Greetings, fellow Barbershoppers,

Another year has sped past, and we meet again to reflect on the achievements of the year, and the goals for the future of AAMBS. And again it was a great year from any measurement you want to use. Our choruses held countless shows and sing-outs around the country, participated in workshops and retreats, and honed their skills. This all led up to the amazing 8th Biennial National Convention in Gold Coast, hosted by our Gold Medal Chorus, The Blenders. Our congratulations and thanks to Mike Ludwig, the Convention Chairman and his hard working Committee, to the Contest Administrator, Bob Charters, to Sue Beardsley, and all the members of The Blenders for a world class event. And our congratulations to the medallists, and to every chorus and quartet that competed as you were all winners just by being there. It was a remarkable Convention that showed us all what can be done with great organization, leadership, innovation, and thousands of hours of dedicated work. In sum, a Gold Medal Convention from our Gold Medal Chorus.

If you want to be immersed in the true spirit of barbershopping you need look no further than a Harmony College like the one in Gold Coast. It had it all …… great educational courses by some of the best faculty in the World, humour, emotion, camaraderie, good food and a great setting. And we got a double treat with two International Medallist quartets, Saturday Evening Post, and Riptide, willing to sing with anyone, anywhere, any time. This was all conceived, organized, and implemented by our VP Music and Dean of the School, Ian Mulholland, and his dedicated staff from The Blenders. If I had just one recommendation I could make to the AAMBS membership at large it would be to never, ever miss a Harmony College. It is specifically organized to cater to the needs of every member of AAMBS, from the brand new rookie to the most advanced music arranger or Chorus Director.

…… Continued on Page 2
PRESIDENT’S REPORT TO THE 2005 AGM

...... (Continued from Page 1

This year AAMBS has been guided by the leadership and hard work of your national Council, consisting of Secretary Kevin White; Treasurer Warren Beckwith; and Vice Presidents for Conventions, Bob Fritz; Music, Ian Mulholland; Marketing and Development, Tom Smith; and Membership, Mike Ludwig. In addition we have had the valued services of Steve Griffin in the role of Youth Development Officer, Nerida White who assisted in all things administrative and edited our great Barbershop Notes, and Rose McGee who is working on a Director Development program. All these dynamic people give of their time and energies and home office facilities and supplies on a totally volunteer basis. Another group without whom we’d all be just singing in the shower.

Regional Co-ordination has been provided by Harry Owen in Western Region, Bill Purdue in Eastern Region, and Chris Mountier in Sunshine Region. These gentlemen have organized our Regional Conventions and many other barbershop activities involving not only their region’s clubs, but also our talented Sweet Adeline counterparts.

2005 has seen the publication of our Australian Polecat book, with a treasure of excellent Aussie songs arranged in the barbershop style, the rapid advancement by the members of our Judges Guild, great success in recruitment of young members, superb barbershop workshops, closer co-ordination with the New Zealand Association of Barbershop Singers, expanded and newly formatted Barbershop Notes, and lots of new info on our web page.

And what’s on the horizon...... well for openers the Convention Committee for our AAMBS 2007 Convention was already at work even before our Gold Coast adventure started. Hosted by Sydney Harmony Chorus, the venue for the 9th Biennial AAMBS National Convention will be the Sydney Convention Centre 27 – 30 September, with Harmony College following immediately after from 30 Sep to 3 Oct. And we have a really exciting initiative in the works for next October.... The International Gold Medal quartet, Realtime, led by Australia’s own John Newell, has agreed to come Down Under for a series of appearances and workshops in each Region of Australia. Details have to be concluded, but this could be a landmark event for all of us. And everyone that enjoyed the Pan Pacific Convention in Christchurch will be glad to know that the next Pan Pac is being organized for beautiful Hawaii in 2008.

Some other good news which affects our AAMBS members ......after an urgent appeal to the new Barbershop Harmony Society CEO, US Navy Captain Ed Watson, he has directed the immediate reinstatement of the member discount to

affiliate barbershop organizations. This will make their great storehouse of barbershop music more affordable. And speaking of money, the World Harmony Council gave us a $3000 grant for 2005 to use for education and training.

In conclusion I want to refer once again to our biggest challenge, and a wonderful opportunity: Membership. We can’t have a barbershop forest without any trees. Our art form is perilously hanging on through the presence of 30,000 members around the world. That sounds like a lot, and 750 of the best are right here in Australia..... but the membership trend worldwide is down...... although here in Australia we’ve done a little better. But it takes the determination, not of the guy next to you on the risers, or the Board, or the AAMBS Council, to get new members....... but of you. The next barbershopper is in your neighbourhood, or club, or workplace, or church choir, or social group. If you don’t take the initiative to talk about barbershopping, he’ll never know what he’s missing. So I encourage every AAMBS member to be bold and personally find at least one new member this coming year - for only by this can we secure the future of the avocation we love.

