

Make a Will guide



A message from our chairman

Sarah Rodgers



Here at the PRS Members' Fund we believe that music has immense value and plays an enormous part in our lives.

Songs are adored by millions around the world, but those who helped create them often remain unknown and can sometimes struggle during difficult times.

Our aim is to support songwriters and composers, the creative force at the heart of this industry. That is why we work hard every day to improve their lives and well-being.

At a time when life has become so unpredictable we rely on the generosity of others to make a positive change in the lives of those creators and their families who need support.

We encourage everyone to learn more about the importance of making a Will, so your wishes can be followed on your death.

We will be happy to discuss the next steps with you if you would like to learn more.

"Many music creators, particularly the most vulnerable ones, struggle to make ends meet, and support from the PRS Members' Fund is instrumental in preventing them from falling further into poverty and improving their well-being." Sarah Rodgers

About the PRS Members' Fund

The PRS Members' Fund is a registered charity whose charitable purpose is the relief and prevention of poverty through financial help and other assistance to past and present members of the Performing Rights Society (PRS) and their dependants.

The Fund was formed in 1934. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we have been able to provide support to PRS songwriters, composers, and their families in times of crisis.

We all know the music business can be unpredictable and demanding, and even after periods of success it can be precarious with no guarantee of earnings. This means that when crisis hits such as illness, accident or emotional breakdown, there may be no safety net.

We can help with support and advice for those struggling financially, physically, or emotionally – whether in crisis and in need of immediate support with financial help, housing, mental health or physical health issues or looking for career advice.

Over the last ten years the Fund awarded £6.3 million in grants and loans to help PRS members and their loved ones make it through difficult times.



Support the future generations of music creators

WHY LEAVE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL?

Music is so important to all our lives. Without the creators behind the melodies and lyrics, there would be no soundtracks to our lives.

Music makes us feel better and plays a vital role in helping us stay positive, especially during difficult times. Legacies are vitally important and collectively help the Fund continue its work in supporting music makers.

We encourage PRS writers to make a Will so that their Estate, including any copyright interests and royalties, is distributed in accordance with their wishes and not left to the vagaries of intestacy law.

We want members to think about what happens to their copyrights and royalties on their death and after providing for family and friends perhaps consider leaving a gift to the PRS Members' Fund to support our work and their fellow members who are suffering ill-health and financial hardship.

Together we can make a lasting impact and let the music live forever!



There are many ways to support the Fund

£40 could pay for return travel costs for an important hospital appointment.

£50 supports music creators affected by the cost of living crisis.

£100 pays for an urgent specialist medical assessment.

Pecuniary gifts:

a fixed sum of money.

Residuary gifts:

a share of the estate.

Gift of royalties:

members can leave any percentage of their PRS royalties to the Fund. It is also possible to leave MCPS and PPL earnings, publisher income, and other royalties.

Will writing notes are available on request which deal specifically with bequests of royalties to the PRS Members' Fund. As a registered UK charity any gifts to the PRS Members' Fund are currently exempt from UK Inheritance Tax and Capital Gains Tax.

Why a gift of royalties is different?

The nature of a royalty bequest presents unique benefits for both the donor and the recipient.

Copyrights continue for 70 years after the death of the writer.

It is a heart-warming thought that 20 years after death, a gift could buy a much-needed new pair of glasses for an elderly composer or pay rent arrears that stopped a struggling songwriter being evicted.

Our Make A Will service to members

bequeathed
make your Will For Good

SIMKINS

WHEN MAKING OR UPDATING YOUR WILL, WE RECOMMEND YOU GET PROFESSIONAL ADVICE FROM A SOLICITOR.



“Make your Will For Good” – free and professionally drafted with our new partner Bequeathed.

The simple way to make the right Will for you.

We all need an up-to-date Will, but it’s one of those jobs many of us put off. With Bequeathed, you can get started straight away. Just go online any time that suits you and follow the simple steps to create a draft Will.

A member of staff from one of their partner legal firms will then advise you in a free 30-minute appointment, in person or over the phone.

Once your Will is complete the firm will help you with getting it signed and witnessed.

There is never any charge for a standard Will, which is suitable for most people.

If your circumstances are complicated and you require further legal advice, the legal firm will explain what’s needed and give you a quote to consider. [Click here](#) to start.

For more complex or international needs assistance can be provided by our partner media and entertainment law firm Simkins LLP. Contact them at wills@simkins.com.

For further information regarding the Make A Will service, contact us at fund@prsformusic.com.



David Ferguson, although not a familiar name outside the business world of music, was highly respected within the music fraternity. A South Londoner, he was born in 1953 and educated at Dulwich College. It did not then appear that music would be his life's work, for he initially took a degree in Slavonic Studies at London University and then, despite no formal tuition, turned to music as a profession.

A founder-member of a group called *Random Hold* and a producer of backstage music for several theatres he eventually established a reputation for creating television music that was 'different'.

He was brought up in a family infused with political ideology and with a maternal grandmother who had been an ardent Labour councillor, plus parents with strong political beliefs, it is not surprising he became a champion of legal rights issues and will be long remembered by the entire British music profession for his incredible activity in ensuring fair dealings for composers and songwriters.

As a composer he is probably best remembered for his scores for *Cracker*; *Bravo Two Zero*; *Rebus*; *American Visions* and early episodes of *Auf Wiedersehen Pet*. Having once been subjected to a coercive publishing threat he also took up the cudgel on behalf of fellow writers and for twenty years he held senior roles on the committees of the PRS, MCPS and British Music Rights. But more importantly, for the last six years of his life, as Chairman of The Ivors Academy (formerly the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors – BASCA) and founder chairman of the Creators Rights Alliance, he became a vital voice for musicians' rights, successfully establishing a pan-European Composers & Songwriters Alliance.

