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### 2011 AAMBS/PANPAC CONVENTION 28 SEPT - 02 OCT

**Only 13 more sleeps!! - and**

Registrations are now in excess of 1000 !!

Our original preferred location for the massed sing has been granted. We have been given permission to relocate the mass sing out from Redcliff Place to the Queens Street Mall (QSM) on Thursday 29th September. This decision will allow us the use of the elevated stage on which the Lord Mayor can open proceedings. The MDs directing the polecats to be sung will have easy access to and from the stage. We will have the use of high quality sound equipment and an operating technician on hand. There will be no need for an inclement weather contingency plan as we can be undercover.

We have amended the above information on all promotional initiatives including informing the TV stations which have asked to be kept informed. The QSM is located very close to Redcliff Place so the relocation should cause no inconvenience to anyone contemplating attending. Registrations are now in excess of 1000.

There are still seats available on the *The Kookaburra Queen* Dinner Cruise should you wish to join the 200+ sailors already booked in. And there are also seats available for the *Young Singers Harmony Concert* on the same night.

The Chorus draw for the allocation of rehearsal rooms has been finalised. All choruses who have booked rehearsal rooms have been advised of their rehearsal times after taking into account each chorus’s position in the draw. We will endeavour to provide choruses with a time slot as near to the ones they originally requested.

Promotion of River Harmony has commenced in earnest on radio 4BC together with a very informative/colourful ad in the latest issue of Bmag which is distributed to 424,000 homes fortnightly. A further promotion will also appear in the next issue.

We have 4 very informative pull-up banners available for any Sunshine region chorus to display at any of their up-coming performances/concerts. Should these banners be required The Clippers will organise delivery/collection.

At this point I would, on behalf of the River Harmony committee, like to express our sincere appreciation to everyone who has assisted in the preparation of River Harmony, particular our friends from the Sweet Adelines. The Sweet Adeline’s have been fantastic with local S.A. chapters providing invaluable support in the areas of volunteers and the loaning of risers. We urge all AAMBS chapters to reciprocate if ever the S.A. organisation request similar support for its conventions.

John Shelton on behalf of the River Harmony Organising Committee
Faces you should know at Convention

John Shelton—2011 Convention Chairman

Mike Donnelly - AAMBS Chairman

Kevin White—AAMBS Secretary

Barry Joy—AAMBS Treasurer

Bill Purdue—Contest Administrator

Vicki Donnelly—Assistant Contest Administrator

Ian Mulholland—AAMBS Dean of Judges

Steve Griffin—AAMBS VP Youth Development

Dan Millgate—AAMBS VP Music

Richard Reeve—AAMBS VP Membership

Richard Gardam—AAMBS VP Conventions

Derek Churchill—AAMBS VP Marketing
What a way to kick off the Pan Pacific Convention !!

A Feast of Youth Singing

The Young Singers in Harmony one day festival will hit the ground running on Wednesday with a jam packed program of fantastic Youth singing. All those who attended the Hobart Convention will remember the fantastic performances in the Theatre Royal that got the Convention off to a great start - and Brisbane promises to be a bigger and better event.

- 9.00 am - Youth Chorus Competition (Free entry to all)
- 12 noon - Youth Quartet Competition (Free entry to all)
- 3.30 pm - Youth Workshop with Storm Front (For Youth delegates, coaches and organizers)
- 7.00 pm - Youth Concert featuring the competition medallists and Storm Front

Tickets available http://www.trybooking.com/KIW or take your chances at the door.

There will be a permanent outdoor stage set up with Quartet microphones where singers of all ages can join in the Festival atmosphere and entertain in the competition breaks or after the show. Quartets and Choruses - here’s a chance to warm up the vocals before the big event.

All events are at St Laurence’s College just a stone’s throw (1.4kl – 18 min Walk – Google) from the Brisbane Convention Centre

This is a must see event where the future of Barbershop singing is on display so don’t miss out!!

Directions on how to get from the Convention Centre to St Laurence’s College

Brisbane Queen St Mall now Smoke Free

Just in time to protect the hundreds of voices singing there during the Pan Pacs Convention Brisbane, Lord Mayor Graham Quirk declared the area smoke free from September 1st. The sun is shining and the weather balmy as the City awaits the over 1000 Registrants in just under two week’s time. The Kookaburra Queen river paddle boat trip on the Wednesday night has just a dozen or so tickets left with over 200 revellers on board. The South-Bank beach and gardens have been fully restored (bring your togs - swim suits in American/English).

Convention Chairman, John Shelton, has even managed to arrange a two for the price of one ride on the Southbank’s huge Ferris Wheel just opposite Rydges, the Convention Hotel. Early morning walkers along the Boardwalk will appreciate the Jacaranda Bowers reaching full bloom before perhaps taking a pre action packed Convention Agenda ride along the River on one of the City Cats for an overview of this attractive New World City. All for the price of a cup of coffee. Migrating birds are coming in from Mongolia in their thousands.

Too late for early birds but we still have rooms available at Rydges for late starters who may still decide to come. Visit the Queen Street Mall and breathe easy.

Derek Churchill
VP Marketing
YSIH Parade of Champions

Parade of Champions Show

Wednesday 28th 7pm

Featuring Pan Pacific Youth quartet and Chorus Medalists plus International Quartet Champions Storm Front

Tickets $10 adult $5 school age

Click for bookings
Here’s a story that should make you even more proud to be a barbershopper. Brenda, a member of A Cappella West Chorus (Sweet Adelines Australia) was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer, which required immediate treatment. But the specific treatment was not yet covered by the Medicare system, and she required $25,000 to fund it.

