Greetings, Fellow Barbershoppers,

And welcome to the 2011 AAMBS Annual General Meeting. It may be a cliché in AGM reports to say “these are exciting times”, but with the great events in Brisbane just behind us, and great initiatives just ahead of us growing like wildfire, ...... that statement couldn't be more true.

If the River Harmony Convention had been a concert it would have received a standing ovation. Every member of AAMBS owes a huge thank you to John Shelton and his team of volunteers for not hundreds, but thousands of hours of work to give us a world class Convention. It was preceded by a Judges School, vital to our progress in barbershopping, and a great Young Singers in Harmony event; and followed by an inspirational and educational Harmony College, organized and conducted by your hard-working AAMBS Council.

As I reflect on the final product of the Pan Pac Convention, and Harmony College, with all the fantastic musical performances, and the humour provided by the funniest quartet in the World, Storm Front, I am pleased that over 1000 delegates were immersed in this beautiful experience. But I also shake my head in disappointment when I realize that some of our fellow barbershoppers actually missed this pinnacle of our art form in Australia. The good news is that the next Convention, in Perth, is only 671 days away, and detailed planning is already underway to make it "bigger than Ben Hur." Please make a spot in your holiday planning for this barbershop happening. For the calendars of you baritones that's 9 October, 2013.

As AAMBS members you have been supported this past year by Kevin and Nerida White, doing all the Secretarial business, Barry Joy managing your funds, and your Vice Presidents; Steve Griffin, Youth; Derek Churchill, Marketing; Richard Gardam, Conventions; Richard Reeve, Membership; and Dan Millgate, Music. I want to extend a special thank you to Barry and Derek, as they retire from the Council. Barry for 6 years as Treasurer, insisting on the wise expenditure of every dollar of your funds, and conducting all financial business impeccably. His considered opinions of every issue before Council will be missed. And Derek has given us 4 years of service in marketing, always insisting that we do things "first class," and that we be proud of our barbershop heritage. On behalf of the membership, our deepest thanks to these two gentlemen. (Here! Here!)

Organizationally AAMBS has changed, as we now have 5 Regions. Sunshine and Western Regions remain as before, chaired by Trevor Remphrey and Kim Sebbage. But the former Eastern Region is now Eastern, Victorian, and Tasmanian Regions. Thanks to Mike Barlow, Doug Moody, and Trevor Rootes for being the inaugural Chairmen of these regions. Mike has now passed the chair to Malcolm Woods for Eastern region. The new organization has led to closer co-ordination, and new initiatives for increased membership. Well Done to these gentlemen.
Happy New Year! You may be aware that AAMBS has been working on many initiatives to improve the music and performance ability of AAMBS choruses, and thereby to increase our member satisfaction and recruitment opportunities.

**Jim de Busman coaching tour**

The first initiative, and one which we are all particularly excited about, is the upcoming extended visit by Jim de Busman, internationally renowned vocal guru, eminent barbershop coach, and all-round good bloke. This visit by a first-class coach is an opportunity which will have a big impact on AAMBS, and AAMBS is thrilled to see that so many Clubs have ‘put their hands up’ to receive coaching from an incredibly experienced and talented specialist.

Jim will spend a few weeks in each capital city, coaching as many choruses and quartets as many times as possible, and hopefully providing each and every AAMBS member with one of his trademark ten-minute personal vocal instructions that had such a massive impact at the Brisbane Convention and Harmony College.

Airfares between Australian cities will be split and shared by the Clubs that Jim visits. This will work out substantially cheaper than if each Club were to attempt to arrange a visit on their own, especially as Jim will be coaching choruses for free. Clubs will be expected to billet Jim (and his lovely wife, Barbara) and provide food, local transport, sightseeing opportunities and the like. Quartets will pay a fee of $50 per hour for coaching.

Jim departs America on 14 March 2012 and starts work on 17 March 2012, and will be hard at work until 20 May 2012. A full schedule will be released in the next couple of weeks, once all interested Clubs have indicated their preferences for timing. Of course, we will still be asking Clubs to be flexible in their arrangements – I’m sure you will all understand what a monumental task this is, given the size of our country, the spread of our population, and the limited time we have available to work with.

