From The President

It’s “Show Time!”

Greetings fellow Barbershoppers. The hundreds of hours of hard work by our Convention committee and their “deputies” is about to pay off as we join together for the 8th national AAMBS Convention in Gold Coast. Huge thanks are in order to our host chorus, the Blenders, and to so many others throughout the AAMBS association. We are indeed fortunate that we can celebrate days of fun, camaraderie, teamwork, inspirational music, both performed and enjoyed, all courtesy of our dedicated members, and indeed scores of our partners. Please take time to express your thanks to them throughout the Convention.

As you can see in the program at the web site the Convention program is absolutely jammed with opportunities for bonding, education, listening to barbershop music at its world class best, and competing with your chorus and quartet “teammates” to bring home a trophy or medal. Again, there is increased opportunity for every chorus and quartet to receive recognition for their hard work and improvement in their performance of music, barbershop style. The handicap competition will provide 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards. In addition there will be trophies for the best choruses based on size: Small Chorus - 20 or less; Medium Chorus - 21 to 40; and Large Chorus - over 40 members. An Audience Favorite award will also be presented, selected by all the delegates present. And everyone will be competing for the primary awards, the Gold, Silver, and Bronze Medals that earn you the respect as the best in Australia, and the right to represent Australia at Internationals.

All the improvements, and additional opportunity for much deserved recognition, are at the request of the AAMBS membership. On behalf of the hard-working members of the AAMBS Council I trust this will be the most exciting and rewarding Convention ever. See you on the Gold Coast!

In Harmony,

Mike Donnelly
AAMBS President
Greetings and a special pre-Convention welcome to all 711 delegates.

I really hope you are as excited about attending this event as the organising team is attempting to leave no stone unturned in its bid to ensure you leave 'barbershopped to the max'!!

Final preparations are well underway for our Eighth National Convention and I trust people continue to refer to the convention website for last minute updates. There are some really important reminders I would like to share at this time:

- I have still not received nominations / expressions of interest from choruses (one large and one small) to be coached by the judges from within Saturday Evening Post on the Sunday morning's Master Class session. It is vital I have these nominations by 23 September to enable logistics planning.

- A special Strut Your Stuff Session is planned for the stage area at Conrad Jupiters immediately following the Schools Quartet Competition on Thursday 6 October. This session is for any registered delegate within a quartet or chorus to take the stage and put out a couple of songs in a non-competition atmosphere. This would be an ideal opportunity for those choruses and quartets which have plenty to offer but never seem to make it into the medals. If you would like to be a part of this (free to enter) opportunity in front of an appreciative audience, please email me urgently at mbludwig@bigpond.net.au

- Don't miss the Schools Quartet Competition on the Thursday immediately following the Masses Sing in the Broadbeach Mall. As a result of the great work done recently by Steve Griffin and Fast Forward there is a great field in this competition. Since these young people are the future of AAMBS, I urge all delegates to come along and support this competition.

- Rumours abound that a significant number of delegates are planning to leave the convention for home on the morning of Sunday 9 October and thereby opting to forego the Church Service, Master Class, Members Forum and Farewell Luncheon. Unfortunately, this seems to be an increasing trend over recent conventions and is most disturbing - not just because of the catering aspect, but also because it diminishes the closing fellowship components of a really great program. I urge all delegates to stay on and attend the Farewell Luncheon and in doing so, get full value for your registration.

- Golf cancellation: Apologies to the four delegates who indicated they would sign up for the golf social activity for your registration.

As Convenor of the 2005 Convention Committee Mike heads up a well qualified and totally dedicated team determined to provide the best convention experience yet seen in Australia.

Mike joined the then Banana Blenders in 1993, and despite qualifying his competition songs, wasn't fully hooked into barbershopping and opted not to attend the Perth Convention that year. This decision is to his eternal regret and he now works to ensure the same act of complacency doesn't impact other newcomers to this wonderful craft. While currently singing Lead with his chorus, he joined as a baritone and has also sung Tenor. One day he hopes to give up a promising career in music and sing with the Bass section.

Mike has also sung baritone, tenor and lead with the original B Natural quartet at the 1995, 1997, 1999 and 2001 Convention and now sings Lead with Escapade - 2003 and 2005.

