

Precious Nonsense

NEWSLETTER OF THE MIDWESTERN GILBERT AND SULLIVAN SOCIETY

September 1993 -- Issue 40

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If anyone anything lacks,
He'll find it all ready in stacks. . .

After what turns out to have been a four-year absence, we have another *SHOPPER ISSUE*. While it's not as long a list of G&S-related distributors as we've had in years past, it's a good start. Of course, there had to be a trade-off: we got so caught up with the shopper listings, we haven't gotten around to printing the answers to the Big Quiz or the last postcard drawing about what the membership thinks of the way the MGS works. But they should all be settled by the next issue (incidentally, the trend in the postcard comments is that everything is fine with the MGS. If you disagree, please send in a postcard soon). In the meantime, there's the Shopper, a synopsis of the Sullivan/Hood operetta *The Rose of Persia*, and a report on the 1993 annual outing.

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Oh, Members, How Say You, What is it You've Done?

I'm afraid we've "spaced" the member news for the last six months, so we're going to try and play catch up now. First of all **T. Michael Stone**, of Basingstoke Productions, has spent his summer producing and directing summer repertory season of creative one act versions of the big three midtown Manhattan.

At the Savoy-Aires' spring benefit sing-along, **David Michaels** sang *Pish-Tush*, and had the part of *Antonio* in the Park Ridge Gilbert and Sullivan Society's production of *Gondoliers*.

If you should happen to come by Founders Library at Northern Illinois University (DeKalb, IL) during October, be sure and take a look at the *Utopia, Limited* Centenary display in the lobby. At this point, **Norman Vogt** and **Sarah Cole** are scheduled to set one up at the beginning of October.

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(By the way, we're hoping to get the news out in a more timely fashion: if you have any news about what you've been doing, we'd sure like to hear about it.

What Cheer! What Cheer! {Midwestern}

We just heard from **The Best of Gilbert and Sullivan.**

This group, which consists of Lorraine Daniels, Geoffrey Shovelton, Deborah Clague, Kenneth Sandford, and John Aylton, and David Mackie as musical director, is going to be

in the United States at the end of October and in November. Their program will include extracts from all of the G&S operas, including *Thespis* and *Grand Duke*, plus *The Zoo*. This is their 8th U.S. tour, and those of us who have heard them in the past know they really do a nice show! Last time they were here, their program included "When a wooer goes a-wooing" from *Yeomen*, and it was the first time S/A Cole had seen an audience so captivated that the auditorium was noticeably dead silent after the music ended and the applause began. If you haven't seen their performances, they are worth the seeing. Anyway, their schedule is expected to be:

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| October 28--Broadway Center | Tacoma, WA |
| 29--South Puget Sound Community College | Olympia, WA |
| 30--Cuesta College | San Luis Obispo, CA |
| November 3--South Dakota State University | Brookings, SD |
| 5--Peoria Civic Center | Peoria, IL |
| 6--Schaumburg Prairie Center for the Arts | Schaumburg, IL |
| 7--Smithsonian Institution | Washington, DC |
| 9--Bridgewater College | Bridgewater, VA |

9--Emory & Henry College	Emory, VA
10--Performing Arts Center	Clearwater, VA
11--Broward Center	Fort Lauderdale, FL
13--Stockton State College	Pomona, N.J.
14--Baravon Opera House	Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
15--Siena College	Louderville, N.Y.
17--Noyes Lecture Fund	Lancaster, N.H.
19--Long Island University	Brookville, N.Y.
20--YM/YWHA of North Jersey	Wayne, N.J.
21--Bloomsburg University	Bloomsburg, PA

Watch your local listings for more details. For more information, the place to contact is Joann Rile Artists Management Inc.; 100 Old York Road; Benson East, Suite 1206; Jenkinton, PA 19046 {(215) 885-6400}. We hope they get the audiences they deserve: they really do put together an enjoyable presentation!