On hearing the news, Annette Connolly (ACW) and Bec Mutton (Director of Men in Harmony), swung in to action and initiated a benefit concert. Working with three weeks’ notice they called on the entire Perth barbershop family to help. Music was provided by AAMBS Men in Harmony, and Sweet Adelines Perth Harmony Chorus and A Cappella West, as well as Bec, and the SAA quartet, Ripple Effect.

The local group, The Seals, provided great bluegrass music, without charging. The City of Fremantle offered to provide the Town Hall as a venue, also for free. Ian Mulholland, of Vocal Evolution, provided all the audio equipment, and then personally ran the sound board. Virtually every barbershopper brought in enough supper to feed the audience twice over, and hundreds of raffle tickets were sold.

Everyone shared in the music, the fellowship, and emotion of the evening. With the PHC trip to Houston for SAI Internationals, and the AAMBS Convention only a few weeks away, all chorus members stopped to help. When the last chords rang, and the tears were wiped away, a sum of over $13,000 was available to help fund Brenda’s treatment.

It’s more than a hobby, and aren’t we lucky to be a part of it.

In Harmony
Mike Donnelly

The true meaning of Barbershop—support, fun and camaraderie

Well, not long to go now. Soon a happy band of enthusiastic conventioneers will descend on Brisbane for what is building to be a magnificent event with delegates from all around the Pacific - Hawai‘i, Japan, New Zealand and of course, the locals – you and me. There are even a few guests from as far away as Europe.

We’re coming by rail, road and air, possibly even by sea – even if that’s just on the river cats.

Please take the time to single out the members of the River Harmony organising committee and tell them individually what a great time you are having. They have put in a magnificent effort on your behalf over the last two years and are, at the point of exhaustion, ready, willing and able to welcome you to the Brisbane Convention Centre.

In particular, find the shy and retiring John Shelton and give him your personal thanks and congratulations.

Inevitably, someone’s convention will not go to plan. Please seek me out to tell me what happened or didn’t happen. We might not be able to do anything to fix the problem this time but we want to avoid a similar problem next time.

I am most anxious that your opinion be heard and taken into account for future events.

In fact, the best time to talk about conventions and what you want or expect is while this one is still going on and things are at the top of your mind. Don’t be afraid to give me the benefit of your ideas and imagination either personally or at the Convention Forum.

If you see me around the place any time make sure that you make yourself known, tell me where you’re from and say “Hi”. That’s the best part of convention. Meeting new and old friends and having a sing with them.

River Harmony Convention – where too much barbershop is barely enough.

I hope you have set some goals for your convention experience and that you will meet or even exceed them.

Reminder

All those quartets and choruses holding a perpetual trophy are reminded to bring the award with them to be handed on to the next winner.
As barbershoppers, we are never alone in the world. A lot of you may not realise that the Australian Association of Mens Barbershop Singers is only a small part of the worldwide barbershop movement.

The Barbershop Harmony Society, which is based in North America, is the largest all male a-capella singing organisation in the world. Every year the society hosts an “International” convention which features all of the best quartets and choruses from around the world. It forms the basis of our barbershop brotherhood and last year I had the privilege of living in the United States of America and attending the convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. During the year, as well as enjoying some amazing singing and seeing many beautiful sights, I was introduced to the wonderful fraternity that is barbershop.

When I first arrived in Los Angeles, I knew nobody. The only contact I had had with anyone in the country prior to my arrival was a short e-mail conversation with well known barbershop baritone Patrick Claypool (OC Times – 2009 International Quartet Gold medallist quartet). In my initial e-mail I had rather timidly asked whether it would be possible for me to audition for the Westminster chorus. I was well aware of the outstanding reputation that the chorus had both in the barbershop arena and more widely in the choral singing world. To be a part of the chorus would be truly life-changing.

The response I received was like nothing I could have expected. He appeared positively excited that I had made the decision to travel to United States to sing barbershop for a year. Such is the nature of the genre as a whole – it’s all inclusive. Passion and love for the art form pervades and conquers all else.

So, after exchanging a few e-mails with Patrick, I hopped on a flight from Hobart to Sydney and then on to Los Angeles – a city of many millions which I knew little about. My initial nerves were soon quashed. I rented a car from LAX airport and drove straight to Venice, California, where I picked up a number of young guys from the chorus. We all became instant friends. From there, we drove 60 miles south to Costa Mesa, California, where I attended a full weekend long retreat with 55 other young men whose passion for barbershop is extreme. I felt at home right away and never looked back.

I had the great honour to sing positions on stage, we were completely quiet. Nobody dared say a word lest they interrupt another’s concentration. The audience was chanting for us from behind the curtain.

I’ll never forget the applause and the lights as the curtains opened. The roar of the audience drowned my thoughts out. The pitch was blown and we began to sing. I don’t think I have ever sung better in my entire life. Months and months of preparation for ten minutes of sheer terror. Well worth it, I feel.

The moment the curtain closed and the stage lights went off the director of the chorus, Justin Miller, punched the air with great vigour. Obviously we had done something right.

