Points of Interest:

- News from the Queensland Floods
- President’s report to AGM
- Meet your new Councillors

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Flood news from Toowoomba members ....

Hi all,

Sorry, I’ve been conspicuous by my absence this week but there have been other things happening.............

An update from Toowoomba.

I was at work on Monday but for some reason decided to work from home in the afternoon as things were quiet and I decided to pack the laptop and trundle home. That was at 12.40pm as the rain started to get heavier. The floods hit at around 1.30pm. One of the intersections I travel through on my way home was where a mother and her son lost their grip on their car a half hour later and unfortunately perished in the floodwaters......

I have lived in this beautiful town all my life and have never seen anything like what hit our city on Monday. The event and it's aftermath has dominated our lives for the week and probably will for months, maybe years to come. Just down the range we've also had loss of life, and, though the official announcements haven't occurred yet, there have been many lives lost. Luckily, all of our friends and acquaintances are OK apart from the horrendous damage to property that filthy, muddy water leaves behind. Our own home was untouched.

As for our chorus, we've had some interesting stories. Our youngest member lives in the Lockyer Valley and there was early concern until communication was restored and we learnt that, apart from no water or electricity, they were safe on a hill somewhere near Gatton or Laidley. Another member, who lives on the range, had half the escarpment slide down beside his house but, it wasn't until he was able to return home (trapped with friends in of all places, Laidley!) that he found up to 75mm of mud through the lower floor of his house. Another of our members lives on a main street in Toowoomba where you would never think there would be a flood, and returned home after being out during the storm to find that water had backed up at the front of his house and had run through the entire home.

I helped him to remove the already stinking carpet a day later and was dumbfounded at the damage to a home a few inches of water can do. Anything that was on the floor was wet and ultimately most things had to be thrown out. I really feel for the people of Rocky, Brisbane and Ipswich who, though they had much more warning of the impending flood, had to endure the heartache of seeing their entire home engulfed by this insipid natural occurrence.

But the medal goes to another member, Peter, who was driving home from Lowood when his car was hit by a wall of water barrelling down the range highway at Withcott. If you know our Toowoomba range road, you'll know that down at the bottom the highway has concrete barriers to separate the up and down section. These barriers act like funnels and increased the flow and velocity of the water into Withcott.

I particularly wanted to perform a rendition of "My Country" in a quartet, which I did, and the words never had so much meaning as they did last night.
places things into perspective when we hear stories such as Peter’s.

I went to our rather ad-hoc (relocated and rearranged due to water damage in our hall) first rehearsal last night with 21 other men, and sang my heart out. I particularly wanted to perform a rendition of “My Country” in a quartet, which I did, and the words never had so much meaning as they did last night.

Keep safe everyone, 
Mike Wells

Here is Peter’s story from his email to us:

“Just a quick update as I know that many have not been able to contact us over the past few days.

Mary and Rhianna are fine. Our home has suffered some damage from water washing from the Uniting Church car park across the road. Jeremy is fine, he was involved in the floods in the CBD in Toowoomba yesterday, as a rescuer for several people trapped in vehicles. He has been very supportive of Mary and me over the past 24 hours. But unfortunately the main act in all the drama was me.

I was on my way home from my office in Lowood yesterday afternoon and got caught in the torrent of water in Withcott. My car was pushed about 500 metres. I eventually had to escape from my vehicle and spent sometime standing between my vehicle and the one that had pushed into it, my car had tipped to a 45 degree angle.

I was fine for a while but got hit by a tree being washed down the roadway. I lost my footing and was washed underneath my vehicle and had to grab hold of a road side speed sign as the water washed around me. I stayed hanging onto the post until eventually the water level dropped.

Physically I am very beaten up with most of the skin torn from my legs below my knees by the tree branches, lumps of wood and large pieces of bitumen. I have no skin left on my right fore-arm as I wear a silver bracelet on that arm and I held that bracelet tight to keep me from being washed away as I clung to the road sign. I have a great bruise on my ribs from being washed into the road sign. But that speed sign is now my favourite on the road.

I lost my footing and was washed underneath my vehicle

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Luckily I was “adopted” by a local Withcott person who took me home and allowed me to shower and found me some clothes and fed me. About 10.30 last night we were forced by the Police back to Toowoomba up the range. They were opening the range for only a short period for residents of Withcott to return and non-residents to be escorted to Toowoomba.

Today, I am home safe with Mary and my kids, I can’t move, cant walk too far and can’t laugh. But am thankful to be alive.

On the work front, my office in Lowood will have about a metre of water through it tonight, but I cannot be there and most of my staff are not able to get there either.”
President’s Report to 2010 AGM

Greetings, Fellow Barbershoppers,

Welcome to the 2010 AAMBS Annual General Meeting. Tonight we meet to acknowledge the contribution of some hard working and talented individuals, and to reflect on where we’re going in 2011. This was an excellent year for AAMBS. Our choruses and quartets participated in shows and sing-outs around the country, and attended workshops, retreats, and regional competitions.