Finally, I want to thank all of the members of AAMBS for giving me the opportunity to serve as President of this outstanding organisation. I look forward to the challenges and opportunities of 2006.

In Harmony
Mike Donnelly, President, AAMBS

Happy Anniversary and Congratulations
to the Members of our newest Chorus
- Miner Chords -
For your 6 month Anniversary on 10th February
Ian began his musical “career” as a young boy in country NSW when his mother taught him to harmonise while driving in the family car on holidays. Ian’s sister would sing the melody and Ian and his Mum would pick out two other different harmonies, *a la* Andrews Sisters style. Both of Ian’s grandmothers were also musical and encouraged Ian to sing and learn piano at an early age. Christmas Eve singing around the piano was a favourite time.

When he was 9 Ian started learning the tuba, which soon branched out to learning the cornet, trombone, trumpet and euphonium. At the same age Ian had developed a fine boy soprano voice and won several eisteddfods. By the time he graduated from high school in Sydney he had taught himself to play the guitar, bass guitar and violin, and had passed several levels of AMEB piano, trombone and theory.

Ian’s musical tastes had broadened to include rock, pop, classical, jazz, and even barbershop! In his final year at high school Ian and three others were required to sight-sing a piece of music for one of their oral/aural music exams. The music was “The Old Songs”.

During his university days Ian concentrated on playing rock and pop with several bands around Sydney. He acted as musical director and arranger for these groups and often arranged four and five part vocal harmonies in the style of The Doobie Brothers, The Eagles and Air Supply. He played in the backing band for a club show called the Happy Days of Rock’n’Roll, which featured many of the famous names of the 60’s and 70’s Australian music scene. Song writing was a natural progression and Ian tried his hand at this too.

Upon graduating as a geologist from Sydney University in 1979, Ian’s musical “career” was put on hold until he moved to Perth in 1987 and joined The A Cappella Fellas, Australia’s second AAMBS barbershop chorus. He met two of the members of Bad Habits (Lawrie and Craig), formed the quartet, and also served as assistant MD for 3 years until the group broke up. It was during this time that Ian also met the founders of AAMBS and enthusiastically embraced barbershop music. He was a member of the AAMBS Board from 1988 to 1991, served on the Western Region Board from 1992 to 1995, was AAMBS VP Music 1996-1997, Western Region Board 1998-2003, and AAMBS VP Music again 2004-present.

At the same time Ian kept up his interest in other forms of music, including musical theatre (he performed in many musicals and even co-wrote and performed one himself) and Gilbert & Sullivan. It was during a season of Pirates of Penzance that Ian met Geoff, who joined Bad Habits, and the quartet won the AAMBS gold medal in 1993, represented AAMBS at the 1995 International Convention, and retains the same membership to this day.

In 1996 Ian joined Men In Harmony and became Music Director in 1997 (initially co-director with Les Goh and then MD on his own from 1998-2001). MIH won two chorus medals (silver in 1997 and bronze in 1999) during that time.

In 2002 Ian joined Vocal Evolution (bronze 2003, silver 2005) and helped form Alliance (current gold medal quartet) in 2004.

Ian lists his greatest achievements as introducing the “Broadway Package” to MIH in 1998 and to AAMBS in 1999, and both his quartet wins. Along the way Ian has also organised two AAMBS Harmony Colleges (2003, 2005), an AAMBS Directors College (1997), the Aussie Songbook (2005, with the able help of Doug Moody), and introduced the Judge Training programme. He is now an AAMBS qualified Music judge.

Ian loves to share his joy of singing harmony with anyone who can lock and ring a chord, so grab him next time you see him and bust a tag or two.
FROM THE DESK OF OUR VP CONVENTIONS

Although 2006 is considered the “off” year for our conventions, it is no less filled with convention business as full preparations are underway by the Sydney Convention Committee for 2007 and we are already working on securing a bid for the 2009 Convention. In addition, the work of the National Council continues and we have just completed a very busy and successful face-to-face meeting in Melbourne.

Our meeting gave us the opportunity to completely review the Gold Coast Convention with a view in mind to retain those things that worked successfully and to examine and discuss those that did not work as well so that they may be either discarded or revised. As always, we have endeavoured to include your comments, suggestions and observations in our discussions.

