The times, they are a`changin’…

As you read the contents of this issue of In Harmony, you will be impressed with the huge initiatives occurring within AAMBS.

A brand new website is being developed and will be rolled out shortly. It will be attractive, easy to navigate, and will have features that are educational and informative.

The Perth Convention committee is well into some really exciting events for the October 2013 Convention.

As noted in this issue, our AAMBS barbershoppers and family members will be treated to not just one, but two top International quartets…..the current BHS Silver medallists, the Musical Island Boys, will entertain throughout the Convention……..and arguably the funniest quartet in the World, Lunch Break, will be here for the Convention and Harmony College. Put it on your calendar now so you won’t miss out.

All of these exciting initiatives are the handiwork of your extremely pro-active AAMBS Councillors. I want to take this opportunity to remind you of the team that is working hard for you: They are Kevin White (Secretary), Nerida White (Assistant Secretary), Trevor Bruger (Treasurer), and Vice Presidents Ian Mulholland (Events), Dan Millgate (Music), Richard Reeve (Membership), Keith Thornton (Marketing), Jonathan Bligh (Youth Development), and yours truly, Mike Donnelly, President. They have been calling or visiting all our clubs to listen to your concerns and ideas, and offer their expertise for your assistance.

Many other significant improvements are in the mill…so watch this space! ‘Nuff from me………please check-out every article in this issue.

In Harmony,
Mike Donnelly
President, AAMBS
Hello from your new VP Events! In an effort to better co-ordinate events around our now five different regions, the AAMBS National Council has broadened the scope of the previously known VP Conventions to include other events, such as Harmony College, workshops, and regional events (including contests). Therefore the position will now be known as VP Events.

A calendar of AAMBS events (national, regional and local) is always available on the AAMBS website. Simply email the details of your event to the AAMBS Secretary who will be happy to list the details for all to see.

We now look forward to a number of events happening around Australia over the next 2 years, including the current Jim De Busman coaching tour and several regional contests as follows:

**Western Region** - 12 May 2012  
**Sunshine Region** - 25 August 2012  
**Tasmanian Region** - 31 August 2012  
**Eastern Region** - 13 October 2012

The Western Region contest is going to be accompanied by a concert featuring Alliance, Benchmark, Vocal Evolution and the top Sweet Adelines choruses and quartets in the West. It should be a concert to remember and will serve as a fund-raiser for Alliance to represent AAMBS at the Internationals in Portland USA, and also as a warm-up event for the Sweet Adelines groups for their National Convention and Contest the following weekend.

The Sunshine Region contest will be held in conjunction with the highly successful SingFest weekend, now in its third year, and rapidly becoming a signature event in the region. Tasmanian Region is planning a concert featuring Alliance in conjunction with their regional contest. Please get along and support these regional events. They are put on for all members to enjoy and benefit from.

Of course the BIG event coming up is the **2013 AAMBS National Convention** to be held in Perth from **9-13 October, 2013**. I am excited to announce that we have secured the services of two top International quartets to entertain us in Perth, viz. the fabulous **Musical Island Boys** and the incredibly funny **Lunch Break** quartets. The Perth Convention committee is planning a number of innovative new events to be part of the Convention to make your participation a MUST DO in 2013. Stay tuned for more information over the coming months.

Of course, no AAMBS National Convention would be complete without an ensuing Harmony College, so make sure you put that one in your diaries too – **13-16 October, 2013**. Go on, write it in now!

See you around the tag halls!

*Ian Mulholland*
VP Events  
events@aambs.org.au
Over the past month I’ve contacted around half our Clubs seeking information on how they promote their Choruses, promote barbershop and find new members. If I haven’t spoken with your team yet, I’ll get to you over the next few weeks.

I’ve also been having a look at Club websites – rally interesting: some are excellent and others maybe not so appealing. The result of all this is that we’re now getting an accurate handle on how we can assist you best to achieve the results you want for your Club.

We’ve a great team working on the NEW AAMBS website at present and the new site will be published in around a month’s time, so if your Club needs some input in relation to its website, (maybe you know it could be better!), please let us know and we’ll see how we can assist!

**Thought for the month:**
What will your Club be doing during April and over the Easter Holiday period to publicise its affairs, promote barbershop and attract new members???

**Chasing new Members for your Chorus?**  Well, how many of the boxes below can your club tick:

- A big banner you can hang on a roadside somewhere busy.
- Business cards, or even better, postcards.
- Flyers for handouts or letterbox drops.
- A Press Release about to go out to local media, papers and maybe radio.
- A sing out at a local shopping centre or mall scheduled in April.
- An open night set for one of your April Rehearsals
- A public performance, and in April, anywhere qualifies.
- A community service performance, nursing home, hospital, etc.
- Someone briefed to approach and welcome any visitors to your rehearsals.
- A welcome pack to hand out to those interested.
- A sign to display near your rehearsal venue each time you’re there.
- All your members focused on chorus membership development.

