

Precious Nonsense

NEWSLETTER OF THE MIDWESTERN GILBERT AND SULLIVAN SOCIETY

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YOU CAN'T GET HIGH AESTHETIC TASTES, LIKE TROUSERS, READY-MADE.

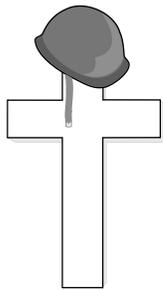
As is invariably the case, it's been one thing after another lately. Thanks to Michael Miano and Carol Lee Cole, we have something ready-made to put in the *Nonsense*. Once things cool slow down at work, S/A Cole will have time to go through the piles of material, and put out a full-blown issue.

Michael Miano and Carol Lee Cole both submitted their pieces in computer-readable form, and they appear here as they were submitted (I may spell-check them, but that'll be about it). While the *Nonsense* doesn't necessarily stand for an unrestricted press, its editorial staff certainly believes in letting people express their opinions. And if readers want to debate points, that's great. S/A Cole will be happy to forward messages.

Anyway, it ought to make for interesting reading. Sarah Cole thanks all the membership of the Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society for their patience over the last two years; and especially thanks the other G&S societies, who have been tremendously indulgent with the MGS's difficulties. We hope to return the kindness some day. In the meantime, here's what we've got.



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



Earlier this year, in which the Fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II was commemorated, we expressed our appreciation to the members of the Armed Forces, particularly those in Europe. We don't want to forget those who served in the Asian Theater, like member *Hugh Locker*, who was one of the radio operators for the Battle of Okinawa. His time in the East was especially important at the Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society: it

was during this time that he got a copy of the G&S libretti in Honolulu, and was hooked. Again (and still, we say Thank You for your work!



What Cheer! What Cheer! {Midwestern}

S/A Cole hasn't had a chance to sort through the materials that have been coming in, but one thing we can say is that the *Savoy-Aires* are planning to stage *Iolanthe* during 1996. When we find out more, we'll let you know, but in the meantime, for more information, contact the company at P.O. Box 126, Evanston, IL 60204, or call David Craven at (312) 862-7781.



The 1995 MGS Big Quiz Answers

At first, these weren't going to be included. As you may recall, the quiz came from the book *Guess Again* (James Monahan and Tom Davin. New York: Duffield and Company, 1927), and while the answers given for some of the questions may not be strictly wrong, some of them are debatable. We'll save the debates for next time, once I've had a chance to go through the quiz responses, but in the meantime, here are the answers the book gives to the questions:

1. What famous marching song of the Salvation Army was composed by Sir Arthur Sullivan? **Onward Christian Soldiers.**
2. What was the first collaborative work of Gilbert and Sullivan? **Thespis.**
3. A burlesque of what play by Shakespeare was written by W.S. Gilbert? **Rosencrantz and Gildenstern, a burlesque of Hamlet.**
4. Why were they called Savoy Operas? **Because most of them were first produced at the Savoy Theatre, London.** (ARGUABLY, THEY WERE ALL PRODUCED AT THE SAVOY THEATER, AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, AND THAT'S WHY THEY'RE SAVOY OPERAS, BUT I PROMISED NO ARGUMENTS AT THIS TIME.)
5. Of whom was the character Bunthorne a caricature? **Oscar Wilde** (ANOTHER DEBATABLE POINT: BUNTHORNE IS REGARDED AS A CARICATURE OF A TREND, NOT A PERSON, BUT BE THAT AS IT MAY.)
6. At what age was Princess Ida betrothed to Prince Hilarion? **One year old.**
7. Of what opera is *Castle Adamant* the subtitle? **Princess Ida.**
8. What was the business of John Wellington Wells? **Necromancer to the Trade.** (THAT'S WHAT *GUESS AGAIN* SAYS, NOT THE LIBRETTO)

9. What degree has Joseph Porter in *Pinafore*? **K.C.B.** (KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE BATH--SAY! IF YOU'VE SEEN THE ANIMATED FILM *DICK DEADEYE*, THAT MAY ACCOUNT FOR THE SEGMENT FEATURING SIR JOSEPH PORTER TAKING PLACE, MAINLY, IN HIS BATHTUB. AS USUAL, S/A COLE IS SLOW TO PICK UP ON THE JOKE.)
 10. Give the subtitle of the opera *Ruddigore*. **The Witch's Curse**
 11. What was the former occupation of Ruth, the piratical maid-of-all-work? **Nursery-maid to Frederic.**
 12. In what opera does the town of Titipu appear? **The Mikado.**
 13. What is the outstanding characteristic of the Lord Chancellor's song in *Iolanthe* that begins "When you're lying awake with a dismal headache. . ."? **It is the longest one in all the operas.**
 14. From what opera is the tune to "Hail, hail, the gang's all here" taken? **The Pirates of Penzance**
 15. Who was Gilbert and Sullivan's best known impresario? **RICHARD D'Oyly Carte.**
 16. Who was Princess Ida's father? **King Gama.**
 17. Give the name of the homely lady in *The Mikado*? **Katisha.**
 18. What type of persons were always left unmolested by the pirates of Penzance? **Orphans.**
 19. What was Buttercup's trade? **A Bum Boat Woman.**
 20. Name the opera which is a travesty on a poem by Tennyson? **Princess Ida.**
 21. Where did Sullivan begin the composition of *The Lost Chord*? ACCORDING TO THE BOOK, IT WAS **at the bedside of his dying brother**, BUT THAT'S NOT TRUE. HE BEGAN IT QUITE A WHILE BEFORE HIS BROTHER DIED, AND HIS BROTHER EVEN PERFORMED IT A COUPLE OF TIMES.
 22. Give the opening lines of *The Mikado*? **"If you want to know who we are, we are gentlemen of Japan."**
 23. Name the pirate chief in *The Pirates of Penzance*? **Richard.**
 24. What was the subtitle of *Patience*? **Bunthorne's Bride.**
 25. Name the opera which was withdrawn for fear of diplomatic complications? **The Mikado.**
 26. What time did Sir Arthur Sullivan prefer for composition? **Late at night.**
 27. Over what kingdom did Paramount I reign? **Utopia.**
 28. What was Frederic's birthday in *The Pirates of Penzance*? **The 29th of February.**
 29. In what opera does the Duke of Plaza-Toro appear? **The Gondoliers**
 30. What incident resembling that of a musical comedy plot happened to Gilbert when a child? ACCORDING TO LEGEND AND THE BOOK, **he was kidnapped by brigands in Italy**, ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE STUDIED THE MATTER HAVE CONCLUDED THAT IT NEVER REALLY HAPPENED.
 31. In what opera does the phrase appear: "of that there is no manner of doubt, no probable, possible shadow of doubt, no possible doubt whatever."? **The Gondoliers.**
 32. Who created most of the Gilbert and Sullivan leading comic roles? **George Grossmith.**
 33. Give the middle names of W.S. Gilbert and A.S. Sullivan. (a) **Schwenk** and (b) **Seymour.**
 34. What is the name of the cantata written by Gilbert and Sullivan. **Trial By Jury.**
 35. Who was the Lord High Executioner of Titipu? **Ko-Ko.**
 36. What serious [grand] opera did Sullivan compose? **Ivanhoe.**
 37. What incident similar to that which occurs in the opera happened shortly after the first production of *Iolanthe*? **One of the actresses in the company playing the part of a fairy became engaged to a peer.** UNLIKE THE OPERA, THOUGH, THE STORY DIDN'T HAVE A HAPPY ENDING. FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE ANDREW GOODMAN'S BOOK *GILBERT AND SULLIVAN AT LAW*.
 38. What Gilbert and Sullivan opera was first produced in New York? **The Pirates of Penzance** (AS A FULL PRODUCTION, ANYWAY. A PERFORMANCE TO INSURE THE BRITISH COPYRIGHT TOOK PLACE IN ENGLAND SEVERAL HOURS BEFORE THE AMERICAN PREMIERE)
 39. Who created the role of Bunthorne in the first production of *Patience*? **George Grossmith.**
 40. Musically, which is considered the most difficult of the songs in the operas? THE BOOK SAYS: **"I have a song to sing, O!" in The Yeomen of the Guard. Try it.**
 41. In what opera is there a song beginning "Prithee pretty maiden, prithee tell me true"? **Patience.**
 42. Name the two characters who sing this song? **Patience and Grosvenor.**
 43. What Gilbert and Sullivan opera was rearranged for children to perform? **H.M.S. Pinafore** ACTUALLY, *PIRATES* WAS EV-IDENTLY PRESENTED BY A CHILDREN'S COMPANY, AND JUST ABOUT EVERY OTHER ONE HAS BEEN SO ARRANGED SINCE, IF YOU WANT TO GET TECHNICAL.
 44. What was Sullivan's favorite opera? THE BOOK SAYS **The Yeomen of the Guard.**
 45. What is the subtitle of *Thespis*? **The Gods Grow Old.**
 46. what caused the break between Gilbert and Sullivan at the height of their success? THE BOOK SAYS **A minor business disagreement.** AGAIN, IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION, THE GOODMAN *GILBERT AND SULLIVAN AT LAW* IS THE PLACE TO CONSULT.
 47. With whom did Sullivan collaborate on the opera *Haddon Hall*? **Sydney Grundy**
 48. What is the subtitle of *The Pirates of Penzance*? **The Slave of Duty.**
 49. What opera contained a song that aroused much disfavor among the French people? **Ruddygore [sic.]: The song being "The Bold Mounseer."**
 50. Give the first line of the opening chorus of *The Pirates of Penzance*? **"Pour, oh pour the pirate sherry!"**
- Bonus Question: Which opera is not considered in this quiz (it isn't used as part of a question or an answer)? And while we're at it, if you can answer the sample questions in the introduction to the quiz, we'll count them as bonus questions, too. The Opera not considered in this quiz is The Grand Duke; and the answers to the other questions were:**
- "All the News That's Fit to Print"** was the slogan of the New York Times
- The Actress who created the role of "Peter Pan" in America was **Maud Adams**, and
- The Greatest motion picture actor of our times (in 1927) was **Charles Chaplin.**