**Eddie Martinez coaching tour**

A similar extended coaching tour is being arranged for September 2012 by internationally recognised barbershop coach, arranger and singing judge, Eddie Martinez. Stay tuned!

**Call for applications for AAMBS Scholarships**

The second initiative AAMBS has been working on is MD education - probably the MOST important thing AAMBS can do as an organisation to enrich the musical knowledge, performance skills and enjoyment of the genre for AAMBS members.

One program we have been working very hard on over the Christmas break is our Director Scholarship Program. The concept is for selected recipient/s of AAMBS scholarship/s to be funded to attend the 2012 BHS Director’s College and return to Australia as an enriched Director, ready to share his (or her) expertise with fellow Directors around Australia, and with a commitment as an instructor, or assistant, at any national Director’s Training course or opportunity.

AAMBS previously only offered infrequent scholarships to attend BHS Director’s College. AAMBS has now made the decision to formalise a Director Scholarship Program, particularly in view of some of the outstanding candidates we have currently directing our choruses. Therefore, AAMBS Scholarships may be offered to selected applicants to assist with the costs involved in attending the annual BHS Director’s School (such as airfares, travel, accommodation and tuition).

AAMBS feels that the Clubs involved also need to have some investment in this expenditure, so they should contribute towards any additional costs incurred by their MDs.

AAMBS will provide a one-off grant to assist the selected applicant/s with the costs of attendance at the BHS Director’s College, to a maximum of $1,500 per successful applicant, per five-year cycle. Any costs exceeding this amount are the responsibility of each selected applicant and/or their Club.

I am now calling for applications for the scholarship from all AAMBS Music Directors. This enables any MD who wishes to apply to do so, and will allow the lead time required to make bookings for flights and for the College.

All AAMBS frontline directors are welcome to apply for a Scholarship. AAMBS may award up to two scholarships in any one calendar year. In the interests of ensuring all AAMBS MDs have the eventual opportunity to attend the BHS Director’s School, only one scholarship per applicant will be granted in any five-year period.

Written applications need to address the selection criteria, stating why the applicants feel they would benefit from attending the BHS Director’s College, what they feel the benefit for AAMBS members would be from having them attend, and how they would use the skills learned at the College.

Upon receipt of all applications, the AAMBS Council (based on the recommendation of a selection panel chaired by the AAMBS VP Music) will select the best candidate/s for the annual scholarship.

(Cont’d Page 7)
As 2012 gets underway and your new Council commences work, you may be aware that a couple of new members of Council have joined the Board. One of the roles filled by a new Council member is Marketing and I am honoured to pick up the reins from Derek Churchill and attempt to expand on the great work and contribution provided by him for AAMBS in the past.

In my first report to you here are some basic thoughts on:

• where we need to go from a Marketing perspective,

• what I believe we should attempt to accomplish in the short term

and, last but not least,

• how I suggest we go about it.

I have already commenced some preliminary work with Richard Reeve & Dan Millgate, VPs respectively of Membership and Music. We all agree that without the three of us working closely together marketing AAMBS can only be at best, half-baked. We have already outlined a number of tasks that need to be accomplished and plans that we need to develop and finalize. The planning phase has a prescribed sunset and when done, within the next month or so, we will present to Council for approval, so that work in earnest can commence.

I'm sure most of you will agree that fundamental to our future marketing success is close communication, coupled with all stakeholders making a contribution.

As a chorus member, quartet participant or club committee member, you have a role to play, and making your personal contribution is key to our future success and the development of our genre. In the near future I will be contacting each chorus executive, your President, and whoever has marketing responsibilities, to find out what your marketing priorities are and ascertain how we can assist you more.

Further, I need to pick your brains, have you tell me where you believe AAMBS should be going and how we should achieve our goals. Does your chorus have someone responsible for marketing, does your quartet have someone responsible for marketing? If not, why not, give it some thought and let’s discuss it when we meet or I call...

