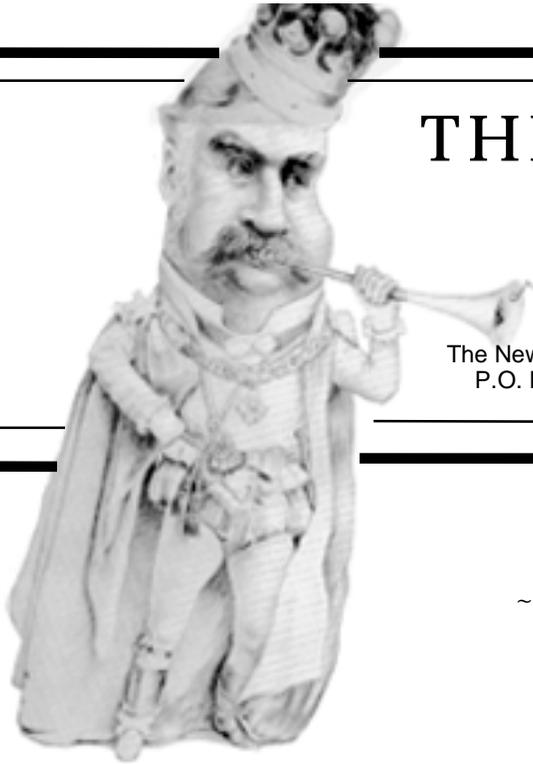


# THE TRUMPET BRAY

NEGASS  
The New England Gilbert and Sullivan Society  
P.O. Box 367, Arlington, MA 02476-0004



Vol. XXX No. 4  
January 2006

~Tripping hither, tripping thither ~

**Newton Library video**  
**January 22, 2006**  
**2:00-4:00 pm**

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### The Newton Library video, January 22: *Pineapple Poll*

This is a ballet whose story is based on Gilbert's **Bab Ballad** "The Bum Boat Woman's Story." The music is all Sullivan: mostly G&S but also including some *Cox and Box* and the Overture "Di Ballo." It was created in 1951 by the conductor **Charles Mackerras** while he was recovering from a serious illness.

The performance to be shown was created in 2004 by the **Spectrum Dance Theater** of Seattle, in conjunction with the **Seattle Gilbert and Sullivan Society**. While it originally served as a curtain-raiser for *HMS PINAFORE*, it will be our intention to show the ballet alone. Since it is fairly short at 45 minutes, we will show it twice, if there is sufficient interest, since there is an element of "Name That Tune" in watching the ballet and trying to identify all of the various snippets from the operas.



-J. DONALD SMITH

**HOW TO GET THERE BY CAR:** The **Newton Free Library** is located at **330 Homer Street, Newton Center, MA**, across from City Hall. (There's a nice big parking lot belonging to the library!) **From Route 128 (I-95)**, take Exit 24. At the end of the exit ramp, turn eastbound onto Rt.

30 (Commonwealth Ave). Proceed on Route 30 for 3.1 miles and bear **RIGHT** at the traffic light onto Homer Street. **From Watertown/Belmont/Cambridge:** Route 16 to Walnut street. Drive south on Walnut for 1.1 miles to Homer Street (one block past Comm Ave). Turn right onto Homer Street and drive past the Library to the adjacent parking lot on the left.

**HOW TO GET THERE BY PUBLIC TRANSIT:** Take the Green Line D (Riverside) trolley to Newton Highlands, exit the station at Walnut Street, turn right. Walk north up Walnut Street a little over one mile, or take the #59 bus, which on Sundays leaves Newton Highlands northbound at 12:35 and 2:05 pm. The bus stops right on the corner of Homer Street and Walnut Street. The library will be on your left. Or take the 59 bus south from Watertown Square, leaving there 1:05 pm. [It's worth calling a board member (see the masthead for numbers) if you'd like a ride.]

See <http://www.mln.lib.ma.us/info/newton.htm> or call (617) 796-1360 for more info.

## RECENT MEETINGS

### Holiday Party Saturday, Dec 10

The hall was chilly, but the spirits of the attendees were warm at the NEGASS holiday party at the First Parish Church in Lexington.

The party got underway when pianist **Juliet Cunningham** began playing the intro to "Sighing softly

to the river,” and some dozen people gravitated to the piano, singing both the verses and chorus. At the end of the song we quickly decided to continue with the rest of the opera. **Dave Leigh** was the vengeful Pirate King, attacking the Major-General of **Tony Parkes**. Juliet was Ruth, and **Marion Leeds Carroll** and **Rebecca Burstein** harmonized beautifully as Mabel and her sister, respectively. The other solo parts were taken by committee.

We then proceeded to the Act 1 finale of *IOLANTHE*. The cast was: Iolanthe and Phyllis, **Rebecca Burstein**; Celia, **Marion Leeds Carroll**; Fairy Queen, **Dave Leigh**; Strephon, **Skyler Wrench**; Lord Chancellor, **Tony Parkes**, and Tolloller and Mountarat by ensemble.

