Hi Barbershoppers,

In recent BSN issues I have talked about the "big picture", and all the opportunities available to experience the thrill of barbershopping outside our own local club. Events like our Australian Barbershop Quartet Challenge, and Sunshine Regional this August. Or the Pan Pacific Convention in beautiful Hawaii, held on back-to-back weekends with the Sweet Adelines International Convention, starting 30 Oct this year. And, of course, no chorus in Australia should be left out of the next AAMBS National Convention and Harmony College in Hobart in September next year. But today I would like to talk about barbershopping closer to home.

My question to every AAMBS member is this......... how much fun are you making barbershopping for everyone else? I know after a bad day at the office, or even a bad day as a retiree 😊...... we might show up at our weekly rehearsal and not be the friendliest barbershopper on the risers. Maybe with an attitude of "OK....I'm here.......make me have fun." It's on nights like that, that the real personal challenge arises. What if a lot of the other guys are also tired, or grumpy, or sad about something. That's when it's time for you to make the special effort to shine. Take a deep breath, and do something nice for a fellow barbershopper. You know you have your "performance smile" tucked away somewhere, so maybe breaking that out would lift the mood for everyone else. A few actions that are light-hearted, or enthusiastic, or supportive, or complimentary can transform the whole mood of the evening. Being tolerant is also especially effective. Not every singer works to your riser or performance standard. Encourage rather than disparage them.

I've seen the whole ambience of a rehearsal lifted by simple actions of one or two members. Maybe this week it's your turn to be that person. It's a great way to overcome the travails of the day, and make a great barbershop experience even greater!

Smile.......... hold that!

In Harmony,

Mike Donnelly

Could I make a difference?

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THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN BARBERSHOP CHALLENGE

So! Where are all those Quartet entries?

So many choruses are saying, yes but we don't have enough Tenors to form Quartets. Well here is another approach! Every barbershopper has amongst his acquaintances people who know that you sing but feel they just couldn't do that and we all know that they can, don't we?

They don't even know that they are not tenors. With your encouragement, CDs. sheet music, you could get them ready before August to learn just two songs and while you are about it rope in two other parts to join you in the privacy of your place where they won't get embarrassed in front of strangers. Maybe over a BBQ ora couple of beers. You'll enthrall your families. Why not give it more than a thought. Do it this week!

If you can do it you might just help your chorus' ongoing recruitment programme as a result after the event. AAMBS has yet to produce its first family Quartet. Now that would be a first worth thinking about.

The big event will be at Ipswich in Queensland on August 16th. Remember the sterling performance put in by the "Miner Chords" in Sydney last year on debut. You all just know that this enthusiastic bunch are going to put on a great week-end. Better still. It will only cost your Quartet a small amount of money. Home hosting is available for all visiting Quartets so you might just save air fares by sharing the petrol in one car.

Someone might have already mentioned that the weather in August in Queensland is a little kinder. Are you listening Tasmanian Quartets? Great opportunity to showcase your National Convention in Hobart next year. 1100 people a week have been moving to Queensland for the last few years. Brisbane is no longer a country town. Who knows you may just like it so much you'll get the urge to stay, then you could join the River City Clippers or Miner Chords. John Newell of "Realtime" did and look what happened to him!

On an immediate and practical note we need someone from each chorus to undertake the responsibility to spread the word personally about this unique competition in this off year through local contacts. Give the story to your local throw away paper. Ring your mate at the local radio station and get those entries in to AAMBS Secretary, Kevin White.

Derek Churchill
VP Marketing

Any competing quartets MUST be registered with AAMBS. This is done by downloading a Quartet Registration Application from the Website, choosing a list of 3 possible names you would like, and submitting it to me. I will check the names of quartets already registered and let you know which name is available, remembering that names of previous AAMBS medal winning quartets are not available for re-use. I noted that some of the quartets who competed in the recent Hills Harmony Quartet Contest had not registered their name or line up –unless these quartets register quickly and secure their names they will not be eligible to compete in the Great Australian Barbershop Quartet Challenge - so, fellas, get a form from the website and do it NOW.

I invite you to take note of the report from our Treasurer, Barry Joy, on the extension of insurance coverage which has been negotiated by the AAMBS Council, going beyond the traditional Public Liability coverage and now about to provide substantial Accident Insurance to members themselves.

And let us move on to provide assistance to our fellow members and our fellow choruses wherever need exists.

The AAMBS Council stands ready to help, to visit and to co-operate with any chorus in need of guidance. All it takes is to ask.

