

THE OLD MAN ASSOCIATION

INFORMATION AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR THE OLD MEN OF
THE WHEATON COLLEGE GLEE CLUB
A STUDENT-LED PUBLICATION



What's Inside

- p2: Letter from Dr. Blackstone
- p3-4: In Remembrance of Edwin Hollatz
- p.5: Address from the President
- p6: Tour Schedule
- p7-8: Student Retrospectives
- p9: Financial Update/Music Digitization
- p10: Announcements

Upcoming Performances 2024 Men's Glee Club Events

- 3/1-8 *Spring Break Tour to Minnesota with Women's Chorale*
- 4/6 at 7:30 p.m. Spring Concert, Canto Vivo
- 5/3 at 7:30 p.m. Commencement Concert

LETTER FROM DR. JERRY BLACKSTONE

I hope this finds everyone well and warm as we head into a beautiful 2024! Let me recap some of the MGC's November and December highlights and point you toward what's in our future.

The November 4 Family Weekend Choral Showcase Concert in the Armerding Concert Hall included the Gospel Choir, the Women's Chorale, the Concert Choir, and the Men's Glee Club. Attendance was terrific! We each sang separately and then with everyone on stage for a Gospel piece led by Tanya Egler.

The 2023 Christmas Festival was beautiful, with an attendance of more than 5,000, second only to 2017 by 43 seats. The MGC sang a rousing "The Virgin Mary had a baby boy" accompanied by marimbas, steel drums, shakers, and other percussion. Wheaton's theme this year was "Let the Stable Still Astonish," Dan Forrest's beautiful and powerful work unified our planning. You can watch it on YouTube [here](#).

We were to begin 2024 with Voice Day (for high school tenors and basses and the MGC) on January 13 but canceled due to snow, slippery roads, and VERY low temperatures. We eagerly look forward to our Spring Break Tour to the Twin Cities and several locations in Iowa during the week of March 1-8, 2024. The itinerary is located elsewhere in this newsletter. JOIN US! We'd love to meet you or see you again. The Women's Chorale and Men's Glee Club performances will be our first traveling tour since the pandemic, and we are very excited.

Nearly 50% of each ensemble are first- and second-year students, so many will be experiencing a Wheaton College choral ensemble tour for the first time. Memories, for sure!

Our Home Concert is the MGC Spring Concert on Saturday, April 6, at 7:30 p.m. in the Armerding Concert Hall. The excellent high school tenor/bass choir Canto Vivo from the terrific Young Naperville Singers program will join us. Canto Vivo will sing two pieces, and we'll join them in a third. We look forward to singing with our younger brothers in song, our "boys-to-men" moment.

This semester will be my last with the Men's Glee Club. Beginning in August, I will be a Visiting Professor at the University of Notre Dame, where I will head the graduate choral conducting studio in the Sacred Music at Notre Dame program. It has been my great privilege to return to Wheaton College, my alma mater, to conduct the choir where my collegiate choral adventure began in 1970. A search is currently underway for the new MGC conductor. I'm confident the Lord will lead the right person to Wheaton College to shepherd these fellows. I leave the Wheaton College Men's Glee Club feeling great fondness, gratefulness, and confidence, knowing that "He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion on the day of Jesus Christ."

Jerry Blackstone, '74
Conductor, Men's Glee Club
2022-24



IN REMEMBRANCE OF DR. EDWIN HOLLATZ

Dr. Edwin Hollatz Jr. (1930 – 2023)

Dr. Edwin Hollatz passed away on December 2, 2023. Dr. Hollatz was a legendary figure for Wheaton College and the Men's Glee Club. He served the college for 45 years, teaching speech, debate, homiletics, media communication, and theatre.

As an honorary Old Man, Dr. Hollatz was an indispensable support to the Club, running logistics for MGC tours of Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. He mentored many Old Men, guiding them through academic and life decisions with his trademark evangelistic spirit. Ed will be missed by his family, friends, and students, but we celebrate that he finally speaks with Jesus face-to-face.



Hector Garcia MGC '77

Ed Hollatz was always a gentleman. In touring with MGC, I got to know him better and saw a funny, gentle side that I had not seen before. He was a great storyteller, and once he hooked me on a story, I was on the ride until the end.

