FROM OUR PRESIDENT –
Mike Donnelly

Internationals really are!

For many years some barbershoppers have harboured the illusion that barbershopping is strictly an American artform. But for anyone that had the joy of being at Internationals in Indianapolis the second week in July, there was no doubt that the artform is now firmly established around the world.

One of the most popular Gold Medallist quartets in recent memory, Realtime, completed their year as International champions, and “sang away” their title to this year’s winners, Vocal Spectrum. As they did they received an enthusiastic standing ovation from a wildly cheering audience of over 10,000. And as we all know, Realtime’s lead, John Newell is a true Aussie, and his quartet has two Canadians and one American. And in the Collegiate competition (up to age 25), the lads from Down Under walked away with the Gold Medal, as Musical Island Boys from New Zealand (NZABS) won the gold and stole the hearts of the audience. Sweden and Britain had entries in the chorus competition and in the open Quartet competition. And next year it will be our turn as our national champions, The Blenders, will represent Australia in the International Chorus Competition in Denver, Colorado, and our Silver Medallist Quartet, Fast Forward will also compete.

Gentlemen, I don’t want to over-dramatize things, but if you like barbershopping at all………. I can tell you that the concerts, education classes, and competitions at Internationals are absolutely inspirational, motivational, educational, and just plain amazing. There is great humour, wit, camaraderie, visual spectacles, and singing guaranteed to take your breath away, or bring tears to your eyes.

If you are planning to take a vacation anywhere in the next ten years I heartily recommend you experience a Rocky Mountain High by attending the

Get to Know Your AAMBS Councillors

**TOM SMITH – VP Membership & Marketing**

Tom Smith became a barbershopper with The Melbournaires after experiencing a TV interview with the 1995 Quartet Gold Medal Winners ‘High Five’. Tom is now a 11 year ‘veteran’ of the Melbournaires having held several management committee positions including President from 1997 – 2000. Tom is currently Secretary of the Club.

A definite highlight of Tom’s barbershop career was to head the Pan Pacific convention team that put together the 3rd Pan Pacific and 6th AAMBS National Convention in Melbourne 2001. In 2002, Tom was elected to the AAMBS National Council as VP Marketing & Development.

Among other things, Tom has produced a position paper examining the feasibility of AAMBS becoming a charitable organization but cites the AAMBS 2005 Membership Survey as one of his more important achievements the results of which have already influenced Council actions relating to conventions, harmony college and member education events.

When the AAMBS VP Membership position became vacant at the 2005 AGM, Tom volunteered to do both VP Membership and VP Marketing jobs whilst a talent search was being conducted within AAMBS for another councillor. Increasing and retaining members is AAMBS major priority and Tom has the task of developing and implementing a National Recruitment Week to be held in 2007.

Tom and Heather have been married for 32 years and have three children now in their 20s. After a 25 year stint with the RAAF completing his RAAF career as the RAAF Resident Engineer at the Government Aircraft Factory, Tom has held senior positions in Facility Management and is currently the IT Infrastructure Manager for Anglicare Victoria.

**Bill Hanna’s favourite Tag**

Bill Hanna, of Hanna-Barbera Productions, (ie. Tom & Jerry, +), always regretted that he didn’t have time to be a barbershopper but was a great friend of SPEBSQSA – Bill always asked Barberhoppers to sing Sweet Sixteen.

**BARRY JOY - Treasurer**

Barry has been AAMBS treasurer since September 2005.

He was appointed by Council to takeover following Warren Beckwith’s retirement and was confirmed in the position at the December 2005 Annual General Meeting.

He is also treasurer of The Australian Barbershop Convention Management Association which is the incorporated vehicle for each successive convention host to use. It enables GST obligations to be handled and business to be Australia wide.

Barry is a Fellow of the Australian Society of CPAs, an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries and a Justice of the Peace (Qualified) for Queensland.

He joined the Banana Blenders in February 1994 and served in the positions of treasurer, auditor and vice-president. Since October 2004 he has been president of The Blenders.

During his professional career he was involved in financial administration of companies in the petroleum, chemical and food industries. For eight years he was Assistant Director-General, Administration & Finance, of the Education Department of Victoria and then for ten years was Finance Director & Company Secretary of The Australian Ballet.

Barry is a computer buff and quotes his hobbies as singing and computing. He has tutored for U3A computer classes for several years and is an enthusiastic proponent of the expanded use of email and websites for members communication. He is a keen supporter of music learning material being distributed electronically and encourages the use of computers and information technologies, particularly for banking and accounting.

Barry and Patricia married in Victoria in 1958. They have three sons, one granddaughter and four grandsons. Although spending a lot of time in Queensland on the Gold Coast, they return to Melbourne regularly and particularly for Christmas and New Year celebrations.

**Quote from Charlie Parker, Jazz Saxophonist:**

Music is your own experience, your own thoughts, your wisdom. If you don’t live it, it won’t come out of your horn.

They teach you there’s a boundary line to music. But, man, there’s no boundary line to art.
FROM OUR SECRETARY

PRIVACY CONTROL – A NOTE OF RE-ASSURANCE

The privacy of AAMBS individual members (as defined in Section 13A of the Privacy Act 1988 as amended) is protected by Section 16A of the Act, which obliges Organisations (including AAMBS) which are bound by an approved Privacy Code, not to breach the Code by an interference with the privacy of the individual.

The statutory records of AAMBS are intended to, and do properly and correctly, record the particulars of its registered members in a secure manner, accessible only by, and disclosable only by, the AAMBS Secretary, for a proper purpose, in compliance with the National Privacy Principles.

