FROM OUR PRESIDENT –
It’s all Happenin’

This issue of Barbershop Notes has a multitude of interesting and informative articles, as your fellow AAMBS barbershoppers around Australia participate in both traditional and unique activities.

For instance, we managed to get the International Gold Medalist Quartet Realtime as close to as many of our barbershoppers as possible by booking a “tour” in three of our capital cities. Everyone is raving about their music, their sincerity, and the camaraderie in the shows and workshops. If you missed the “Golden” opportunity then perhaps a look at the International Competition in Denver, Colorado would be in order. Thousands of tourists flock to “Springtime in the Rockies” so I would suggest if you ever considered a vacation in America’s most beautiful State, then July 07 would be the time to do it. And our very own Gold Medallists, the Blenders, will appreciate all the cheerin’ and screamin’ we can do in the audience as they take the International stage representing Australia.

Do you realize we’re already closer in time to our next Convention than we are to our last Convention? Read Bob Fritz’ article and let him know what you’d like to see at our next national gathering.

We all know it’s rewarding to get a new member signed up in your chorus. But now it is really rewarding! Check out Membership VP Tom Smith’s description of the new membership drive, and find out what getting new members can mean to you and your club. Remember, our number one goal should be to ensure this artform that we love endures, and does so because of personal action by each and every one of us.

There are some great letters from Realtime, and from Mr Barbershop himself, Bruce Okely, some important reminders from AAMBS Secretary Kevin White, and lots of news from our Clubs and Regions. As you read through the exciting stuff they’ve been doing consider how your own club might profit from a similar activity. Remember, Barbershop Notes is about as good a “best practice” source as you’ll ever find.

This issue even has a full barbershop calendar, so why not make it a “cover to cover” read. Our thanks to Nerida White for assembling and editing our AAMBS source of entertainment and education. Enjoy!

Yours in Harmony
Mike Donnelly
Hello Everyone,

I would just like to add my bit about the recent visit from Realtime. From everyone that I have spoken to, both here and New Zealand, there has been nothing but praises for the time they spent with these fabulous four gentlemen. I know from my own personal experience with them that they truly represent the very best in barbershop camaraderie and are true champions in every sense of the word. Not only did they bring their incredible talents and expertise to share with us but also their wonderful zest for this great hobby of ours. It was not surprising that the last 4 people to leave the afterglow following the Sydney concert were….yes, Realtime. After singing a marvellous set to close the show, they continued singing in the lobby until the theatre closed up. My personal thanks to all of the AAMBS regions for all of the work and effort they put into hosting and producing the respective concerts in Perth, Brisbane and Sydney. The efforts by the National Council to bring this calibre of barbershoppers to our shore is only as successful as the work put in by the various members of the regions. On behalf of all of the AAMBS membership, our thanks to you for making the Realtime concert tour the success that it was.

It is now less than one year before we will all gather here in Sydney for our 2007 National Convention and I’m pleased to report that all the plans and preparations necessary for a successful convention are falling into place. The Sydney Convention Committee has been hard at work to ensure that your time in Sydney will be most rewarding and that all you have come to expect at your National Conventions will be fulfilled.

While final plans are being made for the Sydney 2007 Convention, why not let me know if there is anything you would like to see happen at the convention that hasn’t happened before or if there is anything that has happened that you don’t want to see happen again.

As you know, the National Council and the Convention Committees do listen to your comments, suggestions and, dare I say, criticisms with an open mind, so please do not hesitate to let me know what you think. All of my contact information is on the back page of the Barbershop News.

Finally, I would like to put in a plug for the International Convention in Denver, Colorado in the first week of July, 2007. Our very own chorus Gold Medal winner, The Blenders, will be competing in the Chorus competition for the second time. Not only that, but we will have another competitor at the International competition as well and an announcement about that will be made shortly. In any event, it would be wonderful if we could have a big Australian contingent to cheer on our representatives. For those of you who have never experienced an International Convention, you owe it to yourself to make the effort to do so. Believe me, it is a barbershoppers dream come true. I’m already registered and I’d love to see you there.

(for further information see:www.barbershop.org)

Yours in harmony, Bob Fritz

From our Secretary

For those Clubs who have renewed and paid for their and their members’ registration – Heartfelt thanks !

For those who have not, only members registered with me as AAMBS Secretary prior to the AGM on 12 December will be able to vote.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – Yes, it’s that time again, and a formal Notice of the Meeting, with particulars of the Nominations for election to the forthcoming vacancies on the Council will be forwarded to all Clubs and Members-at-Large about 22 November, together with copies of the Audited Accounts and the Treasurer’s and Secretary’s reports and the usual proxy voting form for persons who will not be in attendance at the AGM in W.A.

We are all very sorry to learn that Ian Mulholland will be standing down from his position as VP Music, due to his very busy work schedule. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Ian for his dedication and the hours he has given to the AAMBS Council over the years – his shoes will be very hard to fill.

Registration & Subscriptions – Please note that your AAMBS membership lists show the joining dates for your members as the date on which AAMBS first received their subscription fees from your Club, not the date the joined your Club. And remember, if they are not members of AAMBS they are not covered by the AAMBS Insurance Policy.