Underlying all of this is the great expectation for the River Harmony/Pan Pacific Convention that is now just 9 months away! As I said last year, if I could make just one recommendation to the AAMBS membership, it would be to never, ever miss a Convention or Harmony College. If you haven’t been, it’s a real eye opener as you realize that the weekly rehearsals you attend with your chorus are really a part of a much bigger national and worldwide barbershop experience.

This year AAMBS has been guided by the leadership and hard work of your national Council, consisting of Secretary Kevin White; Treasurer Barry Joy; and Vice Presidents; for Conventions, Richard Gardam; Music, Ian Miller; Marketing and Development, Derek Churchill; Membership, Tom Smith; and Youth Development, Steve Griffin. And as always, the day to day administration, without which AAMBS just wouldn’t function, is professionally accomplished by Nerida White. In addition she has done a total remake of Barbershop Notes, now under the banner of In Harmony. All the latest and greatest about barbershopping nationwide is in In Harmony, which is available on the AAMBS website, remarkably named aambs.org.au.

Two of our stalwarts are retiring from the Council at the end of the year. Tom Smith, our Membership VP has served us extremely well for over 8 years. His nationwide membership initiatives have helped AAMBS buck the trend toward declining membership in North America in both the Barbershop Harmony Society and Sweet Adelines. His guidance, surveys, and membership competitions have reinforced the vital importance of membership to keeping our art form alive. Tom will be replaced by Richard Reeve who brings infectious enthusiasm and an unmatched passion for member retention to the job.

Retiring after four years on Council is our Music VP Ian Miller. Ian has worked tirelessly in the area of Music Director training, realizing that the Association will only progress as far as our music directors will lead them. In addition to all the music initiatives you all know Ian as the “producer” of Harmony College, into which he invested over 300 hours of organization and coordination. Our deepest thanks to Ian for his work in both those areas. Incoming will be Mike Wells, who is currently doing all things musical in High Altitude Harmony, and is extremely enthusiastic to advance our collective musical standard.

I want to acknowledge the work done by our newest AAMBS Life Member, Ian Mulholland. As Dean of the Australasian Contest Administrator and Judges Guild he has continued to develop those assets to provide a valuable pool of experts for Australia and New Zealand. There will be another school and validation course before the Pan Pac Convention.

Sunshine and Western Region co-ordination has been excellent, led by Trevor Remphrey and Kim Sebbage respectively. Eastern Region has had difficulties this year, so the AAMBS Council made a decision to make qualifying for Convention easier for all quartets in those areas. In May, there will be three separate qualifiers - in Sydney, in Melbourne, and in Hobart. On behalf of the membership I want to thank Mike Barlow, Doug Moody and Trevor Rootes for stepping up to co-ordinate those events, and to Bob Haynes for brokering the process. Council is carefully considering the advantages of having three new Regions to complement the Western and Sunshine Regions.

Last year I made a statement ...."Every member in AAMBS has a responsibility, and a golden opportunity, to do whatever they can to make sure barbershopping continues to grow and flourish through this century." This year I’ve seen progress on all fronts as we collectively made that happen. We have many new members and even new choruses. And I have reports of innovative actions to make rehearsals something not to miss. Skills are rising. It also seems that the number of public performances is increasing, just by noting the club reports in In Harmony. And we have full representation at Internationals this year with our Seniors Gold Medal quartet Benchmark representing us next month at Las Vegas. Our Gold Medal chorus Vocal Evolution is going en masse to Kansas City to represent Australia, as is our very active Gold Medal quartet Alliance, and our Silver Medallist Youth Quartet Fishbowl Boys.

If we each make a commitment to personally grow, and build, and embellish every aspect of barbershopping, then I know our chords will continue to ring, our friendships will deepen, our audiences will be smiling and crying, and singing in the barbershop style will be there for our future generations.

I thank all of the members of AAMBS for giving me the opportunity to serve as President of this outstanding organisation and I look forward to our big Convention year of 2011.

In Harmony
Mike Donnelly
Greetings from your new VP Music!!! I must say that I am honoured to follow in the footsteps of my predecessor, Ian Miller. Compared to Ian’s extensive musical and Barbershop experience, I’m a relative newcomer. Not that this restricts my enthusiasm for Barbershop and a cappella singing nor my determination to encourage more members to strive for continual improvement in this great craft.

I’m a lifelong resident of Toowoomba, Queensland, who studied music and piano early in life, as part of a musical family. Like most wise teenagers, I decided to quit the piano for other pursuits but have always maintained an avid interest in music throughout my life. I’ve always enjoyed a rather eclectic range of music, but I’m one of those funny people who concentrated on the melody and harmony of the music I was listening to, rather than the words!! (I could hum most songs perfectly!!) So, when introduced to Barbershop in 2008, picking up the harmony bits wasn’t nearly as difficult as learning the words!!!! I currently sing tenor for High Altitude Harmony chorus (HAH), and for my quartet, Left Field. I also juggle the roles of Tenor Section Leader and Music VP for HAH.

To earn money, I teach Horticulture at the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE, and class myself as one of the lucky people who actually can’t wait to go to work each day and teach what has been a lifelong passion and interest for me.

