Seasons Greetings, fellow barbershoppers!

The Holiday season must be upon us. Our cities and towns are aglow with festive lights and decorations. Church choirs are rehearsing Handel's Messiah. Newspapers and magazines are promoting everything imaginable for us to buy. And I submit, with all this happening, there is an important place for barbershop music in the scheme of things. Regardless of religious persuasion, the Holiday season is acknowledged as one of cheer, brotherhood, compassion, family reunions, giving, and happiness. As barbershoppers we are the experts in one component of the season—- the Christmas music. Whether sacred or secular, there is a wealth of music that is an integral part of the mood of the Holidays. The oldest of riddles says - if a tree falls in the forest and no one hears it, is there a sound? And if we just sing carols to ourselves in the rehearsal hall, is that enough?

Virtually all of the AAMBS choruses and quartets around Australia are singing to some extent in their communities. But are we doing all we can to share the gift we have? At this season we can truly spread some cheer, and nostalgia, and lift the spirits of thousands. In Perth we are singing at candlelight services, in the city centre in a joint concert with our Sweet Adelines sisters, carolling in the malls, and even joining Santa with quartets on 20 special "Santa Trains" to the city. But the opportunities are endless.

Our retirement villages and nursing homes usually have a nicely decorated Christmas tree in the dining room or foyer. But think of how quiet it must be.

Wouldn't a performance by your quartet, or chorus bring that tree to life, and bring joy and resurrect precious memories to the residents? If you have missed this opportunity, it's not too late for this season. Sing your songs, and look into the eyes of your audience, and you won't leave with a dry eye. The joy on the day is theirs…………but the reward is yours for a lifetime.

Merry Christmas,
Mike Donnelly

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From our Treasurer

Grants to Regions for 2008

Each year AAMBS Council provides funds to the three regional committees in the form of grants calculated at a standard rate for every member registered within the region as at 30th September.

The grants represent a return of portion of the registration fees paid by every club within the region. The rate is $6.25 per head, even though under 25 youth members pay a concessional rate of half the adult subscription.

The grants were paid directly into the bank account of each region just prior to the end of October. Here's how they were calculated –

- Eastern Region 370 members @ $6.25 = $2,312.50
- Sunshine Region 275 members @ $6.25 = $1,718.75
- Western Region 180 members @ $6.25 = $1,125.00

**Total** 825 members $5,156.25

Yours in financial harmony

Ramblings from the desk of your VP Conventions

Wouldn't it be great if all the members of our association could have the opportunity to come together to do what we do best – sing (and socialise)! We could decide to meet in a given city on a given date and just do what comes naturally (for singers).

Actually, we already have the date and location fixed. All we need is you!

Historically, around half our choruses have attended our bi-annual conventions. Perhaps some are frightened off by the idea of competition and judging. Some have complained of there being too little singing opportunities for them.

The organising committee for the *Heritage Harmony Convention* has had some thoughts on the matter and has developed a strategy to encourage you and your mates to start saving to come to Hobart in 2009. Ken Hunt, foundation member of *The Wellingtones*, sometime President & Vice President, and all round great guy, has been given the brief of contacting all those choruses who were not at the last convention to give a personal invitation to attend. He will contact your Secretary by mail and telephone in the coming weeks.

If there is anything we can do to build the opportunity for us to meet you and for you to meet us and have a great time at our convention please contact me. The address is always on the AAMBS website.

Richard Gardam
conventions@aambs.org.au
From our Secretary

Annual General Meeting

Notice of the 2008 Annual General Meeting to be held on 9 December 2008 was forwarded to all Club Secretaries and Members at Large on 17 November 2008.

The positions on Council to be filled are VP Music, VP Membership, VP Youth Development and Secretary. All members now holding those positions are eligible for and are standing for re-election.

Membership – A few Clubs have still failed to renew their and their members’ registration for the current year which commenced on 1 October 2008; members are again cautioned about the need to re-register to avoid risking the loss of insurance and copyright protection.

Sin(g)cerely,

Kevin White

From our VP Music

Having recently returned from PanPac in Hawaii, my thoughts returned to the friendly rivalry between the singers from New Zealand and Australia. This was perhaps triggered by the upcoming cricket tests, the Bledisloe Cup (rugby, for the AFL fans) and the women’s netball teams where the competition is always fierce and the results variable (well maybe not with the cricket).

