Fellow Barbershoppers,

I have had the privilege of sharing some personal thoughts with you in over 30 issues of Barbershop Notes. And today, as I read the draft of the March-April issue, I felt a real sense of pride in the inputs of all the contributors that make BSN the outstanding magazine that it is. With submissions by all of your AAMBS Council, Regional Chairmen, Convention Committee, and Club Presidents and Secretaries, there is a wealth of information of interest and importance to every single member of the World’s best barbershop organization. So for this issue my message is short and sweet. If you are reading this issue, the scores of hours of work by your mates in composing it are being rewarded, and I’m “preaching to the choir.” But I know for a fact that a lot of our members never get a copy, or actually read the content. So I’m asking each of you to do whatever you can to get Barbershop Notes in the hands, or on the screens, of every one of our members.

The issues are emailed to every Club President, Club Secretary, and Music Director. The Secretaries, with their up-to-date list of their chorus email addresses, forward it to those members. They also print copies for any members not on high speed internet. In theory, this should get the word to everyone. And on top of this, every issue is immediately placed on the AAMBS website, under www.aambs.org.au – then “downloads”, and “Barbershop Notes.”

Wearing another hat, as President of the World Harmony Council, I correspond almost daily with the Presidents and leaders of the 14 other International barbershop organizations around the World. A few are bigger than AAMBS, but most are a lot smaller. But I would hold our AAMBS camaraderie, fellowship, dedicated work, and contribution to our communities, up against anyone. To reinforce this National feeling everyone should know what their fellow choruses and quartets are doing. There is no better way to do this than to simply pick up the latest issue of Barbershop Notes and read it.

Nerida White spends long hours editing, organising, and producing our AAMBS Barbershop Notes. I offer my thanks and appreciation to her for the superb product she produces, and to all the contributors to this issue. I only ask you, as a dedicated reader, to make sure your mates and supporters have the opportunity and motivation to read this issue. Also, your supporters like to know what is happening, so help out by letting your partners read it too. Thanks!

In Harmony,
Mike Donnelly

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From our Secretary
If I didn’t see it with my own eyes I wouldn’t believe it!!

Every year when the AAMBS Insurance is renewed a copy is sent to each Club Secretary for their records so, when a venue asks their Chorus or one of their Quartets for proof of insurance cover he can go to his files and produce the relevant document. It is early in the year and I have already had a request for this document to be sent to a quartet. Secretaries, what are you doing? Don’t your members know that you have received a copy of our insurance cover and have it ‘in a safe place’ so you can let them have a copy whenever they need it? Can you put your hands on your copy of the current Public Liability Insurance certificate? This is not due for renewal until June 2009.

A copy of our current Accident Insurance policy with DanceSurance appears below for easy access by all AAMBS registered Choruses and Quartets. Remember, if your Chorus or Quartet is NOT REGISTERED WITH AAMBS YOU ARE NOT COVERED under our Insurance Policies.

Kevin White

Policy Schedule

SPORTSCOVER
A.C.N. 096 637 033 ABN: 09 096 637 033 APS Limited by Guarantee

TAX INVOICE
Policy Number: PMEL90/00077297

The Insured: AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF MEN BARBERSHOP SINGERS INC

Address: PO BOX 6026 WEST GOSFORD 2250 AUSTRALIA
Postal Address: PO BOX 3553 WHEELERS HILL 3150 AUSTRALIA
Sports / Activities: DANCESURANCE (DANCE & PERFORMING ARTS)
Teams / Members: 761 PLAYERS
Period of Insurance: From 1/03/2009 to 1/03/2010. At 4:00 pm and any subsequent period for which the insured shall have paid and the Underwriters shall have accepted the new premium

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Issued subject to the terms of the attached Policy Wording and signed by the authorized Representative of Sportscover Australia P/L on behalf of the Underwriters detailed above.

Signed: [Signature]
23/03/2009
DATE

| Premium | $1,599.80 |
| GST | $196.98 |
| Stamp Duty | $91.14 |
| Total | $1,997.84 |

Issue 109 Barbershop Notes – March/April 2009
From our VP

Music

After five long months from first contact, the director coaching program is under way. Acceptances (or very close to) have been from Cairns to Hobart and places in between. Some have not responded positively and a number of directors have indicated that they don’t have the time to get involved with this initiative; 9 hours over 2 days.

No organisation can move ahead without training and further education. Quartets and choruses are not removed from this need. It can been seen that the best of these in the world have continuing coaching as they chase that perfect ringing sound and therefore add to their enjoyment of the craft. And improve they do.

At the recent Eastern Region workshop in Canberra, I was highly impressed by the huge improvement of the nine or so quartets that performed in the Saturday night concert. Most of these were clamouring for more coaching during the weekend and were prepared to give up on sessions such as Advanced Vocal Production to get it.