While he may not have been an "official" Old Man, he was part of our Club. On the 1979 tour of Europe, he showed his skills in managing an ever-changing schedule. For instance, when we went to compete in the International Choir Competition in The Hague, The Netherlands (June 23 – 30, 1979), we won first place in the male chorus competition. That was great, but it also meant that we had to come back later in the week and compete against the other winners (women's chorus, mixed chorus, children's chorus, etc.). That meant changing the schedule for the entire week, and Ed Hollatz was the one who had to do that.

We returned for the final competition and won the top prize against all the other genre winners. Ed Hollatz was as thrilled as the rest of us. Unfortunately for Hollatz – but fortunately for us – that meant yet another change in the schedule because the winning choir of the competition would be presented to the queen the next day. So, Ed had to reshuffle things for the men of the Club to be given individually – and I mean by name and with a handshake – to Queen Juliana of The Netherlands in her home, Soestdijk Palace.

It was an unforgettable experience and Ed Hollatz just smiled, as if this was just another typical day in the life of the Wheaton College Men's Glee Club.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF DR. EDWIN HOLLATZ CONT.

Michael D. Wilder, Dean

I somehow inherited from Dr. Hollatz the task of announcing the names of graduates at Wheaton commencements over this past decade. Though I could never hope to offer even a fraction of the timbre and diction he provided in this duty for many years, I am honored to follow in his footsteps in this honorable endeavor. I have always looked forward to engaging with Dr. Hollatz as he offered his signature encouragement and joy in our shared dedication to serving students and faculty.



Tony Payne

Ed Hollatz was a truly unique member of the Wheaton College community who supported arts activities for years after his retirement. I always enjoyed seeing his beloved Lincoln Town Car in the parking lot because I knew that meant he was here and still engaged in the things that mattered to us all. I can still hear his crisp, imposing voice at faculty meetings or the Christmas Festival when he shared a scripture reading. There is something genuinely honorable about a person who humbly and nobly continues, as Eugene Peterson put it, “A long obedience in the same direction.” God bless his memory to this community, and God bless his dear wife as she journeys without Ed at the wheel of that Lincoln.



ADDRESS FROM THE PRESIDENT: SAMUEL BURK

Dear Old Men of the Wheaton College Men's Glee Club,

On behalf of the 117th Cabinet, we thank those who have supported us financially and in prayer for our Spring 2024 Tür to Minnesota and Iowa! With your support, preparations are going swimmingly. As those of you who have been on Tür before will know, Tür is one of the foremost highlights of being in the Glee Club.

My time on the 2022 Tür to South Carolina and Georgia was a formative experience at Wheaton. I made deep connections with brothers in Christ I hadn't known well before, explored two states I'd never been to, and, most importantly, worshiped God in song with brothers. To share the Gospel, often with people who may have never heard it before, and do so through beautiful music, was an opportunity to live out our commission to share the good news of Jesus with the world, and I am glad that we have the chance to do so once more.

The Men's Glee Club has only been around as long as it has because of your support, whether attending concerts or assisting financially. Tür is a massive undertaking that requires your help to making possible. The Glee Club appreciates any assistance you can provide, no matter how the size! You will not only help give the current members of the Glee Club an unforgettable experience but also allow the Gospel to go out across the land. Once again, thank you for your support!

In Christ,

Samuel Burk

President, Men's Glee Club



SUPPORT THE TOUR

SPRING BREAK TOUR SCHEDULE

Saturday, March 2

Luther Collegiate Chorale exchange – 10:00 am-12:30 pm

Mass at Basilica of St. Mary, Minneapolis, MN – 5:00 pm-6:30 pm

-

Sunday, March 3

Wooddale Church – 8:15 am-11:00 am

-

Monday, March 4

Southwest Christian School choral exchange and joint concert – 9:00 am-7:00 pm

-

Tuesday, March 5

Legacy Christian Academy choral exchange, Andover MN – 7:40 am-9:45 pm

Morningside Lutheran Church, Sioux City, IA – 4:00 pm-8:00 pm

-

Wednesday, March 6

Unity Christian High School, Orange City, IA – 10:00 am-1:00 pm

-

Thursday, March 7

Grand View Christian School, Des Moines, IA – 12:35 pm-3:00 pm

Westminster Presbyterian Church, Des Moines, IA – 4:00 pm-7:00 pm

-

Friday, March 8

New Melleray Abbey – 10:30 am-12:00 pm

****This schedule is subject to change and more performances may be added. For the most up-to-date schedule, please visit [this link](#)****