How does this compare with our barbershop rivalry? Well, the PanPac chorus results speak for themselves: NZ 1st, 2nd, 5th, with 7 choruses entered. Australia’s best was 6th with 3 choruses entered. The first placed, Pride of Auckland Chorus, blew the audience away with a 78.7% performance. The majority of singers in this group are probably under 25 and produce a powerful and ringing sound. The second placed, Northern Regional Chorus, contained voices from choruses throughout the North Island who, with only a limited number of rehearsals together, produced a very energetic performance that rated 75.8%.

How have they done this? Let me count the ways.

1. They have been at this game longer than we have (1979 the first chorus in Auckland started).
2. Geographically they have a much smaller area to cover.
3. They have the natural ability of Samoan, Tongan and Maori boys to sing.
4. They have a US coach on hand: Gary Bolles lives in NZ 6 months of the year.
5. They sent 10 members to the USA Director’s College this year.
6. They run an individual Director Training program.
7. They hold a convention and competition every year.

Now some of these points (1, 2, 3, 4) we can’t do much about and, owing to high travel expenses, an annual convention here is not viable; this has been seen by the poor attendance at the Quartet Challenge in Queensland this year. We therefore need to concentrate on 5 and 6 and get our directors to a competency and confidence level where they can draw their own singers up without needing too much outside assistance.

Our director training program is under way with 15 directors from Cairns, Perth and Hobart (and places in between) agreeing to undertake training.

Why not also make a decision to send YOUR director to Director’s College in the USA: contact me for details.

Ian Miller, VP Music,
Judge – Singing Category
BHS Director of the Future Trainer
Have you started planning for the Hobart Convention? It’s now only ten months away.

The Hobart Committee is looking forward to welcoming a large number of delegates in 2009. We know this is one of the few chances people will take to visit Tasmania. Already, we’ve heard of many people planning to stay on for a week or two after convention.

Of course, there will be a Harmony College following Convention. It’s from Sunday evening 27th September to early afternoon Wednesday 30th September. Harmony College is at Eastcoaster Resort.

You can now take the first steps to organise your visit.

Details of convention accommodation are on the convention website. Accommodation bookings open on Monday December 1st. A tip: most hotels in Hobart are within easy walking distance of each other and Convention HQ the Grand Chancellor Hotel.

When you’re booking your accommodation please think about whether you will participate in any of the activities planned for Wednesday 23rd. You may need to stay an extra night.

What’s On Wednesday?

Mt. Wellington and City Tour
A morning tour to Mt. Wellington with its breathtaking views, also city highlights, 9.30am to 12.30pm. Cost: Early bird $25

Heritage Harmonisers Chorus
The Heritage Harmonisers Chorus is open to delegates from all Clubs and will have opportunities to perform at Convention. We’ll provide a director and a space. All you have to do is turn up. There will be a warm-up rehearsal on Wednesday afternoon from 1.30pm to 3.00pm at a venue around the historic Hobart waterfront, and an open rehearsal on Thursday morning.

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KNOW YOUR VOICE!

Your voice is vital to you. It is your chief mode of communication and without it your livelihood and well-being suffer. To assist you in protecting your voice, here is some information on how to maintain and optimise it.

HOW IS MY VOICE PRODUCED?

Your vocal cords are two sheets of muscle in your larynx, situated at the top of your windpipe, leading down to the lungs. When you breathe out air passes up through the larynx, the vocal cords are held together and their vibration produces voice. This voice is modified into speech sounds by the articulation of the tongue, lips, palate, etc. The muscles of the larynx control the movement of the vocal cords and can alter the tension and position of the vocal cords to modify the voice, etc. change pitch. The vocal cords must be relaxed to vibrate freely.

HOW MIGHT I STRAIN MY VOICE?

The muscles of the larynx, and consequently the vocal cords, will be overworked and will tire if any of the following occur:

1. Speaking without breaks
2. Sustaining a loud voice
3. Speaking with tension in the throat
4. Speaking with a dry throat causing coughing and throat-clearing
5. Not using enough air for speech
6. Forcing the vocal cords together in an harsh manner – as when speaking forcefully

Be aware of any bad habits you may have and check yourself whilst talking.

HOW CAN I OPTIMISE MY VOICE?

Voice projection techniques are based on using an open, relaxed throat and projecting the sound forward in your mouth. Avoid a tight, clenched jaw and be aware of any tension in your upper chest, throat and face.