A report on the Park Ridge Gilbert and
Sullivan Society's
The Mikado

By Carol Lee Cole

Dear S/A Cole:

(It was a cold and rainy night! No, that's not acceptable.) Well, it was a rainy afternoon and I needed to rest a bit so I decided to spend some time with Gilbert and Sullivan. By video tape I was transported back to May, 1995, and the St. Mary's Auditorium in Park Ridge, Illinois. As the tape rolled and I sat back with some crocheting I was part of the audience as we watched a janitor stroll onto the stage pushing his broom. He looked out into the audience and waved to someone he knew. A gentleman walked out from the wings, greeted the janitor, walked to the front of the orchestra and took up a baton. Se the overture to **THE MIKADO** began. More people dressed in street clothes strolled onto the stage and began to dress in the colorful robes of **THE MIKADO** characters. The costumes were easily put on over the clothes the actors were wearing and transformed them before our eyes into the characters we knew belonged to the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera.

Make-up was applied and wigs were carried in on a long wig stand. Eye brows were changed, lips reddened, hair tucked up and under, obis arranged, greeting to each other were all made in full view of the audience. I was entranced and became a vicarious part of the company. When the overture ended the cast was dressed, made-up and ready to begin. I am not a person who has seen hundreds of productions and I am not a critic who can tell if an actor is hitting all the correct notes. I do know that I enjoyed the preparation for the opera and was ready for "We are Gentleman from Japan."

I relaxed and enjoyed the effort of the Park Ridge Gilbert and Sullivan Society who seemed to be enjoying themselves also. It was good to have the video to watch since I live over a hundred miles from Park Ridge and was not able to attend the production in person. Keep up the good work, thespians.

As a postscript, David Michaels, a member of the Midwestern Gilbert & Sullivan Society was in good voice and acted the part of the Mikado with proper dignity. The Costume creator, Lisa Bower (a young person whom I have watched grow from a grade-school child into a creative woman with a needle and tread) is to be thanked for the use of the video!



A Report on the 1995 Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in Buxton

By Michael Miano

The Second International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival

The Second International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival took place from July 30 to August 12 in Buxton, England. The significance of this event cannot be overestimated. Like the works of G&S themselves, the entire two-week period was designed to elicit feelings of pleasure - pleasure, not merely to be able to see on consecutive nights eleven of Gilbert & Sullivan's operas, but to enjoy a number of other functions relating to G&S and to share them with enthusiasts from all over the world. Perhaps most significant of all is the fact that during the festival attendees had the opportunity to see a professional performance of "The Sorcerer" (the first such production in 13 years) including in the cast seven stars of the old D'Oyly Carte Company, which closed in 1982. As Ian Smith, the Festival Director, was fond of repeating, this Festival was "the biggest Gilbert and Sullivan Jamboree that the world has ever seen"!

As indicated above, there were many opportunities available to Festival visitors. Many of the former D'Oyly Carte stars conducted "Master Classes" and/or hosted "Coffee Mornings". There were a series of workshops for

amateur theatre administrators. There was an impressive sale of Gilbert & Sullivan memorabilia - old and new. There was a special "Sullivan Day" including a fascinating lecture by the famed Sullivan biographer, Prof. Arthur Jacobs. Four different performing companies travelled from various parts of the United States to show what they could do in this competitive Festival. There was a costume parade with marching bands and a "big sing". There was an opportunity for everyone to participate in the full scale "Festival Production" - "The Gondoliers" directed by former DOC star, Alistair Donkin. Every night, there was a raffle for prizes. The amateur performances were introduced by a former D'Oyly Carte personality. Since this was a competitive Festival, all competing performing groups were adjudicated by a renowned theatre expert (David Turner) from the Opera House stage immediately after each performance. Following every performance, Festival patrons could enjoy a supper, dancing, "star" appearances, a G&S quiz, and a G&S cabaret in the Festival Club adjoining the Opera House. The famous Savoyard, John Reed, who was the Festival President, hosted a nostalgic evening with his friends from the D'Oyly Carte (i.e. Donald Adams, Thomas Round, Kenneth Sandford, Julia Goss, and Gillian Knight). There were several excursions to various note-worthy locations in England. There was a performance of Sullivan's "The Chieftain" with libretto from the pen of F.C. Burnand who also worked with Sullivan on "Cox and Box". There was even a performance of "Jesus Christ Superstar"!

Individual opera ticket prices ranged from \$14 for a Gallery seat to about \$19 for Dress Circle seats. Tickets for the two performances of "The Sorcerer" cost \$2.50 more. While these prices may seem low to Americans, British amateur performing societies traditionally never charge more than \$10 for tickets to their productions. Videos of each of the amateur productions during the Festival were sold (in both the American NTSC video format and the European PAL format) for \$33, which I thought was rather excessive. Though quite a small city, Buxton has many guest houses and hotels (I counted 45!) - nearly all small and quaint. Accommodations for single rooms in Buxton could be reserved in advance for between \$41 and \$115 a night - with most being available in the \$50 range.

THE TOWN

Buxton is a lovely, small, historic "spa town" in Derbyshire (pronounced "Darbysher") County on the edge of the Peak District National Park. The easiest way to get there is to fly into Manchester and take the bus or train from there for the hour ride to Buxton. If you fly into Heathrow London, the trip is quite a bit more tedious - and that, if everything goes well! You can take the Underground (one transfer required) from the airport to Euston Station in the center of London. From there, you catch the train to Stockport. Then, you catch another train to Buxton. On a good day, with perfect timing and connections, and with no complications, you could make this trip in just under three hours.

Buxton is surrounded by the spectacular and unspoilt scenery of England's first National Park (Note, the word "park" doesn't necessarily mean a lot of trees.). And in the Buxton area are to be found a great variety of other attractions: beautiful historic buildings in quaint villages, caverns, museums, galleries, gardens, markets, canals, shopping, wells, monuments, and thermal baths - not to mention the warm, friendly people in this part of England.

THE OPERA HOUSE

The beautiful Edwardian Buxton Opera House is situated alongside the 25 acres of ornamental gardens which are part of the Pavilion Gardens complex. The centrally-located House was built in 1903 by Frank Matcham. It was

lovingly restored in recent years, though modernized slightly, and it retains that delightfully intimate feeling. It has a pit capable of seating 85 musicians, though only 19 were used during the Festival. The House seats 946 people. The acoustics in the auditorium are quite good and I could clearly hear every digital watch "beep" and hearing-aid whine in the place. I loved everything about the building excepting the climate control. In 1903, a device called a "sunburner" was installed in the roof of the Opera House. This device is actually a gas-burning furnace designed to suck the hot air from the auditorium in the heat of the summer. This historic device was never particularly efficient, but it was restored with the rest of the building. (It was not used during the Festival.) Though I've attended performances in hundreds of theatres all over Europe, I've never found a building that so reminds the present-day theatre-goer with such emphasis just how uncomfortable the summer theatre experience could have been - particularly before electric lighting came along, when the gas lights would have increased the temperature substantially. In winter, "off we go to the opposite extreme". There are only a few radiators about the auditorium. The auditorium was an absolute oven every night of the Festival. Many members of the audience came to the performances dressed in shorts and T-shirts. Those who didn't tried to cool themselves by making fans of their programs. The Buxton Opera House is used nearly constantly for an amazing variety of programming throughout the year. To give you an example of the eclectic (if ambitious) schedule which I could not resist - on October 24, the House will host "The Complete Works Of Shakespeare", production of which, if the brochure is to be believed, comes with a warning: "...not recommended for people with heart ailments, back problems, English degrees, inner ear disorders and/or people inclined to motion sickness."

THE OLD D'OYLY CARTE OPERA COMPANY

Only a little more than three years after the Company's monopoly on the Gilbert & Sullivan operas ended, on Tuesday February 9, 1965, I saw the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company for the first time at the American theatre in St. Louis. During the next five days, I was to have the long-desired pleasure of seeing "H.M.S Pinafore", "The Mikado", and "Pirates Of Penzance" performed by the company founded in order to produce the Gilbert & Sullivan operas. The DOC had arrived in St. Louis after visiting Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco as part of its North American tour. Similar tours occurred in 1966, 1968, 1976, and 1978 before the Company finally closed in 1982. For 107 years, the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company was a "source of innocent merriment" for countless millions of people. 15 of the stars from the old DOC performed during the Festival. (Their years with the company will be shown, if I could get them, in parenthesis.) Included were Joyce Wright (1947-1962), Julia Goss (?), Gillian Knight (1959-1965), Donald Adams (1951-1969), John Reed (1951-1979), Thomas Round (1946-1949, 1948-1964), Kenneth Sandford (1957-1982), Geoffrey Shovelton (1975-1979, 1980-1982), Patricia Leonard (?-1972), John Aylton (1967-1982), Lorraine Daniels (?-1976), Peggy Ann Jones (1958-?), Michael Buchan (?-1972), Roberta Morrell (?), and Alistair Donkin (?-1982).

