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A Publication of The Lambs, Inc.

America's First Professional Theatrical Club, Established 1874.

Fall-Winter 2005-2006



**Lamb Edwin J. Burke—Benefactor, Academy Award Winner.**

**The Lambs' Script**  
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Davida Rothberg, David Dow Bentley III

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**Editor's Notes**



Our cover story for this issue is on Lamb Edwin J. Burke, producer, Academy Award winner, and generous benefactor. His Oscar was recently placed on long-time loan in our Fifth Floor quarters. This issue also features homage to two very dear members of our club recently departed, Peter Johl and Jim Ruth.

With the passing of Peter Johl, we lost one of our club's most talented and beloved singer-actors. When he was not busy performing on Broadway or elsewhere, few were the Friday nights he did not treat us to a song.

We thank Jim Ruth's friend, Bill Gallo, Assoc. Sports Editor at the *NY Daily News*, for his reminiscences of a great Lamb.

This edition also covers the fall barbecue; the Annual Holiday Party; Davida Rothberg's lively column, "In the Fold;" the Annual Membership Meeting; the Shepherd's Luncheon of February 27; "It's a Gift!" (accounts of donations to the Club); reports on visits by two of our members to our reciprocal clubs in London; an announcement of the upcoming published history of our club; an article on Lamb Don Pippin's conducting in Chattanooga; the Annual holiday party; an Gerry Ruth delightful reporting of "News of The Lambs," informing us of their doings throughout the city and elsewhere. Enjoy!

...Thanks to Randy Phillips who shot many of the fine photos in this issue.

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Marc Baron  
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Wayne Coleman  
Linda Fields  
Scott Glascock  
Lewis Hardee  
Mike Mearian  
Robert Winter-Berger

**Final Curtain**

**Peter Johl  
Jim Ruth**

to The Lambs' performance space. I had never seen the complete classic musical before. I was so pleasantly surprised. Although the piece is generally done in large auditoriums like churches and opera houses, it seemed particularly lovely in the intimacy of The Lambs. Jacqueline sang the role of the mother and was very good. The production was sponsored by her production company, Cameo Productions, a 501-C3 non-profit arts organization ... The Annual Membership Meeting of The Lambs made use of that same space just weeks later. As usual it was well attended and gave me an opportunity to touch bases with old friends like **Gene Smith** and his wife, Avril, for so long very much a part of our club. Gene has been a member for over 50 years! And it was great to see **Norman Dean** and son US Naval Commander Ret. **Benjamin Van Dienst**, also a Lamb. The last time we all got together was at Ben's retirement party aboard the USS *Intrepid* just weeks before 9/11 ... **Carol Sheldin** gave her show, *Swingtime*, at Danny's Skylight Room March 7, 9, 14 and 16 ... **Neva Small's** show, *Not Quite an Ingenue*, was a sell-out at Helen's and sure to get a second run there ... **Marc Baron** has been getting a lot of world-wide press for his knowledge of *The Sopranos*, and at the same time he was working in a new Bruce Willis film ... On March 6, **Lewis Hardee** gave a presentation/book signing of his recent cookbook, *Southport Classic Cooking, Recipes and Reminiscences*, at the National Arts Club. The book is a local best seller in his North Carolina hometown and is in its third printing ... **Penny Larsen Vine**, a theater writer for *Nouveau Magazine* as well as an actress, just completed a 2 ½ year tour as Jeanette in the National Company of *The Full Monty* ... **Richard Wolf's** new musical *Bookstore* had its premier in Florida at the Amelia Community Theater in January. The music recording was given high-praise in the January 3 issue of *Folioweekly* as "unforgettable as any Broadway Show."



Members should note: If you are not receiving E-Mails from The Lambs, send your E-Mail address to [Info@the-lambs.org](mailto:Info@the-lambs.org)

### **Lamb Edwin J. Burke**

*First Ever Academy Award Winner for Best Writing*

*compiled by Marc Baron*

The first-ever Academy Award for writing was bestowed upon a Lamb, Edwin J. Burke, for his screenplay adaptation of *Bad Girl*. The statuette is on loan to The Lambs from the Albany Institute of History and Art thanks to the efforts of Edwin's nephew, Lamb Ambassador C. Thomas Burke. The statuette was the bequest to the Institute by Burke's niece, Grace Baxter. We greatly appreciate the help and cooperation of Tamis K. Groft and Barbara A. Bertucio of the Albany Institute for arranging the loan. Research was provided in part by Elizabeth Spinelli, Public History Program, State University of New York at Albany.

The Oscar<sup>®</sup> (pictured here) was designed by George Stanley in 1929, and cast by the California Art Bronze Factory, Los Angeles, CA, 1929-1932; it is bronze with a marble base, inscribed, "Academy First Award to Edwin Burke for Writing Adaptation of *Bad Girl*," and "Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences First Award 1932."



Edwin J. Burke was a successful playwright, screenwriter, director and active member of The Lambs. He was awarded the Oscar in 1932 for his writing adaptation for the movie *Bad Girl*, which also won an Oscar for Best Director Frank Borzage. Unfortunately, no known copy of the movie exists today.

Born in Albany, New York, on August 30, 1889, Burke moved to New York City in 1908 to attend the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. During 1910-1920 he worked in a variety of productions as an actor and director, including significant roles in *Othello* and *Hamlet*. By the early 1920's he began to write one-act plays and skits. Of his 250 works, 87 were produced.

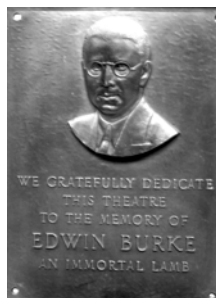
Burke was elected a Professional member of The Lambs in 1924. In 1928 he wrote his first full-length play, *This Thing Called Love*, which ran for more than 100 performances at Maxine Elliott's Theater. The play, which dealt with the trials and tribulations of modern marriage, was adapted to the screen in 1929 with Constance



Bennett and Edmond Lowe in the leading roles, and again in 1940 with Rosalind Russell and Melvyn Douglas. Burke moved to Hollywood in 1929 and worked as a writer for the Fox Film Corporation where he wrote scripts and worked as a dialogue director on many successful films. Burke returned to the East in 1935 and was the Director of the Percy Williams' Home, a predecessor of the Actors' Fund home. He was an active Council Member of The Lambs, and a member of The Players until his death in 1944.