The failure (if any) on the part of any AAMBS Club to fully disclose the particulars of its members, would have the effect of excluding them from recognition as members, from protection under the AAMBS Public Liability Policy and from the ability to vote as duly registered members of the Association.

Following is an extract from my report in Barbershop Notes Issue 89:

*It is ESSENTIAL that you keep AAMBS notified of any change of contact details – this applies particularly to Executive Members of each chorus. I am constantly surprised at how many times important emails are returned as "undelivered" or "unknown". For you to be kept up to date on all aspects of AAMBS’ operations I must have correct contact details for your Club, and these need to be updated when any change is made. This is up to you.*

This also applies to postal addresses – we have had some items **Returned to Sender** recently marked **No longer at this address.**

Your assistance will help us all.

Yours sin(g)cerely,
Kevin White

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FROM OUR TREASURER

AAMBS Council is keen to keep operating expenses to a minimum so the maximum amount possible is available for national and regional development programs.

At its last meeting it was decided to cease printing and mailing *Barbershop Notes* and only publish electronically. That will save a lot of money each year and free up funds to support the Youth Development Program and training workshops. It will take all of us a while to get used to receiving our copy of the newsletter on our computer screen but the bonus is it’s in full colour. We can print it if we want and it’s not a great chore to run a copy for our buddy who doesn’t yet have an internet accessing PC.

Even with the utmost attention to cost cutting, the need for increased outlays on regional development programs make it inevitable to raise the subscription fee from 1st October, when the new AAMBS financial year commences. At present the total fee is $35 with $5 being returned to the regions. It is proposed to increase the fee and the return to regions by the same percentage. The basic fee will rise by $8.75 and $1.25 will be added for the regional return grants, making a total fee of $45 per member.

The new fee structure will be submitted to the Annual General Meeting for ratification.

Yours financially,
Barry Joy

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**Note from the Editor:**

*You will see that this is a bumper issue of your AAMBS’ Newsletter - Barbershop Notes. Thank you all for your very interesting articles and, please, keep them coming. We are all fascinated to hear what you and your members are doing as we can all learn from each other’s experiences. BSN would not be such a great font of information tool without your contributions. Congratulations one and all!*
FROM OUR VP MEMBERSHIP

BUDDIES 101

As we all know, we want life to be better and more productive for our children than it was for us; this is the same principle behind becoming a Barbershop Buddy (big brother, mentor, sponsor). Having a Barbershop Buddy can make the first year of Club membership for a guest or new member more fun, more meaningful, more fun, more educational, more fun, more musical and – more fun!

The duties of being a Barbershop Buddy include seeing that your guest or new member is NEVER alone. Perhaps you could provide his transportation for a while. Be certain he has all the music that will be used each evening including, if possible, a learning tape for those songs. Give your guest or new member an idea of what is going to happen each evening and WHY.

See that your guest or new member has EVERY opportunity to sing before, during, and after the chorus meeting. It's what we are all about – the MUSIC! A Barbershop Buddy (you) also offers to answer questions about fees, the Region and about AAMBS.

When the guest becomes a new member, your job isn’t over. In fact, it has just begun! A Barbershop Buddy will spend more time with his new member because he needs to know all about your chorus/club, types of music, educational opportunities, the annual concert, family involvement, contests and conventions.

If your Club runs a crash course for beginners, attend with your new member because you’re his new best friend and resource. He will feel better asking you additional questions than asking them in front of a group.

Along with singing tags and great music fun, show your new member how the risers go together, how to sell tickets, sell ads, and market our hobby. Yep, make certain he knows what’s expected of him and what he can get from his Club membership.

And finally, make him PLEASED that he made the right choice to put Barbershopping higher on his priority list.

Recruiting Revelations:
- A good demo tape is worth a thousand sales pitches.
- The majority of male singers don’t read music… they just follow the notes up and down.

Tom Smith

Ed. Note – Can you help with an answer for Doug? If so, let me know and I will forward your comments to him.

Doug – here is a reply from our VP Music for recording Learning Tapes:

“I use a simple 4 track cassette recorder to record part-predominant tapes. I don’t need a professional recording studio, just a quiet room in the house, and a good quality vocal microphone (I use a Shure SM58).

I record each voice part on a different track, starting with the Lead part (except if the song has a lot of bass pick-ups, and then I might record the bass part first). Most 4 track recorders have a facility to record other tracks while you play back (and listen) to already recorded tracks. So I play the Lead part back and sing the bass part, then I do the same again adding the tenor part, and finally the baritone part. Getting the sync right when doing this can be tricky, and I don’t always get the sync exact. The other thing I do is play the part on the piano as I sing, so that the note is right (you can hear the piano in the background on each track), so slight pitch imperfections (that can be transferred to the learner) are eliminated or minimized.

The trick for me, not being a natural bass, is to wait until early morning to record the bass part – adds a few bottom notes to my range! Once the four tracks are all recorded, I can then mix the various part-
predominant versions required, e.g. Lead on left channel, other 3 parts mixed together on the right channel, and so on. Another option is to do exactly the same as above, but have a quartet sing and record all four parts at once. Of course the quartet needs to know the songs being recorded very well. We did this with the AAMBS Polecats Learning Tapes, where my quartet Bad Habits recorded all the songs (except for I Still Call Australia Home which I did all parts myself).

It's a bit of work to make learning tapes this way, but I have found them very effective and very well received by the guys in the chorus. I also think it is the best learning tape tool – after all BHS do this too! I did this for 4 years for Men In Harmony, and have been doing the VE tapes the same way until the last year, when the quartet version of the above has been used.

