



THE HAPPY DISPATCH

SPECIAL FRIENDS' EDITION

NOVEMBER, 2004

Bravo! Bravo! Bravissimo! World Premier of Gilbert and Jones' *Thespis* a delight to all

ON November 6th the Durham Savoyards presented the first-ever public performance of a new version of *Thespis*, or *The Gods Grown Old* with music written by our very own Alan Riley Jones. For those who aren't familiar with the show, it was the very first collaborative effort between Sir William S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan. However, most of Sir Arthur's music was lost. Very little Sullivan music survives from the *Thespis* score (he did reuse "Climbing Over Rocky Mountain" in *The Pirates of Penzance*, our April 2005 production). The addition of Alan's original compositions to this remaining music helped make Gilbert's libretto into a complete show once again.

Alan Riley Jones has been active for some time in Triangle music and theatre circles and was involved with Savoyard productions on stage until he took on the role of music director two years ago. Alan had been composing and arranging music for some time and was inspired, while reading the libretto of *Thespis* a few years ago, to write down some of the tunes that were playing themselves in his head. He calls them "remembered" melodies he'd never heard before.

The concert reading was performed by a cast of 25 Savoyards who were invited by the composer to be a part of this exciting project. Led by Richard Dideriksen as the comedian *Thespis*, the group used their

musical and acting talents to tell the story of a group of traveling actors who replace the gods on Mount Olympus for a year, giving the gods a much needed break but wreaking havoc on earth with their "experiments".

Nearly one hundred lucky people were present in the audience to hear the beautiful new music paired with Gilbert's still clever lyrics. Judging from the enthusiastic reception and the commentary heard afterwards, this is not the last time this piece will be performed! There have been suggestions of everything from a CD recording to a full blown Savoyards production, so who knows where this may lead. Stay tuned!

Thank you to Alan Riley Jones for sharing his beautiful music with us and for letting us share it with an audience. Thanks also to the Board for encouraging Alan and making all the production arrangements with the Durham Arts Council.

— Karen Guidry

A note from the Editor (and Business Manager)

Dear Readers,

BY JOVE! A full year has passed since we last came to you, our Friends, asking for your continued financial support. I just completed my first full fiscal year as DSL Business Manager on August 31st. Having now seen a full circle of the Savoyard seasons, I have gained a deep appreciation for the role of Savoyard Friends in the vitality of our organization.

As Friends, your influence goes well beyond providing the financial strength that allows us to keep our ticket prices reasonable while meeting all of our obligations promptly. You provide a well-spring of ideas and wisdom in our operations. You provide a willing and, may I say, often colorful source of ready volunteers for Savoyard activities and arts-related activities in the community.

No less important, you provide a continuous flow of encouragement to those of us doing the daily work of the Durham Savoyards. In that regard, I want to make sure to thank you all for so many nice comments about the last Happy Dispatch. You can be assured that such encouragement makes it a pleasure to sit down and write this edition.

Even though our last Happy Dispatch was just over two months ago, this fall has been an uncommonly creative time for the Savoyards, producing a bountiful harvest of performing arts. We have plenty to tell you about what has been happening and what is coming up in 2005, so please read on.

Fix yer spyglass on the horizon ya landlubbers For as scurvy a bunch of scalawags as Durham has ever seen!

IF YOU haven't already reserved your tickets for the April's production of *The Pirates of Penzance*, now is an excellent time. What a wonderful gift tickets would make for people on your Christmas list! Our brilliant team of directors, Derrick Ivey and Alan Riley Jones, who delighted the audiences of *The Mikado* and *Ruddigore*, are returning again for this, our 2005 show.

Tickets are on sale now at the Carolina Theatre box office, phone 919-560-3030, or may be purchased through the Internet at WWW.CAROLINATHEATRE.ORG [select the web page's "On Stage" tab, scroll down to April to find us, then click the "Buy Tickets Online" button].

Remember that all tickets are reserved seating this year and as Savoyard Friends at the Peer level and above, you can request a discounted price of \$20 per ticket. Also note discounts for seniors, groups of 15 or more, students, and our Friday Family Evening pricing. Refer to the table below for the best discount for which you can qualify. Please note that senior, Friends, group, student and Family Evening discount prices must be obtained through the theatre box office. Only regular admission and Pick-3 prices are offered online.

2005 *Pirates of Penzance* TICKET PRICES

	Regular	Discount
Adult	\$25	\$20
Senior	\$23	\$20
Student	\$15	\$15/10*

— All Seats Reserved —

Discount Prices apply to

- Pick 3 series patrons
- Corporate patrons
- Groups of 15 or more
- Donors at the Peer level and higher
- All cast sales**

*\$10 special Family Evening discounted price available to ages 18 and under (Friday evenings, April 15 & 22 only)

**Box office handling fee will be waived on all cast sales



This program was made possible with the support of the Durham Arts Council, Inc. Go to www.durhamarts.org for current class, exhibit, and event listings.

The Official Newsletter of
The Durham Savoyards, Ltd.

