



THE HAPPY DISPATCH

The Official Newsletter of
the Durham Savoyards, Ltd.

NOVEMBER 2015

durhamsavoyards.org

President's Message

By BOBBY CAMERON

There's a lot going on with the Durham Savoyards as we enter our 2015-16 year. This year's Board of Governors is in place and we're already busy. (Read about newly elected members-at-large Ada Brown and Michael Rowe elsewhere in this newsletter.) We've launched the production of *HMS Pinafore* with Derrick Ivey, director, and Alan Riley Jones, music director; planning is underway for 2017's world premiere full-stage production of *Thespis*, orchestrated by our own Alan Riley Jones; and we're renewing our plans for growing the Gilbert & Sullivan community. (Read about each of these elsewhere in this newsletter.)

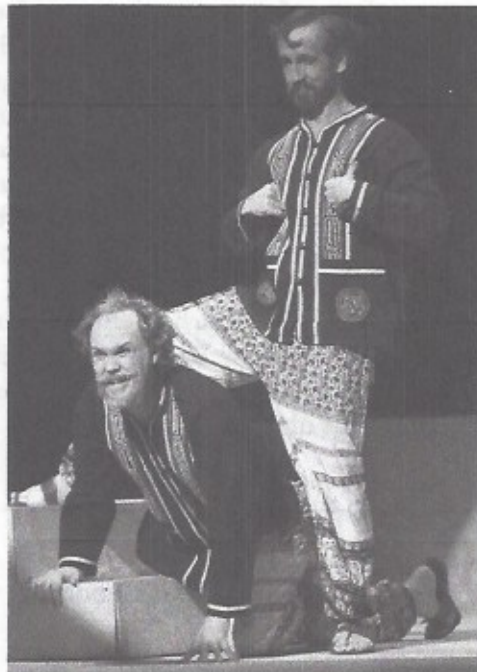


From *Utopia Limited* (2015)

I want to put in a special plug for BJ Attwood, our newly appointed development director and a life-long Gilbert & Sullivan fan. BJ brings a lot of energy and great ideas to an important role within our organization—community development and fundraising. With a background in marketing and fundraising for non-profits, BJ has begun working with the Board of Governors to figure out ways to expand our outreach to new Savoyards performers, production staff, audience

members and contributors. BJ will be working closely with Sonja Foust (publicity director), Katherine Zeph (social director), and others, so keep an eye peeled for opportunities to help out. Please welcome BJ and feel free to contact her with ideas of your own, including ways to give her a hand. (And you can read more about her elsewhere in this newsletter.)

Looking forward to seeing all of you at the *HMS Pinafore* sing-through on November 15!



From *Utopia Limited* (2015)

The Durham Savoyards, Ltd. Presents **HMS PINAFORE**

Directed by Derrick Ivey
With Music Direction by Alan Riley Jones

April 11-17, 2016
Carolina Theatre, Durham, NC



Notes from the Producer

BY JANELL LOVELACE

I hope everyone reading this was able to enjoy *Utopia Limited* as much as I did. What a spectacular group of talented people contributed to the show! Whether they mostly stayed behind the scenes making everything work, like our stage manager and rehearsal accompanists, or displayed their talents front and center like our two new female leads, all of the Savoyards should give themselves a hand.

It takes an amazing number of people to put on a show like this, with skills including concept, staging, choreography design, music direction and performance, set design and construction, lighting design, technical direction, costume design and construction, graphic design, photography, videography, prop design and construction, publicity, business management, hair and makeup design, etc. I can also tell you that in addition to being talented and hard-working, everyone was overwhelmingly kind and caring, and did a wonderful job of taking care of me and helping me get everything done when I had unexpected medical problems this year. I couldn't ask for a better group of people to work with!

Now we're starting to think about our 2016 show, and I'm working to put together another production team to see if we can put on an even higher quality show for everyone this year. *HMS Pinafore* is deservedly one of the most popular works of Gilbert & Sullivan. The satire of, for example, a political appointee most distinguished by having no qualifications relevant to their job

seems particularly apt in this election year, and as usual we can expect silly songs, love entanglements, mistaken identity and all of the wittiness that we've come to expect. There will be many opportunities to be involved during the next few months, so please plan to audition, volunteer, donate and/or to come see *HMS Pinafore* April 14-17 at the Carolina Theatre!

Why Do We Perform Concerts?

BY JIM BURNETT

Durham Savoyards are drawn together as a company by our love for the topsy-turvy comic operas of Gilbert & Sullivan. We love performing and singing them and, more importantly, sharing them with our local communities. Offering our concert series in both private and public venues is an important way to introduce these timeless and entertaining operas to people who may not be familiar with Gilbert & Sullivan, or to those who are long-time devotees. Either way, we perform to entertain, to educate and to perpetuate the body of work known collectively as the Gilbert & Sullivan operettas.

School groups, retirement communities, church fellowships, opera clubs and other civic/social organizations have delighted in previews of our upcoming productions often accompanied by educational

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and informative discussions from our talented production staff. While we are traditionally and best known as a Gilbert & Sullivan company, we also offer—through our concert series—a range of musical genre. Concerts are just as likely to include selections from jazz and blues standards, Broadway hits, seasonal music and a range of contemporary pieces.

This musical diversity not only introduces musical theater to new generations of patrons, but it also reacquaints our established fans with long-time favorites. We are proud that grandparents bring their grandchildren to our performances, and they can all laugh at the same jokes and hum the same tunes as they enjoy superb musical theater in the true spirit of family entertainment.