As Barbershoppers we are never alone in the world

After competing on the International stage I made the decision to road-trip around the United States, meeting as many barbershoppers along the way as I could. I ended up visiting 30 of the 50 states, met hundreds of wonderful people and attended three district barbershop conventions. Everywhere I went I made lifelong friends and experienced the joy and power of performing and community. I will never forget the amazing experiences that I had and, most of all, the amazing people that I had the fortune to associate with.

Hopefully by realising that there is a greater society out there, many of you will explore barbershop more fully as a genre. I recommend visiting the Barbershop Harmony Society’s website (www.barbershop.org) and seeing that there is much, much more to barbershop than just singing. Many of the people who I met and sang with in the USA treat barbershop as a lifestyle. The society becomes their extended family and they are forever surrounded by friends and harmony.

There are also a number of other societies based in different countries around the world. The newest inclusion to the list of affiliated societies is the Spanish Association of Barbershop Singers. There are also societies from New Zealand, Japan, Sweden, Britain, Germany, Holland, Finland and even a society based in the southern part of Africa.

So please, next time you think about barbershop, remember that is a global art form. Your brothers are not just here in Australia. They exist worldwide and they are out there waiting to sing a polecat or two with you!

Tim Carolan
Hobart Men’s Chorus

Music Quote No 1

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

Aldous Huxley
Our AAMBS Gold Medal Champs

Well, Vocal Evolution’s tenure as the 2009 AAMBS Champion Chorus is almost at an end, and what a fantastic two years it has been!

We have had the chance to do many things during our ‘reign’, not the least of which was the supreme honour of representing all of you at the Barbershop Harmony Society’s International Convention in Kansas City, Missouri.

As many of you would know, Vocal Evolution travelled to the United States in July, along with several of the boys from Adelaide’s Festival Statesmen Youth Chorus. First stop was Denver, Colorado where we had the pleasure of being coached by the world-renowned Cindy Hansen. We then shared a rehearsal with International Bronze Medallist chorus, the Sound of the Rockies. The SoR boys really made us feel very welcome and after we sang for each other and shared Tim Tams, we made our way up into the Rocky Mountains for our high-altitude training retreat. It was the first time that many of our sand-groping chorus members had ever seen snow, and hours of entertainment ensued when they realised snow was not only cold and wet, but hard, too!

Singing our competition set on the top of the Rocky Mountains National Park was a real “high”light for us. At 12,183 feet, it was about 12,180 feet higher above sea level than most of us are used to living in Perth, and we were struggling to breathe, let alone sing. But, a fantastic crowd gathered in the beautiful Alpine surroundings and as we sang “Waltzing Matilda” with snow-capped mountain peaks in the background, ice and snow all around us and an MD struggling to overcome his snowball-fight-related injuries, we learned all about how to make the best use of breath control.

We spent the next few days in Estes Park with Eddie Martinez, whose expert coaching always helps buoy the chorus along to new levels of competence. We were lucky to sing at one of USA’s best summer camps, Cheley Camp, in their Sunday morning inspirational gathering; what a treat to perform in such a stunning location. We also put on an evening concert for our fellow campers at the YMCA Camp where we were staying – ‘singing for our supper’, so to speak. We had expected a few people would come along and see what was happening, but it eventuated that everyone in town turned up to the show – many hundreds of people were there to see the chorus and quartets strut their stuff, to many standing ovations.

So, having successfully avoided attacks from bears, mountain lions and tiny but ferocious squirrels, we headed to Kansas City next and joined the many, many thousands of barbershoppers from all over the world for a celebration of all things barbershop. A few of our members had the opportunity to shadow judge some of the competition sessions. Not only did it give them a chance to hone their judging skills against the experience of the world’s best, but what better place to watch an International Contest than from the front row?!!

Vocal Evolution was honoured to perform at the World Harmony Jamboree Show – a concert where performers are asked to present something unique to their country. Again, our chorus and quartets received standing ovations for our Aussie songs and we watched on as our brothers from across the ditch in New Zealand enthralled the huge audience with powerful performances of their Maori heritage material.

We had great pride in cheering on our resident Australian Champion quartet, Alliance, who performed amazingly in the quartet contest and received a new Australian Record high score! The guys really did us proud.

We then moved on to the main reason we were here: the International Chorus Competition. After rising early and sharing breakfast together, we put on our costumes and makeup and headed to the venue. Although about half the chorus had picked up a very nasty cold (although they assure us it wasn’t playing-in-the-snow-related...) we all fronted up to perform first in the contest. Nobody would miss the chance to sing on that stage! (For many of our newer guys, this was their first contest altogether, so it was a real initiation by fire for them too). To a rousing rendition of “Aussie, Aussie, Oi, Oi, Oi”, the curtain went up and we sang our hearts out.

We then took the opportunity to watch the rest of the choruses compete and learned everything we could from their performances. When they announced the places, and that Vocal Evolution had scored Australia’s first-ever A-level score (81%) we were ecstatic! We are so proud to have done such a great job representing Australia and couldn’t have done it without the support and encouragement of AAMBS, our partners and friends and all you Aussie barbershoppers across this wide brown land. We humbly thank all of you who sent us messages, who came to our shows, who cheered us on from their lounge rooms – we were absolutely thrilled to perform at our highest level yet.

We’d love to send a big thanks to our coaches Eddie and Cindy for all of the wonderful moments we have shared, and of course, a huge thanks to our families for making it all possible.

Cont’d......
Since the International Convention, Vocal Evolution has been preparing for the next challenge ahead: defending the gold medal in Brisbane.

