



The Sudbury Savoyards' Sandwich Board

Fall 2004 - Vol 10, Number 1

The new year starts for the Savoyards in the fall, with preparation for the year's Big Show the focus of our activities. We do have a summer to recap, however, and at least one Fall activity to highlight. But 2005 promises to be a noteworthy year, as we present what many would consider Gilbert and Sullivan's Greatest Hit in a brand new performance venue. So settle in while we wrap up 2004 and set you up for 2005....

Sudbury Savoyards Summer Shows

***The Boys Next Door* breaks new ground in a Savoyard Summer Show**

Our summer shows began in 1996, and up until this year have featured late 19th and early 20th century comedic pieces. This year's production of Tom Griffin's *The Boys Next Door* was a departure from that mold, still a comedy, but a modern American play with a social message. Many in the audience were moved by the compassion evident in Griffin's script, both for the mentally challenged "Boys" and for the people around them. Great credit is due to first-time Savoyard director Corey Jackson for the passion and dedication he brought to the show. Nearly 400 patrons over our three-weekend run allowed us to net almost \$2000 for the benefit of the Savoyards' designated charity, world hunger relief.

The Savoy Club Goes Operatic

In another departure, we offered but one Savoy Club program this summer, and that was not the heretofore-usual cabaret. Under the Savoy Club banner, members of the **Robert Gartside Voice Studio** presented a semi-staged, costumed, English-language production of Mozart's opera *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. **Kathy Lague**, long-time Savoyard and Stage Director of our upcoming production of *The Mikado*, has been a student of Professor Gartside for many years, and sang the role of Constanza, one of the abductees in question. The opera's two-night run in Hawes Hall netted over \$900 for world hunger relief.

The Parade

It was hard to link the Sudbury Fourth of July Parade's theme "Happy Birthday America" to much in the way of Gilbert and Sullivan, but the Savoyards decked out a Mikado-themed float with birthday-themed bunting and other decorations and had a go of it. The parade has become a mid-summer mainstay in the Savoyards' program to connect with the community as a whole. This year Trustee **Laurel Martin** (daughter **Linnea** shown, appropriately costumed, at right) coordinated the effort. Thanks go out as usual to **Sudbury Lumber** for the loan of their truck as the basis for the float, and to the Savoyards who rode, walked, supported, and talked up the Savoyards to the cheering fans lining Concord Rd.



The Mikado

The Savoyards welcome back the team of **Stage Director Kathy Lague** and **Music Director Steve Malione** to oversee our upcoming production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*, to be presented at the brand new Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School in seven performances between February 25 and March 5, 2005. Kathy and Steve last teamed as directors in the Company's 2003 production of *Patience*. Our fall newsletter is one way we entice our readers to consider auditioning with us, and by way of that enticement we encourage our directors to tip their hands about their vision for the show and what our auditioners might expect. Kathy offers the following enticement:

"Then let the throng our joy advance..." My joy is quite advanced already – we are well underway planning our next production, *The Mikado*!

The Mikado is one of the great results of the collaboration between Gilbert and Sullivan. Anyone who's seen the movie "Topsy-Turvy" will know that their partnership had been going on for some time, and like any long-term relationship, it was perhaps becoming a bit routine. Whether or not Gilbert was truly inspired by a Japanese sword falling on his head is beside the point – the work is inspired.

A brief synopsis:

Nanki-Poo, a wandering minstrel, has come to the village of Titipu in search of a maiden, Yum-Yum, whom he met the previous year. At that time, Yum-Yum was betrothed to her guardian, Ko-Ko, so Nanki-Poo left, broken-hearted. Since then, he has heard that Ko-Ko was condemned to death for flirting, and Nanki-Poo has rushed back to woo Yum-Yum. Unfortunately, the village decided to promote Ko-Ko to Lord High Executioner instead of beheading him (there's a logic to it, but it's not important). Yum-Yum and Nanki-Poo meet and are overjoyed to see each other again, but she is still engaged to Ko-Ko. Hoping to persuade her to forget that fact, Nanki-Poo reveals himself to be the only son of the Emperor, the Mikado of Japan. He ran away from his father's palace in order to escape the matrimonial clutches of Katisha, an elderly lady of the court. Yum-Yum, however, is a woman who keeps her promises and remains engaged to Ko-Ko. Meanwhile, Ko-Ko has received a letter from the Mikado, who is concerned about the lack of executions coming from the village. Ko-Ko realizes he must find someone to execute, or it will have to be him! Right in the middle of Ko-Ko's soliloquizing on his fate, Nanki-Poo enters, determined to kill himself since he cannot live without Yum-Yum. Seeing an opportunity, Ko-Ko offers to execute Nanki-Poo instead of his committing suicide. Nanki-Poo agrees on the condition that he can marry Yum-Yum first and delay the execution for a month. Ko-Ko reluctantly agrees. While everyone is rejoicing about the upcoming nuptials, Katisha appears, ready to claim Nanki-Poo as her long lost love. Her claims fall on deaf ears, however, so she threatens to expose Nanki-Poo. She is thwarted in that as well and storms off, vowing vengeance.

So much for Act I. To find out what happens in Act 2, you'll just have to either be in the show or come see it!

The setting of this production will be in the Kabuki style. Kabuki is a Japanese theatre form with very old and strict traditions as to story lines and how characters look and act. We can't do authentic Kabuki theatre, but we will try to involve a lot of its elements.

There is a lot of traditional dance and movements in Kabuki and we will be recreating some of that feeling by having featured dancers in some of the chorus and solo numbers. These dancers will be members of the chorus, who will step out to do their special numbers. For this show, I will be auditioning the dancers, rather than simply asking for volunteers. But don't worry! The dances are not hard and I will audition people in groups; probably at the December 6th rehearsal. We'll have more details later.

