



# Precious Nonsense

NEWSLETTER OF THE MIDWESTERN GILBERT AND SULLIVAN SOCIETY

May 1990 -- Issue 26

Gentle sir, my heart is frolicsome and free  
(Hey, but he's doleful, Willow, Willow, Waly!)

And, like Patience, the Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society is still unattached. The membership was not in favor of affiliating with the London Gilbert and Sullivan Society (at least not at this time), but more on that later. In the meantime, among other things, we have the annual Big Quiz, the G&S Star Wars parody, and **the details for the MGS Annual Outing. We're going to the matinee performance of Princess Ida August 26, 1990, at Light Opera Works.** Afterwards, we're going to Gulliver's Restaurant for dinner. We'll certainly look forward to seeing you there! In the meantime, let's see what the G&S news is.

## Oh, Members, How Say You, What is it You've Done?

Congratulations to Tom and Ruthann Stetak, who are now invested members in their respective Sherlock Holmes clubs: Tom as the "Head of Police at Cleveland" in the Baker Street Irregulars, and Ruthann as the "Marchioness de Brinvillier" in the Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.

## What Cheer! What Cheer! {Midwestern}

As far as we know, the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company, sponsored by the University of Chicago Department of Music, is going to be giving Gondoliers on August 17-18 during the University's (?) Summer Nights Festival (at least tentatively). For more information, try getting in touch with the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Co. at 5545 S. University, Chicago, IL 60637.

The Ohio Light Opera's 1990 repertory will be: A Double Bill of H.M.S. Pinafore and Suppé's "The

Beautiful Galatea" (June 1 {preview opening}, 7\*, 9, 14, 15, 19 [mat.], 23, 27 [mat.]: July 7 [mat.], 19, 29; and August 5 [mat.]); "The Merry Widow" (June 2 {preview opening}, 6\*, 9 [mat.], 10 [mat.], 16, 22; July 1 [mat.], 14 [mat.], 18 [mat.], 22, 26; August 1, and 5); Heuberger's "The Opera Ball" (June 8\*, 13 [mat.], 17 [mat.], 23 [mat.], 26 [mat.], 30; July 12, 18, 29 [mat.]; and August 3); The Yeomen of the Guard (June 12\*, 16 [mat.], 21, 29; July 7, 15 [mat.], 25 [mat.]; and August 4); Lehár's "The Land of Smiles" (June 20\* [mat.], 24 [mat.], 28; July 6, 21, 25, 27, 31 [mat.]; and August 4), Hahn's "Ciboulette" (July 3\* [mat.], 5, 8 [mat.], 14, 20, 24 [mat.], 28 [mat.]; and August 1 [mat.]); and Weill's "Street Scene" (July 11\* [mat.], 13, 17 [mat.], 21 [mat.], 22 [mat.], 28; and August 2). Matinees are at 2:00 and evening performances are at 8:00. Dates with asterisks indicate Opening Performances, and after those performances the entire audience is invited to a reception in the lobby. Otherwise, Individual tickets are \$16.50 for Tuesday matinees, and Wednesday through Friday evenings, and \$18.50 for Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday matinees and Saturday and Sunday evenings. The OLO apparently accepts VISA and MASTERCARD if you want to order tickets over

the phone. If you want tickets mailed to you, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Allow approximately 2-4 weeks for processing when ordering before May 15. There is a \$2.00 per ticket charge for exchanges, subject to availability. Purchasers have the privilege of one exchange only per ticket order. Tickets must be exchanged no later than 48 hours before the scheduled performance or the privilege is forfeited. All sales are final and there are no refunds. OLO has group rates, and some series specials, as well. MGS members who have gone to OLO's shows have said they're just wonderful, but the theater is small. Ordering tickets early might be a good idea. For more information, the OLO can be reached at The College of Wooster, Wooster OH 44691 / [216] 263-2345.

We heard from the Findlay (Ohio) Light Opera Company, and while they will still be presenting Mikado as their third annual production, they will be doing it on June 22 and 23, 1990, contrary to what appeared in the February Nonsense. For more information, contact the company at P.O. Box 264, Findlay, OH 45839,

Light Opera Works' 1990 season will consist "The Gypsy Princess {Die Csárdásfürstin}" by Emmerich Kálmán (June 22-24), Princess Ida (August 24-26), and Romberg's "The New Moon" (December 27-31). Thanks to Bridget McDonough, managing director, and Julianne Barnes, administrative assistant, **The Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society is going to be holding its Annual Outing in connection the August 26 matinee performance of Princess Ida. Details about the big event appear on the back page of the Nonsense.** By the way, page 10 describes the special deal the MGS has for non-members who would like to attend this performance as part of the MGS. Do take a look at the details and tell your G&S-enthusiastic friends. We will be looking forward to seeing you at this big event. In the meantime, the company, Light Opera Works, can be reached at 927 Noyes St., Evanston, IL 60201-2799 / [708] 869-6300.

We haven't heard anything to the contrary, so we're assuming that the Savoy-Aires are still plan-

ning on giving The Yeomen of the Guard this year, over two weekends in August. If anyone hears any details, please do pass them on to us.

The Indianapolis Opera (250 E. 38th St., Indianapolis, IN 46205 / (317) 283-3531), we learn from member Thomas Weakley, is going to be giving Pirates (starring Douglas Perry) September 14 and 16, 1990. No word on ticket prices and performance times, but if we hear anything, we'll let you know. If you want to know before that, getting in touch with the company should solve the problem.

It's still pretty tentative, but the Park Ridge Gilbert and Sullivan Society will probably be giving Ruddigore toward the end of September. It's been a while since there's been a production of Ruddigore in this neighborhood, so we'll be looking forward to theirs!