Cheers, Ian Mulholland, AAMBS VP Music

9TH AAMBS NATIONAL CONVENTION 27 to 30 September 2007

2007 Convention Update No. 2

Planning is gearing up for the 9th AAMBS National Convention to be held at Sydney’s Darling Harbour from 27th to 30th September 2007. Yes that's right - only 14 months away.

We look forward to welcoming all our choruses and quartets with a promise of hospitality and friendship to match that memorable Convention last year at the Gold Coast.

Website

Please keep checking on the Convention website, www.barbershopconvention.com.au/. Over the next few weeks you will see new pages added to deal with accommodation, registration, convention information and merchandise.

We will be contacting all choruses to ask you to put a link on your website to the Convention website, and other sites that may be of assistance to your members.

Guest Stars

As previously advised the special guests performing at the Harmony Spectacular Concert will be 2004 International Champions GOTCHA, Australian and world renowned a-cappella group The Idea of North, as well as Australia’s own 7 times National Champions, The Blenders. The Blenders will be fresh back from the International Convention in Denver and we know they will do Australia proud. Look for more information on these websites:

http://www.gotchaquartet.com

More Information

Why not have a pre-Convention look around Sydney. These websites will give you a wide coverage of the venue as well as Sydney itself.

http://www.darlingharbour.com

Contact us

Please feel free to contact the organising team at any time with any comments or suggestions; we really appreciate your input. Our email contact is: Team2007@sydneyharmony.com.au.

The current members of the organising committee are:

Christopher Miley Chair
Richard Kaan Deputy chair
Bob Fritz AAMBS VP
Conventions
Geoff Millard
Rob Walley
Ladd Wheeler
John Forrest
David Ojerholm

Best wishes to you all as you prepare to take part in the Convention in Sydney in 2007.

Christopher Miley
Convention Coordinator

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night;
And his affections dark as Erebos:
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

"The Merchant of Venice" (5.1.91-7)
Coaching Visit from Eddie Martinez

Vocal Evolution was once again fortunate to benefit from the services of Eddie Martinez from Austin, Texas on his latest visit to Australia and New Zealand. Eddie was in Perth for just over a week from 12 – 20 June and we made sure to pack plenty of activity in during that time. A coaching retreat was held on the weekend and was a bit more relaxed than on other occasions due to the fact that it is not a contest year. Nevertheless, it was a great success on many levels. As always Eddie was able to continue to challenge us to be the best we can be as singers and chorus members.

Eddie Martinez & his Perth hosts – Neil Cocker & Helen Verhoeff

Eddie celebrated his 40th birthday while he was in Perth and we certainly could not let the occasion pass without organising something big to mark the occasion. After taking Eddie out for a low-key birthday lunch we were able to catch him on the hop later that evening with the real event, a surprise birthday party at the very well-appointed University Club at the University of WA complete with live entertainment from a 12-piece swing band. We were even able to surprise him with the presence of an old friend of his from the USA who happens to now be working in Perth. It certainly was a great evening and was the very least we could do for the man who has become a great friend and mentor of Vocal Evolution.

ABC Choir of the Year Contest WA State Final

The chorus is delighted to have progressed through to the ABC Choir Contest WA State Final to be held at His Majesty’s Theatre, Perth on 1 August. We are rehearsing hard to get our performance package together and hope to be able make a very good impression on the judges and the audience alike as we wave the flag for Barbershop Harmony in WA.

Youth Quartet Nexus Perform at Rugby International

Vocal Evolution quartet Nexus were invited to sing both the Irish and Australian national anthems at Australia v Ireland Rugby International at Subiaco Oval in Perth on 24 June. Ashley, Gordon, Alex and Alastair did a fantastic job of both songs in front of a capacity crowd and worldwide television audience using special arrangements put together by Alex to accommodate the instrumental backing. Well done boys!

Nexus – Alex Morris (Bari) Alastair Jamison (Bass) Gordon Jamison (Lead) Ashley Schofield (Tenor)

Musical Island Boys Visit Perth for Youth Event

The NZ Quartet Champs, Musical Island Boys will be visiting Perth in early September as the star attraction for the “Big Barbershop Day Out”, a weekend of Barbershop Harmony workshops for youth which will culminate with a concert involving all participants. Last year’s event was a great success and we are confident that the expanded activities and the musical presence of MIB will help to build on this. Vocal Evolution is very happy to be working in conjunction with other Perth barbershoppers on this ongoing project as youth development is critical for the continued success of the Barbershop artform in Australia. For more information on the event visit http://www.mychorus.info/yibdi/.

Upcoming Events

The chorus is also currently rehearsing for an appearance on the Sweet Adelines Perth Harmony Chorus Show “Cirque’appella” later this month. We are also looking forward to what promises to be one of the biggest Barbershop events of recent times in Perth with the visit of BHS International Quartet Champions, Realtime in October.

So much for 2006 being a nice, quiet non-contest year! We wouldn’t have it any other way of course…

Adrian Gimpal

“The effects of good music are not just because it’s new; on the contrary - music strikes us more the more familiar we are with it.”

- Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe
News from the Brisbane River City Clippers

Rehearsals at The Clippers took on a different look in May. Four of the Blenders made the journey from the Gold Coast on several occasions to give us some coaching on presentation and singing. Steve Griffin, his son Aaron, Andrew Howson and Coby Chapple helped us to see old things in new ways. Coby convinced us that our movements must be large and exaggerated if the audience were to see and be engaged by them. Steve suggested we form our own presentation team as a way of adding variety and interest up front during rehearsals and as insurance that the focus on presentation be maintained into the future. All up the visit and professional input from these gentlemen in working with the Clippers was much appreciated and reflected the brotherhood of the Barbershop movement at its best.