Nobody can see themselves as well as experienced external eyes. You may think that you are improving but sometimes you are simply reinforcing poor technique or continuing bad habits. As a judge, I have to train by watching and scoring quartet and chorus performances on DVD. There are many occasions where I see a quite reasonable chorus being scored lower than their potential because of the director’s poor technique. No one in the chorus is going to tap him/her on the shoulder wanting a quick word about one or two negative aspects of directing style; for one they don’t realise there is something wrong and for another, the director is “God” and cannot be approached in this way so probably wouldn’t listen anyway.

When looking at tennis players at the top level, the vast majority have coaches. Are these the past wizards of the sport? Generally no. They are past players who are very good at analysing problems and also have the ability to teach and correct. This is no different from directing; a good coach is a person who can observe and then teach.

I am asking all execs and music teams to persuade their director to get into this no cost program with an aim of lifting chorus performances in Hobart; time is, however, of the essence (as lawyers often say). There are only four months left to take this on otherwise the coaching will be too close to the convention to have any useful effect.

Get involved and get better.

Ian Miller

From our VP

Conventions

Heritage Harmony Convention

Here in Hobart, my competition chorus, Deep South, has started a special preparation program designed to get two songs up to standard and ready for Convention.

What effect is that having? Well, for me, there are two aspects. I am working on my own technique to make sure that I will not be the weak link in the chain. Hopefully my voice production is improving and it won’t be too long before I can remember all the words, rhythm and notes. How will I ever cope with the choreo?

The other thing that’s coming home to me is “They are all coming, it’s happening – will we be ready?” I’ve seen the accommodation bookings coming in and now registrations as well. Yes you are coming! I am looking forward to meeting new friends and renewing old acquaintances.

Someone from the Convention Organising Committee has or will be contacting your chorus to encourage members to come to Hobart. If there is anything we can do to help pave the way for your adventure down south in Tassie please take the time to let us know.

The convention web site is constantly changing. I would encourage you to visit the site on a regular basis. If there is something you need to know and it doesn’t yet get a mention on the site don’t hesitate to contact us with your question or suggestion. Point your web browser to http://www.barbershopconvention.com.au/ and follow the link.

At the end of the day, this is your/our/my convention. It is a chance to come together to meet each other and share what we do, and, as the man said, “Ya gotta be in it to win it.”

Oh, by the way, planning is already underway for Brisbane 2011. As it will also be a combined Pan Pacific Convention we are looking forward to some 1200 singers from West Coast USA, Alaska, Hawaii, Japan and New Zealand and, of course, we locals. The convention will again be the last weekend in September. Apologies to those of you who are AFL fans, but the venue is only available at that time.

Richard Gardam

Quote of the day –

After silence, that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music.

Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990)
ONLY SIX MONTHS TILL HERITAGE HARMONY CONVENTION

There’s plenty happening in Tasmania in late September. Go to the Heritage Harmony website for all the details. You can navigate there from www.barbershopconvention.com.au

It’s worth a visit. There’s a draft program, details about booking accommodation and registering, Harmony College and more.

Use the link above to get to the site.

Online Registration has opened

for the Convention happening from Thursday September 24th to Sunday 27th. Your Club will let you know the preferred method for registering. If your Club is subsidising members it will probably want to look after all registrations. Other clubs will probably encourage members to do their own registration online. Check with your Club. A reminder, early bird registration of $295 closes on July 15th.

Accommodation Bookings

We have appointed Convention Wise as our sole agent to handle your accommodation needs. Convention Wise has secured a variety of accommodation locations at good prices. No payment is required at this stage. Don’t delay with this one if you want to secure a good location. Go to the convention website ASAP and book online.

Online Harmony College Registration

will open from Monday 30th March. Members will be responsible for completing their own registration. Clubs will not be involved in this process. As there are only around 120 places available, delegates will need to get in fast. AAMBS has set the registration fee at $285 + $10 bus fare to/from Harmony College.

What’s On Wednesday,

pre-convention day activities on September 23rd include Mount Wellington and Hobart city sights tour, Heritage Harmonisers Chorus, Cascade Brewery tour, Evening Meal and Sing. Details are on the Convention website. Keep these activities in mind when you are making flight and accommodation bookings. You will be able to register and pay for these items online within the next couple of months. We will also put up merchandise items at the same time.

Convention Quartet

details have not been finalised. We are waiting on advice from AAMBS regarding the quartet they have invited.

Massed Sing

AAMBS has selected the following Polecats: The Old Songs, Nellie Chorus, Sweet and Lovely, Heart of My Heart, My Wild Irish Rose, Honey/Lil Lize, Let Me Call You Sweet Heart, Down Our Way, Shine on Me, I Still Call Australia Home. This year the Massed Sing will be indoors at the Theatre Royal commencing at 12 noon on Thursday 24th. The Schools Quartet Competition will follow. This year the Youth Quartet Competition is also on the Thursday afternoon. We hope as many delegates as possible will arrange to be in Hobart for these events.