This report is purposely brief as your AAMBS Council has just conducted its annual Face-to-Face Workshop, heaps has been achieved and news of the results will start filtering out over the next few weeks as plans are put into action, so, we’ll keep you posted.

Please contact me anytime at: marketing@aambs.org.au.

**Keith Thornton**
**V.P. Marketing & Development**
MEMBERSHIP

With your AAMBS National Council having just completed its annual face-to-face meeting in Perth last weekend, there is a new wave of membership documents about to be rolled out to all—y’all. One of the discussion points at the meeting was how Council, and I as Membership VP, can provide help to the wide range of aspirations clubs have. Specifically, we have a range of goals within our clubs, from wanting to compete on the international stage, to being more socially focused.

While everyone agrees that “the more you improve, the more you enjoy this hobby”, my role isn’t to dictate anything to you about what your chorus culture should be. It is to help you achieve whatever your chorus decides its goals are. As such, over recent months I have either visited in person, or spoken on the phone to most clubs in AAMBS about their membership goals and how AAMBS can help. If I haven’t spoken with you yet, I’d love to hear from you – either by email to membership@aambs.org.au or give me a call on 0411 519 851.

I am also well advanced on my second priority of reviewing the BHS membership documents. My aim here is to see which documents are directly applicable to AAMBS, which can be applicable with a little editing, and what other documents AAMBS needs that aren’t covered by BHS. Watch for these documents as they are posted on the web site.

My goal is to provide you with as much administrative help, ideas and encouragement for you and your team to achieve your membership goals. Remember that every member of your club has a role in attracting new members and ensuring that they enjoy their time, whether in rehearsals, gigs, or otherwise.

Here’s an interesting story posted on Facebook just yesterday:
“just had a nice conversation w/a random older gentleman & his wife in the food court at Midway airport...he started by asking a few questions about my iPad, then about music - then he began telling me about his 'barbershop chorus' in Hanover, New Hampshire and if I ever considered singing ;-) AWESOME.”

And who had this conversation with this older gentleman? None other than Sean Devine (lead of 2008 International Champion Quartet, OC Times; Westminster Chorus and the Masters of Harmony). Apart from being funny, this shows how charming it can be to chat with men you meet about the hobby you love.

To finish, one of the most common questions I am asked is, “What does AAMBS do for us?” One of the first documents that will be in the visitor folder template I am preparing is “Benefits of AAMBS membership”. Until I finish drafting the AAMBS version, however, and as we’re all Barbershop Harmony Society affiliated members, check out the BHS document, at http://www.barbershop.org/join-the-society--renew-dues.html.

Feel free to stick this up on your wall at rehearsal and give this to any prospective member.

Richard Reeve
AAMBS Membership V.P.
By now many of you will have finalised your preparations for coaching sessions from music educator, certified BHS Singing Judge and all-round great bloke, Jim DeBusman. Direct from the Music City Chorus in Nashville, Tennessee, Jim is travelling to every club in Australia to share his knowledge and skills with us and I am sure that this AAMBS initiative will be of awesome benefit to all of us. Make sure you take the opportunity to catch up with Jim and glean as much barbershop information as possible, as this level of skill doesn’t come through your town every day!

In saying that, though, we have many people within our organisation who do possess excellent skills when it comes to coaching. I am currently putting together an AAMBS coaching roster identifying skilled coaches in each city, including their key areas of expertise, their availability details, and their costs and so on – meaning that there will be immediate help available to you, the members, without having to go to the cost of bringing in external coaches from overseas. This resource will be available on the AAMBS website when completed, so it will simply be a matter of identifying what sort of coaching your group requires, looking up who best fits your needs, and contacting that person directly – making it easier for clubs to know who is going to help them the most for the best price. You will all be notified when the roster is available.

While we are talking about coaching, AAMBS recognises that this doesn’t only mean coaching choruses and quartets. Another important area of education is the support we provide to our Musical Directors, Music Teams and club leadership. We are currently in the process of making training resources available to assist with MD development, meaning that MDs and section leaders can take advantage of local resources to build their skills to a higher level. This also means that there will be advice, training and mentoring available for members of club leadership teams to help them deal with the ins and outs of running their clubs – recognising that we are all volunteers and not always skilled in the specific roles we find ourselves in! Stay tuned for further details.

