BEHIND THE SCENES:
THE SOCIAL FABRIC OF THE GLEE CLUB

By: JUSTIN LUCKENBAUGH

Throughout its 142-year existence the Rutgers University Glee Club has played a significant role in university life. From our concerts filled with challenging repertoire to our “gigs” at important events around campus, the Glee Club is well known and respected for always rising to the highest of standards. What many people do not see is the vibrant social activity that goes on behind the scenes.

The fellowship shared in the Glee Club is unrivaled by any student group at Rutgers University, New Brunswick. This fellowship is fostered through the relationships our members develop outside of the intense rehearsals and wonderful performances we hold throughout the year. The Glee Club’s social fabric is woven through various social activities near and dear to every member.

Many traditions have been formed around unwinding from the intensity of our weekly rehearsals. One of our most important traditions is to gather at Stuff Yer Face, a local restaurant just down Easton Avenue from our rehearsal space in McKinney Hall, for pizza and singing the Glee Club’s repertoire of traditional Rutgers tunes. We have recently renewed an off and on tradition of inviting women from the other choirs to join us for an annual joint Stuff Yer Face event. Thomas Young, our current El Supremo, plans to coordinate social events with the other Mason Gross choirs (Voorhees Choir, Kirkpatrick Choir, and University Choir) throughout the year to make the Rutgers choral program a more unified family.

The Glee Club has a strong tradition of service to the university. We honor requests to sing at various university events throughout the year, such as scholar’s days for incoming honors students, dedication events, and football games. In May, we round out our year with a week full of performances at various ceremonies around the Rutgers campus, colloquially known as “Senior Week.” The Glee Club sings at the Old Guard Dinner, the Senior Reception on the lawn of Old Queen’s, and the Memorial Service at Kirkpatrick Chapel—and
Soup Bowl team relishes its victory over the Marching Band

of course we cap off the year with performances at the Rutgers University Commencement at the stadium, singing on our own as the Glee Club, and also joined by the women of the other choirs for the Alma Mater and the National Anthem.

Graduation week contains some of the most important social events of the Glee Club year, not the least of which is the annual Mike’s Hunt. This overnight scavenger hunt traditionally pits brothers against each other, competing to solve clues and present skits for ultimate bragging rights. Lead by Chris Glass and Will Krakower, the Hunt Team is responsible for creating the 18-hour excursion and will be inviting members of the other three Mason Gross choirs to participate in this intense night of competition for the first time in the history of Mike’s Hunt. In this spirit, the annual tenor-bass softball game held during Senior Week also will transform into an annual game consisting of members from all of the choirs, forming a team of sopranos and tenors against a team of altos and basses. The Glee Club is excited to foster a closer relationship with the other Mason Gross choirs, with a proposed idea of a formal dance uniting all the choirs also in the works.

Another addition to our fun-filled year was a game of Assassins, developed and coordinated by member Chris Glass. This game was fought with spoons, with each participant assigned a target, whom they had to hunt and strike with a spoon to “kill.” The winner would receive a stromboli from Stuff Yer Face, bragging rights, and ever-important points added to their Mike’s Hunt team’s final score. Out of thirty participating Glee Club members, freshman Alex Monastersky took the top prize, with runners-up Austin Tamutus and Will Krakower also receiving points towards Mike’s Hunt.

Soup Bowl, our annual football game against the marching band, is a long-standing tradition that holds strong to this day. This event is a constant in every fall semester, with intense practices and playbook sessions devoted to bringing the Glee Club the honor of winning the Soup Bowl. This fall, the Glee Club was coached by veteran running back Marquis Davis, and cheered on by the new Soup Cheer team, created by Tom Young to get those not interested in football involved in one of the biggest events of the year.

Fellow Glee Club members call each other “brothers in song” for a reason: the fraternity and community developed by the club over recent years has created a group of gentlemen into which all are accepted. I am extremely proud of how accepting the club has become just in my two years here, and I look forward to helping foster the brotherhood I have felt since I first stepped into McKinney Hall.
Ever changing…
By: THOMAS YOUNG

Exactly 40 years ago, Greg Young was given the honored title of El Supremo of the Rutgers University Glee Club. His duty was to preserve the esprit de corps of such a tightly knit brotherhood, to keep everyone engaged at a level appropriate for the individual, and to be the glue that keeps the Brothers in Song together. Forty years later and I have been given the same honor of being the glue that holds these time-honored traditions of song and brotherhood together.