Sin(g)cerely,
Kevin White
From our Treasurer

AAMBS insurance

Public Liability

The public liability insurance cover AAMBS provides to all registered AAMBS members and clubs continues to indemnify against any claims which may be made by a member of the public as a result of attending an event presented by a registered chorus or quartet.

Previously the policy was underwritten by QBE Insurance but on its renewal for twelve months from 1st June 2008 will be underwritten by Sportscover Australia Pty Ltd and placed with Lloyds of London.

The broker is DanceSurance Australia which provides specialised service to dance and performing arts organisations. A copy of the Certificate of Currency of the policy will be available very soon.

Additional Insurance cover at no extra charge

AAMBS Council has decided to add a new cover on a trial basis until 1st March 2009 without additional charge. From 1st June 2008 all members and clubs will be covered by a Dance & Performing Arts Accident Scheme. The policy will also be underwritten by Sportscover Australia.

Here is an outline of the benefits –

Coveting:

Students/Members and Competitors/Officials of the Insured, (other than whilst social dancing and at home), whilst:

* Dancing / Performing Australia Wide in organized training sessions, competitions, displays, performances, etc.
* Travelling to / from their dance / performance activities, to / from their residence, school or place of employment.
* Touring world-wide for the purpose of participating in the sport/art of dancing/performing art, whilst representing their studio, club, organisation or their State or National body.

Benefits:

Death & Disablement Benefits: ........................................ $30,000
Note: Under 18 years of age (Event 1 - Accidental Death) ........................................ $10,000

Medical Expenses: 80% of all Non-Medicare medical expenses up to $2,000 per injury, including: Ambulance, Chiropractic, Massage, Private Hospital, Dental Services, Theatre Fees (in Private Hospital where Medicare does not apply), Naturopath, Osteopath, Orthotics & Prosthesis (prescribed by a Medical Practitioner for the treatment of injury only) and Physiotherapy (95% of initial 5 visits, 80% of the next 6-10 visits and 75% of subsequent visits).

Note: a) Members who are not covered by Private Health Insurance are subject to a $50 excess per claim.
b) Due to Government Legislation, students/members can not be covered for any part of any "Medicare" Doctor, Surgeon, Anaesthetist, X-ray or other "Medicare" related account.

Student Allowance for full time students (costs incurred for tutoring, travelling, etc, up to a maximum of $300 p.w.).

Domestic Home Help for non-income earners (costs incurred [as per policy] up to a max. of $200 p.w.).

Loss of Income for full time employees (up to 75% of weekly salary, to a maximum of $200 p.w., for a maximum period of fifty two (52) weeks per claim). Excess 7 Days.

Barry Joy
National Treasurer
Editors Note:

Gentlemen –

Thank you very much ... you have become so good at sending photos with your Barbershop Notes Contributions that we have not been able to include them all in your articles for this issue of Barbershop Notes !!

I apologise for those who expected to see their faces smiling out on the following pages but unfortunately some have ended up on the editing floor

I have also had to edit the contribution from the Westcoast Chordsmen as some of their report was already covered in the article from Fleurieu – Sorry Pender!
“SLEEP WITH A BARBERSHOPPER”

(A new initiative for the Sunshine Region Convention)

The combined Sunshine Region 2008 Convention and the Inaugural Barbershop Quartet Challenge will be an outstanding event.

To encourage closer collaboration within and outside the region we are encouraging the “sleep together” initiative.

Within the region, particularly the Brisbane, Gold Coast and Ipswich areas, we need co-operative Barbershoppers who will provide Billets and transport for our visiting Quartets and for Chorus Members from more remote areas such as Gympie and beyond!

The move will be even more successful if we have Barbershoppers (with or without partners) who are keen to accept this hospitality.

PLEASE SEND AN E-MAIL TO TREVOR REMPHREY AT marinett@bigpond.net.au BEFORE JUNE 30, 2008 ADVISING:

Name:
Address:
e-mail contact:
‘phone contact:

And either Accommodation Required OR Accommodation Available

Trevor will then be back in contact to co-ordinate and introduce HOST and GUEST.

Accommodation will be required for at least the evening of Friday and Saturday 15th & 16th August 2008.

“Let’s all get together again and we’ll have a wonderful time”

AN INNOVATIVE WAY TO ATTRACT NEW MEMBERS

The following article, from a Western Region Newsletter, describes the great way in which the Sweet Adelines attracted new members – We should all try it in our areas

“New Chorus Grows

A CAPPHELLA WEST is already breaking new ground in the Sweet Adeline organisation despite only having been on the music scene in WA for just 3 short weeks! With 106 singers taking part in a 6 week vocal education course at Murdoch University in the southern suburbs of Perth, you have to wonder how this all came about?