In addition to his current role as AAMBS membership VP (see our new strategy on display at the 2005 Convention), Mike has undertaken duties of President, Secretary and Music Vice-President with the Blenders and is very proud of the Life membership of the Club awarded to him after he led the Blenders chorus to Anaheim in 1999. In addition, Mike has also served the Sunshine Region as President.

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His vision for barbershopping in Australia is to see membership grow to 1000 and for that membership to be underpinned by an increase in younger men - the future of our association.

The major distraction to his barbershop singing is a thing called work and Mike has recently been appointed Regional Director of Education for Darling Downs and South West Queensland - a position that oversees all aspects of state schooling across 182 sites. This role draws heavily on his 17 years as a principal of schools across Queensland, but unfortunately sees him based 2 hours from home and rehearsals.

In addition to jealously guarding time with his lovely wife Beris (another Barbershop widow) and two daughters Jacinda and Karissa who are midway through university courses in Queensland, Mike is an Elder in the Lutheran Church at Tallebudgera on the Gold Coast and serves in the band at regular Sunday Worship.

His vision for barbershopping in Australia is to see membership grow to 1000 and for that membership to be underpinned by an increase in younger men - the future of our association.

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The Ancient Harmonious Society of Woodshedders (AHSOW) was formed in 1977 with its purpose to preserve the skill of woodshedding as an art form within the Barbershop Harmony Society (SPEBSQSA).

Woodshedding” is defined as the act of three men creating Barbershop harmonies "by ear" to a given melodic line sung by a fourth man. All AAMBS conference attendees are welcome to come and get the energizing relief of a "woodshedding fix”:

Check out the convention website for more information on AHSOW.

DATES: Thursday, Friday October 7, 8 2005
VENUE: Conrad Jupiters, Pavilion Convention Centre
ROOM: Broadbeach room 2
HOST: AHSOW Director, Information Glenn Schilberg
CO-HOST: Mike Taylor, AAMBS and AHSOW member
TIMES: Thurs., Oct. 7: 12:30 - 4:30PM, 7:30 - till late

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY….

The Blenders are happy to announce the holding of a special raffle, to be drawn at the coming Convention.

The Special Package Prize:

- An autographed VOCAL MAJORITY POLO SHIRT
- and
- 9 VOCAL MAJORITY CDs

1. Twelve Days of Christmas
2. How Sweet the Sound
3. The Music Never Ends
4. Love Songs
5. White Christmas
6. Freedom’s Song
7. I’ll Be Seeing You
8. The Vocal Majority - The Best of the Early Years
9. The Secret of Christmas

Tickets at $5.00 each

may be pre-purchased through Club Secretaries (to whom full particulars and application forms are being forwarded by email) or at the Blenders’ table at the Convention.

This is indeed a Golden Opportunity!

FROM THE SECRETARY

All AAMBS Clubs and their members are reminded of the need to renew their memberships from 1 October 2005. This applies also to the registered Quartets. The names of Medal-winning Quartets enjoy protection under the AAMBS Rules; however failure on the part of other registered Quartets entails a risk that the previously registered names may be registered afresh by other AAMBS members in the identical name or by a name which is remarkably similar. I urge Quartets to ensure that their Quartet is re-registered promptly.

You are requested to note and appreciate the following criteria:

- All Quartet members should be current members of AAMBS;
- The AAMBS Secretary needs to be notified of any changes in the Quartet members – there must be at least two of the original members of a non-Medal-winning Quartet continuing for the original name to be retained;
- Application for registration of a new Quartet name has to be directed to the Secretary for approval of one of the names selected and needs to set out the particulars of the Quartet members and their point of Contact;
- Unless Quartets are registered they do not enjoy the protection afforded under the AAMBS Public Liability Policy, evidence of coverage being frequently requested by the operators or managers of performance venues.

Notice also needs to be directed each October to the Secretary updating the listing of Club membership and their contact particulars, and at the same time Clubs need to pay the annual AAMBS contribution of $35.00 for each member to retain their current registration, their Access to AAMBS Library material and their protection under the AAMBS Public Liability Policy.

BARBERSHOP NOTES:

By now you should be receiving your copy of the AAMBS newsletter in one of two ways:

1. Members with internet access – you will receive your full colour version via email from your Club Secretary, and also be able to access it on the AAMBS Website, AAMBS.org.au at any time;
2. Members without internet access - you will receive your black and white hard copy from your Club Secretary.

We encourage Clubs, Choruses and Quartets to keep your fellow Barbershoppers informed of your activities through the many interesting articles which we are able to include in the newsletter.