Rumor has it that the University of Michigan G&S Society will be giving Princess Ida as its next major G&S production. Member Patricia Burton saw flyers to that effect at the group's recent production of Iolanthe, so we'll see how their plans turn out. In the meantime, the company can be reached at UMGASS, 911 N. University, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

### What Cheer! What Cheer! {Elsewhere}

We still have a few flyers from the Mansion House at Grims Dyke (Old Redding, Harrow Weald, Middlesex HA3 6SH, England /01-954-4227) about their 1990 G&S season. If you would like one, get in touch with S/A Cole, and she'll send you one (and if you wanted to send along a self-addressed, stamped envelope, business-sized, she wouldn't complain, either)

If you're going to be up Nova Scotia way, the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Nova Scotia is going to be giving Utopia Limited May 30-June 2 at the Neptune Theater. Tickets are \$15.00 and \$10.00, and can be ordered from the box office (807?) 429-7070 after May 22. For more information, the Society can be reached at P.O. Box 48, Armdale

Post Office, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4J7 Canada / (807?) 429-1287. The Society also has available tie-in tee shirts, featuring the logo of the show (the words "Utopia Limited" by a palm tree on a beach. The palm tree's reflection in the water looks like Big Ben). The shirts come in black, tropical turquoise, or watermelon pink, with the design in white. Sizes are from small to extra-large, and are \$15.00 each, plus \$2.00 postage.

The Lyric Opera of Dallas is going to be giving Gondoliers, starring John Reed as the Duke of Plaza-Toro, June 8, 10, 13, 15, and 16, 1990. Evening performances begin at 8:15, and matinees at 2:30. Performances will be at the Majestic Theatre (1925 Elm St., Dallas, TX, 75201), and ticket can be ordered by calling Tom Gilbert in the box office at (214) 368-2183 between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm (We got a very cheerful call from Ross Price, who will be appearing as "Luiz", and had such a good time talking that S/A Cole forgot to ask what the ticket prices were). For other information, the Lyric Opera of Dallas can be reached at 8111 Preston Rd., Suite 818, Dallas, TX 75225. Other cast members will be Henry Price (Marco), Edward Coker (Giuseppe), Kimberley Conell (Tessa), Lynne Gincalone (Gianetta), Catherine Cook (Duchess of Plaza-Toro), Casilda (Jocelyn McDonald), and Eric Johnson (Don Alhambra). If the rest of the cast is as enthusiast as Mr. Price, our Texas members are in for a great show!

The G&S Society of Chester Co., so far as we know, will be giving Patience as the company's summer fund-raiser. Further details are unavailable at this time, but we'll pass on anything we hear.

From the August 1989 Happy Dispatch (news-letter of the Victorian Lyric Opera Co. {P.O. Box 10391, Rockville, MD 20850}), we learn that the company is expecting to present Pirates in June of 1990, Princess Ida in January, 1991, and Pinafore in June of that year. We haven't heard otherwise, so we assume these are still their plans. In anyone knows anything to the contrary, please do let us know.

If you are planning a trip to England in 1990, the end of June is going to be the time to go! The

Sir Arthur Sullivan Society is going to be hosting the Sullivan Festival 1990 at the Old Ship Hotel, Brighton, June 29-July 1, 1990. According to the prospectus, the fun begins the evening of June 29, with a recital and "light-hearted G&S-based quiz", continues the afternoon of the 30th, with talks on Iolanthe, and Sullivan's unseating as conductor of the Leeds Festival (by member Anne Stanyon, by the way), a recital of Sullivan partsongs, another talk on Sullivan and the gramophone, and a concert by the Ditchling Choral Society and the Mid-Sussex Sinfonietta, featuring: "In Memoriam" Overture, "The Merchant of Venice" suite, the "Festival Te Deum", "Iolanthe" Overture, and the ballet "L'Ile Enchantee". Sunday, talks by John Cannon, honorary curator of the Gilbert and Sullivan Society museum, and one about Sullivan and The Golden Legend, a sacred recital in the Brighton Unitarian Church, another recital in the afternoon, and a danced performance of L'Ile Enchantee. The price for this event is £130/person (£80 without accommodations). For the price, participants will get 2 nights' accommodation (and full English breakfast), Saturday lunch and dinner, Sunday lunch and gourmet afternoon tea, tea and coffee at various times, admission to all concerts, recitals, and talks, and a copy of the festival brochure. You can reserve places for this event by contacting Stephen Turnbull, Sullivan Festival 1990, 48 Front Street, Cockfield, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham, DL13 5DS, England with your name, address and a £25 non-refundable deposit (checks payable to the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society). The balance must be paid by June 1, 1990. Or contact Mr. Turnbull for more information. We've already heard from a couple of MGS members who are expecting to be there, so those of us who can't make it will be looking forward to hearing all about this event. It goes without saying that we hope the festival goes according to plan!

The MGS had been reporting for some time that the New D'Oyly Carte Opera Co. would be coming to the United States in 1990. Well, we heard from the company fairly recently, and it seems THE NEW D'OYLY CARTE IS NOT COMING TO THE UNITED STATES, in 1990, anyway. They should be coming before long, though, and we'll be looking forward to seeing their work whenever they

can get here. In the meantime, the company is touring with Pirates, Mikado, and a double bill of Pinafore and Trial by Jury (and according to a couple of reviews from the Western Daily Press [presumably the Somerset area, England (April 28, 1990): 17] that member John Tugwell sent in, the reviewers are greatly enjoying their work!) Speaking of the N'DOC, we got a nice letter from Mary Kitson, the Company secretary, about the condition of the Company. Contrary to the rumors the Nonsense picked up in the February issue, the company is doing quite well for a non-subsidized company in England. She says, "[The New D'Oyly Carte] played for eighteen weeks in the provinces to very large audiences and then for a further twelve weeks at the Savoy Theatre in London where, although we did not succeed in drawing full houses, our audiences were of a good size and seemed pleased with what they saw. Quite contrary to the comment that 'the financials are disastrous', we finished the year having almost broken even which, for a non-subsidized company in this country, is very remarkable--the Royal Opera and English National Opera have deficits running into millions of pounds." She also says that membership in the Friends of D'Oyly Carte is building up, that the company is hoping to arrange various activities for the Friends while the company is touring this year, but that doing so is not easy since they are widely scattered. The company also has a large quantity of very old archive material, so the rumors about the Company having a major clear-out seem to be just rumors.

### The Best of Gilbert & Sullivan at The Woodstock (IL) Opera House

The Best of Gilbert & Sullivan appeared at the Woodstock Opera House last March 27th, to what certainly seemed to be an appreciative audience--I know the people I was with had a good time! As always, this group did a grand show, and prove that a company does not need great costumes or scenery, but great performers, to really do G&S credit.