At the 2009 Ivor Novello Awards ceremony he was awarded a BASCA Fellowship, the academy's highest honour, and sadly it was to be his last public appearance. He had begun to suffer from pancreatic cancer in 2007 and, although in remission for a time, a reoccurrence sadly brought his life to an end in July 2009 at the early age of 56.

Although his triumphs on behalf of the music industry is a Legacy in itself, he will be ever remembered for the generous Legacy of his copyrights and royalties bequeathed to this Fund.

The Legacy Memorial

DAVID FERGUSON

ONE OF BRITAIN'S MOST SUCCESSFUL TELEVISION COMPOSERS
WHO SPENT THE LAST DECADE OF HIS LIFE CAMPAIGNING
TIRELESSLY FOR THE RIGHTS OF COMPOSERS AND SONGWRITERS.



With World War Two at an end, London dance band leader, Lou Preager, organised a song contest as a morale booster. Billed as *Write a Tune for £1,000* the weekly BBC broadcasts from the Hammersmith Palais became highly popular radio listening. By the close of 1945 the public vote declared the winner to be *Cruising Down the River* – a languid tuneful waltz written by two 55-year-old ladies, Miss Eily Beadell and Miss Nell Tollerton.

When Eily Beadell died, she generously left her performing royalties to the PRS Members' Fund and although not an internationally renowned writer, or indeed a prolific one, her bequest has proved to be surprisingly lucrative.

Born in 1890 in Battersea, some 4 miles west of central London, she remained thereabouts all her life. Little is known of her personal life, but one story goes that she was a member of *Tolly and her Trio* in the then elegant tearoom of Ely's Department Store in Wimbledon.

Tolly was her best friend, Nellie Tollerton, and together they wrote songs as a hobby. Their entire output was less than twenty compositions with only a handful being published and, when their combined claim-to-fame came rather late in life, it was all down to that one song.

Sung by Paul Rich with Lou Preager's Orchestra, its first recording was issued in January 1946 and, together with its sheet music sales, it eventually became a worldwide hit. By 1949 America had taken it to its heart and a recording by Russ Morgan and his Orchestra peaked at No. 1 in their hit parade and remained in the charts for 22 weeks. Many other British and US recordings followed – Vera Lynn, Connie Francis, Frank Sinatra, and it featured in a 1953 film given the same name as the song and sung by its star Dick Haymes.

Co-writer, Nellie Tollerton, died in 1958, but Eily Beadell reaped its financial benefits until her death in 1971 at the age of 81. The Fund is eternally grateful for the bequest from Eily, for her bequest, just like her nameless river, flows freely to assist present day members who suffer from financial hardship and illness.

The Legacy Memorial

EILY BEADELL

'CRUISING DOWN THE RIVER' WAS A WORLDWIDE HIT AND MANY BRITISH AND US RECORDINGS FOLLOWED – VERA LYNN, CONNIE FRANCIS, FRANK SINATRA, AND IT FEATURED IN A 1953 FILM GIVEN THE SAME NAME AS THE SONG AND SUNG BY ITS STAR DICK HAYMES.



The elder brother of Dusty Springfield, the finest and most soulful female British singer to emerge during the decade, he joined her and Mike Hurst in the Springfields, a trio who enjoyed commercial success in Britain, the US and Australia from 1961 to 1963.

When Dusty left to follow her solo career, Tom began working as a songwriter and producer with an Australian band, the Seekers, who also specialised in pop-folk songs and had a similar lineup, though with added double-bass, and a female lead vocalist, Judith Durham.

The Seekers had already recorded an album in Australia, and arrived in the UK in spring 1964 and they stayed on to become the first Australian group to achieve major success in the UK – thanks largely to Springfield, who did not perform with them but became their producer and principal songwriter, known as “the fifth Seeker”.

Tom’s hit songs for the band included *I’ll Never Find Another You*, which reached No 1 in the UK and Australia and No 4 in the US in 1964-65, *A World of Our Own* (No 3 in the UK in April 1965) and *The Carnival Is Over* (No 1 in November 1965), which Springfield had adapted from a Russian folk song.

Following Springfield’s death, the Seekers wrote that *“we could not have done it without him. He was our creative heart and soul”*.

When Tom passed away he bequeathed his future royalties to the PRS Members’ Fund to support the most vulnerable in the PRS community.

[Click here](#) to watch our 1-min tribute to Tom’s generosity and please consider making a royalties’ bequest in your own Will.

The Legacy Memorial

TOM SPRINGFIELD

TOM SPRINGFIELD WAS AN ENGLISH MUSICIAN, SONGWRITER AND RECORD PRODUCER WHO WAS PROMINENT IN THE 1960S FOLK AND POP MUSIC SCENE, AND WROTE HITS INCLUDING *GEORGY GIRL, A WORLD OF OUR OWN, I’LL NEVER FIND ANOTHER YOU AND THE CARNIVAL IS OVER.*

OUR PLEDGE TO YOU



LEAVING A GIFT IN YOUR WILL IS A SPECIAL AND PERSONAL DECISION. THAT IS WHY WE PROMISE:

- We will continue to offer financial and welfare support to PRS songwriters and composers and develop our services to meet our members' needs.
- We will use your gift wisely and cost-effectively so that it has the greatest impact for PRS songwriters and composers in financial need.
- You can change your mind about leaving a Gift in your Will at any time, and we will respect your decision.
- Any personal information that you choose to give us will be handled securely and confidentially. We will always respect your privacy – you choose the frequency and ways we can contact you.
- Once you leave a Gift in your Will, you will join a powerful community of people working tirelessly for music creators. We will update you on our work through our newsletters and communications.
- Your contribution will not be forgotten. It will ensure our work continues to support songwriters and composers for generations to come.