In Continuing Harmony,
Kevin White, Secretary
As I write this article, we are only 28 days from our Gold Coast Convention and the preparations from our host chorus, The Blenders, are proceeding at a fast and furious pace. For those of you who have never had the opportunity of experiencing all of the effort that goes into hosting one of our conventions, I can only tell you that as the days grow closer to the big event, everyone involved is incredibly focused on his or her own specific tasks and the Convention Committee itself is concentrating on bringing all of it together so that all of you will be able to have the barbershopping experience of a lifetime. From all indications, that is exactly what will happen on the Gold Coast come Oct 6. I hope that all of you will, sometime during the Convention, make a point to take one of The Blenders aside and thank him for all the hard work they have done to create the wonderful experience that I know each of you will have.

And speaking of hard work, I’m pleased to report that the Sydney Harmony Convention Committee is already busy with preliminary efforts towards our 2007 Convention, which, obviously, will be held in Sydney at the Sydney Convention Centre. For those of you who were with us in 1997 for the previous Sydney Convention, you will be excited to hear that the Convention Centre has made some new and outstanding improvements to their facilities that will, in many ways, enhance our convention experience in 2007. I am also please to announce that the 2004 International Quartet Champions, “Gotcha” will be our guest quartet for this convention. For those of you who have heard this exciting quartet, I know you can’t wait for the opportunity of seeing and hearing them, up close and personal. For those of you who may not have heard them, I can only say that you are in for a wonderful treat, especially when they perform a couple of polecats as they did in the competition, to standing ovations. I was fortunate to see them perform as the out-going champs in Salt Lake City this year and I know that you will find them as entertaining as I did.

I know that we’re just about to convene on the Gold Coast and we’re already planning for Sydney in 2007 but that doesn’t mean that we aren’t already starting to look at 2009! I know that may seem to be a long way off but in this day and age, many of our popular convention venues are being booked four and five years in advance so that if we want to be able to utilise these facilities, we must plan that far in advance as well.

So, if your chorus has any thoughts that you might be interested in hosting the 2009 Convention, now is the time to make some preliminary inquiries. It won’t be long before we will be seeking expressions of interest and any information that you can acquire now will be extremely helpful to you in making that decision. Please know that I am available at any time to assist in your discussions in this regard. I know that I have just mentioned how much work there is in hosting a convention but that work is more than counter-balanced by the rewards, both personal and financial for your chorus. As a thought, wouldn’t it be exciting if our 2009 Convention could be held in Hobart or Adelaide perhaps?

Yours in harmony
Bob Fritz

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FROM THE VP MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT

Just to let you know the BHS 2005 Music Premiere Series A package has arrived, I’ve sorted them and Heather will mail them to the 23 choruses that participated in the survey. Each chorus package comprises the music for six songs plus the demo CD.

FYI, the songs in Series A are:

- Frog Kissin’ - Most Happy Fellas
- Everything Old is New Again - The DJ Four
- The Lion Sleeps Tonight - Metropolis
- Do You Hear The People Sing - The DJ Four
- God Bless The USA - Side Street Ramblers
- Thanks For The Memory - The DJ Four

Cheers
Tom Smith
AAMBS 2005 CONVENTION

SPECIAL ADVERTISEMENT

WELCOME DINNER EXTRAVAGANZA

Unsure if your partner will attend the dinner?
Got non-delegate friends who might like to attend the Convention Welcoming Dinner?
Delegates get all of this with registration.
• a sumptuous 3 course meal
• performances from Riptide, Saturday EveningPost, and FREEFALL
• world class Compere
• special presentations
• a special surprise and
• camaraderie not to be missed.
Additional tickets can be paid for directly through your Chorus and then mailed to:
AAMBS Convention
PO Box 623
Pacific Fair, Q 4218

LADIES BREAKFAST
Friday 7 October

Outstanding Value
• Interstate Female MC
• Full hot and cold buffet breakfast
• Entertainment by Riptide
• Presentation by Australia’s most eminent female neurosurgeon
• Special surprise

Come on ladies – leave the men behind for the morning!

Delegates only $25
Non-Delegates only $35

Additional tickets can be paid for directly through your Chorus and then mailed to:
AAMBS Convention
PO Box 623
Pacific Fair, Q 4218

HARMONY SPECTACULAR CONCERT

Hopefully, all registered delegates took the opportunity to pre-order additional Show Tickets when they registered by 30 June.