June 21st saw Eddie Martinez stop in on his way back to the USA. Again the session was “full on” as he presented us with new ways of coming to understand the techniques of Barbershop, which we had probably all heard in coaching sessions previously. Eddie's fresh approach and engaging presence in front of the chorus left us with many memories. His constant reminders to, “Open up your face”, “Show us your teeth” or “Sing with enough warm air to fog up your watch” will hopefully remain with us far into the future. Eddie also encouraged the Basses to realise and appreciate their importance in the “pyramid of sound” produced by the chorus, resulting in some very pleasant chords being produced throughout the evening.

During June the chorus sang twice at Bunnings’ Stores throughout the city while conducting sausage sizzles on Saturday mornings. Our zealous VP Membership, John Shelton, missed both dates however as he and wife Linda were out of the country, visiting family and friends in England. John somehow found time to drop in to check out the happenings at the British Barbershop Convention. Before his departure for the “Old Country”, John and his three companions (Keith Lay, Don Godfrey and John McMillan, of National Senior Champion quartet “Who’s Counting”) completed a run of presentations at Brisbane City Council libraries. The shows for which the BCC undertook publicity were well attended with over 100 people at one performance.

With a strong record of charitable contributions to worthy causes over the years, The Clippers have been nominated for an NAB 2006 Volunteer Award.

Finally, our rehearsal venue, the Old Museum in Gregory Terrace in Brisbane, is undergoing major, intermittent renovation. Hopefully it will be in good shape to provide great vibes for the annual Clippers concert at the venue on October 21st.

Keith Druery
Vice President Publicity

Looking for new men? Try this!

Doug Moody, Music VP of The Melbournaires, reports on their Sing in Harmony course

The tried and tested recruitment method has been the Guest Night. This is a special night when we run a program that demonstrates what the chorus does and how barbershop harmony works. We entertain with a few songs, have a quartet perform and then encourage the visitors to give it a go. We might get a dozen visitors to join us on a Guest Night and perhaps 2 or 3 new recruits as a result.

What are the problems with this approach? Possibly at least the following:

- It's ONE night and if you can't come on that night you miss out. (I know we say that “every night’s a guest night” but we don’t get a dozen new men along every week, do we.)
- The guests don’t get much of an opportunity to try themselves out. Sure, they sing with the chorus a bit but will probably only learn a simple song and they will need to get really hooked on that night to want to come back the next week. They won’t really find out what harmony singing in the barbershop style is about until they’ve been along for a few months.
- The new men are out-numbered by chorus members. Indeed, they are usually surrounded by men who are confident singers and seem to know what they’re doing. The new men feel that an extraordinary amount of attention is being focused on them and that other men are actually LISTENING to them sing. This can be quite intimidating for men who have mostly sung in the privacy of the shower and who may be hoping for some degree of anonymity. We often forget how nervous we were when we first stood up to sing in public with all those eyes watching us.

After a pretty dismal recruiting effort in 2005, our Musical Director, Ian Lushey, drew our attention to information that was available on the BABS (British Association of...
Barbershop Singers) website. (It may not be there now.) The Taunton Rivertones reported that they had run a 12-week course in singing that had attracted 33 men and had resulted in them gaining 16 new members. For a chorus of 27 men, this was an outstanding result. The website contained all the documents that they used to organise their course and they gained Arts Council funding to run it.

Soon afterwards, a few other choruses adopted this approach and also published their materials on the BABS website. Most opted for a shorter course of 6-8 sessions. Some provided their course notes and even their teaching notes.

So The Melbournaires decided to give the Singing Course approach a go. We reviewed the materials available from BABS and decided that, rather than a general course in singing, we wanted the emphasis to be on learning to sing in harmony. So our course was titled “Sing in Harmony.”

The next problem was to decide the course length and work out how we would work this into our normal rehearsal schedule. We decided to offer six one-hour sessions. These would occupy the first hour of our normal rehearsal time and commence at 7:30 p.m. While the sessions were operating the remainder of the chorus would be warming up, practising choreography, and checking out the latest chorus news. Then promptly at 8:30 p.m. the chorus would take to the risers and rehearse for 90+ minutes straight.

The Music Team took responsibility for planning and running the course; the Management Committee took on the other roles. Mike Thorne volunteered to be the Course Registrar and respond to all enquiries. We decided that the course would commence on Monday May 1 and advertising for the course got underway. This took the form of posters in shops and libraries, letterboxing, newspaper advertisements, news articles in local papers, radio advertising and, of course, word-of-mouth. The chorus sang a couple of songs on the ABC Evening Show and our MD was interviewed by the show’s presenter, Derek Guille, about our Sing in Harmony course. Essentially any method that wasn’t excessively expensive for publicising the availability of our course was used.

Our ads emphasised that it was a course in harmony singing for men and that it was FREE and obligation-free and conducted as a workshop rather than a lecture. We said that an ability to read music was not required. (A large number of our existing members do not read music in the proper sense of the word but they do know that when the dots go up you sing higher and when the dots go down you sing lower!)

In other words, we offered our course as a public education initiative with the hope that men would be attracted to it, and some would want to continue harmony singing afterwards and some of them would enjoy singing with The Melbournaires enough to want to join us. We were confident that, if we could interest enough men in harmony singing, some would choose to stay with us. The others might be interested in attending our performances in the future or perhaps joining us when they had more time. Some would no doubt just become better singers in their church choirs, gospel groups, or local community choirs.