With so many worthy groups in Australia it is certainly a big task, so we have been refining our singing techniques, perfecting our choreography and coming up with what we hope is our biggest and best performance yet! We’ll get to test it out at our Family & Friends Farewell Concert shortly, so we are excited about that.

As part of this preparation we have been busily producing our latest CD – a Christmas CD – entitled “Christmas”. Yes, we sing better than we come up with CD names. Hot off the presses just in time for Brisbane, we hope to share our love of the festive spirit with as many of you as possible, so come and find our store at Convention and grab yourself a copy.

We look forward to catching up with you all in Brisbane!

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As you will read elsewhere in this issue, Alliance had an awesome time representing AAMBS in Kansas City with our chorus, Vocal Evolution.

We were also thrilled when our quartet achieved a personal best score, and the feedback and encouragement we received for our performances was fantastic. We finished 35th in the world, a result of which we are very proud, especially with both Richard and Adrian laid low by the flu in the days leading up to the contest. Knowing that there were so many supporters, family and friends cheering us on meant a lot to us, and we thank you all for your well wishes, your kind words and your friendship.

Like Vocal Evolution, Alliance has recently been busy in the recording studio, producing our second CD, Circle Of Life. Along with many of our favourite tracks, we have included a couple of songs with Vocal Evolution and Australian Champion Sweet Adelines quartet, BlackJaQ. Ready just in time for the upcoming Convention, the CD sells for $20 and is also available via our website, www.alliancequartet.com.

We too look forward to catching up with you all in Brisbane. Come and find us, buy a CD, and have a sing with us – after all, singing with some mates is what a Convention is all about! Of course, you don’t have to buy a CD, but we don’t have to sing with you either! Seriously, though, we’d love to sing with you!
Recruit & Retain—some ideas for us all

As a relatively young chorus (formed in early 2008), High Altitude Harmony (HAH) has enjoyed a regular and strong growth in membership over the last three and a half years. There are currently 50 men on the HAH books.

I’m quite proud to be the current VP Music for HAH and believe that much of what has been achieved by our chorus is due to our highly energetic and forward-thinking MD, Mike Ludwig. Mike’s philosophy and drive is instilled into a motivated and dedicated Music Team and Executive, who can also be congratulated for contributing to our membership success.

We don’t believe that we have reinvented the wheel or discovered previously unknown ways of growing and keeping members, but do believe that our success is based on two things we do reasonably well:

**Recruitment:**

a. word of mouth promotion from current members who will often bring new men to chorus.

b. singing frequently in public via many charity events, paid gigs, our highly successful yearly Singing Restaurant, a healthy relationship with a local radio station, and the odd sausage sizzle. We constantly plug the need for new men who can “hold a tune” at these events. Add to that at least one accomplished quartet who can further spread the word at other gigs.

c. conducting at least two New Faces nights per year.

**Retention – focusing on:**

a. a buddy support system for potential, new and existing members (as well as one member nominated as the chorus “guardian angel”, keeping in contact with members who are encountering life’s challenges from time to time)

b. initial learning expectations which are supported by quality learning materials and 1:1 coaching

c. celebrating the official membership entry of each new man

d. maintaining close follow-up learning support for new men once they have joined chorus (we’re OK at this but can improve at this point)

We have in place a number of strategies to help sustain and maintain membership across the chorus. None of these are rocket science but we realize that it is important to watch how each strategy progresses and never assume that once in place it will stay relevant to the needs of the chorus. Strategies include:

a. Developing and following a simple chorus philosophy that is made known to every man, and ensuring that he engages this philosophy constantly.

b. Identifying and utilizing the key people needed to ensure musical and operational leadership. We currently have a Music Team comprising an MD, Asst. MD, Section Leaders, Asst. Section Leaders and a Visual Team, without which it is difficult to generate a program that offers variety and interest.

c. Keeping the weekly rehearsal program varied and interesting by including things such as YouTube segments, teaching a new tag, polecat revision, rotational quartet singing, scratch quartet singing, constructively reviewing AAMBS resources (e.g. previous convention DVDs), and, most importantly, section rehearsal sessions that focus on tuning chords and building resonant unit sound rather than learning notes

d. Ensuring that the chorus can access quality learning materials including accurate and legal sheet music and audio tracks

e. Regularly adding new and achievable repertoire that builds the performance capability of the chorus

f. Not overloading the performance calendar which includes a range of activities, a vital part of the men having a clear learning focus.

g. Developing a song qualification process that endeavours to keep lifting

h. Communicating regularly with the chorus via a weekly newsletter that focuses on the camaraderie/pastoral care aspects, reviewing last week’s rehearsal, a heads-up on next week’s work songs etc.

i. Engaging regular quality external coaching – a much lauded but under-utilised activity.

As mentioned earlier, none of this is ground-breaking stuff, but if implemented, practiced with passion, and regularly reviewed by a quality Music team and dedicated Executive, you too can look forward to “swelling the ranks” of your chorus!

Mike Wells
VP Music, High Altitude Harmony, Toowoomba

*In Harmony Issue 125— September-October 2011*
In September, AAMBS Council approved an initiative for a PR professional to roll out a national promotional campaign to attract new members to barbershop. The campaign was triggered by Benchmark’s wonderful achievements on Australia’s Got Talent and to capitalise on this "once in a lifetime" exposure. We want to get the message out that "if you liked what you saw on AGT, then there is a barbershop chorus 'just around the corner' that you can visit."

