

"THE GONDOLIERS" REVIEWED

I shot a rocket into the air,
It exploded all to h—l, I know not where;
The stars all bounded hither and there
And finally landed on "The Gondoliers."

The comic opera "The Gondoliers" had a run of 554 performances on the London stage when it opened in 1889, but no first-nighter could have provided a more brilliant and entertaining evening than the Dalhousie Glee and Dramatic Society's production of February 25 and the two succeeding nights. While the audience failed to fill the gymnasium, their enthusiastic applause demonstrated the great enjoyment with which the Gilbert and Sullivan was received.

Even Canada's famed hot-stove-hockey-league would have been on the spot in making its three-star selection, but the bouquet catchers for top honors goes to veteran DGDS troupers Graham Day, Hugh Latimer and John Campbell. Of equal high calibre but less demanding were the roles so aptly portrayed by leads Sheila Piercey, Joyce Moore, Stewart Watson and Carmel Romo.

First Rate Chorus

With such an almost invisible honour-line we include John Phillips, Joyce Kerr Latimer and Neva Eisner in the laurel lineup closely followed by the top-notch performances of minor leads Laura Wiles, Stuart MacKinnon, George Phillips, Douglas Morrison, Sally Roper, Eleanor Richardson and David Peel.

The Gondoliers makes use of the familiar comic opera situation of a mix-up of identities in childhood to weave a droll series of resulting inopportune and embarrassing moments. Timed in 1750, it shifts from the waterways of Venice to the imaginary island of Barataria and in customary poetic justice style, a supposedly rich duke's daughter winds up married to a supposedly poor drummer-boy, who is in reality, the king of Barataria. But with music by Sullivan and libretto by Gilbert, the story itself matters little.

Produced under the able direction of Dal's Prof. Harold Hamer, the opera opens with a flowery chorus number by the cantadines (gondolier girlfriends) which is nowhere as catching a number as the one that follows. Hugh Latimer and John Campbell combine their voices in a "We're Called Gondoliers" number which might really be considered the opening production feature.

The combined voices of Joyce Latimer, Stewart Watson, Carmel Romo and John Phillips introduce the first pleasant change of pace with a rendition of "From The Sunny Spanish Shore", but it is not until we hear them sing the gay and liting, "The Duke of Plaza-Toro" that the Gilbert and Sullivan touch is felt. This is the first spot in the production where the unknowing listener would lean back and learnedly exclaim, "Oh yes, Gilbert and Sullivan!"

A duet by John Phillips and Joyce Kerr Latimer is delivered with just enough musical reservation and acting conviction to convince us of troubled and youthful romance.

But it is the entrance of the Grand Inquisitor which jolts the

audience up straight in their chairs. Graham Day's excellent performance of this role left nothing to be desired. Perfectly suited for the part, lean and long, garbed in a diabolic but still humorous costume, and leaning on his ebually lean and long staff, he sings a catching rendition, "I Stole the Prince and Brought Him Down and Left Him Gaily Prattling."

A short recitative of typical G. and S. bombastic rhetorics is performed by Joyce Latimer again followed by a quintet arrangement of "Life's a Pudding Full of Plums." While the latter production, starring Stewart Watson, Carmel Romo, Graham Day, Joyce Latimer and John Phillips, showed considerable work, its deletion could have been effected without any serious effect on the story content. It was however, pleasantly performed and did help the actors make a graceful withdrawal from the stage.

Once more featured is Miss Moore whose "When a Merry Maiden Marries", shows considerable improvement over her opening number. An increase in volume was appreciated by the audience, but unfortunately Miss Moore failed to note the acoustic difficulties imposed on the duet-holders. This was somewhat made up for by the captivating and sensuous manner in which her role was performed. Miss Piercey's "Kind Sir, You Cannot Have the Heart Our Lives to Part" which follows is a teasing little number particularly enjoyed by the audience.