As you know, one of the innovations trialed at our last convention was the use of a 6-judge panel for our competitions instead of our normal 3-judge panel. For all accounts, it proved to be an enormous success and in spite of the additional costs involved, we have unanimously agreed to continue this practice at our next National Convention in Sydney in 2007.

One of the other major changes made last year was the inclusion of additional awards at our competitions. These awards (Chorus & Quartet Handicap Awards, Chorus Size Award and Chorus & Quartet Audience Favourite Awards) proved to be very popular and will be retained in Sydney, however, we have duly noted that the manner and timing of the announcements of the winners of these awards left much to be desired and this will certainly be corrected.

Over the next few months, we will continue to examine all aspects of our Conventions in an effort to improve, wherever we can, your experience at our biennial get-together. As always, should any of you wish to comment on any aspect of our Conventions or make any suggestions or observations, they will always be welcome and, more importantly, considered.

For now, please be sure to mark your 2007 calendars for the Convention dates, 27-30 Sept., and the Harmony College dates, 30 Sept-3 Oct.

Yours in harmony,
Bob Fritz

FROM OUR SECRETARY

Now that all Choruses are back in the rehearsal / performance mode I hope you are having the joy of welcoming new men onto your risers. As you know, AAMBS has a comprehensive Insurance Policy which covers any accidents to AAMBS Financial Members during rehearsals and performances.

Of course this means that if you do not keep your Club’s membership fees up to date then your new members will not be covered by our policy. So, for your safety, whenever you accept a new singer as a member of your Club you need to pay their membership fees so they will be covered in case of an unexpected mishap to a member or an audience member.

In view of Tom Smith’s sterling efforts in conducting the AAMBS Membership Survey, the Council has appointed him to the casual vacancy of VP Membership. Tom will remain as VP Marketing for a short period while an expert in this specialised area is considered to fill that position.

Your Council is conscious of the preferences expressed by our members in the recent Membership Survey. These include a desire to see “Letters to the Editor” subject to available space – member’s letters relating to our special Barbershop style of music and its performance will be considered for publication. The letters may be either positive or negative in their suggestions, but should be short, to the point, and be written in the true spirit of Barbershop Brotherhood and Harmony.

Yours, in Continuing Harmony,
Kevin White, Secretary
FROM OUR VP MUSIC

The AAMBS National Council has just spent a 3 day weekend planning and discussing activities for the next couple of years. Major outcomes in the music education field included:

- Chorus Director’s Workshop Intensive (CDWI)
- Quartet Training Camps
- Development of an AAMBS Educator Faculty
- Chapter Officer Training Scheme (COTS)
- Establishment of the AAMBS / NZABS Guild of Judges
- Possibility of annual national quartet competitions
- Development of an events calendar for the next 2 years (to end 2007)
- Confirmation of one scholarship for a front-line chorus director to attend the International Director’s College in the USA in 2006 and another in 2007.

Things are really moving ahead. We are excited about a number of these initiatives because they will bring our Chorus Directors up to date with the most modern directing and management techniques. The CDWI program is an intensive program of Chorus Director training involving one-on-one instruction over a weekend. If the opportunity arises, please encourage your Chorus Director to be involved.

The AAMBS educator faculty is designed to spread the expertise and enjoyment of Barbershop that we have been building up locally over the last few years. While visiting educators from the USA are always excellent value, the infrequency of their visits, and the high cost, often compromise the outcomes. Using our local band of educators, we can organise much more frequent education visits at lower cost for better effect. Several groups are now starting to benefit from this. If your Chorus isn’t one of them, ask your Chorus Management Team to get in touch with me!

The above two initiatives are being coordinated by our new AAMBS Chorus Director Development Officer, Rose McGee, erstwhile MD of The Blenders. Thanks Rose!

While we can provide training in the musical and technical aspects of our art-form, we also need to take a look at the club administration from time to time. The guys in Sunshine Region have developed a first class COTS program, modelled on the namesake program run in the USA, and are now ready to share their experience and know-how with local AAMBS Clubs. We have Steve Griffin, Mike Ludwig and Barry Joy to thank here.

There are no nominations for the AAMBS Director’s College scholarship to the USA this year, so if you want your MD to go, get in touch with me.

Till next time,

Sing-cerely,
Ian Mulholland, AAMBS VP Music
**Invitation to Sing with The Blenders**

The Blenders are starting our campaign to represent Australia on the International Contest Stage in Denver in 2007. In response to enquiries about joining us for this fantastic experience, our music team and executive committee have put their heads together and come up with the following program.

One of our goals for this competition is to “make a splash”! That means singing and performing at the highest standard we possibly can – and that means every man on the risers must be committed to those high standards. Following these guidelines will be challenging for anyone who isn’t local – but not impossible. We welcome dedicated singers!