This time around, the Best of G&S consisted of David Mackie on piano, Geoffrey Shovelton, Alistair Donkin, Kenneth Sandford, Lorraine Daniels, and newcomer to the group Penelope Cope (her bio in the program showed she was not a new-

comer to G&S, however. It said there that she also had the distinction of recording "Poor Wand'ring One" with the London Symphony Orchestra for Stephen Spielberg's film An American Tail). The company sang something from all the operas but Thespis (understandably) and Trial by Jury, did scenes from Patience, Mikado, and Yeomen, and Geoffrey Shovelton told a number of funny stories about the Original D'Oyly Carte company.

The funny stories are my favorite part of the show, and as I recall, this is how they went. Geoffrey Shovelton tells them much better than I do, but they're too good to keep quiet. In any event, he told the audience about the time in Iolanthe when the peers were all kneeling to Phyllis in a line across the stage, and the one on the end fell over on the one next to him. They went down like dominoes until they reached the peer on the other end (who, as it turns out, was the smallest in the bunch). He managed to catch himself falling, and ended up holding up the whole line of peers. Another story accompanied the scene from Yeomen. As we know, at one point an arquebus is shot off. In order to get the right kind of sound, the Original D'Oyly Carte would hang a bombtub in the flys of the theater where they performed. At the right time, the explosive would go off in the tub and make the sound of a shot. In one theater, the stage hands would play cards above the stage during the performances. You can guess what happened: when the explosion went off at that theater, somebody above the stage let out a yell, and cards rained down upon the actors. It's a little hard to ad lib around an occurrence like that, especially in Yeomen.

The scenes the company did were very funny (when they were supposed to be). Donkin and Sandford put on silly wigs and gave the "battle of the poets" exchange preceding "When I Go Out of Door", from Patience, and the ladies of the group gave the Patience/Lady Angela discussion of Patience's love life. Now, until this evening, I had never heard of Penelope Cope, but at this point she did something that has rarely been heard among soprano leads in the Midwest. She is the first one I have heard in some time who didn't seem to think a soprano lead's speaking voice should sound like a mouse being stepped on! It was so refreshing to hear a Patience who talked like a human being! I hope she gets an opportunity to

spread this innovation throughout the U.S.: the Midwest sure need the exposure! The group also gave the part in Yeomen where Fairfax, Phoebe, and Elsie teach Jack Point how to woo ("A Man who would Woo"/"When a Wooer goes A-Wooing"). When they finished, the auditorium was dead-silent until the music ended. Now that's what I call a great performance of Yeomen!

They did a fine job, and as I always say, if The Best of G&S gets to your neighborhood, you ought to go see them because they are worth the seeing. By the way, the very enjoyable recording the company made (that we talked about last year) was available at the theater, and as far as we know is still available for \$10.00 from Byers, Schwalbe and Associates, One Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003 ([212] 260-3320).

There was one other funny thing that happened that is too good to leave alone. One of the reasons the Best of G&S can do such a good show is because, when appropriate, they encourage audience participation. One of the ways they do it is by getting the audience to sing the chorus part of "I am the very model of a modern major-general". Geoffrey Shovelton tells the audience how annoyed Alistair Donkin gets if they don't sing, so to sing good and loud or Mr. Donkin will chew him out. Well, that night, there was some lady in the balcony with a distinctive laugh (it sounds like Hopalong Cassidy's, and if you don't know how he laughed, it's a little like hearing a car going over rumble strips) who found that business terribly funny. Needless to say, the audience did not sing the chorus part loudly enough, Donkin called Shovelton out, pointed at the balcony, and exclaimed, "That young lady made more noise laughing than the whole audience did singing!" Then everyone was laughing. Now, ordinarily, repeating such story might be a great embarrassment to somebody, but it turned out that laughing lady was none other than our own Secretary/Archivist Sarah Cole, who thought the remark was pretty funny. "Anything within reason to help out G&S performers," as she says. We'll all look forward to helping out The Best of G&S again!

## Let the Welkin Ring with the News

The Savoy Theater in London suffered a fire, according to an Associated Press report in the Chicago Tribune ("Fire hits London's Savoy Theater", February 13, 1989, Sect. 1, p. 6). The report tells how guests at the Savoy Hotel were evacuated to the Strand Palace Hotel across the street as flames shot through the roof of the theater. No one was injured, and the Savoy Hotel suffered minor damage. The fire curtain was down, so the stage area seems to be all right. According to a letter from member Anne Stanyon, the management will have to restore the auditorium since it was a Schedule 1 Listed Building, but it will be restored to the Basil Ionides Art Deco design rather than the 1880's style. The fire may have been a blessing in disguise, since the auditorium was apparently in serious need of restoration anyway. The fire gutted the auditorium. Reports from Terence Rees, which appeared in the March/April 1990 GASBAG [21 (173): 10] indicate the fire probably started about 1:00 am on February 12, possibly due to an electrical fault. He concludes, though, that plans are already afoot for the theater's reconstruction. We'll look forward to continued reports on the progress.

This news is coming a little late, but here it is anyway. The MGS recently donated recordings of H.M.S. Pinafore and Ruddigore to WFMT (98.7 FM in Chicago), and the two programs were broadcast in their entirety at 9:00 pm: Pinafore on May 9th, and Ruddigore on May 23d. Member Jane Stedman has fond recollections of the time when the station would occasionally broadcast complete G&S recordings on Sunday afternoons. Now that the station has some more appropriate material, perhaps those days can come again.

The Friends' Bulletin, from the Friends of the D'Oyly Carte (Africa House, 64-68 Kingsway, London WC2B 6BD, England) mentioned that the company should be making recordings of The Pirates of Penzance and Mikado in January and February 1990 for or with That's Entertainment Records. Recordings should be available in all formats, by early summer. Iolanthe and Yeomen may be recorded later in the year.

