



∞ NEGASS EVENTS ∞

**NEGASS Meet-Up, April 10, 2015, 7 pm til ?,
Vinebrook Tavern, 20 Waltham St., Lexington, MA**

Join NEGASS members for a friendly, relaxed Meet-Up at the cozy Vinebrook Tavern in Lexington. Have a drink, sample the culinary treats, and chat with fellow G & S lovers about your favorite shows, beloved characters, and awesome productions.

This is NEGASS' first G & S meet-up and we hope that it will be a great success. So come along and bring your friends.

<http://vinebrooktavern.com/>; 781-863-2012

NEGASS Annual Meeting & LMLO - *The Mikado*, May 3, 2015, 2 pm, Park Avenue Church, 50 Paul Revere Rd., Arlington, MA

NEGASS is happy to announce a two-for-one! We will hold our **Annual Meeting** in conjunction with a **Last Minute Light Opera - *The Mikado***. The place is the Park Avenue Church in Arlington and the date is May 3.

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**2015 Board of Directors Election May 3, 2015
- Call for Nominations**

Open board positions are: **President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Program Director**. If you are a NEGASS member in good standing and would like to be a candidate for one of these positions, please send your name and a brief summary of your qualifications to sec AT negass DOT org.

President - oversees the work of the board of directors and runs board meetings

Vice-President - supports the president and other board members

Treasurer - maintains the NEGASS accounts, writes checks

Program Director - manages the events calendar for the year

Last Minute Light Opera, May 3, 2015 - *The Mikado*

Please send your request for roles to sec AT negass DOT org; don't delay - May is fast approaching.

Roles for *The Mikado* -

- *The Mikado of Japan* (bass or bass-baritone)
- *Nanki-Poo, His Son, disguised as a wandering minstrel* (tenor)
- *Ko-Ko, The Lord High Executioner of Titipu* (comic baritone)
- *Pooh-Bah, Lord High Everything Else* (baritone)
- *Pish-Tush, A Noble Lord* (baritone)
- *Yum-Yum, A Ward of Ko-Ko, engaged to Ko-Ko* (soprano)



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GENERAL NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS AND REVIEWS may be sent to editor AT negass DOT org .

MEMBERSHIP NEGASS membership dues are \$25. Please join NEGASS online at www.negass.org, or contact memb AT negass DOT org.

THE TRUMPET BRAY Members receive the Bray as a PDF email attachment. To receive a paper copy of the Bray via US mail, please send a request to editor AT negass DOT org. All editions including the current one are available at www.negass.org.

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



www.negass.org

- Pitti-Sing, A Ward of Koko (soprano or mezzo-soprano)
- Peep-Bo, A Ward of Koko (soprano or mezzo-soprano)
- Katisha, *An Elderly lady, in love with Nanki-Poo* (contralto)

The audience is the chorus. Scores will be provided; we would be most appreciative if you can bring your own.

***H.M.S. Pinafore*, NEGASS/Longwood Opera, June 7, 2015, 2:30 pm, Christ Episcopal Church, 1132 Highland Ave., Needham, MA**

NEGASS is thrilled to announce the cast and crew of the Longwood Opera/New England Gilbert & Sullivan Society Last Minute Light Opera performance of *H.M.S. Pinafore!* This is our eighth collaboration, and many of our talented performers recently sang in sold-out concerts with Cape Symphony, so don't miss them together onstage again. It will be an amazing show! Join us on Sunday, June 7 at 2:30 p.m. at Christ Episcopal Church, 1132 Highland Avenue, in Needham, MA.

The audience is the chorus, so bring your scores and sing along! Costumes and kids are always welcome. Admission is free, but donations to our worthy organizations are always gratefully accepted at the door. We look forward to seeing you aboard with Her Majesty's noble crew!

Our outstanding cast includes:

- Conductor - **Kate Meifert**
- Pianist - **Jim Hay**
- The Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph Porter - **Lonnie Powell** (cover: *Tony Parkes*)
- Captain Corcoran - **Tom Frates** (cover: *Thaddeus Bell*)
- Ralph Rackstraw, Able Seaman - **Josh Collier** (cover: *David Bell*)
- Dick Deadeye, Able Seaman - **Mike Lague** (cover: *Steve Lebron*)
- Bill Bobstay, Boatswain's Mate - **Randy Glidden** (cover: *Larry Millner*)
- Bob Becket, Carpenter's Mate - **Tony Parkes** (cover: *Tim Daughters*)
- Josephine - **Rebecca Hains** (cover: *Carolyn Kelly Schwartz*)
- Cousin Hebe - **Connie Benn** (cover: *Christine Petkus*)
- Mrs. Cripps (Little Buttercup) **Angela Jajko** - (cover: *Shannon Lebron*)
- A Tiny Princess Sailor - **Margaux Lebron**

⌘ NEGASS SCHOOL OUTREACH ⌘

Salem Students Star In NEGASS *Pirates of Penzance!*

The following article is from *Smart Talk*, December 4, 2014, *Young America (YA)* newsletter -

[Teachers] **John Bannick** and **Cyndi Geller** of Salem really know something about gift-giving through the arts!

