



NASSOON NOTES

The Newsletter of the Princeton Nassoons Alumni Association
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Semper Fraternitas Cantusque

The "1941 Fund" Update Creg Hall '98

As many of you are aware, the "1941 Fund" was launched in December 2016, in close collaboration with, but independent from the PNAA. The Fund was constituted as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization, and its mission is to support the current group of undergraduate Nassoons; to promote "inter-generational" activities such as concerts, events, and archiving; and to contribute more generally to close-harmony singing and music at Princeton and elsewhere. Sandy McAdoo '71 agreed to lead the Fund as its President, while Stephen Miller '93 and Gregory Hall '98 serve as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively.

As of today, the Fund totals \$78,000 thanks to generous contributions from many of you. Response to the Fund's mission amongst the ranks of our alumni has been quite strong, and we are pleased to note that we've received contributions across all decades and vocal parts! We are also pleased to have a number of new members joining the 1941 Fund board of directors, including Buzz Kelsey '62, Stephen Ban '84, Pete Daneker '95, and Doug Roberts '97. With their help, we hope to take the Fund to new heights in the coming years.

With our initial fundraising push now complete, the 1941 Fund board is turning its focus to making the Fund's first grants in support of its mission. We have a number of interesting ideas we are considering, but the following have captured our immediate attention.

First, the 1941 Fund has agreed to commit up to \$7,500 as a seed contribution to the undergraduate endowment being formed by the current group in close cooperation with the University. The accompanying article in this edition of the Notes provides more detail on the many benefits an endowment can provide to the current group.

A number of you have inquired about the differences between the Undergraduate Endowment and the 1941 Fund. As shown by the Fund's contribution, we are highly supportive of the Undergraduate Endowment initiative and believe the two funds can live together in perfect harmony

(pun intended). The endowment will support the group's operating costs and ensure that a need for financial resources doesn't hold the group, or any of its members, back from wonderful opportunities. The 1941 Fund will have a more "inter-generational" focus, working with both the current group and alumni to enhance the experience of the wider Nassoon community. The Fund will also
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Remembering...

Bill Kehlenbeck '75

On May 11, the Nassoons lost one of their all-time sweetest first tenors. Bill Kehlenbeck '75 died peacefully in Worcester, MA after courageously battling melanoma for the better part of a year. Surrounded in love by his wife, Vickery Hall Kehlenbeck '75, sons Alex and David, their spouses Kate and Ginny, and three grandchildren, Bill made it his mission to stay current on every minute detail of their lives and to celebrate with them every single day. Singing and performing to the end, just three weeks



before his death Bill performed a medley of Beatles hits at an assembly at his beloved Noble and Greenough School, playing bass, singing lead, and backed by a band of current and former faculty members

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"1941 Fund" Update cont.

maintain its broader mission of supporting music at Princeton and elsewhere, as well as the students who participate in it – something very important to our Board as well as many of our early contributors. As friends and benefactors of the Nassoons, you will have multiple options for expressing your support.

Another effort for the Fund is the "Spotify Project". Working closely with the PNAA and the undergraduates, the 1941 Fund has allocated up to \$5,000 to support the uploading of all Nassoon albums to digital music services such as Spotify. This serves multiple purposes within the Fund's mission. Digitization of the albums and artwork will form an indelible archive of the group's recordings; distribution through music streaming services will help to expand accessibility – giving alumni, current members, and new recruits easy access to our musical heritage; and finally, preparations for reunion arches will become that much easier!

Finally, many aspects of the Alumni Association's wonderful

Bill Kehlenbeck cont.

Video can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2663421780366472>

What love, courage and talent! The mid-late 70's heavenly group of Travis Emery '78 (bass), Scott Reynolds '79 (baritone) and Rip Taggart '76 (2nd tenor) now sadly has lost its first tenor.