Breathe from the diaphragm and allow the air to travel unobstructed to the front of the mouth. Awareness of how you are speaking is central to the identification and correction of any faults. If you voice becomes tired and changes in quality during teaching, please discuss this with your doctor who will refer you to an ENT Specialist and Speech Pathologist if necessary.

Prevention is better than cure!

Warning signs: Be aware of any of the following:

1. Change in vocal quality, e.g. Huskiness, pitch change
2. Voice tires easily
3. Pain during speech
4. Loss of voice
5. Breathiness
6. Excessive throat-clearing or coughing

BREATHING EXERCISES

Diaphragmatic breathing:

- Lie down on the floor or a bed
- Breathe naturally without controlling or forcing the breath
- Place your hand on your diaphragm
- Feel the diaphragm rise as you breathe in and relax as you breathe out
- Breath deeply so your stomach muscles expand as you breathe in
- Feel your back press into the surface on which you are lying
Stand up in front of a mirror and place your hand on your diaphragm:
- Watch and feel the expansion of the centre of your body as you breathe in
- Relax these muscles as you breathe out
- Keep your shoulders and upper chest still as you breathe

Throughout the day monitor your breathing. Once you have practised diaphragmatic breathing at home start to use it at work and when speaking.

Make diaphragmatic breathing a habit.

COMMANDMENTS TO AVOID VOCAL ABUSE

Thou shalt try to avoid:

| Talking against background | In loud classrooms, clubs or bars, at sports arenas, large family gatherings, on a bus, train or aeroplane |
| Noise | Staying up late at night, Talking a lot – including on the telephone |
| During busy periods | Drinking coffee, tea, cola, Drinking alcohol Taking dairy products |
| or | Never stifle BUT don’t phonate |
| When your voice is tired | Outdoors, If it hurts to swallow, Higher or lower than comfortable, Over a cold or laryngitis, At a lower or higher pitch than is comfortable for you, The ‘huumm’ pitch (of mild surprise) is your pitch, With an unnatural speaking voice (‘vocal image’ eg. Sexy) |
| Phonating during a yawn or sneeze talking | ‘Over talking’ |
| | If you are hoarse after talking something is wrong |
| Whispering | Loudly, or for very long |
| Using drugs | Becoming a cheerleader |
| Screaming and shouting at sporting events | Coughing or clearing your throat continually |
| Coughing or clearing your throat continually | Raising your chest or shoulders when inhaling |
| Yelling | Yelling |

Thou shalt try to:

- Speak at your own pitch
- Drink lots of water (8 glasses per day) – Pee Pale, Talk Clear. Urine must be clear, yellow means dehydration
- Keep your voice well lubricated throughout the day
- Utilise both audio and visual aids when appropriate
- Rest voice whenever possible: lunch break, before and after work, at weekends
- Support your speaking voice
- Get plenty of rest
- Be happy
- Laugh a lot, but with good breath support
- Avoid stress and seek mental tranquillity
- Avoid places with foul air, since it will pass through your valuable instrument
- Inhale with a relaxed belly (ie. let your belly hang out, feel fat)
- Eat a balanced and healthy diet
- Humidify your bedroom if the atmosphere is artificially or naturally dry
- If undergoing surgery request a laryngeal mask (if possible) to reduce the risk of laryngeal trauma
Fred Brown, genial Wellingtones Musical Director from 1996 to 2005 passed away in July this year.

Initially, Fred took on the role of MD of the Wellingtones as an interim measure. But members of the Chorus enjoyed his leadership so much that he stayed on for the following decade.

After retiring from the Wellingtones, Fred became MD of the Silvertones, a Club chorus largely made up of men retired from singing with the Wellingtones. Fred stayed with the Silvertones until departing for London in May this year to be with this family.

Throughout his years with the Club, Fred was always generous with his time and talents including fostering beginning singers and quartets. And he always delighted members with his continuing buoyant and quirky good humour.

Among Fred’s great contributions to the Club was his taking the Wellingtones to three AAMBS Conventions – Sydney 1997, Melbourne 2001 and Gold Coast 2005. No doubt this made Fred one of the most senior MDs in our Association.

Not only was Fred a great MD, but he also brought his wonderful gifts as an arranger to the Club and to AAMBS. Fred’s arrangements made up the majority of the Wellingtones repertoire during his time as MD. This gave the Chorus a distinctive style greatly appreciated by local audiences.

Fred’s talents as an arranger were also recognised by our Association. Two of his arrangements, In a Field in France and Neighbours, are included in the AAMBS Song Book.