We began the advertising drive about 5 weeks prior to our starting date and enrolments began to drift in. As the promotion of the course gathered momentum so did the enrolments. In the final week before the course commenced our registrar was updating the enrolment numbers three times a day. Men continued to enrol after the course commenced. We had around 60 enrolments – some of them never turned up (including one guy who said his name was “Al Jolson”), some pulled out quickly for various reasons, but for most sessions we had around 50 (new) men on the risers and this reduced to about 40 by the end of the course.

The teaching team consisted of our Musical Director, Ian Lushey, assisted by the section leaders (Steve Carnie, John Webb, Leckie Webster and Richard Fisher) and the Music VP. The MD was responsible for most of the craft sessions with a little delegation to the section leaders and the Music VP. The Music VP, the only retired man in the teaching team, was responsible for the preparation of the course materials. The other members of the Music Team were asked to look after our chorus in the back room.
On the first night, the registrar met the men as they arrived and gave them a name badge, a learning CD and a display book containing general information, two songs and course notes for the first session. We should have had more men delegated to assist with this task.

Each session began with a short vocal warm-up and review. This was followed by a craft workshop. The men then moved into sectionals to learn their part for a song and then returned to the risers to practise the song. The time literally flew! Clearly one hour wasn’t enough. Our session on Presentation Skills went hopelessly overtime to 90 minutes but our own chorus members joined the workshop for this session.

We soon twigged to the fact that the class wanted to hear some good harmony singing so we started gathering the attention of the group prior to 7:30 p.m. with a quartet performance. When the song finished the class took to the risers and immediately began their warm-up.

When the workshop concluded, the men were invited to stay and watch a Melbournaires rehearsal, have tea or coffee or enjoy any other activities that were happening. On the first night of the course the ladies from East City Sound joined us to practise the songs we would sing with them in their concert. On the third night of the course we celebrated our 15th birthday and had a lot of old faces return. We viewed a short DVD on the history of the chorus and its performances over the years. (Fortunately, our rehearsal hall has a data projection facility and a good sound system. We also used this facility to assist our session on Presentation Skills by showing clips of top choruses and quartets in action.)

The evaluation forms we received at the end of the course told us that the course was far better than they had imagined it would be, the course materials were excellent, and the course was very professionally run. They said that they loved the experience and would have appreciated longer sessions. They also appreciated receiving an encouraging email each week.

**The nitty-gritty**

The curriculum was as follows:

**Week 1:** Allocation of parts, the vocal instrument, posture and breathing.

**Week 2:** Legato singing

**Week 3:** Vowels and diphthongs

**Week 4:** Resonance

**Week 5:** Presentation skills

**Week 6:** Course review; how to be a better lead / bass / baritone / tenor; performance for friends and family.

Participation Certificates issued together with a copy of the Barbershop Harmony Society “Singing Is Life” DVD. Supper supplied.

When we run the course again, we are likely to change the order so that Resonance is in week 2, and is followed by Vowels/diphthongs in week 3 then Consonants and Legato Singing in week 4. This is a more logical way of developing the course concepts.

In week 4 we supplied the participants with information on how to become a Melbournaire and in week 5 those who expressed interest were offered our audition pack including a learning CD, music and details about our chorus. About half the group took the audition pack and about half of those have continued with us at the completion of the course. In the month after the course, three men had passed their audition and the rest were working towards an audition in our early-bird class.
Evaluation

Instead of a Guest Night with a definite recruitment objective, we offered a public education course over six weeks that would have the likelihood of discovering men who wanted to sing and who might want to continue their singing with our chorus. At no stage during the course did we engage in a “hard sell.” (However, we may have spoken about singing barbershop harmony with obvious enthusiasm.) We were happy to accept men into the course who clearly had an interest in other singing groups and would finish the course and go back to those groups. We said the course was “obligation-free” and we meant it.

The amount spent on Sing in Harmony was a little over $1000 so each man who came along cost us about $20. This included newspaper advertising costs, print costs, display books and learning CDs. All of our printing was done on bubble-jet printers using refillable cartridges. Previous Guest Night budgets have been around $500 – about $50 per man. We did not have sponsorship for the course.

For our money, we inducted a large number of men into the techniques of singing close harmony in the barbershop style. Instead of a one night stand, the men attended for six consecutive weeks, gained a basic barbershop education, found out all about our chorus and were befriended by our members, and most discovered that they had the ability to sing in a chorus. According to their evaluation forms, they loved the experience. Even those who didn’t stay after the course now know more about the style so we’ve spread the barbershop message to an interested group of men and their families.

Many men find the weekly commitment to a chorus and the need to be available for gigs a real difficulty. Commitments to business, work and school can monopolise one’s life and quite a few of our participants commented that, while they could find time for a six week course, a regular commitment every week would be beyond them. Some already had other commitments to other clubs or choral groups that they were loathe to give up. Obviously, these constraints are more likely to affect younger potential members.

Membership in our chorus is not cheap. There is a membership subscription ($79 per quarter) as well as the cost of some items of the performance costume and the cost of getting to rehearsals and gigs. Even at concession rates the costs can be significant and beyond a man who is unemployed (and possibly the very man who is in need of the companionship and teamwork that is part of harmony singing). So for some men who attended our free course, the cost of continuing was a problem.

Men still join our chorus by turning up on a rehearsal night and getting bitten with the bug. Some of our newer recruits welcomed the opportunity to participate in our little Harmony College. All things considered, Sing in Harmony was a resounding success. We’ll certainly want to do it again, and hopefully do it even better the next time.