(Above: Shepherd Bruce Brown and Ambassador C. Thomas Burke stand with Edwin Burke's Academy Award. Photo by Marc Baron)

*Bad Girl* was based on the book of the same name written by Vina Delmar in 1931. Delmar, a New York City writer, was known for her strong characters – especially women – and her insightful descriptions of American life during the Roaring 20's and the Great Depression. Part melodrama and part comedy, *Bad Girl* tells the story of a young married couple as they struggle to survive during the hard times of The Depression. The film resonated with the American public because so many people were facing similar hardships. Edwin Burke will always be remembered for his generosity to The Lambs for financing the building of the theater within our old 44th Street clubhouse. The bronze plaque (pictured right) acknowledging his contribution is located in our 5th Floor performance space. Edwin J. Burke is an Immortal Lamb.



In early December I took advantage of a lovely Sunday afternoon to wander around the West Village, eventually ending up at the Wings Theatre on Christopher Street for one of the last matinees of **Bernice Lee's** musical play, *Rachel*. In the cast were several Lambs and one former Lamb. **Kay Arnold** was Mrs. Donelson, Rachel's mother, **Sandra Bendfeldt**, Jane, Rachel's sister, Kathy Kelleher was cast as Rachel's first mother-in-law, Mrs. Robards, **leslie Shreve** was one of the society ladies. Old friend and former Lamb Susan Jerome was Rachel, the much-maligned wife of Andrew Jackson. The story was interesting, the costumes authentic. But it was the performances that made the afternoon memorable. Thank you Bernice, you made my day ... Then there was a fun event on The Lambs' Fifth Floor—**Richard Wolf's** new comedy, *The President's Mother*. It was chock-a-block with Lambs' performers. **Joyce Randolph** was the President's deviously delightful mother, **Peter Kingsley** played the very proper President. Guest Kathleen O'Grady was the reporter, **Scott Glascock** her agent, and **Marc Baron** her husband. Marc directed as well. It was a perfect comedy and so well done. Cheers to all ... Caught up with **Stuart Chamberlain** at the excellent Shepherd's Luncheon. He was on his way to St. John the Divine to see how the reconstruction is coming along. He told me about a recent incident involving the venerable Paul Harvey. Some weeks ago he received a surprise call from Angel Harvey, Paul's wife. The Harveys had just returned from a trip and Paul was feeling a bit under the weather. "Stuart," she said, "Paul wants you to write his news stories for the next two days." For those of you familiar with the Harvey newscast, you know how totally personal it is to him. Stuart considered it quite a compliment ... **Linda Fields's** cable show *Cabaret Today* featured **Steve DePass** in January and February. Unfortunately, my cable provider switched to digital during this period and I've not gotten around to ordering a new cable box. Let's hope Linda repeats this show and that she warns me in advance. Linda's other project was a cabaret appearance at Central Presbyterian. She looked lovely, sounded great and was the star of the show ... **Camille Savitz** put together a fun musical show, *Italian Dish*, which she presented in The Lambs' performance space. It concentrated on food and food songs and had a jingle quiz with cookie prizes. Camille has lots of energy, a nice voice and a sunny disposition. It was fun...Just after Christmas I was delighted to hear that **Jacqueline Kroschell** was bringing her production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*

## News of The Lambs

by Gerry Ruth

What a busy time this has been. In October there was **Kathy Kelleher's** show, *Love Who You Love* at Danny's Skylight Room. With **Hope Hardcastle** in the director's chair and Paul Chamlin at the piano, Kathy took the stage and the show began. She looked great and her voice was easy to listen to. Poignant love songs and gentle humor made for a very pleasant evening ... A few weeks later I found myself at Helen's Hideaway Room to catch **Helen Klass** in *Another Klass Act*. Helen's selections are always interesting and well executed ... The room is okay, but I prefer the Judy's setup ... Just days later, I squeezed myself into **Beth Holland's** encore of her *Young at Heart* at Danny's. The place was so packed I had to share a table for two with two other people. One was a gal named Laurie who was an entertainment critic for a website. She had gotten a note from **Chuck Prentiss** who was in town. My other table mate was a former Lamb, Elizabeth Sharland Jones. Jones is a Brit. and published a book on places that English actors and performers favor in New York. Her new book is a cultural tour of Paris. Elizabeth gave me a description of a tour she's leading in Paris in March. (Kathy, are you listening?) Just as we finished our introductions, Chuck swept by. He stopped long enough to tell us that he has a new CD and that Beth was singing one of his new songs. When the audience was seated and had placed their orders, Hope Hardcastle gave the word, Woody Regan seated himself behind the piano, and Beth stepped into the spotlight. Her songs were interesting and familiar. Chuck's song was lovely and Beth did it very nicely indeed ... I was talking to **Bob Heffernan** the other evening at the Low Jinks. He was staying in London last July 9 when the terrorists set off bombs in the Underground, killing many people. His family members in the States were frantic about his safety and were calling all his friends in London to find out if he was okay. Happy-go-lucky Bob stayed on for another few days, then took a train to Southampton and boarded the Queen Mary 2 for a leisurely cruise across the Atlantic. He wouldn't tell what the family said to him when he arrived home all in one piece.



## DAILY NEWS

BILL GALLO  
Associate Sports Editor

**Jim Ruth**

by Bill Gallo

I got to know Jim Ruth well during my two term tenure as President of the National Cartoonists Society. It was the grandest four years I've spent with the Society.

Jim was a member of my board for all that time. He, along with Al Kilgore, Al Jaffee, Bill Kresse, Bill Robinson and Dick Ericson made up a happy group who seemed to work well together. We struck the right chord and in all those years of weekly meetings there was never a disagreement. We went the way of worthwhile projects, always stressing pleasure with our accomplishments

Going back through the years, I can recall stories that made this band of cartoonists what it still is. Always a solid institution, the Cartoonists Society was a family most of us were happy to be a part of. And we had a common ground; the idea was always for the veteran members to make the "new kids on the block" feel like they belonged.

Big names of the profession—Milton Caniff, Rube Goldberg, Al Capp, Mort Walker, Charles Schultz, "Dikbrowne," Chester Gould, Herblock, Walt Kelly and other giants of India ink—would meet at The Lambs, an actors' hangout which was nice enough to let us use its quarters on West 44<sup>th</sup> Street for our once a month get-togethers.