Throughout Fred’s time as a barbershopper, he was an advocate of a greater Australian flavour for AAMBS and a broadening of the arranging style.

For over a decade Fred’s wonderful personal qualities pervaded the Club. “A man of great compassion and generosity and truly a gentle man”, commented former Club President, Ken Hunt, when he presented life membership to Fred on behalf of the Club earlier this year.

Members of the Club, past and present, gathered in Hobart in August to perform at the memorial service for Fred.

How can we sum up Fred’s contribution to our Club and AAMBS? Perhaps best in his own words after every successful performance, “It’s been a triumph”.

Fred Brown, we salute you.

Congratulation to our Linc Abbott for being nominated for this year’s Life Time Achievement Award on the Gold Coast. A well deserved honour, indeed.
Introducing ……  
High Altitude Harmony  
(Toowoomba, Queensland)

Wow! What a rollercoaster journey it has been for HAH since that initial meeting in mid-February this year when Derek Cosburn and ESCAPEADE’s Chris Gray, Owen Bucklely and Steve Griffin joined Mike Ludwig to introduce a small group of interested guys to the world of Barbershop singing.

Since that first practice and during our incredible learning journey thus far, HAH has been aware of the support of the experienced Barbershop fraternity of the Sunshine Region. Their passion and willingness to support our Barbershop interests at the grass roots level have been invaluable. In May, Derek Cosburn and his Quartet, BENCHMARK, travelled to one of our Toowoomba practices to support us with a wonderful evening of coaching and singing.

In June, at our first social outing in Toowoomba (at Stuart and Beth Adey’s residence) we had the company of some of our fellow choristers from Miner Chords of Ipswich. Again the Blenders Quartet, ESCAPEADE, was with us even though Steve and Owen had spent an exhausting week in Sydney at the Battle of the Choirs. The July social get-together for Tea and Singpathy hosted by the Miner Chords provided us with an enjoyable Sunday afternoon of harmony singing plus afternoon tea whilst at the same time enabling us to see how the Miner Chords approach their craft. Just before the Regional Convention, Chairman of the Sunshine Region, Trevor Remphrey, with his wife, visited us for an informative evening and to wish us well. It will always be HAH’s intention to take on board the advice of our experienced fraternity in the hope that they will notice a difference the next time we meet.

Interspersed with all of the above, of course, were our own gigs for Camellia Shows, Christian Men’s and Women’s Conventions, Wedding Anniversaries, Nursing Homes and the like. A very busy time was had by all with each outing necessitating the cause to expand our ever-growing repertoire just that much more.

Our introduction to the AAMBS regional community was our non-competitive debut at the Sunshine Regional Convention in Ipswich during August. Our members were interested to see what other Barbershop Choruses and Quartets across S E Qld were up to and also to participate in an atmosphere of camaraderie. Our focus as the Regionals drew nigh had the effect of inspiring us by creating an enthusiasm for individual and collective improvement of the chorus.

We performed for a very appreciative audience and if we created a buzz for others as we did for ourselves, then we achieved our aims. We have certainly been overwhelmed by the positive feedback from many quarters. Certainly the stimulus and excitement and creation of community interest in HAH have been confidence-building for us and this has propelled us on even more enthusiastically towards 2009.

Much credit for how we are placed today must go to our tireless MD, Mike Ludwig, whose organising ability, enthusiasm, commitment and nurturing since day one has ensured that we sing well for enjoyment by continuous improvement with individual commitment. There has certainly been a lot of fun mixed with the hard yards along the way. It was fitting that Mike was able to be congratulated by his peers for his efforts in having us ready for the Regionals. He is aware that HAH cherishes the moments that make their MD proud!

Recently, the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers provided HAH with a perfect opportunity to raise our community profile and to strut our stuff with a walk through the beautiful Queens Park Gardens, singing to family gatherings.

So now in the spring of 2008 HAH is at the stage where we have to plan and formalise the aspects of our group to shape our future as a chorus. We will promote ourselves so that we will be noticed more in our local community. To assist our membership drive from here on we know that it is imperative that HAH must be successful.

HAH has come a long way in the past 8 months or so. Good friendships have been established and renewed amongst our members and further afield. We have had a lot of fun and learnt much in the way of Barbershopping skills and Barbershop etiquette. As we discuss and plan our future direction, Barbershopping for HAH between now and the next Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers appears extremely exciting.