As advertised from the very start, pre-ticket sales at the discounted rate of $35 closed off on June 30 but you can still get extra tickets for this night of nights.

Additional tickets at $45 can now only be purchased from August 01 through TICKETEK on 132 849

More details coming soon ……
( Check the website for the latest news)
• Strut Your Stuff Session
• Sing With The Champs
• Church Service
• Chorus Master Class
• Harmony College

Have YOU checked out the latest Convention Website Updates? DO IT NOW!!
www.aambs.org.au or www.theblenders.com.au
Beyond singing skills
Would you believe a guy can sound great during an audition with your quartet and still turn out to be less than you need as a singer? It happens all the time. Consider these additional factors:

- Is everyone singing the right voice part? Many people think they sing the correct part, but they don’t. Just because a guy is known as a Bass doesn’t mean he can handle the demands of your arrangements any day of the week. Remember, each singer needs to get the job done when he’s vocally tired and dealing with the nerves of performing for a contest or an audience – not just when he’s had time to rest up for a private audition. Unless every quartet member can perform well on his down days, you will have the added job of rearranging your music. That’s time-consuming and can be frustrating.

- Are you sure you know what voice part you’re looking for? In our case, our perfect new Tenor had been better known as a Baritone. In your case, your perfect Bass may currently be singing Tenor, your perfect Baritone may be singing Lead. In an existing quartet, one or two quartet members might even change parts to make room for “the right guy”. Be flexible in what you’re looking for and you may be surprised. We certainly were!

- Is he a fast learner? How quickly does a guy learn his music? Someone who has a lovely voice but learns very slowly may frustrate the others. That frustration may outweigh his great stage appeal or personality.

Presentation skill
A man’s presentation skills can be as vital to your quartet as his singing ability – especially if you are in a competing quartet. Within that aspect are some less obvious factors:

- Does he look the right fit? Does your quartet have a certain image? Young? Experienced? A mixture of both? Do height and weight matter? Sure, a guy’s age or appearance is only a surface detail, but in the performance arena these are not necessarily minor issues. Noticeable differences among quartet members can be an asset, but “different” can also mean that one guy stands out in an unflattering way.

On-stage personality
What you do when the singing stops has a big impact on your entertainment value. You’d be wise to ensure that at least one member of your quartet can skillfully handle microphone duties.

- How well does he talk to the audience? This may or may not be something you care about – in our case this was huge because none of us remaining quartet members is particularly good at it. Do you have or need someone who can make the talking portions of your performances worthwhile for the audience and a strong complement to your singing? If you already have a good microphone guy in your quartet, could you use a good straight man?

- How is his joke telling? Barboppers love to tell jokes at the microphone. Ten thousand comedians are out of work, yet we all think we’re Shecky Green. Telling a good joke or story is a hard skill to learn, and even more difficult to pull off in front of an audience of strangers. It’s likely that a guy either already possesses this skill or doesn’t. If someone thinks he’s good at it, but really isn’t, don’t adopt a problem. Does a guy tell clean jokes that are helpful to the flow of the show, or are they angular to the theme you are endeavoring to develop?

Off-stage personality
Barbershopping is a social experience as much as a musical experience. How does each man interact?
with other quartet members? How does he interact with your audiences?

- What kind of citizen will he be in your four-man fraternity? As a quartet, you're going to be spending an awful lot of time together. Get the wrong guy, and you could instead be spending a lot of awful time together. Maybe it doesn't matter so much if a guy laughs at your jokes, but is he at least known for being pleasant to work with? Does he have a reputation as a prima donna, or will he respect the other quartet members and compromise when there are artistic differences among you? Away from rehearsals, will he work as hard as the others at learning his music and improving his craft? A guy’s track record on these questions may trump all other issues of talent and ability.

- Is he teachable? How willing is he to learn new music, new skills? It’s really important to talk to (and perhaps test) the potential new man regarding his ease in taking advice from a coach or teacher. District Workshops are a great place to learn and grow as a team, except when you have a guy who is resistant to instruction, suggestions or gentle criticism.

- Are his goals compatible with yours? If you have high ambitions and enjoy a steady diet of intense rehearsals and coaching sessions, several gigs a month, traveling to contests, and a continuous cycle of perfecting new songs, you’d better choose quartet mates who enjoy that too. Likewise, if most of the members of your quartet are content to stay local and tweak a small repertoire, you’ll frustrate and be frustrated by a quartet mate who is ready to fall on his sword over anything less than a district championship. Incompatible goals lead to short-lived quartets.