I had the pleasure of meeting with Greg Young over a few sarsaparillas at a bar in downtown New Brunswick known as the “World of Sarsaparilla.” We caught up on our current lives: I being a fresh graduate ready to embark on my masters degree in landscape architecture, and he being a Reverend Doctor at the Methodist Church in New Brunswick (a shocking, yet humbling career for a past El Supremo). We talked about the changes that the club has gone through in the past 40 years: Soup changed to Gardner, quartets came and went, the Corner Tavern transformed into Stuff Yer Face, raunchy bus songs turned into singing Rutgers songs with the women of other Rutgers choirs, “My father sent me” made its way to “From far and near we came.” But Greg and I concluded that these are the petty things that change over the years. Forty years is a long time, but the brotherhood of Glee Club seems to supersede decades and seasons. We are a brotherhood that changes small details: places to drink, songs to sing, conductors, words, people. But we are a brotherhood that will always stay the same in our original passion, spirit, and friendship.

The one thing that will always bind us together is the music.

…Yet eternally the same
By: JOSHUA ROCHOTTE

It has often been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Pictures hold a lot of memories in them and they can jog people’s minds after years of seeing them. As the Rutgers University Glee Club Historian, I’m hoping that you as alumni can all help out. On the Rutgers University Glee Club Alumni Facebook page, we will be posting our collection of scanned year-end formal RUGC photos. Specifically, we want to put a name to every face in the spring photos from years past and continue this for the years to come. “Like and Follow” the Rutgers University Alumni Facebook page and postings over the course of the year and see if you can help shed light on the people in the photos. If you come back to McKinney Hall and take a look at the photo from your first year in the Glee Club, I want you to be able to look and find your name and face or the name of an old friend in choir. If you have friends or know of members who don’t have Facebook and may be able to recall more faces, show them the photos and share a conversation with them about the college days and memories you shared. Any and all information you have is greatly appreciated. We will always be members of the Rutgers University Glee Club: one club, ever changing, yet eternally the same.
Next year’s officers have been elected. The hectic spring semester has come to a close. The bags are now packed. The menus have been planned. It could only mean one thing: the annual Glee Club officer retreat.

After many stressful weeks of exams, papers and other assignments, most college students’ summers begin with a large dose of relaxation. This is the case for many students, but not for the members of the new Glee Club Executive Council, who are already busy planning the activities for the following school year. At the beginning of every summer, Executive Council spends a weekend together on retreat. This time away from our families and friends from home affords us the opportunity not only to accomplish our planning tasks, but also to bond as a council. This past summer, our retreat was held at the Golden Inn in Avalon, NJ. The inn, with its prime location next to one of New Jersey’s nicest beaches, provided us with an idyllic setting to get down to business and discuss the tasks at hand. Well, at least we could look out on the idyllic setting from a big window—we were indoors for most of the weekend. With our director in the vanguard, the council discussed plans for our upcoming European tour at the end of this year, and collaborative concerts with various choirs, as well as big picture questions including a five-year plan for the club and plans for our 150th year. “The efficiency with which Executive Council attacked problems was surprising to me and the breadth of discussion topics we had equally surprised me,” said Josh Rochotte, SAS ’17, our newly appointed Historian, who participated in his first officer retreat this past summer. “The forward thinking of the group as a whole let me appreciate the process and the work that is done behind the scenes a lot more.”

In addition to the planning aspects, the retreat also allows us to grow closer as a group. This is done in several ways, but is most notably seen in the meals that are prepared. Each group of officers (senior officers and junior officers) plans, prepares, and serves one of our two dinners over the course of the weekend. Each group spends the week leading up to the retreat planning menus and purchasing ingredients to cook their respective meal at the inn. Obviously, a hotel room kitchen is not the ideal place to prepare a multi-course meal, so each group will no doubt run into challenges. Over the years it has become a competition between the junior and senior officers to see whose dinner meal is the best. Despite this, the group of officers who are not cooking still lend a helping hand to those who are, making each meal a collaborative effort between all of the members of the council. Last year, the junior officers presented a beautiful Asian-themed dinner featuring traditional appetizers such as onigiri (stuffed Japanese rice balls), edamame, and miso soup. As an entrée, we enjoyed seared steak strips with sautéed mushrooms on a bed of ginger salad and the meal was completed with a delicious mochi dessert. Senior officers prepared a great Italian-themed dinner with a groaning table of caprese and antipasto for starters, a veal marsala entrée, and Italian puffed pastries.

