for directions to Our easy-to-get-to Arlington, MA home. — mlc**

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| The Nightmare Song               | <b>Tony Parkes</b>   |
| The Ape and the Lady             | <b>Deborah Sager</b>   |
| I Know a Youth                   | <b>Marion, Tony Parkes</b><br>(Isabel on piano)  |
| If You Go In                     | <b>Janice</b> (Tolloller), <b>Deborah</b> (Mountararat), <b>Isabel</b> (Lord Chancellor) |
| Things Are Seldom What They Seem | <b>Isabel Leonard, Carl Weggel</b>   |
| When the Buds Are Blossoming     | <b>Entire company</b>  |
| Hail Poetry                      | <b>Entire company</b>  |
- Special mention to:  
**Eric Schwartz**, piano  
**Carol Mahoney**, refreshments  
**Howard Rosenkranz** (**Linda Silverstein's** father), page turner.

Thanks, all, for a lovely afternoon! - mlc



*And now, M'Luds,  
to the business of the day*

*(by all means!):*

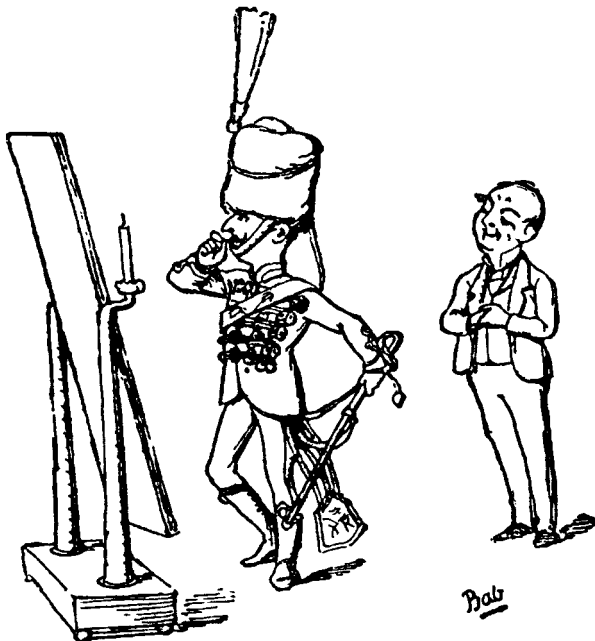
It's time to renew your membership!

The Board's decision several years ago to create extra categories of membership is still in effect. Please bear in mind that the majority of our members are still "Yeomen," but that those who wish to contribute more to NEGASS have the opportunity to do so, in the following increments:

- \$15 **Yeomen** (basic membership)
- 25 **Daughters of the Plough**
- 50 **Bucks and Blades**
- 100 **Flowers of Progress**

*(On the other hand, if even the \$15 basic membership is a problem, please talk to Membership Chair **Janice Dallas**. Please note – Charter Members officially hold their membership as a gift from the Society – but many insist upon donating at some level.)*

Lacking the means for a Display of Fireworks in the Evening, We celebrate these friends by printing a yearly list of Members Extraordinary - those who chose a category higher than Yeomen for the previous year. Here, forthwith, is the list of 2003-2004 Extraordinary Memberships (*Bow, bow, ye Lower Middle Classes*):



*Daughters of the Plough*

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Frank Behrens           | Steven B. Levine          |
| Robert Breau            | Ernest V. Loewenstein     |
| Nancy & Philip Burstein | Ervin H. Miller           |
| Peter T. Cameron        | Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Miller  |
| Ms. Judith Chasin       | Tony Parkes               |
| Allen Cohen             | Lonnie Powell             |
| Thomas Drucker          | Ruth S. Roper             |
| Barry E. Garden         | David Stieber             |
| Sheldon & Alice Hochman | Jonathan Strong           |
| Charlee Hutton          | Fred Ward                 |
| Richard & Mary Hyatt    | Dr. & Mrs. Charles Wilder |
| Alessandra Kingsford    | Stephen Zykofsky          |