**Life circumstances**

If a guy’s family or boss is not supportive of your quartet’s time demands, you’re dead. If you disagree, you’ll learn the hard way. All members of a quartet will likely need to make adjustments to the others’ situations; just be sure you’ve considered the following:

- Does he have children? What are their ages? Can your quartet’s goals and schedule mesh with his family goals, or do you have reason to doubt he’s in a position to walk the tightrope of being both a good quartetter and a good father?

- Is his wife or girlfriend supportive? You want to be a good husband, but you also want to rip some chords with your buddies, perform in shows and compete. Does his significant other think that’s fun too? Once she stops enjoying it, he’ll stop enjoying it. Be considerate of her feelings and desires.

- Is his job flexible enough? A guy has to earn a living – can he perform when you need to perform? Can he practice when the others can practice? Can he get occasional time off from work without jeopardizing his career? Can the quartet adjust to his job demands?

- How far away are you willing to search for the right match? It’s also possible that the best match for your quartet isn’t a Society member...yet. The broader your search, the more likely you are to form a quartet with compatible goals, voices and growth opportunities.

For example, we auditioned guys who we could have gladly welcomed into the quartet were it not for sizeable schedule conflicts. For us, finding the right guy meant constant, clear communication among the remaining members and a clear focus when we considered the various candidates.

Before you put the word out that you are looking for a new guy, be sure you have discussed the various factors so that you will know the right guy when he finally shows up. Same goes double if you are forming a new quartet. Good luck in your journey in finding the guy or guys who have the right stuff.

With thanks to Jeff Selano, Bass of Riptide, and to The Harmonizer.

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**A VERY BIG THANK YOU TO OUR AAMBS PARTNERS AND FAMILIES**

...FOR ALWAYS BEING BEHIND US AND SUPPORTING US IN OUR HOBBY AND PASSION!!

(especially in a busy Convention year)
Greetings fellow Barbershoppers  
from AAMBS newest chorus, Miner Chords of Ipswich, Queensland.

Ipswich was once almost the state capital of Queensland. It lies about 30 kms west of Brisbane and has a population of 180,000.

Welsh coal miners from Blaenau Ffestiniog and the Rhondda Valley started a very strong choral tradition of excellence in 1886 with the founding of the Blackstone Ipswich Cambrian Choir in Ipswich which now boasts 2 A grade Choirs with over 100 singers each.

Mike Ludwig your AAMBS VP Membership started the ball rolling then flick passed the ball to me to run with it. Mike and his quartet Escapade came to Ipswich in June and were the headliners at a musical theatre evening. Then I produced a concert for the Blenders including a lot of local talent on 30 July. That afternoon we held a workshop featuring Steve Griffin and Fast Forward and, with help from the local press, on Wednesday 10th August Miner Chords was born.

Out interim MD is Mark McCann who has never in all his experience seen such progress made as Miner Chords have in just 3 weeks. He is excited at the fantastic sound being produced and as a bonus we sing in pitch.

Our one regret is that we were formed too late to compete this year but watch out for our distinctive apple green badges during the convention.

We have up to 20 men rehearsing and are keen to qualify these guys as members as soon as possible. We already have 5 songs as repertoire and will work 2 new songs (polecats) next week. We currently rehearse at my home pending the refurbishment of our permanent home, the Old Ipswich Court House, which we understand will be ready by the end of September. We rehearse every Wednesday evening from 7pm to 9.30. If you are ever out this way you can be assured of a warm welcome. We'd love to see you.

Our grateful thanks to Kevin White the ever industrious secretary of AAMBS for his willing assistance and material support which has helped us greatly. Also Peter and Jeannie Hattendorff who run the Marketing Office (07) 3822 3132 who turned my dream of a logo into a reality as well as creating a huge range of promotional material such as flyers, car stickers, sandwich boards, signs, banners, programs, letterheads, DVDs, labels, etc.

A huge thank you to The Blenders for their active support and encouragement, for learning CDs and music, uniforms, MD, workshop, advice on a variety of topics including copyright, the list goes on. The Blenders have a wonderful tradition of always helping out whenever they can, be it other choruses, the Regional or the National body and they have excelled themselves with their support of Miner Chords.