933 Lystra Lane
Chapel Hill, NC 27517



Pirates Schedule

Since *Pirates* is later than our past few shows have been (April instead of March), the startup schedule begins later. Please mark these key dates on your calendar for the 2005 production of *The Pirates of Penzance*:

Sing-through – January 8, 2005, 2pm
 Auditions† – January 16 and 23, 2-5pm
 Callbacks – January 24, 7:30pm
 First cast sing-through – January 27, 7:30pm
 Rehearsals begin – January 30, 2pm

All above events will be held at the Durham Arts Council

†Auditions will be by appointment only, and will be scheduled in 15-minute intervals during the times listed above. Please call 919-632-4224 or send email to INFO@DURHAMSAVOYARDS.ORG with your preferred date and time. Please bring sheet music. An accompanist will be provided. To audition for a principal role please prepare any Gilbert and Sullivan song. For chorus auditions any prepared piece is fine. The audition process will include vocal and acting assessment.

Spreading the good word (and many excellent notes as well)

CONGRATULATIONS are in order for Impresaria and Director of the G&S Singers, Ann McCloskey, on completion of a year which saw unprecedented expansion of the Musicale program. In the ongoing effort to increase our exposure to the community, Ann added important new stops on the Musicale tour and included entirely new types of material in the program. Here are highlights of the 2004 Musicales:

- St. Valentine's day was the date for the G&S Singers' annual performance at the Chapel Hill Senior Center. In view of the date, a program made up entirely of love songs from the Gilbert & Sullivan canon was presented to an enthusiastic audience.
- Carol Woods in Chapel Hill has always turned out a packed house for the Savoyards and this year was no different. After being introduced by Dr. Wesley Wallace (please see the article on Dr. Wallace, above), the Singers presented what has come to be known as *Mini-gore*. This is a 45-minute condensation of the story and much of the music from *Ruddigore*. Several of the original 2004 cast and their understudies joined the G&S Singers to reprise their roles and the plot was expedited by a narrator. Our thanks to Chris Newlon for scripting *Mini-gore* for the occasion.
- Spring Arbor Assisted Living is an entirely new stop this year. Although it is a smaller venue, the audience made up for their number in enthusiasm. This was entirely a variety show in which members of the G&S Singers picked songs from show music, popular, jazz, and (I almost forgot) Gilbert & Sullivan. The show finished up with an original song by Dwight Sullivan.
- Yet another fun invitation came from Emerson Waldorf School where a small troupe of Singers did a short variety show presentation for the school's May Fair. Once again, the variety show format was a big hit. The crowd included all ages from pre-schoolers to grandparents.
- Fearrington Village has been on the Musicale tour for only a couple of years, but the audience greeted the singers like old friends not once, but twice this year. The Singers presented an all Gilbert & Sullivan program in May, and a variety show in September. Both shows were packed and we've already been asked back for two more shows next year.
- Two of our regular G&S Singers, Ann Marie Thomas and Chris Newlon, presented a scene

Remembering Dr. Wesley Wallace

WITH SADNESS, on September 19th, the Durham Savoyards family bid farewell to a long-time friend and supporter, Dr. Wesley Herndon Wallace. Dr. Wallace had a distinguished career that spanned more than five decades and included:

- Broadcasting as a pioneer in early commercial radio;
- Managing Armed Forces Radio stations, service for which he was decorated twice with the Bronze Star;
- 25 years as Professor and then Department Chair at UNC Chapel Hill, Department of Radio, Television and Motion Pictures; and
- An active retirement during which he and his wife, Carolyn, have been great supporters of the Durham Savoyards.

A long life with such remarkable accomplishments leaves the world with a rich legacy of Dr. Wesley Wallace. Many Savoyards, however, will still remember him as the gracious gentleman who arranged for a bus full of people from Carol Woods to come and enjoy our show every year, and who introduced our G&S Singers so kindly when we appeared there last April.



This issue of *The Happy Dispatch* was written by Dwight Sullivan and Karen Guidry, and published by Charles Register.

THE HAPPY DISPATCH
NEWSLETTER

from *The Pirates of Penzance* at a benefit for the Carrboro Arts Center on September 11th. In this scene Frederick reveals his true love for Mabel, but explains that he is bound by duty to return to the pirates to whom he has been apprenticed since he was a promising lad.

- Southern Village was an entirely new stop, with new material and new format. The G&S Singers gave a mixed program — half variety show and half Gilbert & Sullivan. This was presented on the community green in the middle of Southern Village's business district, our second outdoor program this year. Southern Village has also asked us back next year to take part in their Summer Concert Series.
 - Carolina Meadows, another new stop on the tour, was the final G&S Singers Musicale of the season. It was an all-G&S program, with songs from many of the operettas followed by a set of numbers all from *Pirates*.
- 2004 has been an exciting year for the G&S Singers with new venues, new material, and new program formats. Let's have three cheers for our talented singers and one cheer more for our outstanding Director, Ann McCloskey.

The Durham Savoyards, Ltd.

presents

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

or *The Slave of Duty*

Gilbert & Sullivan's
most famous musical comedy

Friday & Saturday, April 15 & 16, 2005, 8pm
 Sunday, April 17, 2005, 2pm

Friday & Saturday, April 22 & 23, 2005, 8pm
 Sunday, April 24, 2005, 2pm

The Carolina Theatre
 309 West Morgan Street
 Durham, North Carolina