DAY ONE, JULY 30

Festivities began at 3:30 with a costume parade from the Pavilion Gardens, around the center of town and back. Fortunately, this is not very far as the heat was sufficient to melt sidewalks. Many G&S enthusiasts were in costumes from one of the operas. (The Houston people - in town for their "HMS Pinafore" production - all wore matching red T-shirts and white cowboy hats.) After the parade, we moved into the Octagon building, named because of its shape, which is but a part of the elegant conference and banqueting complex (not air-conditioned!). Costumes were judged and prizes were awarded. The Duchess of Plaza-Toro, not to mention her admirable husband - the Duke, melted in a puddle under the weight of wig and gown shortly after they got their prize. Those dressed in "Mikado" costumes were fortunate, as they got to use their fans to good advantage. Ian Smith, the main force behind the Festival, made a few introductions and words of welcome. One of the speakers described him as "P.T. Barnum revisited". John Reed said a few words to the filled hall. He said that he is "an honorary Texan" - this remark apparently intended to make the large numbers from that state feel more at home. I passed-out for a while due to the heat. A few politicians spoke. Then began "The Big Sing". Everyone was given a very large booklet containing the words to songs (choruses surrounding a few solos) from several of the Gilbert & Sullivan operas. And, to the accompaniment of the Festival Orchestra, we sang (and fanned ourselves). In the beginning, stars Julia Goss, Thomas Rounds, and John Reed would sing the solo parts. Later, talented members of the audience took over in the solo sections when needed. Aside from a few timing problems (which were certainly understandable considering the large numbers present), the harmony displayed that afternoon by the multitude - singing together for the first time - was simply amazing and brought tears to my eyes. Unlike the other men present, I found it impossible to sing: "Oh, I love the jolly rattle of an orde-al by battle. There's an end of tittle tattle when

your enemy is dead. It's an arrant molly-coddle fears a crack upon his noddle. And he's only fit to swaddle in a downy feather bed!" at the required tempo. But, the affair was a delightful beginning to what was called "The Friendly Festival".

At 7:30 in the evening, in the Opera House (within five minutes walk from anyplace in town), John Reed, "patter man" with the D'Oyly Carte Company for more than 25 years had gathered together a range of friends including Donald Adams, principal bass from 1953 to 1969; Julia Goss, one of the youngest principal sopranos in the history of the company; Gillian Knight, principal contralto; Thomas Round, who first appeared with the company in 1946 and was the principal tenor for many years; and Kenneth Sandford, who became synonymous with such roles as Pooh Bah, Don Alhambra, Private Willis, Dr. Daly, and Grosvenor over a 25 year period with the company.

PATIENCE

At 7:30 in the evening on July 31, began the production of "Patience" presented by the Wakefield G&S Society. (Wakefield is a very small town near Buxton.) The Society was formed in 1982 and since then has performed one of the Savoy operas every year. Immediately before the performance began, Donald Adams came on stage with Ian Smith. Mr. Adams was asked to tell an amusing story concerning his many years with the old DOC. He said he couldn't think of anything. But, he told the story of one time when G.B. Shaw was ready to produce a new play, he sent a telegram to W. Churchill, saying: "Have reserved two tickets in your name for the opening night of my new play. Bring a friend, if any. Shaw". Churchill responded with a telegram of his own: "Can't attend opening. Send tickets for second night, if any. Churchill".

Having been appalled for years by the arrogance of many of the world's directors who mutilate the intentions of the authors in productions, I had expected to see during the G&S Festival at least of few of this type of production. But, this production of "Patience" was thoroughly and delightfully "traditional". I thank James Newby, the producer and music director. Though the costumes (rented) of the chorus were rather flimsy, they worked well for a budget production and were appropriate. Bunthorne, Sid Kenningham, had a traditionally aesthetic costume - a velvet, burnt-orange jacket with a lily over the heart; and orange silk pants. Kenningham was clearly the star of this production. He was excellent! He had great gestures and a magnetic stage presence. He was constantly in character. Not only was his acting exceptional, but his singing was also unbeatable. I particularly liked when he "accidentally" put Lady Jane's raffle ticket in his mouth and had to be reminded by the Dragons to put it in the vase for the drawing. The Duke, Martin Whitaker, was also very good in his role, though I don't know why some people think that the Duke must have a speech impediment. The only problem I had with the Duke's presentation was when he sang "Your maiden hearts". He should turn to the Dragon chorus and say: "Sigh", "Kneel", and "Weep". But, he turned not his head in their direction.

Tony Lancaster, as the Colonel, was fine. I liked his gestures during "When I first put this uniform on". Graham Weston's Major was good - excepting the Monty Pythonesque "silly walk" during "If Saphir I choose to marry". It got a laugh, but was too broad and distracting. Lady Angela played by Jane Trudgill, was fine. But, she had a very weak voice. Like her, the Grosvenor, John Townend, also had a very weak voice. And on stage Bunthorne would have overpowered him in their second act duet had Bunthorne not obviously underplayed at that point. Townend was embarrassingly poor in "When I go out of door". His acting was generally weak and he was not even slightly aesthetic-acting. In the act one finale, Grosvenor was seen to be smiling, even though he was singing: "Again my cursed comeliness spreads hopeless anguish and distress!" Down stage, facing the audience, he recited "Gentle Jane" and "Teasing Tom" with the maidens all behind him. Poor blocking! But, on the other hand, "Fable Of The Magnet And The Churn" was very well executed - center stage with the maidens all around him laying on their stomachs. Jean Manning played Lady Jane. Jean is quite young - pretty even, and thin. There was nothing done to make her look "massive". Moreover, there was nothing excepting a grey wig to suggest that she was aging. Her one funny bit was the missing of her cello cue during "Sad is that woman's lot". Patience was played by Corinne Stokes. Though she had a very nice voice, I had a lot of problems with her portrayal of the character of a girl who should be naive, innocent, and perhaps a bit silly. Corinne played the part with general hostility and nastiness. She was consistently hostile to Bunthorne and rude to everybody else. (Immediately after the performance, the Adjudicator, David Turner, made the remark, which is as negative as he got during the Festival, that though Corinne's singing was light and appropriately bubbly, her character was far too strong. "Patience is one person; not two", he said. "Alone, she could have taken-on all of the Dragon Guards!")

I had some little difficulty with the female chorus - particularly in the first act. How can you tell if it is aesthetic transfiguration or merely bad acting? I

don't know. The male chorus was good in terms of acting and both choruses sang well enough. The biggest problem with the entire production was that (with the exception of the Bunthorne parts) the tempi were painfully slow. The first act lasted an hour and a half and dragged badly. This show - particularly the first act, must sing-along merrily. This production didn't. But, everybody knew their lines - which, as I was to find out later during the Festival, is a blessing in itself.

As I said earlier, this was a "Competitive Festival" and each of the amateur groups was adjudicated on stage immediately after the performance. David Turner has exceptional stage experience and vast knowledge in every aspect of theatrical production. I had hoped to be able to use his words of wisdom in my reviews. But, with the exception of what I mentioned concerning Patience herself, his remarks were kind to the point of being extremely generous. He praised the good and ignored the bad, which I found somewhat annoying since there was so much bad - particularly in "The Chieftain". His position is a difficult one. I'm not sure if I would have the courage to stand up in front of an audience of friends and relations of cast members and tell an unpleasant truth. Personally, I do not feel that the audience needs to hear the adjudication at all. If the Adjudicator's detailed written analysis, which he sends to each performing group, can help improve the company, then in my view that is a matter between Turner and the company.

I know well the difference between a professional performance and an amateur one. However, in Europe there is a vital factor which may escape an American attending amateur performances there - every tiny village has a singing group consisting of local friends and neighbors. These groups serve an important social function. As such, everyone is invited (indeed, practically expected) to participate regardless of talent. In Europe, neighbors get together to perform G&S because they want to enjoy themselves and develop community spirit. In the U.S., things are quite different. For one thing, the cities are far larger, thereby allowing performing groups to draw upon considerably larger populations. Inevitably, they find talent. Few American neighborhoods would think of developing cohesiveness and mutual enjoyment by performing an opera.

Likewise in American cities, church groups have better things (well, at least different) to do with their limited financial and diminishing participation assets. Of the hundreds of amateur groups who perform G&S in Britain, few have the financial means to travel to Buxton. And nearly all of the groups consistently operate at a financial loss. In my reviews of Festival performances, I must ignore these considerations. I must concern myself with the overall quality (or lack of it) of each show and each performer. It is one thing for the cast members to enjoy performing. It is another thing for audience members to enjoy being witness.

HMS PINAFORE

On August 1, Buxton audiences were delighted to witness a splendid production of "HMS Pinafore" by the Houston G&S Society. This is the Society's 44th season since they began in 1952. In 1982, the Society secured the services of a leading performer from the D'Oyly Carte, Alistair Donkin. He has appeared in succeeding years as both guest artist and stage director. (In this production, he acts as director as well as plays the role of Sir Joseph Porter.)

The group was introduced by this evening's host, Thomas Round. Mr. Round's funny story was this: "Leaders of a small British community had placed an ad requesting applications for the position of music director. After placing the ad in newspapers far and wide, the members of the city council scheduled an interview with a young man who travelled from London for the occasion. When the young man was called-in, he immediately explained that he could not stay long because he had to be on the 5:05 train leaving for London. The council members assured him that they would not keep him long. The leader of the council asked the young man: "What do you know about Beethoven?". The young man responded: "What can I say? We went to school together!". Next, the council chief asked: "What do you know about Mozart?". The man replied: "Let me just say that we belong to the same club.". The next question was: "What do you know about Sullivan?". The applicant said: "Well, to be honest, I don't know him personally. But, my father plays golf with him regularly.". The council leader asked the young man to step outside the office for a few minutes while the panel deliberated their decision. The young man, before leaving, reminded the panel again that he could not stay long because he must catch the 5:05 to London. After the man was outside, the council leader told the others that he was very impressed with the qualifications of the young man. "I wasn't!", said the neighboring member. "I think he is something of a liar. There IS no 5:05 train leaving for London!"