Billy K, as he was called by us all, didn't join the group our freshman year, but instead came into our orbit when he tried out for the group as a sophomore. He had spent most of that first year heading back to Rockaway, NJ on weekends to play wedding gigs with his old high school band, and he discovered two important truths. As a math major, he calculated that first, his chances of meeting any of the beautiful Princeton undergrads were dramatically reduced if he wasn't on campus more, and second, this group called the Nassoons seemed always to draw a large crowd of women both on and off campus. In the Fall of 1972, we sang Billy in along with the great class of '76, and he merged his beautiful first tenor voice with the current group. The rest is history. The class of '75 quartet was now set! (Tony Cascardi left in our junior year)

With Billy as our music director, we spent the next 46 years blending our voices, our families and our abiding love for one

contribution to Soon culture over the years have involved the preservation of music, arrangements, personal histories and interviews, artifacts, and other priceless pieces of our collective memory. The 1941 Fund, working in conjunction with the PNAA and the University's Mudd Library archivists, would like to take an active role in providing funds to promote this important work.

For the remainder of 2019, we will be focusing our efforts on bringing these projects to fruition, and identifying new ways to serve our mission. We would love to have your input and can be reached via email at "info@1941fund.org".

In the meantime, we will not be actively soliciting for new contributions. Instead, we would highly encourage any of you who feel moved to contribute to the Nassoon cause to consider a gift to the Undergraduate Endowment.

See page 3 for information about the new Endowment.

another. Who will ever forget Billy rocking the solo of our two greaser numbers, "Blue Moon" and "Get A Job", with his hair slicked back, sports jacket inside out and wearing the ubiquitous shades. His rock 'n roll chops were on full display.

Billy K's boundless enthusiasm for and gratitude to the Nassoons ran deeper than most folks even know, as it was due to the pushing and prodding by Buzz Schmidt '74 that Billy screwed up the courage one evening at Quad Club to ask Vicky out on a date. It was love at first sight and a *continued on page 3*



Billy K, second from the left

Bill Kehlenbeck cont.

sense of mutual admiration that grew into an amazing 46-year love affair. With the '75 'Soons as ushers, Billy and Vicky got married less than a month after graduation, and thereupon Billy embarked on the other great love of his life, teaching at Noble & Greenough School in Dedham, MA.

Billy spent 44 years deeply committed to serving the Noble community in palpable and extraordinary ways. A major presence as a member of the math faculty, Bill was also the longtime leader of the Nobleonians, the all-male a capella group, a varsity baseball coach, and a fixture at just about every single Nobles event over his four decades. Bill showed in his career the incredible power of an educator who invests in the lives of students, serving as the gold standard for all. I am told, as he walked down the hallway after his last visit to campus, he said quietly, in a whisper spoken just to himself, "This place is just so special."

And indeed, Billy K was special as well to all Nassoons who were privileged enough to sing with him for three years as undergraduates, for decades at reunions and weddings, and then this past January in his living room in Wellesley. Let me close with the message Buzz sent to Vicky not long after Billy's death. I think it says it all.

"Had you eavesdropped on the email exchange of 40 Nassoons this weekend you would know that Billy is still giving and very much still living. This outpouring has everything to do with respect, awe, and probably some envy for the remarkably sane, centered, contributing, joyful and loving life he led. It's almost like we're trying to channel that abundance. We continue to be moved by the man. My goodness - same marriage, same job, same community, same friends, same love of music, baseball, math, kids. Many even at our advanced age are wondering what is important in life? What will seem important when we get to the end? Billy had that all figured out by the time I met him. He obviously had an amazing and complicit partner. What a couple! What a life! What a loss!"



Dick Armstrong at rehearsal with the 2016 group

**Nassoons Endowment
Kevin Williams '21**

The Nassoons have a special opportunity with the University to establish a University-managed endowment. We have worked closely with the Dean of Undergraduate Students to craft this endowment; once the Nassoons reach our goal of \$50,000, the undergraduates will enjoy returns on this fund at the same rate as Princeton's own endowment (last year, 14%!). Your contribution would be an ever-giving gift that would support the Nassoons with a base fund each year for all undergraduate groups to come.