Chorus Rehearsal Rooms

will be available on Friday 25th September at Convention HQ. A circular has gone to Clubs asking for an indication of requirements. You can contact the planning committee at convenor@hmbhc.intas.net if you haven’t heard about this, or if you have any other questions.

Trevor Rootes
AAMBS Eastern Region
Quartet Competition – Hobart Convention Qualifying Event

PRELIMINARY NOTICE

Introduction

In accordance with Standing Order 6, all quartets who wish to perform in the Open or Senior section at the AAMBS National Convention in Hobart in September 2009 must first qualify at a Regional Contest. Regional Youth quartets do not need to qualify but are welcome to enter the Eastern Region contest.

Eastern Region will conduct its Quartet Qualifying Competition on Saturday 30th May 2009 at the Anglican Church complex at 45 President Road, KELLYVILLE NSW 2155. Regional medals will be awarded for the contest. Depending on eligibility, quartets may enter in the Open, Senior or Youth sections of the competition, but they will be judged on only one appearance before the judging panel.

Only quartets who are registered with AAMBS by the closing date for entries will be eligible to compete in this Regional Competition. Interstate competitors, or others for whom distance is a barrier, will be able to compete by submission of a videotape or DVD entry (see Standing Order 7 below).

In addition to the quartet contest, Eastern Region Choruses will be invited to entertain the contest audience during the afternoon, but these performances will not be judged.

Event Co-ordinator

The Eastern Region Board has appointed Bill Purdue as the Event Coordinator for the event. General enquiries should be directed to Bill by telephone at 02 9488 9275 or by email to bill@purdue.id.au.

Contest Panel

The Australasian Guild of Judges and Contest Administrators has made the following appointments:

1. The Contest Administrator will be David Brown (Central Coast), who will be fully responsible for the conduct of the competition;
2. The Category Judges will be
   - Singing – Dan Millgate (Canberra)
   - Music – Kevin McLoughlin (Christchurch NZ)
   - Presentation – Eddie Klimowicz (Gold Coast).

Following the actual competition, the Judges will provide each “live” quartet with a private evaluation and feedback session. Video entrants will receive a written summary report.

Eligibility

All contestants should make themselves thoroughly familiar with the relevant AAMBS Standing Orders and ensure that they meet all necessary requirements, to avoid the risk of disqualification. Ignorance of the requirements will not be accepted as an excuse. The following AAMBS Standing Orders are relevant and may be found on the AAMBS Website www.aambs.org.au:

1. Standing Order 5 – Regulations for Quartets
2. Standing Order 6 – Contest Rules

Entries

The Regional Board has agreed that an entry fee of $20 per quartet will be charged, to help cover the costs of staging the event. The Contest Administrator will shortly call for entries and will provide full details of arrangements for lodging entries and paying the entry fee.

The closing date for entries will be Thursday 30th April 2009. Those quartets competing by video must still lodge their entry by the closing date, but their videotapes or DVD’s need not be lodged with the Contest Administrator until Friday 15th May 2009.

Bill Purdue
The following guidelines appeared in the February edition of SOUNDWAVES’ newsletter – Snippets, and should be implemented by all Clubs

**Riser Etiquette (Membership Induction Program)**

- It is a requirement for all members to stand on risers during rehearsals or performances by the Chorus. It is vital that all rehearsal sessions and performances run smoothly.

- It is vital that members remain focused and professional when standing on the risers.

- To achieve the best results for the Chorus, your full attention to the Music Director is a minimum requirement. The Music Director requires all members of the Chorus to concentrate and follow instructions whilst on the risers.

**Guidelines for all members on the risers**

i. Take your place on the risers immediately the Chorus is called to do so.

ii. Focus your attention on the Music Director or Coach giving instructions.

iii. Prepare to start singing (in the re-state position) the instant the pitch pipe is blown. When the Music Director stops directing, stop singing and listen to his comments.

iv. When the Music Director or Coach is working with a particular section, do not talk or sing or hum your part, but listen and pay attention as more often than not it will be helpful and educational to all.

v. Comments on the risers, whether whispered or unwelcome comments may distract the Music Director and members of the Chorus and must be kept to an absolute minimum.

vi. Members wishing to raise a point or ask a question should raise their hand and wait to be invited by the Music Director to make the comment or ask the question.

vii. Late arrivals can be distracting. If a member arrives late to a rehearsal, he should wait to be invited to take his place on the risers. Do not walk on in front of the Music Director.

viii. The erection and dismantling of risers and their storage in the Club is an arduous task. All members are expected to assist in the erection and dismantling of the risers after each rehearsal or performance.

ix. Members are not to make direct comments to another singer on the risers concerning their singing incorrect notes or words. Any issue relating to another member’s singing or performance should be brought to the notice of the Section Leader. If considered necessary, the Section Leader will be responsible for speaking with the member at a convenient time and place.

