



THE HAPPY DISPATCH



NOVEMBER 2012

The Official Newsletter of the Durham Savoyards, Ltd.

durhamsavoyards.org

Pirates of Penzance: Producers' POV

By KAREN AND CHARLES GUIDRY

Where else but a Gilbert and Sullivan show can you find singing female mountain climbers, swashbuckling pirates and their pirate king, bumbling bobbies, hard-of-hearing nursemaids, and a very modern major-general? Nowhere!

Pirates of Penzance has been a show of firsts from the very beginning. It was the first (and only) Gilbert and Sullivan show to have an official premiere in the United States, opening in New York City on New Year's Eve 1879 (albeit the day *after* a single performance in England to secure copyright there). It was also the very first production of The Durham Savoyards in 1963 and we are proud to be producers for its 50th anniversary performance.

If you Google "Pirates of Penzance," you will get 1,590,000 hits (maybe more by the time you read this and try for yourself)! This Gilbert and Sullivan show is probably the best-known of their works among the population as a whole because of all the interesting characters already mentioned, in addition to great sing-along music that has been used for chorus classes and school shows for many decades. The major-general's patter song is one of the most recognized Gilbert and Sullivan songs, appearing in parody versions in everything from *The Muppet Show* to *Doctor Who* to a recent insurance commercial.

While all of you are anticipating the show to come, whether as potential cast, crew, or audience members, the fun has already begun for us, as producers. For a few months now, we have been working, along with the Durham

Savoyards Board of Governors, to put together a production staff, rehearsal dates and space, and audition schedules. All the cogs in the giant wheel have started to creak and come to life, some haltingly and others raring to go. By March 2013, we hope you will see nothing but a beautiful, finely tuned, well-oiled machine of a show! We look forward to sharing the exciting final product with all of you. Perhaps by then we will all have figured out how old Frederic would be today – 2012 *was* a leap year.

Hail, poetry!

Savoyards New Publicity Committee

By SONJA FOUST AND KIMBERLY HIRSH

The Savoyards have recently formed a year-round publicity committee, chaired by Kimberly Hirsh. The group consists of Kimberly Hirsh, Sonja Foust, Janell Lovelace, and Tanner Lovelace. The committee is excited to be working on several long-term projects for this year.

In the arena of social media, we have great things planned! Our goals for the effective use of social media for the Savoyards are to expand fundraising efforts, increase volunteer participation, increase audience for our performances, and increase awareness of our organization.

We're also planning to open a Flickr pool where you can share your own photos from Savoyards events and productions.

In addition to social media, we're working on making it easier for the friends of the Savoyards to donate, with electronic Donate Now technology on the website. Stay tuned for that! It'll be coming soon.

We're also making some back-end improvements to our mailing list database. Hopefully, you won't notice anything significant in that arena, but know that it will help the Board out with keeping track of who gets what and when!

The committee is open to your ideas, suggestions and help! If you have something to offer, please feel free to get in touch with Kimberly Hirsh (kimberlyhirsh@gmail.com) or Sonja Foust (sonja@sonjafoust.com).

Sonja Foust will head up the publicity for this year's show, *The Pirates of Penzance*. If you're interested in getting in on the action (and fun) or have any specific talents or resources you'd like to offer (video editing, contacts in the press, marketing experience, etc.) please don't hesitate to contact Sonja via e-mail: sonja@sonjafoust.com. She'd love your help!

You can find us
on the following
social media platforms:

Facebook
facebook.com/durhamsavoyards

Twitter
[@DurhamSavoyards](https://twitter.com/DurhamSavoyards)

Google+
goo.gl/oUJzb

YouTube
[youtube.com/
durhamsavoyardsltd](http://youtube.com/durhamsavoyardsltd)

From the Desk of the President

By KIM KINGSLEY
PRESIDENT, DURHAM SAVOYARDS, LTD.

Greetings Savoyards,

The 2012-2013 fiscal year is underway and I have the distinct honor of leading this amazing organization into its 6th decade. The 50th Anniversary Committee is in the process of planning a wonderful celebration to commemorate our Golden Year. The production team, led by the inestimable team of Karen and Charles Guidry, is fervently preparing for the upcoming production of *Pirates of Penzance*. The Board of Governors is trying to make sure that The Durham Savoyards, Ltd. will be around for at least another fifty years. As this newsletter comes to you in the season of giving and thanksgiving, I would like to express my thanks to all those who have made this amazing community theater group a reality.