**Singing With The Blenders in Denver 2007**

**Universal Preparation Requirements**

*These requirements apply to everyone who sings with The Blenders in Denver.*

1. **Attendance**
   
   **Weekly Rehearsals:** From 1 July 2006, must attend 80% of regularly scheduled Monday night rehearsals. Attendance means arrive for warm-ups and stay for Let’s Get Together Again.

   Rehearsals will be recorded on DVD and will be available to interstate or non-local Blenders, and to any local members who miss rehearsal at a cost of $20 per DVD per rehearsal. Interstate members can also make up missed rehearsals by organizing and funding Blenders music team members to come and run workshop days.

   **Camps/Retreats/Coaching:** Attendance at all camps and coaching is compulsory to sing in Denver. Scheduled camps are:

   - 21-22 October 2006 with Bobby Gray Jr to set the presentation plan for our contest package.
   - 23-24 June 2007 with Chuck Mitchell and Don Kahl for the final polishing before travelling to the US.

   **Scheduled coaching:** Singers hoping to perform with The Blenders in Denver should make every effort to attend all coaching sessions. The sessions will be on video and will be available to borrow from the library.

   Scheduled coaching already on the books includes:

   - 17 April 2006: Michael Hayden at Monday night rehearsal.
   - 22-29 May 2006: Jim Kahlke. Includes two Monday nights and all day Saturday 27 May
   - 21 Feb-7 March 2007 Ron Black two Monday nights plus 24-25 Feb weekend and 3-4 March weekend.

22-24 June 2007 Final Camp with Chuck and Don is mandatory.

In Denver: attendance at all scheduled Blenders functions is mandatory.

2. **Performance Readiness**

**Vocal Readiness:** Singers will perform the contest and/or show songs for their section leaders three times in the lead-up to Denver according to a schedule of Progress Points to be developed. The first two can be face to face or by audiotape, the final one must be face to face. Progress Point 1 requires correct notes and words. Progress Point 2 requires correct rhythm and breathing. Progress Point 3 concentrates on artistic delivery.

**Presentation Readiness:** At the second (may be in person or by videotape) and third (must be in person) Progress Points the singer will perform all notes and words and presentation, and will be evaluated by presentation as well as vocal staff. PP2 will give singers feedback about how to improve their presentation; PP3 will require all moves and timing to be accurate and in character.

All three Progress Points must be passed within the specified time frame.

3. **Financial Support**

In order to receive financial support from the chorus a member must attend and participate in 80% of chorus singing engagements from 1 July 2006.

In order to receive financial support from the chorus a member must attend and participate in 80% of fund-raising activities from 1 July 2006.

4. **Financial Expectations**

Blenders normal dues must be paid for 12 months prior to travel to Denver.

Blenders music and costume: all costumes remain the property of The Blenders. Any cost related to long-distance purchase or fitting must be borne by the member.

Cost of trip: each member is responsible for all expenses including airfare, accommodation, meals and extras.

Cost of registration: payment of A$175 (the cost of registering for the convention) to the Blenders is required by 30th June 2006 to confirm commitment.

**THE TAG – The Harmonizer: January/February 2006**

There are tags in this issue for each part, Tenor, Lead, Baritone & Bass, all from Burt Szabo. Here, for all our Basses, is the Bass tag:

![Sheet music for I SMILE by Burt Szabo](image)
Meet Sydney Harmony’s New Musical Director – Vicki Dwyer

After an extensive search, which attracted a field of excellent musicians, Sydney Harmony is fortunate to have appointed highly respected Sweet Adelines Director, Vicki Dwyer, as its Musical Director from February 2006. Vicki’s significant qualifications, experience and barbershop achievements will ensure the continued development of Sydney Harmony as Sydney’s leading men’s a cappella Chorus.

Vicki has always loved music and movement and has completed formal studies in piano, singing and dance through the Australian Music Examinations Board, Trinity College (London) and RADA. She is in demand as an energetic teacher of both piano and singing through her private studio.

In 2001, Vicki was appointed as a “Certified Director” in Sweet Adelines International, and she is the current Director of the Circular Keys Chorus, a position she will retain in addition to her post at Sydney Harmony.