Some additional material, Pitch Pipes, and recordings are expected imminently from the Harmony Marketplace, and these CDs and DVDs will be listed on the AAMBS Website and also in the next Barbershop Notes in an update of material held and available for loan to Clubs and members.

In Continuing Harmony,
Kevin White
NEW MEMBERS –  BRING ‘EM IN OR BUST!

Two facts about our current membership are important to share with you.

- Around 80% of AAMBS members are 55 years or older and of this group some 8% are 75 years or older.
- AAMBS net membership is in a slight declining trend.

If you enjoy singing four part acappella harmony with friends as much as I do and the opportunity to re-engage with good friends every two years at convention, then it’s quite sobering to contemplate AAMBS ‘going the way of the dinosaurs’ within 20 years or so. If you look at the first fact, within 20 years natural attrition will take its toll on this group. If net membership continues to trend downward or remains stagnant, then it’s conceivable AAMBS could become unviable in its present form.

Now The Good News!

The good news is together we can do something about net membership and reverse the trend – and AAMBS would encourage you to help your Club to do that and GROW.

Beginning on 1 December 2006 and finishing on 30 June 2007, AAMBS is promoting a National recruitment program through all AAMBS affiliated Clubs emphasising the ME in Membership.

OUR GOAL IS TO RECRUIT 100 NEW MEMBERS BY 30 JUNE 2007!!!

Is 100 new members by Jun 2007 hard to achieve? – Not if every club recruits three new members each, but to reach this goal we’re going to need the co-operation of every member in every Club. Membership is not someone else’s job; it is a privilege given to every member of the barbershop family. Membership begins with ME and with Mike, and with Steve and with you.

A significant milestone of the campaign is the Guest Night in the week of 20 – 24 February 2007. The aim is to have all AAMBS affiliated Clubs hold their first guest night of the year in this week (we are working on this aspect as a ‘hook’ for media exposure). Use the period between now until February to find the men in your respective areas including friends, work colleagues, church mates, club mates, etc. who absolutely love singing four part acappella harmony – but haven’t realised it yet – and plan your guest night so that these potential new members are given a warm welcome to a fun night of singing.

Financial Rewards!

It could also financially benefit your Club as well. AAMBS will award $1,000 to the Club which registers the highest percentage of new members with AAMBS in the period 1December 2006 to COB 30 Jun 2007. Similarly, a runner up award of $750 will be paid to the Club with the next highest percentage of registered new members. Our esteemed AAMBS Secretary will determine the baseline membership of all Clubs as at 1 December 2006 and the winning clubs will be those that have registered the highest percentage of new members with AAMBS in the recruitment period.

AAMBS Resources

Posters for internal and external use, checklists and scripts for radio advertising will be provided to every club to assist in their individual recruitment campaigns. Other resources will be made available as they come to hand.

Singing four part unaccompanied harmony singing is FUN, Satisfying and Rewarding – and there are 100 men waiting for you to let them in on the secret.

Good luck and see you at the end!

Tom Smith
VP Membership
Membership Matters

UCANSING2
Membership campaign kicks off December 1.
Association-wide Guest Night Week is February 20-24, 2007.
Go man, go!

In 2007, we’re doing it all.

Growing the Australian Association of Men Barbershop Singers through our Clubs is what we’re all about. It’s central to our mission to preserve and encourage barbershop quartet singing. Without new singers for tomorrow, there will be no barbershop style to perform, arrange, debate, or celebrate.

We can do this.
This is our first major recruiting effort as an Association.
The proven keys to success:

- Universal participation— all of the Association clubs making a positive affirmation to do something —anything.
- Personal commitment—most recruiting happens because individuals determine they will make a difference.
- Individualized incentives — Knowing that your personal commitment is matched by a desire to support and celebrate it.
- Deep commitment from regions, clubs, individuals, and the Association leadership.

"Why worry? My Chorus’s doing OK"

For now perhaps...but what about tomorrow? Who will you be singing with in ten years? If your chorus is typical of most, your demographics may look like this:

- Average age 62; 80% of members over the age of 55
- Recruited perhaps 10% of previous year’s total membership
- At the same time, perhaps 12% of your members dropped out.

Maybe a small net loss last year was not a big deal. But what happens as the drop out rate accelerates, as those older men become unable to participate for reasons of health, energy or death?

That’s what we as an Association face: We must grow now, while we can – or die.
Hi everyone,

WOW what an amazing couple of weeks it has been! Realtime and our families just returned home from a whirlwind tour of barbershop hot spots in the Southern Hemisphere. We performed in Christchurch, Wellington, Auckland, Perth, Brisbane and Sydney, coached eight fine choruses and many quartets, and met a LOT of wonderful people. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the key people from NZABS and AAMBS, as well as the Greater Auckland Chorus of Sweet Adelines International, who sponsored our trip, organized all the shows and coaching sessions, put us up in their homes, and simply showed us an amazing time. First and foremost, thank you Ed Dempsey for planting the seed and getting the ball rolling, and to Bob Fritz for leading the charge in Australia. We owe you one.

