



News from the Alumni Association

The Alumni Association of Princeton University: over 92,000 served

aluminary

Thomas Swift '76



circa 1976

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"It's fair to say that I didn't arrive on Princeton's campus with a lot of school spirit, but I'm happy to say that it came to me after my retirement," Tom Swift '76 says. "A very good friend of mine pulled me into some alumni events, and I got hooked! The rewards of volunteering have been truly marvelous."

Since the time that Tom said yes to volunteering, he hasn't stopped. He has been an active volunteer with Reunions, including serving as a committee member and a P-grade Marshal seven times, and is active in the Princeton Area Alumni Association (PA3) where he helps lead its robust programming as vice president.

He continues to interview prospective students for the Alumni Schools Committee and is chair of the Princetoniana Committee. He has also been a member of the Alumni Council Executive Committee for several years.

It was Tom's work with PA3 and the Princetoniana Committee that initially sparked his interest in volunteering. The group was ready to embark on an oral history project, and Tom was asked to spearhead it. They conducted 16 interviews as part of the project which piqued his interest in the history and traditions of Princeton. His involvement in the Princetoniana Committee snowballed from there.

Currently, Tom is leading the charge in creating an online museum of Princetoniana. "We have never had a space to showcase our Princetoniana, so we decided to build a 21st century museum, a virtual one, to showcase exhibits and artifacts," Tom says. "We started our project by taking high-resolution photos of 100 Reunions beer jackets, and that's just the beginning. We want the museum to be accessible to everyone regardless of where they live in the world."

As someone who really enjoys Reunions, Tom also volunteered to lead the effort to plan a fun and exciting trip for his classmates as they approached their 40th Reunion in 2015.

"It's a tradition that Princeton alums scale to the top of Mount Princeton in Colorado," Tom says. "Perhaps it is temporary insanity, but we thought it would be a fun run-up to our 40th Reunion."

Tom was initially introduced to Princeton by his father, also Thomas, who was in the Class of 1929. "I wanted to be an engineer, but I also wanted to learn something of the humanities. Princeton was the perfect choice."

And while his years at Princeton were fruitful as they led him to advanced degrees and a successful career in technology, Tom finds his years as a volunteer just as rewarding. "I think back to all of the years I could have been involved. Here I am. It's never too late to start."