

Savoyardage

The newsletter of the Madison Savoyards, Ltd.

June 2005 – Number 82

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

AARGH!! Spend a Swashbuckling Summertime with Gilbert & Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*!! Madison Savoyards, Ltd. will present *The Pirates of Penzance*: or, The Slave of Duty this summer, their 43rd season of delighting regional audiences with productions of Gilbert & Sullivan (G & S) comic operas. Replete with tender-hearted pirates, cowardly policemen, and pretty damsels (the wards in chancery of the bumbling Major General), *The Pirates of Penzance* is a witty musical repartee revolving around the Victorian sense of duty. Celebrating its 125th anniversary, this popular G & S operetta tells the story of pirate-apprentice Frederic who, upon completing his 21st year, believes he is free to rejoin respectable society. But, Alas! He discovers that he was born on February 29 during leap year, and thus will remain indentured until his 21st "birthday". From the G & S archives: "...the pirates, a Major General who knows nothing of military strategy, his large family of beautiful but unwed wards, and the timid constabulary all contribute to a cacophony that can be silenced only by Queen Victoria's name". Brian Bizzell, Stage Director, who directed last summer's smash success, *Ruddigore*, along with Blake Walter, Music Director, will lead a talented troupe of musicians and actors, many professionally trained. With a cast of nine principals, a chorus of Pirates, Police, and General Stanley's Wards, and a full orchestra, Pirates presents an uproarious topsy-turvy world, destined to delight audiences regardless of age. Prepare to embark upon a jolly journey of swashbuckling shenanigans as you join us this July!

Tickets on sale now for all six performances:

Friday, July 8 & Saturday, July 9 @ 7:30 P.M.
Sunday, July 10 @ 3:00 P.M.
Friday, July 15 @ 7:30 P.M.
Saturday, July 16 & Sunday, July 17 @ 3:00 P.M.

All performances in Music Hall on the UW Campus, North Park Street at University Avenue, at the foot of Bascom Hill. Ticket prices: Adults, \$25; Seniors, \$23; Students, \$10; and, Children (under 13), \$5. Limited Economy seating is available the day of the performance. Tickets are on sale at the UW Memorial Union Box Office. Box office hours are Monday-Friday, 11:30am to 2:30pm. Call 608-262-2201.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In a tree by a river a rare warbler sang, Willow titwillow, titwillow! And Madison's bird watchers, expensive optics at the ready, are up before dawn, in rain and cold, watching and listening. I'm one of those passionate ones, and in May we birders gleefully dash forth without morning coffee and dawdle late without bathroom relief to spot, listen, count and gloat about the sightings. Passion is like that.

The passion of Madison Savoyards members is even stronger and longer lasting. The keen members of the Board forgo golf and bridge, time with families, weekend travel to assure that once again, that rara avis, that migrant from the past, a G&S light opera, comes to Madison each summer. For them "Summer Means Savoyards" isn't just a motto, it's literal and all consuming. And a flock of almost 100 performers and musicians share that passion, and give up normal lives to create the song, look and patterns of the true G&S opera. I said stronger? Longer lasting? That drive, that determination, has kept G&S flying high in Madison for 42 years!

I thank them all, and their hard working, talented predecessors. Yet for you and for them, loyal devotees all, the real thanks will be the sighting of a pirate ship approaching shore- on time, in full rigging, well plumaged.

With your help, we'll also be able to say Summer Means Success. *The Pirates of Penzance* will be a great show. But without you, the theater is empty. So call some friends, bring the grandchildren, make it a party with the Pirates.