Over the next couple of months Richard, Dan and I will be working to clarify our primary goals for AAMBS, combined with the establishment of realistic targets.

Benchmark’s huge success last year brought Barbershop to the Australian public.

Guys, now it’s time to capitalize on that awareness...!

Have you registered your Quartet for the current AAMBS Financial Year?

To find the answer to this question go to the AAMBS’ Website and click on Quartets—if your name is there then you are OK.

If you quartet’s name is not there then you need to register it NOW.

(Forms are available on the Website under Download—Documents)
The most prominent event of the past year is surely the huge success of our Seniors’ Gold Medal quartet Benchmark; Derek Cosburn, Paul Roussel, Tom Percy, and Ray Smyth. Their terrific success on Australia’s Got Talent has given barbershopping exposure and publicity that we couldn't buy for a million dollars. If every one of us worked with the dedication of these four gentlemen imagine where barbershopping in Australia could be by this time next year.

For barbershopping to continue as an art form we must have a product that is worthy. The whole purpose of the contest part of our Conventions is to give choruses and quartets another incentive to be the best they can possibly be. This too can take thousands of hours of practice and rehearsal. For their contribution to barbershopping we should thank all the 2011 contestants at the recent Convention, and congratulate all our medallists and award winning choruses and quartets. And I especially want to thank Vocal Evolution, Alliance, The Fishbowl Boys, and Benchmark for representing Australia at international competitions. Their best-ever performances were something of which we should all be very proud.

New initiatives, thanks to Dan Millgate, and Richard Reeve, include a Directors’ Training School happening next month, a huge nationwide publicity campaign which saw barbershop articles in scores of papers nationwide, and for 2012, a commitment from world renowned coaches Jim De Busman and Eddie Martinez, to spend extended time Down Under to provide their guidance and inspiration to virtually every Club. And Steve Griffin has a host of youth initiatives on the go, with Aaron Griffin formally designated now to assist him.

We have a huge pool of talented and dedicated people in our organization, and I apologize for not being able to thank all of them in this brief report. Instead I ask each of you to take the time to pass a simple “thanks” to those filling the vital roles on Council, at Regions, and in every Club in AAMBS. And then you could consider if it’s your turn to do something for your fellow barbershop mates. It’s the ultimate team experience, and an art form absolutely worth perpetuating and enhancing.

Let’s work together to make 2012 a fantastic year of barbershopping.

In Harmony,
Mike Donnelly
President, AAMBS

Voluntary Workers Insurance valid to 4.00pm on 30 September 2012

Your Council has been able to arrange for Insurance against Accidents resulting in bodily injury being suffered by co-opted volunteers who are actually assisting our Clubs in their activities.

The insurance covers does not cover accidents which result from the volunteer’s personal negligence.

It does cover bodily injury caused directly by an accident during the period of insurance which results in expenses incurred for medical treatment or temporary total disablement.

Any such accident must be notified without delay to the AAMBS Treasurer and Secretary to ensure proper notification to the insurer.

Kevin White
Secretary

The Miner Chords from Ipswich, South East Queensland are looking for a new Musical Director

The applicant must have a substantial background in Barbershop Harmony Singing and the enthusiasm and demonstrated ability to work in a team environment, encouraging existing members and at the same time developing strategies to attract new members.

Expressions of interest are to be directed to Howard Kennedy whk@optusnet.com.au
Phone 0733897463 - Mobile 0431689054

AAMBS LIBRARY UPDATE
New items available—2011 DVDs and CDs from River Harmony (Brisbane) and International (Kansas City)
The highlight of the end of 2011 was undoubtedly our Christmas show, "Where Are You Christmas?", with fellow national champions Perth Harmony Chorus and Alliance. The two shows at the Regal Theatre went extremely well with lots of Christmas barbershop harmony and a fair bit of theatre thrown in as well.

