



Albert Einstein:

MUSICAL GENIUS?

By Brian J. Kelley '97 (journ.)



Many great vocalists and musicians have passed through the halls of Westminster Choir College over the years, but perhaps the greatest mind to ever grace the quaint Princeton campus was hardly a virtuoso.

Albert Einstein—yes, *THAT* Albert Einstein—used to play violin for the school's orchestra.

Jean Williamson Thompson, daughter of Westminster Choir College founder John Finley Williamson, recalled her childhood memories of the legendary physicist in a letter to *Reminiscence* magazine.

"I wrote it back before 1997 and it was published in December 2003," said Thompson in a phone interview from her home in De Land, Florida.

In the brief account, Thompson says "we both loved ice cream and often walked home together, happily licking our ice cream cones. He was a gentle, beautiful man, and no fuss was made over him when he played in the orchestra of Westminster Choir College."

Thompson also recalls a holiday memory involving Einstein.

"The Einsteins never pulled their shades down. One Christmas Eve, when the students went out to sing carols to him, they saw his bedroom light go on, then watched him get out of bed in his nightshirt and nightcap. He went to the closet, put his coat over his nightshirt and came out on that snowy night to accompany them on his violin," Thompson wrote.

The American Boychoir, invited by Williamson in 1950 to move from its cramped quarters in Columbus, Ohio, to an estate known as

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