



Sudbury Savoyards Sandwich Board

Fall 2008 - Vol 14, Number 1

Year 14 for the Sandwich Board starts with a change in style and format. All the News You Need to Know is still here, backed up with more detail on our vibrant, active web site, www.sudburysavoyards.org. We're hoping the reduced size will make for a faster, snappier read for you and an opportunity for us to be more timely in our communications. Our overall publishing schedule is expected to remain the same: The Fall issue will alert you to the plans for our annual Big Show (this year *Utopia Ltd*), with details about kick-off activities, auditions, and recruiting. The Winter issue will provide the details of the Big Show production, with performance dates, ticket availability, and the like. The Spring/Summer issue will lead up to our Summer activities, the Summer Show, perhaps the 4th of July Parade, and any other special events. We'll include recaps and news as we can in every issue. Also keep an eye out for special mailings, like save-the-date postcards for special events. Comments? Questions? Subscription issues? Email the newsletter editor at newsletter_ed@sudburysavoyards.org. And thanks for reading!

Arsenic and Old Lace

Our 2008 Summer Show, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, continued the tradition of Fine Summer Theater in Sudbury. The Savoyards attracted many new talents to our Company on both the artistic and technical sides, and we provided a well-deserved outlet for the creativity of many of our long-serving members. We also raised about \$4000 towards a donation to the United Methodist Committee for Relief, the Savoyards' designated charity. Thanks go out to all concerned, especially our generous and supportive audiences.

Utopia, Ltd.

Everything you ever wanted to know about *Utopia, Ltd.*...well, go to Wikipedia for those details, but here's the scoop on our 2009 production:

Utopia, Ltd. was the next-to-last of the major Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, first staged by the D'Oyly Carte Company in 1893 and was last staged by the Savoyards in 1988. Most of the G&S works have been performed so often that aspects of the productions have become beloved, or at least expected, traditions. Not so with *Utopia, Ltd.*, thereby giving our team a real opportunity for being creative.

Utopia, Ltd., subtitled *The Flowers of Progress*, is tied together by theme rather than plot. The theme is the cultural and political contrast between Victorian England and a fictional South Pacific kingdom. The premise exploits the Romantic era's fascination with "The Noble Savage" and the Victorian obsession with the Far East. The plot, such as it is, meanders through this riot of contrasting cultures and focuses on a King who, with his Anglicized eldest daughter, persuades his people that the British are the real Utopia. His personal quest is to escape from his present "political" problem of being under the thumb of the Public Exploder and to woo his daughter's British governess. Gilbert's rapier wit is evident throughout as he squeezes these idyllic people into the Procrustean bed of Victorian culture and politics, and even manages to make reference to *The Mikado* and *HMS Pinafore*!

Stage Director Ed Knights and **Music Director Jim Ravan** suggest that perhaps one reason this show is so seldom performed is that there are several subplots that never resolve. Therefore, they have collaborated over the score to eliminate superfluous verses, tighten up dialogue, and edit the insensitive or now-obscure political jokes.

The contrast in cultures will be emphasized by portraying the Polynesians as accurately as possible, costumed as natives complete with tans, tattoos, and a mixture of pareos, grass skirts, and even a few coconut bras. The native ceremonies will also be realistic, with the blowing of the welcoming conch and authentic Polynesian choreography. This realism allows for a new source of humor as natives try out British attire, such as wearing a hoop skirt frame adorned with flowers and shells atop a traditional pareo. The British cast of soldiers, officers, and officials, known as The Flowers of Progress, and the alto governess of a certain age and stature, will be as "spot on" as ever, using their larger than life portrayal of Victorian England as further contrasting humor.

So if you thought *South Pacific* was the only musical with Polynesian dancing and a coconut bra, and *The Wizard of Oz* was the only one romping with poppies, here is your opportunity to participate in one of the rarely performed G&S operettas, show off your tattoos, and sport a deep tan in the dead of a New England winter.

AUDITIONS for UTOPIA, LTD

Auditions for lead roles will take place on Sunday, November 9th and Wednesday, November 12th, 2008 at 7:30pm in Hawes Hall at the Sudbury United Methodist Church.

Callbacks, if necessary, will be held on Thursday, November 13th.

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Auditioners should be prepared to sing 16 bars of any song; please bring sheet music or a score for the accompanist. Chorus members need not audition but must attend one of the two audition nights to register. Vocal scores will be available.

Performances will be February 20-22 and 26-28, 2009, at the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School Theater.

Please refer to our website at www.sudburysavoyards.org for character sketches, vocal ranges, and other information, or call 978-443-8811 and leave a message.

Staffing Call!

As you've heard from us so many times before, it takes a village to put on one of the Savoyards' major G&S shows. Our staff is filling in nicely, but there are several open positions whose work needs to start *now*, or very, very soon. Our stage and music directorial staffs are set, but we still need a Technical Director to lead a design team that is almost fully recruited. We still need a Publicity Chief, Ticket Chief, Playbill Assistant, Internal Sales, Social Chair, Cast co-Manager, and House Manager(s). Even positions that have been filled could use assistants, a great way to build your theater skills. If there's something you'd like to try or just find out more about, email **Producer Andrea Roessler** at producer@sudburysavoyards.org

The Beloved 2-Ring Reigns Again!

The best way to kick off the Savoyard year is with a party. The 2-Ring extravaganza is the traditional opportunity for Savoyards to meet old friends and welcome new ones. The focus is on the Big Show, *Utopia, Ltd.* The directors will reveal their plans for the show, the designers will have outlines of their concepts, and there will be a sing-through of the show. We might even have a showing of the video from the 1988 production to help bring you up to speed with the show.

This year's 2-Ring will again be held at the home of **Tom and Nancy Powers**, 201 Union Ave in Sudbury, on Sunday, October 26, starting at 7:30pm. Experienced Savoyards, Bring Something To Share. Newcomers are welcome!

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 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 our web site you will find two forms. One is for advertisers in our *Utopia, Ltd* 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 will 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.

Fall Craft Fair - It's that time again. The start of school means the beginning of the fall craft fair season. The Savoyards' 6th annual Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, October 11th from 9:00am to 3:00pm at the Sudbury United Methodist Church. This year we have LOTS of new vendors and new items, plus many of our returning favorites. Some of the crafts being sold this year include beautiful jewelry from stones, gems, Swarovski crystal, silver and turned wood, glass bottle cheese boards, hand-knitted children's sweaters and scarves, pet photo pillows, ceramics, beautiful photography, dried floral arrangements, hand-painted silk scarves, herbs and spices for dips, etc., hand-made cards and gift boxes, doll clothes, dog stockings, and holiday items. As always, admission is free!

This year we need your help once again with yummy baked goods for our bake sale table. Remember, all proceeds from the bake sale go to world hunger relief. If you are a Betty Crocker clone (or even if you aren't!), please consider donating a baked good. Please email Donna Roessler at donnarslr@rcn.com, or call her at 508-628-9772 if you'd like to help. Pies, cakes and breads are the popular sellers, but anything would be appreciated. See you at the fair!