After such a busy year Vocal Evolution chose not to do as many Christmas gigs as in the past, but still did a number of performances at Karrinyup Shopping Centre and an appearance at the Voice Moves Christmas Choir Bash, which was extremely well received, with the audience being made up mainly of singers from choirs from all around Perth. Another of the highlights was a performance on the big outdoor stage at the World Sailing Championships in Fremantle. This was a huge event which drew thousands of people from all over the world to beautiful Perth.

After an amazing year, representing Australia at the BHS International Contest and finishing 19th in the world, and winning the AAMBS and Pan Pac gold in Brisbane, there was plenty to celebrate at VE’s end of year party, but also some sadness as we bid our Music Director, Alex Morris, farewell. As previously announced, Alex has now moved to Melbourne to further his career and, of course, we wish him all the very best. VE gathered and sang an emotion-filled rendition of "You'll Never Walk Alone" to him at the party as a final farewell.

Peter Dyball & Alex Morris

On the brighter side we were pleased to present Peter Dyball with the annual Vocal Evolution Man of the Year award for his outstanding efforts for the club over the past 12 months. Peter is our Immediate Past President and has helped guide the chorus into the most successful period in our history. He led from the front and by example and so we were pleased to be able to acknowledge his efforts with this award. Well done Peter!

VE’s year will kick off again on the weekend of 20–22 January with the Kickstart Weekend retreat at Rottnest Island. VE will get back to regular rehearsals on 23 January and everyone is looking forward to learning some new repertoire! With invitations to several concerts in country WA scheduled for the middle of the year, an annual show, VE’s proposed trip to Toronto in 2013, and organising the 2013 AAMBS Convention, VE certainly has a busy period coming up!

VE will also be running more Learn to Sing Harmony courses this year, with the first one running from 20 February until 26 March. The six weekly workshops have been quite a success, with eight graduates joining VE on stage at the Christmas show for a couple of songs. Hoping you all had a great Christmas/New Year break - everyone at Vocal Evolution wishes you the very best for the coming year!

Hoping you all had a great Christmas/New Year break - everyone at Vocal Evolution wishes you the very best for the coming year!

Dan Millgate—President

Last year, 2011, drew to a close on a very busy note with the Sunshine Statesmen doing seven, three-hour sing-outs at Kawana Shopping Town. Although our audiences enjoyed the carols they really got their toes tapping with our up-beat favourites. So much so, in fact, that our diligent ladies gathered a score of men’s names who were interested in learning more about the joys of barbershop. We even got the chance to sit on Santa’s knee!

Our first gig for 2012 is Australia Day on Buderim and this will be another opportunity to attract new members while enjoying our Australiana and other songs.

As soon as Australia Day has passed we will be lining up for our third annual, free voice-coaching session which will involve all of our members and prospective new members.

This year will also introduce new territory as we set out to introduce local youth to barbershop.

Bruce Laming

Now that the holiday season is coming to an end, the reindeers have left their mark, and a new year has come staggering in, it is soon time to return to the risers for rehearsals for our Australia Day gig in the beautiful Domain Gardens.

This is an annual event where we compete against trams, jet planes, and vintage cars, but always a great family fun day. The entertainment is performed on a tent-enclosed stage with a sound console controller, who can alert the entire gardens if necessary, as to the music and dancing programme. Being a happy and informal occasion, it’s a great opportunity for the Melbournaires to find their feet, so to speak, and enhance the camaraderie that barbershop singing encourages.

May we take this opportunity also to wish all barbershoppers a very happy, prosperous and musical 2012, and let’s keep the flag flying for this wonderful art.

Terry Phillips
Well, what a year 2011 turned out to be for the Festival Statesmen Youth Chorus! Our third year in existence has seen us grow from an original 14 to 24 members, work with international and local coaches, as well as some amazing groups around Adelaide and increase our visibility throughout the a cappella community.

Term 3 hit and it was ‘all go’ in preparation for the National and Pan Pacific Convention in Brisbane!

The Convention was very exciting for us, with roughly half of our members’ first timers and three quartets from within the chorus competing.