Vicki first joined Circular Keys in 1996 and soon was enlisted as Lead Section Leader and as the Choreographer for the Chorus. In 1999 she moved with her family to San Francisco and joined the Lead Section of the Bay Area Showcase Chorus (BASC) in SAI Region 12. She was soon promoted to Assistant Director, Lead Section Leader and a member of the BASC Music Staff. During that period, she also sang Lead with the Quartet Cat’s Pajamas, who competed successfully in the SAI Region 12 competition. In March 2000, BASC won first place in the Region 12 Chorus Competition, qualifying them to compete at the 2001 Sweet Adelines International Convention in Portland, Oregon, where they achieved International 5th place (still their highest achievement!).

During her time in the USA, Vicki participated in the SAI Director Certification Program and the Regional School for Directors and Assistant Directors. She was also active in teaching the barbershop craft to secondary school students in the Santa Clara Schools District and contributed to the Regional “Young Women in Harmony” program. In September 2003, Vicki was honoured to be one of only six directors from around the world to be invited to direct at the Massed Sing in Phoenix during the Sweet Adelines International Convention.

On her return to Australia in January 2002, Vicki took up the directorship of Circular Keys and applied her energy and learning to the musical development of that Chorus. By 2004, Circular Keys had achieved third place in the SAI Australian regional competition in the mid-size chorus category and fourth place overall.

Under Vicki’s leadership, Circular Keys successfully ran a membership growth program in 2003-2004. The chorus increased its membership by 55%, an achievement that won international recognition in the SAI movement. In addition to this growth in membership numbers, in 2005 Circular Keys achieved second place in the mid-size chorus category and second place overall!

As a member of the SAI Region 34 Music Faculty, Vicki is a sought after coach for Choruses and Quartets. She also finds time to sing Lead with the Quartet Accolade. In 2004, Accolade competed together for the first time and won the Australian National Sweet Adelines Quartet Competition with Australia’s highest ever quartet score! Accolade went on to represent Australia during October 2004 at the Sweet Adelines International Convention in Indianapolis, USA, along with quartets from all over the world!

With Vicki’s demonstrated achievements and experience in barbershop and in other musical fields, Sydney Harmony is delighted to welcome her to our ranks and we look forward to a new era of singing enjoyment, show production and competition success.
FREEFALL actually made it to the International Quartet Finals! Firstly we must thank a few people who helped to make this trip possible.

- Sydney Harmony Executive and Members
- Bob Fritz
- Those very generous and supportive Sweet Adelines who bought over 200 of our CDs
- Of course all the other 800 people who bought our CD including 100s of NSW barbershoppers
- AAMBS National Body
- Sunshine Region Board

It doesn’t seem enough to just say thank you to our lovely families, but without their support and understanding this trip would have never got off the ground. Linda, Joel & Owen, Erica, Kim and Ben, Colin, Gaye and Adam we love you all and hope our music making makes you feel proud of us.

We decided to write individual highlights from our trip and hope you all enjoy our sharing what was a fantastic experience for us all.

From Jim Catt – Lead
This is my 8th International and 4th in which I have competed. As I have done this before my notes will be brief. It was fantastic to feel and see snow in Summer! It was awesome to have barbershop legend Lloyd Steinkamp actually seek us out and say such nice things about the quartet. Singing on the World Jamboree, singing in the most up to date purpose built facility I think I will ever sing in, totally awesome!!! Singing Shenandoah on a mountain top with no-one around, magical moment, sliding down the same mountain on our bottoms after finding no other way to get down! Finding some decent beer in a Mormon homeland!

Coming across a hobo that played off some pretty serious poetry as his own! Well he delivered in such a way that he made us feel like he wrote it. Singing in a 900 voice Gold Medal choir with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Representing my adopted home with my three friends Guy, Tony and Sam. This was a true privilege and one which will remain with me for ever. So many people bothered to say hi and also take the time to say some very complimentary things about FREEFALL.

From Tony Sykes – Tenor
Wow! First time at an International and competing to boot! Just a sensational experience with so many highlights: the thrill of performing in such a magnificent venue as the LDS Conference Centre in front of an audience of thousands; singing in the combined Gold Medallist chorus under Jim Clancy’s direction along with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir; meeting so many legends and heroes; meeting scores of regular barbershoppers who were genuine and sincere in their kind praise of our performances; seeing so many Aussies who had come to Salt Lake City to support us; finding Brewies pub/cinema, the perfect entertainment venue for a hot Salt Lake afternoon just across the car-park from our hotel; having top arranger David Wright tell us we did “Okay” on his chart of Sweet Lorraine in the comp; and when Tom Dames, the Lead from legendary quartet The Easternaires, was moved to tears after we sang with him (the first time he was asked by anyone to sing all week). It was truly a memorable time.

