



∞ NEGASS NEWS ∞

NEGASS Annual Meeting: Election Results for the 2014- 2015 Board of Directors

NEGASS held its annual meeting on Sunday, June 22, at a lovely private home in a nearby village. All candidates for election to the Board of Directors were elected unanimously:

- Vice President - **Angela Jajko** (incumbent)
- Program Chairman - **Angela Jajko** (incumbent)
- Secretary - **Martha Birnbaum** (incumbent)
- Members-at-large - **Kaori Emery, Carolyn Schwartz** (incumbents)
- Elaine Crane, Tom Frates** (new members)

Congratulations and a hearty welcome to the new Board of Directors for 2014 - 2015!



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NEGASS/NELO Sponsors Successful Summer Concert Series in Hamilton, MA, in July, 2014

For the first time ever, NEGASS collaborated with New England Light Opera (NELO) to produce the 11th Annual Summer Concert Series on Wednesday nights in July at the Hamilton-Wenham Community House. NELO began this series in 2003 and thought that 2013 would be the final year, but NEGASS stepped up to continue the series for its loyal audience. Our collaboration was a total success, as NEGASS produced four concerts to full or sold-out houses, standing ovations, and general acclaim from both our audiences and performers.

Naturally, we started with *Here's a How-de-do!*, an evening of Gilbert & Sullivan scenes with a program coordinated by former NEGASS President **Rebecca Hains**. We continued the series with *Broadway Lights* (songs and scenes from the great musical theater shows), *Songs from the Gilded Stage* (arias and scenes from opera and operetta), and *Cabaret Nights* (an intimate evening of jazz standards and torch songs), with programs coordinated by VP and Program Chair **Angela Jajko**. All four concerts were music directed and accompanied by President **Thomas Dawkins** at the piano, and the roster of 27 volunteer singers (which may be found on our website) included a dozen NEGASS members as well as members of NELO, Boston Lyric Opera, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and many other organizations.



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

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

NEGASS held raffles at every concert that were hugely popular, and we'd like to thank Boston Lyric Opera, Cape Cod Symphony Orchestra, and Smith & Wollensky for their generous donations of gift certificates and concert tickets. We are proud to have such incredible organizations as our sponsors, and with such impressive programs and overwhelming audience response, NEGASS hopes to continue this venture well into the future!

➤ NEGASS SCHOOL OUTREACH ➤

G & S Goes to Summer Camp!

On July 25 NEGASS brought its successful School Outreach *Pirates of Penzance* program to a summer camp in Townsend, MA. For the children who made up the chorus, it was 'fantasy week' and a perfect opportunity to enter into the magical world of G&S. The children were prepared ahead of time by two counselors, a rising high school senior and college freshman, and to the children's delight, the counselors enthusiastically joined in the chorus.

NEGASS members **Susan Larson** and **Elaine Crane** organized, produced, and sang in the program (as Ruth and Mabel respectively), joined by tenor **Brendan Buckley** (Frederick), baritone **Tom Frates** (the Pirate King) and accompanist **Tom Dawkins**, NEGASS President. Much effort takes place behind the scenes to be sure each show flows smoothly. Our coordinator works closely via email with the host site to set them up with the materials, gather details about the location, and answer any questions that arise.



The morning of the show starts early. The backdrop set, several adult costume pieces, and a giant

pirate chest is housed, loaded and brought to each performance by Elaine. Susan houses, loads and hauls a carful of bins - containing all the children's costumes, numerous props and costume pieces, background scenery, a stepladder, and curtains for the set. The first half hour is spent constructing the set and determining how to adapt our show to the physical space. And as we construct the set we continue to warm up, run dialogue, and consult with site personnel on last minute details.