Two Gold Medal Quartets – our own Alliance with Realtime

Barbershop is alive and thriving down there, and it's a wonderful thing to see first hand. The youth movement in New Zealand in particular is a model that we should all pay attention to - Barbershop is recognized as a legitimate "for credit" course in the NZ school system, due to the foresight and organizational efforts of some key people who sponsored our trip, put us up in their homes, and simply showed us an amazing time. First and foremost, thank you Ed Dempsey for planting the seed and getting the ball rolling, and to Bob Fritz for leading the charge in Australia. We owe you one.

We took well over 2,000 pictures on the tour, and we will be sorting them into galleries over the next couple of weeks. Look for them at http://www.realtimequartet.com over the next few weeks.

In other news, we have been reviewing mixed tracks for the new CD during the whole trip, as Tony DeRosa got them ready, and we're happy to say that the new CD entitled "Ain't That A Kick" has been finalized, and is right now being duplicated. It will be for sale Nov 15th. You can still pre-order from our web site and get free shipping, but only for the next FIVE DAYS. More on that later.

Cheers,
Tom Metzger
Bass – Realtime

And a short note to Bob Fritz from Tom Metzger in reply to Bob’s letter of thanks:

Thanks Bob! We had a wonderful time that we will not soon forget! It was a pleasure to meet so many great people down under, and I hope we can keep those relationships for many years to come. All the best to AAMBS and your endeavours, and I sincerely hope that we were a help to you.

Letters to the Editor

Hearty congratulations to you both, Mike and Ian, and to all concerned in the visit to Perth of Realtime and, particularly, the show last Saturday night.

The concept of bringing Realtime to Australia and New Zealand was a bold one. I have no detailed knowledge of the financial arrangements, and I hope this side of things worked out reasonably satisfactorily.

However, the quartet's visit and the Saturday show has given the members of my chorus, Westcoast Chordsmen, a real boost - a jab - a shot in the arm - whatever! Realtime were generous with their time, engaging in their manner and helpful, even inspiring, in their comments. Our guys will be talking about it for a long time to come.

I would like to thank most sincerely those responsible for inviting Westcoast Chordsmen on to the show program last Saturday. Whether we deserved the invitation or not, it was most appreciated - and it provided our chorus with a great incentive to work as we haven't worked before. The reception that the chorus received from the audience was fantastic and it provided all the reward the guys could have wished for.

Thank you. We may never again share a program with such illustrious company, but we won't forget this one occasion.

In harmony
Bruce Okely
Westcoast Chordsmen
Over the weekend of October 14-15, some 30 prospective quartet singers from Eastern Region gathered at the Mangrove Mountain resort just north of Sydney for a weekend of instruction in quartet singing. Led by Alliance, your 2005 AAMBS Quartet Gold Medallists, the weekend was co-ordinated by Dean, Ian Miller.

The weekend was divided into a number of sessions covering various aspects of quartet singing, such as How to be a Great ... Tenor, Lead, Baritone or Bass; Aspects of Quartet Performance (e.g. Music, Singing, Presentation); Rehearsal Techniques; How to choose Repertoire; Planning a Performance; and Quartet Administration. Each session was led by a different member of Alliance, with Les, Dan, Adrian and Ian able to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and abilities as educators.

At the beginning of the weekend a voice matching session was held to match singers and voice types to create pleasing sounding quartet combinations. These quartets were then schooled in a number of techniques and coached by the members of Alliance. At the end of the weekend a small concert was put on where each quartet presented themselves to their peers. Hopefully some successful quartet combinations will result.

The success of the weekend has led the Eastern Region to plan another such weekend for March-April next year, and the Alliance boys are ready willing and able (now that all the course materials have been prepared and tested) to run such weekends for other Regions also. Please contact Ian Mulholland if interested.

Recently, two big events in the WR calendar have kept everyone busy. We had the Musical Island Boys over for the Big Barbershop Day Out (see full report in this newsletter). Some Sweet Adelines who heard them in Christchurch in 2004 worked hard to realise their dream of bringing MIB over to WA to show our school choruses how amazing they were. We’re very grateful, particularly to Helen Verhoeff, Rae Knight and Mary Leonard and their team. Needless to say, MIB were a big hit with kids and adults alike! We’re already working on BBDO for next year, to capitalise on the good work done.

The other event was, of course, the long-awaited Realtime visit, with the guys facing a heavy schedule including coaching local choruses, and hosting a Gold Medal evening where they demonstrated their skills and answered questions from the floor. We were all impressed with their friendliness, and willingness to share their expertise, not to mention their amazing sound! The visit culminated in a big show, with Realtime backed by Alliance, BlackJaQ, Perth Harmony Chorus, Vocal Evolution, Men in Harmony and West Coast Chordsmen.

Both events were managed very professionally, and left the audiences shouting for more. My congratulations and sincere thanks to everyone who was involved.

Harry Owen
Chairman
WR AAMBS

The past month has seen a good deal of activity within the Eastern Region to the point where the organisers are looking to a good rest before Christmas.

QUARTETTING WEEKEND

A weekend was spent in the hinterland of the Central Coast showing a bunch of around 30 singers what good quartetting is all about. This was not aimed at existing quartets but at those singers who have a desire (latent or
active) to sing in a quartet. The boys from Alliance, Ian, Adrian, Danny and Les formed the faculty and Ian Miller was the Dean.

