



THE
TRUMPET BRAY

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW ENGLAND GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY



~ UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS ~

HMS Pinafore and The Pirates of Penzance,
Sudbury Savoyards, August 19, 2012, 3 pm,
Sudbury United Methodist Church, 251 Old
Sudbury Rd., Sudbury, MA

On Sunday, August 19 The Sudbury Savoyards will happily team up with touring members of the English company Opera Comique to present a joint concert performance of the popular Gilbert & Sullivan operettas *HMS Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance*.

The program will be conducted by **Kevin Syver**, who also conducted four of the operettas at last year’s NEGASS “Sing Out” in Concord. This visit to the United States marks Kevin’s 50th year of active involvement with Gilbert & Sullivan as a performer, director, and musical director.

In addition to the guest performers, veteran members of the Sudbury Company will take on leading roles, including **Mike Lague** of Sudbury as Dick Deadeye, **Kathleen Larson Day** of Framingham as Little Buttercup, and **Dennis O’Brien** as the Bosun

in *HMS Pinafore*, and **Connell Benn** of Concord as Mabel, **Tom Frates** of Lexington as the Pirate King, and **Randy Divinski** of Natick as the Sergeant of Police in *The Pirates of Penzance*. Other local Savoyards will serve as the chorus accompaniment.

Opera Comique will then travel to Mystic, CT,

accompanied by **Kathleen Larson Day**, where they will perform *HMS Pinafore* aboard the “Joseph Conrad”. The company last performed there in 1996 as part of their 20th anniversary.



Admission is \$10 for Adults, \$8 for Seniors & Students. The church is

handicapped accessible with plenty of parking. For more information please visit: www.sudburysavoyards.org or leave a message at 978-443-8811.

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BETWEEN-BRAY ANNOUNCEMENTS Available to NEGASS members through online member profile.

DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL: 15th of the months of January, March, May, July, September, and November, 2011.

www.negass.org

RECENT PRODUCTIONS

The Pirates of Penzance, The Hypocrites, June 21 - 24, 2012, The A.R.T.'s Oberon, 2 Arrow St., Cambridge, MA

On Friday afternoon I heard about the Hypocrites' production of *The Pirates of Penzance* at the Oberon Theater in Cambridge, read some reviews online, and decided I had to see this. Am I ever glad I heard about it in time! It was a blast and a half. I loved it!

Well, truthfully, it was painful enduring the edits which cut the show to 80 minutes, and the stripped down accompaniments missed almost all of the glorious Sullivan harmonies. But I loved it anyway! It sparkled, it rip-roared, and the entire audience laughed non-stop. It was more a cartoon than an operetta, so who cares if the singing was spotty, the virtuoso bits cut, and the guitar chords all over the place? It had the manic energy of a bunch of tipsy musical-comedy nuts at a who-can-be-the-silliest house party, kinda drunk, playing every role with besotted hilarity... dressing up in pajamas, wielding water toys and fabulous wacky costumes from the attic... raiding someone's funky instrument collection to try their luck with whatever squeezebox or ukulele they could get their hands on - definitely my idea of a good time.

We shared our table with a woman who was blogging the festival this show was part of. From her questions it seemed she didn't know *Pirates*, and this rendition might be even harder to figure out first time around. Though some parts were easier to get, thanks to extra care taken to deliver the most crucial plot idiocies, other G&Sisms were even denser than usual, due to the breakneck speed at which they were delivered, and the non-stop hilarious stage business.

But whether or not the plot was comprehensible, the acting was fabulous -- especially the Major General, and Mabel/Ruth, who is a force of nature -- although as an aging Ruth myself, I cringe more than ever at the poor woman's pathetic persona. But here was a twist: for the finale: Ruth and Mabel became one (if I interpret the half-and-half eyeglasses aright) and so they both got their man!

The Major General's "Sighing softly to the river" echoes were not sung by the entire company, as is usual. The cast, all brilliant comedic actors, were manifestly capable of handling it, and without them, the joke of the song was missed, although the tenor who floated in for the echoes/harmony had a lovely voice. And there was no "Ha Ha!" from the hidden

pirates & police at "I thought I heard a noise". Another dropped joke, and why? Ah well, there were plenty of others to make up for it. Lots of other petty quibbles from this long time G&Ser -- I could whine about many jarring musical liberties with this perfect operetta -- but, again, who cares? It was a riot!

-Ruth Roper

The Hot Mikado, The Community House Players of Hamilton and Wenham, June 24, 2012, The Pingree School, South Hamilton, MA

While this performance may not have had the polish of professional shows, it certainly did not fail to entertain. The cast was made up largely of high school and college students, one as young as 12, and included local teachers, professors, graduate students and a highly talented professional dancer and choreographer.



