



The Sudbury Savoyards' Sandwich Board

Winter 2003 - Vol 8, Number 2

Even with the growth of the Savoyards' activities into year-round busy-ness, Winter remains the busiest of our busy times. More than 150 people contribute to the effort to get our "big show" onto a stage (and into your hearts). Time is short and the effort is great between Thanksgiving, when we cast the show, and Presidents Day, when it comes to the stage. So *Patience* is our present virtue (and the focus of this issue), but our horizon stretches into the Summer. We are eagerly searching for lead personnel for our summer shows, especially our Savoy Club cabaret. In other news, we have many thanks to give here, both for current gifts and through a new program of Life Achievement Awards for Savoyards. We thank *you* too for your continuing support of our Company, and hope you'll be with us through the coming year.

Patience

Patience, first produced in 1881, followed *HMS Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance*, when Gilbert and Sullivan were well-established in the London theater scene. It was also the first production to occupy the now-eponymous Savoy Theater. Gilbert had first outlined the plot for *Patience* as a rivalry between two Curates, but was uncomfortable with the likely repercussions if it were thought he was ridiculing churchmen. His 'out' came with the rise of the Aesthetic Movement, which presented a less contentious target of self-described anti-establishment exhibitionists. Rival Curates became Dueling Poets, and gave excuse for women to swoon and Dragoons to wave lilies instead of swords.

Our production of *Patience* features our largest cast in several years, led by a fairly even break between veteran Savoyards and welcome newcomers. **Dennis O'Brien, Ted Koban, and Ben Stevens** are the Commanding Officers of our Dragoons (Colonel Calverley, Major Murgatroyd, and Lt. Duke of Dunstable, respectively). **Cindy Ewing, Elaine Crane, Stephanie Mann, and Leah Tsamous** swoon as the Aesthetic Ladies Angela, Saphir, Ella, and Jane. Our Dueling Poets are **Eric Ruben** as Reginald Bunthorne and **Bill Kuhlman** as Archibald Grosvenor. **Kathryn Denney** takes the title role of *Patience*.

Our chorus of Officers of Dragoon Guards and Rapturous Maidens consists of Deirdre Bergeron, Sheldon Brown, Jorge Castillo, Julio Ciprian, Debbie Crane, Edwin Fell, Marcia Goldensher, Beth Goldstein, Kent Hatton, Marianne Hatton, Jennifer Healey, Mariah Howland, Fred S. Hughes, Julia Jerome, Randi Kestin, Julie Kingman, Mike Lague, Scott Lutz, Kanti Mann, Kris Maples, Marylee Marsh, Laurel Martin, June McKnight, Patricia McMahan, Larry Millner, Rich Olsen, David Owen, Tony Parkes, Roy Paro, Karen Pierce, Nancy Powers, Anne Rollins, Jonathan Saul, Karen Schlosberg, David Silberstein, J. Donald Smith, Ellen T. Spear, Jose Valentin, Erin Van Speybroeck, Marie Wallace, Suzanne White, Jack Wirtz, Jay Woodruff, and Marla Zucker.

Sudbury Savoyards Sandwich Board - Winter 2003 - 2

The burden of preparing this cast and chorus for their artistic endeavors centers, of course, on our stage and music directors **Kathy Lague** and **Steve Malione**, assisted this year by **Bill Kuhlman** and **Katherine Engel Meifert** as Assistant Stage and Music Directors, respectively. Kathy and Steve are eager, as always, to share their enthusiasm and vision for the show with you, our prospective audience.

Steve: We're off and running with this season's production of *Patience*. We have a fabulous cast and crew, with many familiar faces returning to the stage once again. In addition, there are some newcomers to the Savoyards which is something we always like to see. Welcome aboard!

It is always a pleasure to share the leadership duties of this production with Stage Director Kathy Lague. And I would like to welcome Katherine Engel Meifert as my Associate Music Director. Katherine wears a number of hats with the Savoyards, but this is her first stint as Associate. She has been a tremendous help to me and the show thus far and has a lot to offer for this production. Thanks, Katherine!

The month of December is the time when rehearsals are geared to learning the music of the show. And we've had a great start! I've been very pleased and quite impressed with the progress that our singers have made thus far. With January upon us, we begin the next phase, which is adding the blocking. It's always an exciting time as the show begins to take shape. In a few weeks, yet another new phase will begin, the start of orchestra rehearsals. Recruiting is nearly complete and we have some outstanding players lined up to complement our cast and crew. All of the elements are in place. We will all work hard over the course of the next few months in order to create yet another enjoyable production for our audiences.

