



"I lived a part of my life again last weekend when I sang the bass solo in "Set Down Servant," even though my breath escaped and my voice broke as the emotions grabbed my throat. Somehow I don't think I was the only one with feelings at Lerner Hall on Saturday, June 5."

Nick Rudd CC 1964

What an event we threw for ourselves! Two rehearsals, a 75 minute performance, two receptions, lots of schmoozing and informal vocalizing, exchanges of memories, stories and downright exaggerations, seeing old friends and making some new ones and – just maybe – the beginning of an effort to organize some other alum singing activities in the future.



From rehearsal...

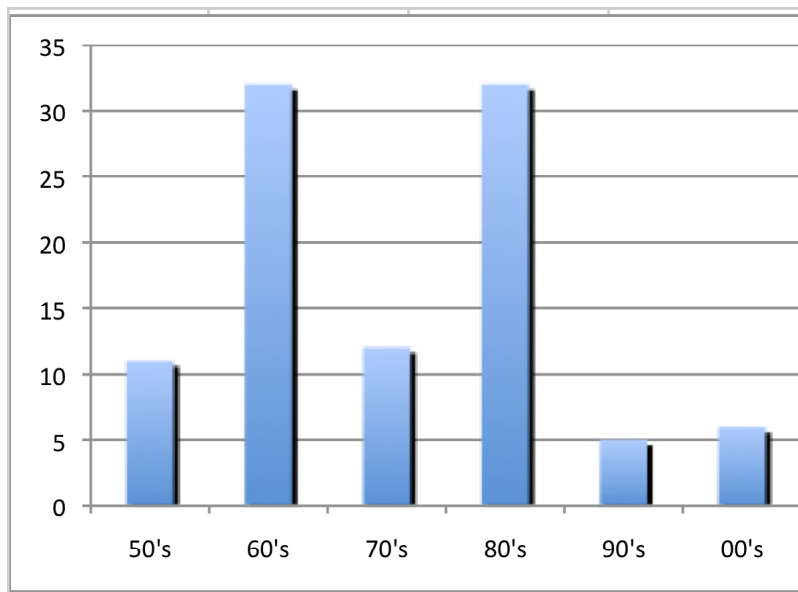


...to performance.

WE SINGERS

About 100 singers participated. 88 are listed on the final, revised program for Saturday, though one or two names might have slipped through without those alums actually singing. A few rehearsed but, for one reason or another, couldn't perform and aren't listed, including Sarah Angelini SEAS 2005, Steve Buchman CC 1959, Bonnie Fox BC 1970, Phil Hirschkop CC 1960, Eugene Leff CC 1966, Anne Rosenfeld BC 1965, and Dean Temple CC 1990. Some last-minute health issues kept Karen McLellan BC 1979 and Dave Tilman 1966 from attending. We wish them a speedy recovery.

Distribution by decade was bi-polar. Alums from the 60's and 80's can have a sing-off for bragging rights. We need to find and attract some more of the younger graduates.



High scorer among Reunion classes (years ending in 0 and 5) was 1985 with 12 alums participating. For non-Reunion classes, the first prize went to 1987 with 8 and second to 1957 with 7. The men of 1957 aren't surprised. Most of them have been singing together at the University Glee Club since they graduated. The alums of 1987, mostly women in the first year that co-eds graduated, credited the Glee Club with being "our life" while undergraduates. There's something to be said for solidarity.

Gratitude goes out to those who traveled distances to be at the event. The winner might be Alan Kusunoki, who flew in from Hawaii for his Class Reunion. Without the Glee Club event, he said, he might not have come.

We were very pleased to see Angela Kelichner, GS 2011, this year's Glee Club president, who joined us on Friday after a summer school class (but couldn't sing on Saturday). Angela had a chance to chat with some of the alums after rehearsal. It's tough to start a club from scratch, as she and her fellow Glee Club managing board members did this past year. They did a great job against big odds and deserve a lot of credit.



