



# Music of Pi Beta Phi

Music has long been a cherished part of the Pi Phi experience. From chapter meetings and conventions to ceremonies and meeting Ritual, songs have brought members together across generations and created a shared connection grounded in sisterhood and tradition.

Pi Phi songs are a unique part of the Fraternity's heritage. They have been sung and shared by members for more than 150 years and are a cherished part of chapter life, Fraternity events and lifelong friendships. Through music, members celebrate the experiences that unite Pi Phis across space and time.

## Early Days

Interest in Fraternity music dates back to 1876. Records from the Lambda Chapter of I.C. Sorosis at Simpson College (now Iowa Beta) include references to songs such as the "Hallowe'en Song," "I.C. Marching Song" and "I.C. Banquet Song."

Music was so important to early Pi Phis that the 1882 Burlington, Iowa, Convention included a constitutional provision requiring meetings to close by singing an I.C. song.

The first song sung throughout the Fraternity as an official I.C. song was "The Foundation Song," written

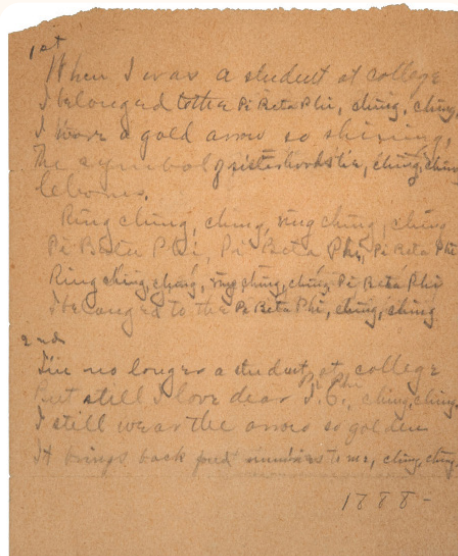
by Kansas Alpha **ETHEL BEECHER ALLEN HAMILTON** in 1883. It later appeared in the first issue of *The Arrow* in May 1885.

As Pi Phi grew, members began sharing songs across chapters and contributing original lyrics and music through correspondence and *The Arrow*. This collaborative effort



eventually led to the Fraternity's first published song collection in 1892, bringing together songs written and shared by members from across North America.

One of the most beloved songs in Pi Phi history was written in 1888 by Iowa Alpha **LULU SAWYERS LINN**. "Ring, Ching, Ching," sung to



the tune of "When I Was a Student at Cadiz," was written in response to a request from *The Arrow* Editor for song submissions.

The adoption of "Ring, Ching, Ching" at the 1892 Lawrence, Kansas, Convention helped establish the song as a Pi Phi favorite. The song would go on to become one of the most widely recognized and enduring songs in Pi Phi history.

In 1915, Lulu learned from Grand Vice President **NINA HARRIS ALLEN** that the song she'd written 27 years earlier had become famous throughout the Fraternity. The original handwritten lyrics, preserved on a yellowed piece of tablet paper, were later presented to Oregon Alpha and now reside in the Fraternity archives at Headquarters.

Another enduring musical tradition began in 1916 when Colorado Alpha **LORAIN LENZ CARROL** wrote "The Loving Cup Song." The song became closely associated with the passing of the loving cup at convention and Initiation banquets and became one of Pi Phi's most meaningful songs.

In 1921, several Pi Phi songs were recorded on a double-disc record and sold by the New York Alumnae Club as a fundraiser for the Pi Beta Phi Settlement School. Michigan Beta **NEVA HUNGERFORD CUTLER** came up with the idea, and Illinois Zeta **KATHRYNE BROWNE**, a professional opera singer, recorded three songs: "Pi Beta Phi Anthem," "Ring, Ching, Ching" and "The Loving Cup Song." The record was sold for \$1.75.

## Role of Director Fraternity Heritage and Vice President Member Experience

The responsibilities of the Director Fraternity Heritage/Vice President Member Experience or delegated Music Chair include:

- Organizing a comprehensive music program for the chapter
- Guiding members toward a shared knowledge of Fraternity music
- Incorporating Fraternity songs into chapter activities beyond recruitment
- Conducting regular song practice sessions
- Coordinating chapter music activities and traditions



# Role of Music Chair

At the International Officer level, the Music Chair is an appointed volunteer who helps preserve and promote Pi Phi's musical heritage. The role demonstrates the Fraternity's ongoing commitment

to celebrating music in a fun, engaging and enthusiastic way.

The Music Chair's responsibilities include collaborating with Headquarters staff on music programming, encouraging participation in Fraternity music at the chapter and alumnae levels, recommending a convention volunteer pianist and leading the Convention Chorus called The Grace Notes.

Music Chairs and other advocates for Pi Phi music through the years include:

**MARY BARTOL THEISS**  
Pennsylvania Beta  
– Song Book Editor, 1899 and 1904

**ALLEYNE ARCHIBALD**  
Nebraska Beta  
– Song Book Editor, 1914

**LAUREL PAYER CISSNA**  
Indiana Gamma  
– Song Book Editor, 1923

**MARGARET KELLENBACH KNIPTASH**  
Indiana Gamma  
– Song Book Editor, 1931

**DOROTHY VALE KISSINGER**  
Wisconsin Beta  
– Song Book Editor, 1946

**ANNE LOGAN HEFLIN**  
Missouri Alpha  
– Song Book Editor, 1967

**SUZANNE CHAPMAN LAWSON**  
Oklahoma Beta  
– Music Chair, 1995 – 1999

**JEANNINE VAN WAGENEN FUNK**  
Nevada Alpha  
– Music Chair, 1999 – 2005

**MARLA NEELLY WULF**  
Kansas Beta  
– Music Chair, 2005 – 2009

**MARIAN HAUKE THOM**  
Oregon Gamma  
– Music Chair, 2009 – 2011

**JANE BONY HEISERMAN**  
California Delta  
– Music Chair, 2011 – 2017

**RENEE RICHARDSON BENNETT**  
South Dakota Alpha  
– Music Chair, 2017 – 2025

**JESSIE MAYNE**  
Alabama Alpha  
– Music Chair, 2025 - present

## Song Book

Pi Phi's songbooks have preserved and shared the Fraternity's musical traditions for generations. The first Pi Phi song collection was published in 1892 and included songs submitted by chapters across the Fraternity. The first official song book followed in 1899 and was expanded in later editions as new music was written and shared.

By 1904, the song book contained 130 songs. The 1914 edition grew to 160 songs, reflecting the importance of music in Fraternity life and the creativity of Pi Phi members. The current edition of "The Music of Pi Beta Phi" song book, published in 1991, includes lyrics and sheet music for 37 Pi Phi



songs and is available in the Pi Beta Phi Resource Library. Favorite songs from the collection include “Boom Boom, I Wanna Be a Pi Beta Phi,” “Cookie Shine Song,” “Ring, Ching, Ching” and “Take a Little Golden Arrow.”



## 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

In honor of Pi Beta Phi's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017, the Fraternity launched several initiatives to renew member engagement with Pi Phi's musical heritage.

These efforts included updates to the music module of the Leading with Values New Member Program and the creation of a CD called “Acapella Angels: The Music of Pi Beta Phi.” The recording features collegians, volunteers and Headquarters staff performing 20 beloved Pi Phi songs. Today, these recordings are available for streaming on Spotify and Apple Music, helping a new generation of Pi Phis learn and celebrate the songs that have connected members throughout the Fraternity's history. ✨