PR professional Heather Travers, from Perth, has put together a press release that she will send to news outlets nationally. The difference with this campaign to one that we might run by ourselves in AAMBS is that Heather has the networks, knows who to send the release to as well as who to contact to follow-up and maximise the chances of the news item being picked up.

Ideally, local media outlets will pick up the story and interview either a representative from a local chorus, or me as AAMBS Membership VP. This is how the story can include specifics and achievements of your chorus... the local angle.

This campaign targets the increased leverage of news items, which generate five times the exposure received from advertising.

This is one example of the way your AAMBS' Council is working hard on your behalf to develop Barbershop in Australia.

I also commend to you the previous article on Page 7 from Mike Wells of High Altitude Harmony in Toowoomba.

One of my priorities as Membership VP is not to "reinvent the wheel" but to help Barbershoppers around the country share their experiences. While each chorus is unique, we also face overwhelmingly similar challenges and opportunities. We can fast-track development by learning from each other what works and what doesn’t work and by thinking about how that might be relevant for us locally.

Mike’s article is an outstanding example of a chorus that has had great success in their membership efforts. If you have feedback on Mike’s article, we’d love to hear from you.

See you in Brisbane!

Richard Reeve
AAMBS VP Membership

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**Barbershop Traits (obviously not compiled by a Baritone)**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Musical Director</th>
<th>Leaps tall buildings in a single bound.</th>
<th>Is more powerful than a locomotive</th>
<th>Is faster than a speeding bullet.</th>
<th>Walks on water.</th>
<th>Gives policy to God</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assist MD</td>
<td>Leaps short buildings in a single bound.</td>
<td>Is more powerful than a small locomotive engine.</td>
<td>Is just as fast as a speeding bullet</td>
<td>Walks on water if sea is calm.</td>
<td>Talks with God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Leaps short buildings with a running start and favourable winds</td>
<td>Is almost as powerful as a pretty small locomotive engine</td>
<td>Is almost as fast as a speeding bullet</td>
<td>Walks on water in an indoor swimming pool</td>
<td>Talks with God if special request is approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Barely clears a small house</td>
<td>Loses tug-of-war with locomotive</td>
<td>Can fire a speeding bullet</td>
<td>Swims well</td>
<td>Is occasionally addressed by God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass</td>
<td>Makes marks on wall when trying to clear a hut</td>
<td>Is run over by locomotives</td>
<td>Can sometimes handle a gun without inflicting self-injury</td>
<td>Dog-paddles</td>
<td>Talks to animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baritone</td>
<td>Runs into buildings</td>
<td>Recognizes locomotives two times out of three, and says &quot;Look at the choo-choo!&quot;</td>
<td>Wets self with water pistol</td>
<td>Can stay afloat with a life jacket but prefers to play in mud puddles</td>
<td>Talks to walls, argues and loses arguments with self</td>
</tr>
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</table>
We have all been practicing hard, spending long hours singing the same songs over and over again in an effort to make them better each time, and perhaps now is an appropriate time to reflect on those people who put in a huge effort to help us most in our endeavour to be the best we can be; our leaders, our Musical Directors. Many of these folks put in countless hours of effort and energy in helping us to achieve a high level of musical performance, but how often do we stop to recognise their work?

We all need to recognise that the Musical Director is pretty much solely responsible for the success or failure of a chorus. A lack of skill on the part of the Director will result in a poor musical performance, less enjoyment for the membership, below average audience reaction, and as a result, declining membership. Conversely, a talented and skilled Director will help attract new members, retain current members, and promote the barbershop ‘brand’ by helping to preserve and encourage good barbershop singing in Australia.

Being a successful chorus director takes natural talent, leadership skills, and musical knowledge. Singers must be able to read the majority of basic gestures a Director executes including beat patterns, cut-offs, dynamics, tempo, phrasing and interpretation, and style and intensity levels.

So, if you truly want to show your MD a sign of your appreciation, there are a few simple things you can do. Firstly, let them lead you. Watch your MD, listen to them, follow their direction, and try your hardest to give them what they are asking for! It is much more rewarding to direct a responsive, focussed chorus than a chorus that is lacking energy, motivation and concentrations.

Secondly, find out what you can do for your MD. The instinctive talent for directing and use of gestures demands special abilities and techniques within the personality of the MD. When combined with proper training, dedication and preparedness can set an outstanding director apart from the average. Maybe your MD would like more support from the chorus leadership, or more musically, to learn how they can improve their own directing skills and improve the level of singing and performing in their choruses, to develop strong leadership, and to learn how to solve problems and concerns that are not unique to just their choruses.

My next assignment as AAMBS VP Music is to design and promote some new training and educational opportunities for your MD. In March next year, AAMBS will be running a great program for chorus directors, offering individualised training to strengthen their ability to face challenges. AAMBS will also offer a program where a trainer comes to your chorus on your meeting night, observes the interaction between the chorus and the MD, and focuses on providing support with leadership skills, rehearsal planning, developing a musical team and the ensuring general health and wellbeing of your director and chorus.

Finally, one of the most rewarding things you could do for your MD is to simply say ‘thanks!’ Showing your director simple appreciation for all of their hard work goes a very long way to giving them the drive to keep going. Before you go onto the stage in Brisbane, give your MD a pat on the back, thank them, and show them that they aren’t just “a guy going for a walk”, but that you support them and that you’ll follow them. And then, most importantly, have fun! I hope each and every one of you enjoys your convention experience and I look forward to catching up with you soon.