Also, this is an historic year. For the first time since 1969, we have a new performance space: the NEW Lincoln-Sudbury High School auditorium. This will be a major change for all of us, but a welcome one! So, please come join us for this exciting production. I look forward to seeing lots of you at auditions and rehearsals.

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Full character sketches and a rehearsal schedule will be available at auditions and the voice ranges for all the leads are listed on the enclosed audition flyer. Remember that you don't need to audition to sing in the chorus!

Lead Auditions for *The Mikado* will be held in Hawes Hall at Sudbury United Methodist Church at 7:30pm on Monday and Tuesday, the 15th and 16th of November, 2004. As is our custom, there are no auditions for the chorus for our shows. However, potential choristers are encouraged to attend auditions and sing accompaniment to support the auditioners, learn a thing or two about the show, and get an initial feel for how Sudbury Savoyard productions come together. Come one, come all, and bring your theatrically-minded friends.

Producers Donna Roessler and Jennifer Dohm and Technical Director Mariah Howland are currently concentrating on recruiting for the variety of business, staff, and technical positions required to support our production. The senior staff is particularly interested this year in engaging folks in "apprenticeship" positions to help build our leadership ranks. Recall that it takes between 100 and 150 people to mount our mainstage shows! Tech work has already begun. Step forward and lend your skills to an area you might not have considered before. Talk to any staff or Board member about what needs to be done.

What's a Savoyard affair without a party?

As is the Sudbury Savoyards' habit, the kick-off for the year's big production is a party. Informally called the "**2-Ring Circus,**" this kick-off party provides an opportunity for new and old Savoyards to meet, mingle, and catch up with one another, and to meet the directors and production staff of the upcoming show. There's *always* a sing through of the upcoming show. This year's 2-Ring returns to a venue familiar to many Savoyards. Join us on **Sunday evening, the 7th of November**, at the home of **Tom and Nancy Powers**, 201 Union Avenue, Sudbury. Union Avenue runs north from Rt 20 near Sudbury Farms supermarket towards Sudbury Center. The Powers' house is at the intersection of Union Avenue and Concord Road, one mile from Rt 20. The party starts at 6:30, somewhat earlier than has been typical. Experienced Savoyards: BSTS; with the earlier start time, pot luck is encouraged.

Who tracks 40+ Years of History?

In our last issue we began a series of articles describing the various (and numerous!) "staff" positions the Savoyards maintain to carry on the work of the Company on an ongoing basis. Our featured staff role in this issue is "Archivist."

Theatrical efforts are, almost by definition, ephemeral. Plays are produced for the immediate experience of the performers and the audience. But much of the effort that goes into a play is documented, though much of that documentation is also ephemeral, or diffuse. Playbills and posters are generated, cast lists are recorded, photos of rehearsals and performances are snapped, production designs are shared, and it all gets tossed (or, at best, filed - somewhere) at the end of the run. In 1996, **Andrea Roessler**, a Savoyard since her teens, recognized that decades of history were at risk of loss. An avid scrapbooker, photo-keeper, and history buff, Andrea was drawn to the task of conservator. She proposed to the Board that the position of "Archivist" be created to take charge of a retrospective and ongoing task of collecting the history of the Savoyards. Through assiduous tracking, digging, and begging, Andrea recovered, from various sources, show programs, cast photos, and other records going all the way back to the Savoyards' founding in the early 1960s. Why bother? Aside from cultivating and communicating a sense of history and Company pride, the records provide reference material for planning future shows, with pictures of costumes, sets, and props used. Records of the accomplishments of Savoyards past are searched to support our member recognition program, Yeomen of Regard. The task remains ongoing. If you have Savoyard memorabilia that you suspect we might not have yet collected into the archives, please contact Andrea or any staff member through info@sudburysavoyards.org or 978-443-8811. We don't have to have originals, though we will take good care of any you wish to donate.

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Opportunities to Support the Savoyards' Work Financially

As many of our readers are aware, the Sudbury Savoyards are a 100% volunteer organization. No Savoyard is paid for his or her efforts in support of the group. Every penny of our income over expenses from our shows is earmarked for distribution in the Relief of World Hunger through the United Methodist Committee on Relief. In support of our charitable goals, we depend on the efforts of our members and donations from the entire community. On the insert that accompanies this newsletter you will find two forms. One is for advertisers in our *Mikado* program, and one is for acknowledged donations. Program ads are priced to cover the cost of preparing and printing the programs; donations directly support the charitable work of the Savoyards. Donations received by mid-January are guaranteed to be acknowledged in the program; later donations will be acknowledged in a program supplement. Your donation will make a direct contribution to the relief of world hunger. Thank you for your generosity.

Craft Fair

You may be reading this newsletter just in time to take in our last formal activity of our program year, a Craft Fair jointly sponsored by the Savoyards and our sponsor, the Sudbury United Methodist Church. The craft fair, featuring crafts from members of the Savoyards and others, will be held at the Sudbury United Methodist Church Hawes Hall on Saturday, October 23, 2004 from 9:30am to 3:30pm. There will be over 25 crafters/artisans featured. Admission is free. In addition to the crafters, there will be a bake sale table, with proceeds going to our world hunger relief fund. For more information, please contact coordinators Donna and Andrea Roessler at 508-628-9772, or by email to donnarslr@rcn.com. Hope to see you there!

The
MIKADO



or The Town of Titipu

***Mikado* auditions - November 15th and 16th, 2004**
info: 978-443-8811 - www.sudburysavoyards.org