Don't miss it. Be there. --Helen Baldwin President,
Madison Savoyards

MEMBERANDUM

Sean Sweeney is the scenic artist and a choir member for the St. Croix Valley Summer Theatre's *Pirates of Penzance* production . . .Kendra Sundal is taking the summer off to tour with the Girl Scouts in Europe . . . Steve Powell is recovering from quintuple bypass surgery. He hopes to return next fall for the Madison Opera. We wish him the best in his recovery...In March Steve Ebel was the pony express rider in the New York City Opera's production of Puccini's *La fanciulla del West* (The Girl of the Golden West). Steve sang in the Savoyards *Mikado*, *Iolanthe* and *Roses Red*. -- Sean Bode

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APRIL OAKWOOD EVENING WITH THE SAVOYARDS

All thirteen Gilbert and Sullivan operettas were heard from in the Madison Savoyards program for Oakwood Village West on Saturday evening, April 16. Accompanied by Ted Reinke, the Savoyards singers presented solos, duets and trios. They also sang back-up choruses and created a certain amount of hi-jinks for a large audience from the Oakwood campus and the wider community, as well. Ten Savoyards choristers were gathered on the fine Oakwood Auditorium stage that evening: sopranos Julie Hutchinson & Emerald Jean (Wahoske); mezzos Terry Kiss Frank & Ilona Pinzke; tenors Brian Bizzell & Ethan Bremner; basses John Kruse & Keith Meyer; and patter-singers Paul Bushland & Jeremy Wetherald. Mezzo Deb Holbrook had also volunteered to sing in the program, but a wretched cold kept her away. The program featured six selections from *The Pirates of Penzance* in anticipation of our July production. Other operettas were represented by at least one number, allowing the audience to meet less known G & S characters, such as Sir Marmaduke and Lady Sangazure, Lord Mountararat, King Gama, Dame Carruthers, Captain Fitzbattleaxe and the Prince of Monte Carlo's Herald. A narration written and presented by John Kruse provided an historical survey of the Gilbert & Sullivan canon. One thing leads to another. The invitation to sing at Oakwood in April came from its former interim activities director Jessica Couto-Lashbrook who sang in the *Winter Joy* concert on February 4. Ian Duncan was in the Oakwood audience on April 16. On behalf of the American Society of Neurochemistry he then invited the Madison Savoyards to provide entertainment for the Society's conference banquet at Monona Terrace on June 29. And so the Savoyards continue singing... all year round!
-- John Kruse

AWARDS THAT REWARD US

We've received great news from the Dane County Cultural Affairs and Madison Arts Commissions! Both commissions provide peer review for their competitive art awards, and we competed well in two large and prestigious fields. Their independent reviewers agreed with our loyal fans that Madison Savoyards Ltd. and *The Pirates of Penzance* benefit the community and merit support. Like a Good Housekeeping seal, these two awards inform you, our donors and the philanthropic community that Savoyards' work continues to be worthy of the support you have provided over the years.

We're proud to be able to say that *The Pirates of Penzance* 2005 will be funded in part by a grant from the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission with additional funds from the Overture Foundation and the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation

and by a grant from the Madison Arts Commission with additional funds from the Wisconsin Arts Board.

We were honored by the message from Rebecca Kasemeyer, Arts Administrator of the Madison Arts Commission, that accompanied the news of our award: "Again, in a year that was very competitive, you should congratulate yourselves for having risen to the top of the pile. The Madison Arts Commission is genuinely pleased to be able to support your important creative efforts."

To continue our mission we need to match these awards. If your business or company, friend or neighbor is willing to sponsor or underwrite a cultural event, please call Helen Baldwin, 608-238-2951 or Paul Haskew, 608-238-7444. We'll carry forward your idea. We'll listen to the potential donor's interests and concerns. And we'll honor and reward you and the donor.
-- Helen Baldwin

A LETTER FROM JIM FLEMING

The Madison Savoyards will put on their 43rd performance this summer, offering Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* to Madison audiences for several performances. It is deservedly one of the most popular operettas from G&S, full of music that leaves performers with smiles on their faces and audiences whistling its tunes as they leave the theater. I can speak of this with certainty, because I was in the very first performance of the operetta when Savoyards put in on in 1966. In fact I credit Savoyards with encouraging me to pursue a lifetime interest in music and performance. It is a credit I think I share with thousands of other young people who have come through the ranks on the Madison music scene on stage, in the orchestra pit, and behind the scenes. It is through such performances as this that Savoyards does some of its best work, and benefits the area in countless ways. This year the organization will add to the pleasure of its performances with an additional outreach effort, pursuing youth and senior citizen alike to encourage them to share in the pleasure of Mabel and Frederic's hilariously tragic love affair, the tongue-twisting virtuosity of Mabel's father - the very model of a modern major-general and the kindly ferocity of the Pirate King. This is exactly the kind of performance that Madison needs and Madison should support. I hope you will agree. Sincerely, Jim Fleming Wisconsin Public Radio