**Judging School**

The AAMBS/NZABS Guild of Judges will once again be holding a specialised school for all judges in the couple of days before the Brisbane Convention. A cadre of returning judges will be joined by new candidates from AAMBS and NZABS for this intensive three-day school that sets the norms, helps our AAMBS/NZABS judge in the same fashion as our BHS counterparts, ensures that all judges score on the same basis, and ultimately helps them help competitors to deliver their best possible performances.

**Harmony College**

Delegates to Harmony College will leave Brisbane following the River Harmony Farewell Lunch and travel to Mapleton for three days of education and fun, starting on Sunday evening 2nd October and finishing after lunch on Wednesday 5th October.

This not-to-be-missed event looks like being the Best Harmony College ever, with top-shelf International educators and sessions catering for every level of Barbershopper - from the raw beginner to the most highly experienced performer.

The venue at Mapleton is beautiful and family and friends are very welcome to come to the final Saturday night concert to experience the results of the many workshops available for delegates to choose from experienced overseas teachers. Details on how to order your souvenir Harmony College shirt have been passed on to delegates.

Dan Millgate
VP Music
Greetings from Penrith Harmony

This is a response to the In Harmony editorial request to hear from those choruses we hardly ever hear from!

The Penrith City Harmony Chorus has been performing for over twenty years and is a regular competitor at the Conventions.

We are only a small chorus of thirteen members, including our Music Director, Peter Fragar. Over the last couple of years we have been trying to rebuild following the retirement of some stalwart members. We also went through the process of re-auditioning in an attempt to lift our standards, but this unfortunately led to the loss of other singers. Although well intentioned, it certainly had a painful side. Nevertheless, we are enthused and well drilled, and now looking to hopefully lift our profile at Convention time.

We've had a number of recent singouts including a performance at the Blackheath Festival of Choirs which ran over the whole weekend in front of big and appreciative audiences. As well as a number of the old standards, our repertoire included a Beach Boys medley and the Billy Joel song, ‘The Longest Time’.

We now have a website www.penrithharmony.com. You might want to add to our hits!

Paul Ryan
Secretary

(Ed note—thank you Penrith, it is great to know that someone reads the newsletter and to get a response)

Our Host Club for River Harmony very much hard at work

News from The Brisbane River City Clippers is all about preparations for the fast approaching River Harmony. The Clippers are determined to ensure that all Barbershoppers and their supporters who make the journey to our great city have an experience they will not forget. The great Australian tradition of getting challenging jobs done via the contributions of volunteers has come to the forefront again as the Clippers, their spouses (Ed. Should the plural of Spouse be Spice?) and friends take on the numerous tasks involved behind the scenes to ensure all our visitors are looked after in the best possible way.

With our Director, Cathie Neil in charge of operations and our choreography expert Lynne Denny at her side, the chorus has done a lot of work focussed on lifting its performance standard. Recently the chorus undertook a full day rehearsal at St Laurence’s College, South Brisbane – a day of hard work and consolidation of effort put in over the past twelve months. St Laurence’s College, because of its close proximity to the Brisbane Convention Centre, has kindly offered their facilities as a chorus rehearsal venue throughout the Convention. The Clippers are deeply grateful to the College for their support in this way. Such is the position and elevation of the College there is little doubt that our visitors who make the journey to the College while they are in Brisbane will be amazed at the view of Brisbane city and beyond – It is possibly the best in town!

In an effort to alert the Brisbane public to the fast approaching Convention a group of twenty Clippers have been performing at various venues around the city to promote the event, with an emphasis on the Concert of Champions to be staged at the Convention Centre on Saturday night October 1. Because of the reduced numbers available to perform at varying times of the day, the group of volunteers were tagged The Little Clippers – a tag which had nothing to do with the age, waistlines or height of those involved!

The Little Clipper in action at Brookside Shopping Centre

Keith Drury
For the Brisbane River City Clippers

Novatones entertain Maitland

On a cold but sunny day in August NOVATONES performed for the third year running at the Maitland Aroma Coffee, Chocolate and Fine Food Festival.

We were all, of course, very annoyed to find that we had to share our warm up room with female models changing for a fashion parade. Most of us showed tremendous restraint (some fairly ordinary restraint), especially when they all had to squeeze past us to their first appearance on the catwalk, clearly delighted as our masculine music filled the room. Our discipline paid off as we hit the ground running and wowed our first gathering of curious onlookers from the word go.
Novatones entertain Maitland (cont’d)

NOVATONES roaming performances are fast becoming a feature at the annual Maitland Festival and I’m sure I recognised some familiar faces in the audiences as we moved from place to place. Our audiences at each site where we performed, gathered round with anticipation and stayed; in fact swelled, till we finished. A far cry from our first appearance there in 2009 with only 6 songs in our repertoire and little more than enthusiasm to carry the day.

We are also becoming outdoor specialists, learning how to compete with duelling rock bands, roaming clowns with their squeaky whistles, jazz ensembles, screaming kids, the festival announcer and a town crier. Our resident quartet, Broadway, stepped forward at each stop and were snapped up by Radio Station 2NUR for a song, which they broadcast live. The announcer and his producer were wide eyed and clearly delighted as they sang The Sentimental Gentleman from Georgia. They performed again at the festival, the next day (without the chorus), but this time were able to use one of the two stages and sound systems provided.