The down-side

While the course was running, those chorus members who were not involved in the course were consigned to the back room where they did warm-up exercises, practised choreography, listened to the week’s notices and did a little singing. As the course progressed, we noticed that members who were not involved in some aspect of the course (setting up the risers, greeting new men, looking after parking, etc.) started to come later and later.

We limited sessions to 60 minutes because we didn’t want to affect the chorus’s rehearsals in a significant way. If we had extended the sessions to 90 minutes or 2 hours the chorus rehearsal time would have been very short indeed. We decided that we couldn’t start any earlier than 7:30pm to allow more chorus time, so we had a problem.

If we included our members in longer sessions of the Sing in Harmony course then our preparation for upcoming gigs would be hindered unless we were prepared to run additional rehearsals on another night of the week. Also, it would be necessary to select music for the course that was new to our members. That would mean having a significant lead time for the creation of learning CDs.

The future

We’ll probably use the experience gained from our first effort to do it differently next time. We know the sessions need to be longer and frankly our own members would probably benefit from a refresher course in the barbershop basics. We may have to install a repertoire rehearsal for members on a different night at least every second week.

We’d certainly recommend the Sing in Harmony approach to other choruses. There is the possibility that we could improve our course materials so that they could be used more widely by other AAMBS choruses. We probably need to develop teaching notes and teaching aids to go with the course. Ian Mulholland has agreed to review our materials.

I understand that both Sydney Harmony and The Blenders plan to run Sing in Harmony courses in the coming months. There will be more to learn from their experiences.

P.S.: One of our newspaper advertisements failed to mention that we were only catering for men. We had more responses to that ad. from women than men, (wouldn’t you know!).

Enquiries can be directed to Doug Moody at dougmoody@optusnet.com.au.

Ed. Note: If any MD or Chorus would like more information on the running of these training courses, let me know and I will email Doug’s very detailed notes to you.
As a result, 12 songs were selected for the next two Music Premiere releases.

Each release consists of six songs. The demo CD has a performance of the song by a top quartet or chorus, or by the creator of the BHS learning tracks. Recently, the demo CDs have featured the amazing Tim Waurick who sings all four parts. Tim is the young tenor section leader of the Ambassadors of Harmony and sings with 2004 Collegiate champions Vocal Spectrum. Tim the tenor and his three clones, Tim the lead, Tim the bass and Tim the baritone, make up a quartet that has a sound that would be the envy of most Aussie quartets. (Tim is a music student doing his Music degree under none other than Dr Jim Henry of the Gas House Gang and has started a business producing custom-made learning tracks crafted to your desired interpretation. He has a huge range of tracks in stock and will produce others to order. See www.timtracks.com/)

The songs are classified into four groups: Barbershop Classics (the barbershop standards), Gold Medal (songs made popular by gold medal quartets but not necessarily in contest), Afterglow (songs that are a bit different from standard barbershop fare) and Harmony Explosion (songs that are thought to be well-suited to younger a cappella singers). Because judging criteria are subject to change, each song usually contains a warning to check that it is contestable before taking it to competition. The fact that a song is arranged in the barbershop style does not mean that it will be contestable nor does the fact that it is a "Barbershop Classic."

However, at the moment you will run into a problem when trying to order the Music Premiere series on Harmony Marketplace www.harmonymarketplace.com

Unless there have been some changes made as a result of my complaints, you will be supplied with three options - the complete Music Premiere series for the 2005-6 financial year (2005A-D), the Music Premiere 2005A set or the Music Premiere 2005 B set. So if you want to order 2005C or 2005D on their own you appear to hit a brick wall.

To get around the problem you need to order something – anything that’s on their list – from Harmony Marketplace. This might be something as simple as one piece of music. Then in the Comments section of the order form insert your request for the desired Music Premiere set 2005C which is now available or the upcoming 2005D set or both (or even 2005CD and 2006AB to make a sequence of 4 sets for the discount price). You can also subscribe to the 2006 sets, 2006A and 2006B. Once published, the songs can be ordered individually of course. The advertised price for overseas orders of a single Music Premiere set is $US16.95 or for a sequence of four sets $US59.95. Whichever way you look at it, it is great value.

As with most published music, Harmony Marketplace can also supply you with learning tracks. If you haven’t explored the goodies available at Harmony Marketplace, it’s time you did.

Continued – next page
Quotes on Singing:

‘If I cannot fly, Let me sing.’

Stephen Sondheim, Sweeney Todd

‘It is the best of all trades, to make songs, and the second best to sing them.’

Hilaire Belloe, On Everything

“Singing lessons are like body building for your larynx.”


Here are two great tags for our mothers – taken from The Harmonizer, March/April 2006.

Music Premiere 2005A
GM #8839 Frog Kissin’ (Bob Jones) – Most Happy Fellows
BC #7389 Everything Old Is New Again (Ed Waesche) updated version
HX #8637 The Lion Sleeps Tonight (Scott Turnbull) – Metropolis
BC #7391 Do You Hear The People Sing (Tom Gentry)
GM #8838 God Bless The U.S.A. (Brian Beck) – Side Street Ramblers
BC #7390 Thanks For The Memory (Mel Knight) with show-closer lyrics

Music Premiere 2005B
BC #7392 Cabaret (BHS)
BC #7393 I Only Have Eyes For You (Bobby Gray) – Metropolis
HX #8639 Happy Together (Liz Garnett)
AG #8201 Bring Him Home (Rich Hasty) – Studio One
AG #8202 Good Old Acappella (David Wright)
GM #8840 Hushabye Mountain (Bill Mitchell) – Platinum

