SPANNING THE YEARS IN HILTON HEAD

Earlier this year, Scott Foster ’58 read an article in a Hilton Head newspaper that announced a local high-schooler, Brian White, would soon matriculate to Princeton’s Class of 2015, and an unlikely partnership was formed.

As President of the Hilton Head Chapter of the PAA of South Carolina, Scott was inspired by this local youth, and he set out to reinvigorate an alumni base that is traditionally more senior and had been recently somewhat inactive.

He established a Board with Chairs ranging from the Class of 1942 to the Class of 2015, and his approach was compelling – run the club “as simply and as inclusively” as possible. The Club tries to use e-mail for nearly all communication, and they hope to run the Club without asking for dues, leaning heavily on breakeven events and donations from alumni.

With only about 150 alumni in the local area, Scott relies on a small group of alumni to drive this club, and he has no shortage of wonderful and remarkable people from which to choose. John “Tex” Farrington ’42 has written extensive remembrances of his experiences in World War II, and Lisa and Don Drakeman (both *88) have also been very active in helping Scott get the club off the ground.

In fact, the Drakemans recently hosted a very successful event that featured Princeton’s Footnotes a cappella singing group on November 1 of this year. More than 80 were in attendance, including Pete Keenan ’35 (who drove himself to the party) and Brian White ’15 (both pictured).

Scott has attributed his success to his commitment to simplicity and inclusiveness, and he looks forward to more successful events in the near future.

THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The Oral History Project sponsored by the Princetoniana Committee was started in 2006 and consists of oral history interviews undertaken by alumni to capture Princeton’s history from Old Guard alumni, early alumnae, and others with significant Princeton connections and perspectives.

The interviews are free-form but do use a topic guide of questions that focuses on the interviewee’s experiences at Princeton, and they typically last about an hour and are audio-recorded. They are then transcribed, and the transcripts and

Join CORA’s discussion group for regional officers and share information and best practices.
ORAL HISTORY, CONTINUED

recordings are entered into the University Archives at Mudd Library (and can generally be found online). To date, approximately 40 interviews have entered the archive.

The Princetoniana Committee is looking for volunteer interviewers to support this wonderful initiative in capturing histories of Princeton and its historical intersections.

The committee has found that regions conducting an “Interview Fest” in a central location can be quite successful. By offering refreshments and providing recording equipment and interview guides in a wheelchair-accessible location, local alumni (both interviewers and interviewees) are more likely to volunteer, and great progress can be made. To that end, the Princeton Area Alumni Association (PA3) has built a process to find and train volunteer interviewers, and they have acquired a pool of ten recorders that can be made available to any region wanting to conduct local interviews.

Excerpts from Interviews

Geg Buttenheim ’44 on the transformation of Princeton during the war years

An Army first sergeant arrived, opened up an office in a ground floor room, had a whistle to assemble us and would blow Reveille and Taps with a bugle and we marched in formation up to Freshman Commons to eat. Eating clubs were history.

Herb Hobler ’44 on reunions

For our first reunion, somebody decided to have a clown costume. But they forgot to have a zipper on it.

More excerpts can be found here.

The Princetoniana Committee encourages any interested region to contact Bruce Leslie ’66 (Chair of the Princetoniana Committee) at bleslie@alumni.princeton.edu or Tom Swift ’76 (Director, Princeton Area Alumni Association) at tcmswift@comcast.net.

TAKE YOUR ASSOCIATION TO THE NEXT LEVEL GRANT

Do you have a project you’ve been wanting to launch to engage alumni? An initiative to invigorate career networking in your community? An effort to build increased membership?

The Alumni Council Committee on Regional Associations (CORA) offers a limited number of grants to Princeton regional associations seeking to achieve the next level of success. These grants, awarded annually, contribute toward the financing of activities and initiatives that support an association’s long-term strength and sustainability.

The deadline for this year’s submissions is JANUARY 1, 2012. Apply NOW for the Take Your Association to the Next Level grant of up to $500 offered by the Committee on Regional Associations!

Past grants have been awarded to associations in Brazil, Central Ohio, Utah, and New Hampshire, just to name a few.

Submit applications by January 1, 2012 to Livia Wong McCarthy at lmccarth@princeton.edu. To learn more about the grant guidelines and submission process, visit this web page.

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