*Bucks and Blades*

- |                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Mike Bromberg         | John & Irene Howard  |
| Robert E. Cumming     | Frederick Hughes     |
| Janice Dallas         | Arthur & Jean Koykka |
| Dean S. Edmonds Jr.   | Miles Cary Leahey    |
| Wm. Randolph Franklin | Lee Patterson        |
| Jim & Nina Harper     | J. Donald Smith      |
|                       | Tom Weber            |

*Flowers of Progress*

- |               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| Nancy Burdine | Carl Weggel |
|---------------|-------------|

*Charter Members*

- |                        |                             |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Eleanor Babikian       | Mr. & Mrs. Alan Hopfenberg* |
| Harry Benford*         | Walt Howe*                  |
| Van Pelt Brower*       | Larry Littlefield*          |
| Ruth Colson*           | Richard Sewell*             |
| Juliet Cunningham      | William C. Venman*          |
| Dean Edmonds Jr.*      | Mr. & Mrs. Leonard Weaver   |
| Jim Ellis              | Jeffrey Weisenfreund        |
| Alexander Nicoll Gerli | Peter Zavon*                |

*\*Charter Members who have donated gifts to NEGASS*

*Other Donations*

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Nancy Burdine                      | John E. Dreslin                    |
| <i>(in Memory of Bill Burdine)</i> | Thomas Drucker                     |
| Allen Cohen                        | <i>(in Memory of Bruce Miller)</i> |
|                                    | Ernest V. Loewenstein              |

*(How shall I express the all-absorbing gratitude - )*

Whatever category suits you - please send the enclosed Renewal Form to **NEGASS Membership Chair Janice Dallas, 63 Everett St., Arlington, MA 02474-6921** with what dispatch ye may! --- *mlc*



**NEGASS COMPANY PROMOTER SEEKS APPRENTICE:** Linda Silverstein inquires whether anyone is interested in doing publicity for upcoming NEGASS meetings. This usually involves sending press releases via email to several newspapers. The job also involves placing and coordinating payment for NEGASS ads printed in programs. Linda can provide guidance, if necessary. Contact her at: (781) 828-6361 or linda@negass.org.



**CHICAGO SINGOUT?** No, that fell through - the organizers found everything except a location. We'll keep hoping...

**TWO LIMITED-REPERTOIRE SING-INS: MAINE AND PENNSYLVANIA** Check the Calendar, below, for sing-ins planned for September (in Maine) and October (in Philadelphia).



**PAN-ATLANTIC G&S** An exhibition "Gilbert and Sullivan: From London to America" featuring items from the collection of **Dr. Harold Kanthor**, will be on exhibit at the University of Rochester Library (Rochester, NY) from October 2, 2004 - March 15, 2005. It will focus on the original London productions and their transfer to New York and other American cities. For further information see the University of Rochester web site: <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/rbk/Exhibit3.stm>.



-- J. DONALD SMITH



**G&S TRIVIA ON THE WEB:** Tom Dawkins informs us of a highly entertaining G&S Trivia Quiz Site at <http://home.pacific.net.au/~scuttaj/savoyoperas/>

He writes: "There are twenty levels of increasing difficulty, with lots of Bab illustrations. You have to know quite a lot about the dialogue in these operas to get terribly far; difficult for listeners to the old D'OC recordings that don't include it!"

Naturally, as a NEGASSer, I made it to and passed level twenty. :)"

-- TOM DAWKINS

**G&S SCORE DONATION** Thank you, **Pamela Rudd**, a native of Toronto, who just donated a full set of piano-vocal scores to NEGASS before retiring to her home town.



**NEWS OF MRS. SHEPHERD (OLD MEMORIES CROWD AROUND ME)** Many NEGASSers remember fondly our annual picnic meetings at the lovely sea-side estate of Mrs. Shepherd. Her daughter writes:

Dear NEGASS, My name is **Holly Fulton** and my mother, **Mrs. Mary Howe Shepherd**, used to host NEGASS parties at our house in Bristol, Rhode Island. I think the last one was in the mid-nineties and we sang **YEOMEN** and you gave my mom a lovely plaque. It was a wonderful get-together.