Onward now to Bunnings Glendale to perform at their Fathers’ Day promotion, followed by The Thornton Spring Fair and then to the Pan Pacs and what an occasion for our Chorus’s very first Convention!

Mike Danks
Secretary

A truly inspiring story from one of our members

Barbershop Singing and Asperger’s syndrome

My world changed, significantly, in March of 2007. I joined Bayside Harmony in Cleveland, Queensland and became a member of a band of brothers dedicated to making the world a better place through singing. You see up to this point I had almost no social interaction with people outside my family. I’m Bazz, I’m 69 and I have Asperger’s.

Asperger’s Syndrome (AS) is a disorder on the Autism Spectrum and it affects many more people than most would suspect. As a high functioning Aspie there has been little negative impact in my working life, in fact, some of the AS traits have proven to be very beneficial in the business world. However, there is enormous effect on my relationship and social skills. I cannot make friends, am withdrawn, socially gauche and am sociophobic. I think differently to neurotypical people, am unable to be empathic and just cannot see the world from another person’s perspective. There is no cure, no treatment to modify my behaviours, only finding ways to make the effects of any adverse behaviours less impacting.

Bayside Harmony is a very safe place for me. All the members accept me for whom I am, without judging me. This aspect of the social interaction is an extremely important element for me. In fact, my psychologist acknowledges the importance of the chorus, and how it has come to play a major part, in my socialisation.

Every member is passionate about barbershop singing. It is infectious and makes Tuesday night something to look forward to with relish. Eager anticipation of a social event is anathema to Aspies. Just shows how far I’ve come. I have been able to make barbershop singing one of my little obsessions.

My Asperger’s does have an effect on the way in which I function in the chorus. I am still not able to “put myself out there” so do not sing in quartets, yet. But slowly, slowly I’m edging there. Singouts are always difficult but the “boys” take good care of me. I don’t know that they fully realise the ways in which they help me. It just comes naturally to them. I am comfortable in the body of the chorus and when there feel at ease. It is as close to “normalisation” that I get.

One aspect of AS that must be frustrating to our MD is that I do not read facial expressions nor do I “pick up social cues”. So when there is a direction to smile, or give expression to the lyrics, or to open up the face or raise the eyebrows it is really challenging because I have to do a learned, not a natural, response. But Nick, like all the other guys, is patient and very helpful.

Bayside Harmony is a small chorus and seems to suit my needs extremely well. I do not know if I would have the same interaction in a larger chorus. The members of Bayside all have a direct contact with me which I think may not be there in a larger chorus. Not quite so intimate & personal. When we intermingle at the Regionals & other competitions I am very ill at ease but Bayside Harmony looks after me and (to my way of thinking) nurtures and protects me.

So, if you hear (or know) of any adult men with Asperger’s please encourage them to join a chorus. It will positively change their life, cite me as an example. Feel free to contact me through Bayside Harmony and I am more than happy to talk with anyone and explain how they might benefit enormously from barbershop singing.

Barry O’Connor
Greetings to our barbershopping friends across Australia. By the time this article is published another great convention will be upon us and we’ll be catching up with old friends and making a whole heap of new ones.

As usual the boys from HAH have been very busy in the lead up to Pan Pacs with plenty of focused rehearsals and a wonderful weekend camp at Lake Perseverance* with our good friends and highly valued coaches Jen & Andrew Howson.

The highlight in August was the staging of our 4th Singing Restaurant in Toowoomba with 260 patrons wined, dined and entertained in a sparkling evening that featured a host of new repertoire from the chorus. The audience were enthralled with our Australiana and Gospel sets and our up tempo toe-tappers really brought the house down. Our quartets Left Field, Uncalled For and Good Fourtunes provided great packages as did special guest quartet ESCAPE.

It gave us real boost to hear so many positive comments from the audience especially from those folk who attend every year and reckon we have really ramped it up another notch.

Post Pan Pacs we will be straight back into a drive for new members and we’ll combine this with reviewing and increasing our Christmas repertoire in readiness for the festive season gigs. Now that we have achieved a somewhat balanced repertoire across gospel, ballad, up tempo, Australiana and contemporary songs, one of our goals for 2012 is to introduce more crowd pleasing toe-tappers from the 50’s and 60’s.

2011 has been difficult for HAH but I believe we have emerged a better and even closer knit chorus for the challenges we have overcome. From floods earlier in the year to a range of serious health/personal issues for individuals and their partners and the part-time involvement of an MD 1300km away in Townsville, HAH continues to grow and consolidate. With the aid of a very committed Executive led by Peter Devey, a passionate Music Team led by Mike Wells and a simply outstanding and loving Ladies Support Team, we are well placed to launch into a couple of exciting projects in 2012.

In harmony, Mike Ludwig - MD

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**Club News (cont’d)**

**Fine Dining with High Altitude Harmony**

A traditional HAH welcome to new member Richard Mahler highlighted by presenting him with his HAH performance and rehearsal gear (Jacket, shirt, shoes) from HAH Bass Section Leader, Reeve Waugh.

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**A heartfelt plea from your hard working National Secretary & Newsletter Editor**

1. We really need you to keep us up to date with any changes to your Executive and members’ contact details. We are still amazed at how often emails bounce back because you haven’t taken a moment to update the contact details for your members and Executive Officers. As you will appreciate this means that some Clubs and members miss out on important information.