Lindsey Dyer had recently relocated from NSW where she was a medal winning Director with both “Sydney Town” and “Aurora Australis” Choruses. As well as singing with the Australian Champion Perth Harmony Chorus who will be competing in Hawaii later this year, Lindsey was also keen to continue with her directing so began developing a plan for a new Chorus.

The Team believe their success can be contributed to the “5 P’s” -

- **Product** - Providing an opportunity to learn a new skill under the leadership of a proven Director.
- **Price** - Creating interest in the group by offering a 6 week vocal course at a cost of only $30.
- **Place** - Aligning with an educational facility so that the singers see the experience as a way of bettering themselves. With Perth Harmony rehearsing in the northern suburbs, recognising the need for something similar in the southern suburbs.
- **Promotion** - Articles and photos in community newspapers so as to reach those living and working in the area. Choosing the right time when people are looking at taking on a challenge with the start of a new year.
- **People** - Gathering like minded people together who all share the same dream. Enlisting the help of those with a proven track record who are willing to support you in the early stages. Most importantly, finding a Director with the right mixture of enthusiasm, charisma and musical skills!

Many of those currently completing the 6 week course have shown a keen interest in continuing on to become the foundation members of the new Chorus. Lindsey believes that this phenomenal start is only the beginning of a very bright future for A Cappella West.

Jennifer Bullen”
**Voices in Harmony**

**a GREAT success.**

For six days (29 Apr – 4 May), members and partners from Festival Statesmen, Fleurieu Harmony, West Coast Chordsmen and some Southside Harmony came together in Adelaide for some great singing and fellowship.

This is the 3rd of the series of concerts held between the South Australian and West Australian Choruses.

The concept of getting together for a series of workshops, finalizing in a concert, was suggested by Bruce Okely from Perth and the first was held here in Adelaide. The following year the SA choruses visited Perth and now SA is delighted to host the 2008 event. These visits have enabled the members to thoroughly enjoy themselves in a fantastic musical and social event and many new friendships have formed.

A well formed committee planned the event down to the last detail and went into action, picking up WA guests at the airport in buses and cars, taking them to their Motel. With everyone in by 7pm Tuesday, it was a short walk across the road to a great Welcome dinner. A great time of greeting, eating and music bleating was had by all.

The next morning was a workshop at the nearby St. Andrews Uniting Church, while the ladies met and planned with a small committee of partners what they could do and see while the guys were enjoying themselves singing.

Following a Quartet class after lunch, the guys got together at the Royalty Theatre in Adelaide that evening for their first lock and rehearsal in the venue for the Main Concert.

Thursday was a free day, with an evening rehearsal at the Royalty, including some of our guest artists; Sisters of Abundance and the Fishbowl Boys. The show was coming together well.

Friday was an organised tour with around 120 attending. After morning tea at Adare, they proceeded to Victor Harbor where they were officially welcomed by the Mayor of Victor. Then some sight seeing, a horse tram ride to Granite Island and lunch together at the Whales Inn, overlooking the sea. Everywhere they stopped there was singing and from all reports a good time was had by all.

Saturday was the BIG DAY. We met at the theatre after lunch for a full dress rehearsal & some fine tuning of the show. After a light meal at the theatre, we were READY TO GO.

We had one big PROBLEM. Our hard working Secretary, ROD WHYTE, was hospitalised on Thursday night with a heart problem and was to miss all that he had worked for.

And so it was decided to dedicate the show to him and his hard work.

N.B. He has had surgery and after a setback, is slowly improving.

Also thanks to his wife, Dini, for all that she has done.

**ON WITH THE SHOW:**

Adelaide identity, Richard Berry, as MC, welcomed a capacity crowd of 500 plus.

The Massed choruses opened with a bracket of songs which were enthusiastically received.

They were followed by the ladies group, SISTERS OF ABUNDANCE, under the leadership of Greg John. They brought a lively performance, full of colour and good harmony.

**FLEURIEU HARMONY**

& quartet then brought a bracket which included a quick demonstration of the construction of barbershop which was very entertaining.

The FESTIVAL STATESMEN then performed a bracket of slower ballads and took the audience on a musical journey to ‘California’. The change of pace was well received.