Thanks guys, it is so great to see the Barbershop Leaders in Australia giving so much back to the craft without any thought of what, if anything, they might gain or profit. To the contrary most of what they do for the craft is a drain on their resources but they cheerfully back up time and time again. Take a bow Blenders. Miner Chords are so lucky to have your active support.

We wish all you delegates a joyous and fulfilling convention on the Gold Coast and we look forward to meeting you in Sydney in 07.

ttfn
Chris Featherstone
Miner Chords.

WELLINGTONES - GOING FAST FORWARD

Over the last few months the Wellingtones has started the process of taking stock and planning for a dynamic future. We have not been alone on this journey. Throughout we have received great encouragement and support from AAMBS Council and from Eastern Region as well as from the Blenders who have been acting as mentors in the process.

Youth development has been one thrust in our development. To support this initiative, in early August Steve Griffin, AAMBS Youth Director, and Champion Youth Quartet, Fast Forward, visited Hobart. Over three days, Steve and the members of the quartet, Aaron Griffin, Andrew Howson, Darren Weissel and Chris Hope, were able to help us share our love of barbershop with almost 40 young men. Activities included two school workshops, also an evening Youth in Harmony Showcase featuring Fast Forward as the headline act. As well, the team conducted a workshop for Blue Triangle, the youth chorus being sponsored by the Wellingtones.

The immediate outcomes are encouraging. Two school quartets were formed and one already existing quartet, Rewind, decided to compete in the Schools Competition at the Convention.

In addition, the Wellingtones and quartets were coached by the visiting team. The weekend also provided an opportunity for input from Steve Griffin who stimulated our Club to think about appropriate structures and processes to sustain our current commitment to development.

In early September as a follow up, we invited Andrew Howson, Fast Forward lead, back to Hobart. Andrew worked in schools with the two newly formed quartets and also with Rewind. Over the weekend, Andrew also coached our Chorus and quartets.

As a bonus Andrew was accompanied by members of the Blenders, Bob Charters, Steve Johnstone and
Trevor Rootes  
Secretary, Wellingtones

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The Canberra Chordsmen

The Canberra Chordsmen went into bat literally on the 25th Aug at the National Eisteddfod program held in Canberra dressed in a neat array of cricket gear along with a few props such as stumps, bats, pads and gloves. As luck would have it, there were just eleven in the side also so the chorus looked genuine enough with Russell Kindervater in a very convincing umpire’s outfit. This was going to be our theme for the Convention this year to defend our Most Improved Chorus Award but due to various restrictions and an MD change, the team decided to play at home instead. The Eisteddfod therefore became our pseudo Convention.

Finding two cricket songs was not easy and finding two Barbershop arrangements of cricket songs was going to be impossible, so I had to think along the lines of a direct word replacement or a parody. In the end I decided that I would have to change the words to “Hey Look Me Over” and change the title to “Hey Bowl Me Over”. For the ballad I based the words around Sir Donald Bradman with parody lyrics to “After The Ball Is Over”. The opening line of the verse in this song fell into place very nicely, with “A little maiden climbed an old man’s knee.” Changing “old man’s” to “Bradman’s” worked out very well. If you want the lyrics to these songs by the way I’m willing to distribute them around.

For the Eisteddfod, the chorus competed in:

1. Open Choirs - Male Voices  
   we came 1st with $150

2. Open Choirs (any combination of voices)  
   not placed unfortunately, but the entertainment value was 100%

3. Open Choral Group (4-8 voices)  
   “Natural Gas” quartet got a Highly Recommended.

Coming up at the end of September we have Canberra’s own Floriade festival in Commonwealth Park where the Chorus sings to the public intent on admiring the daffodils and the tulips. People do stop and listen which is really pleasing and I hope it adds to their pleasure also. We don’t sing “Tip-toe through the Tulips” but I think we should.

I’m pleased to announce that four of our Chorus are still travelling to the Gold Coast for the Convention without the pressure of performing and of those three are attending Harmony College.

By the time you read this, the Convention results will be known and if I was a betting man, I would have to put some money on “Alliance” this time. Let’s see if I’m right.

Chris Drury  
Musical Director

Hi to all our fellow barbershoppers

What an exciting time is ahead for all. For all those competing in the Nationals our chorus wish them all the very best. For those who are not competing this time it will be great to see you all again.