She is now in a nursing home with Alzheimer's and I visit her every day when I come home to visit. I live in Denver, CO now and just finished singing in the chorus of **RUDDIGORE** with the **Empire Lyric Players**. They are **THE G&S** group of Denver. It's a great group. My husband sang in it too and he has turned into a G&S fiend. YES!!! He even had a line in the ghost scene with Roderick Murgatroyd. I had missed G&S and now am back into the G&S swing of things.

Is **Warren Colson** still with NEGASS? I came upon his incredibly enormous concordance while going thru my mother's G&S collection. Could you please give him my email address and tell him to email me and bring me up to date on NEGASS and how he is? {We forwarded **Holly's** email to Warren's widow, **Ruth**, who is still an active NEGASSer - Warren, as every NEGASS member knows, was our founder!}

I will join NEGASS when my husband and I move back to New England which should be in a few years. When I visit my mom now I take a BIG ole G&S book with me (Marty Green's collection) and sing songs for her and some of them she remembers and she hums the tunes and says some of the words. It's precious given she has had Alzheimer's for 10 years!!

Thank you for forwarding this to Warren if possible.

-- HOLLY FULTON

--[Thank you, Holly, for your news!]

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**THESPIS AT MIT: FOL DIDDLE, LOL DIDDLE, LOL LOL LAY!** So I went out singing after seeing MIT's production of **THESPIS** --and I've been assured by cast members that they can't stop singing it, either! That was the refrain of the "Train Song" ("I once knew a chap") that was a highlight of this highly amusing production.

What I liked best was the troupe of actors played by a troupe of actors, with a rich and dense network of relationships linking them all. I saw the show twice, and there was much more going on than I could take in. Whenever two members of Thespis's troupe were near each other, there was an interaction worth watching. This all came together wonderfully in the train song. While Thespis, over the course of five long verses, told the tale of "the gentleman who undermined his influence by associating with his inferiors", the rest of the group by twos and threes formed a train which grew ever more elaborate, with engine, caboose, whistle, passengers reading the newspaper and drinking tea, etc. When the train was sent down "to the wilds of Barking" the troupe appropriately howled and yipped. And when the experiment went bust, the group slowed down, collapsed, and dissolved. Throughout, **Andrew Sweet** as Thespis related the tale with impeccable diction, concluding each verse with an amusing set of gestures for the "North South East West Diddlesex Junction", and a grapevine step and salute ("Fol diddle, lol diddle") that took him the width of the stage.

The music for this production was written by **Colin Johnson**, with the obvious exceptions of "Climbing Over Rocky Mountain" and "Little Maid of Arcadee". Orchestration and music direction were by **Todd Neal**. I liked a lot of the new music, but there were problems. The opening chorus, "Throughout the Night" (sung by the Chorus of Stars) was written with overlapping lines so that it was impossible to hear the words. The situation was even worse with Mercury's two patter songs, "Oh, I'm the celestial drudge"--a cute quirky piece in a minor key-- and the non-memorable "Olympus is now in a terrible muddle." **Tracy Hammond** was charming in her role and did her best to enunciate, but it was impossible to project the words in that low vocal register over the orchestration. As the Act II patter song is crucial to explaining what has happened--and there



was a huge amount of stage business--this was a serious loss. While the orchestra did fine during the show, the performance of the overture both times I went was really weak. The overture itself seemed flabby, with "Climbing Over Rocky Mountain" appearing twice and the music then dawdling on interminably after an apparent crashing conclusion.