Not all of the tunes of *Patience* may be as well known to our audiences as those of *The Mikado*, *Pirates of Penzance*, or *HMS Pinafore*, but I'm convinced that they will instill a lasting impression on all who hear them. The contrast of the beautiful melodies sung by the love-struck maidens of our women's chorus and the rousing regiment-like tunes of the men's chorus of Dragoon Guards will help tell the story of love and aestheticism that is the basis of *Patience*. The first appearance of the Dragoon Guards in Act I is one of my favorite entrance numbers for the men's chorus of all of the operettas (the entrance of the Peers in *Iolanthe* is also a favorite). Our Dragoons have already gotten their first primer in marching and that coupled with their singing of "The soldiers of our Queen" will be quite an exciting part of the show. Another great moment in Act I is "In a doleful train." Here Sullivan gives the women's chorus a lovely flowing melody to sing, followed by a patter-like melody for the men's chorus, and then combines both melodies for the end. It is quite an interesting effect, and one that I am particularly fond of. The Act I Finale is one of the longest finales of the operettas. There is a lot that happens, including a raffle for Bunthorne, a fabulous sextet sung by six of our leads, and a rousing conclusion with full cast and full orchestra at full tilt. Lots of fun!

Act II continues with some great solos and duets by our leads and a humorous trio by three of our Dragoon Guards ("It's clear that medieval art") in which they transform themselves to aestheticism for the sake of winning the hearts of the ladies.

A lot of hard work is still ahead of us, but we will continue to rehearse diligently and bring to you yet another performance of Gilbert and Sullivan "on a grand scale!" So please do come out to Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School for the Sudbury Savoyards' presentation of *Patience*. See you there!

Kathy: "Here we are once more at the scene of our former triumphs..." While not usually considered one of the top examples of the G&S operettas, *Patience* has always been a personal favorite of mine. It's too often overlooked as "the one that makes fun of Oscar Wilde." Gilbert was indeed lampooning the then-current rage of aestheticism that was happening in Britain, but the sentiments are very much applicable to modern day. We will be setting our production in its original time period, and the basic story is easily understood:

Bunthorne, an aesthetic poet, has captivated all the maidens in the village, except for the one he loves himself: *Patience*, the village milkmaid. Complications arise when the maidens' former flames,

Sudbury Savoyards Sandwich Board - Winter 2003 - 3

the dragoon guards, arrive on the scene, wondering what has caused the change in the ladies' affections and being very surprised that it is Bunthorne. More trouble occurs when a rival poet, Grosvenor appears on the scene, cursed with a beauty that causes every woman to fall in love with him at first sight. He, of course, loves only Patience, whom he knew when both were children. Patience understands nothing of all this talk of Love, but is persuaded to love someone completely unselfishly; hence, she decides to fall in love with Bunthorne, professing that there can be nothing selfish about that. Since Bunthorne is now "taken," the ladies immediately transfer their love to Grosvenor. Now, everyone is in love, but no one is happy; the dragoons are rejected by the maidens, the maidens are rejected by Grosvenor, Grosvenor is rejected by Patience, and Bunthorne is rejected by the maidens, except for Lady Jane (who is, of course, rejected by Bunthorne). It all works out in the end, it always does.

So while aestheticism is the cause of all this Love, insert any movement/culturally significant trend, such as Dadaism, rock music idols, self-help seminars, etc. and you will see the same kind of behavior from followers and skeptics alike.

One interesting tidbit: In almost every scene, there is a person or group "left out", or observing the action of others. The title "Patience" has multiple meanings: it is a character, a virtue, and a pun: card games that involve only one player are called Patience games in Britain (like our Solitaire). And with all that, there is great music and wonderful characters! So please come join us at the performances.

Open Ticketing Continues!

As was the case last year, our seven-performance schedule allows us to implement an important change to our ticketing policy, which we hope will make it even easier for our prospective audience to attend our show. Again, **any ticket will be good for any one of our seven performances**, with the exception of our discount Thursday night tickets, which will be honored only for that performance. All tickets are for general admission seating. We hope this policy will make it easier for our audience members to decide to attend a show without having to commit to a specific performance in advance.

The Sudbury Savoyards are pleased to present Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience* at 8:00PM Friday, February 21st; Saturday, February 22nd; Thursday, February 27th; Friday, February 28th; and Saturday, March 1st, with matinee performances at 2:00PM on Sunday, February 23rd and Saturday, March 1st. All performances will be presented in the Virginia Kirschner Auditorium at the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School, 390 Lincoln Road, Sudbury, Massachusetts.