At 1 hour before the show, the children in the chorus arrive, having already met 4 times with a school music teacher. Using materials provided by Opera for the Young, the students learn about Gilbert & Sullivan, the plot, key vocabulary, chorus bits and lines from several scenes in the show. Three or four

students are pre-selected to be the constables and have some features lines that inevitably get the biggest laughs every time. There are 18 onstage choristers playing wards, pirates and constables, and often up to 18 more singing from the quite visible sidelines. Also, the whole school can be taught some of the bits ahead of time and are welcome to sing along with the chorus during the show.

At the student rehearsal, we teach the choristers some easy motions and choreography. To get them comfortable with the flow we do a quick 'dress rehearsal.' After reminding the students that the most important thing is to have fun, it is costume time! All the students start out as pirates and love putting on their costumes and bandanas. Oftentimes, you will see students arrive with temporary pirate tattoos on their arms -- evidence of their joyful anticipation of the day.

We quickly slip into our own costumes and the show is off and running!

The students are onstage for the entire 45-minute adaptation by Opera for the Young and are the stars of our show. The most important job of the adult performers is to make sure the students are comfortable and happily engaged in the performance. During the show, we often are whispering under our breath gentle reminders and encouragement. After the final bows, we acknowledge our hosts, NEGASS, GWO, Gilbert and Sullivan and then have a Q&A. We are typically asked some variation of the same questions every time:



hemming by Angela Jajko)

Q. Who made the costumes?
A. Elaine made the adult costumes, and Susan's family made the student costumes (with some fabulous

Q. Are Frederick and Mabel married in real life? **A.** No :)

Q. How did you learn to sing so well? **A.** We loved music in elementary school and we practice, practice, practice

Q. I like Power Rangers! **A.** That's nice...next?

Q. How old are you? **A.** Next question.

Q. How long did it take to learn? **A.** The kids practiced 4 times with your music teacher, and once with us today - aren't they amazing?? (Applause!) The adults practiced over a period of one month.

Q. I loved when... (several variations of re-living the moments)

After the Q&A, we take a group photo with the students. The parents and teachers swarm for pictures of their students like Hollywood paparazzi. We then change out of our costumes, deconstruct the set, and pack everything up. We also hold a debriefing so that we can learn from each experience how better to meet the needs of our partnering schools.



On August 1 we have double shows at another summer camp at BB&N in Cambridge. After that, we will pack things away until the fall.

We have a showcase performance with Young Audiences of Massachusetts in mid-September. This will put our educational program in front of countless PTO arts committee members from around Massachusetts looking for arts outreach experiences for their schools.

Our program is made possible by the enthusiastic support of the NEGASS Board of Directors, by Opera for the Young's tight, clever adaptation, and by our rewarding collaboration with Greater Worcester Opera. NELO graciously lent us a pipe and drape set to help us get started. It is a financially self-sustaining program which has already provided over 1500 students with a taste of piratical G&S fun. Hard work, to be sure, but it is a privilege to bring this G&S treasure to local children!

-Susan Craft Larson

➤ NEGASS DONATION ➤

NEGASS recently donated a large number of librettos of all the G & S operettas to the Wellesley Free Library in Wellesley, MA. The librettos come from the NEGASS archives, and are all in excellent condition.

We have found that audience members appreciate our loan of full scores at G & S shows, but do not request the librettos, which are text and dialogue only. Libraries can make good use of librettos and Wellesley was happy to receive our donation. They will share extra copies with the Newton Library.

MEET A SAVOYARD

The Trumpet Bray Interviews Bill Remmers

If you attended the NEGASS Sing-Out on May 31 in Sudbury, you were in for a double treat.

Complementing our multi-talented local performers was **William Remmers**, a visitor from New York who dazzled the audience with his rich baritone, droll delivery, comedic timing, and general zaniness. At the NEGASS Sing-Out Bill practiced his stage magic as Sir Joseph Porter in *H.M.S. Pinafore* (this lucky writer was his Cousin Hebe), then as Florian in *Princess Ida*, and with no sign of fatigue, finished off the event as Reginald Bunthorne in *Patience*.

Bill is the founder and director of *Utopia Opera*, a New York City company dedicated to presenting opera as limitless entertainment enjoyable to all. *Utopia Opera* presents G & S and often less-performed operas, all in the original languages, with a professional cast of young as well as experienced singers.