Ivan Nugus
Secretary & Tenor

Aloha Hawai'i

SH members are currently much focussed on their upcoming trip to compete at the Pan Pacific Convention in Hawaii commencing 30 October. 28 members will be making our first overseas trip as a competing chorus. It shapes to be a wonderful event with nearly all choruses staying at the Ala Moana Hotel that should create a great atmosphere for harmony. The competition will take place at the Hawaii Theatre which was opened in 1922. After falling into disrepair and near destruction it was eventually restored and was recognised as the “Outstanding Historic Theatre in America” in 2005 by the League of Historic American Theatres; then in 2006 it was awarded an Honor Award by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. It will be an exciting experience for all of us to sing in this amazing venue. We are really looking forward to joining with our Aussie compatriots, Soundwaves and River City Clippers to show off some style from down under.

SH Concert - ‘voices@norths’

In late July Sydney Harmony held it inaugural concert at our rehearsal venue, Norths Leagues Club, on Sydney’s lower north shore. We had been trying for some time to get Norths...
interested in putting on an all a cappella concert, but that is not something our prominent leagues clubs are used to staging. Well we finally managed to set up the concert and to the surprise of many we sold out Norths main concert venue, something no other act has done there for some time. On the bill with SH was our medal winning Sweet Adelines chorus Circular Keys (another role for our wonderful director Vicki Dwyer), and the farewell public performance by our 2003 Gold Medal quartet FREEFALL. The concert also featured a new mixed quartet (our wonderful director features again). Was it a success? As all BBS singers know success for us is not just measured by how many tickets we sell, or how well we think we performed; it is always measured by what our audience gives back to us in response to what we have given to them. As they stood at the end and cheered and yelled we realised again why it is that we do what we do. FREEFALL produced a standout performance that held the audience (and us performers) spellbound. We are already in the planning to make this an annual event.

Bravo Blenders
As we strapped ourselves into our armchairs and watched the opening night of ‘Battle of the Choirs’, how proud we were to be Barbershoppers, as we witnessed the Blenders bitz them. It was a stunning start to the series, and showed why a group of men singing in four part harmony is so emotionally compelling and captivating. Although the Blenders did not make it to the final night, they did a wonderful promo job for our art form – and many of us feel that with a few cards falling their way, the Blenders were a real threat to the eventual winners. Congratulations fellers, you did us all proud.

Beatles Night at The Blenders

After the Sunshine Region Convention in Ipswich was over, The Blenders finally had some time for fun. The long planned and oft postponed Beatles Concert was presented on 20th September on home turf.

The good old Beatles – most of us grew up with them and (almost) everyone could relate a song to an event in his/her life. The event was presented to the public as an Open House of The Blenders and open microphone night with a gold coin entry fee.

Media was informed and several articles in the papers promoted the concert. Rendezvous (a quartet of The Blenders), gave an interview and sang two Beatles songs on Gold Coast’s ABC Radio. Other radio stations advertised the event as well and this way we could be sure that there would be a full house.

When one organises an “open microphone night”, it is never clear who might show up. As the concert day approached, the playlist of performers grew longer and longer and needed to be closed days before the event because of a three hour time limit.

The Blenders Chorus had the honour of opening the session at 7:00 sharp, presenting four Beatles songs to get the audience into the right mood. Then it was time for the soloists, duets, quartets, octets and small groups. It rained Beatles songs and each one was better than the next. We all were transported back in time when Harold and Elliot donned their Beatles wigs. Lovely songs like “Till There Was You”, “Eleanor Rigby” and

“Here, There And Everywhere” melted away like snow on the Gold Coast.

Politics were part of the evening as well, including a satire based on the Gold Coast sung to the tune of “Yellow Submarine”. A rendition of John Lennon’s “Working Class Hero” did not find everyone’s approval, but it’s an open night. After the Mallet Family sang “Nowhere Man” I heard someone in the audience say: “Did they sing about… (I won’t mention the name of the well known Australian politician)”.

“The Fool On The Hill” was probably the most complicated piece that evening, presented by an octet led by Rose McGee. Rose also led the audience through the evening acting as the MC. Lachlan Grant, our youngest Blender, played “Obla Di – Obla Da” on his clarinet. That gifted chap can do more than sing! The talented Logan Family presented several pieces that included singing, fiddling, plucking strings and hammering the keys of a piano.