2. **PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE** – include your Club / Quartet name in the Subject line of your emails. It is very difficult and time consuming when we want to reply to you (and then file your correspondence in the right file) if the subject line is vague or, in some cases, does not reflect the content of your email. This mainly happens when we send you an email and you use the Reply function to send an email to us which has nothing to do with the original subject heading.

So gentlemen and ladies, like all of you, we are busy volunteers, please remember that whatever you can do to make life easier for us is really appreciated.

Yours, hopefully,

Kevin & Nerida White

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**Music Quote No 2**

I think music in itself is healing. It’s an explosive expression of humanity something we’re all touched by. No matter what culture we’re from, everyone loves music.

Billy Joel

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*Ed: Is the name of the venue an indication of their dedication?
Music Director Wanted

After six years as the Music Director, Rod Stow has decided he wants to spend more time singing and less time directing. Therefore, the Geelong (Bay City) Conchords are looking for a new Music Director for 2012, to take over the great work Rod has done.

Barbershop experience would be an advantage but not essential. While this is a voluntary position, a modest annuity of $1000 will be paid to the successful applicant.

More information may be obtained from, or applications sent to:

Bert Moritz
Secretary
Geelong (Bay City) Conchords
40 Goggin Road, Lethbridge Vic 3332
or email to— bm014527@bigpond.net.au

Making life easier for you

If it is easier for you to pay your Registration, Membership Fees and Invoices by Direct Debit this is now possible through the AAMBS Bank Account:

Account name: AAMBS Inc
Bank: Westpac
BSB: 032 281
Account No: 13 0739

Please make sure that you indicate what the payment is for at the time of payment, and email a copy of your receipt to secretary@aambs.org. As soon as your deposit appears on the AAMBS Bank Statement your account will be credited.

You will still need to send completed Club / Quartet Registration Application forms and updated membership lists to

Secretary
AAMBS Inc.
P O Box 6026
West Gosford NSW 2250

We hope this makes life easier for you all.

Your big chance to sing at Carnegie Hall!!

For those of you who have “a performance at Carnegie Hall” on your bucket list, getting to perform at Carnegie Hall may be as easy as the old adage: Practice, Practice, Practice!

Who: Calling all male barbershoppers, age 30 and under
Where: Carnegie Hall - Stern Auditorium (the main hall) - 57th St. & 7th Ave. New York City
When: Monday, December 26, 2011 - all-day rehearsal 7:30pm Showtime

What: Carnegie Hall will be producing a USA-Japan Goodwill Concert (free admission) which will feature a Youth Barbershop Chorus comprised of singers from all over the US and Canada, under the direction of Joe Cerutti (Alexandria Harmonizers) with Prestige (2011 International Collegiate Quartet Champions) and Tim Waurick (Vocal Spectrum - 2006 International Quartet Champions) and many other special guests. The concert will also feature a joint performance with the youth chorus and a 3-time gold medal 100-piece youth orchestra from Japan.

Why: Why not?!

In addition to performing on one of the most renowned stages in the world, Carnegie Hall will be using this event as a fundraiser for organizations that directly help people affected by the earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan. Even though admission is free, the event will be open to donations. (When the Alexandria Harmonizers performed there in May for a similar event, the event raised $200,000 for the Japan relief effort.)

How:

Bring your collegiate quartet or youth chorus, in part or full. Individual singers are also welcome! Participants will prepare 5-6 songs (one of which will be a back up to Tim Waurick singing a solo), via learning tracks by Tim Waurick and choreography by Cindy Hansen Ellis. The chorus will be expected to arrive NYC the morning of the 26th, rehearse all day, and perform that night. Arrangements for hotel, food, and bussing will be arranged for a nominal fee. Participants will have to be able to learn songs and choreography without formal rehearsals, and will be tested in octets upon arrival in NYC.

For more information please contact

Joe Cerutti at joe.cerutti@gmail.com or call 703-401-7144

Make sure your state/chapter/district is represented!
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

Sept 25-27—AAMBS’ Judges’ School—
9 am Sun 25—5pm Tues 27, St Laurence’s College, 82 Stephens Road, South Brisbane Qld 4101 Australia Guild of Australasian Barbershop Judges - phone 0418 956 492 or email mulholand@roxresources.com.au

Sept 28—Young Singers in Harmony Festival & Concert at St Laurence’s College, Brisbane Qld.

Sept 28–Oct 2 - AAMBS 11th Annual Convention and Pan Pacific Convention, Brisbane Qld— Hosted by The Brisbane River City Clippers, followed by Harmony College Contact: info@panpac2011.org.au www.barbershopconvention.aambs.org.au

Oct 2-5—AAMBS Harmony College, Queensland Convention and Camping Centre, Mapleton Queensland.

Oct 7-9 – Irish Association of Barbershop Singers’ International Convention. Belfast, Ireland

2012

Mar 2–4 The BinG! Barbershop Music Festival Dortmund , Germany www.konzerthaus-dortmund.de

Mar 22-25 En Armonia 2012—Spanish Association of Barbershop Singers Convention, Malaga, Spain www.sabs.es/cm2/?page_id=1229

May 31-Jun 3—Cracovia Cantans—3rd International Krakow Choir Festival, Krakow Poland. www.krakowfestival.pl

Jul 1-8 – BHS International Convention, Portland, Oregon USA

Jul 14-22—2nd Krakow Singing Week, Krakow, Poland www.krakowsingingweek.pl

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

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

CHECK FOR EXTRA ITEMS ON THE AAMBS WEBSITE