The next act, the FISHBOWL BOYS, had brought their fans with them & they also endeared the older members of the audience to them. Earning an encore, they show great promise for barbershop in SA.

**WESTCOAST CHORDSMEN** then took to the stage. Much delight to all with their singing & choreography, & showing the way to ‘Wim-O-Wey’. Great quartet as well.

Trumpet and flugelhorn Champion MARK SMITH showed the talent that earned him the titles. He also described & demonstrated the difference between the instruments.

The combined choruses and the Fishbowl Boys then took the stage for another combined bracket of songs. Then for the Grand Finale, the choruses were joined by the Sisters of Abundance. We performed the song, ‘Perhaps Love’ with mixed voicing. A great finish to a great show. A great audience. Everyone went home on a high.

On Sunday morning the choruses took part in a Church service at St. Andrews. It was standing room only in the church and we sang three times during the service.

A little after the service, we gathered at the hotel again for our Farewell Luncheon. It was another great get together where we ate, drank and sang some more. Everyone was sad it was ending, but glad they’d had such a great time together. So we sang some more.

Monday it was back to getting our WA friends back to the airport. Then we all went home, cracked a tinny & put our feet up. SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL who made the week great.
The WA touring party of 68, 36 singers and 32 wives and family members, was the largest yet. We were accommodated together at the TAFT Motor Inn, within close walking distance to the Glenelg beachfront and the vibrant Jetty Road shopping precinct. Being accommodated together enabled us to better support each other during the tour. The Tuesday evening Welcome Dinner, at the Glenelg Jetty Road Bay and Reef Hotel, was just a short stroll from our motel. During the dinner, chorus members and wives created and renewed bonds of friendship. Following the dinner, each chorus serenaded those present with a song.

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On Friday, members and wives relaxed with an all-day coach trip to Victor Harbour, the premier seaside holiday town 85 km south of Adelaide and the unofficial capital of the Fleurieu Peninsula. The day included a 1.6 km ride on the double-decker horse-drawn tram across the wooden causeway from the mainland to Granite Island. We were then joined by our SA friends for a relaxed lunch at the Whalers Inn Resort, located at the base of the Bluff and overlooking Encounter Bay.

Following the church service, the Farewell Dinner gave everyone an opportunity to relax and celebrate with new and old friends in the harmony of song. David Evans, President of the Festival Statesmen, thanked the WA women for bringing their menfolk to SA. A special event during the proceedings was the presentation from the SA singers of an award of appreciation to Doug Davies for his song We've Come to Sing You Barbershop. Michael Wood, President of the Fleurieu Harmony Chorus, thanked the musical directors for their contributions and expressed everyone’s feelings with the comment: “We’ve got more out of this week than we ever expected”. He described the week in verse as follows.

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THE CLIPPERS MD AWARDED SCHOLARSHIP TO USA

In February of this year the committee of the Brisbane River City Clippers decided to apply for a Scholarship for the Musical Director, Don Godfrey, to attend Harmony University 2008.

In Don’s own words, “The submission was obviously quite deceptive and misleading, and so free with the truth that it was successful! and so in July this year I am off to Kansas for a week of coaching in the Directors’ School of Harmony University 2008. All accommodation and fees are covered by the BHS (The Barbershop Harmony Society).”

Scholarship holders are required to submit Music theory tests for placement purposes and DVDs for technique classes to analyse. Don has been given the Curriculum and the scope of the course is very broad. Directing techniques, Understanding Vocal sounds from in front of a chorus, Music team Development, Warm-up and Coaching Techniques, Beat and Rhythm, Voice Analysis as well as Directors Arranging, Music Theory and Basic Choreo are all possible classes, so our MD will be busy.

Don will also have a lot of songs to learn for the General Sessions so there is a lot of preparation to be done as well with sessions timetabled to go from 8.45 am to 9.45 pm with breaks for meals.

It will be an experience, which can only help as we try to improve the level of performance of our Chorus, and I am very grateful to the Chorus Management Committee for their support in the Scholarship application process.

THE CLIPPERS - MORE RELAXED WITH NEW SPONSOR ON BOARD!

The Brisbane River City Clippers are delighted to have attracted the support of Multi Award Winning Composer and recording Artist, Tony O’Connor.

You won’t see Tony’s video clips on Rage or MTV. You may not often hear his music on popular radio. In fact it is a rare treat to see him performing live. Yet without all the usual media and promotional hype associated with successful recording artists, Tony O’Connor has sold over four million albums worldwide (rare even amongst more mainstream acts) and is one of Australia’s most popular and biggest selling instrumental artists.