In honor of retired teacher **Eleanor Robinson**, they brought YAMA's *Pirates of Penzance* program from the New England Gilbert and Sullivan Society to Bates Elementary School.

Pirates always features students from its host school as lively chorus members. This production had another very special guest. As John tells it:



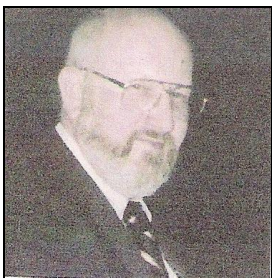
"A widow was facing her 80th birthday. Her family wanted to cheer her up. She had

absolutely no idea she would join the kiddies on stage as a pirate. But, being a former Marine officer, she suited up, sang, and had a wonderful time. They even sang Happy Birthday."

Thank you John Bannick and Cyndi Geller for all you did to arrange this incredible gift! Special thanks as well to Bates Elementary's music specialist **Ann Berman**, for preparing the student chorus for this wonderful performance!

⌘ NEGASS NEWS ⌘

The Trumpet Bray Has A New Editor



NEGASS welcomes **David de Vries** as the new Editor-in-chief of The Trumpet Bray. David will begin his tenure with our June 2015 issue. A long-time NEGASS member and G & S devotee, David brings several years' experience to the job as editor of

The eMessenger, the newsletter of Adams Square Baptist Church, Worcester MA.

It has been my privilege and pleasure these many years to publish The Trumpet Bray in collaboration with our Board of Directors and the contributions of our membership. I look forward to reading new issues and lending a hand (although I don't think it will be needed) to our new editor as he becomes the monarch of a vibrant publication.

-Martha Birnbaum

⌘ G & S NEWS ⌘

G & S Week, Road Scholar, August 23 - 28, 2015, Warwick Center, 62 Warwick Center Rd., Warwick, NY

NEGASS member **Ralph MacPhail, Jr.**, will offer a Gilbert & Sullivan Road Scholar (Elderhostel) Program at the Warwick Center in Warwick, New York, the week of August 23-28. The entire week of programming will be devoted to G&S, with emphases on *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, and *The Mikado*. For further information, visit www.RoadScholar.org (then search on "Warwick Gilbert"); and/or write to RafeMacPhail@Yahoo.com.

⌘ RECENT PRODUCTIONS ⌘

***The Mikado*, Opera Providence, August 8-10, 2014, Columbus Theatre, Providence, RI**

Having bought tickets to Opera Providence's *Mikado*, I was curious about a couple of things. I was unacquainted with the company and was looking forward to seeing how a grand opera company would treat Gilbert and Sullivan's most popular work. Also, this was the first *Mikado* production I attended since reading of the current "yellowface" controversy. (In brief, there have been objections to *Mikado* productions in several cities over the past couple of decades, on the grounds that it is offensive for people of mainly European descent to make up as Asians and that even without the makeup the show is patronizing to Japanese people. A particularly sharply worded editorial in a Seattle newspaper this summer attracted the attention of national media and sparked a heated debate.) I was curious to see how Opera Providence would deal with actual or anticipated criticism.

There were a handful of people on the sidewalk protesting quietly and peacefully; they made no

attempt to block entrance to the theater, but handed flyers to anyone who cared to accept them. At curtain time, the president of the company's board, who also produced the show, made some brief remarks and joked that the Pirates' Association had lodged an objection to the group's upcoming production of *The Pirates of Penzance*. I was disappointed in the audience for laughing and cheering. (Ko-Ko also worked the protesters into his "Little List" song, at the expense of rhyme and proper pronunciation.)

The house (a restored theater from the 1920s) was gorgeous. Although there were only three musicians in the pit: a pianist, a violinist, and a percussionist, the three-man orchestra did a decent job of accompanying the singers. The percussionist was employed to great advantage, the violinist less so (he seemed to be playing mostly long sustained notes while the pianist tackled the melodies). The best thing about using a small combo was that it enabled the singers to perform unmiked – something I love to experience. The quality of the voices averaged better than in many, though by no means all, community G&S productions.

Taking both singing and acting into consideration, the women impressed me more favorably than the men. The standout of the show for me was the Yum-Yum of **Allison Pohl**. Her sense of comic timing in the dialogue was better and more consistent than any of the men's, and her singing voice was lush and lovely. "The Moon and I" was exquisite; my wife pronounced it the best rendition she'd ever heard. **Roselin Osser** was a fine Pitti-Sing, suitably mischievous but not overdone. **Arielle Rogers** was so convincing as Katisha that I was astonished to read in the program that she is a recent graduate of Rhode Island College; she ably conveyed both the dragon lady and the woman scorned.