There was also a lot I like about the stage direction, by **David Jedlinsky**. He evidently followed Thespis's maxim of allowing the group to "experiment", so I don't know how many of the innumerable excellent bits were invented by him. For example, at the end of Act I, **Randi Kestin**, as the reformed alcoholic Tipseion, displayed horror at finding that the only symbol of office left on tray was Bacchus's grapes. **Len Giambone** as Sparkeion reveled throughout Act II in his ability as Deputy Apollo to make the spotlight go on and off--and then found with crushing disappointment in the Finale that he had lost his touch. And **Sheldon Brown** as Preposterous climbed down from his towering rage upon being offered a grape by a fellow picnicker. But occasionally the staging was odd. During "Climbing Over Rocky Mountain", both **Rebecca Burstein** as Prolixia and **Sonya Tang** as Daphne sang their solos exquisitely while standing at the edge of the stage, rather than to their colleagues who were filling the stage behind them. And in a social environment in which one could barely kiss one's wife on the cheek before the marriage ceremony was complete, it was strange to see Sparkeion and Daphne cuddling voluptuously in the midst of the revelers. Similarly, the costumes were generally excellent, with the striking exception of that of Diana, an Aged Deity. The Victorian piquancy of seeing a young lady in tights as Mercury was undercut by the appearance of **Mary Finn** in an extremely skimpy (and unbecoming) tunic, so that her lower limbs were not only visible, but completely bare. [*Um... Nancy... I suspect that was the point! - oh, and We thought Mary's legs looked quite good! - mlc*]

The tall slenderness of **Ashley Kim** as Nicemis made her a wonderful visual as well as vocal complement to the likewise tall and slender Sparkeion. It was a pleasure to see the two of them stroll together arm-in-arm. The other members of this ensemble likewise filled their roles, great and small, with fun and pleasure--**Rishi Basu** as the doddering Jupiter, **Ion Freeman** as the superannuated buck Apollo, **Robert Morrison** as the irascible Mars, **Nick Bozard** as the "dear old thing" Sillimon, **Bradley Timmers**

as the pusillanimous Timidon/Deputy Mars, **Noelani Kamelamela** as the mischievous Stupidas, **Sarah Pearcey** as the frustrated Pretteia/Deputy Venus, **Brie Frame** as the very young Cymon/Deputy Father Time, and Deputy Vulcan **Matthew Morse**, Deputy Thalia **Jesse Sullivan**, and Deputy Minerva **Kendell Timmers**. Well done, MITGASP!

- NANCY BURSTEIN



**IOLANTHE AT H-RG&S: Review The First**

There were some incredible moments in **Harvard-Radcliff's IOLANTHE**.

The **Harvard-Radcliff G&S** is going through lean times at the moment. Upcoming finals may be forcing many of them to concentrate on other things. They have no dearth of talent, but **IOLANTHE** had a slim crew.

The set was simple: a curving ramp running from downstage right to upstage left, suggesting not much of anything; exits downstage right, downstage left, and upstage right (the stream); simple stippled patterns on the floor suggesting a stream bed. The set did work well. Everyone got on and off without difficulty.

Costumes: HR has rarely been top-notch in costumes. The Fairies wore a mix of costumes, one in pants, three in a variety of dresses, none really suggesting Fairies- more 17th Century peasants. Iolanthe wore a full-length blue gown. The Queen wore a yellow gown suggesting Elizabeth I. The Lords wore business suits. Strephon wore street clothes, as if he had just come in from work. Phyllis wore several changes of everyday dresses.

Music: The music had some surprises in tempos. It's good not to be a slave to some favorite recordings, to try something different. This show scored about 70-30. Some songs worked, some were strained. During the first act finale, someone decided they should

E-  
Nun-  
Ci-  
Ate

the lines. The pauses and stops robbed the song of its power and force.

Acting: **Daniel Spitzer** (Lord Chancellor) sang his swan song before heading to England. He gave his all to his

role, just as he did as Pooh-Bah and J. Wellington Wells. (Could still use an acting coach, but he's improving.)