Our Educators – Alliance
(Ian, Adrian, Danny, Lee)

The weekend started on Friday night where voices were vocally matched and we finished up with eight quartets with only two tenors and one baritone doubling up. Many of the guys had never met before but by the end of the weekend you could be excused for thinking that they were lifelong friends. There were singers from SOUNDWAVES, Sydney Harmony, SydneySiders Express, Hills Harmony, Canberra, Conchords (Geelong) and Illawarra Chordiality (Carmel, the lone female, was persuaded to sing tenor).

They will probably never sing "My Wild Irish Rose again". Experience ranged from those who has been singing barbershop for over 15 years to Ron Anderson who has been involved for only 3 weeks!! Did he learn a lot, real fast.

We all need to persuade new singers to attend these activities as they are inclined to be a little daunted by the "apparent" knowledge of those around them.

THE A CAPPELLA PARADE OF CHAMPIONS

Held at the Seymour Centre this was the hit of the decade in Sydney. The venue was the best that I have worked in, both from the point of facilities and sound. “Realtime” absolutely (I don’t use that word lightly) wowed the audience with their smooth and seemingly effortless presentation and they were such nice people. John Newell had a ball in that he could actually talk “strine” and the audience understood him.

The supporting acts were, Alliance - AMBS Gold Medal Quartet, Accolade - Australian Sweet Adelines Gold Medal Quartet, Circular Keys - Australian Sweet Adelines mid-size Gold Medal Chorus, Sydney Harmony - top NSW Men's Chorus and Hills Harmony - the chorus with attitude.

Hills Harmony being The Life of the party

Many of the audience were past barbershoppers who had come to see what has happened to our craft since they had left: to a man (or woman) they were amazed at the quality and were seriously considering returning to the fold.

We've made a bit of a rod for our collective backs at Eastern Region as the next effort must be as good or better.

Ian Miller
VP Education
Eastern Region

Sunshine Region

..... A REAL great TIME

We have just hosted the Realtime party here in the Sunshine Region and it has been an event-filled week which has been enjoyed by them and all of us here in the Region. Each family was hosted separately on the Gold Coast between Robina and Broadbeach.

The Region extends its heartfelt thanks to Bob and Pat Charters, Gerard and Aruni Cabraal and Eddie Klimowicz, all from “The Blenders” family and Margaret Richards, President of the Harmony in Paradise Chorus, for the wonderful way they hosted the quartet members and their wives and children. Special mention must go to Bob Charters who drove the mini bus, picking up and shuttling around the members of the Real Time party during their stay.

The Quartet member’s wives and children arrived on Friday from New Zealand and the Quartet arrived on Sunday night from Perth. After some family time on Sunday night and Monday, the quartet attended an open Blenders rehearsal on Monday evening, during which they did an extensive amount of coaching and, of course, the singing after the end of rehearsal.

On Tuesday the day’s events opened with Quartet coaching under glass of “Spike” and “Escapade” between 9.00am and 12.00 noon with both the Quartets and the appreciative audience of barbershopers, school teachers and students gaining a great deal of benefit from Realtime coaching. The afternoon session went from 1.00pm to 5.00pm and comprised a school coaching session with the boys learning “Fit as a Fiddle” and the girls learning “One fine day”. The boys were coached by Realtime and the girls were coached by Kari Metzger, with the help of section leaders, Rose McGee, Fiona Johnson, Susan Lansdowne and Rina Mahon.

The school children received their music at the beginning of the coaching session so the ability of the coaches to achieve the results they did, demonstrated their barbershop skills during the evening concert.

The day was rounded off with the “Harmony in Realtime Concert” which was a great success. The show was opened by the school girls chorus singing “One Fine Day” directed by Kari Metzger and followed by the school boys chorus which sang without a director singing “Fit as a Fiddle”. Included in the first half of the concert were “Harmony in Paradise” and Redland Rhapsody and the mens choruses the “River City Clippers” and “The
In Hobart we have recently reformed our Club. We now have three choruses and two quartets. Rhett Knight has taken the role of President of the Club and is well placed to lead us as we develop a cohesive new identity. Ric Finlay retires as President after very successfully leading the Club over the last three years to reach this new stage of development.

The afterglow was extremely well attended with plenty of singing, photos taken and CDs sold and enjoyment rounding out a wonderful day.

Wednesday was a free day for Realtime and the evening was an open chorus rehearsal for the River City Clippers in Brisbane with a special gathering of ex members who sang with John Newell during his time with the Clippers. A great night was had by all, with the current chorus being given special coaching by Realtime and a coaching session of “Who’s Counting” and reports have it a great time was had by all. The Realtime party flew out on Thursday to return home and left very positive memories.

Realtime is a great Quartet and was extremely cooperative in everything they did within the Region. They expressed a desire to return to Australia again, if this could be organized. Perhaps, in Hobart, Tasmania.

The big coaching tip that has come from this visit is that: “Everything happens below the shoulders – relax everything above the shoulders especially your lower jaw and your throat and your sound quality will improve”

Last, but definitely not least, I would like to thank Steve Griffin for all his work associated with this visit and also Michael Haan, our Treasurer, for his great work with this visit.

This is my last duty in my role as Chairman of the Sunshine Region and I would like to thank everyone for their help during this three year period, and I wish my successor all the best with the Chairmanship of the Sunshine Region.