The young lady who played Yum-Yum, though a recent graduate of Pingree, was exceptionally good, acting beautifully with her eyes. The other little maids from school, Pitti-Sing and Peep-Bo were not far behind. The chorus was well-trained; the singing and dancing were terrific. The pit

band was right on the mark and consisted of a conductor and five musicians, graduates of Berklee and New England Conservatory.

We missed some essential dialogue, but otherwise the story was well-told, with the clever integration of 1940 musical styles: swing, blues, jazz and gospel rhythms. The set used Japanese architecture, but in the textures of the Cotton Club - neon, brass and mahogany. The costumes included the Mikado's white zoot suit, though softened by a silky kimono texture.

-Ann and Dick Luxner

❧ G & S NEWS ❧

Papers, Presentations and Patter, Ralph MacPhail, editor, presented at the 2011 International G & S Festival, Gettysburg, PA

Papers, Presentations and Patter is a collection of essays delivered at the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival at Gettysburg in June 2011, edited and

introduced by that indefatigable Savoyard, Ralph MacPhail, who solicited the papers and hosted the symposium.

This volume, which I recommend to all NEGASSers, covers a wide range of topics from "Matters Mathematical" (by Thomas Drucker) to the operas in Yiddish (by Al Grand), from the theatrical context of G & S alongside Aristotle (by Shane Magargal) and the American musical comedy (by Andrew Vorder Bruegge). It opens with an investigation into whether Gilbert was a little Liberal or a little Conservative by the noted scholar Ian Bradley, followed by a deeply argued essay on "The Masculine Woman and the Feminine Man" by Carolyn Williams, a valuable appendage to her recent book, *Gilbert and Sullivan: Gender, Genre, Parody*, the groundbreaking study that has set a new standard for scholarship on the Victorian theater.

Henry Benford has some good fun with Gilbert's vocabulary, and Sylvan Kesilman contributes a thorough and useful survey of a century of D'Oyly Carte comic baritones; Elise Curran analyses Sir William's relationships with his "girls"--most importantly Jessie Bond and Nancy McIntosh. William Hyder discusses *Pinafore* in America with an illuminating glimpse into our topsy-turvy misunderstanding of the British class system. Not to leave out Sullivan, our own Connecticut G&S Society conductor, John Dreslin, takes an insightful listen to Sullivan's musical sense of humor, and Marc Shepherd explores, as has never been done before, the full history of "Little Maid of Arcadee" and proves what a hit song it once was.

For me, the most surprising contribution is Daniel Kravetz's brief study of *Iolanthe* that uncovers delightful and unexpected layers of its political subtext. And, as an appreciator of the much despised lozenge plot in its final form as *The Mountebanks*, I particularly admire how Donald Smith, our president emeritus and now owner of Cellier's autograph score, reveals hitherto unknown details about an opera whose composer died just before its premiere.

The handsomely produced volume can be ordered for \$21.50 from www.lulu.com. The ISBN # is: 978-1-105-20054-0. Let's hope *Papers, Presentations and Patter* launches a lengthy series of annual festival anthologies. Such proceedings must not be unwitnessed. Start your collection now!

--Jonathan Strong



Upcoming Productions & Events

<p>An Evening of Gilbert & Sullivan Longwood Opera</p>	<p>August 7, 2012 (7:30 pm) www.longwoodopera.org 781-455-0960</p>	<p>Christ Episcopal Church 1132 Highland Ave. Needham, MA</p>
<p><i>HMS Pinafore and The Pirates of Penzance</i> Sudbury Savoyards</p>	<p>August 19, 2012 (3 pm) www.sudburysavoyards.org</p>	<p>Sudbury United Methodist Church 251 Old Sudbury Rd. Sudbury, MA</p>
<p><i>Trial by Jury & H.M.S. Pinafore</i> CTG&SS</p>	<p>September 14 & 15 (7:30 pm), 16 (2 pm), 2012 www.ctgands.org 800-866-1606</p>	<p>Middletown High School Performing Arts Center 200 LaRosa Lane Middletown, CT</p>
<p><i>Ruddigore</i> CTG&SS</p>	<p>October 28 (7:30 pm), 29 (2 pm, 7:30 pm), 2012 www.ctgands.org 800-866-1606</p>	<p>Middletown High School Performing Arts Center 200 LaRosa Lane Middletown, CT</p>
<p><i>Ruddigore</i> Joint NEGASS/Longwood Opera event</p>	<p>March 3, 2013 more details to follow</p>	<p>Christ Episcopal Church 1132 Highland Ave. Needham, MA</p>