My biggest complaint about the acting concerns body language. Strephon must display confidence. His dialogue compels it. Our young Strephon shows none at all. Lord Tollerer bends and sways at the waist like the servile usher making excuses. Mountarat also bends at the knees and shoulders. As each sang they would pace in small circles, believing that if they weren't moving nothing was happening. The other three Lords stand erect, but that's all they did.

The responsibility lies with the Director, who made some other mystifying choices. As the Fairies started "Don't go!", all the Lords just stood there. Not a twitch. Not a move. Wasn't the Director aware of the words? How can you sing "Don't go" to someone who isn't going anywhere? "Don't go" was the only song that drew no applause. Even stranger: "Fare thee well, attractive stranger" cut directly to "The law is the true embodiment." THEY CUT "TRUMPET BRAY"! The signature piece of the first act. Imagine **Marriage of Figaro** without "Non Piu Andrai." Granted there were only five Lords and the Lord Chancellor, so he may have cut it for lack of voices. Strephon and Private Willis were available to sing offstage to add volume. Cutting "Trumpets" was an extreme choice. The Lords came on stage without establishing who they were.

On the other hand, a lot of the staging worked well. For "Dignified and Stately" they marched in circles around Strephon and Phyllis, and carried Phyllis offstage. Simple but funny.

Singing: The best part of the show. Spritzer sang the patter songs with ease. For all his annoying gyrations, Tollerer

had a fine voice, as did Mountarat. The cast sang with amazing clarity.

Private Willis was dressed in camouflage fatigues, and moved like a go-go dancer doing the macarena. The strangest Willis I've ever seen, but he carried it.

I would have asked **Johanna Karlin** (Fairy Queen) to tone down a bit until I saw the last act. What at first seemed loud and brassy was burlesque. ("Don't ye know that it is



DEATH!!!.....to marry a mortal?") She played vampy to Private Willis, and then sang Captain Shaw directly to the bassoon player, with the Fairies, to the delight of the audience.

Her business with the law scroll, --reach into bosom, pull feather, another feather, pack of lozenges, pop one into mouth, then pull scroll-- was hilarious.

In all, not HRG&S' best show, but the audience was well satisfied. My friend's two daughters had never seen a G&S before. They were impressed.

-- DONALD BILODEAU

### &&& *IOLANTHE* AT HARVARD, Review the Second:

I don't know if you're looking for a review of the Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Players' production of *IOLANTHE* at the Agassiz Theatre, which they put on [in April], but I happened to be in town on the ninth and so was able to take in that performance.

The HRG&S Players are an experienced howbeit amateur group, so that I expected the performance to be considerably more polished than it was. My main criticisms fall into four categories. First, the set. It was a bit curious, very green (which is appropriate for the first act) with several tall green stalks, each topped with a small, illuminated hexagon, whose significance, if it had one, was lost on me. A small dais at stage right carried a chair from which the Fairy Queen pontificated at intervals in the first act and which served as a stand (no box) for Private Willis in the second. That's right, there was no change of scene for the second act despite a protracted intermission. No Big Ben, no facade of the Houses of Parliament, nothing to indicate that we are now to be, not in an Arcadian glade but in the Westminster Palace yard. The Agassiz Theatre is an old house, so that I don't know how much is available back stage for set changing, but let's face it, *IOLANTHE* is not one of the operas (such as *PINAFORE*, which is often put on by impecunious parties for that very reason) that can do with the same set in both acts.

And then there were the costumes. For some reason some person in authority, I don't know who, very likely Director **Hector Garza**, decided to do the show in modern dress. Now that's an often-made election, and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. In this case, at least for a traditionalist such as myself, it didn't.



I didn't really realize what was going on when the fairies tripped in in an assortment of fluffy but nondescript costumes, but when Strephon (**Michael Moss**) appeared in a rather disreputable T-shirt hanging out over jeans, I found it hard to believe he was an Arcadian shepherd. Maybe that's how Arcadian shepherds dress these days, if indeed we still have Arcadian shepherds, but I was bothered by it to the point of being distracted from his otherwise competent performance.