Why do the Durham Savoyards offer concert series? Because... it is, it is a glorious thing to give back to our local communities!



This project was supported by the Durham Arts Council's Annual Arts Fund and the NC Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources.

Our shows are also made possible by the generous donations of time, money, and expertise of our members and supporters. Thank you!

Welcome, New Board Members

BJ Attwood, Development Director

I am fairly new to the Triangle area, coming from Greenville, SC and Richmond, VA and have been involved in non-profit development and fundraising for many years, both in Greenville (Centre Stage) and Richmond (The Goochland Free Clinic).

As public relations representative for The Free Clinic, I ran galas, fundraising events, did publicity in both print and broadcast media, and coordinated events with other groups.

As a long time fan of Gilbert & Sullivan, I am happy to be involved in promoting the work of the Savoyards. I look forward to assisting you in raising much needed funds, and increasing community awareness and participation in the future growth of the company.



Ada Brown, Member-at-Large

Ada Brown here, new at-large member of the Durham Savoyards board. I previously served on the Greenville (NC) Choral Society and Ayden Community Theatre boards. You may remember me as Mrs. Partlet in last year's *The Sorcerer* and Melene in this year's *Utopia Limited*.

I played oboe in the Duke Wind Symphony under former Savoyards music director Dr. Paul Bryan with Savoyards Charles Register, Kathy Register and Bruce Klitzman. I've acted and sung at ECU Opera Theatre and in community

theater. (Favorite roles: Mammy Yokum and Sister Mary Amnesia.)

My dad invented a robot and Mom was part Transylvanian, so I basically grew up in a Frankenstein movie. I've taught medical microbiology at ECU and write (as Ada Milenkovic Brown) humor and speculative fiction—some of it published—and also monologues and one act children's musicals (book and lyrics), which have been performed.

I look forward to doing my best for the Savoyards.

Michael Rowe, Member-at-Large

I am very excited to be on the board for the second time. I moved to Durham in 1999 after living and performing Gilbert & Sullivan in Atlanta with a group that went through many names: The Southeastern Savoyards and The Savoyards Light Opera, just to name a few. Within a few months of moving to Durham, a work colleague introduced me to the Durham Savoyards and I knew I had found a new group to perform with. I was happy to be able to be Ernest Dumpkopf in the 2000 performance of *The Grand Duke*, and

to spend a year as the secretary for the group before work and a master's degree got in the way of being on the board. Well, here it is 15 years later and I have enjoyed being a part of many performances, parties and productions with the Durham Savoyards. As a member at large, I look forward to helping the Savoyards grow so we can have at least another 40 years of Gilbert & Sullivan. To that end, I will work to grow our endowment and to help bring a new generation into the theater and on the stage.



Down to Business

By KIM KINGSLEY

Greetings Savoyards and Friends! This past year has been full of challenges, successes and more challenges. We started the fiscal year at a distinct disadvantage because we were going to be producing a relatively unknown show (*Utopia Limited*) in a year following the production of a somewhat better-known operetta that didn't draw the crowds for which we had hoped. Although *Utopia Limited* was very well received and earned wonderful reviews, the ticket sales were, unfortunately, less than those for *The Sorcerer*.

Ticket sales for *The Sorcerer* totaled 1,685 over four nights with

an average of 421 tickets per night. *Utopia Limited* only had an average of 307 tickets sold per night for a total of 1,229 in ticket sales. The expenses for *Utopia Limited* are in the range of those for *The Sorcerer* (\$63,000), although I am still collecting receipts for reimbursements at this time and I don't have an accurate total to share with you. Our income from the show, however, is over \$9,000 less than last year's.

On a happier note, our Friends donations were up \$877 over last year's total thanks to matching donations. We received \$16,168 from 60 donors and two matching companies. The matching donations more than made up for a decrease in the number of donors, twelve fewer than last year. I want to thank everyone who took the time to send us a donation and

especially those who became first-time Friends of the Durham Savoyards! As you can see from the numbers above, we need each and every one of you to help cover the costs of creating and presenting our shows.

Thank you again to everyone who donated to the Durham Savoyards this past year. We depend on your generosity to continue to provide fun, affordable family entertainment for the Durham community. If you have never donated, please consider sending a gift in any amount. If you are already a Friend, please continue to support us and if you work for a company that offers matching gifts, please let me know so I can assist you in making your gift go further.

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Thespi's Coming in 2017

In 2017 the Durham Savoyards, Ltd., will produce a newly-scored operetta derived from Gilbert & Sullivan's first collaboration in 1871, *Thespi's*, or *The Gods Grown Old*. This two-act burlesque portrays the gods on Mount Olympus grown old and in need of a vacation. In their absence they turn

over their offices and powers to a troupe of actors led by Thespi's, the legendary inventor of Greek drama, with comically disastrous results. Though we still have W. S. Gilbert's libretto from the 1871 *Thespi's*, Sullivan's score no longer exists with the exception of two intact numbers, "Climbing Over Rocky Mountain" (reused in *The Pirates of Penzance*), and "Little Maid of Arcadec" (published separately in 1872). These numbers have been incorporated into a new musical setting of Gilbert's libretto

composed and orchestrated by Durham Savoyards' music director, Alan Riley Jones.

The Jones musical setting was first heard in an enthusiastically received concert reading with piano accompaniment in 2004. The 2017 staging is to be a fully staged production with orchestra. Make plans now to see this unique world premiere event, and if you can be generous in your financial support, please help us to make the new *Thespi's* a grand reality.

Become a Friend of the DURHAM SAVOYARDS, Ltd.

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