Music Premiere 2005C
BC #7395 A Wink And a Smile (Kim Brittain)
BC #7396 Heart (Ed Waesche)
AG #8204 Trickle, Trickle (Mel Knight)
AG #8203 Can You Feel The Love Tonight? (June Dale)
BC #7394 Hey, Look Me Over (BHS)
HX #8640 Freddie Feelgood (Dave Briner)

Music Premiere 2005D (due now)
HX #8643 Breaking Up Is Hard To Do (Tom Campbell)
AG #8205 You Raise Me Up
GM #8841 If I Were A Rich Man
HX #8642 Recipe For Love
HX #8641 Sh-Boom
HX #8644 Crazy ‘Bout Ya Baby

Music Premiere 2006A (due soon)
Memphis Blues
Come and Go
I Don’t Mind Being All Alone
Railroad Rag After You’ve Gone
For All We Know

Music Premiere 2006B (due later this year)
Tin Roof Blues
Old Cape Cod
I Told Them All / Whippoorwill Medley
Mexicali Rose
The Trolley Song
Daddy’s Little Girl
5th Pan Pacific Convention 2008

Make your plans now to be part of Great Pacific Harmony 2008 Pan Pacific Convention. Planning for the fifth Pan Pacific Convention is well under way. The convention will be October 30th 2008 through November 2nd 2008 in Honolulu Hawaii. "The Sounds of Aloha" chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society (SPEBSQSA) will be the host chapter. The venue is the Renaissance Ilikai Hotel on Oahu http://ilikaihotel.com/index.html

The Pan Pacific Convention is designed to be a barbershop competition and fun filled event for barbershoppers who reside on the Pacific Rim. For the purpose of the competition this is defined as New Zealand, Australia, Japan, Alaska and Hawaii. Parts of the Far Western District and parts of the Evergreen District border on the Pacific. In the Far Western District this is Divisions 1 SCW, 2 SCE and 3 NCW. In the Evergreen District this is Divisions I, II and IV. If you are part of this geography please make your plans to join us and compete in 2008. If you are not, come join us and enjoy the fun.

The Sweet Adeline's International 2008 Convention is in Honolulu the following weekend. You can take in two fun filled barbershop events for the price of one air fare and enjoy paradise all at the same time.

For further information contact the Chairman, Don Raymond donraymond@hawaii.rr.com.

The website for The Sounds of Aloha is located at www.soundsofaloha.org.

ASPIRING NEW CHORUSES

Misty Mountain Moonshiners

Frank Heard is President of the newly formed Atherton Tablelands Barbershop Club – The Misty Mountain Moonshiners, which has started off with 6 members.

Members visiting Far North Queensland are invited to visit and raise their voices in harmony with the MMM men.

Port Stephens area of NSW

Long time AAMBS members will remember Col Williams, Bass, who sang with Central Coast Barbershop Chorus (now SOUNDWAVES) and then with Sydney Harmony.

Well, Col has had withdrawal symptoms since he and Joan moved to North Arm Cove. So, surprise, surprise, he has now formed a Quartet in the area and is planning an open day on 20th August to see if he can form a chorus in the area drawing on members coming from the Port Stephens / Myall Lakes part of New South Wales - Tea Gardens, Hawks Nest, and environs.

Gary Kirk MD of SOUNDWAVES and members of SOUNDWAVES – Chorus and Quartets - will travel up from the Central Coast to help in promoting Barbershopping. There will be a morning workshop, lunch, and Barbershopping demonstrations during the day.

We wish Col well and look forward to welcoming more singers to the AAMBS fraternity.

There are more love songs than anything else.

If songs could make you do something we'd all love one another.

- Frank Zappa
COMING EVENTS

2006

July 10 – Aug 21 – Sydney Harmony - “Sing in Harmony” workshop, Monday nights 7.30 pm
North Sydney Leagues Club, Cammeray.

Aug 16-15 – 7th International Russian Barbershop Harmony Festival (further information
www.fineartstours.com)


Sept 9 – Western Region – Big Barbershop Day Out 2006. Main Guests – Musical Island Boys
From New Zealand. Details TBA.

Sept 20 – Sydney Harmony – The Basement Studio Night Club, Reiby Place, Sydney CBD

Oct 21 – Brisbane River City Clippers – Annual Concert at the Old Museum, Gregory Terrace, Brisbane

(see Bob Fritz Report on Page 3 Issue 91)

Nov 4 – Miner Chords & The Blenders – Matinee and Evening Concert, Ipswich Civic Hall.

Nov 18 – SydneySiders Express – 7.45pm Concert at Abbotsleigh Girls School,1666 Pacific
Highway, Wahuongga. Guest artists FREEFALL, Nova Youth Orchestra plus
other great acts. The concert is in aid of the Oncology Research at Westmead Hospital
Tickets $20 and $15 for school children and pensioners. Contact: Bob Mackenzie –
02 9489 1900

2007

July 1 – 8 – Barbershop Harmony Society International Convention, Denver, Colorado

Sept 27 – AAMBS 9th Annual Convention, at Sydney Entertainment Centre, Darling
Harbour, Sydney followed by Harmony College, presented by Sydney Harmony

2008

Oct 30-Nov 2 - 5th Pan Pacific Convention – Renaissance Ilikai Hotel, Honolulu, Hawaii
presented by The Sounds of Aloha.

(For more details of these events – go to www.aambs.org.au)

OUT OF THE BLUE SINGERS

Seeking a Musical Director with Enthusiasm, Energy and Commitment

Out Of The Blue Singers is a women’s performing group of 34 members and is a member of Sweet Adelines International.