At this stage in The Gondoliers the entire group appear on stage, and there is no doubt that they are really "warmed up" to the show. The chorus, which opens somewhat half-heartedly and stiff are now relaxed and thoroughly enjoying themselves. Marriage, apparently, had done wonders in 30 short minutes for our star gondolier and cantadines and Mr. Latimer plays his role from this point onward with considerable more conviction and enthusiasm.

The natural beauty of the Misses Sheila Piercey and Joyce Moore

leave little doubt that they will survive the pending temporary separation from their newly acquired husbands.

These three, joined in by Mr. Campbell, sing "Oh, 'tis a Glorious Thing I Ween" and their effort earned them the first encore of the performance. The number is catching, lively, exuberant and well-performed. Act I closes with a chorus version of "Then Away We go to an Island Fair."

The setting and costumes for Act II are breath-taking, and some neat introductory steps accompanied by a lively vocal number get the opera underway again. A miscaught cue at this time jarred the audience just slightly. A gondolier chorus number referring to republican equality is followed by John Campbell's "Rising Early in the Morning." Apparently Mr. Campbell rose a bit too early, for of the many wig-wearers on the stage at this time he achieves the distinction of being the only cast member improperly wigged—too much black hair showing under that milk-white wig.

"Take a Pair of Sparkling Eyes" is well-handled in a pleasing manner by Mr. Latimer, although at no time does his Stanislavski (acting) reach the level attained by his gondolier partner-in-crime, John Campbell. For his efforts, the night's second encore is extended to Mr. Latimer.

Once more, brides Piercey and Moore steal the spotlight with "After Sailing to This Island", but it is their cacuca dance routine with partners Latimer and Campbell that earned them the greatest ovation of the show—and encore number three.

With everyone well warmed to their parts by this time, Graham Day joins with Messrs. Campbell and Latimer to present "There Lived a King, as I've Been Told." The quartet, oft-named by this time and therefore un-named now, repeat their excellent teamwork in the number "In a Contemplative Fashion," and the chorus then takes over with "With Ducal Pomp and Ducal Pride." The high calibre of costume colours almost detract from the excellence achieved in this short number.

Hollywood "Oscars" are indeed in order for the fine performances of Stewart Watson, the Duke, and his not-to-be-outdone Duchess, Carmel Romo. Miss Romo sings "On the Day That I was Wedded to Your Admirable Sir" so captivately that the audience required no urging to heap encore four on this fine supporting musical actress. Mr. Watson's vocal and the gavotte number at this time earn him an equally rewarding ovation for their novel and soothing quality.

And so with the old songs of the gondoliers ringing to the rafters, the entire cast once more appears to hear the old nurse Inez dramatically pronounce her son the real King of Barataria, and the thun-

derous chords of voices and instruments combine to ring down a momentous finale.

Noteworthy among the many interesting factors relating to the production was the eye-pleasing effect of the costumes obtained from Malabars. The cast of over 100 were decked out in perfect taste, with just the correct contrasts and matching to provide an authentic professional touch.

Music for The Gondoliers was provided by a combined orchestra of students and non-students and much credit is due the musicians for their excellent performance, and all gratis.

With only two noticeable exceptions, the cast members were sharp on cues. They did however, allow backstage noise to take over once and on several occasions appeared unnecessarily at the side-openings of the stage, detracting the audience. Make-up appeared first class and many of the cast seemed to have gotten along on almost their natural colouring which speaks well for the handsome and beautiful outlook of this fine group of performers. A sole star is handed to Miss Sally Roper whose dress, make-up and acting were most satisfying.

Lighting on the whole was well done with unnecessary noise from the spotlight operator at the rear of the gym. It is likely that this was inadvertent. Acoustics, as usual, left much to be desired, and the audience were unable to enjoy the libretto to the utmost. A more lively pick-up system would be practical.