The thing is, being passionate about a job, interest or hobby makes you want to improve your knowledge and skills in order to be better at what you do. So I see my task as AAMBS Music VP to firstly encourage members to be passionate about 4-part harmony singing. Secondly, convert that passion and enthusiasm into a quest for continual improvement. Improvement can occur as quickly or slowly as you want it to happen. Some members may see improvement as finally nailing the notes and words to their first Barbershop polecat. Others may strive to be in one of the top 10 quartets at Pan-Pacs later this year. Regardless of what you want from this hobby, I’d like to help you achieve your goals. Now, I’m not gonna bombard you with lots of heavily technical articles in In Harmony, simply because I don’t have the technical knowledge to do so. Heaven knows, if I don’t understand the stuff how can I expect this from most members? My intention is to draw upon the huge repository of knowledge and skills present in Barbershop and a cappella singing in Australia and overseas, and hopefully share these with you in a fun and interesting manner that makes you want to learn more. Can I say that, in my rather short time within the Barbershop community, I am astounded by the musical talent (and their ability to pass this on) of the few Musical Directors and others I have met so far. And I’m sure that there are many more of you who have the knowledge and skills at all levels that can be passed on as well.

Speaking of learning opportunities, I’m aware of a weekend workshop planned for February 2011 in Canberra, and a mini-Harmony College to be held in Brisbane in March. And of course, don’t forget our national Harmony College in early October, straight after the River Harmony/Pan-Pac Convention in Brisbane.

I look forward to meeting with as many of you as possible and hearing your comments and ideas on how we can improve this fantastic hobby that we all enjoy. In the meantime, my contact details are on the AAMBS website, and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Hooroo,
Mike Wells
AAMBS VP – Music

** STOP PRESS **

AAMBS has two new Regions!!

At the AAMBS’ Council Meeting on Sunday 9th January unanimous approval was given to the formation of two new AAMBS Regions—Tasmanian Region under the Chairmanship of Trevor Rootes and Victorian Region under the Chairmanship of Doug Moody. This follows on from a recommendation at the Forum at the Hobart Convention when it was suggested that a Southern Region be formed as it was felt that the area covered by Eastern Region should be reduced to make it more accessible and manageable.

We welcome these two new regions which, along with Eastern Region (now covering NSW and ACT), Sunshine Region and Western Region, means that we now have five active regions within Australia.

We will certainly be watching their progress and development with great interest.
Hi AAMBS choruses,

I’m excited to be taking on this position and working to improve the enjoyment of AAMBS members and bring the joy of barbershop to many more Australian men.

I'll be getting in touch with each chorus early in 2011 to introduce myself and understand your situation. Then over my time as VP Membership it is my aim to help each chorus attract and retain more members, have fun and improve skills along the way.

With a background in musical theatre, I began barbershop in 2003 with Sydney Harmony. Upon moving to Perth in November 2004 I immediately joined Vocal Evolution with whom I have sung ever since, as well as being a member of the Management Team.

My vision for the Membership VP portfolio within AAMBS is to facilitate all barbershopers in Australia learning from each other and from overseas (particularly utilising BHS resources). There is a tendency for each chorus to feel it needs to tackle challenges of membership on its own, when in fact every chorus is facing the same challenges (and opportunities).

Fundamentally, the Membership portfolio is about recruitment and retention. I shall work with the VP Marketing to streamline and improve information and support to Cubs about recruitment.

Also, I will work with the VP Music to ensure that once in a Club, a member gets out of barbershop what he’s looking for. 2004 International Quartet Champ, Alan Gordon (Gotcha!) introduced me to the concept that there are three aspects of enjoying barbershop –

1. Ahh – enjoying the rich barbershop sound
2. Ah-ha – learning and improving
3. Ha-ha – having fun

My focus will be facilitating these concepts.

Note, from a presentation category perspective, enjoying our time on the risers goes hand in glove with engaging and entertaining audiences.

Best wishes for a great year.

Richard Reeve

Comment from our President – Mike Donnelly:

Richard Reeve brings an impressive breadth and depth of experience to the position of AAMBS VP Membership. As Immediate Past President of the AAMBS Gold Medal Chorus, Vocal Evolution, his leadership and management expertise speak for themselves. He brings a rare combination of technical expertise, leadership qualities and a tireless work ethic to the job. I feel that the Membership of AAMBS’ is extremely fortunate to have a gentleman like Richard Reeve co-ordinating and implementing all the vital retention and recruitment aspects of membership and look forward to working with him on the AAMBS Council.

Note—

Richard is also an AAMBS/NZABS qualified presentation judge and the baritone with our Gold Medal Quartet Alliance!
At last, 2011, the year is with us.
The year we at The Clippers have been working toward for the past three years.
The year for which choruses and quartets from within the Pan Pacific region have been preparing since the 2008 Pan-Pacific convention in Hawaii.

The register is now open. Cheryl Ivess, our convention registrar, is eagerly awaiting the anticipated deluge of registrations (www.panpac2011.org.au) from people who have already expressed interest in attending.