**Mentoring new Potential members**

Any member who agrees to accept responsibility for mentoring a new potential member should provide whatever assistance deemed necessary to assist that person to qualify to become a member of the Chorus. This may include bringing to his attention the need to sing the correct note or to learn the words to a particular song.

The mentor, together with the Section Leader, should provide encouragement and support to the new potential member to achieve the best possible result when he attempts to qualify to become a full member of the Chorus.

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It is probably a darn good thing that February is the shortest month of the year!

Full of activity for the chorus, many things to do, many things completed, more to plan for next month….how did we ever find time to sing?! But of course, we certainly did!

Sunday February 1st was the chorus barbecue right on the Maroochy river at beautiful Cotton Tree park….we sang our heads off. Surprising how much better we think we sing with a couple of glasses of fine wine in the tank! We all enjoyed the fellowship and chance to catch up with partners. Some incredulous early morning barbecuers almost got talked into joining us!

February 12th saw one of the chorus quartets…“Just 4 Fun”, head to Annie Gaffney’s breakfast morning talk show on 90.3 Coast FM to promote our “Valentine’s Day” singouts. A good lengthy interview preceded the singing of a couple of songs live on air…and was that a deep crimson blush that came over Annie Gaffney’s face when confronted with four guys serenading her up close and personal?! Good job it was only radio!

The program must have worked its’ magic because we got twelve bookings for Valentine’s Day and two quartets travelled all over the Coast from Noosa to Caloundra surprising ladies in coffee shops, caravan parks, private homes and parks. Each lady was given a red rose and a digital photo of the surprise sent to them all later. Most of the ladies’ partners responded with much more than the asking price… so it was a very successful day.

At “Kookaburra Village” in Caloundra, the residents there proved that love, or the pursuit of it, is still very much alive in Retirement Villages! You betcha! They held their very own “Valentine’s Day” party and the chorus entertained with appropriate repertoire love songs. They would not let us off the stage and one of the many compliments received was...“You guys are better than “Sister
Act! We do hope it didn’t mean we sang like a pack of girls, but we received a large donation towards Hobart.

A 90th birthday surprise party was also on the agenda at “Edenlea Village” in Buderim where a quartet wowed the birthday boy and his family with age appropriate songs…always a worry when the oldies know all the words to our songs! But more funds for Hobart were raised and more grateful fans discovered.

Our new members’ night on Feb 18th attracted 5 new hopefuls and some came with their wives too who all enjoyed the Barbershop experience. Welcome to new tenor, John, who came to us from Noosa Chorale. He is already keen to compete in Hobart. And welcome also to Jock, new lead from Pelican Waters, who learned his two audition songs in double quick time!

Foundation of the new “Statesmen Ladies Support Group” is a big boost to us with plans now well underway for the first “High Tea” and concert on Sunday 29th March. Each member will host a table of eight at this event, with delicacies such as Beef Wellington Tarts, tiny scones, smoked salmon roulades etc. It all sounds mouth wateringly good and will boost the Hobart fund no end.

All told it was a great month and we are keeping up the momentum in coming months with quartet bookings and chorus bookings coming in.

In Harmony
Shane Bycroft
Publicity Officer

the Blenders Are Back!

After a summer break the Gold Coast based harmony club started its 2009 season with an impressive performance on Saturday, Feb. 2nd at the GC Convention Centre. The Blenders entertained an audience of over 1200 in a dinner show for an international construction firm. Viewers were impressed by the 60 performing artists on a central stage delivering Barbershop style songs at their best. Michel Jackson’s “Man in the Mirror” and Ray Charles’ “Shake Your Tailfeather” were part of the show.

An article was published regarding this matter, to be found at: http://www.westender.com.au/news/396/15/
The-Blenders-Are-Back

The Gold Coast Barbershop Harmony Club has been without a director under contract since August 2007. Andrew Howson and Aaron Griffin did a great job keeping the club alive and even led them successfully through the 2007 Convention in Sydney. Aaron managed to win the 2008 Sunshine Regional Convention with the chorus and the club is grateful to his outstanding efforts keeping The Blenders a popular chorus, not only at the Gold Coast, up to now.

However, there is hope that there may be the end of the tunnel in sight. Just wait for the next edition of Barbershop Notes.

Following are some comments from one of our newest members, 15 year old Geoffrey Wu, who is a talented young musician and who joined us after seeing us compete on television in the Battle of the Choirs. Geoffrey started playing piano at 5 years old and achieved his A. Mus Diploma last April. In grade 5 he started clarinet lessons at school and moved to having private lessons in Grade 6. He is currently concert master of the Queensland Youth Orchestra’s Wind Symphony, so, as you can see, he knows a bit about music!!

