



The Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Sussex

President: Valerie Masterson C.B.E.

Vice Presidents: Stephen Brown, Simon Butteriss, Barry Clark, Bill Colbourne, Bruce Graham, Donald Maxwell, Cynthia Morey, Michael Simkins, Richard Stuart.

Honorary Members: Christine Colbourne, Kay Tarran.

NEWSLETTER

Chair's Chat

I hope you are enjoying this lovely summer weather.

We have had a wonderful year so far and have a lot more great concerts to come as listed below.

On the 3rd July a number of us went to Eyot House on D'Oyly Carte Island to view Melvyn Tarran's memorabilia and had a delightful afternoon of G & S favourites sung to us in half an hour concerts. We were once again blessed with the weather (not too hot).

We are continuing to maintain a steady membership at round 70 people but are always looking for new members, so if you would like to introduce any of your friends, family or neighbours to our Society please ask them to come along to our next concert you know they will have a very warm welcome.

Thank you so much for the people who have been delivering the magazines for us as this makes so much difference with the cost if postage and thank you all for your continued support.

Sylvia (Chair)

Recent Society happenings

Since our last magazine newsletter, the Society has enjoyed two excellent afternoons of entertainment.

We knew we were in for a treat when Godalming Operatic Society, resplendent in Hawaiian shirts and flower garlands, came to give us a concert performance of their recent production of *Utopia Ltd.* on Sunday 22nd March and were certainly not disappointed by this event. Led by musical director Dick Stockton, and accompanied by Judith Flint, the group presented the opera with great expertise and energy, bringing out all the humour and satire of the work. A particularly memorable element was the minstrel scene with its amusingly choreographed use of tambourines and updated lyrics in the encore to include reference to Net Zero and water supplies. Everyone left the meeting with a smile on their face!

On Sunday 14th June the very talented group A Merry Band presented *In a Country Garden: A Musical Tour of Fortescue Hall*. The performance was structured around an imaginary tour of a stately home and the musical director, David Wright, was the most amusing "tour guide" while Andrew Harrap provided excellent accompaniment.

There was an imaginative selection of songs and readings, matched to each "room" and we were treated to a rich mixture of pieces by Gilbert and Sullivan, Sullivan without Gilbert, Gilbert without Sullivan and songs by neither Gilbert nor Sullivan! Each item was delivered in a most accomplished manner. The performers were decoratively adorned to represent the various rooms visited and the stage was strewn with flowers which added to the occasion.

Congratulations must go to Rosie Jex who, very deservedly, won the audience prize for the best floral attire!

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The concert was followed by the Society's Annual General Meeting. The business was dealt with promptly and the current Committee members and Officers were re-elected to their existing posts. Looking ahead, we can now confirm the proposed entertainment to the end of 2027

Future Society Happenings

4th October 2026

Simon Gray will return with his group, featuring Colin Morris, Matthew Scott Clark, Karen Orchin and Hilary Andrews, who will present a varied concert in the first half, while the second half will consist of one of our now famous "sing-along" events when the audience will become the chorus – this time it will be *Trial By Jury*.

29th November 2026

This Sunday will see our regular Christmas themed meeting when we will be entertained by two firm favourites who were closely connected to Melvyn, our founder. I refer to the international soloists James Cleverton and Stephen Anthony Brown, who is one of our Vice Presidents.

31st January 2027

A newly formed London-based group Twisted Cue, who performed *Iolanthe* at Barons Court Theatre at the end of July 2026, will start the year for us with a concert of G&S favourites.

21st March 2027

Godalming Operatic Society return for their now regular visit and this time will present us with a concert version of their full production of *The Gondoliers*.

27th June 2027

We are pleased to host John Griffiths & Robert Hazle in their performance of *Cock & Bull* which is a stage play exploring the stormy partnership between WS Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. It features music, dramatic songs and backstage gossip about their famous comic operas. Set in 1911 at WS Gilbert's home, a decade after Sullivan's death, the two men look back at their creative journey from *Thespis* to *The Grand Duke*. This show played to critical acclaim in London in early 2026.

This performance will be followed by our AGM.

26th September 2027

Some of you may have gone to the G&S concert with West Sussex Philharmonic Choir in Horsham in July 2026. Jon Openshaw, who masterminded that concert, brings his group to Hassocks for a concert.

28th November 2027

Following the great success of the "sing-along" *Mikado* back in 2025, White Knight will be presenting a "sing-along" *Pirates*. As with *The Mikado*, White Knight undertake these performances to raise important funds for the Disaster Emergency Committee.

Do get all these dates in your diaries now!