Thomas Weakley has found another upcoming **Pinafore** production, this time by the Kentucky Opera at the Macauley Theatre December 7, 10, 11 (1:00 pm matinee), and 14, 1993. For more details, the Kentucky Opera can be reached at (502) 584-4500 / 631 S. 5th St.; Louisville, KY 40202-2201. Other musical works to be included in their 1993-94 season are *La Bohème*, Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera*, and *Rigoletto*.

We hear from Jeordano Martinez that North Central College, in Naperville, Illinois, is expecting to put on **Pinafore** for its winter theatrical production. Professor Martínez will be directing it, and it should all come off in late February, 1994. We'll certainly be looking forward to more details closer to the production date.

We hear from Winfield Smith that the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company is expecting to give *Mikado* in 1994 (probably late winter or early spring). Auditions will probably be held in December or so, so if you're interested in getting on the mailing list for tryout announcements (et. al.), send him your address. Winfield Smith can be reached at 5825 S. Blackstone Ave., Chicago, IL 60637.

Although The Savoy-Aires are done for this season, they are planning their 1994 show now. Only in 1994 (at this point, anyway), they are expecting to give it in October. We'll look forward to

seeing what it will be. In the meantime, the company can be contacted at P.O. Box 126, Evanston, IL 60204. Incidentally, the Savoy-Aires now have a newsletter.

Light Opera Works' will be presenting *no Gilbert and Sullivan in 1994*. But at this point they are expecting to present *A Most Happy Fella*, *One Night in Venice*, and a revival of their production of *The Student Prince*. For more information, Light Opera Works can be reached at 927 Noyes St., Evanston, IL 60201-2799 {(708) 869-6300}.

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What Cheer! What Cheer! {Elsewhere}

The Lamplighters (2350 Turk Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94118 / (415) 752-7755) are going to be giving **Gondoliers** weekends between October 2 and November 7, 1993. Tickets are \$22.00 (\$17.00 for youth, and they knock off a dollar for paying with cash/check). For more information, contact them: we've heard nothing but good reports of their work.

This sounds like it ought to be something. The Connecticut Gilbert and Sullivan Society is going to be presenting a double bill of *Trial By Jury* and Robert Cumming's "fairy tale operetta" *Rumpelstiltskin* November 5-7, 1993, at the Middletown High School, and November 13-14 at the Ivoryton Playhouse. Tickets will be \$12.00 (though seniors and children get a special price of \$10.00 at the matinees, which will be November 6, 7, and 14th). For more information, contact the company at P.O. Box 2152; Middletown, CT 06457 / (203) 873-1005.

We learn from Charlee Hutton that Ambassador Pops Subscription Series (at the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, CA) is going to feature Donald Adams "in his solo musical autobiography *My Life in Songs and Arias*" on Wednesday, May 4, 1994 at 8:00. There's no word yet on individual ticket prices, but you can call 1-800-266-2378 or (818) 304-6161 for more information. If you're going to be in the area, it ought to be a lot of fun. We hear from Robert Sheldon, of *Opera A La Carte*, that he's also going to be appearing with them in their April 30 (evening) and May 1 (matinee) performances of **The Gondoliers** at the Ambassador Auditorium. We'll pass on details of the performances as they become available.

The Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Shreveport is

planning to present **Mikado** in 1994. For more information, you can contact the society at 270 Bruce Ave.; Shreveport, LA 71105.

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Let the Welkin Ring with the News

We don't know when they will be available in the United States (maybe they are already?), but we hear from Andrew Heyward that CDs of the D'Oyly Carte's recordings of *Utopia Limited* and *Grand Duke* have been released in England. We'll look forward to seeing them when they become available locally.

A notice appeared in the September 1993 issue of the *Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Austin* (Texas)'s newsletter, saying:

There is talk about a two or three-day Gilbert and Sullivan Seminar, to include members of the Austin and Houston [G&S] Societies, and possibly some people from Dallas and San Antonio. It will feature musical performance, G&S discussions and lectures, visual displays, and meetings for exchange of practical organizational ideas and possible mutual assistance between the Societies. Any interested person will be welcome to attend.