Regards,
Chris Mountier
Chairman - Sunshine Region

Our new Youth Chorus, Tag Team, is the most exciting development. This dynamic group of 14 young men, all under 25 years, came together in August. Already they have made one impressive public appearance. And in mid November they featured in a story on ABC TV Stateline Tasmania. Over the next few weeks Tag Team will be performing at schools and in public places. This is a first step in a Club recruiting program into the new year.

The Wellingtones is continuing to develop under new MD Richard Gardam. At a recent appearance at the Clarence SeaFarers' Festival the audience was impressed with the developing vocal quality of the Chorus.

The Wellingtones also performed at a commemoration service at Soldiers’ Walk on Hobart’s Domain on Remembrance Day. The arrangement of *In a Field in France* is by former Wellingtones MD Fred Brown. It is in the Aussie Song Book.

The Club’s three choruses, including The Silvertones, perform in the Moonah Arts Centre Concert Series on November 24. We are calling our show The Magic of Barbershop. The audience will not only enjoy the pure magic of the lock and ring of chords but will also be entertained by an associate member of our Club, a professional magician with the stage name Zarpola. Quartets Acappellago and Four Bucks Fifty Five are also on the bill.

Trevor Rootes
Secretary

**GEELONG (BAY CITY) CONCHORDS**

Last month the Geelong (Bay City) Conchords celebrated its 10th birthday. The celebrations took the shape of a dinner dance at a local club which was well attended by both current and past members and their wives. There was a lot of memorabilia on hand and memory lane was very popular.

Naturally, there was a lot of singing going on and the Sweet Adeline’s quartet “Gossip” entertained us with some great quartet songs. These girls were eighth at the last Adeline’s convention and have set their sights high for the next convention in 2007.

Certificates of appreciation were presented to John Hare and Matt Eaglesham who were instrumental in forming our chorus ten years ago. My how time does fly. Our Auditor for many years, Mick Tuohey was also presented with a certificate.

Life Membership was then bestowed on two charter members of the chorus, namely Bob Gibb and Jimmy Duffield. Both these men have worked tirelessly for the chorus both as singers and committee members and have vowed to continue their support for many years to come. We sincerely hope so.

Bob Gibb
Secretary

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**BECAUSE THE MUSIC MOVES US**

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**HOBART MEN’S BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB FORMED**

In Hobart we have recently reformed our Club. We now have three choruses and two quartets. Rhett Knight has taken the role of President of the Club and is well placed to lead us as we develop a cohesive new identity. Ric Finlay retires as President after very successfully leading the Club over the last three years to reach this new stage of development.
When a few visionary barbershop singers from Perth, Western Australia experienced the Musical Island Boys at the 2004 Pan Pacific Barbershop Competition in Christchurch, New Zealand they began to dream. They returned home and formed YIBDI (Youth in Barbershop Development Initiative) and that dream became a reality when the Musical Island Boys, the 2006 Barbershop Harmony Society International Collegiate Quartet Champions, and their coach and mentor Charlotte Murray arrived in Perth recently.

According to the locals the visitors were superb ambassadors for youth in barbershop. Jeff Hunkin, Lusa Washburn, Will Hunkin and Matthew Gifford wowed over 500 school and university students and teachers, during a week of workshops culminating in a 2-day Big Barbershop Day Out Festival with a Concert on the Saturday night. Supported by other great barbershop acts, the concert featured a captivating performance by the Musical Island Boys and 2 large choruses of expertly coached boys and girls performing their newly learned and choreographed songs.

Veteran Barbershop Director and AAMBS life member, Bruce Okely said, “The future of barbershop singing in Perth looks excellent, thanks to all who gave their time and energy to this project. The enthusiasm and admiration felt by audience members at the concert was not only tangible – it was electric.”

When thanked, one hard working volunteer, who didn’t wish to be named said, “my reward was the looks of awe and sheer enjoyment I saw in the faces of those kids, and parents were just blown away!”

As well as firing up a love of barbershop singing in the hearts of so many young people, the Musical Island Boys won the hearts of the local barbershop community so much so that tears were shed by some who waved them farewell as they headed through the gateway to their homeward bound aircraft.

Earlier in 2006, Colin Williams (formerly of the Central Coast Chorus and Sydney Harmony) and Graeme Dunn (SydneySiders Express) met by chance in the supermarket at Tea Gardens. Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest is a small, friendly seaside community, north of Newcastle, on the northern shore of Port Stephens. The two had last met in Salt Lake City in 1996 at the International Convention. Colin invited Graeme to join a new quartet with a friend Mike Danks (formerly Bluemountainairs). All we needed was to find a tenor. New to barbershop was Ian Hesse, and we were away. Colin and Mike soon discovered other interested singers in the area and suggested we form a chorus.