Tony’s music falls into many categories and, even though he scores for TV and documentaries and you will find his CDs in major record stores, it is his work in relaxation and stress management that has made him a household name both here and internationally. Doctors, nurses, natural therapists, palliative carers, teachers and students all over the world are tuned into the signature Tony O’Connor sound. ...........

Keith Druery

Men In Harmony
A Kiwi joins the team!

That’s right, our new Music Director, Richard Davies from New Zealand, is settling in very well and we are having a great time.

Richard, a talented musician, joined us in early March and is quickly placing his mark on the chorus. We are enjoying new ideas for learning and revising music and new routines for all the old essential practising of breath control, vowel matching, blending, etc.

Some of this is an extension of the initiatives of our Management and Music Committees aimed at involving as many members of the chorus as possible in running, not only the day to day administration of the club, but also contributing in the music department. We’ve found some great talent in the ranks with people applying considerable effort and research in devising new ways and means of getting the points across in warm up routines, adding fun and interest to what can be a dull exercise.

We’ve had quite a few casualties in the health department lately and the “off” (or non-convention) year is always popular for extended holidays. This some-what governs the engagements we can accept but several are firming for later in the year and we are looking forward to participating in the Western Region Convention weekend in June, which is shaping to be the most ambitious local gathering to date.

From time to time we enjoy surprise visits from overseas wandering barbershoppers, usually from the UK, who are holidaying or visiting family and find a need to pop in for a “close harmony fix”. It’s great to exchange greetings and first hand information about happenings on the other side of the world in this international musical family to which we belong. There are not too many organizations where one can so easily walk in “out of the blue”, step up on the risers and sing a few songs, feeling totally at home.

The same welcome mat is always there for any of you Eastern Staters who happen to venture this far West – do give us a buzz and let us know you’re in town – we can usually arrange a ride to rehearsal on Tuesday nights if you have time to share a chord or two. Cheers to all!

Andy Aberle
The Chorus was founded in Oct.1992 following the publication of an ad in the local Gympie Times. The ad had been run by The Buderim Chorus calling for men interested in forming a singing group within the area. A meeting was held at one of the hotels and a steering committee was formed. Ads were then run in the paper with an inaugural meeting being held at a hall associated with a church.

The meeting at the church hall attracted over 50 men but as is usually the case, the numbers dropped as the weeks passed. We settled with around 12-15 members, and despite some resignations and new members we still have a membership of 12 -14. We have had several Musical Directors over the period our current MD being Brendan Broderick. Under these directors we have learnt almost 90 songs however, we don't practise anywhere near this number. A big problem is that we now have only one tenor and one or two baritones .They are kept very busy. Because of the above mentioned numbers we can’t form more than one quartet.

We sing out at various old peoples homes, as well as any other venues as requested, but again if one of the above mentioned sections is unavailable … ????

Recently we lost two of our original members through death, one member being aged 101. Coincidently, his life long employment was as a barber.

We still enjoy getting together each Monday night when a good time is had by all. We have competed at several conventions in Brisbane as well as in Sydney and Canberra. Several of our members combined with the Sunshine Coast Chorus to sing at one of those gatherings

Pat Dinneen

Ed. Note:

On our visit to Queensland last week, my husband Kevin White (AAMBS Secretary), Derek Churchill (VP Marketing), Trevor Remphrey (Sunshine Region Chairman) and Mell McMichael (the inspiration for the formation of the Gympie Chorus) and I visited Gympie for their Monday night rehearsal and were blown away by the great sound that came from this Small Chorus. Congratulations to all and especially their MD, Brendan Broderick.

From Mothers' Day to The Battle Of The Choirs

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Gold Coast Rotary Clubs, mothers at several care centres were serenaded by The Blenders. The singing club’s mini-chorus and three of its quartets were out on Mother’s Day to bring joy and happiness to many people at Cypress Gardens, Alexa Lodge, Domain Annexe, Lady Small Haven, Robert Ashton, River Lodge and Abri Nursing Home.

The Club is now preparing to compete in the “Battle Of The Choirs”, a brand-new series coming soon to Channel Seven, with David Koch hosting the search for Australia's top choir. And The Blenders are proud to represent the Gold Coast and AAMBS in this event.

The Blenders showing off their new performance gear !!

The Battle Of The Choirs will showcase 16 choral groups from around Australia. The genres of gospel, barbershop, classical, pop, a cappella, jazz and soul will be represented, but it's personality, passion, power and performance that the judges will consider as the choirs perform songs from the likes of Kylie Minogue, Meatloaf, Rhianna, Kiss, AC/DC, Scissor Sisters, Stevie Wonder and more.