“Singing with THE BLENDBERS has been one of the greatest musical experiences of my life. Being able to sing and create music with such a large group of dedicated and talented guys has just been fabulous. Never have I seen such determination, motivation and eagerness as that displayed each week by all the members of this wonderful choir. I currently sing Baritone - the Baritones are the most versatile, smartest and best looking section by far (wink! Wink!).

So now I look forward to every Monday night when I can see all the guys again and sing our hearts out together and I am sure this won’t be changing anytime soon.”

Come on and sing…

Gunther Illek
PR and Gig Coordinator

Silver Fox Quartet

Showing the true spirit of barbershopping

Silver Fox is made up of four old blokes from Penrith NSW who just enjoy singing. We average about 40 performances a year at a wide variety of functions, locally and Statewide.

We knew our mates were doing it tough in the bush with the drought – The Land newspaper interviewed us and put in a page about us and we were flooded with calls from the country. We went to Leeton, Glen Innes, Junee, Wellington and Coffs Harbour last year at their invitation, and sang for the whole town. We have already been to Boorowa and Eurongilly this year and we’re off to Adaminaby, Grenfell, Tullibageal and Lake Cargellico in the next few weeks.

We received an award from Ministers Tony Kelly and Philip Costa, for our contribution to Regional Australia, at Coffs Harbour on 8 November 2008. Our combined ages for the four of us is 287 years!!
We’ve sung for audiences such as one man and his guide dog, George, 800 people at the Joan Sutherland Arts Centre, Penrith and on 16 March this year at Penrith we will be singing for an audience of 6000 ... Bikers from the Ulysses Club.

Are we any good? Probably not ... we wouldn’t win any National competition. We make mistakes, but we cover them up with showmanship in good humour and honesty and people seem to like us – they keep asking us back.

Mal Castledine
Silver Fox

(Ed’s note – Congratulations Mal, Barrie, David and Colin for bringing so much pleasure to people around the country)

Our Chorus has really hit the ground running in 2009 with a number of major activities well underway or coming up in the near future. Our inaugural learn-to-sing program got under way on 19 February with twelve potential singers turning up on the first night of the five session training program spread over five weeks.

Our chorus also turned up in strength at the excellent Eastern Region workshop held at Greenhills Conference Centre in Canberra over the weekend of 22/23 February. Eighteen of our Chorus, including MD Ian Fraser were in attendance. Two of our Chorus quartets, Hijacked and Prime Time, participated in coaching sessions with everyone participating in the excellent group coaching activities throughout the weekend. Special thanks should go to our Chorus members John Gerber, Bob Tait and Bill Purdue together with Bob Haynes from Sydney Harmony for their part in organising such a great weekend of full on Barbershopping.

Our next major activity is the upcoming Harmony Spectacular which is a fundraising activity for the McGrath Foundation on Sunday 5 April at Castle Hill RSL. This function is being arranged by the ladies of the Inner Wheel District A53 Committee. Hills Harmony will be sharing the risers with SOUNDWAVES and Circular Keys with the concert staging being managed by our MD Ian Fraser. All the performers have donated their time and Castle Hill RSL has donated the use of their excellent facilities. Sponsorship has also been provided by Westside Wholesalers to cover some of the staging costs enabling the majority of the proceeds to be donated to the McGrath Foundation. This will be a fantastic afternoon of Harmony and everyone is welcome. Advanced bookings are essential. Details can be found on our website www.hillsharmony.com.au.

Hard on the heels of the Harmony Spectacular is the 3rd Annual Hills Harmony Barbershop Contest. This is being held on Saturday afternoon 2nd of May with all quartets and choruses welcome to participate. This is a great opportunity to hone your competition skills prior to the Eastern Region Qualifying Competition on May 30 and the Nationals in Hobart. Details can also be found on our website.

Richard Bushell – Secretary

Alliance has been very busy over the last few months, rehearsing the package they plan to take to the International Quartet Contest in Anaheim, California, in July this year.

Recently, Alliance was thrilled to participate in the Eastern Region’s Education Weekend, held near Canberra. This was a nice change for Dan (bass), who lives in Canberra and normally has to fly to Perth once a month.

Held in the beautiful sunny climate of Canberra, where the birds sing, the flowers bloom, and the politicians run free, the weekend was truly inspirational. Alliance was able to coach many fine barbershoppers from the Eastern Region, and also learned a lot about themselves when they were coached ‘under glass’ (in front of an audience of more than 100!) by Vicki Dwyer (acclaimed educator and chorus director from Sydney) and Mo Fields, the Master Director of the 2008 SAI Champion Chorus and all-round coaching sensation.

The weekend was capped off by a fantastic concert on the Saturday night, MC’d by Hills Harmony’s Ian Fraser, who quite remarkably told a joke that was actually funny. Just about everyone got up to strut their stuff on the stage, and the tremendous ‘Battle of the Two Choruses’ finale ended somewhat dubiously in a ‘draw’. As a result, there was nothing else to do but eat ice cream and sing tags into the wee small hours.

