

December 2023

Fairfield University Glee Club Collection

Fairfield University

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Fairfield University Glee Club was established in 1947, the same year as the University's first incoming freshmen class, by Rev. John P. Murray, S.J. and Simon G. Harak, an accomplished singer. Under the guidance of Mr. Harak, who was the director until his death in 1970, the University Glee Club developed a strong reputation for excellence and award-winning performances. Through Mr. Harak's professional connections, the University's original Alma Mater was composed by Alfonso D'Artega. The Glee Club, nicknamed "The Ambassadors of Song," performed on local radio stations and at local area concert halls and parishes as well as singing for the campus community. The tradition of excellence continued under Paul D. LaMedica who assumed directorship after Simon Harak's death until 1986, when Daniel Rowland took over as interim director. Soon after the University became co-ed in the 1970s, the Women's Chorale was formed. In 1982, the Chamber Singers, Fairfield University's first mixed choir, was established by Carole Ann Maxwell and Dr. Orin Grossman. In 1987, the University reorganized the choirs by merging the Men's Glee Club, the Women's Chorale, and the Chamber Singers into a single combined choir.

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Rev. 2019-02-09

Creator: Fairfield University

Title: Fairfield University Glee Club Collection

Dates: circa 1948 – 2015

Extent: 2.1 linear feet; 6 archival storage boxes

Repository: Fairfield University Archives and Special Collections, DiMenna-Nyselius Library,
Fairfield University, 1073 North Benson Road, Fairfield, CT 06824, 203-254-4000 x2892.

Historical Note: Fairfield University Glee Club was established in 1947, the same year as the University's first incoming freshmen class, by Rev. John P. Murray, S.J. and Simon G. Harak. Under the guidance of Mr. Harak, who was the director until his death in 1970, the University Glee Club developed a strong reputation for excellence and award-winning performances. Simon Harak, an accomplished singer, had appeared as a soloist for both CBS and NBC prior to his directorship. His strong musicianship guided the professionalism of the Glee Club, which benefited from his association with radio orchestras, such as the NBC Symphony of the Air, and radio glee clubs, namely, the Emile Cote Glee Club. Through Mr. Harak's professional connections, the University's original Alma Mater was composed by Alfonso D'Artega, a songwriter and conductor of orchestras in the 1940s and 1950, including the NBC radio orchestra. The Glee Club, nicknamed "The Ambassadors of Song," performed on local radio stations and at local area concert halls and parishes as well as singing for the campus community. Important early milestones include the first broadcast on WICC, a local radio station, in 1948, the first Klein Memorial Concert in 1949, and the first record album in 1951. Singers within the Glee Club formed smaller specialty groups, including the Bensonians, a barbershop quartet, and the Minstrels, known for comedic songs. The Glee Club won awards in intercollegiate glee club competitions through the years, notably in 1960 and 1961. The tradition of excellence continued under Paul D. LaMedica who assumed directorship after Simon Harak's death until 1986, when Daniel Rowland took over as interim director. Soon after the University became co-ed in the 1970s, the Women's Chorale was formed. In 1982, the Chamber Singers, Fairfield University's first mixed choir, was established by Carole Ann Maxwell, the present director, and Dr. Orin Grossman. In 1987, the University reorganized the choirs by merging the Men's Glee Club, the Women's Chorale, and the Chamber Singers into a single combined choir. Under Carole Ann Maxwell, the Glee Club's reputation continues to represent the best of Fairfield University with performances in prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall in New York City, and the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and internationally in London, Dublin, and the Vatican.

Sources:

- Glee Club concert programs: (1) The Fairfield University Glee Club, Past and Present 1997, (2) 25th Anniversary Concert 1972, (3) 65th Anniversary Gala Concert April 21, 2012
- Recordings liner notes for "Men in Red";
- Fairfield University Life@Fairfield Portal.
- Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfonso_D%27Artega

Scope and Content: The Fairfield University Glee Club Collection is comprised of concert programs, flyers, brochures, black & white paper-based photographs and negatives of the Club members and directors, and copies of Glee Club recordings in both vinyl and CD. The time covered by the Collection ranges from 1948 through 2015. Concert programs include Glee Club performances from as early 1949 under the direction of Simon G. Harak, who established the choir in 1947, through 2015 under the direction of Carole Ann Maxwell, the present director. Most of the paper-based material is concert

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programs, ranging from 1949 through 2015. The collection does not include programs inclusive of all years covered by the range. There are programs for several milestone anniversary concerts, including the 50th year (1997), the 60th Gala (2007), and the 65th Anniversary Gala (2012). The photographs range from a 1948 negative of the Glee Club's first radio broadcast to a black & white 1974 photograph of Glee Club members. Most of the photographs are professional, undated, and are of the Glee Club in concert, as well as in posed groupings for publicity and promotion. There are negatives in original envelopes. Of note is a photograph of the Glee Club's First Place Trophy in the 1960 Annual Catholic Intercollegiate Glee Club Festival. Also noteworthy is a photograph circa 1968 of the Glee Club with Director Harak that includes his son, Rev. G. Simon Harak, S.J., an American peace activist and professor of theology. Among the early Glee Club recordings is "Men in Red," directed by Simon G. Harak. The most recent Glee Club recording in the Collection is the 1979 Rev. J.P. Murray, S.J./Simon Harak Memorial Concert at the Klein Memorial, under the direction of Paul LaMedica. The collection also includes vinyl records of the Cote Glee Club and Rev. Thomas Murphy's benefit performance in both vinyl and CD formats. This a listing of the Fairfield University Glee Club's recordings in the collection.