Tickets good for any performance are \$16 for adult general admission, \$12 for seniors and students, and \$10 for children under 12; Thursday night discount tickets are \$8 for all age groups. **Order your tickets by phone** at 978-443-8811, by **email** to PatienceTix@aol.com, or **postal mail** to Patience Tickets, 9 Marlboro Rd., Sudbury, MA 01776. With all orders, indicate your name and address, a phone number for callback, the number of tickets for each category (adult, senior/student, child), and whether you are ordering specifically for the Thursday discount night performance. Prepaid orders (make checks payable to the Sudbury Savoyards) received before February 14th will be mailed back to you; later orders or orders without payment will be held at the door. You can also get tickets from any participating Savoyard. All tickets paid for in advance, however purchased, except the Thursday night discount tickets, are subject to a discount of \$1 per ticket.

The Sudbury Savoyards are a not-for-profit organization, sponsored by the Sudbury United Methodist Church. All the proceeds of our productions are donated to the United Methodist Committee on Relief, earmarked for the relief of world hunger. An important source of support for this work is donations from our patrons. Donations to the Savoyards are acknowledged in our program, with levels ranging from "Supporter" (under \$25) to "Angel," for donations over \$250. Please consider adding a donation to your ticket purchase, or contact the Savoyards to inquire about levels of support and program acknowledgement. Thank you.

Outstanding service program – "Yeomen of Regard"

Sudbury Savoyards Sandwich Board - Winter 2003 - 4

This year the Savoyards are implementing a program that many will think is long overdue. In our 40+ years of history, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people have participated in our shows on stage, in the house, behind the tech scenes, in management and production, and in many, many other ways. By our custom, all these people are Savoyards For Life, and they are the lifeblood of our Company. But as in many groups, some people have taken roles and made contributions far beyond expectations, in some cases being responsible for the very survival of the Company as a continuing operation. This year we will begin to recognize these people for lifetime achievement with the Savoyards as "Yeomen of Regard." Yes, the name may be a little too cute, but it reflects sincere appreciation for the efforts these stalwarts have contributed. Our first group of honorees will be presented during our run of *Patience* and honored at our general membership meeting, the Last Supper, on March 1st.

This will be an ongoing program, and nominees will be accepted on a continuing basis. The formalities of the program will be published this spring, but general criteria for recognition will include any form of "extraordinary contribution to the mission of the Savoyards as defined in our Bylaws." Please give thought to your nominations, especially for those Savoyards who contributed in the early years of our Company, and who may not be known to newer Savoyards.

Rugs - A few issues ago we presented in this space what some probably considered an unusual request. We asked for discarded carpeting to provide flooring in our orchestra pit. The carpeting softens the sound off the concrete floor of the Lincoln-Sudbury auditorium and provides warmth and softness for our magnificent orchestra. Our request met with a more than satisfying response, yielding enough new (to us) carpeting, some with the luxury of pads, to more than cover the area needed. Thanks to the Bishop and Fell families for their generosity, and to loyal Savoyards Roy Paro, Liz Kinney, Brian Meifert, and Kent Hatton who fetched and carried the bounty into our 110 degree attic!

2003 Sudbury Savoyards Summer Shows - The success of the Sudbury Savoyards' summer productions is well-established. The Board is currently considering proposals for productions for Summer 2003, both our now-traditional stage play and a reprise of last year's well-received novelty, the Savoy Club. As always, there is need for participants in every aspect of the production effort. If you would like to produce, direct, act, paint sets, collect props, manage a box office, or help in any way imaginable, contact the Board by telephone at 978-443-8811, or through Chair Katherine Engel Meifert at 508-303-2000 or kate@meifert.org.

2004: *Pirates* - The Board of Trustees of the Sudbury Savoyards has selected Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance* as the company's 42nd main stage production, to be presented in winter/spring of 2004. The Savoyards last presented *Pirates* in 1993. Senior staff recruiting will begin soon. Selection of directors will occur in June of 2003. Interested directorial and senior staff candidates are encouraged to contact the Board through any of our contact addresses, below.

Contacting the Sudbury Savoyards - If you would like to work with the Savoyards, or attend our performances, or support our efforts financially, we want to hear from you. Write to us in care of our sponsor, the **Sudbury United Methodist Church, 251 Old Sudbury Rd., Sudbury, Massachusetts 01776**, or call the Savoyards' voice message line at **978-443-8811** if you have any questions about any of our activities. **Do we have your e-mail address?** The Savoyards run several different e-mail lists we use to apprise our friends and members about our activities and other local theater opportunities. Visit the Savoyards Web page at www.sudburysavoyards.org and follow the 'e-mail' links to subscribe, or send a note via info@sudburysavoyards.org.