Following that we had our feast, the centerpiece of which was the whole roast turkey brought by **Carl Weggel** and his twin brother **Bob**. Afterwards we played the game that was such a big hit last year, with **Janice Dallas** placing names of G&S characters on backs, to be guessed by the wearer through asking other people questions.

The singing resumed with the March of the Peers, then **April Grant** and Tony sang—and danced—“I have a song to sing, o!” April then became Dame Carruthers and Tony, Sgt Meryll, for “Strange adventure,” with Dave as Fairfax and Rebecca as Kate.

Then April, Carl, Dave, Janice, Juliet, Marion, Rebecca and Tony were joined by **Art Dunlap**, **Isabel Leonard** and **Don Smith** for “I hear the soft note” from *PATIENCE*. (I don’t know which of the eleven people sang which of the six parts, and which the chorus.) We finished the Act 1 finale from there, with April as Angela, and Carl and Skyler doubling Grosvenor.

Another Act 1 finale followed: that of *YEOMEN*, from “the pris’ner comes.” The cast was: Tony as the Lt., Art as Sgt Meryll, Carl as Fairfax, Dave as Jack Point, Skyler as Wilfred, Rebecca as Elsie and Marion as Phoebe.

Next to *PRINCESS IDA*. “I am a maiden cold and stately” was delightfully sung and danced by Dave (Hilarion), April (Cyril), and Tony (Florian). They were joined by Rebecca (Psyche) and Isabel (Melissa) for “A woman of the wisest wit.”



Meeting Schedule, 2005-06	
January 22	Newton Library video: "Pineapple Poll" ballet
Mar 19	LMLO <i>IOLANTHE</i>
April 30	Spring meeting
June 4	Annual election and Fantasy day, Dallas house

**NEXT BRAY COPY DEADLINE: Feb. 26, 2006**

**Next Bray Stuffing:** Sunday, March 8, 3:00 pm, at the home of **Janice & Ron Dallas**, 63 Everett St in Arlington. Email for directions, [membership@negass.org](mailto:membership@negass.org)



**Welcome, Welcome, Welcome We:** New members **Alan Harwood** of Cambridge, and **John W. Hodge** of Acton. And **Betsy & Bruce Moir** have rejoined us after an absence of several years. Welcome back!

Dave then produced his new *COX AND BOX* score and shook the rafters with Bouncer’s complete two-verse “Rataplan” song. That was a tough act to follow, but the singers were still hungry for more (the singers, at one point, even silenced an attempt by a few people to watch a video of a past meeting), and *THE SORCERER* came next: the quintet “She will tend him.” April was Mrs Partlet; Rebecca, Aline; Dave, Alexis; Don, Dr Daly, and Tony, Sir Marmaduke.

Time then being up, the party concluded with “Hail Poetry” and “God save the Queen.” -**SEWELL & CROSS**

**REVIEWS**

**H.M.S. PINAFORE** by Savoyard Light Opera Company

Evidently, the performers in SLOC’s *H.M.S. PINAFORE* really learned their lessons well in the days since the performance reviewed by **Daffyd Mac an Leigh**, whose critique appeared in the November *Bray*. I attended the Saturday, 11/19 performance and saw (and heard) things differently.

Perhaps it is being ignorant of G&S “tradition,” or because of having performed with at least six of the cast,

or perhaps the expectation of being entertained that led me to this conclusion: Magnificent!

The entire production -- set, costumes, lighting (with a board resembling a jumbo-jet cockpit), and lively stage-direction combined to a delightful effect!

The orchestra, led by **Fred Frabotta**, was the best I can recall hearing. IF I nit-pick, I could recall no more than two very minor misplays; the intonation was amazingly accurate, even from the strings and high-winds.

**Christopher Porth** sang the role of the Captain. VERY secure in his concept of the character, he "mugged" where appropriate and was natural when necessary. (Not since I looked in the mirror have I seen a face as supple and widely-expressive as his.) And, oh yes, can he sing! No matter whether he's a lyric baritone with a very nice lower range, or is a light tenor -- I was enthralled and entertained by his total performance.



**Laura Schall Gouillart** seems the epitome of the G&S alto. With wonderful and expressive acting, her voice and stage demeanor always provide (as they did on this night) a solid yet mellifluous anchor to the sometimes-hectic action.

**Mike Quezzaire-Belle** was not to be outdone. I had heard his *light* voice during a summer G&S concert in Arlington, and a hint of his *opera* voice in the *Lucia* sextet at one of the Longwood Opera Needham concerts. He used both in this performance. Mr. Belle may not yet have a smooth connection between his voices, but, in fact, used this as an attribute for the "young" able seaman. [inserted quotation marks around "young" because Ralph has to be as old as the Captain, if they were "exchanged in childhood's happy hour!" -tsw]

Soprano **Lauren Sprague**, as Josephine, was attractive, demure, gamin, and light on her feet (she seems to dance when she walks). Her voice is bell-like, strong, and accurate, with a hint (in this performance) of strength, which no doubt serves her well in other operatic roles.