We are thrilled and honoured to have been named your Young Singers in Harmony Barbershop and a cappella champions and are so humbled to have gone on to place third in the AAMBS and Pan Pacific Chorus competitions.

We would like to congratulate The Fishbowl Boys on winning both the barbershop quartet and a capella quartet/small ensemble categories in the YSIH competitions. We are so proud of all their hard work and achievements and can’t wait to see what is next for them!

We would like to take this opportunity to note the success of all of our quartets in the open competition, who finished 15th (Now in Stereo), 13th (YouTune.com) and 5th (The Fishbowl Boys).

We would also like to extend a huge thank you and congratulations to John and Steve and their respective teams of the 2011 National and Pan Pacific Convention and Young Singers in Harmony Festival for all your hard work in mounting a mammoth event.

A huge thank you must also go to all our supporters both in Brisbane and abroad. Our families and friends both near and far make all of this possible and worthwhile and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your unwavering support.

Following in the footsteps of Benchmark, we are excited to announce that The Fishbowl Boys have passed the first round auditions of Australia’s Got Talent and will be flown to Perth for second round auditions in February. We will keep you posted and hope you will all get behind your YSIH champions as they provide ongoing exposure of our wonderful craft in Australia and around the globe.

We would like to acknowledge our members who, on top of the demands of the chorus in a competition year also completed studies. We had five members graduate from year 12 and one complete his Bachelor of Music. All of the graduates achieved fantastic results and we would like to make special mention of the 7 members who used barbershop as part of their performance assessments. Congratulations to you all, and we look forward to seeing you grow musically, personally and professionally.

We had a relaxing end to 2011, with a couple of well received local performances and finished with a great day shooting each other with paintballs.

This along with the arrival of a significant value of sound equipment, awarded in a grant from Telstra, has topped off what was an amazing year for FSYC. We plan to use this equipment for amplifying concerts and recording rehearsals and performances, and maybe even for a CD down the track.

This has been a difficult report for me to write as alas, it will be my last on behalf of the Festival Statesmen Youth Chorus. I will be leaving the chorus and SA to seek greater career development opportunities in the west. While I look forward to beginning this next chapter of my life, I will miss FSYC and its members and families incredibly, and will look on from a distance with great anticipation to see it continue to grow and develop. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the 2011 committee for all their hard work and determination to make FSYC better each day and wish the new committee, chaired by Anne O’Dea, all the best for the coming year.

We are looking forward to what the next year will bring and can’t wait to join you all in Perth in 2013 to ‘get together again’.

Trevor Anderson
Immediate Past President
Festival Statesmen Youth Chorus

If you see someone without a smile -
Give them one of yours!
Recently, Vocal Evolution was pleased to award Harry Owen with the very first Vocal Evolution Life Membership Award in recognition for his long-term service to the club. Many of you would know Harry as the baritone of 1997 AAMBS Gold Medallist Quartet, Four To The Bar.

Harry is a foundation member and one of the main driving forces behind the establishment of the group that would become Vocal Evolution in 2003. Since the beginning, Harry has always been a consistent contributor to the chorus at many levels, whether by serving on the Music or Management Teams or by organising costumes or fundraisers. He even single-handedly built our risers!

Harry also played a big part in youth development with his work with students at the Churchlands Senior High School. Some of the students he has coached have since joined Vocal Evolution and now serve on the Music Team. Harry has always been singing in a quartet during his time with us, including Western Region Gold Medallists Vocal Edge and currently with Western Region Senior Champs, Back to Bassics.

Harry kept his acceptance speech short, with a simple, "Thanks for singing with me". Well, Harry, everyone at Vocal Evolution is glad that they had the opportunity to sing with you and to experience your immense passion for barbershop harmony.

Dan Millgate
President

We’re just wild about Harry!

The Selection Criteria being used to select scholarship winners is based on the premise that the investment made in an MD attending the BHS Director College is in some way returned to AAMBS members. Therefore the following set of selection criteria will be used to enable the AAMBS Council to select the most suitable applicant/s.