A date was set for 20th August and a venue for a full day workshop arranged at the Tea Gardens Grange Country Club, a well founded retirement resort. The Central Coast Leagues Club Chorus (SOUNDWAVES) enthusiastically supported AAMBS, the Young Singers Foundation and Healthways – “Smarter than Smoking” and many other sponsors including local choruses and quartets. It was the third time in 2 years that Western Australian men and women barbershop singers have joined forces and worked together to promote the artform through education and special events, the first one being Voices Down Under in 2004. There are 5 Barbershop Choruses in Perth, 4 male and 1 female totalling approximately 220 singers. More about the Big Barbershop Day Out including names of all sponsors and pictures can be seen at http://www.mychorus.info/yibdi/
agreed to come and oversee the day which was advertised by word of mouth and “The Nota” (the local newspaper). On the appointed day, Director Gary Kirk, with two quartets and some ladies, drove up in the Leagues Club bus. Nineteen local men responded to the invitation with several apologies. All participants were provided with lunch and a great day was enjoyed by us all, ending with a mini concert to which wives and friends had been invited. We remain greatly indebted to Gary and the talented team from Gosford.

We are now a Chorus of 20 members, registered with AAMBS and slowly growing in numbers. Brian Jones, of obvious Welsh heritage, is our capable publicity officer, keeping our name before the community. Although many have sung in choirs, most have not sung close a cappella harmony before and find this a challenge, but there is much enthusiasm and willingness to learn. We begin each practice with mental, physical and vocal warm ups, and the Society manual is a great help. We are learning Polocats and have chosen a repertoire from The Great Australian Barbershop Song Book, a great AAMBS publication. Let’s sing some at Convention sing outs!

A music committee will shortly emerge from the management committee when we find those capable of the section leader role. The world of Barbershop Harmony is new and foreign territory to most of our fellows, but we are looking forward to bringing the chorus to The Sydney Convention in 2007.

We practice on Tuesday evening at 7.30 pm in The Grange Country Clubhouse, Spinifex Avenue, Tea Gardens. If you are holidaying in the area (and it’s a great place for a holiday) or passing by, you would be very welcome to visit us. Call President Colin (4997 3438), Secretary Graeme (4997 2700) or Treasurer Mike (4997 0559).

Graeme Dunn
Secretary

Hills Harmony Chorus is made up of a ‘band of brothers’ centred in the Hills District of Sydney. We may be a small chorus of only 19 members, but what we lack in numbers we make up with enthusiasm and the love of our hobby. During the past few months we haven’t been short on activities.

Thursday 29th June: By appointment with his royal vocal majesty, Sir Eddie Martinez, our chorus enjoyed a terrific evening of singing & voice coaching. Eddie has a real skill when it comes to putting across his coaching message. I can say with clarity, that since Eddie’s visit, our chorus has adopted many of his techniques and “improved our game” considerably. Eddie also gave up a morning to coach “Highjacked,” our aligned quartet.

28th & 29th July: Our Chorus members and partners invaded Mount Victoria for a “Christmas in July” weekend. It was freezing cold in the Blue Mountains but plenty of fun, fine food, singing by the fire, and an opportunity to bring out the Christmas Carol harmony repertoire warmed our hearts and those who joined us for the Yuletide festivities.

Saturday 5th August: We were invited to provide the surprise entertainment for Endeavour Ladies Sweet Adeline Chorus 10th Anniversary celebration dinner. Our reputation as “Nerds” had preceded us from the Gold Coast and it was well received.

5th to 17th September: Our chorus was responsible for the billeting, for the first three days of their visit, of two highly respected judges in the International Harmony Society who were in the Eastern Region to conduct the Chorus Directors Workshop Intensive. Byron Myers and Paul Tamblyn were inspiring when they visited the chorus and our MD, Ian Fraser, has benefited greatly from the training sessions and now holds the position of Apprentice CDWI Trainer and DoF Co-Trainer. Subsequently, the chorus has reaped the benefits of the knowledge Ian has gained.

Friday 13th to Sunday 15th October: The Quartet Workshop at Mangrove Mountain. The weekend was a brilliant opportunity to further the choruses singing and quartet skills and Hills Harmony were well represented with 8 of our chorus members attending. Who could want for better presenters & guides than the members of Gold Medal winning quartet “Alliance.” These 4 talented singers gave freely and openly of their skill and abundant talent. From the very shaky start of the newly ‘voice matched’ quartets, we observed Alliance weaving its magic with the end result being some very credible performance on the Final Sunday concert. As a result of the workshop, Hills Harmony now has the makings of 2 more quartets. We just need a few more tenors!!! But then, what chorus doesn’t!!

Saturday 21st October: Willandra Village: This retirement home in Epping, enjoyed a concert we presented on Saturday afternoon. With Ian’s “Enthusiastic” announcements, our band of finely tuned singers kept the audience happily entertained for an hour.

Saturday 4th November: The Realtime Concert. Once again the “nerd set” was trotted out to the delight of many in the audience. Ever tried singing & keeping a straight face when your audience is falling about?? It ain’t easy!! We rehearsed the performance and adapted it a little to suit the particular venue and having learned from past performances, we were able to tune the stage work a little to iron out a few difficulties. We have all enjoyed hugely doing our “nerd” routine, but realise its time to hang up our “specs & hats”, so, last Saturdays performance may likely be the swan song for the “Nerds.” What will we follow that act with?

Between now and the end of the year, we have several new songs to cover and one or two more engagements.

David Farley
VP Members
HHBC
CLIPPERS FAREWELL
MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Some 18 months ago when the Clippers found themselves suddenly without a leader, John McMillan stepped forward from the risers and accepted the heavy responsibility of Musical Director of the Chorus. John's contribution saved the chorus from what was at the time becoming a very significant problem.