As our President alluded to in his introduction, big things are happening for AAMBS. One of the key areas that we have been focussing on is the development of a new AAMBS website. The website is our “shopfront” if you like, and if we are to be successful in attracting new members, retaining the members we have (by providing tools that are useful, up to date and easily accessible), and widely promoting our organisation as modern, refreshed and vibrant, then the new website will be an excellent resource. It will be attractive, easy to navigate, and will have features that will be educational and informative. We will also be providing clubs with templates and advice for their own linked websites and pages, so that we present a united, consistent and refreshed image.

It goes without saying that simply changing a website doesn't make AAMBS suddenly a whole different organisation – but it is definitely a step in the right direction when it comes to reinvigorating our brand, allowing members to feel included in the wider organisation and providing a more complete presence in the world of barbershop.

It is a very exciting time to be a member of the AAMBS Council. There are many ‘big ticket’ items on the boil that I am sure will greatly benefit Aussie barbershop, and we look forward to sharing these with you as they develop. Working together as a Council in the key areas of education, membership, marketing and youth development will undoubtedly provide you, the members, with some awesome opportunities in the near future, and we look forward to providing you with a new level of service, advice and leadership. In the meantime, if you have any comments, suggestions or feedback, especially as far as your barbershop education goes, you can always contact me at music@aambs.org.au.

Dan Millgate
VP Music

In Harmony Issue 128—March—April 2012
MEET YOUR NEW VP YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Jonathan Bligh is a Vocal Coach, Musical Director, Choral Conductor and Secondary School Teacher of Music.

He has performed with and directed over thirty-five groups within Australia and Overseas. Jonathan is the Founder and Musical Director of the local award winning group, The Festival Statesmen Youth Chorus (2011 National Youth Chorus Champions and 2011 Open Pan Pacific Region Bronze Medallist Chorus). Jonathan also directs the choral program at Charles Campbell College, a performing arts focussed school. He has a Bachelor of Music in Solo Performance Conducting (Elder School of Music), a Graduate Diploma in Education (University of Adelaide) and a Licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music in Performance (London). He recently returned from the United States of America after studying components of a Master’s Degree in Conducting (under Rodney Eichenburger) and representing Australia in an international choral competition.

He has also directed a number of successful musicals including Gin and Vodka’s production of Spring Awakening (awarded best musical of 2010) and Gypsy (2011). He is indeed a great asset as a member of the AAMBS Council and is well qualified to represent and encourage youth involvement in our beloved hobby—Barbershop a cappella singing.

Welcome, Jonathan, from the Council and all the members of AAMBS.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

What an exciting time it is to be a youth member of AAMBS! The Fishbowl Boys have just returned home from their first tour interstate as our national champion youth quartet and ambassadors of AAMBS. They completed a full three days of performances and youth workshops at various schools. A big thank you must go to Trevor Rootes, Andrew Carolan and the Tasmanian team for their efforts in making this trip a success.

Having only just returned home myself from my very first Council meeting as your newly-appointed VP Youth Development, I can say that there are a number of exciting plans on the horizon for the Youth Development here in Australia. At this point it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the hard work of Steve Griffin who has put countless hours into developing the youth program to where it is today. Thank you Steve!

I firmly believe that the future of our organisation depends on how effectively we can inspire young men across Australia to share in this wonderful hobby of ours. I have already spent some time discussing the future development of the youth program here in Australia with James Estes from the BHS and Matt Gifford from NZABS and a number of key regional people in Australia. Watch this space for further updates!

Feel free to contact me regarding any youth matters at youth@aambs.org.au.

Jonathan Bligh
VP Youth Development

“Young singers are much better educated musically, much better informed, through discs and videos, than I was.”
Placido Domingo
Central Coast Barbershop Chorus has secured the services of Rob Sequeira as our Music Director for what we hope will be a long and successful term. Rob came to SOUNDWAVES to assist our then Music Director, John Thomson, and quickly proved his knowledge and experience teaching men to sing four-part harmony in the barbershop style to us all. John Thomson is now our Assistant Music Director and Music Officer.

Our website is getting a fresh new look, thanks to the efforts of Rob Sequeira and Siva Gounder. We recently developed a 5-Year Plan for SOUNDWAVES, with an emphasis on attracting new members to the Chorus, improving our performances and singing a new range of songs. Our President, Geoff Lehner, and his committee members are working hard to gain new members, particularly young people, to keep the art of singing in the barbershop style alive and well into the future. We are now planning a Young Singers in Harmony Workshop, which will be held on Saturday 2nd June 2012 in the Parkview Room, Central Coast Leagues Club. It is hoped that we attract many secondary school students and young men up to 25 years of age.