Early AAMBS registrations will provide the River Harmony committee a wonderful promotional tool with which to attract more overseas delegates as we work towards preparing the best convention possible.

Media organisations have been alerted to what will surely be a magnificent example of A Capella singing in the barbershop style, with Radio 4BC/BH agreeing to sponsor the school section of Young Singers in Harmony (YSIH) to the tune of $2000.00. (Provision of trophy & medals together with $1000.00 to the school of the winning chorus)

St. Laurence’s College (SLC) have agreed to host the YSIH component of River Harmony. The facilities at SLC include a brand new 1500 seat auditorium with state of the art equipment which will be made available to the organisers of the YSIH competition.

SLC is situated close by the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre allowing delegates the opportunity to judge for themselves the result of some innovative measures taken by Steve Griffin (AAMBS Youth development) and his team as they strive to increase the interest of young people to the art form.

Remember, this is a team effort with each and every one of you being a member of the team, let’s make it a winning team and register soon.

John Shelton
Chairman—2011 Convention Committee

Recent comments from John Shelton regarding floods in Brisbane, our September 2011 host city

The situation up here was beyond my belief, the magnitude of the water travelling down the hill and under our place was unbelievable but the real victims are the ones who’ve perished and the loved one’s they’ve left behind, it’s all just beyond my comprehension.

The wonderful support of the Australian nation and in particular the Brisbane community must be so encouraging to the poor souls who have lost everything that in a strange sort of way makes me feel proud to be part of this great “Let's give 'em a hand culture” which always comes to the fore whenever tragedy strikes.

Several members of the Clippers were evacuated and I believe The Clippers are donating $2000.00 to the flood fund.

The Convention Centre must have been inundated being so close to the Brisbane River as would, I’m sure, be St Laurence’s College, the location of the YSIH component of River Harmony but as you say, we have 10 months to clear up the mess and I’m very confident all will be ready to host a magnificent convention.

John Shelton
PEP plus PEP for 2011

Just a few months to go before the biggest Barbershop singing event ever in Australia. The weeks and months will just scoot past and as we meet together again at rehearsal nights around the country we must both plan and put into action almost immediately if we are all (yes ALL) going to feel good about both ourselves and our craft come October 2011. It is not about spending just months practising two songs to death until our voices fill our halls so much that people leave to make room for them. Some of them might be our treasured members, bored to death.

So! Why do we bother to put in so much effort for sometimes so little result? Some choruses don’t even attend Conventions as they feel they have no chance of winning a medal. Wrong, wrong, WRONG! To mix and enjoy the company of our peers at a point in time when we are performing at our best and giving enjoyment to ourselves and their audience is our goal and that goal will enhance barbershop singing to a wider audience long before the Convention and certainly afterwards.

Your Marketing committee member is in place (isn't he?) to take the Chorus to the public as often as each Chorus decides. Why? Only by continually performing in front of a live audience will each of us achieve a higher performance and confidence. England just proved that in the Ashes series. If gigs are sought on a paid basis, each Chorus will be able to offer their members a subsidy to ensure that they ALL come to Brisbane in September. Thirdly, and here is the hidden lasting benefit which will assist AAMBS to reach 1000 members in 2011, your local community will hear you more, be aware of who you are, and will want to sing with you.

How do we achieve this state of Nirvana?

**PEP plus PEP!**

**Performance**

**Entertainment**

**Pleasure**

By ensuring we give our best performance (smile, act, sing) we will entertain and hold those listening. Isn't it awful when people just walk past? And best of all we will give ourselves pleasure. If we don’t do that what is the point of performing and practising. And that is just for us. What about our audience? What hopefully do they get?

**Perception**

**Enjoyment**

(a)Ppreciation

Yes well we know the last one is not quite correct but I wanted to make sure you were paying attention! Our live audience hopefully say. "Wow what is that" and perceive that they are listening to something different - talented application and chords that ring. They will get enjoyment from listening to you and appreciate that they have just heard something that is not only different but worth listening to.

Our chance Gentlemen to take our craft to a bigger and better audience. It’s called Marketing! 2011 the year of PEP!

_Derek Churchill_

Director of Marketing
Our Overseas Brothers in Barbershopping  
express their concern

From: Rod Schultz, Sounds of Aloha, Hawaii

“As immediate past president of the Aloha Chapter, I just wanted to let you folks in Brisbane know that we’re watching the news of the floods in Brisbane, and praying for everyone who is threatened, particularly our fellow barbershoppers over there. Stay dry and be careful. Aloha.”

From: Kazuo Matsumura, Tokyo Barbers

“Dear Mr. Shelton,

Please accept our sincere sympathy to those who suffered from the disaster hit Brisbane this week.

We have learned through the news and web that the recent heavy rain over Queensland resulted in flood of Brisbane River and its famous Riverwalk was damaged. The news also tell us that hundred thousands of the residents are threatened with flood of their houses.

We hope all of you escape from the danger safely.