Cartoonist meetings were always interesting, lively and always with a difference theme. One month was set aside for what we called "Sports Night." We would invite the current sports stars and put on a show for them. What started out as a little thing with four or five sports figures became one of the biggest sports dinners of the year in New York.

The fact was that it became so big that we had to pull out of The Lambs and book the Commodore, Hilton or Waldorf Hotel depending on where we'd get the best deal.

At these dinners, when we needed fresh ideas Jim Ruth stepped forward. Jim and Al Kilgore became a gifted team by writing and developing skits. I tell you Jim and Al did it like they were putting on a Broadway musical. Jim's wife Gerry and Al's spouse Dolores could attest to how much work went in to these productions.

The dinners were packed with sports personalities. You name them, they were there. On the dais in any given year would be Howard Cosell, Weeb Eubank, Whitey Ford, Bobby Thomson and Ralph Branca, seated next to people like Jim Farley, Sr., Mayor John Lindsay, George Steinbrenner, Ted Sorenson, Mike Burke, David Frost and others.

Every dinner was a huge success and each year we'd try to top ourselves. We enjoyed them all, but one especially sticks in my mind—in 1977 when we named Pearl Bailey the Top Sports Person of the Year.



*Bill Kresse's portrait-cartoon of Jim Ruth.*

Pearlie Mae was a devoted Met and Yankee fan, and a devotee of the Knicks. "They are the body and soul of New York City" she said. When we asked Pearl if she would accept this kudo from the cartoonists, she agreed under one condition, that we not ask her to sing. "I'll be there with bells, honey, but no singing please. I do not sing for my supper."

Of course nobody would even hint that she utter one note. But with the band playing all the popular tunes of the day, Pearl began tapping her feet. She started to hum. "Lord, don't tell me she's going to break out in song," I thought.

Well, to make a long story short, Pearl Bailey, the trouper of troupers that she was, told the bandleader to go into a rendition of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame." She sang it and never did we hear anyone sing it better. She made it sound like *Aida*.

Jim Ruth worked like hell on this show just as he did on all the others. I always felt the production of anything we put on would not



*At the Shepherd's Luncheon of February 27. (l-r) Boy of The Lambs Marc Baron waits while Guest David Hartman signs his copy of the book; next to him are guest Nicole Barth, and Lamb Gene Bayliss.*

***Cliff Robertson***  
***Guest of Honor at Upcoming***  
***Shepherd's Luncheon***

Mark your calendars! We are pleased to announce that the distinguished actor Cliff Robertson will be the guest of honor and speaker at the next Shepherd's Luncheon, April 19th. Robertson won an Academy Award for *Charly*, was hand-picked by the Kennedy family to play John F. Kennedy in *PT 109*. He is also a writer, director and producer, served on the Board of Directors of SAG for many years, and donates generously of his time and energies to charitable work. Cliff is also a renowned pilot who will be inducted into the Aviation Hall of Fame this summer.

- Bob Dorian, longtime host on AMC.
- Producer Karen Kaiser.
- Kevin Winkler of the Library of Performing Arts at Lincoln Center. And:
- Lamb Sylvia Schwartz, associated with David Merrick for decades.



*At the Shepherd's Luncheon of February 27.  
 (l-r) Producer Karen Kaiser,  
 Broadway actress and event coordinator Sheila Smith, and  
 Broadway actor/Lambs Corresponding Secretary Peter Kingsley.*

have been as good or complete without these two guys, Al Kilgore and Jim Ruth. It wasn't always the Society that brought us all together. Jim and I were good friends. Jim was great company and a good spinner of sports yarns. He had a wonderful memory for baseball trivia and nothing gave him more pleasure than to sit at Costello's bar with a handful of cartoonists and talk about the great days his namesake Babe Ruth had with the Yankees.

Jim, you were a class guy and I'm glad I had you as my friend.

*Bill Gallo*

*Notes on the National Cartoonists Society  
 by Gerry Ruth*

Bill Gallo is the sports cartoonist for the *Daily News*. He just celebrated his 60th anniversary with the paper. Bill Kresse is a cartoonist and illustrator who, like Gallo, was a newspaperman. Bill worked at most of the major papers in the city including the *Daily News*, *Newsday*, *Journal-American*, and the *Herald Tribune*. For several years he had a cartoon feature, "Super Duper," which ran in the *Sunday News*. (His sketch of Jim appears the preceding page of this article.) Bill Robinson was a colleague of Kresse and Gallo at the *News* and was an illustrator for the paper. Al Jaffee was a longtime friend and neighbor—he lived a block or so away. Al is a *Mad Magazine* artist, his *Mad Fold-In* appears regularly in the magazine and each is a work of art. Dick Ericson, another neighbor, lived across the street and had several syndicated features including "Citizen Sybley," and "Trixie the Trader." He was a fantastic PR rep and had hundreds of panel gags to his credit. Al Kilgore was an especially close friend to both Jim and me. He and Jim joined The Lambs at the same time. Al was a superb caricaturist. His drawing of Tom Dillon as "The Rock of the Flock" is on display on our 5th floor. Along with Prof. John McCabe, Al was a founder of the Sons of the Desert, a Laurel & Hardy appreciation group. John McCabe was also a Lamb, the author of several books on the comic duo which Al Kilgore researched and illustrated. Jim and Frank Melfo were early members of The Sons.

*Jim Ruth and the Lambs*

by Lewis Hardee

No one loved The Lambs any more than Jim Ruth; few contributed more time, energy and talent. An active member since his election in 1972, he served on the council from 1979 and in other capacities until his passing in 2005. He was one of the loyal, unsung stevedores of our history, among those few who, during the darkest days of The Lambs in the 1970's, worked so hard to make sure the Club survived. For years he and his wife Gerry turned out the Club newsletters, a vital link among our members.

A professional cartoonist-turned-art-director for a major bank, he studied at the School of Visual Arts down on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, and for years wrote stories and layouts for memorable cartoon features such as "Nancy," "Archie," and "Dudley Doornight." For decades he sketched hundreds of birthday cartoons which Lambs regularly received on their birthdays. His cartoon figures reflect his fun-loving, upbeat, optimistic nature. Their feet never touch ground. The characters seem to levitate, and often there is impish mischief in their eyes. When my children's musical *Christopher Columbus* opened, my birthday depicted me in a captain's hat steering a ship; when I published my first book he sketched me with pen in hand, a cartoon I cherish and use at the top of the Editor's Notes in each issue of the *Script*. In recent years he was an art director for Banker's Trust. More than a few actors had some useful employment in one of the bank's projects.