**Benjamin Cole** was droll; and in that, highly entertaining -- "regardless of what was going on around him." Amidst the lively and animated *characters* sharing the stage (and I haven't mentioned Dick Deadeye *or* the cousins and the aunts) it was wise to "play down," providing a foil for all the action on the stage. His voice was secure, and his delivery compelled attention.

**Jonathan Saul**, veteran Savoyard he, surprised with the strength and attractiveness of his voice. Not surprising was his acting ability, whether delivering solo lines or playing his roles as part of an ensemble.

While not every performer owned a stentorian voice or the manner of a seasoned actor, I found no reason to be disappointed. Those with smaller-but-featured parts delivered performances within the concept of the story and the music.

I haven't yet mention that the entire production was "miked." Initially, I was distracted because the sound didn't "travel" as the performers did, but I became accustomed to it. I would agree that, if we're trying to determine if a singer/actor has the "chops" to deliver in the "house," artificiality has no place. The comments from the audience, however, seemed to be 100% in favor.

-KING RODERIC

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### ~ THE MIKADO AT MIT: A SUCCESSFUL OPENING NIGHT IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE

"Who's the stage director?" I asked my companion, who'd had more time than I to look through the program. "I only see 'Director: **Emily Senturia**' on the cover - but she's a music director/conductor, not a stage director."

"Her bio says this is her first time as a stage director, so I guess... she must be doing both."

Sure enough: When the production found itself without a stage director early in the preparations, conductor Emily found that everything seemed to point to her. Of course there were shaky moments on both sides of the proscenium, but for an opening night which was also the debut of a stage director who was also serving as conductor/music director of a production with a cast, orchestra and production staff relying heavily on overbooked and undertrained MIT students, this was a miraculous performance - and it got better before our eyes throughout the evening, as the performers gained

in self-confidence.

First: The overture. Okay, that had a rocky start, and I was disheartened. It turns out, among other problems, that a replacement percussionist had joined two days before and was basically sight-reading, which caused some rhythm and volume-control anomalies - but even so, he was solid enough that I was sure he'd be fine by the second performance, and the more lyrical moments of the overture were spirited and lovely.

When graceful and interesting gobos gave way to full lights (a fine design by **Ky Lowenhaupt**) at the start of the opening number, we were greeted by a lovely, very Japanese set designed by **Nick Bozard** and painted by **Ethan Tyndall**. A good-sized male chorus entered, singing warmly and with fine diction while performing witty and graceful chorography by **Jonathan Gilbert**.

My heart was won by Nanki-Pooh, 19-year-old (non-MIT) tenor **John Deschene** - sweet voice, sweet personality, true understanding of the text and good, very human acting - what a find! Next **Dan Salomon** gave us a very nice reading of Pish-Tush's explanatory solo, to be followed by freshman **Gabriel Fouason**'s very original, consistent and fascinating portrayal of Pooh-Bah.

**Nick Bozard** may be a set designer off-stage, but on-stage he was **Ko-Ko** - a tailor to measure by. His wards (senior **Miranda Knutson** as Yum-Yum, grad student **Legenda Henry** as Pitti-Sing, and sophomore **Elizabeth Lex** as Peep-Bo) and their companions were appropriately charming, sweet, and giddy.

The Act I finale introduced the powerful presence, witty acting, and strong and lovely voice of Katisha, graduate student **Rosie Osser** - I want to see and hear more of this lady! [*Me, too—she was brilliant!* -tsw] Act 2 brought us fresh delight in the person of MIT graduate **Lyman Opie** - a solid, polished comic singing actor whose Mikado raised the level of all sharing the stage with him.

Have I mentioned the costumes yet? **Emma Forrest** and **Georgia Young** designed very attractive, flattering and believably-Japanese [*except for the bowless obis!* -tsw] outfits, which enhanced the performance without distracting.



I appreciated our tyro director's well-balanced stage pictures (which blended seamlessly with the pictures provided by the choreographer), but even more I appreciated her understanding of balance among on-stage priorities. Although every member of the cast, down to the least-highlighted chorister, was given the opportunity to present a three-dimensional characterization, there

was no stealing of focus, as I've seen in certain recent MIT productions: the focus remained on the particular characters essential to any particular scene. As a result, the story line had a chance to spin its way clearly to an exuberant conclusion, with joyous shout and ringing cheer.

I hope that the next time Emily serves as stage director, with more advance notice and more time to plan (may she soon get this chance!), she'll work on one more detail: actor coaching for the less experienced and untrained among the actors in this company. Just as a musician must learn to play every note as written at the composer's indicated tempo, dynamic markings and so on, before "interpreting" the music, so an actor must read every word as if it were the very first time he's ever read it, and

always live through each scene as if each time were the first. There were a few too many scenes played as "Everyone knows these lines, and we all know they're funny, so I'll just read them" - with no sense of the attitude and timing that make the lines funny. For instance, in the Act I scene between Ko-Ko and Pooh-Bah, I had no sense that Ko-Ko was coming up with a new, clever idea each time he suggested

that they move "over here, where the \_\_\_ can't hear us" - which dimmed the sparkling scene, in which characters are developed with outlandish humor, down to the level of a dry routine.