Alliance took the opportunity to arrange several performances during the trip, and sang for the National Archives of Australia, a fundraising luncheon for the Australian-American Association, and for the U.S. Embassy. They also had a guest spot on ABC Radio’s Drive program.
Alliance is truly appreciative of the support, camaraderie and friendship shown by the Eastern Region – opportunities like this remind Alliance exactly why they do what they do, and the boys offer sincere thanks to all those involved in such a successful weekend – new friends, old friends, and of course Ian Fraser.

Next on the calendar is Alliance’s Show, scheduled for 18 April 2009. See the flyer below or visit our website, www.alliancequartet.com.

Harmoniously, Dan, Ian, Adrian and Richard.

Out and about creating a public profile, an Octet performed creditably for local ABC Radio in the lead up to Christmas with a return invite issued for Mothers’ Day. It was great to see visitors, John and Terry of Miner Chords, call in to a recent rehearsal too. A healthy contingent of HAH members shared an enjoyable afternoon of camaraderie and singing with our hosts and brother chorus, Miner Chords of Ipswich as part of Tea and Singpathy. The Chords hosted the event which also gave valuable airtime to our quartet, Left Field.

All the while we’ve continued to plan our future fund raisers, funding submissions and had very enjoyable sausage sizzles. Other upcoming events include a Singing Restaurant on the 27th March, participation in the local eisteddfod, a family camp for August and gigs on Mothers’ Day. Our journey towards the Sunshine Regionals and the Hobart National Convention continues. Add to the above a recording session organized by members Steve Hughes and Mark Phythian for sample website tracks and a potential marketing tool, a TV debut during a recent rehearsal for the local WIN channel and our first official on-stage gig, singing in full uniform, for a Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE Graduation Ceremony.

Perhaps we can entice some AAMBS members who are trekking this way on holidays during 2009 to call in and join us on our risers at practice in our beautiful city of Toowoomba on the Darling Downs.

Ivan Nugus
(Secretary)
SouthCoast
Barbershop Singers

Being members of The Fleurieu Harmony Chorus, Ronny VanVliet and I thought that as we both lived on the south coast near Victor Harbor we would try to form a local chorus.

We ran an advertising campaign for a few weeks and then last February held a meeting in a church hall in Inman Valley and about 8 men turned up and were given a demonstration of barbershop by some of the Fleurieu lads that had come to help us. Six came back for the next few weeks but we dwindled down to only four of us due to family and work commitments. We then decided if we moved to a location in Victor Harbor we would stand a better chance of recruiting as it is more central to the population.

With some more advertising we now have a regular membership of 10, which we hope to increase in the coming months with local radio interviews and general advertising. The members are all very keen to learn our artform and have all joined AAMBS. Tony King and the Fleurieu Lads !!! (age range 45-85) will be joining us every month or so for workshops and will be giving any general assistance they can.

We are also desperately seeking the services of a Chorus Director, I'm doing my best but MD I am definitely not.

In Harmony Gordon Tomlinson (Jack of all Trades and........)

Ed’s Note - We extend a very warm welcome these new Guys on the Risers and hope that someone will put their hand up to become their MD

FESTIVAL STATESMEN

We are off to a busy year, with a large number of bookings already received. Being an ‘older’ Chorus, we are in the position to do many day-time bookings as most of our members are retired. But we’ve been retreaded & are good for a few more years yet. We also welcome Vaughn Sage, Paul Blythe & Nigel Woolmer as new members to our Chorus.

We have tightened our ties with the City of Marion, being invited to a Community Seminar. This opened many doors to our group and gave us the chance to promote our Chorus. We have already done several shows with the Council, and have a booking at a large Community event at the Living Kaurna Cultural Centre. We will be doing a ‘roving’ performance; something larger choruses might find awkward.

SCHOOLS BIG BARBERSHOP DAY OUT (BBDO) 2009 will be held at St. Mary’s School, Adelaide on Friday, 3 April, 2009. This initial workshop is being organized primarily with the Adelaide Sound Connection (Sweet Adelines) and it is hoped that this will be an annual event.

On the July 4th, Festival Statesmen is joining with Fleurieu Harmony to present VARIETY OF VOICES, at the Royalty Theatre. The program includes Adelaide Sound Connection, Sisters of Abundance and several other acts. Music for a big finale has been supplied to all which will have the full cast of the show together on stage.

A VERY BIG THANK YOU to ANDREW BRADLEY for his work on our new music programme.

It is good to welcome back our Secretary, Rod Whyte, after a long period of illness. He has been missed, but we trust will be ready to put his enthusiasm to the test.

Please visit us at our website: http://festivalstatesmen.synthasite.com

Graham Whetter

A message from our Musical Directors …..