Jim was a uniquely humane and understanding person. How many times did I hear him say, "You may disagree with someone's opinion, but you may not disagree that he has that opinion."

He produced for The Lambs far too many shows for me to count, some of which I directed. I recall that while putting together a Fourth of July show a young woman came forth with a grim, dismally preachy song she wanted to perform. Jim told her as tactfully as he could that it was not appropriate for a Fourth of July celebration. "But I want people to know that war is terrible and make them feel bad," she insisted. Jim, who had himself served in the Korean War for two years, told her, "If you knew what some of our members have gone through, you wouldn't want to remind them. Why, Peter Collins still has shrapnel in his skull." Such was our dear Jim Ruth. We shall miss him.

*The Shepherd's Luncheon of "Champions"*

contributed by Sheila Smith, Friend of the Lambs

The first Shepherd's Luncheon of 2006 was held on February 27. The guest speaker was John A. Gilvey, Professor of Theater and Speech at St. Joseph's College. His recent book, *Before the Parade Passes By*, is a biography of Gower Champion and his contribution to the glorious American Musical.

Despite a "real-feel" temperature of ten degrees, more than sixty Lambs and their guests filled our newly-redecorated Fifth Floor quarters.

Promptly at noon, Shepherd Bruce Brown announced, "The bar and buffet are now open!"

Collie/Entertainment Chairman Randy Phillips, a veteran of many Merrick-Champion Wars from *Hello, Dolly!* through *42nd Street*, introduced the *very special* guests—all alumni from eleven of the eighteen Champion Broadway Musicals:

- Marge Champion, collaborator/partner with Gower Champion. Marge joined us straight from a performance down town—performing jury duty.

- Lamb Gene Bayliss, Assoc. Choreographer of both *Carnival* and *Bye, Bye Birdie*. Yes, Gene staged the memorable teenagers "Telephone Hour" in *Birdie*. He danced in *Make a Wish*

- With Gene Bayliss was Nicole Barth who performed in *Carnival*, became dance captain of *Hello, Dolly!* and played the lady bass fiddle player in the all-girl band in *Sugar*.

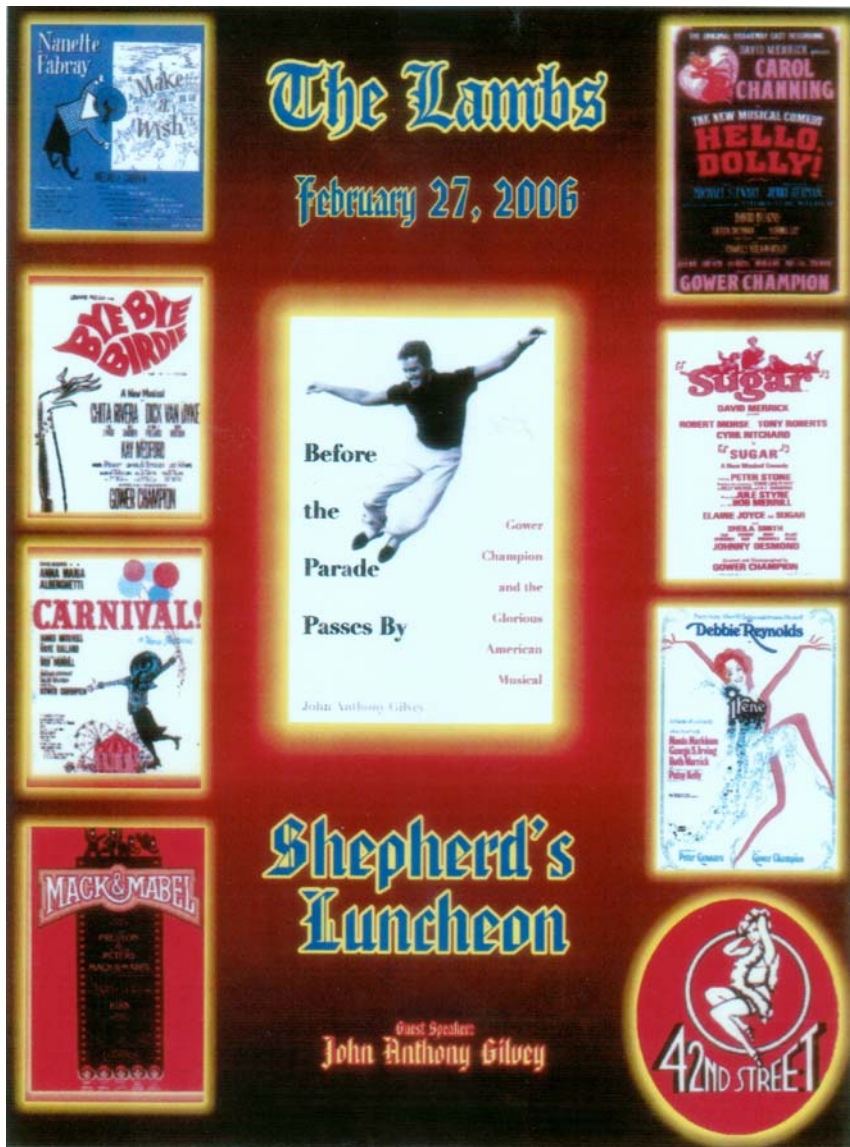
- Bert and Patricia Michaels were in *Prettybelle* (oops! It closed in Boston!)

- Sheila Smith, the original "Sweet Sue" – Ina Rae Hutton, leader of the all-girl band in *Sugar*. Sheila went on to challenge Jerry Orbach on stage (and David Merrick off-stage) in *42nd Street*. Imagine, she has a clock engraved, "Love, David Merrick!"

- Flying in from North Carolina was David Hartman who played the head waiter of the Harmonia Gardens in *Hello, Dolly!* He now co-hosts PBS's "A Walk Through...the Boroughs of New York," the eighth edition of which aired in March 2006. We were also pleased to welcome...

- Mary Jo McConnell, Mrs. Potts of *Beauty and the Beast*.





