

= University of Michigan Men 's Glee Club =

The University of Michigan Men 's Glee Club is an all @-@ male glee club (or choir) at the University of Michigan . With roots tracing back to 1859 , it is the second oldest glee club in the United States and is the oldest student organization at the university . The club has won the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod on four separate occasions . Since 2011 , the Club 's musical director has been Eugene Rogers who has continued to expand the Club 's repertoire and arranged performances .

The origins of the club stem from a variety of groups that came together in 1876 . After a number of years including banjo and mandolin players in the club , it reverted to simply a vocal group by the mid @-@ 1920s . It received a substantial rise in profile under the directory of Philip Duey in the 1950s , who organised national , then international tours , and numerous television appearances . Since then , the club has continued to tour internationally at high @-@ profile venues .

The club is entirely managed by students , except for the musical director , taken from the university staff . It has a number of traditions , including the practice of snapping fingers instead of clapping .

= = Organization = =

The club is a student @-@ managed organization , which undertakes all management facilities , including all finances and tour arrangements . Only the musical director is a member of the faculty . It accepts members from both undergraduates and graduates of the university , who are chosen by audition . Membership is made up of the majority of the university 's 17 colleges .

The group is composed of about 100 singers from several of the schools and colleges at the University of Michigan . They perform repertoire ranging from music of the Renaissance to African @-@ American spirituals . Their official motto is " In Tradition , Camaraderie , and Musical Excellence " .

A number of traditions are upheld and recognised by choristers . Club members snap their fingers instead of clapping at each other 's achievements (i.e. a good performance on a solo) because it is more difficult to clap with one 's music in the other hand . The club hosts a banquet every spring where awards are presented .

= = History = =

= = Incarnations and early tours = =

Originally , there were individual Glee Clubs consisting of ten to twenty members , arranged by graduating class . The current framework of a cross @-@ college club started with eight members in 1876 , doubling to sixteen in 1877 . Amongst their early repertoire included numbers written by Fred Newton Scott . In the 1890s , the organisation gained a banjo and mandolin club , causing the name to temporarily change to the University Glee , Banjo , and Mandolin Club . A Freshmen Glee Club was active during the 1890s and 1900s .

In the early twentieth century , the club held operas to help raise funds to build the Michigan Union . Because the club was male @-@ only , all female parts were played by men . Several popular songs performed by the club , like " The Bum Army " and " Ann Arbor Days " , were written during this time .

In 1908 , the club began to be led by the university faculty , although its official history still notes that this was merely an " advisory " role for over a decade later . By 1914 , the club included two other groups ; the Varsity Quartette and the Midnight Sons , which allowed singers to tackle barbershop and similar music requiring less singers .

The " Banjo " was dropped from the name in 1905 , and " Mandolin " in 1923 , after which the group concentrated on vocal performances without instrumentation , becoming the University of Michigan Glee Club . The group was renamed the University of Michigan Men 's Glee Club in 1938 , in

reference to a Women 's Glee Club that had gained popularity during the 1930s , and between 1944 and 1948 was briefly known as the University of Michigan Varsity Club .

For most of the twentieth century , the club toured locally around Michigan , but did tour across other US states in 1926 and 1941 . World War II prevented any touring , which did not resume until 1947 .

= = = The Duey years and later tours = = =

Philip Duey took over conducting duties in 1947 and began increasing the Club 's profile with radio and television performances . In 1947 , the group started recording numbers , including " The Friar 's Song " and " ' Tis of Michigan We Sing " to be broadcast on local radio . In the fall of 1951 , the Glee Club started the tradition of performing joint concerts with the Glee Club of a football opponent when they invited the Cornell Glee Club to Ann Arbor . The following year , they made a national television appearance on Ed Sullivan 's " Toast of the Town " . In 1954 , the Glee Club provided the music for an RKO film , Songs of the Colleges , which featured scenes from colleges and universities from around the country .

The Glee Club had not previously had the membership base or the financial resources to attempt an international trip , but in the spring of 1955 , a four @-@ week trip to Western Europe was undertaken . Highlights included an appearance at the American Embassy in Rome and a performance before Queen Juliana of the Netherlands . In 1958 , the club made another national television appearance on the Pat Boone Show ,

In 1956 , Dr. Walter Collins temporarily took over leadership of the club from Duey . During his tenure , an associated group , known as The Friars , was formed . It is named after a former drinking club at the university , and specializes in parodies of popular songs .

The European tour in 1959 commemorated the centennial of the Glee Club . In addition to a four @-@ week concert tour , the group competed in the International Eisteddfod in Llangollen , Wales , one of the world 's most significant choral competitions . The boat the club were travelling on was nearly a day late arriving , nearly missing the competition , and they performed having had only three hours sleep . Despite this , the club became the first American choir ever to win the male choir competition .

In 1963 , a five @-@ week tour included performances at the residence of the American Ambassador in Athens and the American Embassy in London . The club took first prize in the Llangollen Eisteddfod for a second time , winning over 20 groups from 11 different countries . In 1967 , the club undertook a world tour of 17 different nations , including the Soviet Union . The club returned to Llangollen , where they took third place in the contest. third place . In March 1969 , Duey retired after 22 years of service .