That same newsletter went on to mention that

Elsie Griffin, principal soprano with the Original D'OC from 1919 to 1927, died in December 1989 [December 21, 1989] at the age of 94. According to the article, her HMV recording of "Poor Wand'ring One" was voted the best British gramophone solo of 1929. After leaving the D'OC, she sang leading roles with the Carl Rosa Opera Co. between 1934-37. Speaking of obituaries, the April 1990 issue of To-ron-to-ra To-ron-to-ra (official newsletter of the Toronto Gilbert and Sullivan Society) mentions that Mavis Bennett, who appeared as "Casilda" in the 1927 recording of Gondoliers, died January 28, 1990, at the age of 89. She made many recordings, but a throat operation in 1940 ended her singing career, though she did teach.

## The Sixth Annual MGS Big Quiz

It seems hard to believe, but the MGS has been having these things for Six years now! How time flies when one is thoroughly enjoying oneself! We are once again indebted to member Arthur Robinson for the compiling of these G&S trivia questions, and he can sure come up with tough questions! In any event, most of the members know the rules, but for the new members, the rules are very simple. The member who answers the most questions correctly wins a prize. You can refer to any reference sources you like, but all responses must be received by the Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society by **July 31, 1990**. The answers will be checked and winners will be notified. In case of a tie, the response received first will take precedence, and decisions of the quiz correctors are final. This year's big prize is an illustrated copy of W.S. Gilbert's The "Bab" Ballads; Much sound and little sense (2d ed. Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, circa 1873).

Now, if you feel intimidated, you need not. The Society's founding fathers, in their wisdom, knew that many members would be novices in matters G&S-ical, so they saw to it that the member who makes an honest effort to answer the questions correctly and answers the fewest correctly will also win a nice prize. Last year's big winners, David Stone and Lorrill Buyens, are disqualified from winning a big prize this year, but all are welcome to participate. We'll look forward to hearing from you

(before July 31, don't forget). Any Questions? Then let the revels commence!

1. Who introduced Gilbert and Sullivan to each other?
2. In which Gilbert and Sullivan opera are there three references to Christmas?
3. What is the only G&S opera to contain no spoken dialogue?
4. What is Lady Sangazure's given name?
5. Who once "practised baby-farming"?
6. Who is able to write a washing bill in Babylonian cuneiform [in the G&S operas, that is]?
7. What is Patience's profession?
8. What, according to Lord Mountararat, did the House of Peers do during the war between Napoleon and Wellington?
9. How old is Prince Hilarion?
10. Who was born sneering?
11. What do the following names have in common: Rupert, Jasper, Lionel, Conrad, Desmond, Gilbert, and Mervyn?
12. What is the name of Elsie Maynard's mother (other than "Mrs. Maynard")?
13. What refreshment is the Grand Inquisitor offered after his voyage?
14. What does Tarara keep on his dressing-table?
15. What G&S opera is set in Germany?
16. In what two G&S operas are there references to guinea pigs?
17. In what two G&S operas is Aristophanes mentioned?
18. In what two G&S operas is Madame Tussaud mentioned?
19. What two G&S characters describe themselves as philanthropists?
20. What two G&S characters are both described as "the greatest villain unhung"?
21. In what three G&S operas are characters blindfolded onstage?
22. What did Teasing Tom put in his father's boots?
23. Which G&S opera was banned in England in 1907?
24. In which operas do a brother and sister appear on stage together?
25. In which two G&S is there a character named Kate?
26. Who wrote the libretto for Sullivan's The Rose

of Persia?

27. With which one of the following did Sullivan NOT collaborate: Rudyard Kipling, Lewis Carroll, Alfred Tennyson, or Arthur Pinero?
28. Sullivan's "sacred musical drama," The Martyr of Antioch (1880), was adapted from a poem by H.H. Milman. Who adapted Milman's words for Sullivan's setting?
29. What Offenbach operetta did Gilbert translate into English?
30. What was the title of Gilbert's blank verse version of the Faust legend?
31. Who replaced George Grossmith as Robin Oakapple after Grossmith was taken ill during the original run of Ruddigore (1887)?
32. The Hungarian soprano Mme. Ilka von Palmy, who originated the role of "Julia" in The Grand Duke, had previously appeared in a production of a G&S opera in Germany. What role did she play there?
33. Who played the parts of Governor Griffenfeld, the Prince Regent, and Nanna in Gilbert's His Excellency (1894)?
34. Who played the three little maids from school in the 1967 film version of The Mikado?
35. Gilbert rarely attended first nights, allegedly preferring to roam through the streets of London, but he was in the theater for the American D'Oyly Carte premiere of H.M.S. Pinafore. What was particularly unusual about his presence in the theater on this occasion?
36. On what day of the week does the second act of Patience take place?
37. How much time elapses between the first and second acts of Ruddigore?
38. Whom does King Paramount (in Utopia Limited) claim to have consulted regarding a suitable punishment for the man who had written libellous attacks on his moral character?
39. In which opera is the composer Richard Wagner mentioned by name?
40. Sir Ruthven's line in Ruddigore, "Alas, poor ghost!" is a quotation from what author?
41. What musical instrument do both Strephon and Dr. Daly play on stage?
42. What G&S song is performed in the movie Chariots of Fire?
43. Who preached in Lunatic Asylums (and was received with enthusiasm)?

44. What two G&S characters are boatswain's mates?

45. Which two G&S heroines (soprano leads) are Wards in Chancery?

46. How do the Grand Duke Rudolph and his fiancée, the Baroness, plan to keep themselves warm during "the long, cold, dark December evenings"?

47. In which G&S opera is there a reference to a telephone?

48. What, according to Peep-Bo, is the "drawback" to Yum-Yum's wedding?

49. Who is the Archbishop of Titipu?

50. Who resides (or at least works) at Number 70, St. Mary Axe?

**BONUS QUESTION:** Can you name the tunes from the Gilbert and Sullivan operas Sir Charles Mackerras used in his ballet suite Pineapple Poll, in the order of their appearance?

\*\* BEST WISHES FOR YOUR SUCCESS! \*\*

### Where Can it Be?

The May 1990 issue of the Palace Peeper says that Mike LeBell's Video [75 Fremont Place; Los Angeles, CA 90005 / (213) 938-3333 (between 10:00 am and 6:00 pm Pacific Daylight time) and Mr. LeBell is very friendly on the phone] has excellent quality video copies of the films The Mikado (-1939, with Kenny Baker and Martyn Green) and The Girl Said No (a 1930's black and white classic, frequently alluded to, in which a G&S performing company is set up as part of a scam, the Peeker says). Both titles are \$24.95, plus \$2.05 postage and handling. That sounds like quite a bargain!