*Montage of some of Gower Champion's musicals compiled and designed by Randy Phillips for the Shepherd's Luncheon of February 27th*



*(l.-r.) Robert Winter-Berger, Bruce Brown, Peter Kingsley, David Dow Bentley III, Billie Stewart and Marc Baron perform "Under the Boardwalk" during our Fall Barbecue. Photo by Ellen Berry.*



*(l.-r.) Randy Phillips, Marc Baron, Bruce Brown, Kathy Kelleher, Peter Kingsley, Enid and Peter Dizozza, with the recently arrived Oscar.*

***In the Fold***by *David Rothberg*

**H**ello and welcome to *In the Fold*. After a fairly mild winter season, we were blitzed the second week of February by a major snowstorm that packed its punch to start the year 2006. As hostess of the Valentine theme night, I felt lucky that the snow didn't start until late Saturday night. We certainly have been using our facilities on both 2M and the 5th floor for many entertaining and exciting events.

Friday Low Jinks have included many theme nights, including songs of WWI and WWII. Chuck Prentiss, now a Florida resident, subbed as Emcee. Linda Fields' theme night featured Kander and Ebb; Marc Baron and Neva Small hosted a Duet Night.

Our Christmas party was lots of fun with good food, good friends, and great singing of Christmas carols completed a festive evening. "Cowboy" Peter Kingsley was Collie for our fall barbecue on the scenic top floor of our building. The solarium held a full house, fine performers, and good food.

A very romantic Valentine's theme night was held on February 10, with a special duet by two of our romantic Lambs, Gene Rodgers and Fay Lytelle. It was even more special because Gene's birthday is on Valentine's Day—which is why I refer to him as Mr. Romance. He and Fay met at The Lambs. With all that good talent, a loving night was had by all.

Our 5th Floor has been busy with lots of special performances. While I'm at it, let me mention—in case you haven't seen our newly renovated digs—they look really spiffy, from the shiny new floors as you get off the elevator, to the newly carpeted space which shows off our memorabilia so well. Please visit our special guest, the first Oscar ever given for writing, which is housed in a glass case in our performance space. I sat next to him at our Annual Membership Meeting on February 3 and enjoyed his company. The Oscar was given to Lamb Edwin Burke for his writing adaptation of *Bad Girl* in 1932. We have it on loan thanks to the Albany Institute of History and Art.

Those who will be using our 5th Floor for upcoming entertainment events are Heather Duke, the Episcopal Actors' Guild, Camille Savitz, and the Professional Women in the Theater. We will keep you apprised of future guests. Check The Lambs' web site,

should do a song or a reading tonight?" I suggested we would all enjoy hearing Peter recite, and he rewarded us with a powerful passage from *Luther*. (Peter had played the Pope when the production toured Chicago.) The only regret of my short and cherished friendship with Peter Johl is that I had not yet had the opportunity to accept his several invitations to join him at meetings of poetry groups, the Ziegfeld Club, and his beloved New York Sheet Music Society. It is fitting that the Society's website maintains a wonderful summary of Peter's outstanding career. Reflecting on this very special life, why not pay that site a visit? The link is: [www.nysms.org/PeterJohl.htm](http://www.nysms.org/PeterJohl.htm).

Farewell dear friend! You will be greatly missed!

***The Blue Book***

Many of our newest members have regrettably never received a copy of The Lambs Blue Book, as our inventory has been exhausted. The Blue Book, officially "The Lambs Certificate of Incorporation, Constitution, By-laws and Rules," was last printed in 1999.

We are pleased to report that the Blue Book Committee will shortly meet to begin discussion of necessary changes to reflect various official amendments that have been made since the 1999 edition. So, sometime during the next few months the 2006 edition will be available. Every club member will receive a copy.

There have been 19 known editions of the Blue Book since the first, which appeared in 1885. Various Blue Books contain different useful and interesting items. That of 1900 and others have contained the Club Annals; most contain lists of Club officers and directors, honorary members, and membership rosters. The 1999 edition featured "A Brief History of The Lambs."

### Reflections on Peter Johl

by David Dow Bentley III

The Peoples Critic

With pen in hand, I am honored to reflect on a sweet soul who went out of his way to make me at home as a newborn Lamb when I was first elected to membership in 2004. I refer to our dearly departed Peter Johl, actor, singer, and first-class gentleman from head to toe. With more than a half century of experience in the theater, Peter was a respected veteran of the stage, including Broadway, off-Broadway, stock and dinner theaters. Perhaps we had been ships passing in the night. In my role as critic I had done reviews in such beautiful theaters as Poughkeepsie's Bardavon (where Peter had played Daddy Warbucks in *Annie*) and Virginia's Barter Theatre (where Peter had originated the role of Behrman in the world premier of *The Last Leaf*). But the first time I saw Peter perform was in the early part of this new millennium, and, at the time, the footlights separated us. He was on the Broadway stage as Poole, the butler, in the musical, *Jekyll and Hyde*. I was a member of the audience. It would be several years before I had the honor of meeting this talented performer at The Lambs.

From my first Low Jinks encounter with Peter, his welcoming spirit, his radiant enthusiasm, and his love of The Lambs was ever in evidence. Whenever I brought guests to the club, Peter would be sure to visit the table with a cheerful greeting and interesting conversation. But beyond that was Peter's truly poetic talent for sharing treasured selections from the American Songbook. He was a frequent vocalist at our Friday night club-gatherings, and I recall his performing such familiar songs as "Let's Get Away From It All," "A Pretty Girl Is Like A Melody," and "Mama." But he also relished treating us to a musical education with less well-known tunes like, "One Kind Word," "The Sky's the Limit," "I Can't Forget You After All," and "I Still See Elisa." On one special evening he performed "C'est Comme Ca," from Duke Ellington's musical, *Pousse Café*. Peter had been Theodore Bikel's stand-by in the ill-fated production which lasted only three performances at the Richard Rodgers Theater.

The last time I saw Peter perform was this past October in The Lambs' solarium. It was a delicious autumn evening for the Lambs' Barbecue, and Peter honored me when he asked, "Dow, do you think I

[www.the-lambs.org](http://www.the-lambs.org), for current information. Thanks to Marc Baron for doing such a great job designing and maintaining the web site.

I am looking forward to our upcoming events—as well as the spring weather. Until then, stay healthy, safe and happy, and let us keep you *In the Fold*.