The chorus was formed 5 years ago and up to the present time has had many successes including but not limited to:

- 5th Place overall in 2006 Sweet Adelines Region 34 National Competition. Brisbane. (5th of 20 Choruses)
- 1st place Small chorus award in 2004 at the Sweet Adelines Region 34 National competition in Adelaide
  (1st of 15)
- 3 major shows
- 1st place Wollongong Eisteddfod 2003 – Open Choral section

Performances include:

- Jesus Christ Superstar 2003
- Christmas Spectaculars 2003/2004
- 3 International Women’s Day Gala Concerts (produced by Out Of The Blue)

plus many community events, corporate functions & festivals

The chorus learns and performs a wide variety of music styles including gospel, classical, popular, folk and barbershop

Rehearsals are on Wednesdays at the Port Training Rooms, Port Kembla. Wollongong. 7.30pm.– 10.00pm.

For further information contact: Pat Schwinghammer
42832359 home
0411951973 mob.

If music be the food of love, play on;
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again! it had a dying fall:
O! it came o’er my ear like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.

"Twelfth Night" (1.1.1-7)
My Hebron Visit

By Keith Swannell

Earlier this year I was privileged to make my first visit to the Hebron Orphanage to do some much needed electrical work, particularly on the pumps supplying drinking water. We were able to install a new pump and fit a float switch on the overhead tanks, so that the pump now keeps the tanks filled automatically and so not to overflow and waste water. These tanks are on the roof of one of the two storey dormitories to give some head pressure. On one of the other two storey buildings are some more tanks that store good bore water for showers and other washing, and another float switch now keeps those tanks full. I was also able to upgrade some of the sub-standard wiring in some of the buildings, unfortunately green earth wires are hard to find.

The Orphanage is situated on the edge of the town of Palakol about 30 km inland, and about 600km north of the city of Chennai (Madras). The main public transport to Palakol from Chennai is by a very long and uncomfortable train journey sometimes taking up to 15 hours. Recently a small regional airline has been established, operating out of Hyderabad which is a 9 hours train journey from Palakol.

So now, if you are visiting, a staff member trains up to Hyderabad, meets you at the airport, you go to a hotel for the night, then back to the airport next morning for a short 50 minute flight to a small regional airport, then it is less than 3 hours by road to the Orphanage. Much more comfortable!!

As we approached the main gates of the Orphanage, I could see some adults and children spilling out on to the road, but I was not prepared for what came next. Upon getting out of the car I was met by Sagar and Richard and the staff, and then garlands of fresh flowers were hung around my neck, and there in front of me, through the archway over the main entrance with its welcome banner, was a decorated avenue of streamers with a row of children either side, screaming their welcome, and I had to walk down the middle.

As I pushed my way down through 280 happy smiling children, all wanting to shake my hands at once and me being showered with fresh flower petals, getting in my hair, down my neck and behind my glasses, it was not only the petals that blurred my vision. To be greeted so warmly by these beautiful children I found to be a very emotional experience as you will appreciate by some photos I have included.

The welcome over, the next day it was down to work, and for the next 12 days we were able to achieve all and a little more than I had planned. There were other things happening too, and over those days I saw another 20 double decker bunk beds being welded, assembled, painted and installed in the dormitories, and so getting another 80 or so children off the concrete floor. Money from Barbershoppers helped to build those beds.

Also a large donation from Smorgan Steel enabled Richard to purchase 20 new computers which were installed in a large room in the new boys’ dormitory, and with much ceremony that room was officially opened during the first week I was there. As Richard pointed out during his remarks at the opening, one of the larger schools in the area with more than 1000 day students has only 3 computers, so the Hebron children certainly are privileged. Every child now will have the opportunity to learn touch typing, and the basics of computer operation, and particularly for the girls, a better opportunity for the future.

To be part of the Hebron family for 12 days was a wonderful experience, to be surrounded by children who are so happy to be at Hebron, having 3 good meals a day, clean clothes, clean water and a good bed at night.

If it were not for Hebron, many of these children would still be living on the streets, and most of them would not have survived, because of starvation, disease and prostitution. Of the 280 children now at Hebron, nearly 100 of those were rescued from the Tsunami disaster, and they have integrated well. The Tsunami children are true orphans as are many of the others, but some have one parent and some have two, but they are too poor to look after them, so they were destined to live and beg on the streets. When talking to some of the older students who have learnt some English, they willingly express their appreciation and happiness to be there.

Although these children feel very secure, they are not able to experience the closeness of normal family life, and many times as I moved around, a group of boys would gather round, would shake my hands and want to touch me and ask me to hug them, and the girls too would gather round, and each one needed a hug.

It was a privilege, as a parent, to show my love for these children, and to see the smile on their faces when that love was shown to them. They called me Papa and they call Richard their Daddy, and he loves them all as his own children. The time went so quickly, my visit to Hebron was one of those life changing experiences that I will never forget, and it was so difficult to say goodbye.

Eds. Note – The Swannells are forever grateful for the donations received from members of AAMBS.

Donations: All donations can be sent to Richard’s father, Keith Swannell of Westcoast Chordsmen at 1 Cameron Green, Floreat, 6014 WA. All cheques to be made out to Hebron Orphanage. This money can be deposited into the Hebron account in Perth.

Keith’s Email kas33@aapt.net.au
Richard’s Email richs@elliottician.com
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The point of contact for Barbershop Notes is secretary@aambs.org.au
Deadline for the next edition is Friday 15 September 2006

Travelling within Australia ???
Why not contact and/or visit the local AAMBS CHORUS and sing along with fellow Barbershoppers, wherever you are, check them out on our Website – www.aambs.org.au

Travelling Overseas ???
Check out the local Barbershoppers on our International Choruses page

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