Phyllis (**Lisa Lareau**) came in wearing a nice little dress (at least she wasn't in slacks!), but although she presented a most attractive picture, it was also hard to think of her as a shepherdess.

The peers (all five of them) were in business attire (although one of them sported a very British sweater under his jacket), and the Lord Chancellor was also in business clothes -- no wig or robe for him any more than we had the traditional ermine-trimmed costumes for the peers. I suppose that's what these gentry wear now when not on state occasions, and I believe it is common practice for the Lord Chancellor to appear in pajamas, as in this case, for his "lying awake with a dismal headache" song, and so I suppose I could put up with that.

The real disaster, however, was Private Willis (**Marcus Wang**) appearing on his stand in army fatigues. Now come on, modern dress or no, even in this day and age a grenadier guardsman on duty before the Houses of Parliament does not wear fatigues. This substitution for the traditional uniform with red coat and busby was a real shocker, and as he's standing there for a good portion of the second act, it detracted a lot from the show's appeal for me.

I should add, however, that there were at least two instances of characters being properly garbed. One was the Fairy Queen (**Johanna Sue Karlin**), who wore a magnificent full-skirted golden gown and looked every inch a queen. I have often held that the standard contralto characters such as the Fairy Queen and Katisha shouldn't be made too unattractive despite the references to their less than desirable appearance. Ms Karlin was sufficiently padded so that references to curling herself inside a buttercup and not objecting to stoutness in moderation drew the expected laughs, but I thought she nevertheless looked great and that Private Willis shouldn't feel at all inconvenienced at the prospect of marrying her.

Another splendid example was Iolanthe (**Celia Maccoby**, who was to me the star of the show), who appeared in a full ball gown, in which she remained for both acts, only a few drapes of seaweed being removed from her upon her entrance. And, yes, I was relieved to see Strephon appear in decent clothing when he accedes to being an MP and Phyllis in an evening dress as countess, even though we are not aware of what.

Another serious criticism of this production, at least to my way of thinking, is that the director fell into the trap that I believe has caught many directors -- that of treating a Gilbert-and-Sullivan opera as farce. To me, the jokes and satire come across in a much more effective manner if they're played absolutely straight-faced with a minimum of stage business. [*In fact, Gilbert was quoted as preferring that style - mlc*] In my opinion, this production featured much too much stage business. For example, the very proper howbeit self-made Lord Chancellor has no reason to perform a rather silly little dance routine (ineffectively imitated afterwards by Strephon) at the end of each verse of his "When I went to the bar as a very young man" song, and as if Private Willis's costume wasn't bad enough, his performing a series of contortionist wiggles each time he sang that "nature always does contrive," etc., was simply ludicrous. Moreover, the Fairy Queen, despite looking and singing well, was apparently instructed to scream the word "death" at the audience in a most unladylike manner whenever it occurred. Thus when reading from the fairy law scroll (which she extracted with exaggerated difficulty from her bosom after first littering the stage with various odd items that got pulled out ostensibly by mistake), she announced, somewhat paraphrasing the original script, "The penalty for marrying a mortal is [turn to audience, open mouth wide, and scream] DEATH!!!" Yes, it got a desultory laugh, but I found it very off-putting.

I should now make some comment on the musical rendition, but as I am not enough of a musician to pass judgment on individual voices, suffice it to say that the singing was all highly competent. This was aided by a superb orchestra, which did a great job on the overture (although I might have picked up the tempo a bit, especially at the beginning) and continued to give the singers just the right support throughout the show. But here comes the unkindest cut of all, and I do mean cut. Believe it or not, according to the conductor (who had vainly hoped nobody would notice until I queried him about this at intermission), that same person in authority apparently decided to cut, of all things, the peers'