### Lambs Annual Membership Meeting

The Lambs Annual Membership Meeting was held February 3 in our Fifth Floor quarters. The new Council members elected for three year terms were Kathy Kelleher, Hope Hardcastle, Wayne Coleman, and Davida Rothberg. Congratulations to all.

### It's a Gift !

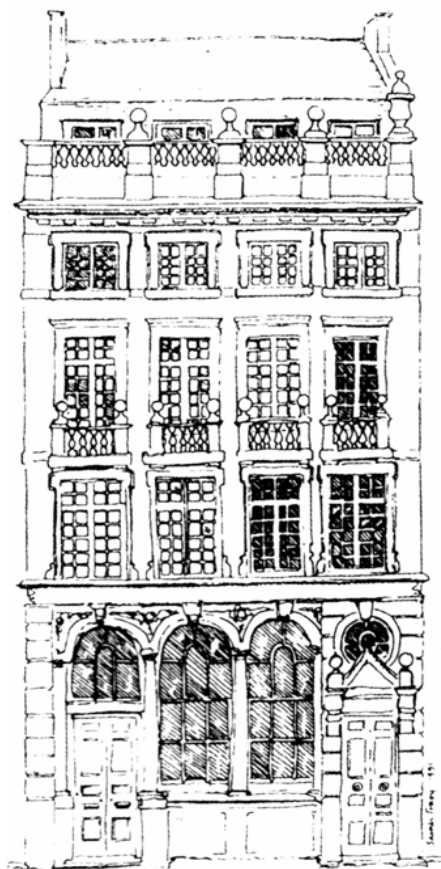
Thanks to Alice Dillon for a delightful souvenir program for The Lambs' All Star Gambol of 1916; the cover is pictured here. She has also donated Bernard Sobel's *A Pictorial History of Vaudeville*.

A million thanks to Sheila Smith for providing *three* new pedestals for the bronze busts featured on our 5<sup>th</sup> Floor. What a great way to display these works of art. Sheila has been extraordinarily generous to the Club with her time, effort—and money!

Let's thank Wally Munro for Darcie Denkert's *A Fine Romance*, a swanky book on the tug of war between Broadway and Hollywood. Wally also donated a 1946/47 *Lambs Script* and a mint-condition photo of Lambs taken at the Savoy Hotel, London, in 1928. Both are fine additions to our archives.

Thanks to AJ Pocock, *Ex-Shepherd*, who presented us with a delightful souvenir program of November 15, 1957, "The Girls Club of New York." The cover is by artist Russell Patterson. Patterson's work is also featured herein on page 14.





# CITY UNIVERSITY CLUB

50 Cornhill, London EC3

bronze busts of the past presidents of the club. There are programs from the dinner shows produced on a monthly basis. These dinner shows are with the male members only. However, they do have a monthly dinner party for both men and women. Women are permitted in the bar after 5:30 pm but permitted in the restaurant bar anytime. Jackets are required and the British do dress for dinner.

“The dining room was very elegant with a view of the London Eye, the Ferris wheel created as a millennium attraction. The décor was very regal with dark wood trim all over, extravagant fireplaces and huge chandeliers. The ambience of the room was terrific. It would be great just to have a drink if you were not interested in dining. The service in the dining room is 5-star with white glove fanfare. There always seemed to be a waiter at my disposal. They spared no expense to detail, were extremely accommodating and very pleasant. The food was wonderful as well with a varied selection of fine foods. The wine was fine and the desserts were to die for. Dinner is served from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm. The prices on average were about \$30.00 US. Keep in mind, in London you are permitted to smoke in most restaurants and the clubs are no exception: cigar smoke is not only accepted but very frequent. So, if you do not smoke, request a non-smoking table in advance.

“Should you be in London in the spring or summer, The Savage has a wonderful terrace bar and café. Unfortunately it was too cold to be outside, but Michael did show me. It would be wonderful in season with its beautiful view. The Grand Ballrooms are just that, GRAND!

“All in all a wonderful evening!

“One word of advice, it is somewhat a distance from the “downtown” area of London, so you would have to take a taxi there. When leaving, walk through to the hotel and ask them to get a taxi as not too many come through Whitehall Place in the evening. Take advantage of a wonderful time and say hello to Michael!”



*Reciprocal Clubs in London (Cont. from page 13)*

Fifty Cornhill in the financial district of the city. There I was greeted graciously by Robina Graham, the club's secretary. We had a lovely chat before I ventured back out into the city.

"Coincidentally, I ran into Heather Simmons, the singer from Enrico Tommaso's Boisdale jazz group, on the plane back to New York City. I had the honor and privilege of bringing her to The Lambs for dinner, where she graciously participated in Lo-Jinx, singing 'Stormy Weather.' It was a lovely coda to a wonderful trip to London."

*Rapanaro's Rave Report*

Peter writes, "For those of you who are planning a visit to London, be sure to stop by our reciprocal club, The Savage, located at 1 Whitehall Place, London, England.

"The Savage is within the National Liberal Club, a truly beautiful and elegant club, which houses several clubs as well as a wonderful Thistle Hotel. The lobby is quite grand with a wonderful spiral staircase which seems to extend into the skies. Speaking of the sky, they have a spectacular stained glass skylight which, even in the evening, is stunning. I happened to have visited during the holiday season. In the main lobby was a beautiful, huge old traditional English Christmas Tree. As I walked through these grand halls to my left was a charming bar room. In a room somewhat similar to our 5<sup>th</sup> Floor is a lovely bar where the bartender, Michael, was truly gracious. He was thrilled to have a Lambs member and was quick to point out the booklet where Gini Dustin's name was the last of us to visit. He explained what fun Gini was and how she was a hit, not only at the Savage but in the Jazz club downtown. Good going, Gini!

"Additionally, there was a wonderfully sweet man who was a doctor and a member of the Savage, who would not let me pay for a drink. He spoke of his love for New York and also shared the history of the room, and how it was actually brought from their old club to this new facility, lock, stock, walls, ceiling and all. Quite impressive it was. This charming room was filled with much memorabilia from many notable British entertainers. As a matter of fact, above the bar, encased under glass, were two walking sticks from Charlie Chaplin, as well as many wonderful posters throughout the entire room. There are many

*Reciprocal Clubs in London*

Two of our members have recently enjoyed visits to our reciprocal clubs in London. Gini Dustin visited both the Savage Club and City University Club, and Peter Rapanaro visited the Savage Club. Following are reports from each. If you are heading to London and wish to visit the either club, please speak to Marc Baron or Bruce Brown for details and introductions. The Web site for the City University Club is [www.cityuniversityclub.co.uk](http://www.cityuniversityclub.co.uk). The Savage's is [www.savageclub.com](http://www.savageclub.com).