Fredric Woodbridge Wilson's book An Introduction to the Gilbert and Sullivan Operas (ISBN 0-486-26386-X) is now available for \$10.95 plus postage through Dover Publications! Or from your local bookstore, for that matter. The book contains biographies, plot synopses, 30 color plates, 59 duotones, and a survey of the Pierpont Morgan Library's G&S collection, and is certainly worth the price. Dover Publications can be reached at 31 E.

Second St., Mineola, NY 11501. **OR, IF YOU ARE THE FRUGAL TYPE, THE MGS MANAGED TO GET 10 COPIES AT A DISCOUNT, AND HAS THEM FOR \$10.00, POSTAGE INCLUDED.** Just drop S/A Cole a note (and a check for \$10.00 would be nice, too), and she'll put a copy in the mail for you post haste. (Incidentally, Dover also has available The Authentic Gilbert and Sullivan Songbook, consisting of reprints of the piano scores of 92 of the songs from the G&S operas, for \$14.95. The ISBN is 0-486-23482-7, so you can also order it from your local bookstore.)

The University of Michigan G&S Society has filmed many of its productions, and they are expecting to make them available for purchase. Video tapes exist for Grand Duke (December '85), Pirates (April '86), Trial by Jury/Cox and Box (Summer '86), Yeomen (December '86), Ruddigore (April '87), Here's a Howdy Do (Summer '87), Patience (December '87), Gondoliers (April '88), Sentimental Passion (Summer '88), Utopia (December '88), Mikado (April '89) and presumably Sorcerer (December '89) and Iolanthe (April '90). According to the January/February GASBAG [21 : 3], the marathon taping session will take place after the Iolanthe production. David Goldberg says, in the "Notes" section that future UMGASS productions may be recorded by a professional recording company, so orders for future tapes will probably be of better quality and delivered more quickly since requesters will be able to deal directly with a recording company. No doubt details about future recording arrangements for UMGASS productions will appear in GASBAG, and we'll pass on what we hear.

The Response to the Question:  
"Should the MGS Try and Affiliate with The London Gilbert and Sullivan Society?"

Eighteen voting MGS members responded to this question: Four members were in favor of it, and fourteen were against it. Since 66% of the voting membership must vote for a measure in order for it to pass, The MGS will not try and affiliate with the London Gilbert and Sullivan Society (at least not at this time). The reasons most frequently given for the responses were that the MGS membership is too far-flung for holding ten

meetings a year, and that they didn't have time to help with the MGS reorganization that affiliation would require. Everyone, even those members who were in favor of uniting, are pretty happy with the Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society as it is, which does make the leadership feel good. Since there are MGS members who are interested in affiliating (at least at some point or another), the issue is not dead. We may vote on it again some other time.

But in the meantime, the winners of the copy of Harry Benford's The Gilbert and Sullivan Lexicon were Jeordano Martínez and Bridget MacDonough. The reason for two winners is an error made in the initial selection of responses. This time, S/A Cole asked an innocent bystander (in this case, her father) for a number between 1 and 18, got the number "7" and counted down that many responses. The problem was she counted wrong the first time. So that's why there were two winners. We hope they will put their prizes to good use!

### **The G&S Version of Star Wars**

Without doubt, W.S. Gilbert was a writer before his time: he was writing stories about extraterrestrials (The Wicked World), alterations in the space/time continuum (Foggerty's Fairy), cyborgs (The Mountebanks), mind-transfer (The Man in Black), and men trying to play gods (Thespis) long before it became fashionable for science fiction writers to do it. Since there is such a strong vein of what has become regarded as the domain of SF in Gilbert's writing, and (more likely) since Pinafore and The Pirates of Penzance lend themselves so well to being parodied, it was only a matter of time before somebody came up with the following.

One of Sarah Cole's friends, a longtime fan of the film Star Wars, sent her what she thought was a parody of a G&S song from one of the science fiction film fanzines she had run across. It turned out that one song was part of a much longer G&S parody based on tunes from Pirates and Pinafore: H.M.S. DeathStar, by Bev Grant, which appeared in Syndizine #3, in about 1983. After a year, we still have no more information about this magazine than its title and the year of publication (if anyone knows anything more about it, please let us know). In any event, Sarah Cole, who still enjoys Star Wars

herself, thought the parody was a riot, and thought the rest of the MGS membership would enjoy highlights from this work (As a matter of fact, she enjoyed it so much, she was sorry the author limited herself to only two of the G&S operas: there are so many other songs in the G&S operas that would have lent themselves to Star Wars-ization. But be that as it may).

Judging from the photocopy in hand, the author got the idea from the recording of Joseph Papp's production of Pirates. The work was set up like a libretto that would accompany a record album, and includes illustrations; a few of which appear here to set the mood. So, courtesy of Margaret McNickle and the publishers of Syndizine, and in honor of the thirteenth anniversary of the film's release (on May 25), the MGS presents:

#### Syndi-Papp Presents

H.M.S. DEATH STAR: THE SOUNDTRACK  
Music pirated from A. Sullivan  
Lyrics adapted from the original librettos of H.M.S. Pinafore and Pirates of Penzance

Dedication: to Anna Russell, who once proposed (see Anna Russell Sings! Again?, Columbia Masterworks) a formula for writing your own Gilbert and Sullivan operetta.  
. .  
. as well as a description of the sort of person who could be expected to try. It's not my fault!  
*{The Cast, for the uninitiated:*

#### *Good Guys:*

*Princess Leia: Representative to the Imperial Senate from the planet Alderaan.*

*Luke Skywalker: A farmboy from the planet Tatooine who has greatness thrust upon him.*

*Han Solo: A handsome young smuggler.*

*Chewbacca: Han's wookie sidekick (he's big and shaggy and speaks gutteral).*

*Ben (Obi-Wan) Kenobi: An old Jedi master.*

*R2-D2 and C-3PO: The cutest pair of robots (droids) you ever saw.*

#### *Bad Guys:*

*Darth Vader: An evil Jedi.*

*Governor Tarkin: Commander of the Death Star.*

*Stormtrooper Chorus: Soldiers of Empire.*

*Jawas: Little desert scavengers. Ed.}*

#### **When I was a Lad**

(Originally "When I Was a Lad" / Pinafore, Act 1, Part II)

*Darth Vader:* When I was a lad, I went to school  
To a Jedi Master who I thought was cool.  
His name was Kenobi, and they called him Ben;  
And although you won't believe it, I knew even then

*Stormtrooper Chorus:* And although you won't believe it, he knew even then

*Vader:* That when Obi-Wan Kenobi finished teaching me,

I'd be the finest Jedi in the galaxy!