Kazuo Matsumura,
President, Tokyo Barbers
cc: All Tokyo Barbers

From: Masa Sugita, Tokyo Metropolitan Chorus, Yokohama

“We learned from the newspaper and TV that caused great damage to your area due to terrible heavy rain recently.

We sincerely hope you are all safe and didn’t suffer any serious damage and also hope your quick recovery from Yokohama.

Masa Sugita
President - Tokyo Metropolitan Chorus-Yokohama”

From: Nicolás de las Peñas, President, SABS

“Hello, Derek
I have knew about the situation in Brisbane from the flood has specially impacted in your town.

I hope you, your wife and family are all OK. Are you?
Please, let me know your current situation.
Thanks a lot,
NICO”

From: Alan Goldsmith, Music Services Director, The British Association of Barbershop Singers

“Hi Derek,

Sorry for taking a while to get back to you but I’m sure that you’ve had other things to think about, like flood water. BABS sends best wishes to all you guys in Brisbane and Queensland, the television picture we’ve seen show what a devastating event this has been, and we do wish each and every one, and their families, the very best in coping with it all. Knowing the Aussie way of things I’m sure you’ll get everything sorted by the time of the Pan Pacific (everything apart from getting your cricketers to play better!)

Sincere best wishes,
Alan”

AAMBS thanks you all most sincerely for your concern and support, and we look forward to giving you a warm (and dry) welcome to the Sunshine State in Brisbane this September
In the words of The King -

“Viva Las Vegas!”

We certainly hope that our Seniors’ Quartet, Benchmark, hits the jackpot in Vegas when they compete and represent AAMBS at the International Convention there on 28th January.

We can all give them our support and let them know we are thinking of them and wishing them well by sending email messages to them at:

http://www.barbershophq.com/?p=1622

By connecting to this link you will see that Benchmark is appearing 9th out of the 27 competitors. You can also read some of the messages of support for other quartets – lets get some more there for our men.

Naturally they would like to know that we are all thinking of them and would really appreciate hearing from you.

Is your Quartet registered for this year?

This is a friendly reminder that if your Quartet’s details do not appear on the AAMBS’ Website then you have not re-registered for the current AAMBS’ financial year.

This means that you will not be eligible to compete at your Regional Qualifying Competition or at River Harmony in Brisbane and that you do you have Insurance cover for any rehearsals or singouts until your Quartet is officially registered.

What you need to do is download a Quartet Registration Application form from the Website and forward it to our Secretary, Kevin White, as soon as possible.

Library Update

They have arrived at last

We now have the DVDs and CDs from the 2010 International Competition in Philidalephia

They are out on loan and there is an ever growing waiting list for other Clubs and members interested in borrowing them

So you should get you name in fast to ensure you don’t have a long wait
Well it might be an old cliche, but WHAT A YEAR it has been for Newcastle Harmony Club and Novatones!

It started with us snaring the services of Ian Miller as Music Director, and what a great choice that has turned out to be for our fledgling chorus. Ian has worked tirelessly and patiently, taking us through our first competition at the annual Hills Harmony chorus contest and all our public performances, from which we have taken a real sense of achievement.

The boys hired a mini bus and enjoyed the usual hilarious bonding and bad singing on the way home, “fuelled” by a few of Paul Toohey’s potent home brewed ales, of which Don Burgoyne so unselfishly denied himself in order to drive the bus!

Then there was our very well received roaming performance at the Maitland Aroma Festival. Our year was topped off by three singouts in December, starting with a rousing and well received performance at “Warners At The Bay Hotel”, where we also sang to a private function for the volunteer workers for Ronald MacDonald’s House.

The very next night we did our biggest gig yet at the Charlestown Square Shopping Centre, followed by a repeat performance one week later on 23rd December.

At each performance we had a quartet stepping out front for a few numbers, Four Crying Out Loud at Maitland and the chorus’s new resident quartet, Broadway, who performed with distinction at Warners Bay and Charlestown Square.

A significant alliance was formed in 2010 with Ronald MacDonald House, a charity which we are very proud to support.

We now have a core of fine singers from which to grow the Club. Everyone really loves to sing, wants to learn, and has those special qualities of working in harmony and supporting their team mates. A special mention has to go to the efforts and enthusiasm of our Management Team, Tom Ahearn, Paul Toohey, Mike Peters, and John Cragg, headed by our hard working and capable President, Brian Bleakley. (Yours truly is proud to be part of that team).

As with all other Clubs, 2011 will be a very big year for us and we are already working with enthusiasm to increase our membership, improve our standard and generally enjoy ourselves immensely.

Mike Danks
Secretary

The end of 2010 and beginning of 2011 has been a busy but fun time for Alliance.

With three of us living in Perth and Dan in Canberra for the entire life of the quartet, it was with much amusement that we saw the irony in Richard being in Queensland for 2010 (to spend time with family, as that’s where he grew up) when Dan finally made the move to Perth in April. So it was extra exciting for Richard to return to Perth in November and for the quartet to be living in the same city for the first time (something we thought might never happen).