Fairfield University Glee Club Recordings			
Title or Description	Vinyl	CD	MP3
1951. Fairfield University Glee Club. 3-record set	Yes	Yes	Yes
1956. "Men in Red, Songs by Fairfield University Glee Club," Simon Harak, Conductor.	Yes	Yes	Yes
1960. Fairfield University Glee Club Concert, Director Simon Harak. (Black & Red)	Yes	Yes	Yes
1963. Fairfield University Glee Club, "Autumn Leaves," Director Simon Harak.	Yes	Yes	Yes
1970. Glee Club - "Cross of Gold," Simon Harak Directing the Fairfield University Glee Club.	Yes	Yes	Yes
1975. Fairfield University Glee Club, "Godspell," Director Paul D. LaMedica.	Yes	Yes	Yes
1979. Fairfield University Glee Club, Rev J.P. Murray, S.J./Simon Harak Memorial Concert at the Klein Auditorium.	Yes	Yes	No

System of Arrangement: This collection is arranged into three series.

Series 1: Concert Programs and other Paper-based material, 1949 – 2015

Box 1: 1949 – 1970s

Box 2: 1980s - 2015

Series 2: Black & White Photographs and Negatives, circa 1948 – 1974

Box 3: 1948 – 1950s

Box 4: 1960s - 1974

Series 3: Audio Recordings, circa 1950 – 1979

Box 5: Vinyl Recordings

Box 6: CDs, many of which are copies of the vinyl recordings

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Custodial History: The collection was extant in the University Archives as of 2003 as a minimally processed collection with no record of the original creator, transfer record, or accession record. Additional copies of the Glee Club concert recordings were added later. In the fall of 2018, the collection was processed by maintaining much of the order and further arranging into series by type of material and within the series by chronology.

Related Archival Material: Glee Club concert posters are maintained separately and located within the Fairfield University Poster Collections.

Box and Folder List

Series 1: Concert Programs and other Paper-based material, 1949 – 2018 (incomplete coverage)			
Series	Box	Folder	Title
1	1	1	Concert Programs, 1949 Roster, Newspaper Articles and Miscellanea 1949 - 1951
1	1	2	Correspondence, Tax Documents, Draft Program 1952 - 1954
1	1	3	Concert Programs, Fund Raiser Program 1951 - 1954
1	1	4	Concert Programs, 1960, 1966-1969; Concert Schedule, Press Releases circa 1960s
1	1	5	Newspaper Clippings 1966-1967
1	1	6	Concert Programs including Women's Glee Club Concert Program 1972-1977
Series	Box	Folder	Title
1	2	1	Concert Programs and Flyers 1981 – 1989
1	2	2	Concert Programs, 1990 – 1993
1	2	3	Concert Programs and Flyers 1994 – 1997
1	2	4	Concert Programs and Flyers 2001 - 2006
1	2	5	Concert Programs and Flyers 2007 – 2012; 2014 – 2015
1	2	6	Concert Programs and Flyers 2018

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Series 2: Black & White Photographs and Negatives, circa 1948 – 1974			
Series	Box	Folder	Title
2	3	1	First Radio Broadcast – Negative, May 6, 1948
2	3	2	Klein Concert – Formal Group – Negative, December 14, 1949
2	3	3	Combined Concerts – Waldorf – April 1950, St. John's University, December 1950
2	3	4	Rudy Ross (Accompanist); Caldwell George Keane (Soloist), 1947 - 1951
2	3	5	Groups, 1949 - 1951
2	3	6	Informal Rehearsal, 1950 - 1951
2	3	7	Club Formal, 1950 - 1951
2	3	8	Presentation to Director Harak at Klein, 1951
2	3	9	Mr. D'Artega, Guest Director, St. Joseph's Concert, 1951
2	3	10	Recording at Columbia Studio, March 1951
2	3	11	Minstrels, 1951 - 1952
2	3	12	Groups, Bensonians, 1951-1952
2	3	13	Groups and Director Harak, 1952 - 1953
2	3	14	Groups, 1952 - 1953
2	3	15	Groups and Director Harak, 1952 - 1953
2	3	16	Bensonians, 1952 - 1953
2	3	17	Bishop McElenty, No Date
2	3	18	Father Murray Awards, 1953
2	3	19	First Alumni Dinner, September 1955
2	3	20	Negatives, 1956 - 1957
2	3	21	Groups, Negatives, 1952 - 1958