Apparently no date has been set, but if you're interested in more information, the notice goes on to say to call Robert Mellin at (512) 345-5950. In the meantime, the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Austin can be reached in care of its secretary Reba Gillman, 1606 The High Road, Austin, TX 78746.

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A Nice Dilemma We Have Here

Has anyone ever heard of the Comic Opera Guild, or of Comic Opera Guild recordings? If you have, well, first of all, the Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society would like to know because it sounds like an interesting group or collection of recordings; and secondly, because Sarah Honeywell, of Marske-by-Sea, Redcar, Cleveland, England, is looking for them. She mentioned that the Comic Opera Guild apparently made recordings of the comparatively obscure operettas *Ages Ago*, *Haste to the Wedding*, *Thespis*, and Sousa's *El Capitan*. If anyone knows any more about this group, or these

recordings, please get in touch with the MGS with the details, and then pass them on to Ms Honeywell at 21, Vicarage Drive; Marske-by-Sea, Redcar, Cleveland; TS11 7AT England. We'll all be looking forward to hearing from you.

Now, here's a problem that has been going on for a long time, but, as she has been wont to do, S/A Cole spaced it. Does anyone know where you can beg, borrow, or buy videos of D'Oyly Carte performances of the G&S operas? If you do, or can shed any light on which productions

were ever filmed or videotaped, Don Sigal (5461 S. Everett Ave., Chicago, IL 60615) is most anxious to hear from you. He rightly has pointed out that it's a pity so much of the D'Oyly Carte's past is lost. So, if you know where any of it has been preserved, do let us all know.

Every couple of years we ask the question of where one can get videos of the 1967 D'OC *Mikado*, the 1960's (?) Sadler's Wells *Yeomen of the Guard*, and the 1970's video of their *Pinafore*, or the biopic *The Gilbert and Sullivan Story* (1953). Well, for Mr. Sigal's sake, and for the MGS's own, we're asking again. If you know, let the rest of us know. This time we can put it in the Shopper list so it won't get lost.

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What Took Place at the 1993 Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society Annual Outing

by Carol Lee Cole

The Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society was held on Sunday, August 15, 1993, at the Marrilac High School in Northbrook, Illinois. The weather was stormy and driving the tollway was interesting. The rain started as we left Aurora. The cars in the opposite lanes were pulled to the side of the road and traffic was crawling. Our eastbound traffic was moving slowly and so were we.

The time set for the meeting was 1:30 p.m., just a half hour before the Savoy-Aires'

Synopsis by Arthur Robinson

performance of The Sorcerer. In a corner of the hall the S/A met the members and introduced the new ones, Mr. and Mrs. Heyward, from Elgin, Illinois, and Ila Migut from Des Plaines. There were 14 members present.

The favors this year were tea filters with three tea bags inside. Significant was it not? (*A filter is a very useful thing in a house, as Aline says, and Three spoons to the pot -- That is the brew of your vicar.*) These were covered with plastic and tied with ribbons. The members had a chance to draw their choices from a bag. The people who had picked colored ribbons were then lucky enough to be awarded door prizes which were tagged with the matching color of ribbon. Two members won paperback copies of Arthur Jacobs' Sullivan biography, one member won a copy of the Benford *Gilbert and Sullivan Lexicon*, and, in honor of the opera, two members won teapots! After the awards were presented, S/A Cole asked if there were any suggestions and how things were going. The members nodded their heads in agreement that they felt things were going well--especially since we did not have to do anything to keep things going except pay our dues.

Where to eat after the performance was discussed and a German restaurant, *The Black Forest*, was picked to gather in later. It was located at the corner of Waukegan Road and Dempster (and would have been just the spot for last year's *Grand Duke* dinner, which was set in Germany anyway). This important matter being decided, we adjourned and took our places in the auditorium.

It might be said that later seven of us met at the restaurant and discovered that the patrons were to be treated to live entertainment from Austria. Three young men dressed in national dress sang folk songs and played authentic folk instruments. They were having so much fun that we could not help having a good time. The food was delicious and the company friendly and jovial. It was worth the trouble to find the restaurant and not worry about the thunderstorm which had just passed by.