As many of you already know, the founding members decided at a party one night to "put on a show," and we owe them our unending thanks for taking that first step. I am in awe of people who can start something and then keep it going. We, as current Savoyards, owe them an enormous debt of gratitude for taking the initiative and seeing their

ideas through to completion. They continued to dream, and that dream has become a thriving community of people dedicated to sharing their love of performing the "topsy-turvy" musical stories created over 100 years ago by Sirs Gilbert and Sullivan.

Although I have only been a member of the Savoyard family for seven years, I have come to understand that we are a very unique group of individuals. We are a

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disparate collection of people from a variety of backgrounds, who spend more time together in the three or more months of show preparations than we spend with our "real" family members. We come together to present a unified performance with all the focus and determination of a professional theater company.

My personal introduction to the works of Gilbert and Sullivan began while still in the womb. My father is a fervent fan of opera and operetta. I grew up sailing on his small but proud boat, "The Pinafore II" and had memorized many of the melodies of "that infernal nonsense" before I entered school. I attended many of the Ohio Light

Opera performances with my parents before and during college and sang in the chorus for *The Gondoliers*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, and *H.M.S. Pinafore* while in college. I am fortunate that my parents have been able to attend all but one of my Savoyard shows and I hope that, since their recent move to Durham, they will be in the audience for many more. Gilbert and Sullivan are in my blood and I hope, with a little help from me, that our amazing little troupe can continue to spread the joy and silliness of their works to generations to come.

In closing, I want to thank each and every person who has ever participated in The Durham Savoyards, Ltd. Anyone who has lifted a hand to build or paint the sets, made and conducted our music, sewn a costume, constructed a prop, sung a chorus or aria, danced or choreographed our steps, sold or distributed tickets, led or served on the Board of Governors, designed a poster, edited a newsletter or program, designed or updated a website, compiled a mailing list, stuck a label or stamp, organized or hosted a party, attended a concert or main stage show, or in any way volunteered your time and effort: you have made this company a success. I am humbled to be a part of your history. Thank you!

Savoyard Board of Governors

PRODUCTION YEAR 2012-2013

President	Kim Kingsley
Past President	Steve Dobbins
Vice President	Bobby Cameron
Secretary	Pam Guidry-Vollers
Business Manager	Michael Hale Gray
Members At-Large	Tracy Delius, Mary Elizabeth Guy



Auditions!

The Durham Savoyards, Ltd.
are auditioning for our
50th anniversary spring production
of *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Dec 9 from 2-6 PM
Dec 10-11 from 6:30-9 PM
Dec 13 – callbacks 6:30-9 PM

DURHAM ARTS COUNCIL

E-mail for appointment:
auditions@durhamsavoyards.org

Looking Back, Looking Forward: Financial Update

By MICHAEL HALE GRAY
BUSINESS MANAGER

The past fiscal year was both memorable and exciting for the Savoyards. It was one of the few times where an entirely new show was conceived, written, and produced. The Durham Savoyards coproduced *Sing Me a Story* with Raleigh Little Theatre, and while the gist of it was in the last *Happy Dispatch*, the financial details are included in this 2011-12 year summary.

As the official host producer of the performance, RLT covered the technical expenses in-house. Of course, the Savoyards had expenses for the directors' honoraria and the script printing costs, to the "tune" of \$1,325. Personal and donated costumes/props and video expenses kept those items to \$57, and the insurance rider of \$105 allows the group to perform at RLT from now on. The check from RLT was for \$1,629, so a small profit of about \$143 was the result. Thank you to all who donated the above items!

The financial report for *Iolanthe*, the main show of 2012, will not be as detailed, due to the myriad items that make up a show of this size. Renting the theatre cost \$4,525, and equipment (spots, gels and mics, etc.) was \$2,392. Honoraria for the tech crew and directors totaled \$11,845 and orchestra honoraria amounted to \$12,450. Payment to the Carolina crew came to \$46,387 and advertising totaled \$6,717.

Further details can be requested of the business manager, but the total expense for *Iolanthe* (including programs, mailings, strike party, and warehouse space to store all

those set pieces) was (drum roll) \$63,141 – a lot of money to put on a great show.

The income from sales of scores (\$683), videos (\$2,010), and T-shirts (\$728) was nice, but the box office sales were the majority of income – \$32,715. From that box office total, many of the above expenses were paid, leaving the Savoyards short by \$23,431.

This is where the Friends' campaign comes in. Owing to gifts of unprecedented generosity, our Friends' donations in 2011-2012 totaled \$82,802. Increase in the two mutual funds (Fidelity Puritan and Value) also helped, as an increase in value of \$6,713 due to stock market "whims" also gave the bottom line a boost.