Gold medal champions sang next to beginners and every one enjoyed the night. A young couple spontaneously grabbed the microphone and led the audience in a spirited rendition of “Twist and Shout”, which brought the house down as the concluding act.

All this would not have been possible without the busy bees of our support group did the greatest job ever. They baked, cooked, sewed, glued and organised every little detail. A great job, ladies. Where would we be without you?

It was a lot of work for all, but everyone agreed it was well worth the effort. The committee decided after a discussion with the members that a similar event will be repeated in December with a Christmas Carol Singing - Open Night. Great - my new topic for the next article! “And so it is Christmas, and what have you done? Another year older…”

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year – and don’t forget to brush up on your Christmas Carols!

Gunther Illek
PR & Gig Coordinator

High Seas Hit Hamilton Island

The new Brisbane/Gold Coast quartet High Seas are just home from a fantastic gig at Hamilton Island for the Audi Hamilton Island Yacht Race week.

Appropriately named High Seas, the quartet members Baritone Keith Lay, Lead John Mahon, Tenor Bruce Muller and Bass Andrew Rasmussen, went to Hamilton Island for 9 days to sing at the prestige event. Their main task was to entertain the yacht crews when the boats came in after each day of racing. The quartet was well
The boys were rewarded with lots of plaudits, & there was a memorable moment when the crowd at the Reef Hotel lounge sang all week to maintain stamina & achieve their best performances in outdoor conditions. The event demanded a high quality standard & the boys worked in the considerable talents of Johnny & Andrew to balance the group with their youth & vitality. Johnny has a big repertoire & pitch perfect voice, & Andrew’s big bass voice matches his enthusiasm for singing & performance skills. This was a good combination & made for a great blended sound. The problem was, as usual, in finding time to practise with work & family commitments, the winter flu, & prior engagements all taking up space.

At first it was not all smooth sailing for our boys because Godfrey & John Shelton were unable to go to Hamilton, then it unfortunately two of the guys from Woodbridge and the sensational pilots of the Air Force Roulettes starring at the Reef Hotel piano lounge. As they were ready to hit Hamo.

Finally, with the repertoire in place & presentation polished High Seas were ready to hit Hamo.

The event demanded a high quality standard & the boys worked hard all week to maintain stamina & achieve their best performances in outdoor conditions.

The boys were rewarded with lots of plaudits, & there was a memorable moment when the crowd at the Reef Hotel lounge was appreciatively silent as everyone stopped to listen when they sang You Make Me Feel So Young to songstress Angie Dean & then the room broke into cheers whistles & applause.

We had some time to relax too & took advantage of the water sports & bush walking tracks. Andrew got to crew a yacht as ballast for a day. We met celebrities, tennis great Todd Woodbridge and the sensational pilots of the Air Force Roulettes team. And we loved the piano & songs of Angie Dean who was starring at the Reef Hotel piano lounge.

The fun centred around Front Street at the harbour with entertainment for the children & visitors during the day. At night the maxi media screens played videos of celebrity events & the yacht races. Strobe lights created spectacular effects lighting up the 150 foot masts of the yachts in the marina. Major performances on the concert music stage by Diesel, the Wolverines, & Joe Camilleri, entertained the crowds enjoying the atmosphere at the Marina Tavern.

It was Keith’s 60th birthday & he, Bruce & Andrew celebrated with a helicopter flight over the islands.

It was a magic week & the boys have some very happy memories of Hamilton Island, a major career highlight for all of them.

High Seas would like to express their thanks to the Oatley family & Hamilton Island Enterprises for their invitation & hospitality.

Bruce Muller
We also recently competed in the Galston Eisteddfod winning the Chamber Choir Section for Choirs of more than fifteen members.

Our new website was recently launched and is now up and running. Come and check it out at www.hillsharmony.com.au.

Dick Bushell
Secretary – Hills Harmony Chorus Inc

Greetings to all from Adelaide’s FESTIVAL STATES-MEN

Our chorus, though not large, is still running at its busy best.

In October we were guests of the lovely ladies of Adelaide Sound Connection in a great concert at Blackwood High School auditorium. We sang a 15 min bracket based around traditional Barbershop and "The Old Songs". We were well received and the concert was a success.

We also performed at Westfield Marion in conjunction with the Marion City Council and have been asked by the council to take part in activities in the new year.

In early November we sang at the Golden Grove arts centre to a very receptive audience. Hear that we may have a couple of future bookings from that. One observer was from a prominent Adelaide Agency and was impressed by our presentation.