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2	3	22	Campus Minstrels and Bensonians, 1958 - 1959
2	3	23	Soloists, 1958 - 1959
Series	Box	Folder	Title
2	4	1	Groups, 1960
2	4	2	Groups, 1960 - 1961
2	4	3	Trophy, 2 nd Catholic Intercollegiate Glee Club Festival, 1960
2	4	4	Director Harak, Mr. Heath, and Father Ruter, No Date
2	4	5	St. Francis Club Officers, No Date
2	4	6	Trophy, Catholic Intercollegiate Glee Club Competition, 1961
2	4	7	Groups, 1962
2	4	8	Club Officers, 1962 - 1963
2	4	9	Campus Minstrels and Bensonians, 1962 - 1963
2	4	10	Groups, 1963 - 1964
2	4	11	Glee Club, 1964 - 1965
2	4	12	Campus Minstrels and Bensonians, 1965 - 1967
2	4	13	Groups, 1966 - 1967
2	4	14	Groups, 1967 - 1968
2	4	15	Groups including G. Simon Harak (Son), circa 1968
2	4	16	Club Officers, Campus Minstrels and Bensonians, 1968 - 1969
2	4	17	Campus Minstrels, 1969
2	4	18	Groups, 1970

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2	4	19	Mr. LaMedica, circa 1970s – No Date
2	4	20	Groups, including Director LaMedica, 1970- 1971
2	4	21	Campus Minstrels and Bensonians, 1971 - 1972
2	4	22	Groups, 1972- 1973
2	4	23	Groups, 1973 - 1974
2	4	24	Student Activities, Fine Arts, No Date
Series 3: Audio Recordings, circa 1950 – 1979			
Series	Box	Description	
3	5	Not dated. Cote Glee Club, Director Emile Cote. VGL 56A-B, Lang-Worth Feature Program, Inc. Label, 33 1/3 RPM, 8" vinyl record. (Note that this and Cote Glee Club VGL 29A-B are contained in the same plastic sleeve.)	
3	5	Not dated. Cote Glee Club, Director Emile Cote. VGL 29A-B, Lang-Worth Feature Program, Inc. Label, 33 1/3 RPM, 8" vinyl record. (Note that this and Cote Glee Club VGL 56A-B are contained in the same plastic sleeve.)	
3	5	1951. Fairfield University Glee Club. 3-record set in brown wrapper, 78 RPM, 10" vinyl record.	
3	5	1956. "Men in Red, Songs by Fairfield University Glee Club," Simon Harak, Conductor. RCA Victor, 33 1/3 RPM LP vinyl record.	
3	5	1960. Fairfield University Glee Club Concert, Director Simon Harak. Black and red cover, RCA Victor label, 33 ½ RPM, LP vinyl record.	
3	5	1963. Fairfield University Glee Club, "Autumn Leaves," Director Simon Harak. Pressed by RCA Victor. Published by RPC, Camden, NJ. 33 1/3 RPM LP vinyl record. 4 copies	
3	5	1970 Glee Club - "Cross of Gold," Simon Harak Directing the Fairfield University Glee Club. Published by RPC label, 33 1/3 RPM LP vinyl record.	
3	5	1975 Fairfield University Glee Club, "Godspell," Director Paul D. LaMedica. 33 1/3 RPM vinyl record. 5 copies	
3	5	1979 Fairfield University Glee Club, Rev J.P. Murray, S.J./Simon Harak Memorial Concert at the Klein Auditorium, Bridgeport, Director Paul D. LaMedica. 33 1/3 RPM LP vinyl record. 18 copies	

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3	5	Not dated. Rev Thomas Murphy S.J, Pianist, "Father Tom at the Piano" Benefit Concert for the Bellarmine Guild of Fairfield Preparatory. 33 1/3 RPM vinyl record. 2 copies
Series	Box	Description
3	6	1951. Fairfield University Glee Club. 3-record set, six tracks. (CD).
3	6	1953-1954. Fairfield University Glee Club, Concert at the Klein, Bridgeport, Director Simon Harak. Compact disc (CD).
3	6	1956. "Men in Red, Songs by Fairfield University Glee Club," Simon Harak, Conductor. Compact disc (CD). 2 copies
3	6	1960. Fairfield University Glee Club Concert, Directed by Simon Harak. Black and red cover. Compact disc (CD).
3	6	1963. Fairfield University Glee Club, "Autumn Leaves," Director Simon Harak. Compact disc (CD).
3	6	1970 Fairfield University Glee Club, "Cross of Gold," Director Simon Harak. Compact disc (CD).
3	6	1975 Fairfield University Glee Club Concert, "Godspell," Director Paul D. LaMedica. Compact disc (CD). 3 copies
3	6	1979 Fairfield University Glee Club, Rev J.P. Murray, S.J./Simon Harak Memorial Concert at the Klein Auditorium, Bridgeport, Director Paul D. LaMedica. Compact disc (CD).
3	3	Not dated. Rev. Thomas Murphy, S.J., Pianist, "Father Tom at the Piano" Benefit Concert for the Bellarmine Guild of Fairfield Preparatory. Compact disc (CD). 2 copies