“Where have all the tenors gone”, Yes, this is the question I am presently asking. Our tenor is in Egypt sailing down the Nile – so no 4-part harmony tonight. How we miss a section when it’s not there. How to fix this problem? We are planning a “bring a guy” night, if the Clippers can do it (they now have 54 members), then so can we. We need more members but how to get them is difficult. We have a great group of guys in our chorus and it would be one of the happiest choruses around - but how do you let the public know this. Come on marketing people, we need your advice.

The chorus sang at the Mt Gravatt Show, (this show is like a small EKKA full of horses, dogs, ducks, art & craft etc). Singing outdoors is hard enough, but competing with the dog race, well that’s another story.

There was a bar next to the stage where we were to be singing and in that bar was a guy having the time of his life belting out country songs on his guitar.

When I asked him if he could “take 5” while my chorus sang he looked at me, then the guy, then put down his guitar pulled out a cigarette and sat back and watched – I think he was pleasantly surprised.
The chorus sang well and was well received by the sitting audience. The local radio station was at the Show and they asked the chorus to sing. I couldn’t direct them as there were two men sitting next to the recording equipment so I just directed them in and watched on the side. The chorus started singing but suddenly went flat, I threw myself over these two guys nearly knocking them over and managed to get the chorus in tune again. How important is the Director I ask!

The chorus also sang at a Garden Club where there were around 150 people. We waited and waited while the guest went on and on about hats. She must have tried on 20 or more showing the audience how to wear them. The chorus and I were exhausted just listening to her. When she stopped the chorus sang and all had a good time. We are also included in a concert coming up put on by the church in which we practise, so will be spending time on getting a programme together.

Let me leave you with this quote from George Bernard Shaw:

“People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don’t believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can’t find them, make them”.

Janet Sippen
Musical Director

RIVER CITY CLIPPERS

The Brisbane River City Clippers have had a rewarding and encouraging couple of months. Our membership has stabilised at just over fifty after our successful membership drive earlier in the year, and we’re rebuilding our repertoire at a gratifying rate.

We’re able to put on a respectable concert, at a surprisingly good standard. Our much-improved scores in the Brisbane Eisteddfod in August (since the May regionals) gave evidence of the growing expertise of the chorus. We’ve sung for one of our major sponsors, Coates Hire, on several occasions, most recently on September 7th, Coates’ 120th birthday, when our musical fireworks were followed by a magical display of the real thing.

On August 26 we hosted a concert in the magnificent new Augustine Centre at Villanova College, where we were joined by boys’ choruses and small groups from four secondary colleges. It was a night of excellent music, a highlight being the finale involving well over a hundred voices joining in two barbershop pieces. The boys seemed to enjoy the evening as much as the Clippers did.

The recent influx of barbershoppers to our ranks has allowed experimentation with new quartets, and some promising sounds are being heard. Our two well-established quartets, Who’s Counting and ACBC, are sounding great and providing wonderful role models. Our octet, Fourb’Two Plus (sometimes our octet has nine members!) recently performed for a welfare group with considerable success.

The first weekend in September saw many of us in camp at Toowoomba, fine tuning our two competition songs for the Convention. Our expert was Gary Taylor, flown over from New Zealand, and what a star he proved to be! He had an enormous amount of skill in the art of barbershop to offer, and we feel we benefited greatly. Roll on the Gold Coast!

We look forward to meeting our barbershop brothers in October, and raising our voices with you all in harmony. Best wishes.

Ralph Andrew, President
Brisbane River City Clippers

With only a month to the convention it seemed appropriate to report on our pre-convention camp held at the maroon dam complex near Boonah. We were invited to perform at the Boonah State High School on Friday the 9th of September. 71 members performed and the concert was very well received by the locals. The chorus performed our show packages and the convention songs.

Afterwards we traveled 20 kms to the campsite. There were 84 members plus family members who stayed there and the overall feeling was that it was a most rewarding weekend. Saturday and Sunday had 7 sessions of polishing and honing our material for the convention, as well as our show package. The chorus is supporting Harmony in Paradise at TSS on Saturday 17 September. Their MD Andrew Howson is our assistant MD to Rose McGee and a lot of their members are related to our chorus members. The two choruses are performing a number which will also be performed at the convention.

This years convention will see the introduction of six judges and a new contest administrator, our own member Bob Charters. A lot of planning has been put in place to make this the best convention the Gold Coast has ever had and we do hope you will all be available to come and visit. As has already been announced, the Blenders are having a reunion and all are invited to the rehearsal on Wednesday 5 October.