At our recent AGM, we inducted 2 more Life members; Len Humphreys (82), Alan John (80) who joined existing ‘Lifers’, Paul Kaye (87) and Ron Vick (84). All these guys have given great service to our chorus and are still active.

We also have a couple of new faces on our committee, with John Lucas as treasurer and Eddie (speedy) Gonzalez as a chorus rep. We value the work that retiring members have given our committee.

I’ll take the opportunity here to wish all AAMBS members, "Greetings for the Christmas and New Year Holidays." KEEP THE WHOLE WORLD SINGING

Check us out at http://www.festivalstatesmen.synthasite.com/

Graham Whetter (acting secretary)

Men In Harmony

...... READYING FOR OUR 24TH CHRISTMAS!

Yes, we’re dusting off the carols and other seasonal favourites as we prepare for our annual busy time in the city streets plus singing for new-found organizations and groups that like our brand of unaccompanied harmony, which seems to fit the festive mood so well.

Of course we haven’t exactly been idle during the winter- with new songs to learn, old ones revived and, in some cases, re-arranged by our MD Richard Davies. Also, as we all do from time to time, we’ve been getting back to the basics of good barbershop singing - isn’t it amazing how some of those things that we learnt all those years ago can slip if we aren’t reminded regularly?

Men in Harmony have made some new “friends” during the year such as our engagement for the Buddhist community when they invited a wide variety of performing groups to share in their annual public day in a city park – it was a very happy occasion. We are joining them this week to sing a few songs at their end-of-year afternoon tea gathering.

The chorus has sung in some new venues and locations too, including a day in the country when we shared our harmony at the Toodyay Annual
Music Fest - it brought back some great memories of earlier trips to “the bush”, singing barbershop in the traditional, historic Town Hall and sharing the day with bands, boot scooters and Scottish dancers, great stuff!

Recruitment of new singers remains difficult, even though our State is booming (or perhaps because it’s booming?) potential members just don’t seem to have the time. But we’re always on the lookout and we do enjoy a trickle of new faces from time to time.

As we enter our (and AAMBS) quarter century year we are planning to attend the Australian movement’s tenth national convention in Hobart – first time in Tassie – should be great! Meantime we wish all our musical mates, especially you “Eastern Staters”, all the best for the Festive Season and 2009. We look forward to catching up with many of you later in the year.

VE held our 2008 annual show on 11 October and all had an enjoyable time. Marion Jamison (mother of two chorus members, Ali and Gordy) very kindly helped arrange the venue at St Stephens School, Duncraig, where she works. The chorus opened and closed the show, with our three established quartets doing a set each and a little variety being injected with guest act Cam van Reyk jazz instrumental quartet. Special thanks to Danny Millgate for doing the honours as MC. You’re right Dan; the audience did have remarkable self control not to laugh at more of your jokes. Huge thanks also to Adrian Gimpel, who produced the show. Your efforts were appreciated by all.

Just before the 2008 show, as part of a busy few weeks for the chorus, over the weekend of 27/28 September, VE went on a road trip to Busselton and Dunsborough (about three hours south of Perth). We headed off from Perth on the Saturday, performed on Saturday and Sunday nights and returned home on the Monday public holiday. We agreed that it’s the sort of thing we’d like to do more often: the audiences were enthusiastic and the guys really enjoyed getting away together and sharing the fun of a roadtrip; very much a thing we’d like to do more often: the audiences were enthusiastic and the guys really enjoyed getting away together and sharing the fun of a roadtrip; very much a positive experience in the life/development of the chorus.

The quote of the weekend came during Nexus’ set on the Sunday night. The guys had sung their opening uptune, which was well received and had just set the scene for their second song, a ballad. Just as they were about to sing, however, a five-year-old girl from the audience ((mother of two chorus members, Ali and Gordy) stepped to have a look and listen. This gig really had a buzz going through the chorus, as all of the guys lapped up the stunned enjoyment of members of the public who had probably never seen anything quite like this before.

Other gigs in recent times have been a charity gig on Melbourne Cup day during a fashion parade and the “One” concert (to raise funds for the starving in Africa) by Riverton Baptist Church on 25 October. Now a busy December of Christmas gigs awaits.

All the best until next time and remember: if you’re too busy to sing…you’re too busy!