The Trumpet Bray interviewed Bill recently to learn more about his background and what led him to become both an outstanding musician and an avid practitioner of the Gilbert &

Sullivan canon. Bill started acting at the age of 3, and continued in theater and in rock bands through high school. He started listening to opera, was captivated, and soon had added singing to his acting and band playing. As he says, he jumped right in, started studying voice, continued to build his acting career, and also became quite proficient at conducting.

Bill wasn't raised with G & S, but while in high school he started listening to *The Pirates of Penzance*,

loving the dialogue as much as the music and becoming a devotee of Arthur Sullivan. In three months he had gone through all 13 operas, and this enchantment led to his immersing himself not only in singing roles but in conducting. In fact, *Pirates* was his first conducting job.

Bill founded *Utopia Opera* in 2011, and it has shown steady growth. The company presents opera as entertainment for all, and G & S is a perfect serio-comic vehicle for drawing in a diverse audience.



The company got started with a Kickstarter campaign and continues with donations and ticket sales. Full operatic productions are accompanied by a 15 - 20 piece orchestra, smaller productions by a piano. Shows are performed at

Hunter College's Lang Recital Hall, at New York University, and at the NY Gilbert & Sullivan Society.

Bill has enjoyed his two Sing-Outs with NEGASS (2011 and 2014) and would like to continue the collaboration. See what *Utopia Opera* is up to at www.utopiaopera.org (give their Facebook icon a "like"). Even better, take a trip to NYC to enjoy *Utopia Opera* for G & S and other shows.

-Martha Birnbaum

G & S NEWS

Longwood Opera Performs G & S

Longwood Opera presents "An Evening of Gilbert & Sullivan" on August 5, 2014, at 7:30 pm at Christ Episcopal Church in Needham. The program is coordinated by NEGASS member **Marion Leeds Carroll**, and stars eight NEGASS members in its cast - **Letitia Stevens, Juliet Cunningham, Tony Parkes, Marion Leeds Carroll, Elaine Crane, Josh Collier, Angela Jajko, and Kate Meifert**. The inimitable James Hay provides piano accompaniment.

The program is rich and varied:

- Climbing over rocky mountain, *The Pirates of Penzance*
Letitia Stevens, Sara Michale Smith, all women

- If somebody there chanced to be, *Ruddigore*
- Rebecca Wright
- Come Mighty Must, *Princess Ida*
- Letitia Stevens
- The Bell Trio, *HMS Pinafore*
- Juliet Cunningham, Lyman Opie, Tony Parkes
- Sorry her lot, *HMS Pinafore*
- Marion Leeds Carroll
- I have a song to sing - oh!, *The Yeomen of the Guard*
- Elaine Crane, Benjamin Morse
- 'Tis done! I am a bride, *The Yeomen of the Guard*
- Sara Michale Smith
- Nightmare Song, *Iolanthe*
- Tony Parkes
- The hours creep on apace, *HMS Pinafore*
- Elaine Crane

Intermission

- The sun, whose rays, *The Mikado*
- Rebecca Lightcap
- Scene, including all dialogue, *The Pirates of Penzance*:
• Now for the pirate's lair
• A paradox
• Away, away
• - Joshua Collier, Angela Jajko, Katherine Meifert
- I am the very model of a modern major general, *The Pirates of Penzance*
- Benjamin Morse
- Hail Poetry, *The Pirates of Penzance*
- Katherine Meifert, all singers plus audience

⌘ G & S TRIVIA QUIZ* ⌘

1. In 'Princess Ida', to what condiment does King Hildebrand compare himself?

Salt, Sugar, Sauce, Pepper

2. How many wheels are there on the third form of transport the Lord Chancellor uses in the Nightmare Song from 'Iolanthe'?

