

These lines can only be a snapshot. I met Sandy in May 2007, to ask him about a Princeton fellow student from the Triangle Club named Brooks Bowman, the composer of *"East of the Sun"*.

Bowman died in a car accident in 1937 and Sandy Maxwell was the only living person who had a present memory of him. Sandy was a substitute for Brooks Bowman during the rehearsals for *"What a Relief"* in autumn 1935. From the first moment on I was deeply impressed by Sandy's energy, the sonorous, well articulated voice in which he told me his memories.

I told him about Joe Bushkin, pianist of Tommy Dorsey and composer of *"Oh! Look at Me Now"* who always wanted to become 88 years old, because a piano has 88 keys. For some reason mistakenly I thought Sandy also was 88. For some other reason he did not correct me at that time, maybe because he liked the story so much.



Conversin' with the elders: Edith Borden and Sandy Maxwell recording „More than Ever“

written by Brooks Bowman and his friend William H. Borden in October 1937. They introduced it to a New York publisher and it turned out to be a breakthrough for the two young men. Only hours later Bowman died in the car crash. Bill Borden never touched the song again. Over 70 years later it was rediscovered by Bill Borden's daughter Edith. Edith and Sandy recorded it for the first time ever.



Lively discussion about the 1930s

Some weeks later, in June 2007 I returned to Princeton again with a young singer from Berlin, whom I had convinced that it would be a good idea to record some of the old songs with Sandy. Among the sheet music there was *"More than Ever"*, a piece that has a very special history. It was

If Sandy was a perfect host and gentleman, while I was his guest, I don't know how to augment that description when he was recording the old songs with *Viola*.

Sandy Maxwell

Dec. 8, 1917 - Feb. 23, 2008



Sandy Maxwell waving good-bye June 21, 2007



Viola & Max - Why change?

It was a time travel into Princeton 1935, into an atmosphere of everything for which America can be loved. I felt like I was in a movie. One of my favourite pictures from that day shows Viola on a timeless easy chair with Sandy's dog Max sitting on her knees.

When Sandy and Viola recorded "East of the Sun" a summer storm's loud crack of thunder proved that there was somebody listening.

Some months later, on Oct. 17, during a Berlin concert in memory of Brooks Bowman who at the age of 23 left this world much sooner than Sandy did, we were showing a picture of young Sandy Maxwell and describing his memories of Brooks.

When we told the audience that Sandy would be celebrating his 90th birthday in December there was spontaneous applause. He must have heard it in Princeton.

More than words the wonderful songs that were recorded in June can explain who Sandy Maxwell was and still *is*.

Because this wonderful gentleman, his deep, good hearted friendliness, his humour and his music *lives on* in every human being that had the pleasure and honour to meet him.



Oct. 17, 2007 - Tribute to Brooks - applause for Sandy (To watch the videoclip, an flv player has to be installed)



More than Ever (Brooks Bowman/William H. Borden, 1937), 1:58 vocals by Edith Borden

Can it be true (Sandy Maxwell, 1937), 2:02 vocals by Viola Manigk

East of the Sun (Brooks Bowman, 1934), 4:04 vocals by Viola Manigk

Better than Average Girl (Sandy Maxwell, 1938), 1:12 Sandy solo

You sing the same old Song (Sandy Maxwell, 1938), 1:12 vocals by Viola Manigk



As a tribute ***Can it be true*** was played for the first time in Berlin/Germany on March 1, 2008.

Viola Manigk - vocals
Alexander Zerning - guitar
Hans Martin Fleischer - double bass

(Quick time video, 6,6 MB)

about the author
Hans Martin Fleischer (44) lives in Berlin. He is working on a biography about Brooks Bowman '36