Perhaps we'll see you next year. I'll think of you as I drink my tea after being strained through my prize. Go: find someone to love.

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Plots of Gilbert's and Sullivan's
Independent Works:
The Rose of Persia

The Rose of Persia, with music by Sullivan and a libretto by Basil Hood (which was described as a combination of *Arabian Nights* and *The Mikado*), opened at the Savoy Theatre in 1899. The cast included Henry Lytton as the Sultan, and Rosina Brandram, the original Katisha, as Dancing Sunbeam. It received good reviews and ran for over 200 performances.

The major characters in the opera are: **Hassan**, a wealthy philanthropist; **Dancing Sunbeam**, his first wife (they're still married--he has twenty-five wives in all); **Abdallah**, a priest; **Yussuf**, a professional story-teller; the **Sultan** of Persia; his Sultana **Rose-in-Bloom**; Rose-in-Bloom's three slaves and companions: **Heart's Desire**, **Scent-of-Lilies**, and **Honey-of-Life**; and the Sultan's three attendants: his **Grand Vizier**, **Physician-in-Chief**, and **Executioner**.

Hassan is contented with his life, and explains in his first song that he likes to live in peace. That is why he has, despite his wealth, only married twenty-five times. Dancing Sunbeam is less happy. She complains to her husband that he is unresponsive to her nagging, and besides, when she married him for his money she expected to be in the best society. Instead, he prefers to associate with beggars rather than with the socially prominent, and therefore is rumored to be insane. But she has concocted a plot with the villain of the piece, the priest Abdallah. He declares Hassan mad and prepares to drive out the evil spirit by which he must be possessed by (as he explains in rhymed verse) hanging him, kicking him, pricking him with swords, and then flicking him with wet towels. To avoid this, Hassan makes a will in Abdallah's favor, pointing out that this will would only be valid if he were of sound mind; the priest promptly decides the evil spirit has left Hassan, and pronounces him sane.

At this point a young man, Yussuf, appears, followed by four alleged dancing girls; since they are afraid of meeting with the Sultan's guard, he deduced that they are really royal slaves in disguise. He is three-quarters right: three of them are royal slaves (including Heart's desire, with whom he has already fallen in love), but the fourth is the Sultana herself, Rose-in-Bloom. She, while shut up in the palace, longed to see the world outside, and now wants to get back to avoid execution. A chorus of tramps and beggars (Hassan's dinner guests) arrives; Yussuf entertains them with a drinking song, and the "dancing girls" are invited to perform as well. In the middle of this, Abdallah returns, with two police officers, to arrest the beggars; but while he is singing his intricately-rhymed warrant, the beggars sneak off. Hassan has bribed the police to look the other way. Having lost the beggars, Abdallah orders the "dancing girls" to be arrested and

brought to the Sultan. Rose-in-Bloom is alarmed, but Heart's Desire, wearing the Sultana's ring, claims that she herself is the Sultana. Her plan is to make the Sultan believe that his wife was home in the palace while a slave was impersonating her.

Abdallah is delighted. When the Sultan hears that his wife has been secretly visiting Hassan, Hassan will certainly be executed--and then his will can also be executed! Dancing Sunbeam realizes she has been double-crossed: Abdallah will now have *all* of Hassan's money, instead of sharing it with her.

Hassan determines to get himself through the execution by taking a drug called "bhang" (ed. note: some of you may remember how, in **Around the World in Eighty Days**, Jules Verne tells how Mrs. Aouda was drugged with "bang" to keep her quiet while she was burned on her husband's funeral pyre). Yussuf is also distressed: Hassan is only going to lose his head, but he himself has lost his heart to the Sultan's wife. Rose-in-Bloom then reveals that the woman Yussuf loves isn't the Sultana--but *she* is. This cheers Yussuf up, but Hassan, learning that the Sultan's wife is *still* in his house, takes an overdose.