With International in July, a second CD and Nationals/PanPacs in October (as well as numerous other commitments during the year) 2011 will be Alliance’s biggest year yet and we are excited to move to a new level of operation now that we all live in Perth.

During November Alliance was chuffed to be engaged to sing at a corporate function at the WACA for the Ashes Test. It seems fairly clear to us that this was the reason that the Perth Test was the only one of the summer that the Aussie cricket team won.

Also we performed at a wedding proposal (yes that’s right, not a wedding - a proposal), which was beautiful and emotional, at sunset on a secluded Perth beach.

Next we got cracking on the Christmas repertoire and enjoyed many Christmas performances. The highlight was to share the stage with Vocal Evolution, Perth Harmony Chorus and BlackJaQ for a big show at the Regal Theatre in Subiaco which included Alliance and BlackJaQ performing two beautiful duets. All had a great time and if “this year’s show sells next year’s tickets” we’re certainly looking forward to next year.

So here we are in 2011 and we are busy working on a bunch of new repertoire songs for competition and a new CD.

One of our first outings for the year will be to join Ian Fraser on the faculty for the annual Eastern Region workshop in Greenhills (Canberra) in February. For details please contact Bob Haynes: bob.haynes@bigpond.com. We would love to see you there!

Lastly, we would, of course, like to pass on our thoughts to all of those in the east affected by the massive floods.

Best wishes—Dan, Richard, Adrian and Ian
Men In Harmony

CHANGING TIMES FOR MEN IN HARMONY

Dorothea MacKellar got it right all those years ago didn’t she? when she spoke so affectionately about her new-found country, the land of “drought and flooding rains…..her beauty and her terror” and we are reminded of it as we think of our musical friends and families in the Eastern States, grappling with so much water now, and over the past twelve months. It’s difficult to grasp, especially when we, in this part of the country, have just had our driest year on record and expect to be increasingly reliant on desalination plants in the future for one of the basic necessities of life. But, distance and State lines don’t count in times like this, when we all hop in to help where it’s needed most, and everybody rallies behind the opening line of Dorothea’s poem set to music, “I’m proud to call Australia home”.

Understandably, many choruses and quartets will have major distractions and vital important domestic and community issues on their hands for some time to come but, where possible, I imagine harmonizers are emerging from their annual “hibernation” and readying for another year of fun and fellowship in the a cappella music we enjoy most. Men in Harmony are already under way, preparing for our annual commitment supporting two Local Government bodies in their Citizenship Ceremonies, one on the eve of Australia Day and the second at 0745 on the day itself.

These are impressive occasions in which we enjoy being involved, sharing with the audiences (made up of “old” and “brand new” Australians) some good old Aussie songs which they love – in fact it’s hard to sing a favourite like “I Am Australian” and watch their faces without getting a lump in the throat.

Men in Harmony members are excited about 2011 with the appointment of our new Music Director

Rebecca Mutton previously directed The Hume Highwaymen in Wagga Wagga, NSW, but she is now in the West, and is an Assistant Director with the relatively new, A Cappella West Harmony Chorus, which shone at last year’s ladies 11th Australian Convention, placing fourth in the national lineup on their first competition appearance. Bec also sings Lead in the Gold Medal quartet, iCappella. We are delighted she has agreed to direct us and take us to convention in September.

So, we have a lot to look forward to and, at the top of the list, is the River Harmony Pan Pac in Brisbane when new singers will experience the thrill for the first time, and us old hands will catch up with musical mates from all over the country, even some from overseas. In the capable hands of our good friends the Clippers, it’s bound to be a beauty. Our thoughts and best wishes are with those of you who are caught up in the very testing and difficult problems of the moment.

Sincerely, Andy Aberle

Canberra Chordsmen

On behalf of the Canberra Chordsmen we wish you all the very best for 2011 and for a lively Pan Pacific Convention in Brisbane this September. From all the marketing information being put around by the Clippers it’s going to be a whopper. What a coup to get Storm Front too.

We have had a really good end to the year 2010, when we suddenly found ourselves being asked to sing Carols and some repertoire all over Canberra. This included some charity gigs as well as fully paid gigs to help fill the BHCC coffers. In all we were asked to sing at nine official events leading up to Christmas including the very prestigious Royal Canberra Golf Club Christmas party. At St Ninians Church fete they thought we were so good, we were asked back for a free Xmas Dinner and another performance, of course, which they loved. Talk about singing for your supper!

One of our members Joseph Gasendo, a lead sometimes but swaps to baritone now and again, also decided he should tie the knot at the end of November and it was a delight to sing at his wedding celebration with such an adoring Filipino audience. The suckling pig was a hit and the wet weather, although atrocious, didn’t spoil the occasion.

The quartet Ketones decided to busk at the Farmer’s Market in Phillip (with permission) and managed to reap over $100 in half an hour. Not bad work boys, enough for a beer anyway.

Men in Harmony members are excited about 2011 with the appointment of our new Music Director

supporting two Local Government bodies in their Citizenship Ceremonies, one on the eve of Australia Day and the second at 0745 on the day itself.