This traditional "Pinafore" was exciting from beginning to end. The sets and costumes were spectacular! The sets were almost exactly like the ones from the old DOC. I have no idea how the company got them to Buxton. Their quality was so exceptional, I doubt the Festival carpenter team put them together like was done for the other Festival groups. The authentic,

bright and colorful costumes were obviously handmade for each cast member by Bonnie Ambrose and Barbara Robbins. They were of exceptionally fine material and workmanship - particularly the costumes for the women - each of whom had a bustle. The precision and timing of everyone in the cast was simply breathtaking. Ralph was played by the young, handsome Nathan Wight - surely the "Brad Pitt" of Rackstraws. His acting and voice were of exceptional quality - effortless singing and acting. It was a pleasure to see and hear him. The only curious thing about the blocking for him was that during his line "I am proud and cannot stoop to implore.", he was actually flat on his stomach in front of Josephine at the time. Buttercup, the round and rosy Lisa Young, is likewise a wonderful actress with a very fine, strong singing voice. Captain Corcoran was expertly played by Harrison Moore. His performance was entirely believable - from his relationship to Sir Porter to his relationship with his daughter - all entirely appropriate. He had a richness to his voice that went perfectly with the role. Kimberly Lane, as Josephine, was a true artist - great acting and perfect singing voice. Alistair Donkin was, as you might expect, also perfect in voice and characterization. He led the traditionally silly five encores of "Never mind the why and wherefore". Hebe (portrayed in the Houston "Pinafore" by Robin Smith) is normally not particularly noticed in productions of the opera - except perhaps as a part of the female chorus. But, this Hebe was different. She appeared rather schoolmarmish with her hair formed back tightly, her glasses, her exquisite black dress. Whenever Porter was around, she was the closest to his side - obviously acting as his proper personal secretary until the last moments of the opera, when she removed her glasses, literally let her hair down, and became instantly seductively attractive. Personally, I liked Ralph Katz as Deadeye the best. Though the Adjudicator made remark that Deadeye is an "evil" character, I strongly disagree. Deadeye is probably the most sensible character in all of G&S! And Katz played him to perfection - relying on sheer acting ability instead of makeup to convey ugliness. Both the male and female choruses could not have been better - great singing and acting, wonderful diction, skillful precision! They chorus sang lustily and beautifully. After seeing this production, one could only wish to live in Houston!

THE CHIEFTAIN

On August 2, the Daggar Lane Operatic Society presented Sullivan's opera, "The Chieftain". The Daggar Lane Society sprang from the Holy Trinity Church choir in Hull in 1982. After "The Gondoliers", in 1894, D'Oyly Carte was desperate to find an entertainment to keep his theatre open. So, Sullivan got together with his old friend, F.C. Burnand, the editor of "Punch". The two men decided to revive their 1867 work, "The Contrabandista, Or The Law Of The Ladrone". Brigands had apparently been a popular subject with audiences in those times. (Offenbach's 1869 operetta, "Les Brigands" is still regularly performed today.) Sullivan and Burnand called their new production "The Chieftain". (For historical interest, note: "The Gondoliers" - 1889, "Ivanhoe" - 1890, "Haddon Hall" - 1892, "Utopia Limited" - 1893, "The Chieftain" - 1894, "The Grand Duke" - 1896, "The Beauty Stone" - 1898, "Rose Of Persia" - 1899, and "Emerald Isle" - 1900.) Sullivan and Burnand reworked "The Contrabandista", retaining largely the first act, but with a new finale. The second act was quite new. The original story concerned a camera-carrying tourist in Spain, our hero, Mr. Grigg. He is chosen against his will as the leader of a robber band. Grigg undergoes a comic mock-coronation ceremony and faces the alarming prospect of being burdened with Inez, the formidable chieftainess of the robbers. Act two brings the wife, Dolly, to Spain on the track of her husband. Sullivan wrote a cachucha and a bolero to illustrate the Spanish location. And there was a love duet in French.

In 1994, David Eden and Martin Yates of the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society, with a desire to restore Sullivan's music to the stage, rewrote all the dialogue, introduced a baby-kidnapping into the plot, and changed the lyrics to take into account the altered story line. (By the way, the baby is supposed to have the initials "WSG" embroidered on his carriage. This is to remind the audience of the story that W.S. Gilbert was himself as a child supposed to have been kidnapped.) According to Eden and Yates, "The rejection [of Sullivan's "The Chieftain" by the public]...is generally put down to the libretto of F.C. Burnand, which is not simply inferior to Gilbert but almost unbelievably bad considering that he was a professional writer working for a leading London theatre.". True enough! But, the rewriting done for the production doesn't much improve the situation. Here is Grigg's introductory song: "From rock to rock, with many a shock, and bump and thump and terrible knock, I fall. But not a soul is near - the traveller's lonely path to cheer. Oh why did I set out to roam and dare the sea's unpleasant foam - slipping, tripping, air so nipping, up in the hills away from home? The love of arts in foreign parts has taken me all the way to Spain. Fumble. Stumble. Crumble. Tumble up the middle and down again! This camera too, to take a view, I never did such a nuisance know. If by shock awry, knock'd like crockery on the rockery, smash 'twill go! I say to myself, my dear friend Grigg, if safe I return, I'd rather dig than follow the arts in foreign parts. But

I'll take to a farm with horses and carts and rear up a lot of little Griggs, who'll lead us a life with their nursery rigs, with my spouse and my cows and my little pigs. Little pigs and little Griggs. My spouse! Ha! Ha! My cows! Ha! Ha! My sows! Ha! Ha! And my little pigs."

The story, as revised, shows us the kidnapping of Rita and her charge, the baby William Shakespeare Grigg, during the overture. The kidnappers, a gang of notorious brigands, take her to their hideout in the mountains while waiting for the baby to be ransomed. While there, Rita falls in love with Vasquez, a member of the band. Two other bandits, Sancho and Jose, supposedly comic characters, plot to kill Vasquez. Inez, the band's chieftainess, catches them and reminds them that according to the "Law of the Ladrones", she must marry soon since the former chief, Ferdinand, has been gone for more than a year. Inez must marry the first stranger who appears. Peter Grigg arrives looking for his kid. He is seized by the Brigands and forced to be the Brigand chief and marry Inez - the wedding to take place the next day. In act two, we are at the Brigand hotel on the banks of a river, where the female members of the Brigand band pan for gold. Dolly, Peter's wife, appears in the company of Willoughby Wiggins, representative of a travel agency. She is searching for her husband and baby. Being too afraid to tell his wife that he is about to be married to Inez, Grigg, Rita, and Vasquez decide to concoct a story that the wedding is part of a traditional Brigand play in which he is an actor. Inez meets Dolly and Dolly figures out the truth. Just then, Willoughby undresses in front of Inez to prove that he is actually Inez's lost husband and Brigand chief, Ferdinand. (The libretto actually says that Ferdinand is recognized by a "WANTED" poster which Jose carries in his back pocket. But, in this production, Ferdinand undresses.) WSG goes back to his mother. Rita and Vasquez decide to get married. And, Peter and Dolly are back together again.

The host for the evening, John Reed, told the story of when he was very new with the old DOC, and how shocked he was to walk out on stage opening night and see in the audience rows of people with libretti in their hands. After one show, a young man came up to him and congratulated him since he had made only one mistake that evening - "but" instead of "and".

The Dagger Lane Society doing a production of "The Chieftain" is like you getting together with all the people on your block and putting on a production of Wagner's "Goetterdaemmerung"! Although the idea of a bunch of neighbors getting together and putting on a show is a great plot for a '40s movie (especially if you are Judy Garland or Mickey Rooney), in the real world, the more difficult the work to be done, the greater the talent required to do it. Concerning the amazing longevity of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, Frederic Woodbridge Wilson, in his book "The Gilbert & Sullivan Operas", writes: "Certainly their lasting success has owed much to the modest vocal demands that placed them within the capabilities of amateur organizations." - "Modest" is the kindest adjective which could be used to describe the vocal capabilities of the Dagger Lane group. Their production was amazingly tedious - not that they had all that much to work with in the first place considering the music is some of Sullivan's worst and the libretto is horribly bad. After the first ten minutes of Daggar Lane, all around me I could see the elderly audience members whose facial expression conveyed their earnest wish for heart failure rather than have to sit through two hours of this production. The younger audience folk squirmed in their seats and looked up to heaven for help. To make things worse than they already were, some person in authority with Daggar Lane, I don't know who - very likely Wendy Arrowsmith, the director, decided that since the action takes place in Spain, all the characters should speak with a Spanish accent. Do they speak with a Japanese accent when they do "The Mikado"? Or an Italian accent when they do "The Gondoliers"? All the accent did was make it absolutely impossible to understand a word the weak-voiced Brigands said.