Hassan's house seems to be a magnet for impostors. He has already been visited this night by beggars posing as cripples and the Sultana and her slaves disguised as dancing girls; and now Heart's Desire announces that the Sultan, Grand Vizier, Physician-in-Chief, and Royal Executioner are arriving, disguised as dancing dervishes. The Sultan has decided to investigate for himself, *incognito*, the rumor that Hassan is mad. Hassan, high on "bhang", claims that he himself is the Sultan; he must be, since the Sultan's wife is in his house. The Sultan, informed by his physician, that Hassan must have taken an overdose of "bhang", decides to play a joke on him. He will pretend that Hassan *is* the Sultan. He informs Hassan's wives that their husband has been leading a double life and is, in fact, the ruler of Persia. His attendants, having shed their disguises, confirm this. Hassan is about to make Rose-in-Bloom unveil herself to prove her (and his) identity when he passes out. The Sultan has him conveyed to the palace, unconscious.

The second act takes place in the Sultan's palace. Yussuf appears and tells Heart's Desire that he is going to ask the Sultan to let him marry her. She points out that if he does so, there may be some awkward questions, and, if the truth comes out, they will all be executed. So he agrees to bend the truth a little.

The Sultan enters with his court, and announces that everyone is to treat Hassan, when he awakens, as the Sultan. Dancing Sunbeam arrives: since she believes Hassan to be the real sultan, she proclaims herself Sul-

tana, proclaiming in a song the joys of rising in society (she can now snub everyone who used to snub *her*). The Sultan plays along. Rose-in-Bloom, hearing that there is a new sultana, thinks she has been found out, and begs her husband for pardon, only to find that he doesn't know what has been going on. She tries to sound him out to learn what his attitude would be if he should learn the truth, and the results are not encouraging. He remarks casually that if she did leave the palace in disguise, the punishment would probably be death, but if he was in a bad mood he might try to think of something worse.

Hassan finally comes to, and is bewildered to find everyone treating him as the sultan. He is told that he has just awakened from a long illness and lost his memory. He is almost convinced that he only dreamed his life as Hassan, and is appalled to learn that he now has 671 wives instead of a mere twenty-five. Then Abdallah arrives, and reveals that the Sultana secretly visited Hassan the night before. Hassan's relief at finding he *does* exist after all is short-lived: the enraged Sultan condemns him to death, and then comes up with a worse punishment for Rose-in-Bloom. Since she "favours low company", he will divorce her and marry her off to a mere story-teller--Yussuf. All prepare for the wedding, except for Hassan, who sings, "Bless my heart, it's time to start, or I shall be late for beheading!"

Heart's Desire is upset at the prospect of Yussuf's marrying the young and beautiful Rose-in-Bloom, and when Dancing Sunbeam arrives claiming to be the sultana, she arranges for her to take the real Sultana's place at the wedding ceremony. Soon, the social-climbing Dancing Sunbeam is shocked to find herself married to a lowly storyteller, and he seems no happier at finding himself married to her. Heart's Desire at last confesses to the Sultan that she was the one wearing the royal signet at Hassan's house. When Abdallah identifies her as the woman he saw wearing the ring, the Sultan condemns him to death for falsely sullyng the Sultana's reputation. The relieved Hassan requests "the usual free pardon for what I never did", but is told that he, too, must die, since he falsely stated that the Sultana was at his house last night. Heart's Desire is also condemned to death, but Rose-in-Bloom begs her husband to spare her slave. When he asks why, Heart's Desire claims to that she has been telling a story to Rose-in-Bloom, who wants to know how it ends. The Sultan decrees that Heart's desire shall be spared--until the story is finished. Hassan then claims that *he* has been telling Heart's Desire the story, so the Sultan agrees that he shall not be executed either until the story has ended. He makes a further command: the story must have a happy ending--"I abominate unhappy endings."

Requested to continue the story (at the end of which

he is to be decapitated-- he naturally wants to make it a long one), Hassan finds himself at a loss, but then has an idea. He begins to sing a song about a small boy; then he explains that this is actually the story of his own life. Since the Sultan himself has decreed that the story (which is the story of his life) must have a happy ending. . .