Stage manager Wally Bergman and his crew deserve much credit for the backdrops and other props. The gondola, the courtroom, the authentic-looking throne chairs, the majestic columns and the superb chandelier were just a few of their many accomplishments.

At this point reference to the programs is in order. The pamphlet was attractive and informative and could have been improved in only one respect—a listing of the titles of the musical numbers in their order of appearance and the artists rendering them. This added feature could have boosted audience-participating-interest a good deal.

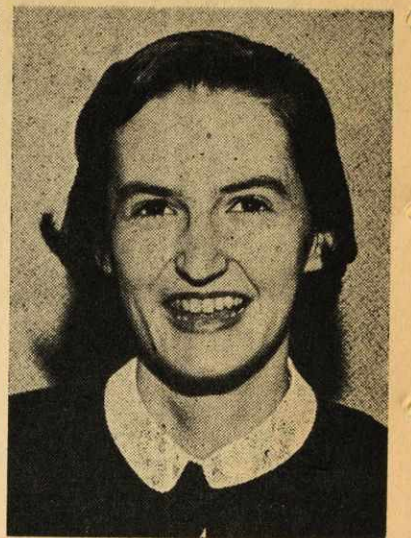
The Dalhousie Glee and Dramatic Society has racked up another success and to its president, Dave Peel, its hard working executive and harder working members go the congratulations of the entire student body.

The Gondoliers were presented under difficult conditions. It was performed in a large, somewhat cold, gymnasium with its hard, unattractive plaster walls and uncomfortable seats on a non-elevated floor. Whether a patron had a reserved seat or a rush seat made little difference since in any event it is impossible to see intricate dance steps or enjoy the pleasure of breath-taking choreography.

Defeated Arts and Science Candidates



DAVE PEEL



HELEN SCAMMELL

Shown above are Mr. David Peel, and Miss Helen Scammell, respective president and vice-president candidates for the A & S Faculty. Both students are very active in campus life but were unable to cop an election victory at the expense of the strong Law slate of Vic Burstal and Sally Roper.

Halifax Mail-Star Critic Lauds "Gondoliers" Chorus For Good Job

A review of the Dalhousie Glee and Dramatic Society production "The Gondoliers" refers to the chorus as a group "that could and really did sing." The review, published in the Halifax Mail-Star, lauded the Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera which was presented for the fifth time Monday night in Truro.

But in true black-and-gold character, the D.G.D. Sters turned out a show which all its many viewers term as an "unqualified success". Dalhousie salutes you!

As seen by "ME" from Row "K", Seat No. 1, Centre

Members of the chorus included:

Contadine

Eleanor Richardson, Elspeth Giffin, Nancy Wickwire, Rita Greig, Elise Lane, Audrey Hamilton, Eileen Kelley, Carol MacGillivray, Helen Wyman, Charlotte Sutherland, Jean MacPherson, Bernadine Melanson, Sheila Parsons, Mildred West, Peggy Fraser, Glenda Barnstead, Christine Carter, Judy James, Anne Thompson, Janet Christie, Carole MacDonald, Jeanne Geizer, Joan Clarke, Sonia Smith, Joan Alice Venner, Nancy Hyndman, Mary Patterson, Leslie Hancock, Julie Dobson, Marian

Gondoliers

George Phillips, Gordon McMurry, Byron Reid, David Walker, Kenneth Abbott, Edward Marsh, Bill Phillips, Jack Bryan, Bill McCurdy, David Thomas, John Armstrong, John Sinclair, Duncan McNeil, Dick Shaw, David Peel, John Douglas, Buddy Smith, Bob Agnew, Doug Morrison, Humphrey Childe, Bill Smith, Peter Jones, Donn Carr, Stu MacKinnon.

Heralds: Roland Thornhill, David Hambrick.

Soldiers: Garry Braund, Graeme Nicholson.

Pages: Colin Hamer, Robert Gillen.