John took with him to the position a wealth of musical knowledge, long involvement in the Barbershop movement including quartet singing with the Seniors National Champions, 'Who's Counting' and importantly, a warm and welcoming manner. John's service to the Clippers in a time of great need was deeply appreciated by the entire membership.

It is also worth noting that during John's time as MD, the Clippers experienced their biggest ever increase in membership. From a chorus of just more than 30 the membership role when John stepped down as MD numbered a very proud 64.

Its all good news for the Clippers, however, as one good person has been replaced by another. Stepping into the role of MD is Rosalie Lang. Rosalie has had little time to settle in but already has formulated exciting plans for the chorus in 2007. The next issue of Barbershop Notes will spell out details of Rosalie's personal journey through the world of Barbershop.

THE CLIPPERS AT THE CRICKET?
YOU'LL BETTER BELIEVE IT!

With support from one of their newest sponsors, Radio 4BC, the Clippers are booked to perform outside the gates of the Gabba on the first two days of the First Ashes Cricket Test. Rupert McCaul, well known Brisbane poet, has penned some appropriate lyrics to well known tunes tinged with just a little sarcasm and Clippers members have created a few more so an adequate repertoire of songs is ready to entertain fans as they approach the turnstiles. The news of the Clippers gig has been picked up by Brisbane newspapers who have run with front page headlines in some regional papers, "OUR OWN BARMY ARMY ISSUES A CALL TO ARMS"

A spokesman for the Barmy Army is reported in the same article, "We welcome the challenge! But we will not be beaten. This is the fourth time the Barmy Army have been to Australia and we have never been close to being out sung! Man for man you will need at least two or three Aussies to match us. I look forward to meeting the Clippers and hopefully after all the banter we'll sit down together and have a few beers."

Many members of The Clippers think that sounds like a good idea! Sung to the tune of "It's a a Long Way to Tipperary" here is a sample of some of the Clippers ammunition which will be fired very tunefully at the Barmy Army.

"It's a long way from Lords to Brisbane, It's a long way to come. It's a long way from Lords to Brisbane, But at least you'll see the sun. Goodbye Piccadilly, farewell Tony Blair. It's a long way to come to lose the Ashes, Tell someone who cares!"

SCRATCH QUARTET COMPETITION
KEENLY CONTESTED.

The recently completed scratch quartet competition, organised by the very busy Mel McMichael was a resounding success. The photos demonstrate the effort Clippers’ members put into their performance and costumes. The whole experience was a profitable learning experience for all and lead to the creation of at least one new quartet from within the chorus with probably more to come in the near future.

The Winners! Around the Blend looked and sounded the best scratch quartet of all. Keight Druery
VP Publicity/Promotions
Brisbane River City Clippers.

MINER CHORDS

Ipswich's own barbershop chorus, Miner Chords, celebrated its first birthday this year in August. It has been a year of great achievement for our fledgling group and it is with quite a sense of pride that I pen this report. We celebrated the occasion with a beautiful cake after rehearsal that was decorated by our MD’s wife, Margaret McCann. and a few first birthday photos.

August 2005 saw the formation of our group with only 3 members that had ever sung in public before and some of our achievements have been:

- Moving into our regular rehearsal premises at the recently restored Old Ipswich Courthouse in February 2006.
- Acquiring our own set of risers, thanks to the generosity of Bayside Barbershop Harmony Club
- Competing in the Regional Convention only 9 months after forming and singing well enough to gain 2nd place in the small chorus section, and 4th overall.
- Singing at a number of nationalisation ceremonies for the Ipswich City Council and receiving financial
support from them and our number one supporter in Mayor Paul Pisasale.

- Being asked to assist The Blenders in the Steve Irwin Memorial Service that went to air internationally.
- Receiving an evening of choral conducting coaching from Byron Myers from the USA.
- Having an AAMBS workshop at St. Edmunds College with Alan Gaspar and Bobby Grey Junior from the USA.
- Singing in the regional chorus supporting Realtime on the Brisbane leg of their Australia/New Zealand tour.
- Staging 2 concerts in our home town, and to be supported by The Blenders and Brisbane River City Clippers in chorus and quartets.
- Securing Alarm Industries as our corporate sponsor.

Our numbers have steadily increased with committed membership recruitment by everyone. We now have 24 regular barbershoppers and I am sure we will get everyone together for rehearsal soon to make that magical milestone of 20 on the risers after illness and work commitments are out of the way. Our lone tenor finally has some company after 15 months of thinking that he actually had no friends and was thrilled to finally have a section practice with his 2 other counterparts at our last rehearsal.

November and December see us with a swag of gigs both confirmed and tentative and this is a great way to promote our craft and recruit even more new members. A great big thank-you goes to our small but dedicated Miner Chords’ Support Team which continues to provide us all with supper after each rehearsal and make a little money on the side. We all appreciate your weekly efforts.

You can check out our website at http://www.users.bigpond.net.au/minerchords/Venue.htm for all our upcoming gigs and events.

Miner Chords have become a Major Success! David Kerle
Barbershop Notes Correspondent.