All in all, though, it was an excellent opening night: fine production values (bravo producer **Gary Zacheiss**), many



exciting performances, and a promising debut of a new stage director. Hooray for MITG&SP - long may it wave!

-- mlc



Great *IOLANTHE* at Brown University

The Brown University Gilbert and Sullivan Society (BUGS), in its second staged production, has already reached a level of performance excellence equal to MITG&SP or Harvard/Radcliffe.

True, they lack money, so instead of a set, there was a large movie screen. During the overture a witty PowerPoint presentation showed the cast and their characters, and during each act it showed a nice backdrop—supplemented at appropriate times with useful (and funny!) information and commentary.

The costumes were as traditional as funds allowed. Evidently those didn't run to capes and coronets, so the Peers were clad—surprisingly effectively—in dark suits with lace cravats and a crest on the pocket (a different crest for each peer). The fairies wore an eclectic assortment ranging in time from Ancient Greek and Egyptian through Hippie to funky contemporary—but all with wings. Again, it worked. Both male & female choruses were outstanding, in both singing and acting!

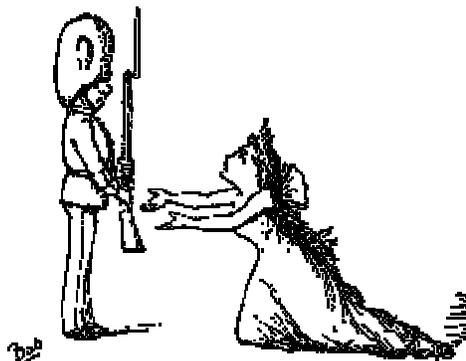
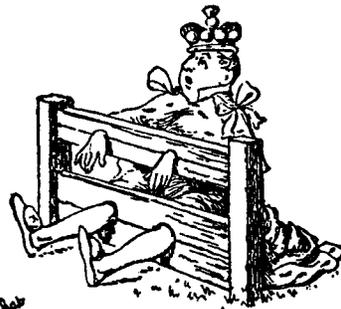
The Fairy Queen, **Claire Coiro**, had the best costume, a beautifully tailored long black dress with wide bell-like upper sleeves and multicolored lower sleeves and underskirt. She was tall and queenly, and though her waist was slender her presence was massive. Her singing voice was untrained, and therefore much quieter than her speaking voice, which was splendid. When she learns to sing with support and resonance, she will be a treasure to any Savoyard group!

The only inadequate costume was Private Willis's; his tunic was the wrong type and looked unfinished, and his shako was just a cloth tube—but the actor, **Jordan Elkind**, compensated for it with his proud bearing and tall, soldierly figure. He did earn my wrath by changing

the final notes of his “accept this friendship all the same” cadenza to a contemporary pop-music ending, TOTALLY unsuited to the harmony following in “this sacrifice to thy dear name.”

The lack of classical training was evident in many of the voices, but all were pleasant and tuneful. Iolanthe, **Leila Chakravarty**, had some trouble with “He loves”...until the “withered flowers” climax, which soared into glory! Her “My doom” section was strong and good, too. **Michelle Menard**, the Phyllis, had a gorgeous professional-quality voice, and did a terrific long angry cadenza just before “Oh shameless one, tremble”. She and Strephon were a delightful couple. He looked much like Sam Gamgee in the *Lord of the Rings* movies, in both costume and figure (though not hobbit-sized, of course). He was sometimes hoarse, but otherwise very good: his “chorused Nature” speech was especially excellent. The Lord Chancellor, **Charles Shrader**, was a very fine singer and actor too. The lead Fairies (**Jessica Marquardt**, **Maggie Machaiek**, and **Lana Zaman**) and Peers (**Stephen Higa** and **Jackson Hoy Loper**) were all energetic, engaging and funny.

The music direction by **Sam Baltimore** was sprightly, though instruments and singers sometimes got out of sync, and the stage direction by **Jonathan Ichikawa** was excellent, with effective blocking and many imaginative touches. During “In vain to us you plead,” the fairies magically stuck one shoe of each peer to the ground on the first “don't go”—which bothered me at first, because then why keep repeating it? But at “We'll go!” each peer escaped by slipping out of the stuck shoe and exiting one-shoed. The fairies then snatched up the abandoned shoes and clutched them lovingly. Sweet and funny!





Strephon had a pet sheep which was a recurring prop. He addressed his soliloquies to it, sobbed into its fur at “Oh mother, weep with me,” and used it to demonstrate to the lords how Iolanthe mothered him. At “your Strephon might have died,” he turned it legs-up, and put the “dead” sheep/baby Strephon into the arms of the Lord Chancellor, who wept over it. Then Lord Mountaratat (**Hoy Loper**), in his “But as she’s not” solo, took it from the Chancellor and tossed it over his shoulder back to Strephon. The combination of his supremely aristocratic contempt and the high arc of the flying sheep was indescribably funny.