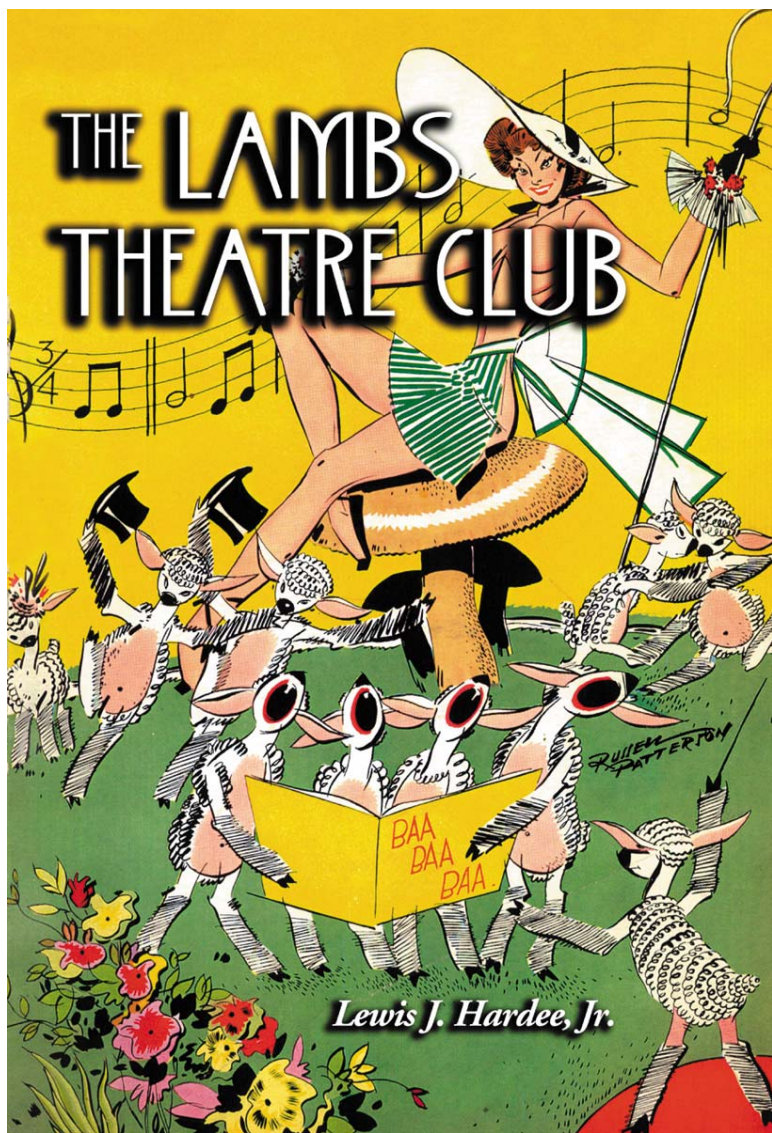
*The City University Club in London*

The City University Club, our most recent affiliate, has quarters at 50 Cornhill in "The City," the financial and commercial hub of London. Originally founded in 1895 as a gentlemen's luncheon club for Oxford and Cambridge graduates, with changing times the membership has expanded to include both professional men and women. The University Club offers an extensive menu that changes daily, an expertly chosen wine list, a comfortably furnished smoking room with a bar, and a selection of newspapers and magazines. It is open from 12 Noon to 4 pm, Monday to Friday, to its membership which numbers about 500.

*Dustin Does the Town*

Gini writes, "This past October, I had the good fortune to spend a week in London. While there I paid a visit to The Savage Club at One Whitehall Place. I had a lovely evening, sharing drinks and lively conversation with a quintet of fascinating gentlemen: Alan Gout, John Wade, Peter Rocca, Trevor Herbert and Enrico Tommaso as well as the charming fellow behind the bar, Michael Leonard. As luck would have it, Enrico – a wonderfully talented trumpet player and jazz musician – had a gig at Boisdales, a restaurant in Belgravia. Enrico was kind enough to invite me to come along to hear his group play. It was the perfect end to a lovely evening with great music and good fellowship. I felt a very warm and enthusiastic welcome from all the members of the Savage Club. Later that week, I also had the privilege of having an elegant lunch at another London club, the City University Club, at

*Reciprocal Clubs in London continued on page 20.*



Cover of The Lambs Theatre Club, soon to be released.



Lambs Annual Holiday Party, December 16.

*Holiday Music in the Air*  
by Sheila Smith, Friend of The Lambs

Not since Jerome Kern's Edendorf Walking Choir debuted at the Alvin Theatre (now the Neil Simon) in 1932, has there been a more joyful sound that was heard at The Lambs' Annual Holiday Party in the Grand Ballroom on December 16th.

The newly-formed Lambs' Madrigal Choir of twelve voices sang their way through the Ultimate Christmas Songbook and into the hearts of partygoers. Music director Woody Regan accompanied the two double sextets of lusty lambs and elegant ewes in a twenty minute program of holiday airs ranging from "Winter Wonderland" through "Count Your Blessings." The audience joined in for the finale, "Silent Night." Randy Phillips provided magnetic 2006 Lambs' calendars for all present. Peter Kingsley presided over the door-prize event. A lucky dozen received gorgeous glass mugs of Texas peach preserves, gifts of David Dow Bentley, III, the People's Critic. Broadway choreographer Tommy Walsh—guest of Lamb Charles Goff—along with Lamb Annette Hunt proclaimed this "the best Christmas party of the season!"

back. I have to say that my reaction was (and what isn't?) somewhat personal in that I felt I was being taken for a review of my entire life. I grew up in the Northeast near New York, and there really is no place quite like the Big Apple at Christmas (except when there is a subway strike). Christmas there and with real snow around was always something special, and I have always felt the South struggles and overcompensates at Christmas simply because of a weather deficiency. My mother passed away this past year. She was my one remaining parent, so many Christmases past were flashing through my mind as the numbers rolled by. I was a bit like Scrooge on an emotional sleigh ride.