There was very little talent to be seen on the stage in Buxton the night "The Brigands" was produced. Chris Riches, portraying Peter Grigg, was clearly the best performer in the cast. Riches played Griggs as though he were a sort of Mr. Rogers (the one who had the neighborhood) in tight pants. I found this characterization, consistent as it was throughout the production, quite annoying. But, it was well-done. His singing voice was good. Judy Westoby as Inez, had a kind of swagger to her walk, which was appropriate for her character. And her first and second act costumes were great! But, Judy's voice is slight and though I was sitting in the Dress Circle for all the Festival performances, I could not hear more than a word or two of what she said or sang. The Rita character was simply awful - bad acting and singing. The minor role of Willoughby, portrayed by John Wilks, was the best performed (with the exception of Grigg). His was the only voice that was powerful enough to always be clearly heard by the audience. His acting and stage presence were impressive. Dolly Grigg was acted by Diana Boanas. She was exactly the kind of wife you'd expect for Grigg - the take-charge type. She was the only one in the cast who viewed the baby as anything more than an annoyance. She had a little voice, but her acting was O.K.. Jose (Gordon Smethurst) was particularly well-acted - great stage presence! And his makeup and costume were among the most-authentic in the production. But his accent was so strong, I couldn't understand what he was

saying or singing. His colleague, Sancho (Ron Powell), was not as good in his portrayal as Jose, but satisfactory, though I could not hear a word he said. The cave-like sets of the first act were quite good! So was the Brigand hotel in the second act. But, the second act river was obviously a piece of blue silk spread across the stage. The choreography was embarrassing to see. And cast members forgot their lines. The lighting was quite interesting in the first act with only half the stage being lit. If intentional, I thought this was an appropriate way to convey the feeling of a cave and also highlight anyone entering or leaving it. The first act chorus costumes were what you might find if you were looking for something Spanish in your closet. The second act chorus costumes (for the wedding) were quite good. In the libretto, there were two references to G&S libretti - "I would if I could but I am not able." and "What, never? Well, hardly ever!". Bad idea!

I was quite interested in hearing what the Adjudicator would have to say about such a dismal performance. He said the baby (a doll) was well-behaved. He also said that he admired the Dagger Lane group for having the courage to do "The Chieftain".

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD

On August 4, the Rose Hill Musical Society performed "The Yeomen Of The Guard". The Rose Hill group has been performing G&S since 1933. They aim "to restore much of the original material cut from many of the operas at or before their first productions". Accordingly, Sergeant Meryll's first act song, "A laughing boy but yesterday" was added. Also added was Shadbolt's first act "When jealous torments reach my soul" and Colonel Fairfax's ballad, "Free from his fetters grim" in the second act. Interestingly, Gordon Humphries, the producer, cut Meryll's lines to Fairfax: "So - this ruff is too high; so - and the sword should hang thus. Here is your halbert, sir; carry it thus."

This evening's host was Joyce Wright. More than anything she actually said, one was left overpowered by the woman's great charm and graciousness. The audience saw the tower fire during the overture. I didn't object to this. But I wonder why it was necessary and what it added to the audience's understanding of the plot. Adrian Redfern, playing Leonard Meryll, was a poor actor with a great voice. Margaret Featherstone playing Dame Carruthers, acted well. Interestingly, her speaking voice on stage was strong, but her singing voice, very weak. Colonel Fairfax, Colin Ashton, had without doubt the best and strongest, most powerful voice of the cast. But, he didn't look anything like what I imagine Fairfax to look like. I think Colin is far too old and short (the other Yeomen towered over him) to convincingly play the part. However, his singing was spectacular! I do wish, however, when he sang "Truly I was to be pitied...", he had sung it as an aside. As it was in the production, he sang those lines to his brother Yeomen, who surely would have questioned the remark. Generally, I was quite impressed with everyone in this cast - even the chorus. The entire cast consisted of great actors and actresses who sang with sensitivity and warmth. The acting was entirely believable - particularly "Were I thy bride" which showed Phoebe and Shadbolt at their best. (Shadbolt, seated, was perhaps a little too orgasmic while Phoebe, standing behind, massaged him. But, Phoebe's expression of disgust as she put her hands through Shadbolt's filthy hair was quite amusing.) Ellen Godfrey portrayed Phoebe with style. Jonathan Godfrey as Shadbolt, was particularly fine. His acting and singing couldn't be beat! Sir Cholmondeley was Andrew Hunt. Jack point was Patrick Dawson. Sergeant Meryll was Peter Featherstone. Elsie was Kathryn Fitchett. Phoebe was Ellen Godfrey. The sets, costumes, lighting, and makeup were all very good. Interestingly, there was no bell toll in the act one finale. Elsie was quite tender with Point at the end of the opera. She left Fairfax for a few moments, went to Point, sadly kissed a rose and gave it to him, and then returned to Fairfax. Perhaps Point's heart attack was a bit of an overreaction.

THE SORCERER

The city of Buxton was full on August 5. Every hotel room had been booked in anticipation of the first professional production since the old D'Oyly Carte Company closed in 1982. Seven of the ten original DOC stars recreated their roles in "The Sorcerer". Since the production was professional, it was not adjudicated; nor was it videotaped. Michael Buchan played Sir Marmaduke. Geoffrey Shovelton, Alexis. Kenneth Sandford played Dr. Daly. The Notary was portrayed by John Ayldon. Alistair Donkin acted John Wellington Wells. Patricia Leonard was Lady Sangazure; and Julia Goss, her daughter Aline. Mrs. Partlet was Peggy-Ann Jones. And Constance was portrayed by Lorraine Daniels. The performances were about as perfect as I am ever likely to see. The production was set in the late 1800s.

Kenneth Sandford was for me the highlight of the show. It was like having a singing Laurence Olivier playing the part. The acting and singing were both perfect! Outstanding in its subtlety, every minute gesture portrayed the good doctor's inner character. I had never before realized the profound sadness in the part. Next best in the cast was John Ayldon. In normal

productions, the Notary does not spend much time on stage. But this Notary was an active part of the chorus and was more noticeable than usual because of his wonderful acting and remarkable stage presence. Mrs. Partlett seemed real - and human - and one really felt her motherly determination to get for her daughter the man of her choice. Great acting! Dr. D's "May fortune bless you" lines were delivered as though an old man, mildly senile, was struggling to concoct an appropriate blessing for Alexis, but got tangled-up in the convoluted nature of his flowery wording. "Welcome joy", sung by Lady S and Sir M, was performed with the chorus in freeze mode whenever either Lady S or Sir M each made their respective passionate asides. But, when the chorus was active during the duet, it was dancing around the stage. This was distracting since no musicians could be seen on stage. Each chorus member was entirely in character and consistently expressed his/her personality throughout the performance - though too often their individual gestures were exaggerated and distracting.

There were only two changes made to the libretto. In this production Alexis was apparently no longer a member of the Grenadier Guards. And so when he attempted to get a discount from Mr. Wells, he mentioned that he had a charge card at Harrads, which entitled him to a 25% discount. When Alexis told Aline that what every adult in the village needed in order to attain pure and lasting happiness was a philtre, Aline responded that, excepting in Buxton, a filter, of course is a very useful thing in the house. (This was a reference to the fact that the Buxton water is bottled and shipped for use all over England.)

Hercules, the "page", was in this production a huge, effeminate butler wearing an apron and carrying a feather-duster, who spoke with a lisp. During the incantation, the stage darkness, a red floodlight, and billowing smoke helped to enhance the effect of the music. Wells put into the tea pot a 3-foot snake, a bat, and various other junk. And he proceeded to do a sort-of rain dance around the pot. The audience loved this, but their response was so loud you could not hear the lovely "Let us fly" being sung. The incantation is not supposed to be humorous! This was Roberta Morrell's fault. She was the director of the production. All of the problems with this production resulted from Ms. Morrell's desire to add laughs to the opera which were not intended by Gilbert. Ms. Morrell, in directing the chorus, apparently confused "rollicking bun" with "rollicking fun" - for the chorus in "Now to the banquet" exploded in a riot of movement, which seemed chaotic and was certainly distracting. However, the audience loved these antics loudly. And so the "see-see-the-y drink" trio and the Alexis & Aline duet "Oh love, true love" was lost - a pity! However, things got worse - and slapstick - when the love potion took effect. The audience laughed so loudly at the silly, drunken sloppiness of the chorus, that "A marvelous illusion" could not be heard. When the chorus awakened, they were far more passionate in their new-found love than I am used to seeing - rolling coupled around on the ground in sexual excitement. Though this got a laugh, it was entirely unnecessary and inappropriate.

Constance, in tears, did not lead the Notary on stage as Gilbert directed. Instead, she came running on, carrying a chair, hotly pursued by the Notary. Constance used the chair - first to push the Notary off, and then to seat him when his heart gave-out from the overexertion. When Constance sang about the mystery of her love for the Notary, he, through gestures indicated that he had a painful cramp in his lower leg. So, Constance massaged it for him. Then he indicated he had a cramp by his knee. She massaged it. Finally, the Notary indicated he had a cramp in his upper thigh. Constance refused to massage him there. The audience responded wildly to this - thereby missing the lovely music in "Dear friends, take pity on my lot". Dr. Daly got a big laugh - one no doubt that Gilbert intended - when he remarked, having been affected by the love potion, that the young maidens were VERY comely. He remained silent for a moment - obviously pondering what he had just said - and then added, in a "come to think of it" manner, that the middle-aged were also comely. After another thoughtful pause, he added the elderly to his list of "comely" females. What delightful acting! Even Mrs. Partlett was attractive to Dr. Daly, but this was handled with such delicacy and subtlety that Dr. Daly's remark concerning Mrs. P's physical attributes were hysterical! His further remarks concerning Mrs. Partlett's cleanliness appeared almost seductive. Again, the slightest movement of the finger, the head, were enough to convey what is so often missing in less-skilled actors.

