

# Gilbert & Sullivan Theater Company Sets Sail for Villages

The New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players will present “H.M.S. Pinafore” at 7 p.m. Jan. 25 at The Sharon.

By TAYLOR STRICKLAND  
Daily Sun Senior Writer

New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players welcomes all aboard Her Majesty’s Ship Pinafore for this leg of the theater company’s national tour.

For 50 years, New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players has been bringing joy unbounded to New York City audiences. Now, the city’s foremost professional Gilbert and Sullivan repertory company will perform a production of “H.M.S Pinafore” at The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center. It’s part of the company’s 50th Anniversary season, which also includes productions of “Ruddigore,” “The Pirates of Penzance,” “Iolanthe” and another touring production of “The Mikado.”

“We’ve been performing ‘H.M.S. Pinafore’ since the beginning of the company,” said David Wannan, the executive director of New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players as well as one of the performers. He plays the bass-baritone role of Bill Bobstay, who is otherwise known as The Boat-swain’s Mate.

Considered W.S. Gilbert

and Arthur Sullivan’s first mega-hit, “H.M.S Pinafore,” or “The Lass That Loved a Sailor,” allowed the playwright-and-composer pair to chart a new course for modern musical theater during the Victorian-era. It launched not only Gilbert and Sullivan, but also the D’Oyly Carte Opera Company, which performed the duo’s canon for more than 100 years.

“As the first great Gilbert and Sullivan success story, one can point to this work, with its union of popular musical hall and more elite operatic elements, as the true father of musical theater as we know it,” said Albert Bergeret, founder and artistic director of New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players. “Its descendants have been going back and forth across the Atlantic ever since.”

The comic opera follows a cast of characters aboard the Royal Navy ship H.M.S. Pinafore. It centers around the captain’s daughter, Josephine, who has caught the eye of two men at once: a lowly sailor named Ralph Rackstraw and the pompous Sir Joseph Porter. To complicate matters further, Josephine only loves one of the men, while her father, Capt. Corcoran, wants her to marry the other.

Thankfully, Little Buttercup is there to help unravel the mess of mistaken identities and mismatched



Submitted photos

As part of the New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players’ 50th Anniversary season, the repertory company will present “H.M.S. Pinafore” at 7 p.m. Jan. 25 at The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center.



“H.M.S Pinafore,” or “The Lass That Loved a Sailor,” is considered W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan’s first mega-hit.

marriages and show the unlucky lovers that “love levels all ranks.”

“The great part about ‘H.M.S. Pinafore’ is that it appeals to both parts of the human mind,” Wannan said. “It has satire that’s cool and biting as well as a rousing heart, then there is the romance between the tenor and soprano.”

Although Wannan’s tenure is shorter than Bergeret’s, he’s been with New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players for quite some time. This year marks his 21st season. He started with the company as a singer and actor, eventually going back school and earning a business degree from Columbia University, joining administration and becoming executive director.

Wannan saw his first Gilbert and Sullivan production when he was 5 years old. His favorites are “H.M.S. Pinafore,” “Ruddigore” and “The Pirates of Penzance,” in which he plays the role of Pirate King.

“Gilbert’s writing has this timeless quality because what he’s making fun of is timeless,” Wannan said. “Like the line, ‘I always voted at my party’s call, and I never thought of thinking for myself at all’ — that is a perfect line for today’s world with today’s politicians. The words stay relevant year after year because history keeps repeating itself.”

New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players brings more of the timeless work of Gilbert and Sullivan to life in “H.M.S. Pinafore” at 7 p.m. Jan. 25 at The Sharon. Tickets are \$45 and up. To purchase, go to thevillagesentertainment.com.

AMERICAN CLASSIC

TRAVEL SHOWCASES  
EXPLORING THE BEST PLACES TO VISIT IN 2025  
To RSVP: Scan QR Code or Call 847.548.3333

COMFORT SUITES  
SPANISH SPRINGS  
JANUARY 11 @ 10:00 am or 2:00 pm  
1202 AVENIDA CENTRAL  
LADY LAKE, FL 32159

THE WATERFRONT INN  
JANUARY 13 @ 4:00 pm or 6:30 PM  
1105 LAKE SHORE DRIVE  
THE VILLAGES, FL 32162

DEL WEBB STONE CREEK  
JANUARY 14 @ 2:00 pm  
6111 SW 89TH COURT RD.  
OCALA, FL 34481

CIRCLE SQUARE COMMONS  
JANUARY 15 @ 2:00 pm or 6:30 pm  
8405 SW 80TH STREET, CYPRESS HALL  
OCALA, FL 34481

THE BROWNWOOD HOTEL  
JANUARY 16 @ 10:00 am or 2:00 pm  
3003 BROWNWOOD BOULEVARD  
THE VILLAGES, FL 32163

DEL WEBB'S SPRUCE CREEK  
COUNTRY CLUB  
JANUARY 17 @ 10:00 am  
13601 DEL WEBB, MEETING ROOM  
SUMMERFIELD, FL 34491

BROAD STRIPES GOLF  
& SOCIAL CLUB  
AT STONECREST  
JANUARY 17 @ 2:00 pm  
11560 SE 176TH PLACE RD  
SUMMERFIELD, FL 34491

Join Us!

SCAN QR CODE BELOW TO REQUEST OUR CATALOG

Offering Airfare from MCO & Home Pickups  
for The Villages, Ocala, Summerfield Area

Discover the world on our all-inclusive tours