Another clever touch was that the fairies all had filmy scarves that rendered them invisible when pulled across their faces. Strephon had the same type of scarf over his wings. When Phyllis in Act 2 said “there’s nothing to show it,” he pulled the scarf off, and she suddenly saw his wings and reacted to them, opening and closing them and seeming utterly charmed. Just as I was by this performance. Well done, BUGS! --**MERCURY MAJOR**

### ☞ **IOLANTHE** at Brown University, II

Hurrah for **BUGS** – **Brown University Gilbert & Sullivan**- now celebrating its second season! It is wonderful that younger generations continue to “inherit” an appreciation for the works of G&S and it is gratifying to witness a college student performer declaring that “All we want to do is bring G&S to the people.”

We went to Providence to see the BUGS Fall production of **IOLANTHE** at the List Art Center on the Brown campus. Admission was free! It became apparent that the majority of the audience at this performance was composed of the families and friends of those involved in the show with a smattering of true G&S fans. It was also clear that BUGS, by its own admission, is an organization in need of additional funding and support -- as evidenced by its small-lecture-hall venue with a non-moveable podium, white-boards, the lack of a legitimate set, and the orchestra crammed into a corner. But what the group lacked in cash, space, and materiel it made up for in ingenuity. No scenery? Not a problem. Simply project a PowerPoint presentation with slides of Arcadia and Parliament. This ploy was actually quite clever and was also used to explain the plot and the characters to a largely non-Savoyard audience. Act II, for example,

began with a very cute explanation of the differences between peers and fairies.

In short, BUGS shows great promise and should be headed for better stages. C’mon guys, you can charge for admission! BUGS will be producing **PIRATES** in the spring, and I encourage NEGASSers to head to Providence (where there are also lots of great restaurants) and check it out. --**PETER & LINDA SILVERSTEIN**

### ☞ **Wonderful RUDDIGORE** at Harvard

This was the finest production I have seen yet from the Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Players! It was full of fresh new ideas and interpretations, but without violating the story G&S wrote or causing a traditionalist like me to shudder. (What, never? Well, hardly ever.)

The sets were superb. Act 1 was a splendid piece of an English village, with looming Elizabethan buildings on a narrow winding street – picturesque yet slightly oppressive, a perfect place for melodrama. The bridesmaids entered all fluttery and giggly, until hectorated into line by a crabby martinet of a Zorah (**Sammi Biegler**).



After their well-sung chorus, **Caroline Jackson** as Dame Hannah entered—a *young* Dame Hannah. She didn’t wear age makeup that I could see, and there was only one streak of grey in her hair. She moved and acted like a young person, too, and a rather outlandish and unladylike one for that time and place, with facial expressions bordering on “mugging.” This annoyed me considerably in Act 1, but in Act 2, it worked. Her “There grew a little flower” was delightfully funny.

Both Rose (**Caitlin Vincent**) and Mad Margaret (**Jess Peritz**) were ideal in every respect. Beauty, singing, acting – both are outstandingly gifted comic actresses.

Also perfectly cast was **Pedro Kaawaloa** as Dick Dauntless. The beau-ideal of a handsome rogue, he raised the energy-level of the show the moment he entered, and it flew for the rest of the evening. One interesting twist of this production was that Robin (**Ben**



**Morris**) didn't really like Richard. It was clearly a case of "Oh-God-he's-a-relative-so-I-have-to-pretend-to-like-him" (on Robin's side, with Richard cheerfully oblivious). Robin had been rather dull in his first scene, but his scene with Richard was a gem. Robin, the perfect picture of the inbred upper-class Anglo-Saxon, tall, skinny, pale and uptight, being boisterously counseled by the tanned, muscular, lower-class Richard. (I have to quibble, though with the men's costumes—Robin's, Despard's and Roderic's, especially. The costumer seems to be under the impression that men's non-casual clothing hasn't really changed in the last 200 years. Believe me, it has.)

Then Rose entered, and each scene became funnier than the last—so much so that, not having promised to review it, I ceased to take notes. I can only tell you I enjoyed it all very much.

Oh, another clever touch, which surfaced in the Act 1 finale, was Zorah's strong attraction to Richard, and her jealous rage when Rose takes him back. Through Act 1, Richard takes frequent nips from a hip flask; after losing him, Zorah produces one of her own. She swigs from it often in Act 2 during "Happily coupled are we," between tragic sulks and murderous glares at Rose (to which Rose, of course, is innocently oblivious). So in the finale when Dick marries Zorah, it doesn't seem like an afterthought as it usually does.

The HRG&SP press release for this production said of its stage director, **J. Jacob Krause**: "A graduate in opera from the U. of Michigan, Mr. Krause comes to us as a G&S lover and a performer who is beginning his professional career here in Boston." I am delighted to hear it! I hope to see much more G&S directed by him.

-- **MERCURY MAJOR**

☞ **The Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Players'** production of **RUDDIGORE** was an interesting mixture of excellence and mediocrity. Several treatments, or bits of business, were things I had not seen before, and many of them worked.