The first heat and quarter finals of “the battle” start during the second week of June in Sydney and at the end of the month the winner will be found. The show will be broadcasted on Channel 7 as soon as possible afterward.

In order to cover expenses the club is searching for sponsors. The Blenders are now in a competitive mood and are experimenting with a new style of music in anticipation of the Battle of the Choirs.

So Come On And Sing...

Gunter Illek, PR Co-ordinator, The Blenders

An easy way to attract new members to your Chorus…

……is to wear an AAMBS lapel badge. This is a great conversation opener :

“What’s that badge you’re wearing?”

“That’s AAMBS, the Australian Association for the men’s chorus I sing with. Do you sing?”

And so it goes on and soon you may have an interested new member on the risers with you. At only $5.00 each, this is a cheap advertising campaign for your Club. Compare that with putting an ad in a newspaper! And you can buy them from our AAMBS Secretary.

These little badges also make wonderful souvenirs for you to give to or exchange with other Barbershoppers – how about taking some to Hawaii with you? You’ll win a new lifelong friend, or two or three or more.
"The Melbournaires" male harmony chorus has just wrapped up its second "Sing in Harmony" recruitment drive and has been knocked-out by the response and success of the venture. As previously, the six week course (2 hours each Monday night) gave elementary singing training to potential new choristers. Those interested were required to register their intention to attend and in exchange they received basic voice training with an opportunity to learn two songs that were being sung by the chorus. Additionally they received course notes, a CD to assist in learning their chosen part and they sang with the whole chorus at a special "end of course" concert on the risers.

Can you imagine how surprised our 50 strong chorus was when we had an additional 80 interested singers join our ranks! The concert performed at the end of the course in front of an audience including a representative of the Manningham City Council who assisted us with funding, featured (we believe) one of the largest male choral groups in Victoria - exceeding even the large Welsh Choirs that are here in Victoria. It was a great success with much hard work being attributed to many in our ranks to achieve such a result. President Roger Archman who was one of the driving forces behind the success, was "delighted" to see that so many men had expressed an interest in our style of singing and found us as a possible link to ignite that interest.

Naturally on-going training and retention will be our focus from now - we would love to have at least 20% stay with us and continue to enjoy what we do in the "Melbournaires". We will ensure that our new found choristers are made to feel welcome - and we will always welcome others who would like to check us out!

For more details see our website at www.melbournaires.com.au or contact the information line on (03) 9898 6014
From Bill Kennedy on behalf of "The Melbournaires"

Hi guys,
A huge thank you to Kevin White and Nerida for visiting our chorus last Thursday night. Kevin and Nerida came up from the NSW Central Coast to visit Broadwater, Clippers and Gympie choruses. How great it was to put a face to a name. Kevin and Derek Churchill from the Clippers joined the guys for a couple of songs. Also one of the wives bought a cake and helped make coffee. The guys asked Kevin and Nerida many questions so a good time was had by all.

Broadwater Connection purchased new walk-out shirts and the chorus looked really “dapper” in them when Kevin, Nerida and Derek, plus other visitors, came. The chorus are starting to get a good sound and we now have a new Tenor to help our struggling single Tenor. Mind you our new Tenor may not be around for too long but while we have him we are very fortunate. We now have 15 in the chorus and it is still slowly growing. We lost two members to the Clippers and we have one member from the Blenders, and two who belong to the Clippers and Broadwater still with us.

Please note that Broadwater has no risers so if any chorus has risers that they want to get rid of please let me know.

The Regional and National Quartet Challenge are approaching. Our chorus will probably have two senior quartets in the Regional and it will be their first time competing. They are coming up with some “interesting” names for themselves but soon they will have to settle on one and register that name with Kevin White, the AAMBS Secretary. The hardest thing to teach them is to “sell” the song, to make the song come alive either with the story or the beautiful harmonies, hopefully both. Hand movements are very important and must be together or they don’t achieve anything – we are practising this but as usual one hand goes one way while the others are going another - Then there is the old story about faces and how to keep that smile on even when your knees are shaking. There is a lot to think of – but what a “challenge”. The chorus has two sing-outs in June and hopefully more to come.