"Oh, nothing much... I just kept talking while the Director was trying to teach!"
You harmonise and meet great guys
   – Our 2009 slogan

Members of the Westcoast Chordsmen are off to a great start on another year of Barbershop Harmony. Following a packed December Christmas season and a short January recess. We returned on Friday 16 January, along with four new visitors, to work on and enjoy the singing we love best. Our new slogan for the year, see above, highlights how we aim to continually improve our barbershop skills in a friendly and supportive social environment.

With the induction last month of three new members, the Westcoast Chordsmen continues to be the second largest of the six men’s barbershop choruses in the AAMBS Western Region. These new members will assist in reinvigorating the club, following the departure at the end of last year of two members of long standing, Gordon Grigor (deceased) and Arthur Boddy (retired). Our new Membership VP, Alf Haines, is to be commended for the energy and enthusiasm with which he is approaching his role.

The chorus’s list of singing engagements for 2009 received a boost when we were invited to sing at all eight Citizenship Ceremonies conducted by the City of Stirling. With 17 singing engagements, we are now virtually fully booked for the rest of the year. The list is an impressive one for this stage of the year and is a fair indication of the popularity of the chorus with the Perth general public.

A series of six sessions aimed at assisting singers gain confidence in sight-reading music commenced on Friday 6 February, with an initial enrolment of 18 members. These sessions, conducted by our Music Director, Bruce Okely, before our normal rehearsals, are of a practical nature, with the emphasis on recognising and singing the sorts of notes, intervals and phrases that commonly occur in barbershop songs.

Through the efforts of club member Ian McAllister, we now have our own chorus website: http://barbershop-perth-wa.wikispaces.com/ We are using the website to promote the chorus in Perth and barbershop singing generally in Western Australia. We also use the website to list our forthcoming events and our monthly club newsletters. The Westcoast Chordsmen is a barbershop chorus that is on the move.

President Peter McGuire welcomes Ken Richens to the Westcoast Chordsmen

A new chorus is born ……

Newcastle Harmony Club
singing under the name of the NOVATONES

The steering committee decided to use the Six Weeks “Learn Harmony Singing Course” as the method of attracting new members. Many thanks to Doug Moody of the Melbournaires who sent me all the material they had used for their very successful recruitment program. We had to abbreviate it some what, as we weren’t in a position to spend money on colour printing.

Over the six week period we had fifty two men attend the course, many of whom belonged to local choirs, which didn’t surprise me as Newcastle has many choirs and theatrical groups. Gary Kirk, MD of the Central Coast Chorus, conducted much of the course and has continued to assist me from time to time. Many thanks also to the SOUNDWAVES chorus who attended on the first night to demonstrate Barbershop Harmony and assist the course attendees. Their performance convinced many of them that this was a hobby they wanted to pursue.

A lot of the Singing Course attendees were members of choirs and although they found the course to be very worthwhile and loved the four part harmony, they admitted they found it extremely hard to memorise notes and words.

Pender Pedler
Presently we have a very enthusiastic twenty one members, the majority of whom have qualified. Four of our members belong to the quartet Four Crying Out Loud who have been singing in the Newcastle area for over fifteen years (they hate admitting to that, they say they started when they were young!) Their contribution to the chorus has been invaluable.

We have found a new rehearsal venue through one of our members, which is a large primary school hall at a very reasonable rental fee.

Recently, one of our members asked us to sing at the retirement village in which he lives, as a short interlude between other entertainment. Although we only know three songs the chorus sang very well, the men were overjoyed by the congratulatory remarks by many of the audience members, on what they had achieved in such a short time.

The chorus steering committee and I would like to thank the AAMBS Board for their help and encouragement, without it we would have succeeded but it would have been a lot harder.

We are holding another Singing Course in a week’s time, In the next Barbershop Notes I hope I can say we have over thirty members who have found what enjoyment can be obtained from this great hobby.

While other efforts to start a chorus in Newcastle have failed, it now looks as though the people of Newcastle better get used to having a Barbershop Chorus in their City.

Dick Costin, President

FROM
“THE BLENDER”
Volume 8 Edition 77

Well the new year hasn’t started very well has it? - with the news of Bernie Cureton’s death on Friday the 23rd of January. Bernie was the Blender’s Musical Director between September 1999 and September 2002.

His life started in Liverpool in 1958 I believe and by age 16 he used to go to the pub with his father where the local barbershop chorus rehearsed. He was obviously a natural talent as by age 19 he became their Music director.

He became a BABS quartet medal winner with Savoir Faire [twice] and Par Fore was another quartet he performed well in. He almost broke into the top 20 in International competition. He left England some time ago and landed in Melbourne where he directed the Melbournaires and the ladies chorus in Melbourne. After being invited to visit the Gold Coast in 1999, he took up the post of Music director from then until he resigned in 2002.

Along the way he conjured up a Gold medal in 2001 in Melbourne. He had the chorus record two CDs and directed a memorable gig at the Gabba where 37000 boisterous fans were there for the English and Irish Lions versus Australia.