Much credit is also due the following for their efforts in making the D.G.D.S. production a great success.

Orchestra

First Violin: Arthur Fordham, Anna Cherpak, Nancy Whittier, George Tattrie; Second Violin: Ardythe Oxner, Sheila Pender, Patricia Wyman, Frank Smeltzer, Hugh Vincent; Violoncello: Carol Chepeswick, Margaret Wyman; Double Bass: William Eagles, Ron Davidson; Flute: James Bell; Clarinet: Roderick Fraser, John Garrison; French Horn: Robert Dietz; Trumpet: Ralph Tingley, David Sperry; Trombone: James Brown, David Patterson; Percussion: Ernest Fong; Piano: Eleanor Ritecy; Conductor: Prof. Harold Hamer.

Stage manager, Walter Bergman; Costume manager, Betty Bissett; Properties manager, Alasdair Sinclair; Make-up Manager, Pat Fownes; Publicity managers, Jack Bryan, Pat Fownes; Receptionist: Amy Pullen; Member ex-officio: Patricia Norman.

Stage Crew

Bob MacLean, Al Lane, John Armstrong, John Douglas, Gordon Armstrong, George Travis, Roland Langille, Randy Burns, Donald Hambrick, Paul Kennedy, John Sinclair, Doreen Mitchell, Ann Stacey, Carolyn Flemming, Eleanor Woodside, Pat Norman.

Cover design by Sarah Pullen.

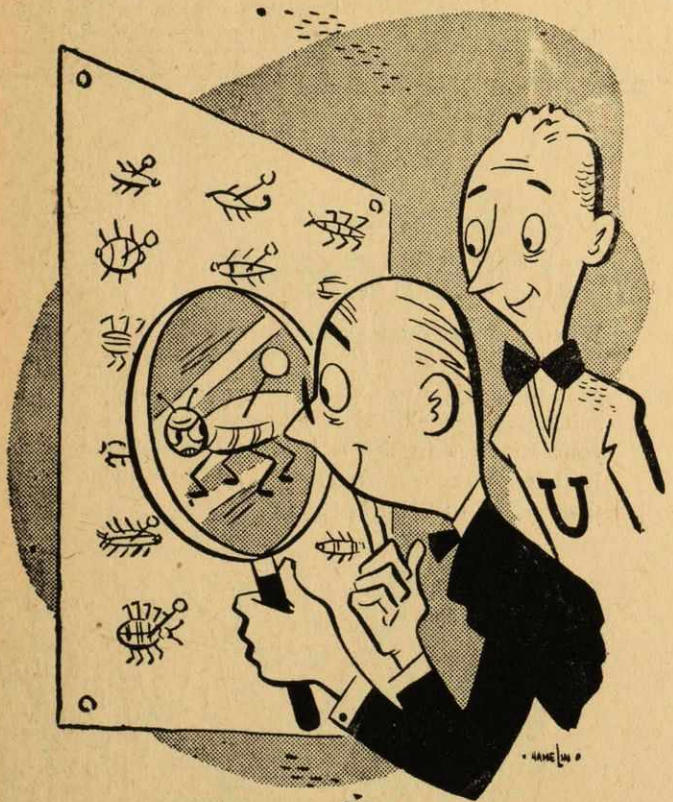
Delegates Attend SCM

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day. On Sunday, the delegates worshipped at the Sackville United Church where Rev. Bob Miller was guest preacher.

Plans were made for a spring work camp to be held in May and the necessary and possibility of having a Maritime travelling secretary was acted upon.

Dalhousie was represented by Marigold Fry, Jane Burchell, Mary Hunter, Rilda Harris, Gordon Haliburton, Fred Neal and Les Stewart. All who attended the conference felt that a wider understanding of the purpose and work of the S.C.M. in the university community was gained.



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NOTICE

A tea will be held for all members of Sodales on Saturday, March 6 at the home of President and Mrs. A. E. Kerr.