Truth be known, Pippin had some help in the proceedings, as the CSO Chorus and the Chattanooga Boys Choir Caroling Choir (they need a new name like the Beatles or something) chipped in, again both sounding pretty hot. What was it? But the heavy artillery was soloist Rebecca Luker, making her Chattanooga debut. She had never been here before, even though she grew up in Alabama. What does this fact say?

If the CSO doesn't have her signed up for a return engagement yet, they are missing an opportunity that may not be there long. She and Pippin ought to do a night with the orchestra and just draw material from anywhere in the musical and opera cosmos because we the audience will gladly go along for the ride. Luker has a voice that can melt tungsten and combine that with looks that will cause traffic accidents, and you have a sensation. She was equally at home doing "Musetta's Waltz" from Puccini's *La Boheme* and the country hit "Grandma Got Run Over by A Reindeer." Take that, Beverly Sills.

The CSO has opened a door. Are they willing to keep it open? We should be engaged in reclaiming our regional artists who have gone on to fame and fortune elsewhere and are not likely to ever return permanently. But we can have them here temporarily. Wherever they go, they are still carrying the imprint (sometimes reluctantly) of what was and is here. To sever that connection would be an inestimable loss. There is no need for that kind of poverty.

The only sad part of Home for the Holidays was that there were only two performances and that every kid and adult in Chattanooga didn't see it. The mission of the arts here will never be complete until all benefit as fully as possible. This was a wonderful show, and everyone needs a little wonder in their lives. Merry Christmas. ■

## The Lambs Theatre Club

McFarland and Co., a prestigious publisher of reference and scholarly books, will shortly release Lewis Hardee's history, *The Lambs Theatre Club*, a work years in the making. When it is available, the Club plans to hold a celebration. Here are excerpts from McFarland's ad currently displayed on their web-site:

[www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com).

ISBN O-7864-2321-8

112 photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography indices

288 pp hardcover (7 x 10) 2006

\$55.

### Description

From its origins in 1874 as an intimate actors' dining club, The Lambs by 1925 had become the most famous theatrical club in the world—the stuff of fable. Fred Astaire said, "When I was made a Lamb I felt as if I had been knighted." The Lambs provides a microcosm of the New York theatre, its fortunes changing in direct relation to the ebb and flow of Broadway and the nation. The roster of its 6,000 members over the years includes Irving Berlin, W.C. Fields, John Barrymore and Will Rogers, with honorary members like John Wayne and Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Drawn extensively from the Lambs' official archives, and including many anecdotes from oral histories, this is the definitive history of the venerable club. It traces The Lambs' roots in London and its initial development in America, dominated by English and later Irish actors. The work then covers The Lambs famous touring "Gambols" in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; rivals like The Players and The Friars; patriotic efforts during World Wars I and II; the Red Scare in 1919; Prohibition and the club's high water mark in the 1920s; devastation during the Great Depression; continued decline toward bankruptcy in 1975; and relocation and resurgence today. The book includes numerous rare photographs, bibliography and four appendices.

**At Chattanooga with Lamb Don Pippin—**

**Renowned World Class Director:**

**“Christmas, Christmas, Christmas CSO Style at the Tivoli”**

by Bart Whiteman

(Reprinted with permission of the author)

Something extraordinary happened in Chattanooga last weekend. First of all, Christmas arrived on Saturday night and Sunday afternoon via the Chattanooga Symphony & Opera’s Home for the Holidays show at the Tivoli Theatre.

Yawn.

So what’s the big deal?

Well, normally Christmas, or (*excuse me*) holiday shows are hiatuses for critics because who really wants to be the Grinch Who Bashed Up Christmas. Take a long winter’s nap, and let those Christmas numbers go peacefully into oblivion, I say. Wake me up on the hour if you have to. If a few people feel good about them, what’s the harm?

Well, this CSO show turned out to be more than just another seasonal Fa-la-la La-la La-la-la-la. I’d have to say – and this is painful – that it was the best show in Chattanooga over the past year, at least of all the ones I saw.

You’re kidding! A holiday show that was little more than an impromptu review of Christmas goodies like just one more office gift basket relegated to the top of the fridge? The best show? You nuts? You fruitcake?



Well, miracles can still happen.

So, what made this one show work and all the others move down a notch? Let’s start with the first number, “American Holiday Overture.” This was composed of material we’ve heard a zillion times before,

but it was the manner in which it was played. An overture serves a purpose. People arrive at a musical show carrying all sorts of street and

life energies with them, mostly toxic. There is the issue of what to wear, there is the issue of driving or walking a little too quickly to make the curtain, there is the parking problem, there is the “Who’s got the tickets?” problem, there is the “Where are my seats or who’s sitting in my seats?” problem, there is the “Is this what they call leg room?” problem, there is the issue of the “Why is the men’s room in the fourth sub-basement and do I have some funds left for a flat intermission Diet Coke?” problem, and this is all on top of the “All the daily business and family chaff that gets in the way of actually enjoying anything ever” problem. Add to this the fact that Christmas nowadays can wear people out rather than rev them up, so what chance does a little holiday cheer actually have?

Well, besides being an invocation of the muse (an ancient ritual that had a purpose), an overture is our transition out of all that garbage and into the world of the show, where for two hours all that stuff just goes away. Thank goodness. Around here most overtures are endurance tests. People don’t know how to play them. Within a few notes of this one, I felt I was back at a Broadway show where the pros have figured out how it’s done because when people come in from the assault of Times Square, they really need a break.

The “pro” in this case was guest conductor Donald Pippin, the Chattanooga native son turned New York music director for Radio City Music Hall (now that’s a Christmas show) and numerous Broadway offerings. He was back for his second visit to the Scenic City in thirty-plus years. What does this fact say?

Somehow, the CSO orchestra has never sounded better. What was it? I have heard them play overtures before. Na-da. This one, we were off. What was it?

Throughout the show, there were two very evident phenomena that anyone producing, directing, choreographing, or staging a show could learn from. The first was pace. It sounds so simple, but you have to keep moving. Quick train rides are kind of fun. Slow ones are misery. The second one was “no fat, not an ounce.” There was nary a moment wasted during the entire proceeding. People are jealous of their time. They are reluctant to give it away. If you are going to take some of it via the show, make the most of it. Keep the diet trim and healthy.

Pippin moved from number to number with no hesitation. It was an eclectic mix of items from all sorts of seasonal related sources – traditional carols to a Hanukah number to pop Christmas songs and