Plus many more gigs in that time. He also was director of the Harmony in Paradise ladies chorus for some time.

A private but sometimes blunt man his humour was very English and he absolutely adored the Australian lifestyle. It seems he must have been here in a past life as he just loved being in thongs and light cotton shirt and shorts. He would look at the chorus with head slightly tilted and say pointing to himself, “Sweat” and then to the chorus “No sweat”. He was essentially an ear man as he could look at a group of singers and instantly pick out the one or two singers singing off key or the wrong words. Even at opposite ends of the risers.

His partner Rochelle shared Bernie with an assortment of characters who invaded their house in Burleigh Heads. Those main players, Martin and Tim were there at Bernie’s bedside when he died. To you Rochelle, thank you for helping Bernie live 5 more years after he became ill and may you be blessed with good health for evermore.

He will be sorely missed by the many people he touched in their lives.

Vale Bernie Cureton

Irish Association of Barbershop Singers

21st Anniversary Convention
Starting: 10am - 2nd – 4th October 2009
Venue: The Helix, Dublin
Cost: €60.00
Registration closing date is 30th June 2009
Accommodation: Crowne Plaza, Santry, Dublin

This annual convention is the major event in the Barbershop singing calendar. We welcome visiting choruses and quartets from around Europe and the US as well as from various parts of Ireland.

We are always delighted to welcome our many friends from all over the world. As 2009 is our 21st Anniversary, we hope it will be a wonderful weekend.

Read more about Irish Association of Barbershop Singers Convention 2009 by clicking the web link www.eventelephant.com/iabsannualconvention09

NEW ENTERTAINMENT WEBSITE

AAMBS has been received details of a new website which will list entertainers, and is to be launched in March. If you want to learn more about it you can research it on Entertainers.com.au
**COMING EVENTS**

**2009**

April 3 - **SCHOOLS BIG BARBERSHOP DAY OUT (BBDO)**
SA. St. Mary's School, Adelaide. This initial workshop is being organized primarily with the Adelaide Sound Connection (Sweet Adelines)
www.festivalstatesmen.synthasite.com

April 5 – **HARMONY SPECTACULAR** - Hills Harmony, SOUNDWAVES and Circular Keys sing for the McGrath Foundation at Castle Hill RSL - Show Starts at 2.30pm

April 18 – **Alliance Quartet International Concert** – 7.30 pm
Subiaco Theatre, Subiaco WA. Fund-raising concert for Australian quartet Alliance representing AAMBS at the International Convention in Anaheim, CA, USA.
Information: IMulholland@roxresources.com.au or 08 9384 9292 or 0418 956 492.

(Ed. Note – if you can't get to their concert in Western Australia you can still support Alliance getting to Anaheim by buying their CD “Anthem” – we should all help them on their way in anyway we can.)

April 19 – **AAMBS Council Meeting** – Nationwide Teleconference

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

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

May 23 – **Western Region Qualifying Competition**
Information: Harry Owen, 08 9524 2351 or 0489 367 600 or ausloc@bigpond.com

May 30 – **Sunshine Region Qualifying Competition**
Information: Trevor Remphrey, 07 3353 4556 or 0438 127 059 or marinett@bigpond.net.au

May 30 – **Eastern Region Qualifying Competition**
Information: Bob Haynes at 02 9416 2615 or 0411 266 602 or Bob.Haynes@bigpond.com

July 4 – **Variety of Voices** - Festival Statesmen and Fleurieu Harmony at the Royalty Theatre. The program includes Adelaide Sound Connection, Sisters of Abundance and several other acts. Music for a big finale has been supplied to all performers - it will have the full cast together on stage.

Sept 18-20 – **SOUNDS CAPITA – NZABS Convention**
– Wellington NZ Details: www.nzabs.org.nz

**2010**

Feb 26-28 – **Eastern Region Weekend Workshop. Greenhills Conference Centre, Canberra ACT**

**2011**

Sept ?? **AAMBS 11th Annual Convention and Pan Pacific Convention, Brisbane Qld** – Hosted by The Brisbane River City Clippers

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**Eastcoaster Resort—Orford Tasmania**

**September 27th—30th 2009**

- Motel accommodation with ensuites.
- Two persons to a room.
- Buses to and from college available.
- Return transport leaves by 2pm Wednesday.
- International and local faculty.
- A range of streams to suit everyone.
- So much to see and do for partners.

Find out more from the Heritage Harmony Web site:
http://www.barbershopconvention.com.au

Learn more about our great craft in an environment that’s the best ever. Only $285 p/p plus bus $10 (if needed)

See for yourself at:
www.eastcoaster.com.au

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Issue 109 Barbershop Notes –March/April 2009
# AAMBS' CONTACT INFORMATION

Please make contact with AAMBS through the Secretary at our permanent addresses and Phone number:

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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

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