The Sultan, admitting that Hassan has outwitted him, spares his life, and restores Dancing Sunbeam to him, which pleases Hassan somewhat less. But it allows Yussuf to marry Heart's Desire. The opera ends with the usual epidemic of weddings. And in case anyone is concerned about the Royal Executioner, he gets paired off, too.

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The G&S Shopper -- 1993

Now that we have a system for listing G&S-related dealers and products, as well as a system for updating this kind of information easily (Hurrah for mail merges!), we're hoping we can have a shopper issue regularly. At this point, we don't have very many listings, but now that we know what to expect from a shopper, we'll look forward to seeing more listings in the future. In the meantime, these are the G&S-related items and sources the Members of the Midwestern Gilbert and Sullivan Society know of and have shared information about.

Ardensingers of Delaware
c/o Jean Fava
408 Stella Dr.
Hockessin, DE 19707

Badge: 1½" badge stating in blue type on a white background: "I love G&S with a white hot passion that is slowly but surely consuming my very vitals". \$1.50

Shipping information: Price includes shipping.

C.D. Paramour
25 St. Mary's Square
Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 0HZ England

G&S-related ephemera

Shipping information: Depends on the item.

Paramour publishes a periodical catalog called a *Gilbert*

and Sullivan Check List. Contact them for more information.

Charlee Hutton
5872 Rose Ave.
Long Beach, CA 90805
Phone: (310) 422-4086
Fax: (213) 956-3732

Note Cards: Write for a list.

Shipping information: Depends on item.

Ms Hutton is the U.S. distributor of, primarily, Geoffrey Shovelton's illustrated notecards/Christmas Cards. They all, naturally, feature G&S themes, and each illustration is quite well-rendered. The pictures on the cards are also quite pretty. Be sure and ask about card availability well before Christmas, to insure on-time delivery.

Dover Publications
31 E. 2d St.

Mineola, NY 11501

Phone: (No phone orders)

Book: The Authentic Gilbert and Sullivan Songbook (#23482-7) \$14.95

Book: The Mikado (Libretto) (#27268-0) \$1.00

Shipping information: United States: \$3.00 per order for book rate, \$4.50 for UPS. Foreign Orders: 20% of the total (\$2.50 minimum)

The Songbook reprints the period piano sheet music for 92 of the songs from the operas, and the *Mikado* libretto is a recent addition to their collection of \$1.00 bargain books. By the way, if you don't want to order from the publisher (though if you don't, you miss out on all their interesting catalogs), you can order these through your local bookstore. Add the numerals "0486" to the front of the above identifying numbers, and you have the books' ISBN numbers. Bookstores use those to place orders, and they should have no trouble ordering these books for you.

John Tugwell
2 Decons Close
Worle, Weston-Super-Marie BS22 0EF England

G&S-related Ephemera: write for a list.

Shipping information: Depends on item.

Mr. Tugwell has access to a wide variety of British G&S ephemera (programs, etc). He would be glad to send a list of what he has in stock.

Mike LeBell Video
75 Fremont Place
Los Angeles, CA 90005
Phone: (213) 938-3333
Fax: (213) 938-3334

Video (VHS) The Mikado (1939--with Martyn Green, Sydney Granville, Kenny Baker, John Barklay, and Jean Colin) \$24.95

Video (VHS) **The Girl Said No** (AKA **With Words and Music**--with Robert Armstrong, Irene Hervey, and Edward Brophy. This) \$24.95

Shipping information: \$3.05 for the first video, \$1.00 for each additional video

Now this is a bargain! First of all, both of these films are charming. Some people may give you an argument about *Mikado*, but all considered it's well-cast and well done.

The Girl Said No is the one where the bookie tries to cheat the dime-a-dance girl as badly as she cheated him, by convincing her that he can get her on Broadway, only things don't quite turn out as either of them expect. The Broadway show turns out to be *Mikado*, and a lot of G&S tunes are used as background music. The second reason this is a bargain is because Mike LeBell Video is giving MGS members \$5.00 off on the price of these videos through November! That's only \$19.95 a piece: you could hardly do better on a video at Wal-Mart, and who wants a video from Wal-Mart when you can get one of these! When you order them, **be sure and include the coupon (below) to receive the discounted price** and payment. The coupon expires **December 1, 1993**, so act quickly. These videos would make great gifts!