In Harmony Issue 120—January / February 2011
We had our Christmas Dinner with wives and girlfriends at the Canberra Yacht Club this year which has an excellent setting on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin. Once the other guests realised who we were of course we naturally “gave in” and sang a few festive songs for them over a marvellous three course lunch.

The Canberra Chordsmen are really excited that the Greenhills Workshop is on again Friday 18 – Sunday 20 February 2011. We are looking forward to a first class education program in Barbershop Harmony and we will be working hard to put on a great performance by your local Chorus on the Saturday evening.

I took the reins as MD in July last year and was immediately struck by how good the overall sound of the Chorus was and I’ve since been very impressed with their singing and commitment to learning in their own time. We do hope to make an impression at the Pan Pacific Convention one way or another and to show we are still as vibrant as ever and still on the map. It is worth noting that England had their worst days on tour in those first few days of the Brisbane test.

The Canberra Chordsmen

CONFIDENCE
RETURNS TO THE
BRISBANE RIVER
CITY CLIPPERS

There would not be many Australians currently living in our beautiful Southern Land who at this time in our nation’s history would have the courage to throw “abuse” at any permanent residents or visitors to our country from Mother England. The recent, unfortunate but excellent performance by the cricketers from the Old Series, has at last quietened the time-honoured tradition of Aussie sports’ followers of poking fun at “the Poms”. Over the past two decades, the Poms have provided many opportunities for Aussie fans to throw banter and even abuse at their pathetic efforts to challenge Australia’s “right to rule” in the world of cricket.

All that has changed! In the recent series, the Aussie spectators were silenced at all Ashes venues by the “Barmy Army”, who belted out their tuneless nonsense for hours on end. Only the River City Clippers from Brisbane stood up to the “Army’s onslaught”.

Radio 4BC organised the Clippers to be at the gate for the first and second days of the first Test in Brisbane to “Challenge the Army” by singing like songs back at Army supporters as they made their way through the gates. In the traditional Barbershop style of beautifully balanced harmony, the Clippers gave the Barmy Army a thorough hiding as they approached the turnstiles. It is worth noting that England had their worst days on tour in those first few days of the Brisbane test.

Once a Yorkshireman, (now a full blood Aussie), John Shelton, giving the “Barmy Army General” a hard time at the First Test at the Gabba in Brisbane.

Some critics may say it was lucky timing and that the Clippers may not have been so effective in Sydney where the Aussies stumbled to their final bumbling loss. The Clippers prefer to believe that to ensure victory, the Australian Cricket Board will need to take the Chorus on tour to all venues when the next Ashes series takes place in Australia.

One of the twelve ditties in the Clippers repertoire for the First Test in Brisbane is printed below. (Sung to tune of “It’s a Long Way to Tipperary”)

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 your Royal Highness, goodbye all your heirs, It’s a long way to come to lose the Ashes, Tell someone Who Cares!

Watch out for the Clippers in 2011! With our new Director, Cathie Neil, in control at the reins, a victory over the Barmy Army under their belt and a “pending” contract coming from the Australian Cricket Board, who have no other ideas of how to beat the “Poms” but to take the Clippers on tour - it’s all about confidence at the Clippers for a great 2011! 2010 ended with two sing-outs for our good supporters, Bunnings and our annual Mater Hospital visit which was once again well received by patients and staff. The plan was to commence rehearsals on January 11th but the Brisbane Floods put an end to that for at least one week. The entire chorus looks forward with confidence to our weekend Camp in February.

Keith Druery
The Brisbane River City Clippers
Greetings from Perth!

Hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year

Vocal Evolution was certainly kept busy in December with numerous Christmas performances including a self-produced Christmas Concert 'Christmas Gold' at the Regal Theatre with Perth Harmony Chorus and quartets Alliance and BlackJaQ—all national barbershop champs.

December was so busy in fact that we decided to have our Christmas party in early January so that we could get everybody there. It was a lot of fun to get together to celebrate and look back over a great year for the chorus. It’s hard to believe that we will be travelling to Kansas City, USA to represent AAMBS at the BHS International in less than six months and then onto Brisbane for an eagerly anticipated Pan Pac Convention in Brisbane not long after that!

We will start the year officially with our annual ‘Kickstart’ weekend on 14–16 January, this year at Rottnest Island, a favourite holiday spot for Perth residents just off the coast. It’s an important weekend, as it will bring together our full Kansas City International Convention contingent together for the first time, including our brothers in barbershop from South Australia who will be joining us on stage in the USA.

The weekend will be very much focused on our contest songs and to this end we will have Cindy Hansen at the retreat to begin coaching the chorus on the choreography for our International contest set.

Regular rehearsals will begin again on Monday 17 January. We love getting visitors to rehearsals so if you happen to be in the area please be sure to visit us.

Lastly, just a reminder that our new CD, Like a Song, is available for purchase through our website (http://www.vocalevolution.com/cd.html). If you prefer a digital download, the album is also available on iTunes. Just do a search for Vocal Evolution. We are very proud of the CD and by purchasing it you will also be supporting us in our fundraising efforts in getting to the Kansas City International Convention.