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SUMMER MUSIC STUDENT PASS

If you are staying in Madison this summer you will be able to enjoy the best music by world-class performers. For \$30 you can get a student pass that will admit you to your choice of one each of six concerts from six performing groups in the Summer Music Consortium. That's six tickets for the price of one-and-a-half. The Summer Music Consortium includes

- First Unitarian Society
- Madison Early Music Festival
- Madison Savoyards
- Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society
- Isthmus Vocal Ensemble
- Token Creek Festival (only one of two concerts at St. Andrews is included)

For a pass, performance dates or more information call Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society at 255-7276 or visit bachdancinganddynamite.org/summermusic.

If you want to go to *The Pirates of Penzance* only, it's \$10.00. Use the order form in this newsletter or risk it at the box office July 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, or 17.

PRETHEATHER DINNERS AT THE UNIVERSITY CLUB

Pretheater Dinner for *The Pirates of Penzance* at the University Club Friday July 8 and Friday July 15. Social hour begins at 5:15, dinner at 5:45 PM, and the performance of *The Pirates of Penzance* at 7:30 PM at Music Hall is a short (half block) walk. Dinner will cost \$25 including service. Your choice of two entrees will be offered when you call the University Club to reserve for yourself and friends, 262-5023

EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE A PIRATE!

(Or a Major-General, a Major-General's ward, or even a Policeman!)

Savvy Savoyards know that the *Pirates of Penzance* is a big draw. Consistently ranked among the top three or four most popular works in the English musical theater, its regular revival in Madison has always enlarged our audience for Gilbert and Sullivan operas. To judge from the record number of performers who lined up to the auditions in April, this year will be no exception. There was talent aplenty for Director Brian Bizzell and Music Director Blake Walter to choose from, and it will delight regulars to learn that despite the fierce competition this year's leads are all Savoyard veterans! There are two Mabels: Julie Hutchinson and Julia Foster.

Julie Hutchinson says, "It's a wonderful role, and the only chance to be a coloratura soprano in the G&S repertoire, in a delightful show that I never fail to find more humor in." Julia Foster, last season's Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore*, was equally enthusiastic about her role. "I was in the chorus of Savoyard's Pirates when I was a freshman in high school, and it's a thrill to come back in a lead role in a show that has been a favorite of mine since I was little." Julia is heading for the University of Houston for a Doctor in Music Arts, after completing her Masters at the Eastman School and a Bachelors at the UW.

Other veterans in principal roles are Jeremy Wetherald as Major-General Stanley, Ethan Bremner as Frederic, Paul Bushland as the Police Sergeant, Bill Rosholt as the Pirate King, Emerald Jean (Wahoske) as Edith and Terry Kiss Frank playing Ruth, Frederic's nurse. The rest of the Cornish crew will be assembled from a mix of other veterans and newcomers.

-- Paul Haskew

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE OR THE SLAVE OF DUTY

Libretto by William Schwenk Gilbert
Music by Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan
Produced by Madison Savoyards Ltd. at Music Hall,
Madison, Wisconsin.
Brian Bizzell, Stage Director

Performances: July 8-10, 15-17, 2005:

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Saturday, July 9, 2005 - 7:30 PM	Saturday, July 16, 2005 - 3:00 PM
Sunday, July 10, 2005 - 3:00 PM	Sunday, July 17, 2005 - 3:00 PM

Ticket Prices (All seats reserved):
\$25 Adults, \$23 Seniors, \$10 Students, \$5 Children
Group rates for groups of 10 or more- call (608) 231-9005

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