Also, Mike LeBell Video has a wide selection of unusual and hard to find films on videos, so you might want to ask about getting a catalog when ordering.

Musical Wonder House
18 High St., P.O. Box 604
Wiscasset, ME 04578

Phone: (207) 882-7163 {For credit card orders: (1-800) 336-3725 }

Audiocassette Gilbert & Sullivan Favorites
(#TC1990), \$12.95

Audiocassette **Victorian Musical Boxes Play Gilbert and Sullivan** (#TC1500), \$12.95

Shipping information: \$3.00 for 1 tape, \$4.00 for 2, \$5.00 for 3, \$6.00 for 4, and \$7.50 for 5 or more. Maine residents add 6% sales tax. Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express accepted.

As far as anyone knows, these two interesting tapes are the only recordings of their kind. The *Gilbert & Sullivan Favorites* features G&S tunes from vintage pianola rolls (which enabled people to play duets with themselves) as rendered on a 1912 Steinway Pianola Piano by Danilo Konvalinka. Included on this tape are medleys from *Iolanthe*, *Mikado* (2 different ones), *Ruddigore*, and *Gondoliers*. *Victorian Musical Boxes Play Gilbert and Sullivan* features tunes from the operas as played on those big-type music boxes that play metal discs. If

you've ever heard these music boxes playing "live", you know what a thrilling sound they make. Included on this tape are tunes from *Pinafore*, *Gondoliers*, *Trial by Jury*, *Mikado*, *Pirates*, *Patience* and *Yeomen*. Both tapes have interesting program notes.

Also, if you like music box music, The Musical Wonder House has a large collection of cassettes of various types of music played on music boxes or player pianos. When you order, you might want to ask for a list. And, if you're in the Wiscasset, Maine, area, you might want to visit the Musical Wonder House Museum. Call ahead for information.

Rose Records
214 S. Wabash Ave.
Chicago, IL 60604

Phone: (800) 955-ROSE (order line)
Fax: (312) 663-3559

Recordings: call or write for their sale catalog.

Shipping information: \$4.00 for 1-4 items, \$4.50 for 5 or more. Illinois residents at 8 3/4% sales tax.

Rose Records in Chicago has a wide variety of current recordings available, and then a wider selection of cut-out or sale recordings that appear in the stores, and in their sale catalog. They generally include a couple of G&S-related items at bargain prices. For instance, their current catalog has a 2-CD recording of the 1960's D'Oyly Carte recording of *Gondoliers* for \$12.99 (Lon. 417 294-2) and a 2-cassette recording of the 1960's D'OC *Iolanthe* for \$6.99 (Lon. 414 145-4). The trouble is that some things don't stay in stock long, so when the catalog arrives, it is wise to order quickly.

Rose Valley Chorus and Orchestra
c/o Janice Manley
2606 Landon Dr.
Wilmington, DE 19810

Cookbook: Now to the Banquet We Press, featuring favorite recipes of the Rose Valley Chorus and Orchestra, and many of Gilbert's "Bab" illustrations. \$10.00

Shipping information: Price includes shipping.

Wilfrid De Freitas
P.O. Box 883, Stock Exchange Tower
Montreal H4Z 1K2 Canada

Ephemera: write for list.

Shipping information: depends on item.

We learned from Sylvan Keselman that this book dealer frequently has G&S-related books, posters and the like available. Beyond this, we don't know anything more, but if anyone contacts him, maybe you can tell the rest of us.

Winfield Smith
5825 S. Blackstone Ave.
Chicago, IL 60637
Phone: (312) 684-3609

Video (VHS): several copies left of the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company's 1993 production of *Utopia, Limited*. \$20.00.

LPs of the musical soundtrack of *Dick Deadeye*, the Bill Melendez/Richard Searle animated feature about the further adventures of Dick Deadeye, as he tries to regain England's "Ultimate Secret" when it is stolen by the Pirate King and the Sorcerer. \$5.00.