- That the applicant can make a firm commitment to the dates of Director’s College;
- That the applicant has demonstrated success in the field of directing an AAMBS barbershop chorus, by way of peer recognition and performance skills;
- That the applicant has demonstrated a willingness and ability to share his or her knowledge of conducting to other MDs, Clubs and members of AAMBS, and other barbershoppers;
- That the applicant has demonstrated a firm commitment to provide/attend MD training opportunities for AAMBS members on a regular basis, as directed by the AAMBS Council; and
- That the applicant has the firm support of his or her Club or chorus, and that evidence of such is produced in writing.

The BHS also provides its own Director’s College Scholarships. These Scholarships to attend Director’s College are available for front line directors, assistant directors, section leaders and others who stand in front of a chorus, affiliates, and up and coming directors. Scholarships cover room, board, and tuition. More info is at http://www.barbershop.org/directors-college-scholarship.html

All AAMBS Scholarship applicants may also apply for a BHS Director’s College Tuition Scholarship in conjunction with their application for AAMBS funding. AAMBS applicants may seek a BHS scholarship to attend the BHS Director’s School, as well as requesting financial assistance from AAMBS.

Successful applicants will be required to provide a full written report to AAMBS upon completion of their attendance at BHS Director’s School, including outlining the skills they have attained.

All applications for this year’s AAMBS Director’s School must be returned to the AAMBS VP Music by the close of business, 4 February 2012 by email to music@aambs.org.au.

Dan Millgate
VP Music

Happy singing!
**Sweet Adelines/AAMBS Quartet Workshop**

2012
Quartet Workshop
South Australia

Saturday
3 March, 2012
Reedbeds Community Centre, Fitch Rd., Fulham

9:30 am – 4:00 pm

$22 per person

Contact:
Lea Baker
education@sweetadelines.org.au

Click here to book

This one-day workshop in the Reedbeds Community Centre, Fitch Rd., Fulham, will be an informative and fun day about building your barbershop skills. The workshop is aimed at quartets, budding quartets and those interested in quartetting. However, all singers of barbershop will get something out of this workshop so chorus members—come along!

Presented by

Master Director, Lea Baker and Jonathan Bligh

BYO:

- lunch
- name tags
- recording devices
- water bottles
- paper for note-taking
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 Verdana 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

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

Phone: 02 4369 8369
Fax: 02 4369 8379
E-mail: secretary@aambs.org.au

Keep the Whole World Singing

COMING EVENTS

2012
Feb 24-26—Eastern Region Workshop, Greenhills, Canberra Contact Secretary, AAMBS Eastern Region secretary@sydneyharmony.com.au
Apr 21—Sunshine Region Workshop & Mini-Harmony College, 10am City Church, 35 Thompson Street, Bowen Hills Qld. martinet@bigpond.net.au
Apr 21—Sunshine Region Concert featuring Alliance + Choruses and Quartets
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 17-22—Sweet Adelines Convention 2012, Llewlyn Hall, Australian National University, Canberra ACT www.sweetadelines.org.au

Jul 1-8 – BHS International Convention, Portland, Oregon USA
Jul 14-22— 2nd Krakow Singing Week, Krakow, Poland www.krakowsingingweek.pl
Sept 28-30—NZABS Convention, Bruce Mason Centre, North Shore, Auckland NZ www.nzabs.org.nz
Oct 7-9 – Irish Association of Barbershop Singers’ International Convention. Dublin, Ireland

2013
Feb 23-24 — European Barbershop Convention Harrogate, England
Jun 30-Jul 7 – BHS International Convention, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Oct 4-6 – Irish Association of Barbershop Singers’ International Convention. Galway, Ireland
Oct 9-13— Go for the Gold—AAMBS 12th National Barbershop Convention, Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, 21 Mounts Road, Perth WA, hosted by Vocal Evolution
Oct 13-15 —Harmony College, Perth WA

CHECK THE AAMBS WEBSITE FOR OTHER EVENTS

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