MEN'S GLEE CLUB STUDENT RETROSPECTIVES

Our Time with Dr. Blackstone

Jake Knot '25

Dr. Blackstone's arrival at the Wheaton College Men's Glee Club felt like it was meant to be. As any older man will recall, becoming acquainted with the Men's Glee Club is no small task. Even though this is only his second year directing the Men's Glee Club, he quickly became not only part of the community but its leader. The Men's Glee Club is a choir, but any Old Man knows it's not just a choir.

Dr. Blackstone's musical expertise is impeccable, and he is never at a loss to find something that could be done better (shambles). Not only does he know how to make us better, but his inspirational engagement with the group compels us to dig deep in rehearsal. In addition to his musical knowledge, Dr. Blackstone expresses many other desirable traits as a director. He is witty, personable, and compassionate (so long as you remember your cummerbund). On top of all this, he admirably and unashamedly calls members by the wrong name in rehearsal (it's an honor). Would we settle for anything less? In all seriousness, Dr. Blackstone is a man who embraces the pillars of the Club himself: Veritas, Integritas, and Fraternitas. All three of these are evident in how he interacts with members and guides the Club. Being a part of the Wheaton College Men's Glee Club under Dr. Blackstone has been a privilege.

Cameron Coulter '26

In January of 2023, choirs from high schools across the Chicago area flocked to Wheaton's campus to participate in Voice Day, the brainchild of the MFK's latest choral director, Dr. Jerry Blackstone. The event aimed to equip youth choruses with a robust knowledge of singing techniques alongside the Glee Club in one intensive learning session. As the workshop began, the man took the stage, and his luminous presence immediately inspired awe. This unique "Blackstone effect" cannot be derived from any other living creature. As the event continued, our fabulous director quickly established rapport with his new high school pupils, giving ample advice and encouragement, splicing in characteristic quips about how God's love is unconditional.

By the end of the day, he left everyone inspired to continue nurturing their artistic talent with joy and appreciation. The high schoolers got to have Dr. Blackstone for a day. We, the Glee Club, have been privileged to have him for two years. His good-natured charm has often cheered us up, while his commitment to integrity and discipline has formed us into better singers and better men. The memories we have received, the skills we have acquired under his direction, and the spiritual truths he has taught us will not be forgotten. I am incredibly grateful to Dr. Blackstone for giving the Glee Club a voice and a song these past two years.

Tristen Guzman '27

The Glee Club has been an exciting experience that I have enjoyed far more than I had anticipated. From the "Gentlemen? Yes?" to the funky warm-ups, ye old men have made this more enjoyable than I imagined. Dr. Blackstone and the Old Men have made my time in the Glee Club a wonderful one that was worth it through the random mooing during our performances and the universal confusion when trying to sing in Latin or French. I have seen the joys of having people of different years and majors come together to sing as brothers and live in veritas, integritas, and fraternitas. Thanks for always making us feel welcome and allowing us first-year students into this group.

Nathan Leschke '24

The Wheaton College Men's Glee Club was the sleeping blessing I had no idea I would receive when I came to Wheaton. I started college during the pandemic quarantine, already in the middle of a period of my life where I felt lonely, far from God, and without worth. After a semester of more isolation, my RA, an older man named Karsten Mohn, listened to me talk about how much I had loved singing in the past and recommended that I join the MGC. At that moment, he gave me an incredible gift.