entering march! I couldn't believe it! No *loudly let the trumpet bray!* No *tantantara, tzing boom!* No *bow, ye lower middle classes!* No *peers of highest station!* When, after Strephon and Phyllis go off, nothing happened until I was suddenly aware that the orchestra was playing the introduction to the Lord Chancellor's song and that worthy straggled in with the five peers, I wondered if I'd fallen asleep and missed part of the show. The conductor, who did a superior job leading the orchestra but whose name I didn't catch (He may have been **Matt Corriel**, who was listed as Music Director in the interesting but peculiar program.), told me the decision was based on there being only five peers, so that a stately procession might have looked ridiculous. Nevertheless, they tried to have one when exiting to "Though our hearts she's badly bruising," but this lost some of its impact because the preceding entrance had been omitted. I wouldn't have seen a problem with only five peers, especially as there were only four fairies. I forget what they did with the extra man at the end, probably because I was watching to see whether everybody would sprout wings in the traditional manner. They didn't, and I left the theatre somewhat disappointed, as noted above.



However, far be it from me to disparage, not a humble foremost lad, but a superior group of New England Gilbert-and-Sullivan players. Certainly I was delighted to have attended.

Most sincerely,  
-- **DEAN S. EDMONDS, JR.**  
a.k.a. Senex Senior



#### DID ANYONE CATCH...

- The Andover Phillips Academy's *PIRATES* in May?
- The second **Bruce I. Miller memorial concert at Holy Cross?** It was on April 30 2004, featuring a presentation of choral music to the college by **Ronald Broude** (of **Broude Brothers Ltd.**)
- The **Savoyard Light Opera Company's** Aug 1 concert, "5/29/1911 - A Gilbert & Sullivan Fantasy"?
- Gilbert's play *Engaged*, at the **Lucille Lortel Theater**, 121 Christopher Street, Greenwich Village, NYC, in May?



New England Light Opera's 2nd Annual Summer Concert Series: July 21st: Gilbert and Sullivan Night?

Tell Us, tell us all about it! - mlc

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 CALENDAR ~~~~~

**Coming! This Autumn! Not one, but Two, East Coast G&S Singalongs!**

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**SPONTANEOUS SAVOYARDS, PHILADELPHIA**

Date/Time: Saturday 18 September, noon to 7 p.m.-ish  
 Location: Drexel Hill, PA, at the home of **Rebecca & Tyler Hains** [Note: a later email suggests that the date may have been changed - please contact Becca for details - mlc]

- 25 minutes from Philadelphia airport
- two blocks from the 102 trolley's Garrettford stop (w/ connections to NY, NJ, & PA public transit)
- 2 hours from Baltimore, Newark, & NYC (LGA & JFK) airports