Lady Sangazure chased Mr. Wells around the stage in what I consider to be too crude a manner. But, it got a laugh. The idea which SHOULD be conveyed in the Lady Sangazure - Mr. Wells scene is that Lady Sangazure has lost her perpetual refinement and composure, but not that she has become Mad Margaret! The chasing continued throughout the "Love me; hate me" duet. Aline's "The fearful deed is done" is one of the most lovely pieces of music in opera and matches in a few words any of the tragic sacrifice through love that occurs in any of Puccini or Wagner's works. During the song, the stage lights were dimmed and a single spot was shone on Aline. Immediately after the song, Aline collapsed on a bench until Dr. Daly was finished with his song. This makes sense, though I don't recall

seeing it before, because the potion puts people who take it to sleep. Dr. Daly did not accompany himself on the flageolet during his "Oh, my voice is sad and low" song. This felt correct to me for this performance. This actor didn't need props and I felt that the breaks in the song allowed him to portray the terrible poignancy of what he was singing.

I didn't care for the fact that Dr. Daly and Aline were locked in an embrace when Alexis appeared. Alexis was observant enough to notice the small, empty vial which Aline had left on the porch of the house. But, he continued singing to her of his great joy - oblivious to the fact that she was in another man's arms until she prevented Alexis from embracing her.

It has always bothered me that though by this time in the plot, it must be 3 in the morning, upon being called by Alexis, all the villagers suddenly appear and the entire cast is aware, without being told, that they have been subjected to the effects of a love potion. Dr. Daly himself knows, without being told, that Alexis insisted that Aline take the potion and was in fact on her way to meet with Alexis when she met Dr. Daly instead. In the Buxton production, when Mr. Wells mentioned the name of "Ahrimanes", the entire chorus yelled: "Who?" and Wells repeated the name. Why was this necessary?

Rather than sinking into Hell through a trap, Wells merely had a heart attack and walked off the stage. Though historically, the youths of the village had not been "enterprising" with regard to women, and the maidens had been "distinctly coy", suddenly, once Wells is dead, everybody linked-up with somebody - even Dr. Daly himself (with Constance)! Typical Gilbert! Happy ending! And a delightful performance. Happy audience!

RUDDIGORE

The South Anglia Savoy Players were placed third in last year's Festival. There were many very good things about their production of "Ruddigore" on August 6. And there were many things which were not so good. I always object when a director injects humor into a production if it takes-away from the audiences' understanding of the dialogue and lyrics. And Derek Collins, the director here, certainly injected a lot which was not intended by Gilbert and which, in my opinion, detracted from the overall work. Without a doubt, these additions were the worst thing about what could have easily been a splendid, nearly-perfect performance.

Mr. Collins added a prologue during the overture. I did not object strongly to it because it was done very well. But, on the other hand, it was entirely unnecessary. The prologue was sort-of a ballet seen through the scrim. It was beautifully timed with the music of the overture. One saw Sir Rupert Murgatroyd, the first Baronet, who had captured a witch (named "Mystic Mag"). As he burned her, the overture stopped and the audience heard the curse on the Murgatroyd family. The stage then darkened and the overture resumed. When the lights came up again, we saw a young Roderic Murgatroyd who, having disguised his true identity, was just about to marry a young Hannah Trusty when Roderic's foster brother, a sailor, appeared and revealed Roderic's true identity. Hannah, horrified, rejected a wedding to a "bad Baronet" and departed. Unless one knew the story of "Ruddigore" or read the program notes, one would never be able to understand the meaning of the Prologue. So, one must ask, why have it at all?

Collins must be responsible for all the dancing in this production as no choreographer was listed in the program. The dancing was spectacular without exception! There was quite a bit of it. So much, in fact, one might think "Ruddigore" was a ballet. Every number in the show had intricate

dancing involved. Although at times the tricky steps made it a bit difficult to understand the words, the quality of the dancing was wonderful - amazingly so for an "amateur" company.

Zorah and Ruth as bridesmaids with solos were both pretty bad. So was the quality of the makeup of the male principals. (The actors obviously think that good theatrical makeup involves drawing a red line along every facial wrinkle.) I didn't care for the acting of Eileen Barks-Marner as Dame Hannah. Her singing voice was O.K., but not great. Rose, played by Sally Brown, was very good and had a great voice for the part. In fact, it was refreshing to hear everyone in the production - though Rose could have enunciated her early lines a bit better. And, once or twice, she was overwhelmed by the orchestra.

The meeting of Rose and Robin (Howard Brooks) was the first place in the production where the director injected misplaced humor. Rose, as you know, was carrying a basket of goodies. In this production, Robin was carrying a bouquet of flowers for Rose. The director's "funny" business concerned the basket and the flowers and Robin's hat (which in approaching Rose, he had removed.) Robin, in his nervousness, stumbled about with the hat and flowers and got tangled-up in Rose's basket, which wound up on the ground. He stepped in it. All of this nonsense happened during the poignant duet "I know a youth", which, because of the audience laughter, could not be heard. I have no idea where South Anglia is, but the entire population must have been in the audience that night. They laughed loudly throughout the performance - and often when the stage action was only mildly amusing or not funny at all. They laughed during the overture, for example. The Adjudicator was also mystified by this phenomenon.

Adam was well-portrayed by Alan Bradbury, though I strongly objected to his antics in the second act, which were no doubt, the fault of Collins. In the first act, when Adam called Robin by his real name, Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd, Robin said: "As you love me, breathe not that hated name.". Then, Robin moved far down-stage and told the audience in an extremely fast manner his entire life story as written by Gilbert. After a moment, Robin came back to Adam to continue his speech with "For 20 years I have been dead and buried.". Collins must have presumed that everyone in the audience would know the story and time would have been wasted in a proper presentation of the material. Wrong!

Richard, as portrayed by Mick Wilson, was the prize of this production. I cannot imagine a better actor in the role! His singing was perfect. So was his stage presence. It was as though he was born to play this part - so natural and in-character was he at all times. He was full of energy and his dancing - spectacular! The dancing of Richard and Robin during "My boy, you may take it from me" was beautifully executed, but unnecessary. The only thing unexpected from the Richard/Rose encounter was the kiss, which was so forceful and passionate, Rose threw her book of etiquette across the stage. As always, the dancing in "In sailing o'er life's ocean wide" was expertly performed. But, on the other hand, it was so distracting that the audience could have missed the fact that during the dance Rose, thanks to Robin's wealth, had decided to marry Robin instead of Richard. After the song, Gilbert's stage directions call for Richard to exit weeping. These have got to be Gilbert's stupidest stage directions. I cannot imagine Richard weeping about anything. In this production, Richard (appropriately) grabbed two of the bridesmaids and went off with them into the inn.

Mad Margaret, as portrayed by the lovely Rachel Yelland, was simply marvelous! Rachel is a wonderful actress with a very good voice. Her costume and makeup were particularly well done. In fact, all the costumes in the show were quite traditional and very nice. During her first entrance, Margaret carried a bouquet of twigs and weeds. Though I find no evidence that the apple which Rose offers to Margaret is intended to be damaged in any way, I think, considering Rose's propensity for giving useless gifts, that it should be at least partially eaten. The apple in this production appeared to have been in fine condition. Margaret, no doubt on direction from Collins, went to the opposite side of the stage from Rose to deliver to the audience her line "Strange! They told me she was beautiful.". I think that line should be heard by Rose.

All of the chorus entrances and exits in this production were handled wonderfully. It was simply amazing how the chorus managed the intricate dance steps and still sang together and with force. The dancing in "Welcome gentry" was marvelous.

Pat O'Connell, as Sir Despard Murgatroyd, was clearly the weakest of the principals - not that his voice was weak. He simply isn't a very good actor and he messed-up his lines a few times too. But, he danced well. Normally, during Sullivan's tender music associated with the lines "Oh, innocent, happy though poor", I expect a toning-down of the husky hoarseness in Despard's voice. But, here I didn't find it. The lines were almost spoken and in a rough manner. In this production, Despard claims to have "robbed a bank and endowed a Northern opera company" (instead of having endowed a bishopric).

The madrigal was wonderfully performed. However Collins tried for another cheap laugh during it when Robin gets upset at Richard's "Fa-la-la-

ing". Act two begins with Robin and Adam (Gideon) both wrapped in long black cloaks - walking melodramatically on stage. They then walked backwards into each other, frightening each other. The audience thought that this was hysterical. The second verse of "I once was as meek as a new-born lamb" was added in this production. During the entire second act, a suit of armor (with sword) stood up-stage. The kidnapped Hannah took its sword after having given Robin her own dagger with which to defend himself (against her). There was a prolonged fight between Hannah and Robin (with non-Sullivan accompaniment). After Robin yielded, Hannah took the sword back to the suit of armor and thanked it. The suit said "You're welcome!" and walked off stage. Stupid, but it got a big laugh.