The club toured Europe again in 1971 with new musical director Willis Patterson and won the Eisteddfod for a third time . This feat was repeated for a fourth time in 1978 under the direction of Leonard Johnson , marking four separate occasions when the club had won the competition . To celebrate their four victories , the Glee Club gives out four " Llangollen Awards " annually to members who embody the spirit of this competition .

Many other highlights come from the Duey years . In September 1965 the Glee Club ? along with Harvard University , Smith College , and Howard University ? was invited to represent the United States at the first International University Choral Festival . This event was held at Lincoln Center in New York and at the National Cathedral in Washington , D.C.

= = = Modern Era = = =

The club performed the pre @-@ game festivities for the final game of the 1984 World Series at Tiger Stadium , but their performance was overshadowed by scenes of violence and rioting after the game . Their tour bus was set upon by rioters , who vandalised it , while the singers fled to safety . A more favourable appearance occurred the following year when , under the direction of Patrick Gardner , the club undertook a 36 @-@ day tour across Europe , which culminated in another

appearance at Llangollen , where they placed third .

Under the direction of Jerry Blackstone , the Michigan Men 's Glee Club embarked on four major overseas tours . In 1989 the Glee Club spent three weeks touring Asia with concerts in Hong Kong , Japan , and South Korea . In 1992 the Club embarked on a trip to Eastern Europe , where they were one of the first American groups to visit the new country of Estonia , which had recently declared independence from the defunct Soviet Union . 1996 brought the Club to South America including Brazil , Argentina , Uruguay , Chile , and Peru , and the Club most recently traversed Australia in 2000 . The highlight of this tour was the inaugural Men of Song Festival hosted by the Brisbane Boys ' College in which 140 pupils participated in a workshop and joint concert .

Under Blackstone 's direction the Club was invited to perform at several conventions of the American Choral Directors Association , including the 1997 National Convention in San Diego . The Club also released six compact discs during this time and was featured on Mannheim Steamroller 's 2001 album Christmas Extraordinaire , with Blackstone co @-@ credited as choir director . In the spring of 2001 the combined Men 's Glee Club and Smith College Glee Club and Chorale gave a performance of Brahms ' Ein deutsches Requiem in Northampton , Massachusetts . The following fall the endeavor was repeated in Hill Auditorium with the Smith and Michigan Women 's Glee Clubs . Blackstone retired in 2002 , with the club 's CD I have had singing being a retrospective of his tenure as conductor . His time spent conducting the club has been well @-@ received , with the secretary of the Warsaw Philharmonica stating , " I was completely enchanted . It is unbelievable that an amateur group could surpass our most professional choirs with such ease of execution . "

Stephen Lusmann took over leadership until 2005 ; highlights of his tenure include an appearance at the Intercollegiate Men 's Choruses National Convention at Harvard University , a sixteen @-@ day tour of Great Britain and Ireland in 2004 and the club 's premiere performance at Carnegie Hall with the Smith College Glee Club in 2005 .

From 2005 to 2011 , the Club was under the direction of Paul Rardin . Notable achievements during this time include international tours to Spain in 2008 and Cuba in 2011 . The Cuban tour was considered especially significant , given that Americans have not easily been able to travel to the country legally , but the University gave financial assistance and an offer of a cultural exchange to make the tour happen . In 2010 , the club celebrated its 150th anniversary , and as part of the celebrations performed a set of joint concerts with the Harvard University and University of Virginia Glee Clubs , taking a variety of music including contemporary American songs , folk and Renaissance music . Rardin said " It 's a wonderful opportunity for all of us to see , hear and learn from three different ensembles . "

Rardin left the University of Michigan after the Cuban tour to accept the position of Director of Choirs at Temple University in 2011 . As of the fall term of 2011 , Eugene Rogers now directs the Club . Notable achievements during his tenure include an international tour to China in 2012 , a major tour of the East Coast of the United States which concluded in a joint concert with the Glee Clubs of Harvard and Yale Universities , and the nationwide extension of the Club 's Brothers in Song program which partners with underserved young men 's choral programs in public schools .

The club continues to collaborate with others . Tom Harle , MD of the Naperville Glee Club said " There 's a lot to be said about them . They 're one of the most prestigious and one of the oldest men 's glee clubs in the country . "

= = List of directors = =

= = Notable alumni = =

Ara Berberian , Metropolitan Opera Basso

Russell Christopher , Metropolitan Opera , Baritone .

Thomas Dewey , three @-@ time governor of New York and two @-@ time Republican Presidential candidate

Dr. Sanjay Gupta , Neurosurgeon , and CNN senior medical correspondent .

Jeff Marx , co @-@ composer of Avenue Q.

Bob McGrath , singer and actor who plays " Bob " on Sesame Street .

Daniel Passino , participant on The Voice (U.S. season 10)

= = International tours = =

1955 : Europe

1959 : Europe

1963 : Europe

1967 : World Tour

1971 : Europe

1978 : Europe

1985 : Europe

1989 : Southeast Asia

1992 : Eastern & Central Europe

1996 : South America

2000 : Australia

2004 : Great Britain & Ireland

2008 : Spain

2011 : Cuba

2012 : China

2016 : South Africa