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**STEVE IRWIN MEMORIAL…..**

Since our last article we have been rather busy. The Blenders have been involved in The Quota International (Ladies) meeting which was held on the Gold Coast at Jupiters Casino in July. The outgoing President was being honoured before an International attendance of 600 ladies and their partners.

In August we instigated a “Sing with the Blenders” program to encourage new members – the sing letters are an anagram of “Singing is Naturally Good”. The program had 30 prospective members enrol – we expect to get between five to eight new members.

The ladies Harmony in Paradise chorus was also involved and we had a concert on the 23rd September which included all the new people from both choruses.

The 4th September – as you will all remember - was the day Steve Irwin died. A few days later Steve Griffin was contacted by John Stainton and asked if we would be available to perform at the memorial service. The Steve Griffin great organisational skills went into action and he proceeded to involve 100 singers to perform.

After it was decided which songs would be sung at the service then our associate director – Andrew Howson – arranged the music to our style.

Five days before the memorial we were asked to keep mum on the whole project so that it would be a surprise on the day.

As we had only 70 men available we asked if members of the Brisbane River City Clippers and Ipswich Miner Chords could bulk up the numbers. Our sincere thanks go to these two choruses for their diligence and commitment to participate.

Two busloads of happy singers who were honoured to have been selected to sing at the memorial left the Gold Coast on Tuesday lunch time. We went into rehearsal mode on arrival at Australia Zoo which, baring a break for tea, went until 10.30pm. The following morning (20th
September) we awoke at 4am to travel to the Zoo for the program run through. Prior to the rehearsal we were given khaki shorts and shirts to go with our work boots which our uniform for the event to make us look like Australia Zoo workers!

The whole thing was planned to the second by John Stainton and was a very uplifting and memorable occasion – the like of which will always be dear to our hearts. Due to our involvement we have been asked to perform as a backing group to Daniel McGahn at the Tourism Awards held on the 17th November 2006.

In October we had a visit from Allen Gasper and Bobby Gray Jn. at our camp at Boonah. Their visit was to acquaint us with our competition package for Denver next year – it was a lot of hard work but also very enjoyable. We are now putting their program into practice. After they returned home we were joined by “Realtime” for a concert at Logan Central. “Realtime” showed us why they were the 2005 gold medallists.

On November 4th we journeyed to Ipswich for a concert with Miner Chords and we are now looking forward to the new songs that we have been given to learn for the next National Convention in Sydney.

That’s all from us – have a very Merry Christmas and a restful New Year for the hard work involved in the lead up to Sydney 2007.

Until next time,
Harold Howson
The Blenders
COMING EVENTS

2006

Nov 18 – *SydneySiders Express* – 7.45pm Concert at Abbotsleigh Girls School, 1666 Pacific Highway, Wahroonga. 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

Nov 24 – *Hobart Men’s Barbershop Harmony Club* – The Magic of Barbershop. 7.30 pm Moonah Concert Series at the Moonah Arts Centre.

Dec 1 – *AAMBS Membership Campaign* begins and runs through to 30 June 2007

Dec 4 – *Eastern Region AGM* – 7 pm, North Sydney Leagues Club, 12-20 Abbott Street, Cammeray

Dec 12 – *AAMBS Annual General Meeting* – 6.30 pm West Coast Time at Wembley Downs Uniting Church, Calais Road, Wembley Downs WA 6019

2007


Feb 20 – 24 – *AAMBS Guest Night Week*, All Clubs to Have their 1st Guest Night for 2007.

March – *Eastern Region Jamboree*. A day of fellowship and fun where choruses and quartets will perform just for the pleasure of hearing each other.

April-May – *Eastern Region: Quartet coaching workshops* in Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart to assist quartets to prepare for the convention qualifying competition

May 3 – *Western Region “Barbershop Big Day Out”* Details TBA

May-June - *Quartet Qualifying Contests*: These are the qualifying events for the Sydney Convention in September 2007. As usual, distant quartets will be able to submit a video taped entry for assessment by the AAMBS Judging Panel.

26 May – *Sunshine Region Qualifying Contest*

2 June – *Eastern Region Qualifying Contest*

9 June – *Western Region Qualifying Contest* (Details of each Contest TBA)

July 1 – 8 – *Barbershop Harmony Society*

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**International Convention**, Denver, Colorado

Sept 27 – *AAMBS 9th Annual Convention*, at Sydney Entertainment Centre, Darling Harbour, hosted by *Sydney Harmony*

Sept 30–Oct 3 – *AAMBS Harmony College, Sydney*

Venue TBA

**2008**


(for more details on these events go to [www.aambs.org.au](http://www.aambs.org.au))

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**BACK ISSUES**

We have a few spare copies of back issues of the “AAMBS Barbershop Notes” & the Barbershop Harmony Society’s “The Harmonizer” available to members on a first in best dressed basis. Available are:

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**ADDITIONAL VIDEOS AVAILABLE FOR LOAN**

From the 2004 Pan Pacific Convention in Christchurch, New Zealand –

- Quartet Preliminary Session One
- Quartet Preliminary Session Two
- Quartet Final & Mixed Harmony
- International Barbershop Show

All Library items may be borrowed for a period of one month – the only charge to you is the cost of returning items by mail.

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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 –

The point of contact for Barbershop Notes is secretary@aambs.org.au

Deadline for the next edition is Friday 12 January 2007