The Sunshine Region is also very fortunate to have “Alliance” for our night concert at the Regionals and for three of them to be our judges. These guys have had a lot of experience in judging and performing and medals to prove it. Keep singing -

Cheers for now - Janet Sippen
MD Broadwater Chorus
& Secretary, Sunshine Region

2nd HILLS HARMONY ANNUAL BARBERSHOP CONTEST 19th APRIL 2008

The Hills Harmony Chorus held their second barbershop contest at the Galston Uniting Church to give all budding quartets, as well as established ones, in the region the opportunity to present their skills to the public and to their peers in an harmonious and relaxed environment. Well, so the story goes. No matter who you are and what level of skill, singing in front of knowledgeable judges and like-minded spectators is always a daunting experience and it showed on their faces. Rabbits in the headlights came to mind, in some cases.

Nine quartets from the ranks of Sydney Harmony, Soundwaves and Hills Harmony put forward some very creditable performances and provided the audience with a great afternoon’s entertainment. The invited judges Danny Millgate (Chairman), Bob Fritz and Peter Fragar, all long-time members of AAMBS, were asked to score the contestants in formal contest mode. The winner was a newly formed quartet from Sydney Harmony members called Just 4 Now, while second and third place, Men in Tune and Highjacked came from Hills Harmony. Ian Fraser, the MC for the contest, was persistent in
inflicting his brand of humour upon the audience, but it should be said that slick organisation skills from the Hills Harmony crew prevented any corn slipping through and prevented any further embarrassment.

For the first time, choruses were asked to compete and be judged in simulated contest conditions. Sydney Harmony and Hills Harmony both recorded the same score but the inaugural chorus trophy was awarded to Hills Harmony on a count back of their singing scores. Soundwaves were a very close third.

Hills Harmony gratefully thank Richard Wadick, of the Penrith City Harmony Chorus, who acted as MC for the chorus contest, and to the three judges, and the other organising personnel for giving so freely of their time.

An exceptional afternoon tea was provided by the Hills Harmony ladies and many tags and songs were sung in the afterglow. All in all a very enjoyable and satisfying contest and coming together of the Sydney region barbershop fraternity

Malcolm Woods
President

(Thank you to David Ojerholm from Sydney Harmony for sending in the following article from MCA Music Forum Feb-Apr 2007. It is of particular interest as our very own Blenders are competing in the 2008 Battle of the Choirs on Channel).

**BECOMING EXTRAORDINARY**

Jonathan Grieves-Smith reflects on the inaugural ABC Classic FM Choir of the Year competition and offers some sage words to singers, conductors, composers and the costume-obsessed

Three cheers for ABC Classic FM and its 2006 launch of the ABC Choir of the Year Competition. Thousands took part and thousands listened. Choral singing is on the map and choirs across the country have entertained and moved us all. Next time there will be the opportunity to give the choral world more lead and a choir's potential grows as it works harder and better. There is a great beauty. By setting its sights high and working patiently, honestly and cleverly, any choir anywhere, can create the extraordinary. And, and I think this is important, that doesn't mean it's just too serious, boring and without fun. I'm sure the Australian cricket team's single-minded pursuit of excellence has been full of fun as well as results. Choruses have the enormous fun when they work very hard and are thus achieving, and a choir's potential grows as it works harder and better.

I thought I should jot down a few pertinent thoughts on choral singing from this first ABC Choir of the Year Competition.

Firstly, some general points:

- When you have learnt the notes it is time to start rehearsing
- Learning the notes is not making music - it is the equivalent of learning a vocabulary.
- Music is what you do with the notes, what vocal colours you employ, what rhythmic energy, pulse and melodic shaping you use.
- Remember the disciplines of good choral singing:
  - Beautiful sense of line or cantabile
  - Energised, unforced tone quality
  - Correct notes and rhythms
  - Good intonation (see below)
  - Articulate, comprehensible text
  - Agility and articulation of melodic line
  - Transparent choral sound
- Remember, if you sing flat or sharp you are not singing out of tune, you are singing the wrong notes!
- Remember, inexact rhythm is wrong rhythm!
- Every line of notes must be sung beautifully – however dull your line may appear, it must be part of a magical whole.
- The choral sound must be transparent so that the movement and pitches of each line are blended and audible.
- The aim is that every word is comprehensible to the audience and that if you sing in French, the French must accept you are a French choir.
- Remember you can always be better and that it is utterly worthwhile being better.