From everyone at Vocal Evolution we wish all of you around the country a very happy and successful 2011.

Adrian Gimpel
VP Marketing—Vocal Evolution
www.vocalevolution.com

At our 13th Annual Dinner, members and partners celebrated our achievements in 2010 and the gift of Christmas with food, fellowship and song. The Club’s highpoint of the year was the successful and satisfying Voices in Harmony 2010 tour to Perth in May of the three South Australian choruses and the launching of our new CD, Sounds of Harmony, at the Welcome Dinner. With 12 Citizenship Ceremonies at the City of Stirling and more than 20 singing engagements in the 2nd half of the year, the Club has maintained a very full calendar. Our music team, Music Director Bruce Okely and Chorus Director Kim Sebbage, put in a magnificent effort with their patient and persistent encouragement for us to continually improve our singing.

This year was certainly one of our busiest and the lead up to Christmas was no exception. Among the audience when we sang at the Town of Cambridge seniors’ Christmas lunch on 2 December was Dr Rosanna Capolingua, immediate past president of the AMA and Chairwoman of Healthway. She wrote a substantial article in the Sunday Times, Perth’s Sunday newspaper, describing the luncheon, the entertainment and the value of such activities to the community. Her comments concerning the entertainment included the following.

“The Westcoast Chordsmen sang in harmony; white haired, white bearded gentlemen in white jackets with gold-spangled vests. They circled the room for a Christmas Carol sing-a-long: “Dashing through the bush in a rusty Holden ute, kelpie in the front, Esky in the boot...”

Pender Pedler reads the citations to Kevin Mitchell & Francis Tay

Club awards, the Chorusman of the Year and the President’s Cup, were presented at the Annual Dinner. The Chorusman of the Year is the ordinary club member who, in the opinion of the members, has contributed most to the life and health of the Club during the year. All members cast their vote at the conclusion of the November AGM. The President’s Cup is awarded to the runner-up in the election for the Chorusman of the Year. This year, Kevin Mitchell was presented with the Chorusman of the Year trophy and Francis Tay won the President’s Cup.

Certificates of Appreciation were also presented to Richard and Maureen Lambert for their many years of outstanding service to the Perth Barbershop Movement and to the club. Richard has now retired from the club. He was a foundation member of both this club from 1998 and Men in Harmony from 1985 to 1997, and served for many years on the Management Committee. Richard was also awarded an Honorary Associate Membership of the club.

Although we enjoyed our short break, we are keen to start rehearsals again on Friday 21 January. We need to be well-prepared for three Citizenship Ceremonies at the City of Stirling on Australia Day, Wednesday 26 January, ceremonies at 8 am, 10.30 am and 1.00 pm.
**Your Website**
Council, Regional and International Barbershop information and contact details as well as application forms, competition results, calendars and much, much more is available on the AAMBS Website—www.aambs.org.au

**Your Newsletter Articles**
- **Deadline:**
  5.30pm EDST on 15th day of each odd numbered month
- **Length:**
  Articles to be 150—500 words maximum and in Georgia 10 pitch font. All articles will be edited for spelling, grammar and length.
- **Photos:**
  Please remember to send photos as attachments - not embedded in your article

**Your Events**
Promote your Coming Events - send full details for inclusion in the AAMBS Calendar below and on the AAMBS Website

**COMING EVENTS**

### 2011

- **Jan 25-30** – BHS Midwinter Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada USA  
- **Feb 10**—Annual General Meetings - Men in Harmony  
- **Feb 10**—Annual General Meeting— Wollongong Mens Barbershop Chorus  
- **Feb 25-26-27** - AAMBS Council Face to Face Meeting, Brisbane Qld  
- **Apr 8-11**—SABS 3rd Annual Convention
- **San Pedro del Pinatar, Maricia, Spain**  
- **May** - Region Regional Qualifying Events
  - 14-15 - Sunshine Region  
  - 14-15 - Western Region  
  - 28-29 - Tasmanian Region  
  - 28 - Victorian Region  
  - 29 - Eastern Region  
- **Jun 27-Jul 4** – BHS International Convention, Kansas City MO USA  
- **Oct 7-9** – Irish Association of Barbershop Singers’ International Convention. Belfast, Ireland  
- **Sept 27**—Young Singers in Harmony Festival at St Laurence’s College, Brisbane Qld.

### 2012

- **Jul 1-8** – BHS International Convention, Portland, Oregon USA  
- **Oct 7-9** – Irish Association of Barbershop Singers’ International Convention. Dublin, Ireland

### 2013

- **Feb 23-24**—European Barbershop Convention
- **Harrogate, England**  
- **Jun 27-Jul 4** – BHS International Convention, Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
- **Oct 4-6** – Irish Association of Barbershop Singers’ International Convention. Galway, Ireland

### 2014

- **Jun 29-Jul 6** – BHS International Convention, Minneapolis MN USA

### 2016

- **Jul 3-10** – BHS International Convention, Nashville, TN USA  

**CHECK FOR EXTRA ITEMS ON THE AAMBS WEBSITE**