*Chorus:* That when Obi-Wan Kenobi finished teaching he,

He'd be the finest Jedi in the galaxy!

*Vader:* I studied very hard and developed skill  
At levitating boulders and at saber drill.

I got so good I could balance, chum,

Upside down on the tip of my right or left thumb.

*Chorus:* Upside down on the tip of his right or left thumb.

*Vader:* Pretty soon it became quite clear to me  
That I was the finest Jedi in the galaxy!

*Chorus:* Pretty soon it became quite clear to he  
That he was the finest Jedi in the galaxy!

*Vader:* I went to the Master, said "Obi-wan,  
The days when you could teach me things have come and gone;

I'm the finest Jedi alive, you see."

And would you believe it, Ben just laughed at me!

*Chorus:* And would you believe it, Ben just laughed at he!

*Vader:* Now I've killed all the others, none can disagree

Than I am the finest Jedi in the galaxy!

*Chorus:* Now he's killed all the others, none can disagree

Than he is the finest Jedi in the galaxy!

*Vader:* The end of the Jedi brought to me

A once in a lifetime opportunity,

For the Emperor had seen my work

And knew that I would not be one to shirk.

*Chorus:* And knew that he would not be one to shirk. *Vader:* My duty, be it e'er so mean

To advance the position of Lord Palpatine\*.

*Chorus:* His duty, be it e'er so mean,

To advance the position of Lord Palpatine.

*Vader:* And from that day, though you may curse,

My power has been feared throughout the universe.

I'm second to one man alone;

The one who sits upon the Empire's throne!

*Chorus:* The one who sits upon the Empire's throne!    *Vader:* Soon the Emperor will fall to me,

And then I'll be the ruler of the galaxy!

*Chorus:* Soon the Emperor will fall to he,

And then he'll be the ruler of the galaxy!

*Vader:* If you yearn to become as great as me,

Then you daren't be fettered by loyalty;

You must study very hard and go to school,

All the while being guided by this golden rule:

*Chorus:* All the while being guided by this golden rule:

*Vader:* There is nothing like a spot of treachery--

To advance, don't miss a single opportunity!

*Chorus:* There is nothing like a spot of treachery--

To advance, don't miss a single opportunity!

{\*For those who, like S/A Cole, are familiar with *Star Wars* but have never heard of Lord Palpatine, the introduction to the novel says he was a senator who got himself elected Emperor of the Galaxy, then let the galaxy go to the dogs. I had to go look it up, too. Ed.}

### Keep Close to Me

("His Nose Should Pant and His Lip Should Curl"/Pinafore)

*Jawa Leader:* Keep close to me and don't make a sound;

Don't let it know anyone's around.

Just wait--yes wait--'til you see it fall,

And then we will descend upon it, one and all.

### It Is an R-2 Droid

("He Is an Englishman"/Pinafore)

*Jawa Leader:* It is an R-2 droid,

A valuable possession,

And we've made it our profession

To resell used R-2 droids.

*Jawa Chorus:* To resell used R-2 droids.

*Jawa Leader:* And though it be in fine fettle

Or a useless piece of metal

With a warranty long void

*Jawa Chorus:* With a warranty long void

*Jawa Leader:* Still we'll sell it at a profit,

And we'll live quite comfy off it,

For it is an R-2 droid.

*Jawa Chorus:* Still we'll sell it. . .(etc.)

### My Friends Call me Skywalker

("I'm Called Little Buttercup/Pinafore)

*Luke:* My friends call me Skywalker, wormie\*

Luke Skywalker

Though I could never see why.

They tell me I'm green, even for Tatooine--

Just a dreamer with stars in my eye.

With Biggs, boon companion, I've flown Beggar's Canyon

And bullseyed a womp rat or two.

Now Biggs says, "Get out of here!" Uncle says, Wait a     year!"

What's a poor farmboy to do?

If you seek to enter into some bright center

Of space, Tatooine isn't it.

Come Jawa, come Raider, I'm hopping a freighter; When this harvest is over, I'll split!

The Academy calls, and adventure entralls--

I may rescue some maid in distress!

With a ship of my own, I'll fight Emperor or clone.

The heroic Luke Skywalker? Yes!

{\*While it doesn't come out in the film, in the novel *Star Wars*, Luke's nickname is "Wormie". Ed.}

[*"Pretty Traitor You Are"* (*"Pretty Daughter of Mine"*)/Pinafore), about Vader's interrogation of Princess Leia, has been cut. Ed.]

### When Darth Vader is Engaged

("When a Felon's Not Engaged"/Pirates)

*Princess Leia:* When Darth Vader is engaged in fiendish torture--

*Vader:* Fiendish torture

*Leia:* Or maturing his demented Sithish plans--

*Vader:* Sithish plans

*Leia:* There is one thing of which no one could be more sure--

*Vader:* Could be more sure

*Leia:* He is not a friend of Wookies' or of man's--

*Vader:* Or of man's

*Leia:* My worries I with difficulty smother--

*Vader:* 'Culty smother

*Leia:* As I wait for him to have his Sithish fun--  
*Vader:* Sithish fun  
*Leia:* Ah, take one consideration with another--  
*Vader:* With another  
*Leia:* A princess' lot is not a happy one.  
*Vader:* As she waits for me to have my Sithish fun--  
    Sithish fun  
    A princess' lot is not a happy one.