Program: *HMS PINAFORE*  
*IOLANTHE*  
*PRINCESS IDA*  
*THE ZOO*

Contact: **Rebecca Hains** at rebecca@hains.net

~~~~~  
**THE MAINE ON WHICH WE DRAW**

Date/Time: Saturday 23 October, noon to 7 p.m.-ish  
 Location: 11 Pleasant Street Center for the Arts, Brunswick, Maine

- 45 minutes from Portland airport
- 2 hours from Boston & Manchester NH airports

Program:  
*PRINCESS IDA*  
*THE MIKADO*  
*RUDDIGORE*  
*THE GONDOLIERS*

Contact: **Barry Hilton** at barryhilton@earthlink.net

☺☺ **Glimmerglass Opera** of Cooperstown, NY presents *PATIENCE*, in repertory with other works, between July 2 and August 24, 2002. TSW has read a highly favorable review



of their production. Visit [www.glimmerglass.org/](http://www.glimmerglass.org/) or phone (607) 547-2255 for more info.

☺☺ **The 11th International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival** is taking place now in Buxton, Derbyshire, England, July 31 - August 22, 2004. For more info, visit [www.gs-festival.co.uk](http://www.gs-festival.co.uk), email [andrewc@gs-festival.co.uk](mailto:andrewc@gs-festival.co.uk), or phone (0) 1422 323252.

**SavoyNet** has brought *PIRATES* to the Festival, with a cast including NEGASSers **Sam Silvers** (Major General), **Mitch Gillette** (Frederic), and **Rebecca Consentino Hains** (Mabel).

What's **SavoyNet**? It's an electronic mailing list dedicated to the discussion of G&S. Email list moderator **Marc Shepherd** at [oakapple@cris.com](mailto:oakapple@cris.com) for more info, or visit their web site at <http://www.cris.com/~oakapple/savoynet/>

☺☺ **MIT Gilbert & Sullivan Players'** Fall show will be *IOLANTHE*. Producers: **Nick Bozard** and **Garry Zacheiss**; Stage Director: **Brian Bermack**; Music Director: **Jimmy Jia**; Vocal Directors: **Jessica Raine** and **Matthew Morse**.

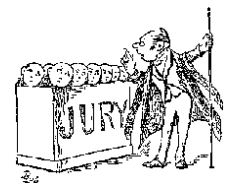
Auditions are September 8 and 9, 7-10pm. Callbacks Sept. 11, 2-5pm (if needed). Rehearsals begin Sept. 13. Performances will be November 12, 13, 4, 18, 19, 20 and 21.

October 2, 1888, *Yeomen of the Guard* opens  
 October 7, 1893, *Utopia, Limited* opens  
 October 10, 1881, *Savoy Theater* opens

☺☺ **Carl Rosa Opera** is touring Australia, not the U.S., with *PINAFORE* this fall. For more info visit their web site: [www.carlrosaopera.co.uk/](http://www.carlrosaopera.co.uk/)

November 17, 1877, *The Sorcerer* opens  
 November 18, 1836, W. S. Gilbert is born  
 November 22, 1900, Sullivan dies  
 November 25, 1882, *Iolanthe* opens simultaneously in London and NY

☺☺ **THESPIS & TRIAL IN IL:** MITG&SP/NEGASS member **Ezra Pesach** is spreading the word about the **Savoy-aire**s of Evanston, Illinois, [www.savoyaires.org/](http://www.savoyaires.org/), who are planning a double bill of **THESPIS & TRIAL** in October 2004.



☪☪ **Valley Light Opera** of Amherst, MA will present **RUDDIGORE** November 5, 6, 7, 12, and 13, at Amherst Regional High School. More info: <http://www.vlo.org/>

☪☪ **The Raylynmor Opera** of Keene, NH, will perform **RUDDIGORE** (or *The Witch's Curse*) November 19, 20 and 21. More info: [djyanish@yahoo.com](mailto:djyanish@yahoo.com).

☪☪ **The Sudbury Savoyards'** winter show will be **MIKADO**. Auditions will be held in November, and performances in February 2005.



☪☪ **Harvard-Radcliffe G&SP's** fall show will be **PIRATES**. Performances: Dec. 2-5 and 9-11. Contact **Michael Lynch**, [mplynch@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:mplynch@fas.harvard.edu)

☪☪ **Belmont Open Sings**, under the auspices of the Powers School of Music, will hold a sing-along **MIKADO** on Sunday, January 23, 2005, at the Payson Park Church in Belmont, with the usual full orchestra. See their web page for more information, at [www.powersmusic.org/belmontopensings.html](http://www.powersmusic.org/belmontopensings.html)

☪☪ **ACROSS THE WATER: The Gilbert & Sullivan Society** [Yes, *THE Gilbert & Sullivan Society*] Weekend at **Grim's Dyke** (Gilbert's last home), Harrow Weald, Middlesex. April 1-3 2005. With talks, performances, videos, and a sing-through of **PIRATES**. (Must be applied for and paid by Feb. 1st). Email **Skyler Wrench** for more info, [owlsnest99@yahoo.com](mailto:owlsnest99@yahoo.com).

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We'd like to remind folks: **To subscribe to SavoyNet**, the G&S mailing list, send the message "Subscribe SavoyNet (your full name)" to the address [listserv@bridgewater.edu](mailto:listserv@bridgewater.edu) - and you'll be sent all the information you need.

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PO Box 367, Arlington, MA 02476-0004

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

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