From Guy Gibson – Baritone
Thinking back over the time we (FREEFALL) were at the International in SLC I am overwhelmed by so many images and emotions I hesitate to draw just a few aside for mention, but I suppose some were not as obvious as the thrill of the stage and the support of our friends and the wellwishing strangers from the world of Harmony that we encountered. One was this, when Lloyd Steinkamp sent his wife searching the centre for us to ask if we would like to spend a few moments with him, only to find that he wanted to express appreciation of our performance.
and encourage us in continuing to do what he felt he found in our humble presentation. That was, in his words, a sense of genuineness, a connection which he felt was distinct from technical excellence (and there was plenty of that about), but something which he felt singled us out from many other competitors.

We sang songs to that particular legend of barbershop ’til we were hoarse. The other was finding Todd Wilson (Acoustix) standing in a corridor and slinking off into a corner to sing a quick “Through the Years” with him. This is barbershop harmony at its highest level, guys that love to sing standing in corners singing harmony. I feel blessed to have ever got the chance to sing with Jim, Sam and Tony on the International stage. Some of these moments will never leave my memory.

**From Sam Taylor – Bass**

Well, it sure was a busy week for FREEFALL in early July this year. There are those who say that one’s first international convention is always the best, and chances are they’re right, because for me, it was a real blast. Where do I start? Of course competing was just exhilarating, singing to such a crowd, and performing alongside quartets who were at such a high standard...there was some excellent output from the quartets this year (top 10 particularly) and that was a buzz to watch up close. Many memorable quartet comp moments that were pretty moving when sitting in the theatre; Realtime, Vocal Spectrum and Matrix just to mention a few.

Being an arranger myself, one of the highlights was eventually meeting David Wright, whose arrangement style I’ve worshipped and modelled my own upon for the last four years or so, ... and to be told that we did ‘OK’ on his chart? Wow! Oh, and Jim Clancy was pretty cool also. Did I mention the winning chorus, with their tear-jerking rendition of Time after Time, and another crazy David W arrangement for their up tune, Mississippi Roll on? All round, an awesome convention.
MEMBERSHIP HITS SIXTY!!

After a significant increase in membership throughout 2005 the membership of the chorus has continued to grow. Only twelve months ago the outlook for the chorus looked bleak as membership plunged and the Clippers could barely muster thirty on the risers, but as 2006 got under way the membership roll proudly boasted sixty. The rapid increase in numbers has been in no small amount due to the work of John Shelton, VP Membership, and the Clippers newest Life Member. However every chorus member has played a part in this very significant step forward by making all who arrive at the Clippers door very welcome to join the fun of music making in the Barbershop tradition.

Clippers President Ralph Andrew greets two more new members on the first Chorus night for 2006.

One of our valued new members (who would prefer to remain anonymous) penned the following verse after a few weeks of joining the fun at the Clippers.....

My Clipper Intro!

I've been a member of the River City Clippers For a month or two – maybe three And I'd like to share with each one of you What the experience so far's meant to me.

I sheepishly entered the rehearsal room Wondering what my reception would be "I've come here to see if I'm good enough to sing With the Clippers whom I've seen on TV"

Well! I soon was greeted with a 'smile on legs' (I'm sure you know who I mean) "Come with me and we'll go outback And we'll see where you fit in the scheme"

I let him know of the doubts I had 'Cause a Pavarotti I am not I can't read music – can hold a tune I think. I let him have the lot

He sang some lines for me to repeat "Right! Now it's up to you" He listened intently then smiled and said "Guess what? I think you'll do"

“A fellow bass man that's your lot We'll help you to succeed Come join us on the risers now You've got something we need”

So he introduced me to the group As the latest brand new member And what a warm response they gave 'Tis a reaction I'll always remember Slowly I'm getting to know the guys And boy it's sure is a treat For the more I know each one of them A friendlier group I never could meet

Now who works in the engine room? A group of women second to none Don't look for praise – just happy to help All the Clippers think they're number one

What can I look forward to with the Clippers? Lots of advice from a dedicated gent To improve my voice and delivery So my effort and time are well spent

But the most important thing to remember Is what I can do for "all" If that's always my motivating factor Then I know I'll have a ball

“Who’s Counting” Hits The Airwaves

The Brisbane River City Clippers answered a call from Brisbane Radio 4BC just prior to Christmas. The 4BC Breakfast show was looking for a musical group who could be available to visit the homes of families who were emotionally or financially not in a good position to find much enjoyment in the Festive Season. Any brave volunteers had to be willing to take the chance to be broadcast direct to listeners from outside locations. “Who’s Counting” did the job every day for one week!

