

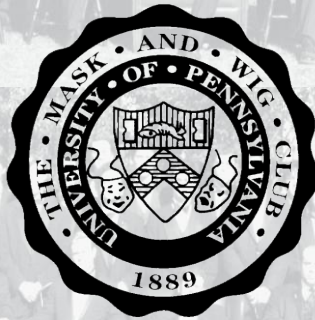
# THE MASK AND WIG CLUB

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

-since 1889-

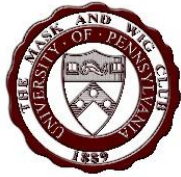


“Justice to the stage  
and credit to the University!”



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The Mask and Wig Club of the University of Pennsylvania  
P.O. Box 31807 - Philadelphia, PA 19104  
[www.maskandwig.com](http://www.maskandwig.com) - [floorshows@maskandwig.com](mailto:floorshows@maskandwig.com)



# THE MASK AND WIG CLUB

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Dear Friends,

Greetings from the Mask and Wig Club of the University of Pennsylvania! We are proud to be the nation's oldest all-male collegiate musical comedy group, having entertained audiences since 1889. We write and perform two original shows each year, one which runs for ten weeks to sold out crowds, and we take part in a nationwide tour in the spring.

Besides the customary fall and spring productions, the Mask and Wig Club also performs "floor shows" for corporate affairs, dinner functions, alumni events, and high school audiences. Next time you are organizing an event, let Mask and Wig entertain your audience—we'll be sure to liven up any party.

A floor show consists of a selection of sketches or songs, usually described as "the best of the Mask and Wig Club." We draw from our large repertoire of bits and musical sketches in order to cater to all ages and tastes. Musical accompaniment ranges from one piano to our full nine piece band, depending on the audience's needs. Cost can vary depending on the number of performers and length of the show.

Mask and Wig is comfortable in any venue and in front of any audience. Significant recent performances include Floor Shows for:

Dedication of Riepe College House at the University of Pennsylvania  
Penn Alexander School Charity Performance  
The 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Penn's Engineering School  
The Inauguration of University of Pennsylvania President Judith Rodin  
The Philadelphia Museum of Art  
Christie's Auction House of New York  
The Philadelphia Zoo  
The Philadelphia Institute of Contemporary Art  
University of Pennsylvania Hillel at the Makor Center in New York

Our unique blend of comedic sketches and musical numbers will surely please any audience. If you are interested in hiring the Mask and Wig Club for an event, please contact our Floor Show Director Daniel McGinly at [floorshows@maskandwig.com](mailto:floorshows@maskandwig.com) or call him at 215-964-3677. In addition, we encourage you to read further and explore our website to learn more about the Mask and Wig club. Thank you for your time; we hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Reg Tigerman  
Chairman

Brian Cargo  
Secretary/Treasurer

Daniel McGinly  
Floor Show Director

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## HISTORY

Once upon a time, in 1888, a small group of Penn undergraduates, led by Clayton Fotterall McMichael, were interested in the stage and were feeling restless. McMichael and his cohorts wanted something the University did not offer: a troupe that would produce humorous theatrical pieces. What was a college man to do? Get up in frocks and spoof everyone and everything, naturally.

Because colleges at the time were open only to young gentlemen any production was limited to an all-male cast. These organizations naturally saw burlesque, which was quite popular in that era, as the perfect genre. The overblown characterizations, loose plotting, musical interludes, and parody of high art made the style perfect for a group of young, well-educated, amateur men; especially since the drag tradition came "built-in."

Founder McMichael combed the local bookstores for a story to produce and found it in Henry Byron's *The Nymphs of the Lurleyburg*. With a little pirating and a bit of imagination, *Lurline*, the Club's first production, hit the boards at the Chestnut Street Opera House on June 4, 1889, for one night only. From that night onward, the Club, supported by a strong network of alumni now known as the Graduate Club, produced an annual show. The runs were extended and the Club established a fine tradition among Philadelphia's theater-going society.

In 1894 the Club purchased a property at 310 South Quince Street to serve as a gathering place and rehearsal hall. Prominent Philadelphia architect Wilson Eyre was commissioned to convert the building, which had previously served as a church, a dissecting room, and a stable. He hired the young Maxfield Parrish, who would later become one of the greatest illustrators of the twentieth century, to decorate the interior. The Grille Room was decorated with caricatures of members; a tradition that continues today, with the second century of members' caricatures continued upstairs at the entrance to the auditorium.

The Club prospered throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The middle of this century was a heady time for the Club. Mask and Wig songs were the rage of the big band orchestras, radio shows, and solo acts of the day. The likes of Frank Sinatra, Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, and Les Brown all covered Mask and Wig tunes.

The 1961 production, *Wry on the Rocks*, introduced a satirical revue format in a cabaret atmosphere. Fourteen years ago, with *Myth America*, Mask and Wig returned the student-written book musical to its stage, a practice which continued last year with *Not Just Another Divine Comedy*. Important in the show's success are the traditional high standards in the caliber of performers and excellence of the material performed.

The Club's primary purpose has always been and continues to be, "Justice to the stage and credit to the University." Today, Mask and Wig maintains its position as one of the premier extracurricular activities on the Penn campus. Its yearly alumni tour over spring break brings the show to alumni clubs across the nation. Book Mask and Wig for your event and enjoy a tradition over a century in the making, and still going strong. "There's Only Room for One!"



## **INTERESTING FACTS**

Founded in 1889, The Mask and Wig Club is the nation's oldest all-male collegiate musical comedy troupe.

The Mask and Wig Club consists of four sections: the cast, band, crew, and business staff.

Each year The Mask and Wig Club writes and performs two original productions. One in the fall, which is more of a variety show and sketch oriented, and one in the spring, which is a full book musical that runs for nine weeks.

The Mask and Wig Club holds a Comedy Festival each year and has performed with such legendary comedians as Gilbert Gottfried, Stephen Colbert, Tim Meadows, Bob Saget, Kevin Nealon, Ana Gasteyer and Paul Provenza

The Mask and Wig Club performed on Ed Sullivan's "Toast of the Town" in 1952, 1953, 1954, and 1958.

Mask and Wig has toured internationally with its annual spring production since 1891 and once owned its own train car to transport its members, set, and costumes across the country.

The Mask and Wig Clubhouse, located at 310 South Quince Street in Philadelphia, is where the club performs its annual spring production. It was purchased in 1894 and had previously served as a church, dissecting room, and horse stable. Maxfield Parrish, one of the greatest illustrators of the twentieth century, was chosen to decorate the interior.

"Route 66" was written by Bobby Troupe, a member of the Mask and Wig Club and sung by Frank Sinatra. "Daddy" is another Mask and Wig favorite by Troupe, very popular in the heyday of radio. Other Mask and Wig songs have been performed by Tommy Dorsey, Ella Fitzgerald, and Benny Goodman.



*“Mask & Wig was a pleasure to work with. Their enthusiasm and dedication to the arts through Penn is infectious.”*

-PENN HILLEL,  
DEPARTMENT OF  
INSTITUTIONAL  
ADVANCEMENT

**Top:** The cast performing “Chucks” at the Mask and Wig Charity Ball.

**Middle:** The company rehearsing in the clubhouse in 1930.

**Bottom:** The Girls from the classic Mask and Wig bit “Boys Will Be Boys.”



*“Our Alums always request Mask and Wig to perform at their events because they know they will always be entertained. Thank you Mask and Wig for making our events so wonderful!!!”*

-DANIELLE PORTER, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF  
PROGRAMS AND EVENTS AT PENN

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