Despite our busy, work-filled weekend, the new council sneaks in some down time to relax and bond outside of our normal activities. The council is made of members from all different graduation years, majors, and interests, but we all share a passion for making great music and ensuring a great future for the organization that we love. “The down time really lets us talk and bond over the silliest of things and I think in order to be a great council, we need to be great friends first,” said Josh. “I felt a stronger bond towards my fellow council members and it makes working with them less of a chore.”

Overall, this year’s officer retreat was a resounding success. The setting located on the beautiful Jersey shore provided this year’s officers with a great environment to solidify the plans for the Glee Club this year.
RUGC GOES INTERNATIONAL IN 2015
By: MARC ROMANO

It’s that time again! The Glee Club is back in full swing and we’re gearing up for a jam-packed European tour this spring. Starting May 19th and returning June 2nd, we will spend a solid two weeks singing challenging repertoire at a variety of venues throughout the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

Our tour begins in London. After landing we will hit the ground running, travelling to the famous Windsor Castle as we adjust from jet lag. The next day, we will travel to historic Bath, home of some iconic Roman ruins. We will then head back to the Gloucestershire area for an evening concert to start off our musical excursion. Our next concert will be in the ancient Gloucester Cathedral, and from there we transfer to Wales. We will travel down the Welsh coast to Bridgend, near Swansea (referenced in the title of a sea shanty that we regularly perform). We will have yet another concert, this time with the Bridgend Male Voice Choir. Our next stop is Oxford, the home of the world famous university of the same name. We will tour the campus, taking note of the beautiful cloistered campuses and finishing off the day with a local concert at St. John the Evangelist Church, a significant venue for choral performance that has recently hosted concerts by famous English choral ensembles like The Sixteen and the Monteverdi Choir.

We will then transfer to London, the cultural center of the UK, for a guided tour. We will have plenty of time to explore all of London’s wonders, including Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, and St Paul’s Cathedral. After our last concert in London, we will travel out of the UK and spend the rest of our tour in The Netherlands.

Our first stop there is in Maastricht, considered by some to be the oldest city in the Netherlands, nestled between Belgium and Germany. Plenty of history and blending of cultures can be seen here! After our exploration of Maastricht, we will share a concert with the choir from the University of Maastricht at Sint-Janskerk (St. John’s church). We will have some free time in Valkenburg, an old mining town with miles of underground caves to explore. If we find our way out, the town of Beek will be our next concert location. Our final location before we transfer to Amsterdam is Nijmegen (which also vies for honors as the oldest city in the Netherlands!) where we will have a joint concert with the Nijmegen Men’s Chorus, under the direction of Dion Ritten. What a wonderful, musically fulfilling trip so far!

Our final stop, “the Venice of the North,” Amsterdam, is an international, multi-cultural city that is certainly Dutch, but is also a hub for fine art, international cuisine, and vibrant nightlife that transcends cultural origin. We will transfer to Utrecht for our last concert, but we will return to Amsterdam to finish our tour with leisure. The number of museums, canals, and historical sites is overwhelming, and everyone is sure to find something they enjoy in this wonderful city!

The Glee Club’s 2015 European tour is bound to be successful, but we would not be able to do it all without the help, financial and otherwise, of our alumni. We thank you for enabling the Rutgers University Glee Club to continue to be a world-renowned men’s choir. Ever-changing, yet eternally the same.
The Rutgers University Glee Club

Presents:

World-renowned pieces
and a few crowd favorites!

Featuring:
Wedding Qawwali – A.R. Rahman
Dulcis Amor – Steven Sametz
Tarantella – Elliot Carter
Das Berliner Requiem – Kurt Weill
Travels – Lewis Spratlan
MLK – Bono
Rain, Rain, Beautiful Rain - Joseph Shabalala

Plus much more!! To order your copy today, detach the CD order form and mail to the address below, or order online at gleeclub.rutgers.edu

Rutgers University Glee Club CD Order Form

Name: ____________________________
Address: __________________________
City: ____________________________
State: ___________ Zip: ______________

____ copies of Travels @ $15.00 each = ___________
and ____ copies of The Bells Must Ring! @ $15.00 each = ___________
and ____ copies of Let Thy Good Spirit @ $15.00 each = ___________
and ____ copies of the 1999 Eastern European Tour CD @ $15.00 each = ___________
and ____ copies of the 2003 European Tour CD @ $15.00 each = ___________
and ____ copies of the 2007 Hear The Voice @ $15.00 each = ___________

Plus $2.50 each for postage + ___________

Amount Enclosed: ___________

Please allow 2 to 3 weeks for delivery

The Rutgers University Glee Club
Marryott Music Building
81 George Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1568