The most disturbing thing was the inability to apply convincing makeup to the characters who were old. When Despard first appeared, his face was greyed like a chimneysweep. When he yielded the baronetcy to Ruthven, he yielded the smudges as well. Old Adam and Dame Hannah were unconvincing in appearance, Dame Hannah sporting an un-Victorian streak of white in her otherwise dark hair. Wide grey lines were applied to

their faces to suggest wrinkles, but they just looked like wide grey lines. The ghosts were white-faced, but similarly smudged. They seemed to be simply dirty, nothing more.

The opening scene was the women's chorus, effectively singing "Fair is Rose." But Zorah (**Sammi Biegler**), in an unusual characterization, was a bossy chorus mistress, adjusting apparel or posture for various Bridesmaids in a manner that conveyed irritable officiousness rather than a helpful team spirit. Dame Hannah (**Caroline Jackson**), with excellent help from the lighting crew in evoking the image of a fire, provided a wonderful telling of the Murgatroyd legend. The chorus encircled her, low to the ground, like the wood of a bonfire. She gave realistic voice to the tormented and vengeful witch, laying the curse, and to the "I'll sin no more!" exclamation of each expiring Murgatroyd.



Rose Maybud (**Caitlin Vincent**) came across as sweet and simple, and thus convincing in her role. She had a beautiful voice. Robin Oakapple (**Ben Morris**) was a bit more of a problem. He had a few subtle mannerisms, such as biting his knuckles, conveying uncertainty and doubt. Unfortunately, he used the same few mannerisms to convey confidence, eagerness, terror, and defiance. He was rarely convincing, and slightly irritating.

Richard Dauntless (**Pedro Kaawalooa**) gave a fine delivery of his words and music. He called in a couple of his mates for the hornpipe, and he pretty much stole the scene with his slightly inebriated manner in the Act I finale justifying his exuberant "Fa la la"s in the madrigal.

Mad Margaret (**Jess Peretz**) claimed, in her program bio, to be finally typecast! She may have meant it, as she never seemed more than a hairsbreadth away from the abyss. I concluded that even settling in the town of Basingstoke, she would still need a prescription for a strong tranquilizer. She played the role well, and surely had a lot of fun at it.

It wasn't quite as obvious for Sir Despard (**Paul Suda**), who was only slightly more expressive than Robin. He was not irritating, but slightly boring. But he was brilliant in describing how his elder brother had, by proxy, trifled with Margaret's affection. He gestured crumpling up the poor child's affections, stamping on them vigorously as

he spoke of "only to trample them in the dust." Then he pointed to them lying at his feet with a deadpan, "Oh fie, sir, fie! She trusted you!"

Old Adam (**Roy Kimmey**) introduced a bit of business that, to my taste, did not work, by degenerating his deep cackle into a coughing fit in "I once was as meek". He did it again, perhaps more appropriately, after dragging the sack with the kidnapped Dame Hannah onto the stage. She once again gave a wonderful delivery of her lines in the "Well, sir, and what would you with me?" scene.

I don't have a very discriminating ear for the music, unless there are gross errors, but I heard one member of the orchestra remark that, having done a great number of Harvard G&S shows, he felt this was one of the best balanced orchestras he had been a part of. Another observer whose opinion I respect remarked on the excellence of the First Clarinet (**Steve Umans**).

I was disappointed in the manner of the ancestors coming to life. Their portraits came apart in jagged lines, allowing the ghosts to reveal their faces for their initial chorus, and then to push apart the portraits and step through. But they were very obviously portraits with people behind them, with no special effects or lighting tricks to suggest otherwise.

The music was wonderful. The general level of performance was adequate, and the outstanding performances of Rose, Dame Hannah, Mad Margaret, and Richard made it a very enjoyable night out.

--**RICHARD FREEDMAN**

☞**The Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Players** launched their 49<sup>th</sup> season with a stellar production of **RUDDIGORE** at the venerable Agassiz Theatre. After the traditional singing of "God Save the Queen" the large orchestra, typical of all H-RG&S productions, launched into the overture under the direction of **Aram Demirjian**. It took about 30 seconds for the multi-generational musicians to hit their stride but thereafter the orchestra performed superbly, maintaining just the right tempo and the decibel level appropriate to each particular scene and to the performers' voices. In particular the patter songs did not become contests between the singers and the orchestra as to who would either finish first or struggle to keep up.

The curtain opened to an adequate though not spectacular set depicting the village of Rederring. The

chorus of bridesmaids entered and it was immediately apparent that their voices were all quite good and their diction superb. In fact the entire performance was noteworthy for the clarity of the performers' enunciation, both spoken and sung. Remarkably, even the Mezzo-sopranos, Mad Margaret and Dame Hannah, could be easily heard and understood.

As in most collegiate productions of G&S operettas the enthusiasm level of the performers was obvious, but what made this rendition of **RUDDIGORE** outstanding was the quality acting by the principal characters -- enhanced by good blocking, staging, and choreography on the small Agassiz stage. Richard Dauntless' Hornpipe, usually solo, was transformed into a trio of dancers that was coordinated and acrobatic. Dame Hannah's musical with lighting effects that evoked the flames consuming the dying witch, and was brilliantly chilling.