L-R: Nick Rudd, Katherine Scott

At one end of the spectrum among the singers was Katherine (Shohl) Scott BC 1955, who heard about the event through the Barnard Reunion and wrote to ask about participating. Not only has she been singing with groups in Washington DC for many years, but she recently sang both the Mozart "Requiem" and "Carmina Burana," albeit as a tenor. Matching her for longest time from graduation on the male side was Jim Hurley CC 1952, who was the club's manager in 1951-1952. He was the man responsible for bringing music director Bailey Harvey to Columbia, an act that changed the Glee Club's history.

At the other end, we had a couple of last-minute walk-on's join us, including Elizabeth Kobak, a young woman 2010 graduate of the College and her mother Dorothy, both singers, though the new alum had not sung with the club while in

school. We're glad she joined us, though, since this year's club scattered for the summer after being invited to sing at Commencement.

Ultimately, it all worked out. As Bruce Trinkley said, we had a lot of basses, fewer tenors, fewer altos than that and just a few sopranos. But since high voices are heard more than low, the balance worked out very well. In fact at one point in the Saturday rehearsal, Jerry Weale declared he would say something no choral director ever says: the first tenors are too loud.



"Long may Columbia stand..."

OUR AUDIENCE

Roone Arledge Auditorium in Lerner Hall (the successor to Wollman in Ferris Booth) was set with 25 rounds seating 10 people each. Those chairs were full and more chairs came out against the walls. As those of us who used to sell our share of tickets to our roommates know, it's hard to have a performance without any audience. This one was attentive and enthusiastic.

Many alum singers brought wives or husbands, and a number of children finally got to hear Dad or Mom do what they have only heard about before. Also in the audience were a number of alums from Reunion classes, including a sprinkling of Glee Club alums. As tradition dictates, they were called to join the singers for "Sans Souci" at the program's end, and this audience knew enough to stand as soon as the opening chord rang out.

Paying particular attention and greatly enjoying the performance were Donna McPhee CC 1989, Vice President of Alumni Relations and president of the Columbia Alumni Association (CAA), and Derek Wittner CC 1965, Dean of Alumni Affairs and Development for the College, and his wife Kathryn, Associate Dean of Student Affairs/Student and Alumni Programs in the Division of Student Affairs.

We might have started something here. If so, Erich Erving GS 2006, who was also there and smiling broadly after the show, will be happy to help. He is Assistant

Director for Alumni Relations, responsible for alumni affinity groups relating to arts, and a rabid Glee Club fan.

Many thanks to all the singers who signed a thank you note addressed to Kimberly Peterson, Associate Director for Alumni Affairs in the College office of Alumni Affairs and Development. Assigned the liaison task for this first Glee Club event by Ken Catandella and Derek Wittner, she did a terrific job in supporting the Organizing Committee's vision of the event over the many months of planning, making everything happen with charm, grace and insight. While the note (and some lovely flowers) got to her after the performance, it's only because she was hiding in the shadows in the back of the auditorium where we couldn't call her out for some public approbation.



L-R: David Harris, Bruce Trinkley, Jerry Weale

CONDUCTORS AND ACCOMPANISTS

We don't know who's coming. We don't know what shape their voices are in. We don't know the balance of voice parts we'll have. We don't know the acoustics of the room in which we'll be singing. We want to put on a program both singers and audience will enjoy, but we only have 3 ½ - 4 hours for rehearsal over two days and not all singers will be at both rehearsals. Now, what shall we sing?

When Bruce Trinkley and Jerry Weale started pulling together the program last January, they faced those issues. Both alums and Glee Club directors in the TTBB era, they reached out to Gary de Sesa, the Associate Conductor from 1979 to 1996,

for some insight into the Great Conversion to SATB, which occupied much of the 80's. Among the three of them, they agreed on representative selections from both eras and SATB arrangements of college songs.