Despite this challenging restriction, “Who’s Counting”, using nothing more than a mobile phone from backyards around the city, drew glowing praise from 4BC Breakfast Radio host Peter Dick, the families who received their visits and the wider listening audience of Radio 4BC. Their final performance of the week in the studio of 4BC was widely acclaimed and had yet another positive impact on the increasing membership of the chorus.

Clippers’ Sponsor, Coates Hire, spontaneously offered a donation of $100.00 to one particular family experiencing considerable trauma, Australian Diversified Engineering added another $100 and Q Print, yet another Clippers Sponsor, threw in a further $50.00 to this amount.
Yes, it’s that time of the year again and Broadwater Chorus is practising hard for the Regionals. There is more competition this year for small choruses but then this is what the Regionals are all about – testing your skills, hoping that the chorus is just that much better than last year and of course meeting old friends and making new ones.

The chorus has had its first sing-out at the Garden City Christian Church. I thought it would be a small church hall but when we got there and went through the gates it was a huge complex. It was a very good sing-out and thoroughly enjoyed by the audience and the chorus members. Broadwater Chorus will also be performing with the Queensland Accordion Orchestra at the Wynnum Leisure Centre on 8 April. This should be a very good concert with a large audience. Another booking in June for a retirement village and a concert in October. Our numbers are slowly growing and we have great plans for the latter part of the year.

Good singing to all, and I’ll see you at the Regionals.

Janet Sippen
Musical Director
The Gold Coast has experienced an event it has not had for five years. The dam is almost full. 99% at last count. Hopefully the powers that be won’t let it drain out as quickly as it did last time.

Back to our craft. The Blenders have entered the ABC FM choral competition. This is open to all choirs and choruses throughout the land and the finalists are selected at a state competition or sing off on the 3rd of August in Brisbane and other capital cities. The final will be in Sydney in September. So remember to listen in because we may well be singing for your appraisal any time soon.

We have been learning new material especially for the competition and hope to have it ready for public consumption at the audition in May. Of course on that very day we have the Sunshine Region competition and it will be interesting to see if we can combine the two.

This year the youth in our group have formed the South East Corner Association under the direction of Andrew Howson and Aaron Griffin. It will be a monthly gathering and is open to 17-30 year olds.

A number of our youth have been appearing in local shows and this augers well for future direction. Coby Chapple and Lensai Nishizawa head the list.

It was sad to hear of the murder of the son of Trevor Rootes in Melbourne recently. We sang The Lord’s Prayer in respect for that poor fellow. He must be devastated.

We have decided to fundraise heavily for our upcoming trip to Denver. It apparently is the dullest city in the USA. It also is called the Mile high city as it is 5000 feet above sea level. It has the dubious honour of producing the world’s largest arsenal of weapons, from bullets to ballistic missiles and the greatest array of shooting irons to be found any where.

Yet it has nearby the Colorado river and the snowfields of Aspen, a much loved ski-ing resort. Although there ain’t much snow to be found in July.

It is now eighteen months to the Sydney convention and the excitement will start happening by early in 2007. It would be nice to have the following in Tasmania or South Australia as they have yet to stage the event. Maybe they will. Who knows.

We have seen a few members retire or take leave of absence this year. The following have given great service and deserve a break.

Dennis Johnson, Mike Ludwig, Chris Gray, Dan and Brad Harriman, Jorge Torres, Case Kruysmulder and Don Clifford.

For those who know Avon Phillips he has had yet another incident. This time it is his ankle which he broke not long ago. The first accident was when his voice broke and that was a while ago. He’s been breaking things ever since on a regular basis. Just as well he isn’t a horse or he would have been glue by now.

That’s all from the Gold Coast.

Remember; It wasn’t the cough that carried him off but the coffin they carried him off in.

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Just for a change, instead of blowing the Miner Chords trumpet, I’d like to reflect on some of the wonderful things that have happened to us as a chorus as we pursue our exhilarating Barbershop hobby.

Our experience as a fledgling club is a wonderful example of the true spirit of brotherhood and harmony which, I’m delighted to say, has re-emerged in the Sunshine Region. There are so many things to be thought about, planned for, budgeted for and slowly acquired when you start a club from scratch that you wonder whether you will be able to achieve half of what’s on your wish list. Thanks to the unstinting support of our brothers in harmony we have made a great start in such a short time.