Looking ahead, *The Pirates of Penzance* will require even more financial support than *Iolanthe* did. To put on a good show, the Carolina Theatre needs to be self-sustaining, and their rates have increased due to the variances of the economy. To rent the Carolina for two weeks for *The Pirates of Penzance* (which includes 3 rehearsal nights and 4 "dark" nights) will cost at least \$14,725. Stage labor will amount to about \$10,200, and lobby personnel will be almost \$1,500. Lighting instruments will add \$2,400, so the cost of the Carolina will be almost \$30,000 even before a costume is sewn or any honoraria are paid.

As you can see, our 50th anniversary show, *The Pirates of Penzance*, is more than just a milestone. It is a continuing challenge to the people who are cast—the ones who have the most to gain—to advertise themselves, their history, and their future, to provide a great show at a great price, and to go out and get as many people as possible to enjoy that great show, and many more shows to come.

Save The Date!

The Durham Savoyards
will be celebrating their
50TH ANNIVERSARY
in 2013. We invite
our friends far and near to
JOIN US
OCTOBER 19-20, 2013

at the
DURHAM CONVENTION CENTER
in beautiful downtown Durham
for the festivities.



**DURHAM
CONVENTION
CENTER**

Thank You for this Concert Season

By NOELLE PAULL

The Savoyards wish to thank all of the singers who have participated in concerts this past year, as well as Kim Kingsley for her invaluable work organizing the music and Alan Riley Jones for conducting. We would also like to offer our special thanks to Sam Hammond for his wonderful work as our accompanist, and Scott Hill and Jim Waddelow for conducting the last three concerts of this season.

To the Friends of the Savoyards

By MICHAEL HALE GRAY

For 50 years you have generously given of your time, your applause, and especially your donation of extra cash, to make sure that the Triangle enjoys a special niche of theatre. When *Princess Ida* was put on in 2011, people came from Charlotte and Charlottesville, from Virginia and South Carolina, to see the show. The Durham Savoyards are well-known in the G&S world, and, with 50 years under our collective belt, we can be proud of producing the complete canon (every show at least twice, and Thespis as a new-found plus to the 13) for a public that obviously wants it.

But the true cost of a great show is more than the ticket price. Our season grant application to the Durham Arts Council requires us to ask other G&S groups for reports of their costs and donations in order to compare those companies with the local group whose newsletter you now hold. A professional New York group's actual cost per ticket is over \$100, and several others around the nation are between \$40-50 per seat. The actual cost per person for the Durham Savoyards? Slightly over \$35 – not bad for a medium-sized thespian group, in a medium-sized Southern town, using lots of volunteers and recycled wood.

Many things cannot be recycled, though, and the biggest is talent. Orchestra members spend years honing their skills to blend in a single body under Alan Riley Jones. Add people with technical specialties (lights and sound, costumes and paint) and the increasing cost of the theatre space. All this must be paid for, as theatre and talent cannot be bartered or delayed, with bills to pay and employees to be remunerated (OK, paid).

We rely on donations from the Friends of the Savoyards to pay these expenses and, if you would like to donate, there are several ways to do so. We currently accept donations mailed to the business manager by check. We are in the process of establishing a PayPal account to accept donations online. You can set up a monthly draft from your bank account to be donated to the Savoyards over the course of the year. You can even provide for a bequest to fall to the Savoyards after you are gone – a loving act of generosity that the Savoyards will not forget.

All these are ways to make up for the increased cost of a show, to allow people of all financial levels to enjoy a slice of theatrical history come alive, and to keep entertaining the population of the Triangle for the next half-century. If a couple can drive from Roanoke, VA, to see the show (and spend a night and eat some meals – adding more than just a couple of tickets to the local economy!), then the monthly drafts, the small donation from a college student, and the many, many generous contributions from so many of you, will enable audiences to continue to visit Durham and see the results of your generosity.

The case for monetary requests having been done in as low-key and gentle a way as possible, the business manager now lays down his pen (keyboard?), having finished his task.

Coming in 2013...

Celebrate with the
Durham Savoyards their
50th Anniversary Season!



Enjoy Gilbert and Sullivan's most popular show – the show that started it all for the Savoyards 50 years ago.

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

or *The Slave of Duty*

March 14-17
& 22-24, 2013

AT THE HISTORIC
Carolina Theatre
DOWNTOWN DURHAM



The Pirates of Penzance is supported by the Durham Art Council's Annual Arts Fund and the N.C. Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources.

The performances in Fletcher Hall of the Carolina Theatre are made possible in part by a grant from the Durham Arts Council's Fletcher Performing Arts Fund of the Triangle Community Foundation.