As the demographics of Princeton change, some members of the group are increasingly unable to pay for things like tuxedos, jackets, ties, and the other costly aspects of the Nassoons — this endowment is essential to the continued functioning of the group. With this money, we plan to supplement the financial burden of these vital performance materials; to ensure that each year the group can travel internationally to spread our image and the image of Princeton University; to have free public concerts for our supporters, both on tour as well as in and around Princeton; and to perform at venues that may not be able to meet our traditional rate, but would greatly benefit from our music. Ultimately, our hope is that no aspiring member would ever to turn down the group due to financial considerations.

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Remembering...

Dick Armstrong '46

An immense part of the Nassoons and its history, Richard Armstrong '46 passed away on March 11, three weeks shy of his 95th birthday. Dick, as he was known by all, in addition to being a stalwart Nassoons and musician, was a poet, preacher, author, athlete, naval lieutenant, composer, professor, and father of five, grandfather of seven, and great-grandfather of six more. His achievements in his 94 years are too numerous to list, and his love for his wife, Margie, his family, and his friends is too great to completely express.

Arriving at Princeton as a multi-sport high school star athlete, Dick played baseball on scholarship at Princeton, finding time to join the varsity basketball team as well. He left Princeton to join the war effort in December, 1942, returning to Princeton in 1946 after an honorable discharge as a naval Lt. (jg). Dick describes the process of joining the re-constituted Nassoons after the war:

"Members of the original Nassoons came to Princeton early in September 1946, to reorganize the singing group, which had disbanded during World War II. Scores of students showed up for the highly publicized try-outs in Alexander Hall. The selectees were announced a day or two later, and soon afterwards the happy 'chosen ones' met

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Remebering Dick Armstrong cont.

for the first time to introduce ourselves and to agree on when and where we would rehearse.

We were a disparate group of songsters, more than half of whom were returning GIs, representing several different graduating classes, and, except for our classmates, strangers to one another. But we soon became friends, as we eagerly committed ourselves to a rigorous rehearsal schedule."

At Princeton, Dick's most famous composition in Nassoon lore was created, "Tigertown Blues," the unofficial theme song of the group for decades, and now, the customary solo of the group's President. His musical talents were manifest throughout his life - two of his songs exist in Carmina Princetonia, one is in the US Armed Forces Hymnal. Dick

wrote more than music - as a published author Dick wrote about his Damascene conversion and subsequent calling to seminary in "A Sense of Being Called", and at his death he left four dozen unfinished book projects, including nearly 3,000 pages of unpublished poetry.

A true Nassoons legend, Dick brought joy to all he met and an immense energy to all of his endeavors - in music, in baseball, with his family, and in his faith. Dick will be missed by family, friends, colleagues, and former students all over the world.

A fantastic interview of Dick by Rich McGlynn '60 can be found at:

<https://vimeo.com/user37094368/review/327488447/>

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Nassoons Endowment cont.

The Nassoons have already received several donations and are a little more than half way to our \$50,000 goal. Any donations will be much appreciated and will directly influence the ways in which the undergraduate group can operate. We hope to reach our goal by 2021 for the 80th Anniversary of our wonderful organization!

Donations may be sent to the following address, made out to "Trustees of Princeton University", and with "Nassoons Endowment (15120)" in the memo line.

**Gift Records
PO Box 5357
Princeton, NJ 08540-5357**

As mentioned in this issue, the PNAA recently sponsored the formation of the 1941 Fund. We are pleased to announce that the 1941 Fund has supported our endowment and supplied seed money to grow our initiative. Over time, we look forward to working closely with the Fund to achieve our mutual goal of a stronger *a capella* community.

If you have any questions about the endowment effort or would like more information as to the ways in which it will benefit the undergraduate Nassoons, please email us at nassoons@princeton.edu, and I will be happy to answer any of your questions.