*Leia:* As I sit imprisoned here aboard the Death Star--  
*Vader:* 'Board the Death Star  
*Leia:* With the Dark Lord Vader standing in my cell--  
*Vader:* In her cell  
*Leia:* And his torture robot hovering not too far--  
*Vader:* 'Vring not too far  
*Leia:* From where I wait its special brand of hell--  
*Vader:* Brand of hell  
*Leia:* My fears close 'round me 'till I almost smother--  
*Vader:* Almost smother  
*Leia:* Can my secrets still be secret when he's done--  
*Vader:* When I'm done?  
*Leia:* Ah, take one consideration with another--  
*Vader:* With another  
*Leia:* A princess' lot is not a happy one.  
*Vader:* Can her secrets still be secret when I'm done--  
    A princess' lot is not a happy one.

{\*Darth Vader is referred to as a Sith Lord. I don't remember it being mentioned in the film, but nevertheless, that's the reason for the reference here.  
Ed.}

### You Don't Need to See His I.D.

("Never Mind the Why and Wherefore"/Pinafore)  
*Ben:* You don't need to see his I.D.,  
Though his speeder's most untidy,  
    And the droids you're searching for appear right underneath your eyes.  
    You are going to let us go much to your underlings' surprise.  
        No stormtrooper with his blaster  
            In the entire galaxy  
                Can detain a Jedi Master

If he doesn't want to be!  
These are not the droids you're after.

*Stormtrooper:* These are not the droids we're after.  
*Ben:* Move along a little faster!  
*Stormtrooper:* Move along a little faster!

*Ben:* You will count it a disaster  
    When it comes time to report  
    That you met a Jedi Master  
    Here in Mos Eisley space port!

For the Force now has you blinded;  
That's because you are weak-minded,  
    Just the sort of a chap who volunteers to serve the Emperor.

You will let us pass right by you and our safety thus ensure.  
(Repeat from "No stormtrooper with his blaster" through "Here in Mos Eisley space port!")

### We Have Flown the Kessel Run

("We Sail the Ocean Blue"/Pinafore)

*Han:* We have flown the Kessel run,  
Though my pirate ship's no beauty;  
Still we have a lot of fun,  
and we never pay our duty!  
All the Empire's decrees  
We evade with ease,  
Be our cargo gems or spice.  
My Millennium ship  
Can handle the trip  
If you think you can meet our price.  
In cash! In cash!

[("What Joy, What Profit I've Attained" ("Oh Joy, O Rapture Unforseen"/Pinafore), about Han Solo's nearly getting shot by Greedo the Hit-Being; and "Though She May Not Look Like Much" ("Sir Joseph's Barge is Seen [the Sailors' portion]"/Pinafore), have been cut. Ed.]

### SIDE TWO

#### I Am Commander of the Death Star

("I Am the Captain of the Pinafore"/Pinafore)

*Tarkin:* I am commander of the Death Star!  
*Stormtrooper Chorus:* And a mighty fine commander, too!  
*Tarkin:* You're very, very good,  
    And be it understood,

I command a right good crew.

*Chorus:* We're very, very good,  
And be it understood,  
He commands a right good crew.

*Tarkin:* Though I really do abhor

Her cause, the Senator  
Will I treat most gallantly;  
I have never used a whip  
Or torture on this trip  
And would never treat her cruelly!

*Chorus:* What, never?

*Tarkin:* No, never!

*Chorus:* What, never?

*Tarkin:* Hardly ever!

*Chorus:* Hardly ever treat her cruelly!

Then give three cheers, and one cheer more,  
For the kind commander of the great Death Star!  
Then give three cheers, and one cheer more,  
For commander of the great Death Star!

*Tarkin:* I do my best to serve the Empire--

*Chorus:* As a dedicated governor.

*Tarkin:* I'll destroy the rebel base;

Its location I will trace  
With the aid of our prisoner.

*Chorus:* He'll destroy the rebel base;

Its location he will trace  
With the aid of our prisoner.

*Tarkin:* Let the folk of Alderaan

Aid the rebels all they can  
And call Palpatine corrupt;  
Though the power I control  
Could destroy their planet whole,  
I would never, never blow it up!

*Chorus:* What, never?

*Tarkin:* No, never!

*Chorus:* What, never?

*Tarkin:* Hardly ever!

*Chorus:* He would hardly ever blow it up!

Then give three cheers, and one cheer more,  
For the merciful ruler of the great Death Star!  
Then give three cheers, and one cheer more,  
For the ruler of the great Death Star!

[*"Although Your Chess Opponent There"* ("I Am the Monarch of the Sea"/Pinafore), about Chewbacca's being a bad loser, is cut. Ed.]

*Ben:* Things are seldom what they seem,

Little moons with silver gleam  
May prove out on close inspection  
A much deadlier confection.

*Luke:* Get away While we may!

*Han:* This is like an evil dream--  
We're caught in a tractor beam!

*Luke:* We are headed for a disaster,  
Moving towards it ever faster!

*Han, Luke, & Ben:* Woe have we! Can't break free!

[The reprise of "They Call me Luke Skywalker", in which Han talks about rescuing the Princess; and "You've Discovered an Aroma" ("Carefully on Tiptoe Stealing"/Pinafore), about our heroes escapades in a Death Star garbage pit, have been cut. Ed.]

### I Am the Very Model of a Modern Diplomatic Droid

(What else?/Pirates {I like this one best, if for no other reason than C-3PO is the only character who sounded like he ought to be in a G&S opera to begin with (the actor who created the character sounds rather like Thomas Round). Ed.})

*C-3PO:* I am the very model of a modern diplomatic droid

I'm fluent in the languages of robot, Wookie,  
humanoid;  
A binary loadlifter does not pose the slight t e s t mystery,  
I know the rules of protocol and also human history;  
I'm very well acquainted too with matters mathematical  
I understand equations, both the simple and quadratical,  
About binomial theorem, I'm teeming with a lot o' news--

With many cheerful facts about the square of the hypotenuse.

*Chorus:* With many cheerful facts about the square of the hypotenuse (etc.)