Shipping information: Shipping included in the price. The *Utopia* videos are a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, since there won't be any more once these are gone. The *Dick Deadeye* soundtrack consists of G&S songs performed in various rock styles, and if it's really quite interesting.

Sarah Jennings Press
2222 Fuller Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48105-2313
Phone: (313) 665-7410

Book: The Revised Gilbert and Sullivan Lexicon by Harry Benford. US: \$20.00, Canada: \$25.00, UK £11.00

Shipping information: Shipping included. Harry Benford's revised **Gilbert and Sullivan Lexicon** is still available, and oh so handy when explaining the period jokes and nuances of the G&S operas to the unenlightened. Discounts are also available on orders of five or more). It's a nice, yellow, trade-size paperback (7" x 10", 270 pages) with lots of pictures and an index, a bibliography, and the libretto of *The Zoo*.)

Now, if you can think of any dealers we've missed, or that we couldn't have thought of, do pass on your information. We may have another shopper issue before next September just to keep in practice, but it won't mean much without new information.

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Welcome New Members

Robert Sherrane (Minneapolis, MN): He has been performing G&S in various capacities since college. During that time, he has had the distinction to work under John Reed during the Boulder (CO) annual G&S productions, and with Richard Sheldon with *Opera A La Carte*. His current goal is to perform Robin Oakapple before he gets too old; considering his résumé, he should have nothing to worry about.

Roy and Jean Cone (Chicago, IL): Mr. Cone has hit the American "Big Three" operas in his time: he was bitten by the G&S Bug at the age of 10 with *Pinafore*, performed once in *Mikado*, and played in the orchestra of *Pirates*.

(By the way, does anyone have any clever ideas about what a "G&S Bug" ought to look like? Maybe the MGS could use one as an emblem sometime.)

Richard and Jane Schlange (Austin, MN): The fine arts are a big part of their lives. They manage to participate in orchestra and theater, while Jane, an artist, plays the piano and flute, and studies voice. We're certainly happy to have them!

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Well, we're working on typing the answers to the Big Quiz for the next issue, plus a report on the Pittsburgh Savoyards' recent production, a synopsis of *The Mountebanks*, the results of the last postcard drawing, and, if all works well, an explanation and list of the Gilbert and Sullivan series of *Players' Cigarette Cards*. In the meantime, we're looking for your news, and any information you may have turned up on G&S or whatever.

One thing S/A Cole's missed in this issue is some of the consciously silly uses of G&S, like the song parodies or surprising uses (and misuses). To that end, she has had an idea that, well, is **really** silly. But it might be interesting to see what kind of responses the creative MGS members might come up with. We all know how Walt Disney Productions likes to play fast and loose with their classic stories: their *Jungle Book*, *Little Mermaid*, and even *Pinocchio* bears little resemblance to what the authors wrote (though in the case of *Pinocchio*, I think they made something of an improvement). Well, anyway, since it's fashionable right now to do "weird" productions of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, and since Walt Disney Productions makes "weird" productions of classic stories, it struck S/A Cole that it might be interesting to speculate how Disney would fiddle around with the G&S plots. So here's the idea: We all know how Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe* looks; what would **Walt Disney's Iolanthe** look like? (or any other opera you think Disney could really do a job on, for that matter.) Think about it for a while, and if you come up with any possible narratives, pass them on to the MGS. Depending on how they turn out, maybe we'll put some in upcoming *Nonsenses*. This idea may sound rather disrespectful, and in a way perhaps it is, but after recently attending an unspeakably obnoxious

production of a G&S opera (and interestingly enough, the opera *wasn't Iolanthe*: the last *Iolanthe* I saw was wonderful!), it occurred to S/A Cole that productions that "do a job" on the original plots or stories can serve a useful function. They (obviously) make the original work look that much better; and they also can give the observant viewer ideas about how to emphasize the truly important elements of the original work *in* an unexpected setting. Generally, the obnoxious productions have completely neglected those important elements.

In any event, do keep in touch, and we'll look forward to hearing from you!

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