Michael DiMucci was the Nanki-Poo every director hopes for, with the looks of a matinee idol and a solid tenor voice, though some of his vowels reminded me of Gilbert's gripe: "I didn't sit up all night for my words to be distorted by this damned Italian method." **Jason Shealy** was suitably imposing as the Mikado, both visually and vocally. **Ian Pomerantz** as Pooh-Bah and **Christopher Davey** as Pish-Tush were a bit lightweight, but adequate. In the crucial role of Ko-Ko, **Andy Papas** had the strongest operatic baritone of any cast member; and his character was much more dominating than the Chaplinesque "little man" of most traditional productions. Papas' Ko-Ko was comfortable with his personal and political power – at least until things start to unravel for him – and even slightly nasty.

In general, this production was stronger musically than dramatically. **Mark Conley's** conducting was sure and his tempos were apt; the musical numbers moved right along without seeming rushed. The chorus stayed together on their entrances and cutoffs; the men were a little unbalanced (five basses and only two tenors), but the women produced a beautiful sound. The "serious" numbers came off the best: the Act I finale, "Alone and Yet Alive," and especially the Madrigal.

Director **Adrienne Boris** emphasized slapstick, to the extent that some of Gilbert's cleverer lines went unheard. It's been said that comedy is harder to play than serious drama, and many of the players had trouble getting this comedy just right. Granted, *The Mikado* is not *Iolanthe* or *The Yeomen of the Guard*, but one wants to be given a reason to cheer for the young lovers, or to fear and then feel for Katisha. There wasn't much dramatic tension in the Act I finale; its effectiveness came mainly from the quality of the singing and the dignity of Katisha. And "Titwillow" became a showpiece for Papas's voice; we didn't see Ko-Ko plotting his approach or Katisha gradually melting.

I liked some of the directorial choices. During "Braid the Raven Hair," a couple of the girls were absorbed in (apparently authentic) Japanese women's magazines, which added a comic touch without being too distracting. And Boris had the good sense to let the Madrigal singers stand still; apparently she shares my opinion that this song doesn't need a tea ceremony or croquet game to keep the audience from boredom.

The single set was more than adequate: a back wall of bamboo with shoji-screen-style doors at stage center, through which most of the leads made their entrances. The costumes were adequate, though there seemed to be an inordinate number of home furnishings in use. The makeup was inconsistent: the chorus and most leads looked like the Euro-Americans they were (a valid choice, and one I might make), but a few leads sported fantastic eyebrows and Fu Manchu mustaches.

Overall, I'm glad I went; this production had much to commend it, particularly on the musical side, with perhaps a little room for improvement in comedic timing.

- **Tony Parkes**

Upcoming NEGASS Events

<i>G & S Meet-Up</i> New NEGASS Event!	April 10 (from 7pm on), 2015 The Vinebrook Tavern www.vinebrooktavern.com see Page 1 for details	The Vinebrook Tavern 20 Waltham St. Lexington, MA
<i>NEGASS Annual Meeting & LMLO Mikado</i> NEGASS	May 3, 2015 (2 pm) see Page 1 to request a role in <i>The Mikado</i> email editor AT negass DOT org	Park Avenue Church 50 Paul Revere St. Arlington, MA
<i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i> NEGASS/Longwood Opera	June 7 (2:30 pm), 2015 www.longwoodopera.org see Page 1 for details	Christ Episcopal Church 1132 Highland Ave. Needham, MA
Summer Concert Series NEGASS/NELO	July 8, 15, 22, 29, 2015 (7:30 pm) Summer Concert Series www.newenglandlightopera.org	Hamilton Wenham Community House 284 Bay Road Hamilton, MA

Upcoming Events

<i>Iolanthe</i> Harvard-Radcliffe G&S Players	March 27-April 5, 2015 http://hrfsp.org/happening-now	Agassiz Theater 5 James St. Cambridge MA
<i>Gondoliers</i> New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players	May 15-17, 2015 http://nygasp.org/current_season/new_york_season	NYU Skirball Center for the Performing Arts 302 West 91st Street, New York, NY
<i>Utopia, Limited</i> MITG&SP	May 1, 2, 7, 8 (8 pm), 3, 9 (2 pm), 2015 http://gsp.mit.edu	MIT Student Center Sala de Puerto Rico 84 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA
<i>G & S Road Scholar Weekend</i> Rafe MacPhail	August 23 - 28, 2015 http://www.roadsscholar.org/programs/search_res.asp?keyword=Warwick+Gilbert	Warwick Center 62 Warwick Center Road Warwick, NY
<i>Iolanthe</i> CT G&S Society	October 3 (2 & 7:30 pm) - 4 (2 pm), 2015 http://ctgands.org/	Valley Regional High School 256 Kelsey Hill Rd Deep River, CT