*C-3PO:* I'm very good at integral and differential calculus,

I know the scientific names of beings animalculous;

In short, my masters find in me a reason to be overjoyed;

### Things Are Seldom what They Seem

(Tune of the same title/Pinafore)

*I am the very model of a modern diplomatic droid.*  
*Chorus: In short, his masters find in him a reason to be overjoyed;*  
*He is the very model of a modern diplomatic droid.*  
*C-3PO: I am the very model of a modern diplomatic droid;*  
*Adventure is the sort of thing I'd hoped that I could quite avoid,*  
*For droids who find adventure often find that they get melted down,*  
*Or shipped out to the Kessel mines and tiresome labor underground.*  
*My counterpart excels at making trouble for the rest of us,*  
*He lured me to the desert where the Jawas soon molested us;*  
*They sold us to some farmers, and before the passing of a day,*  
*I had to tell our master that the little twerp had run away.*  
*Chorus: He had to tell their master that the little twerp had run away (etc.).*  
*C-3PO: Now that we're on the Death Star, and stormtroopers swarm the premises,*  
*I'm hiding in a closet with that little R-2 nemesis;*  
*And so I want to make it clear ere R-2 gets us both destroyed,*  
*I was the very model of a modern diplomatic droid!*  
*Chorus: And so he wants to make it clear ere R-2 gets them both destroyed,*  
*He was the very model of a modern diplomatic droid!*

### I Am Commander of the Death Star (Reprise)

*Tarkin: I am commander of the Death Star,*  
*Stormtrooper Chorus: And we're now in sight of Yavin's moon!*  
*Tarkin: The famous rebel base Will be gone without a trace Ere the end of this afternoon.*  
*Chorus: The famous rebel base Will be gone without a trace Ere the end of this afternoon.*  
*Tarkin: Any dangers you perceive From attacks we here receive, Do not overestimate. With our triumph now so near, This is not the time for fear, And I never will evacuate.*  
*Chorus: What, never?*

*Tarkin: No, never!*

*Chorus: What, never?*

*Tarkin: No, never!*

*Chorus: No, he never will evacuate.*

Then give three cheers, and one cheer more,  
for the late commander of the doomed Death Star.  
Then give three cheers, and one cheer more,  
For . . .

(Note from the record jacket: We regret that technical difficulties beyond our control made it impossible to record the end of this aria *{sic! Ed.}*)

### The Grand Finale

("Come, Friends, Who Plow the Sea"/Pirates)

*All the Good Guys: Hail, hail, the gang's all here:  
Leia and the Wookie,  
Solo and the rookie.  
Hail, Hail, the gang's all here:  
Get in line for Death Star II!*

Hail, hail, the gang's all here.

Ain't the show been thrillin'?  
Bet we make a million!  
Hail, Hail, the gang's all here:  
Get in line for Death Star . . .

(Spoken:) Two, four, six, eight,  
Who do we appreciate?

(Note from the record jacket: The following music accompanies fifteen minutes of credits.)

### The Truth is Found/ A Nice Dilemma We Have Here

There's still no word on Tetrie's "Lost Amen", that was being sought in the last issue of the Nonsense, but member Arthur Robinson does have a clue about possible words to Latitia's wordless solo in The Zoo. In a copy of the vocal score he purchased recently, he found some lyrics, dated between July 4 and August 23, 1975, stuck in the book. Those lyrics are:

*Alone and broken-hearted I go my way.*

*The cries of these wild beasts my weary soul affright not.*

*By my darling?*

*Who knows?*

*He believes me dead, or worse -he-*

*Thinks I drank that potion.*

*Fates, oh tell me is my lover lost? Oh, say.*

*Could he have wandered to this place, this place of dread?*

*Its terrors I have braved all with the hope that I might find him.*

*If I do not?*

*What then?*

*Then my hope of love is fled -all-  
Joy in life has vanished.*

*Fates, oh tell me is my lover lost? oh, say.*

*Oh heartless Fates, Ah Oh, say.*

It would be interesting to see how these lyrics compare with those The Chicago G&S Society and The Ardensingers used in their productions of The Zoo.

This puzzler should prove no problem to the many videophiles in our midst. In the 1970's, member Rachel Henry saw on PBS what appeared to be D'Oyly Carte versions of Gondoliers and Yeomen. They were probably filmed in the 60's, and the Yeomen production featured Valerie Masterson and David Hilliard. Does anyone know anything about these productions, and if they are available on video? The only Yeomen video we know of here featuring Valerie Masterson is a 1978 filming with Derek Hammond-Stroud, and was (according to the November 1988 Precious Nonsense) available for \$49.95, plus \$3.50 p&h, from Lyric Distribution (P.O. Box 235, Roslyn Heights, NY 11577 / [516] 625-0588 & -0589 / [1-800] 777-5444). That might be the one in question, but that still leaves the Gondoliers production a mystery. If anyone has any information, please let us know.

## Welcome New Members

*Quentin Riggs* (Huntington Beach, CA): who is doing research on John Barklay, and George H. and Maybelle Broderick, who appeared in several of the original G&S productions (they were the first U.S. Pooh-Bah and Katisha, it appears. We'll be looking forward to more information on them!)

*William J. Hinshaw* (Saline, MI): who describes himself as just a "groupie."

*Hugh and Eleanor Locker* (McHenry, IL): Among other things, Mr. Locker is an active member of the Chicago Stereo Camera Club. *and Herbert S. and Chalice Ann Taylor* (Columbus, OH), *Norman Kopp and Sandra Wittman* (Des Plaines, IL): who we're very glad to have.

Well, that's about it for May. There will probably be a summer issue, so if you have any urgent G&S news (or even regular news, for that matter), do let S/A Cole know by the end of June. Oh, and don't forget to get your quiz answers back to her by **July 31, 1990!** She'll be looking forward to hearing from you either way, and I'm sure we'll all be looking forward to seeing each other at the August 26, 1990, Annual Outing at Light Opera Works' Princess Ida. By the way, a lot of times MGS members want to bring non-member friends or relatives, and that's all right (the more the merrier). A pretty fair number of people have joined because of the annual outings. This year, though, we have a special incentive for non-member outing attendees to join the MGS: anyone who is not already an MGS member who attends the Annual Outing can join the Society at last year's fee (\$5.00/individuals, \$6.00/couples, and \$8.00/families). Just send in touch with S/A Cole about your prospective members, and she'll get them all registered. In the meantime, have a lovely summer and do keep in touch!

The Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society

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