As to the leads: **Caitlin Vincent** (Rose) sang beautifully and perfectly portrayed a young woman seemingly innocent, somewhat confused, her life and behavior guided by a book of etiquette, but who also coquettishly and cunningly could bounce back and forth between



Robin the wealthy landowner, Richard the humble British Tar, and even Despard, depending on whose star was in the ascendancy at any particular moment. **Ben Morris**, looking and acting like a young Jimmy Stewart and

dressed somewhat inappropriately like a college undergraduate in the 50's, held up his end as the shy farmer with a secret who was forced to become the bad bart of Ruddigore.

Though it is arguably easy to steal the show playing Mad Margaret, **Jess Peritz** was marvelous as a riotously crazy but seductive, sad but zany lunatic who in the Second Act could not quite maintain the prim demeanor of a District



Visitor without frequent "Basingstokes" to curb her relapses into madness. **Pedro Kaawaloa** (Dick) capably portrayed a British Tar in his mannerisms, his speech, and his singing, while **Roy Kimmey** (Adam), despite excessive make-up, was a worthy valet d'chambre with a surprisingly loud and deep bass voice that resonated through the theater. **Caroline Jackson**, with a single gray streak in

her hair somewhat reminiscent of the Bride of Frankenstein, played a younger, more energetic and even sexy Dame Hannah than is customary, and her voice had an effective Mezzo-Soprano/Alto blend that enhanced her portrayal. **Paul Suda** (Sir Despard), **Ryder Kessler** (Sir Roderick), **Sammi Biegler** (Zorah), and **Jackie Granick** (Ruth) rounded out the cast of Leads and all turned in creditable performances.

Though there was really little to quibble about in this truly wonderful show, it would be dishonest not to express some disappointment with the entrance/exit of the "Ancestors" from their portraits in the Picture Gallery at Ruddigore Castle. It is always fun to anticipate new and clever special effects to accomplish the transition from inanimate pictures to "living" spectres and back again, but in this production it was done somewhat poorly and at one point one of the doors failed to close. The male chorus that made up the "Ancestors" was also adequate but not as noteworthy as the other cast members. The costuming was also pedestrian and didn't seem to reflect the 19<sup>th</sup> Century time frame.

Despite these few criticisms the current Harvard/Radcliffe production of **RUDDIGORE** was arguably one of the best to be performed in several years in the Greater Boston vicinity, and I hope that every area Savoyard had a chance to enjoy it.

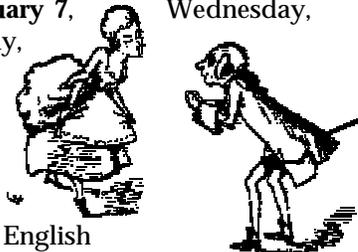
--PETER SILVERSTEIN

### 🎭 CALENDAR 🎭

January 22, 1887, *Ruddigore* opens

🎭 The G&S Society of Hancock County, Maine is doing a double bill of *H.M.S. PINAFORE* and *TRIAL BY JURY* on **January 27, 28, and 29 and February 3, 4, and 5, 2006**, at The Grand Auditorium in Ellsworth. Tickets: 207-667-9500 or 1-866-363-9500. For more info see <http://ellsworthme.org/gsshc/>

🎭 The MIT G&S Players hold auditions for *PATIENCE* on Tuesday, **February 7**, Wednesday, **February 8**, and Thursday, **February 9**, all from 7-10pm, in room W20-491 on the 4th floor of the MIT Student Center (on Mass Ave a block north of the Charles River). Please prepare one song in English and bring a copy of the sheet music for the accompanist. Callbacks, if needed, will be held on



Saturday, **February 11**, from 2-5pm in W20-491. Performances will take place the weekends of April 14 and April 21, 2006.

Producer: **Rob Morrison**; Stage Directors: **Garry Zacheiss & Ky Lowenhaupt**; Music Director: **Dawn Perlner**; Vocal Director: **Katherine Bryant**.

🎭 The Sudbury Savoyards will be performing *THE GRAND DUKE* on the following dates: Friday, **February 24**, 8pm; Saturday, **February 25**, 8pm; Sunday, **February 26**, 2pm; Wednesday, **March 1**, 8pm; Friday, **March 3**, 8pm; Saturday, **March 4**, 2pm and 8pm. All performances are at **Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School**, at the corner of Concord Road and Lincoln Road in Sudbury, MA. For tickets and information:



978-443-8811 or [www.sudburysavoyards.org](http://www.sudburysavoyards.org). Tickets: \$18 / \$14 / \$10. All seats \$10 on Wednesday, **March 1**. The Stage Director is **Paula Moravek** and the Music Director is **Stephen Malionek**. The NEGASS members involved are, in order alphabetical (not categorical): **Janice Dallas** - Chorus (woman with cane!); **Arthur Dunlap** - Herald; **Beth Fowler** - Supernumerary; **Fred Hughes** - Supernumerary; **Laurel Martin** - Martha; **David Owen** - Costumier; **Tony Parkes** - Grand Duke Rudolph; **J. Donald Smith** - Chorus; **Ellen Spear** - Choreographer. Other familiar faces include **Michael Belle**, our Fairfax at the August meeting, as Ernest Dummkopf, **Dennis O'Brien** as Ludwig, **Kathy Lague** as Julia Jellicoe, and **Ed Fell** as Dr. Tannhäuser.