While Gary had work obligations to fulfill and couldn't be at the event, he was very helpful over several months, supplying copies of music, concert programs and rosters that helped us track down alums from that time.

Also participating in the event as a conductor was David Harris, the music director of the 2009-2010 Glee Club, who led some Mozart, the Orff and Stand Up and Cheer in its SATB arrangement. A composer and singer as well, David also sang with the chorus under Bruce and Jerry's direction.

Bruce, CC 1966, just retired from Penn State University where he ran the choral program and is focusing his time on his composing as well as conductor workshops.

Jerry, CC 1957, has retired from doing the same at Boston University and now leads a church choir near Hanover NH and a community chorus in Newburyport MA.

In the audience was yet another former Glee Club conductor, Gregg Smith, who was the club's music director from 1971 to 1975. Though confined to a wheelchair, Gregg is still active musically and continues to lead the Gregg Smith Singers. Gregg seemed especially pleased when Bruce led the alums in singing one of Gregg's compositions, an SATB round setting of a Navajo prayer, "Now I Walk in Beauty."

Jerry invoked the memory of former Glee Club music director Bailey "Oats" Harvey just before leading the group in Harvey's arrangement of "My Lord, What a Mornin'." Bruce also read a list of Glee Club alums no longer with us before dedicating our performance of "There Is a Balm in Gilead" to their memories.

Jerry and Bruce acted as accompanists for each other, though they were happy to call on former Glee Club accompanist Ed Nowak CC 1970 to come out of the chorus to play the piano for "Plorate Filii Israel." Other former accompanists among the singers were Paul Kimmel CC 1963 and Bob Gunn CC 1965.



L-R: Alan Kusunoki, John Suggs, John Mueser, Stan Wexler

PROGRAM

Bruce, Jerry and Gary's proposed repertory almost survived the rehearsal process unscathed. After Friday's rehearsal, they decided to drop only two pieces in the interest of a stronger concert. Those singing were strongly in support of their decisions!

Besides, that left an opening in the program that four veterans from different iterations of the Blue Notes, the Glee Club's one-time barbershop quartet, were only too happy to fill. Putting it together after Friday's rehearsal, Alan Kusunoki SEAS 1970, John Mueser CC 1971, John Suggs CC 1969 and Stan Wexler CC 1970 did a comedic interpretation of "M-O-T-H-E-R" – with choreographed moves! - that left the audience laughing and applauding. Anyone wanting to see the video that John's son and daughter captured should apply directly to John.

From the risers, the audience appeared absorbed, even mesmerized, by the music. Mixing selections from the TTBB and SATB eras and combining excerpts from the classics with traditional choral works before moving on to college songs, the fast-moving program kept even the youngsters' attention. And were those the glint of tears in the eyes of some - both audience and singers - as we moved into songs of Columbia?

Yes.

Last-minute changes meant the concert program was edited and printed in the hour just before the performance began. Apologies to John Kasbarian and Lawrence Scoones for mis-spelling their names in the concert roster. Please pass on any other corrections. The version posted on the cugcalums.com web site has them right.



RECORDING

Yes, the complete performance was professionally recorded. Yes, you can buy the CD.

Yes, if you performed, you can buy several copies and send them to your classmates who didn't show up in order to embarrass them into future participation.

\$20 for each CD.

Send the money plus your name and address to Nick:

Nicholas Rudd
20 Sea Spray Road
Westport, CT 06880

We don't have a bank account as Glee Club Alums & Friends yet, so either send cash or make the check to Nicholas Rudd and trust that he'll put any excess over expenses to the cause.



Tom Bonczar turns in concert posters.

EPHEMERA AND HISTORY

Entering the rehearsal room after checking in, alums passed by a collection of Glee Club concert posters from the 60's, many designed by Kathleen Whelen BC 1968 and evoking the psychedelic images of the time. Most came from the closet of Michael Garrett CC 1968, while Tom Bonczar CC 1972 added some more that will be donated to the Glee Club files in Columbiana, now housed in the Rare Books and Manuscript Library in Butler.