The lighting of Colin Andrews was very good in this production and the animation of the pictures was particularly well-done. Paul Lazell was excellent as Sir Roderick Murgatroyd - good singing; good stage presence. I objected to the characters called Ghost 1, Ghost 2, and Ghost 3 using a slow, ghostly voice when they spoke rather than a natural one in response to Robin's list of weekly crimes. They don't sing in a ghostly voice, so why should they speak in one? "Henceforth all the crimes" was sung by Robin, but not very well. I could not understand a word. A super-fast encore of "My eyes are fully open" was sung. The biggest Collins disgrace of the evening came when Hannah and Sir Roderick were supposed to be alone together prior to the "Oak tree" duet. Collins had Adam walk on stage with tea service. He walked slowly to where Sir R and Hannah were sitting. Then, they moved to the other side of the stage. So, Adam followed them with the tea service. When he got to the other side of the stage, Hannah and Sir R moved to the opposite side. Finally, Adam, exhausted, sat in the chair and drank the tea himself. The audience laughed so loudly, the "Oak tree" duet could not be heard. Shame on Derek Collins! I was not familiar with the Finale: "Having been a wicked baronet a week". I wish that the cast had enunciated the words more carefully.

All in all, this production of "Ruddigore" was very good. It would have been better if the director had left Gilbert's work alone.

SULLIVAN THANKSGIVING DAY

At 2 p.m. on August 6 at the Buxton Parish Church, the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society hosted a Sullivan Thanksgiving which began with an hour-long lecture by the celebrated Sullivan biographer, Prof. Arthur Jacobs. The talk was most fascinating. It was after the formal part of the lecture that Jacobs was asked by a member of the audience if he felt that Sullivan ranks among the top British composers such as Henry Purcell and Benjamin Britten. Mr. Jacobs' response was interesting. He said that he doesn't feel that Sullivan ranks with Purcell and Britten as a composer. However, "I don't think we have so many top ones that we can do without the very, very good second class ones.". Prof. Jacobs presentation was followed by Mr. Steven Turnbull who played unusual G&S recordings on an old phonograph. At 4 p.m., a thanksgiving service was held with Brian Fieldhouse conducting the festival choir and Michael Williams at the organ. Soloists included Betsy Walker (Philadelphia), Stella Whitehouse (Colne), and David Lace (Huddersfield).

PRINCESS IDA

Tennyson wrote his long poem, "The Princess", in 1847. Gilbert used Tennyson's work for a work of his own in 1870. And eventually, in 1883, that work became "Princess Ida". On August 9, in Buxton, the Lamplighters Music Theatre of San Francisco performed "Princess Ida". The hosts of this "amateur" production were Roberta Morrell and Kenneth Sandford. Sandford told the audience of the splendid welcome he had received from the people of San Francisco in 1979, when the DOC was on tour in the city. Ms. Morrell told the story of a stage cannon for a production of "Princess Ida" - the cannon ball dropped out of the end of the gun and rolled on the stage floor. Whereupon one of the Daughters Of The Plough, with mighty effort, lifted the ball and threw it over the walls of Castle Adamant.

This was one of the better productions during the G&S Festival. The sets were entirely satisfactory - made more so by the marvelous lighting. There were some cuts in the libretto. Cut were the lines during the dialogue between Hildebrand, Florian, and Cyril in which Hildebrand remarks "his 'sting' is present, though his 'stung' is past" (which has been voted the worst Gilbert line in a Gilbert & Sullivan opera). Cut also were parts of Ida's introductory speech: "Let no one care a penny how she looks". Blanche's "Come mighty must" was cut. "Are men stuck in her throat!" was cut. I wonder why. I always liked the line myself.

Rick Williams' Gama was a delight! Wonderful acting and singing! Wonderful costume and makeup! I should mention that all of the costumes were perfectly appropriate. They even thought of giving Ida a beat-up, dirty dress to wear after she fell in the stream! Ida's second act costume by Melissa Wortman and Jeff Noll was a work of art - amazing to see the silver armor set with all those diamonds - and the crown incorporated into the helmet! What a piece of work!! Arac, Guron, and Scythius were played by Tim Hart, Mike Dadarian, and Jeffrey Beaudoin. They were all splendid and

worked together in some stage business which was entirely appropriate. Their acting and singing couldn't be beat! Melissa was played by Stacey L. Helley. What a fine actress!! Great voice too! Kathi Brotemarkle's Psyche was beautifully underplayed. Kathi is also a great actress with a lovely singing voice! Her attraction to Cyril was entirely believable. The only problem with the entire first act was the lady who played an old fortune teller. Her part should be left out entirely. In the first place, she wasn't really old and couldn't act old. Most importantly, though she disrupted the first act, she added nothing. The chorus was very well-rehearsed and strong, and they added greatly to the overall impact of the work. However, there could have been a few more male voices. The third act "Death to the invader" was very well done! Blanche, played by Willa Berliner Anderson, was an unusually fine actress. I thought that her flower-mutilation scene was particularly poignant. I was so glad to see that after having been expelled by Blanche for bringing chessmen into Castle Adamant, Sacharissa was reinstated by Ida herself later in the same act. This was beautifully handled, with subtlety too, without disrupting the rest of the action and without adding a word of dialogue. Very clever and appropriate!

When Hilarion, Florian, and Cyril entered Adamant, they found a book - left behind by one of the students - which explained the goals of the college. So, all they had to do was read to each other in the song: "They intend to send a wire to the moon". Very clever! I wondered how the three learned so much about the goals of Ida's college. By the way, the lines were changed in the song to include the appropriate "And the kings they'll be impeaching by and by." In this production, Florian actually went into the college buildings to steal gowns for the three to wear. This makes more sense than just finding them in a heap on the ground. Ida's words: "And I will drown the shrieks of those that fall" was cut, as was Ida's "I have been wrong - I see my error now". Gilbert directed that Hilarion, Cyril, and Florian should be victorious in the fight with Ida's brothers. But, in this production, the fight was rather silly and Gama's sons won. Hilarion was well-played and sung by Baker Peeples. Also great were Len Moors as Cyril and Jonathan S. Spencer as Florian. Claire Kelm was very impressive as Ida. One always knew when she was on stage. One constantly felt her power as well as her gentler spirit. It was because of her wonderful portrayal of the role of Ida that at the end one did not feel she lost, but won! A great cast doing a wonderful production!

IOLANTHE

On August 10, the Hancock County G&S, Maine, performed Gilbert & Sullivan's "Iolanthe". The Hancock group were the winners of the 1994 G&S Festival with their production of "Utopia Limited". I was somewhat worried when I read in the program that there would be children in the Hancock company - fearing that they would be used to elicit an "Oh, isn't that cute" response from the audience. But, the children were merely young fairies and acted well with the rest of the group. The fairies (all 26 of them) themselves were very good. Their dancing and general choreography for act one added greatly to the overall work - magical! The tiny flashing lights in their head garlands were used to good effect. After the overture and before the curtain rose, two of the playful little fairies stuck their heads out from behind the curtain to peek at the audience. As far as the whole show is concerned, whenever the females were on stage, everything went well. The same cannot be said for the male chorus. The male chorus was generally weak - excepting during their first entrance when they were accompanied by two on-stage trumpet players and a bagpipe band. The male chorus had a lot of trouble with precision, enunciation, and never seemed to be able to begin a song together. I also noticed a lack of bass voices. Edwin Schneider and David Wilson as Mountarat and Tolloller were clearly the weakest members of the cast. I understand that Schneider had had serious health problems recently. But, in any case, his singing was very poor, his acting was worse, and he forgot his lines. He made Wilson seem worse than he probably was. "When Britain really ruled the waves" was painful to watch!

Virginia Cunningham played the Queen of the Fairies to perfection even though her singing voice was not what you'd call melodious. This is a great tribute to her acting ability. She looked like the Nibelung hoard with legs. That is, she wore a long, coarsely-woven gold dress and she was massive. She was a very powerful Queen and you certainly didn't want to get on her wrong side. Her scepter had a magnifying glass incorporated into it, which she used to inspect Private Willis. Whenever she was to take hostile action against someone - like the Peers, she wore a clever Valkyrie-like helmet with a huge lobster claw sticking out of each side of it. Her tree-trunk staff had more lobster pincers attached. And she wore a claw necklace. Very clever work by John Cunningham and Rob Smith - designers of the Queen's costume! The Queen's fury was delicious to see in "Bearded by these puny mortals". "Through the grouse and salmon season" was changed to "through the moose and salmon season". For some reason, in this production, Strephon was made a Peer by the Queen of the Fairies and not merely a Member of Parliament.

Roland Dube as the Lord Chancellor was the most annoying member of the cast. His whining, prancing, and mincing-about on the stage showed not the slightest trace of dignity. Those things and his apparent belief that acting consists of making silly faces, made me wince whenever he was on stage. The "Nightmare Song" was sung with him standing down-stage. He had brought a cute chancellor-dressed teddy bear with him, but there was no there indication in his dress or manner that he had been having a bad night. I wonder what he was doing out in the Palace Yard, Westminster, in the middle of the night anyway! I had always presumed that the Chancellor's lines "Recollect yourself, I pray" were intended to be directed to Strephon. But, in this production, with his back to Strephon, who was across the stage, the Chancellor directed his remarks specifically to Lord Mountarat.

Sarah Schneider, as Phyllis, was very good. However, I would have preferred her to portray Phyllis more as the "dumb-blonde" type of silly girl. She sang beautifully though, and her acting was quite good for the Phyllis she imagined. I do wish that Phyllis could have hidden behind a bush or something when she (and the Peers) overheard Strephon's conversation with Iolanthe. In this production, they were all clearly visible. I felt it inappropriate that Strephon and Phyllis should be french-kissing on stage. Any kissing done in a Gilbert & Sullivan opera should be extremely chaste. Iolanthe was played by Leslie Michaud. Her voice was satisfactory for the role - but not great. Her acting could improve. I should feel sympathy for Iolanthe. But, I felt nothing. Upon Iolanthe's first act entrance from the pond, she was not covered with weeds, but a veil served nicely in this production. Private Willis (John Mason Cunningham) was very good. He was portrayed as a Scotsman - which gave the producer an excuse to have a bagpipe band play the Procession of Peers on stage. Willis sang and spoke with a strong Scottish accent. Though this was interesting, I wonder why it was necessary and what it added to the Gilbert & Sullivan experience. Willis leaned to the left when he sang the word "liberal" and to the right when he sang the word "conservative". Good!