The Blenders, as ever, have been magnificent and tireless in their support of Miner Chords. They donated 3 large Porta Robes of grey tails which will be the mainstay of our formal uniform. Librarian Johnny Mahon is a huge help to us and produces music and CDs for us at a fraction of the cost we could do it for ourselves. This ongoing support is just so great to receive and is of inestimable value to us. Thanks too to Steve Sinclair for his support with learning materials The Blenders have also supported us with their physical presence on several occasions, the most recent of which was just last Sunday at our Open Day. Member Derek Hoult who used to live in Ipswich many moons ago brought along Escapade and Chordial Exchange. This was the third visit by Escapade to Ipswich in the last 9 months and we were so happy for Aaron Griffin to fill in as Tenor for the indisposed Chris Gray. Thanks also to Steve Griffin who fled the AAMBS Face to Face Council Meeting early to hop on a plane and come straight to Ipswich. Their presence on the risers was such a positive experience for our brand new Barbershoppers and gave them a real buzz to sing with some of the best not only in Australia but also on the world scene.

Bayside Barbershop Harmony (the Bay City Rollers as I call them) have also come to the party in a big way. Thanks to them we now have our own set of risers which got their first public outing at our Open Day. They also donated a huge bag of vests and ties for which we are extremely thankful.

This wonderful outpouring of fraternal love and support within the Sunshine Region is especially pleasing to me and is hugely appreciated by the
members. Long may it continue throughout Australia and thanks so much to all our fellow Barbershoppers for your selfless and untiring assistance to the newest kids on the block.

In awe of all the blessings we have received I remain

Chordially yours

Chris Featherstone, President, Miner Chords
Ipswich’s Own Entertainment Chorus

The Barbershop Harmony Society has recently partnered with Naked Voice Records in a collaboration that will have a profound effect on the availability of barbershop audio worldwide. NVR is a record label owned by Barbershoppers (AIC members, in fact!) and dedicated exclusively to the digital distribution of a cappella music.

Phase I of the project will make available world-wide virtually every quartet and chorus contest performance recorded at international contests since 1999. Initial release is expected in the first quarter of 2006.

Over the succeeding months, NVR hopes to digitize and add to the catalog, all contest music dating back as far as the technology will allow. As you might imagine, old reel-to-reel tapes from the ‘40s are rather fragile so a by product of this effort will be the conservation and preservation of the Society’s audio legacy. It is estimated that this initiative will ultimately result in an available barbershop catalog of tens of thousands of tracks!

This body of music will join the digital catalog of NVR already available through a variety of the most popular legal music download services such as iTunes, Napster, Rhapsody, and more. These services offer legal digital downloads and/or streaming delivery of CD quality audio on a piecemeal basis. Both Apple and Windows based computers are supported both with and without the popular portable players such as iPod, iRiver, Zen, GoGear, Sony and many more.

Watch this space for the launch of these incredible new music services! “

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**Items from Tempo, The Harmonizer – January/February 2006**

**Official publication of the Barbershop Harmony Society**

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1) A TRULY GOLDEN FAMILY …

Is this the first time that a Father & Sons (and Uncle) have taken International Quartet Gold Medals — and in the same year?

2005 International Gold Medal Seniors Quartet
Antique Gold – from Greater Vancouver, BC, Canada
Tom Bates (Tenor 70), George Wakeham (Lead 63),
“Uncle” George Metzger (Bass 58),
“Father” Charlie Metzger (Baritone 59)

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2005 International Gold Medal Quartet
Realtime – from the Evergreen Chapter, Vancouver, Canada
Tim Broersma (Tenor from USA),
Our own John Newell ex Southern Cross (Lead),
Sons : Tom Metzger (Bass),
      Mark Metzger (Baritone)

We would be very interested to hear how many Australian Choruses have members from the same family singing with them.

2) Downloadable barbershop coming to iTunes

Soon you’ll be able to legally purchase thousands of barbershop performances from iTunes, Napster, Rhapsody, MusicMatch, and more!

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**WARNING – WARNING**
- WARNING -

DO NOT (REPEAT NOT)
SEND EMAILS to exec@aambs.org.au

DO NOT (REPEAT NOT)
OPEN EMAILS from exec@aambs.org.au

As already notified in previous editions of Barbershop Notes this email address has been cancelled SO any emails sent to or received from exec@aambs.org.au are likely to contain viruses.

Some members are still using this address and addressing enquiries to the previous Executive Secretary … this position has not existed since 31 December 2004).

**ALL CORRESPONDENCE** should be addressed to Kevin White, Secretary, AAMBS Inc at secretary@aambs.org.au or to the post office address which appears on all AAMBS letterheads and on the back page of all editions of Barbershop Notes.
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Up There Cazaly, Waltzing Matilda, Where The Dog Sits On The Tucker Box, Wild Colonial
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Travelling Overseas ???
Check out the local Barbershoppers on our International Choruses page

Deadline for the next edition is Sunday 15th May 2006