Special mention must be made of a donation of vinyl recordings from the 50's, brought in – very carefully - by Jim Hurley CC 1952. Not only does the collection include a copy of the 1952 club recording led by music director Carl Lambert but also the 1951 Homecoming concert and the Town Hall concerts of 1953 and 1954.

Among others generously donating a wealth of rosters, concert programs, photos, fliers and files were Dory Agazarian CC 2000, Marty Konikoff CC 1969, Jeff Kurnitz 1968, Eric Lindow 1971 and David Zapolsky CC 1985. There may well have been others, but in the press of preparing for the performance, not all contributions were noted. If you turned in some stuff at the event and don't see your name here, please be assured we thank you kindly.

If you made some promises about digging into your attic or basement files, here's your reminder to follow up and match those generous contributions. Or if you simply have similar materials and are willing to have them go into the Library collection, please get in touch with Nick Rudd ([ruddnick\(at\)aol.com](mailto:ruddnick@aol.com) or 203-226-5194 in Connecticut), who will process the items for their historical information and ensure they get to Butler.

We're not sure how much historical information got added when Art Gallancy CC 1968 showed up in the audience still fitting into his undergraduate Glee Club blazer. Well, maybe the sleeves are little short. But since he paired it with his JV Glee Club rep tie and still had the then-CUGC patch on his breast pocket, he accepted our plaudits graciously.



A LITTLE HISTORY

"Notes and Keys, founded in 1908, is the graduate society of the University representing musical activities. Its inception was the result of an agreement between the then active Musical Clubs and certain alumni, all of whom felt the need for an organization standing as a graduate society and whose membership should be composed of men who had been identified with the undergraduate Clubs during their college years. A number of the active members of the undergraduate clubs were to be included in the membership of the society.

"The primary purpose of Notes and Keys is the active supervision of the Glee and Mandolin Clubs, joint control in the selection of suitable coaches for both Clubs, and a lively and widespread interest in helping the Clubs in securing trips and in aiding them with their musical endeavors."

1922 Columbian, p. 378



"And then there was that night in Puerto Rico..."

WHAT'S NEXT?

Besides the enjoyable schmoozing, recollecting, vocalizing and storytelling, a serious 15" presentation on what Glee Club alums might consider doing in the future prompted some useful conversations. A copy of the presentation is up at www.cugcalums.com.

People started talking about helping today's Glee Club build itself back, about raising funds (incremental to what we all already give to Columbia, of course), about organizing the alum body in some way and about undertaking some sort of alum activity – perhaps musical events, more reunions, other performance, even touring as an alum group.

We organizers believe all that requires just a bit of organization. These days, Columbia is prepared to assist and support so-called "affinity groups" of alums. Moreover – and this could be key – if we act together in doing those things, we are likely to have more impact than if we act individually.

So, two things.

First, please be on the lookout for a brief electronic survey. We want to put some numbers next to what people want to do and are prepared to do to help.

Second, if you would like to get involved at the organizing level to expand the Temporary Organizing Committee beyond its original quartet of Bruce, Jerry, Michael and Nick, please send an e-mail message to Nick ([ruddnick\(at\)aol.com](mailto:ruddnick(at)aol.com)). Initially, your commitment will mean only participating in some conference calls.



L-R: Jerry Weale, Bruce Trinkley, Michael Garrett, Nick Rudd

"Rarely has a project of this complexity exceeded all reasonable expectations by such a fine margin. People were moved to tears by certain songs and certain sounds and Jerry and Bruce created miracles out of a meager four hours of practice with their selections and their expertise. My perception is that there is so little harmony in the world at every level that our creation of an island of nostalgic and current harmony touched, moved, and inspired people more than they expected."

Michael Garrett CC 1966



Future collector's item?