With our current members list of 89 and another six expected to be qualified by the end of the month, we will have a minimum of 93 on the risers. Plus the MD that will be 94. We are proud of this fact as our music team put in long hours to make our chorus improve each year. On the list are 17 youth members; we expect 22 for the convention, with ages from 9 to 22. So our expanded list is ranged from 9 to 86.

Looking forward to seeing our mates from around the nation.

Until next time.
Harold Howson

KEEP THE WHOLE WORLD SINGING!
Richard & Mandy Swannell rescue Baby Padma

Hebron Orphanage Update

Since the Tsunami hit the east coast of India and other places more than eight months ago, there has been a tremendous amount of activity at the Hebron Orphanage. Within a few days of the tragedy, Richard and Mandy Swannell and other helpers went into the devastated area about 300kms south of the Orphanage, and were able to rescue more than 150 children who had lost their parents. The Orphanage staff had set up a relief camp in the area and were feeding 4000 people two meals a day for several weeks because no other aid had come. The accommodation at the orphanage was not sufficient to house all these children, and so donated money was given to the elders in the town, to keep those children fed and clothed until the buildings were ready.

At the end of June the Orphanage was able to accept 175 tsunami orphans making a total of 310 at present. Another 45 children from the Andaman Islands near Indonesia will be accepted in a few weeks.

The Westcoast Chordsmen here in Perth have been involved in several efforts of fund raising, the most recent has been the sale of some donated passionfruit. Our MD’s daughter and her husband are on a property north of the city, and for the past couple of months have sent small bags of the fruit for sale to our members at our Friday night rehearsals. The fruit that is not sold is taken by our worthy Len Aaroundse to be sold in the shop at his Roadhouse in the hills. He does this at no profit to himself, and gives all the money to the Orphanage. Total sales to our members and the public has been about $500.

Earlier in the year Harry Owen from Vocal Evolution and others organised a sausage sizzle outside one of our large hardware stores and raised another $500. We must also mention the generosity of the members of the congregation of our Reverend member Graham Bishop, when asked to respond to the Orphanage appeal they opened their wallets and their hearts to the tune of $6000. Richard and Mandy are most grateful for these efforts.

There is an interesting piece of history about the Orphanage which is worth sharing. It all started in 1961 when Prakasam Jalli and his wife were so concerned about all the children dying of starvation on the streets of their town of Palakol, they decided they would do something about it. He was a teacher at a local school, so they sold some of their land to raise money to put up some buildings, and took in children off the streets. They gave them love, shelter, food, education and hope for the future.

Twelve years later in 1973 the local government stepped in and told Mr. Jalli that unless he could find outside funding, he would have to close the orphanage. The Jallis had grown to love the children as their own, and they could not contemplate sending the children away to starve on the streets, so he wrote to every organization he could find. The weeks went by, but there were no replies.

On the night before the Orphanage was to be closed, Mr Jalli had a dream. A Vivid Dream!! He saw a massive curtain come down from the sky and hang there, gently moving in the breeze. On the bottom of the curtain he saw an urn. Then a voice came from the sky and said “This is the bowl of Elijah”. The very next morning a letter arrived. It was the only reply he ever received!! It came from Bruce and Les Battye who were members of a small church in Melbourne, and they gave him assurance that they would give continuing support to the Orphanage.

And so began a long and wonderful relationship between the Orphanage and a group of dedicated Australians. In the mid 1980s Mr Jalli lost his sight, and his only son Sagar, ran the orphanage under his guidance. Then while in his early 20s, Sagar assumed full control after his father died of a heart attack in 1989, and so the torch passed to a new generation. In 1995 Sagar married one of the graduate orphan girls, and now Sagar and Sunetha devote all that they have, all that they are, to their life’s work.

Richard and Mandy have been keeping the “Bowl of Elijah” filled since 1999 and now are looking for those people who will be partners with them to keep the much larger “Bowl” filled to overflowing well into the future.

These precious children will thank you.
http://www.hebronorphanage.org
kas33@aapt.net.au
http://www.swannellfoundation.org

Keith Swannell
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Deadline for the next edition is Friday 11th November 2005

If you want to contact and/or visit any AAMBS CHORUS and sing along with your fellow Barbershoppers, wherever you are, check their rehearsal / contact details on the Website – www.aambs.org.au