The sets were generally poor (in the sense that they were cheaply constructed and few in number), but one could hardly expect everything to be shipped from Maine. The platform, however, was used to good advantage for the Queen's entrance in act one. The lighting helped the effect enormously during "tripping hither". I DID like the painted backdrop used in act two, which rolled at the end of the opera to reveal that we had all travelled with the cast to fairy land. It worked! The costumes were good all round.

Strephon was played satisfactorily by Francis John Vogt. He wasn't "inclined to be stout" that I could see. His costume was rustic and traditional. His acting was very good, but his vocal range is limited and he had trouble with the lower notes.

Leila (Debra Hangge) explained to the audience the name she gives to the fairies' influence over Parliament. She calls it "Peer pressure". Leila's and Celia's "In vain to us you plead - Don't go!" was enforced by the use of their magic wands, which held the Peers in place. (Mary Ellen Martel portrayed Celia.) The Queen's "Oh, foolish fay" second verse was entirely changed to refer to Ian Smith, Festival Director, instead of to Captain Shaw. Since Mr. Smith could only be said to put out fires in the poetic sense, Gilbert's meaning was lost. But, the joke was a good one - particularly since Smith was sitting in the first row of the Dress Circle at the time. He heard something like: "Oh Ian Smith, type of true Savoyard, with energy never lagging, when will your tongue stop wagging?". It brought down the house! If Iolanthe, as in this production, wears no veil when she meets with the Chancellor, the staging can be very awkward because the Chancellor cannot look at Iolanthe without recognizing her as his "long-dead bride". Iolanthe used a magic spell on the Chancellor to put him into a trance whereby he was forced to attend to her. The spell was broken immediately after "plead for my boy - he loves". When the Queen appeared to kill Iolanthe for having betrayed her vows twice, the Queen intended to bash Iolanthe's brains out with the tree trunk the Queen carried. This is an interesting method of death I've not seen since "Das Rheingold". No wings sprouted on Willis nor the Peers at the opera's end. But, the choreography was sufficient to convey movement to Fairyland. The Festival Orchestra was conducted by John Mallery Haskell. The tempi were generally good. But, I thought I noticed a few changes in key to accommodate the singers.

THE GONDOLIERS

According to Ian Smith, the Festival Director, "the concept of the Festival Production is to bring together international enthusiasts who are in Buxton and who want to perform." The auditions for this year's Festival Production were held in Buxton on August 5. Over 80 people tried-out. Most of the cast had not met each other before and I was amazed at how quickly this production of "The Gondoliers" was put together and how wonderful it was. The only performance took place on August 11. The Director for the production was Alistair Donkin, who had already been seen in a number of capacities during the course of the Festival. He directed the Houston presentation of "HMS Pinafore" and played Sir Joseph Porter. He also played John Wellington Wells in the Festival's D'Oyly Carte production of

"The Sorcerer". The cast was huge. There were 36 in the chorus! The sets were great. So were the costumes. The first act costumes were the typical Italian variety. For the second act, the entire cast (excepting the Inquisitor) wore expensive, perfectly-tailored formals - a remarkable feat considering there was less than a week to prepare them.

The only libretto changes that I noticed were when Giuseppe offered the Inquisitor "kidney pie and 'mushy peas'" instead of "macaroni and a rusk". This was an inside joke appreciated by those in the audience who attended the Festival last year and had their dinners at the Festival Club. The Inquisitor explained that there was no hurry to interview the king's nurse because she was checking the results of the national lottery (instead of her having "all the illustrated papers"). The dancing in this production was very well done - particularly the Cachucha!

Tessa, Stacey Helley (from San Francisco), who was such a delight as Melissa in "Princess Ida", was seductively "a silly" in this production. Her performance can't be praised enough! Gianetta was Joan Rawstron (from Burnley, Lancashire), who played the part to perfection. She had just a touch of shrew in her (she slapped Marco in the face twice - hard - during the performance) and will clearly "wear the pants" in the marriage. But, she also had tenderness in the lovely song "Kind sir, you cannot have the heart", as did her "sister", Tessa, in "When a merry maiden marries". Both Tessa and Gianetta were also sufficiently bouncy when necessary. Entirely believable performances from both!

Casilda (Stella Whitehouse, from Colne, Lancashire) and Luiz (Nathan Wight, from Houston) were both perfect. Nathan had played Ralph in the Houston "Pinafore", and, like in that earlier production, he couldn't have been better. His duet with Casilda was tender and romantic. And both sang beautifully. All of the pairs of lovers were young and attractive - particularly the handsome Paul Lazell (from Essex; he did the set design for the Essex Group's "Pirates of Penzance") as Giuseppe, who was a great favorite with the ladies in the audience. Lazelle was spectacular in his dancing, speaking, and singing. He had the necessary vitality and stage presence. Marco, as portrayed by Andrew Follin of St. Helens, was, like his "brother", full of enthusiasm and danced well. Moreover, he could hit the highest notes with ease.

The Duchess (Lisa Young of Houston; the Buttercup in "Pinafore") also acted and sang beautifully. The same can be said for the Duke (Brian Boardman of Arbroath, Scotland) and the Grand Inquisitor (Peter Featherstone of Derby). The Adjudicator thought that Featherstone wasn't pompous and grand enough. But, I don't agree. His portrayal reminded me of the undertaker stereotype, which is a perfectly acceptable interpretation for the role.

The villain of the production was, again, the director. In this case, Alistair Donkin, who should know better, interjected slapstick comedy while the principals were singing. Most of the inappropriate "humor" in "Gondoliers" was the result of the Duke being silly with spaghetti during Don Alhambra's act one song, "I stole the Prince"; the Inquisitor getting too "friendly" with Casilda, Gianetta, and Tessa; and the Duke trying to get a reaction from the servant during the Duchess' song "On the day when I was wedded". In each case, audience laughter made it impossible to hear the other characters. I admit that the scene during which the Duchess sings to her daughter about her relationship with her husband while the Duke is standing right there can get uncomfortable. What is the Duke supposed to be doing? Just standing there pretending not to hear? Personally, I think that I would have him step out onto the balcony in mock indignation after he accuses the Duchess of being cruel. And he would return just in time to hear his daughter refer to him as "shady".

"The Gondoliers", while not competing as a whole with the other amateur productions, did allow individual cast members to compete in the "Best Male Voice", "Best Female Voice", "Best Supporting Male", "Best Supporting Female", "Best Male Performer", "Best Female Performer", and "Best Character Performance" categories. Despite lapses in the director's sense of good taste, the production was a delight!

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR

On the last night (August 12) of the Festival, St. Mary's High School performed "Jesus Christ Superstar". The musical was written by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice (whose names were not mentioned anywhere in the program) in 1970, which makes it over 25 years old. When it was written, the Viet Nam war was still ongoing and the world was full of young people protesting the world left to them by the older generation. For those times, "JCS" worked. But it is wildly anachronistic today. Firstly, the music is not very good. Only "I Don't Know How To Love Him" has the viability for survival. Secondly, it is an inappropriate production to tack-on to the end of a Gilbert and Sullivan Festival. Thirdly, it is a poor choice for the St. Mary's group, who proved that they have exceptional talent with their vibrantly vital, entirely non-traditional production of "The Gondoliers", which won the second prize during last year's Festival. The program for the production states that: "The opera dramatically reminds us of the pathos and

violence of events which we very often take for granted.". What Christian takes the suffering and death of Christ for granted? While such irreverence as pervades "JCS" was somewhat appropriate in the early '70s, it is not valid today. Take, for example, the lines sung by Christ's apostles: "Always hoped that I'd be an apostle. Knew that I would make it if I tried. Then when we retire we can write the gospels, so they'll still talk about us when we've died.". Are these lines cute? Witty?

There were 74 students in the production of "Jesus Christ Superstar". While the quality of the production was marginally satisfactory, it seems a waste to do such a show. The vocal demands of "JCS" are entirely beyond what any High School can hope to provide in a reasonable manner (unless they're teaching "Falsetto 101" in British High Schools these days). "JCS" requires mature voices. Further, while one can suspend disbelief seeing a teenager as a member of the Baratarian court, it is considerably more difficult to picture such youth in the role of apostle. Besides the delightful works of Gilbert & Sullivan, there are scores of musicals by Meredith Wilson, Rogers & Hammerstein, Lerner & Lowe, Kern, and Bernstein which would be entirely appropriate for High School students to perform.

Please St. Mary's, give us more Gilbert & Sullivan!



Well, this is all S/A Cole could get in the issue this time. We'll try and get some more old business cleaned up in time for the next issue. As a matter of fact, she's currently working on a plan to compile the past year-and-a-half of news she has in piles around her workroom.

Before I forget, you've probably noticed the self-addressed postcard included in this mailing. We're having another of our infamous drawings. The question this time is:

**Can you, or anyone you know, use LP
recordings? and
If you can use LP recordings, which G&S
operas do you have on record?**

the Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society has a number of unused LPs that had been bought to donate to libraries, only the libraries we know of aren't collecting LPs any more. They aren't doing any good sitting in S/A Cole's basement, so we're trying to find places that can use them.

In the meantime, Do keep in touch!

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