3, 2, 4, No wheels

3. In 'The Mikado', what, according to Ko-Ko, is "the singular anomaly"?

4. What is the first 'ology' mentioned by John Wellington Wells in his introductory aria, 'My name is John Wellington Wells' from 'The Sorcerer'?

Tautology, Biology, Demonology, Astrology

5. How many lovesick maidens are after Reginald Bunthorne in 'Patience'?

20, 25, 30, 35

6. What words do "When the night wind howls" ('Ruddigore') and "We are warriors three" ('Princess Ida') have in common?

Tra-la-la, Ha-ha, Fa-la, Aha

7. What does the rich attorney's elderly ugly daughter need to have behind her to make her pass for 43, according to the Learned Judge in 'Trial by Jury'?

Sunlight, Dust, Light, Mist

8. The group of actors in 'The Grand Duke' are going to "produce [their] magnificent classical revival" of which show?

Tristan and Isolde, Romeo and Juliet, Troilus and Cressida, Antony and Cleopatra

9. Which of these words does NOT go before 'condescending' in "I am a courtier grave and serious" from 'The Gondoliers'?

Dreadfully, Terribly, Confoundedly, Deucedly

10. In 'Ruddigore', what instrument does Robin Oakapple mention in "My boy, you may take it from me"?

Fiddle, Bass, Horn, Trumpet



Answers:

1 - Pepper; 2 - 2; 3 - Lady novelist; 4 - Tautology; 5 - 20;
6 - Ha-ha; 7 - Light; 8 - Troilus and Cressida;
9 - Terribly; 10 - Trumpet.

* www.funtrivia.com

Upcoming NEGASS Events

<i>Pirates of Penzance</i> NEGASS School Outreach	August, 2014 Adaptation of <i>Pirates</i> for elementary schools	Buckingham Brown & Nichols-Cambridge contact education AT negass DOT org to book for your school
<i>G & S - The Music of England</i> NEGASS/CCSO	January 17 & 18, 2015 Cape Cod Symphony Orchestra with NEGASS soloists & chorus www.capesymphony.org	Barnstable Performing Arts Center 744 West Main St. Hyannis, MA
Upcoming Events		
<i>An Evening of G & S</i> Longwood Opera	August 5 (7:30 pm), 2014 www.longwoodopera.org/summer14/august5.html	Christ Episcopal Church 1132 Highland Ave. Needham, MA
<i>The Mikado</i> Opera Providence	August 8, 9, 10, 13, 2014 www.operaprovidence.org/calendar.htm#mikado	Aug. 8-10: Columbus Theatre 270 Broadway Providence, RI Aug. 13: Blithewold Mansion 101 Bristol Ferry Road Bristol, RI
<i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i> College Light Opera	August 12 - 16, 2014 www.collegelightoperacompany.com/the-2014-season.html	Highfield Theater 58 Highfield Dr. Falmouth, MA
<i>Trial by Audience</i> original comedy based on <i>G & S</i> MITGSP	August 30 (2 pm), 31 (8 pm), September 1 (8 pm), 2014 gsp.mit.edu/productions/2014/summer/trial-audience/	MIT Student Center Sala de Puerto Rico 84 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA
<i>The Sorcerer</i> The Theater at Monmouth	September 18 - 28, 2014 www.theateratmonmouth.org	Cumston Hall Main St. Monmouth, ME
<i>The Gondoliers</i> Connecticut G & S Society	October 4 & 5, 2014 www.ctgands.org	Valley Regional High School 256 Kelsey Hill Rd. Deep River, CT
<i>Ruddigore</i> New York GASP	November 1 & 2, 2014 nygasp.org/current_season/new_york_season	NYU Skirball Center 566 LaGuardia Place New York, NY 10012
<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i> Valley Light Opera	November 7 - 16, 2014 (2 & 8 pm) info@vlo.org	Valley Light Opera Amherst, MA
<i>The Mikado</i> MITGSP	December 5 - 13, 2014 gsp.mit.edu/productions/2014/fall/mikado/	MIT Student Center Sala de Puerto Rico 84 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA