



The Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Sussex

President: Valerie Masterson C.B.E. **Co-President:** Melvyn Tarran
Vice Presidents: Stephen Brown, Simon Butteriss, John Cannon, Barry Clark, Bruce Graham, Donald Maxwell,
Cynthia Morey, Michael Simkins, Richard Suart.

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020

Dear All,

Welcome to our coronavirus edition. This horrible and deadly pandemic has thrown the whole world into tragedy, debt and confusion, and everything has changed. Gatherings of any kind are outlawed, and we seriously wonder if we will ever get back to the way things were. All we can do is adhere to government instructions, and pray that medical science can conquer this terrible scourge.

EVENTS REPORT

On Sunday 23rd February at Haywards Heath's Birch Hotel we held our Annual Celebrity Luncheon. A very pleasant occasion it was, too - The Birch staff did everything they could to make us comfortable, and the meal was well received. Ian Gledhill, our Principal Guest, spoke for almost an hour and was always interesting and entertaining. We didn't know it at the time, but this was to be our last get-together for the foreseeable future.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

We were to have welcomed Godalming Operatic Society on 26th April, with a concert version of their recent Ruddigore. Sadly this had to be cancelled, and refunds have been made to those who took our advice and booked early. Initially it was hoped to re-arrange this much-anticipated concert for later in the year, but this posed too many problems for GOS, and we now hope to bring their Pirates of Penzance to The Birch in 2021.

Our Annual General Meeting, scheduled for 14th June, has also been cancelled, though luckily there was nothing of significance on the agenda.

Mae Heydorn, the National G & S Company mezzo-soprano, who was to have provided the pre-AGM entertainment, will now come and sing for us on 29th November instead.

So as things stand at present, we very much hope to be able to stage our next concert at The Birch on Sunday 18th October, when we plan to welcome Lawrence Olsworth-Peter (tenor) and Elinor Jane Moran (soprano), with Elspeth Wilkes (piano). Lawrence will be remembered for helping us out in 2017 when we needed a Nanki-Poo for our home-grown Mikado. Having played the part for Opera Anywhere, and happening to be free on the date in question, he stepped in and gave us a wonderful Nanki-Poo, which lifted the whole production. And although not a G & S specialist, he has recently and very successfully played Ralph Rackstraw in HMS Pinafore for Opera Della Luna.

EDITOR'S JOTTINGS

With the sad closure of the Mid Sussex Competitive Music Festival, our magnificent Isabel Jay Trophy could no longer be competed for. But the ever-resourceful Christine Colbourne negotiated with the Springboard Brighton & Hove Performing Arts Festival, and they introduced a Gilbert & Sullivan class for adult singers, with the Trophy awarded to the winner. It was all set to take place last month, but of course the coronavirus intervened and the Festival was cancelled.

The International G & S Festival in Buxton and Harrogate, due to be held in August, has also now been cancelled, disappointing a great many of us. A highlight of this year's event was to have been two performances of The Emerald Isle, libretto by Basil Hood and music by Sir Arthur Sullivan and Edward German. This is an operetta I don't know very much about, and Christine and I were keenly anticipating seeing it and buying the DVD. Fingers crossed for next year!

Live performances of G & S are non-existent at the present time, for obvious reasons, so I have none to advertise. But if you are suffering withdrawal symptoms let me remind you that there is a wealth of it to be discovered and enjoyed on Youtube.

So we all very much hope that the coming weeks and months will see a steady reduction in covid19 infections and deaths, and we can once again enjoy our Gilbert & Sullivan and each others' company. Please keep safe and well.

Best regards,

Bill.

Items for inclusion in our next Newsletter should be sent to:

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Committee Members: Chairman and Publicity: Bill Colbourne Vice-Chairman: Laurence Leng Secretary: Sylvia Nixon
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