March 7, 1896, *The Grand Duke* opens  
March 14, 1885, *The Mikado* opens

🎭 The New Hampshire Gilbert & Sullivan Society at Leddy Center for the Performing Arts, Epping, NH, is pleased to announce its production of *OH, JOY! OH, RAPTURE! - A GILBERT & SULLIVAN REVIEW*. It includes solos, duets, trios, quartets, quintets, sextets and a few choral pieces from Gilbert & Sullivan's comedic operettas! **March 10 & 11**, 7:30pm; **March 12**, 2:00pm; **March 17 & 18**, 7:30pm; and **March 19**, 2:00pm. Go to <http://www.leddycenter.org/OhJoyOhRapture.htm> or call (603) 679-2781. Tickets: \$16.00/\$14.00.

🎭 The Brown University G&S Society (BUGS) will be performing *PIRATES OF PENZANCE* next semester, the weekend of **March 17th**.

☺☺ **The Carl Rosa Opera Company** presents **MIKADO** [I saw their production last tour and it was awesome!! -tsw] Wednesday, **March 15, 2006**, 7:30 pm at Capitol Center for the Arts, 44 South Main Street, **Concord, NH 03301**. (603) 225-1111 or <http://www.ccanh.com/>, and **HMS PINAFORE** on Thursday, **March 16, 2006**, 7:30 pm at Merrill Auditorium, 20 Myrtle Street, **Portland, Maine**. <http://www.pcagreatperf.com/pinafore.htm>

☺☺ **Troupers Light Opera** of Fairfield County, Connecticut, will be performing **IOLANTHE** **March 24, 25, 26**(2:30 matinee), **31 and April 1, 2006**, at St. Luke's Performing Arts Center in New Canaan, CT. It will be directed by **Andrea Andresakis**, with musical direction by **Christopher James Hisey**. For more information: <http://trouperlightopera.org/Troupers/> or call 203-762-9285.

☺☺ **The Wilbraham United Players** in Wilbraham, MA ([www.massarts.com/wilbrahamunitedplayers](http://www.massarts.com/wilbrahamunitedplayers)) are celebrating their 50th anniversary year with a return to the fold - this spring's production will be **THE MIKADO**. Performances begin **March 31, 2006**.

☺☺ **AGES AGO NO GO**: Alas, **New England Light Opera** has announced that its production of **COX AND BOX** and **AGES AGO** has been postponed indefinitely.

☺☺ **The Simsbury (CT) Light Opera Company (SLOCO)** is next performing **PIRATES OF PENZANCE**. This will be their 61st annual production, which will be presented **April 1** (matinee & evening), **2** (matinee), **7** (evening), and **8** (matinee & evening), at Simsbury High School. <http://www.sloco.org/>, tickets on sale soon.

☺☺ **The Harvard/Radcliff Gilbert and Sullivan Players** will be doing **THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD** for their Spring Production. The dates are **April 6-8 and 14 and 15**. Evenings are 8PM and Matinees will be at 2PM on **April 8th 9th and 15th**. -CONNIE WILSON



☺☺

NOTE: To subscribe to **SavoyNet**, the G&S mailing list, send a plain text email to [listserv@bridgewater.edu](mailto:listserv@bridgewater.edu) with nothing in the subject line and **SUBSCRIBE SAVOYNET Your Name** in the message body.

☺☺

## THE NEW ENGLAND GILBERT AND SULLIVAN SOCIETY

PO Box 367, Arlington, MA 02476-0004

Send electronic contributions to [editor@negass.org](mailto:editor@negass.org)

President **J. DONALD SMITH**:

(508) 823-5110; [president@negass.org](mailto:president@negass.org)

Vice-President **TONY PARKES**: [vp@negass.org](mailto:vp@negass.org)

Secretary **CARL WEGGEL**: (978) 474-0396

[carl@negass.org](mailto:carl@negass.org)

Treasurer **RICHARD FREDMAN**:

(978) 667-0222; [treasurer@negass.org](mailto:treasurer@negass.org) and

<http://www.rfreedman.org>

Publicity and Program Chair **APRIL GRANT**:

[programchair@negass.org](mailto:programchair@negass.org)

**Members at Large:**

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[carol@negass.org](mailto:carol@negass.org)

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[art@negass.org](mailto:art@negass.org)

Membership Officer **JANICE DALLAS**: (781) 643-2537,

[membership@negass.org](mailto:membership@negass.org)

Webmistress **MARION LEEDS CARROLL** [mlc]

[negass@leeds Carroll.com](mailto:negass@leeds Carroll.com), <http://www.leeds Carroll.com>

Newsletter Editor **T. SKYLER WRENCH** [tsw]: (617)

921-6119 or [editor@negass.org](mailto:editor@negass.org)

*NEGASS membership dues are \$15 and up. Please send membership inquiries to **Janice Dallas**, 63 Everett St., Arlington, MA 02474-6921*

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