Over my four years in the Club, God has blessed me with more gifts at every opportunity. One of the greatest was my chance to sing under Dr. Jerry Blackstone during my last two years in the choir. Dr. Blackstone brought a sense of unity and purpose to the Club while also pushing us to improve musically and professionally. His wisdom and advice helped point our members towards veritas, integrity, and fraternity, and he was always quick with a joke or story to set the group at ease. Beyond all this, Dr. Blackstone began leading our group the same year I started my time on Cabinet as the Glee Club's Librarian. I felt overwhelmed and underprepared for the position, but Dr. Blackstone was a constant source of encouragement and support. He inspired me to meet my responsibilities and put as much work as possible into serving the Club members. Looking back on his two years with the group, I can see how much we have grown as performers and men. Most importantly, I have sung, worked, prayed, and laughed with some of the best men on the face of the planet. The friends I've made, especially those I'll be closing out the year with as we approach graduation, have been constants throughout a difficult time. I wouldn't trade the world for the time we've spent together.

The best part of the Men's Glee Club is that even when you leave campus, you never leave the group. It was all the more honoring to sing under Dr. Blackstone, knowing that he is one of our number who returned to the current Club to give back to us. It is a privilege to end my time with this group at the same time as a director who has meant so much to me. It will be one last gift to hang up my sweater and paddle somewhere special at this year's end and know that there will always be somewhere I belong.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

This fall marked the Old Man Association's first general fund giving campaign. The general fund fulfills many long-standing goals, from student financial assistance to OMA events.

The Board aims to be as transparent as possible with donations and expenditures and will provide annual updates via our newsletter. The first of these reports will be published in our fall issue, but thank you for your overwhelming response to our initial mailing campaign. To that end, these are the initial totals from 10/26/23 – 12/31/23.

Total Donations: \$3555.00

40 donors - 10 setting up recurring gifts

Total Expenditures: \$156.84

Homecoming Old Man Reception - \$156.84

With this response, the Board is excited to move forward with our support objectives, including assistance with tuxedo costs and course fees and providing a scholarship to the winner of the annual Four-Year-Man Award. I look forward to sharing more information in our official report, but in the meantime, thank you very much for your generosity and prayers!

If you wish to contribute to the ongoing work of the OMA, you can always do so at the link [HERE](#)

Max Terman '17

Chairman

Old Man Association

MUSIC DIGITIZATION PROJECT: ROUND 4

Accessing the MGC recordings has been challenging, but the MGC Archive has been steadily creating a collection of streamable music for all Old Men to listen to! So far, almost 100 Old Men have streamed their favorite pieces from the decades of recordings available in the Archive.

We are entering the 4th round of beta testing and are ready to add more Old Men as users. If you are interested in signing up to be a tester of the MGC Archive, register at mgcarchive.org or email us directly at mgc.alumni@my.wheaton.edu

If you have recordings from your days in the Men's Glee Club, we would love to add them! Please reach out to us at mgc.alumni@my.wheaton.edu



Announcements

- Spring Tour to Minnesota and Iowa: The Club will tour with the Women's Chorale through Minnesota and Iowa during the 2024 spring break. If you would like to support this tour, [donate with this link](#).
- Participating in the Men's Glee Club has been a life-changing and life-defining experience for many of us. As we seek to stay connected as Old Men and part of each other's lives, we'd like to begin sharing news and updates of significant life moments such as weddings, births, and the deaths of Old Men. But we need your help! If you've recently married, expanded your family, or know of a recent passing of an Old Man from your era, we'd like to hear from you. Please send your news (along with what years you were in MGC) to mgc.alumni@my.wheaton.edu and help us share these events.
- Submit Your Stories! The Old Man Association is always excited to collect memories and reflections from Clubbers past and present. Whether you recently found some old MGC memorabilia or have a score to settle from the Bass-Tenor football game, you can send stories and photos to mgc.alumni@my.wheaton.edu.
- The Spring Concert is Scheduled: Join us for the 117th annual Home Concert. Saturday, April 6th at 7:30 PM in the new concert hall, with a reception to follow. Come sing A Mighty Fortress and E'en So with your fellow Old Men and support the new generation of the Men's Glee Club.

CONNECT YOURSELF!!!

Join the "Wheaton College Men's Glee Club Old Man Association" Facebook group to keep in touch with what is going on with your fellow Old Men!

CONNECT YOUR FRIENDS!!!

Know any former Glee Clubbers who don't receive these newsletters? Help them out! Send their email address to alumni@wheaton.edu (or encourage them to do so)!



**WHEATON
COLLEGE**

CONSERVATORY of MUSIC

For Christ & His Kingdom