Last weekend, 8 Nov, VE auditioned for “Battle of the Christmas Choirs”, run by Belmont Forum Shopping Centre. With this being the first of three stages of the competition, we were asked to sing one non-Christmas song, with Christmas carols coming during the December part of the comp. We sang “Liar Medley” to rapturous applause from the hundred or so shoppers who had stopped to have a look and listen. This gig really had a buzz going through the chorus, as all of the guys lapped up the stunned enjoyment of members of the public who had probably never seen anything quite like this before.

Other gigs in recent times have been a charity gig on Melbourne Cup day during a fashion parade and the “One” concert (to raise funds for the starving in Africa) by Riverton Baptist Church on 25 October. Now a busy December of Christmas gigs awaits.

All the best until next time and remember: if you’re too busy to sing…you’re too busy!

Richard Reeve

**MUSIC DIRECTOR VACANCY**

**The Blenders**, Australia’s premier entertainment chorus, and eight times consecutive and current National Mens Barbershop Champion is seeking to appoint a Musical Director.

We seek a dedicated and experienced MD to take us to new heights in competition and singing for enjoyment.

**The Blenders** enjoy an active membership of 70 and sing and perform an energetic and diverse repertoire in the a cappella harmony style.

Affiliated with the Australian Association of Men Barbershop Singers (AAMBS), **The Blenders** have a clear focus on maintaining and progressing the A Grade status achieved in the 2005 National Convention. It is anticipated the new MD will share our focus on the development of committed Music and Presentation teams, the use of international coaches, quartet development, and the encouragement of youth.

We require an outstanding MD able to lead and work with positive and forward thinking teams to achieve vocal and presentation excellence.

Based on the Gold Coast in sunny Queensland, **The Blenders** MD and Music Team are supported by an experienced and hard-working Club Executive Committee and an outstanding Support Team.

Initial enquiries should be directed to Roy Tomkinson, (President) on +61 7 5530 6307; Mobile 0418754323 or by email on shoppers@bigpond.com.au Additional detail is also available on our website www.theblenders.com.au.

Written applications including a detailed CV and contact details for one referee should be submitted by 10th January 2009 and should be emailed directly to Roy Tomkinson at the above address.

All enquiries will be treated in the strictest confidence.

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2008
November 20 – SOUNDWAVES, Citizenship Ceremony, Gosford City Council Chambers – 3.30 pm

November 28 – SOUNDWAVES sing for Lake Macquarie View Club at 1.00 pm

November 28 – Miner Chords Christmas @ Riverlink when we will sing in Santa.

December 7 – Miner Chords 7pm, Carols in the Carpark, Christ Church, Raceview

December 9 – AAMBS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 6.30pm WDST, Wembley Downs Uniting Church, Calais Road, Wembley Downs WA

2009
Feb 20-22 Eastern Region Workshop – Greenhills Conference Centre, Canberra.

April 5 – SOUNDWAVES & HILLS HARMONY sing for The McGrath Foundation at Castle Hill RSL. Time TBA

May 2 – 3rd Annual Hills Harmony Barbershop Contest – details TBA

May 17 – Miner Chords at Ipswich Heritage Fair at Woodlands in Marburg.

May 30 – Eastern Region Qualifying Competition – Details TBA


Sept 20 – 22 – AAMBS Eastern Region Weekend Workshop Greenhills Convention Centre CANBERRA 1437 Cotter Rd. WESTON ACT


Sept 27-30 – AAMBS Harmony College, Hobart

2011
TBA – AAMBS 11th Annual Convention & Pan Pacific Convention, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, Cnr. Merivale and Glenelg Streets, South Bank, Brisbane; Presented by Brisbane River City Clippers

It’s on again!!! Announcing the 3rd ANNUAL HILLS HARMONY BARBERSHOP

When: Afternoon of the first Saturday in May 2009 i.e. 2nd May 2009.

Where: Somewhere nice in the beautiful Hills District of Sydney

Who for: All Choruses and Quartets no matter how experienced or inexperienced.

Why: Mostly because it’s fun, but it’s also a timely sing-out before the Eastern Region Qualifying Contest for the Hobart Convention.

SO: please mark this date on your calendar and watch for further details.

Let’s all look forward to another terrific afternoon singing

Please contact Ian Fraser for more details:
Tel 4739 3859 singerdad@optusnet.com.au

A Harmony Spectacular

Featuring

 [...]
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Send your items for Barbershop Notes in 9 pt Arial font to:
secretary@aambs.org.au

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