Secondly, some thoughts for conductors:

- You are responsible for ensuring all the general points above.
- You are servants -- of composers, of your choir, of the audience. The choir is not there to show off your brilliance but to sing to an ever higher quality, great and wonderful music.
- A major part of your job is to ensure the singers come back next week.
- You are not there to be a clown but to work hard, at a good pace, and with rigour: through that will the best fun and the best standards happen.
- You must know the score better than the composer. You must have sung every note in the score, analysed every note in the score, anticipated every mistake, read biographies, listened to a diverse range of recordings, practised the conducting, considered a battle-plan for learning the notes and for an expressive concert.
- If you are a composer as well as a conductor, don't programme your own music in a choral competition.
- Remember Rome was not built in a day.
- Remember that if they are not doing what you wish them to do – it is your fault!
Lastly, a few thoughts on presentation:
- Remember charm, persuasion, repetition and a constructive approach are the best ways of moving forward.
- When something goes wrong blame yourself first. When something goes well, praise your singers.
- Be open to learning and to the limits of your own talents. Ask questions of choral conductors you respect. Invite them to do a workshop with your choir.
- Go to concerts sung by other choirs.
- There is no reputable conductor who is not happy to help and give advice – call them, email them, use them!!
- Be humble.
- And… see below about repertoire choice.

Thirdly, something important from singers about conductors:
- With the utmost love and understanding, you must hold your conductor accountable for all the above.

Fourthly, something about repertoire:
- Choose repertoire that excites and challenges but does not utterly bamboozle your singers!
- There is no virtue in choosing repertoire that is too difficult. Your choir will not be able to sing the notes, they will be diffident and insecure and the performance will be poor.
- Choose repertoire carefully to develop the talents of your choir and the ears of your audience.
- Why not commission a new piece?
- Speak to two other choirs in other parts of Australia and co-commission: cost can be shared and the composer will have more performances.
- Be cautious of the pushy local composer who feels hard done by! They may be a new Beethoven or they may not be a very good composer and that could be the reason for their neglect! Read the music carefully and make up your own mind. Be clear with them or they will plague you!
- Why not combine every two years with another choir or choirs so as to perform some bigger piece? It makes sense financially as well as artistically and it opens up a new world for singers and their artistic (and social) experience.

Lastly, a few thoughts on presentation:
- If you walk on reluctantly, we will not want to hear you. Be business like.
- If you look at your scores all the time, we assume you do not trust or like your conductor.
- If you look unhappy or uninvolved, you will sound unhappy and uninvolved.
- Your singing comes before your choir’s dress code – one does not make up for the other.
- Create atmosphere. Be happy with silence.
- You are there to command the space in front of you
- You are there to create magic.
- This last point – you are there to create magic – is the most important, the most worthwhile, the reason for all those hours slogging over notes at home and in the rehearsal room, the extraordinary miracle that happens rarely more than once a year when all your minds seem as one and you are no longer yourself but somehow part of something greater.

Jonathan Grieves-Smith is artistic director and Conductor Emeritus, Melbourne Chorale and was a member of the judging panel for the ABC Choir of the Year Competition 2006.

Does your right hand know what your left hand is doing?

It seems that in a number of cases the answer is a definite ‘no’.

Your Secretary, Kevin White, continually receives requests for copies of the current insurance cover from Clubs who need to show this documentation to venues before contracting for a sing out.

The document, showing insurance cover up to 31 May 2008, was emailed to ALL CLUB SECRETARIES on 18 January this year and therefore you should have a copy in your Club’s files. Please check with your Club Secretary before asking us to send you another copy.

When we receives a copy of the renewed AAMBS Insurance cover (from 1 June) your Club Secretary will receive a copy for his files. So if you need it, please see him first.

COMING EVENTS

2008
- June 1 – The Blenders performance as part of Opera on the Mountain at The Cedar Creek Estate Winery, 104 Hartley Road, Tambourine Mountain – 11am to 3pm – Fine music, Great Food and Wine. Admission $50
- June 7 – SOUNDWAVES visit to The Highlandaires for one day workshop and concert.
- June 20–22 – Western Region Convention. Details TBA
- Aug 16-17 – Australian Barbershop Quartet Challenge George Hogg Auditorium, Ipswich Civic Hall, Nicholas St., Ipswich Central
- Aug 16-17 – Sunshine Region 14th Annual Convention Ipswich Central

2009
- Sept 27-30 – AAMBS Harmony College, Hobart
### AAMBS Calendar – 2008-2011

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<td>NZABS Quartet Regionals Harmony University Missouri 25 – 1 Aug</td>
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Send your items for Barbershop Notes in 9 pt Arial font to:
secretary@aambs.org.au

The deadline for receipt of material is 15th of each odd numbered month –
January
March
May
July
September
November