A movie night is being held at the historical Avoca Beach Movie Theatre on Monday 19th March 2012, which will be a pre-screening The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel. Our thanks go to Mel Ferguson and all those members who have assured the Chorus of a sell-out crowd.

Nerida White has agreed to assist our Chorus committee by taking up the role of Publicity Officer. Her dedication and experience is a great asset to our Chorus. Nerida’s work is attracting new men** and extending our exposure by gaining free advertising and promotions over local radio stations and print media. Well done Nerida.

Ray Bale
Secretary

**Ed’s Note — to the Chorus!

In Celebration of the Human Voice — The Essential Musical Instrument

Have you discovered www.singers.com yet?

This is an a cappella website which promotes all styles of singing, including our beloved Barbershop, and where you can buy lots of music, CDs and a cappella material. How about listing your CDs on the site! It would be great to have some of our great Australian Barbershoppers out there for all the world to hear.
Penrith City Harmony Chorus
Greetings from the chorus - an infrequent contributor to Club News! We are currently a twelve-member chorus – three leads, three baris, two tenors, four basses, plus our music director, Peter Fragar. With such a small chorus we are doing our best to recruit new members, but with little success so far. We have our own website [www.penrithharmony.com](http://www.penrithharmony.com) plus a banner we display during performances. We are pursuing more recruitment ideas this year, including a Reunion Concert and a Learn to Sing course.

Recently, we have performed at the Leura 1920s All That Jazz festival which featured a world record Charleston dancing attempt, plus a collection of vintage cars, one of which will feature in Baz Luhrmann’s upcoming film ‘The Great Gatsby’. Unfortunately Baz wasn’t there to hear us sing. We may have earned a cameo role!

Seven of us went to the Greenhills Barbershop singing school at Canberra where we had excellent tuition from eminent presenters Robert Sequeira, Vicki Dwyer, Alex Morris and Matt Gifford. Choruses and quartets got the chance to perform at the Saturday night concert, and a highlight was being able to sing 'I've been Working on the Railroad' as part of an eighty strong chorus. We have upcoming events that will give us an opportunity to present some of our recent repertoire additions - The Beach Boys medley, In My Room, The Longest Time and When I'm Sixty Four. We are conscious of the need to update our songs to appeal to a wider audience.

Paul Ryan
Secretary

8.00am Saturday February 4th was to be the start of a very hot and humid Melbourne summers day. Nevertheless, around 16 intrepid members of The Melbournaires Chorus took barbershop to an outer Eastern suburb, Nunawading, by way of a sausage sizzle outside the local Bunnings store. Working in 2 hour shifts, the day became progressively hotter, and those in the later shifts had to toil much harder to keep the hungry patrons well sated.
It may well have been the quartet singing that kept the Bunnings customers from their DIY afternoon, but no doubt Barbershop, and thanks to the fine work of our President, Peter Canet, The Melbournaires, were the winners on the day. A great fundraiser and well worth the effort.

**A New Chorus for Melbourne!**

One of our members, Tim Carolan, together with Alex Morris (former Music Director of Vocal Evolution in Perth), have created the new chorus **The Southern Lights Chorus**, in the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne. This is an extension of, and supported by, The Melbournaires.

We wish Tim, who is a presentation judge in his own right, and Alex, every success in developing this new chorus, and bringing barbershop to new audiences. The Southern Lights Chorus rehearse every Tuesday night at 7.30pm at the South Yarra Sports Club. Visitors are most welcome.

*Terry Phillips*

---

**Come and Sing Until You Drop!**

No, it’s not a reference to how hard we have to work at rehearsals, though usually by the end of the evening we know we have put in a solid effort. It’s a line from our greeting song for new members, “Welcome Into Barbershop”, and is a light-hearted observation that our hobby is worth making a lifelong one.

**Bewdy, Bonza, Ripper Mate!**

*Now you’ve sealed your singing fate:
Come and sing until you drop;
Welcome into Barbershop!*

At Westcoast we certainly take the message to heart. With an average member age of between 70 and 75, we are a growing club, and one of the larger in the Australian Association: with 47 members I believe we are now in the top 5! While folks in other pastimes, and even in other barbershop clubs, are hanging up their spurs because they are getting too old for it our members are thriving, and proudly so, well into their eighties.

Vice President (Admin), Ken, who became a club member at the age of 71 says “I was attracted to the club by the music and the obvious camaraderie.” Incidentally, when asked if now that he was part of the leadership team that enjoyment had diminished, he responded emphatically in the negative. Amongst our older members, John, aged 86, still takes to the risers and struts his musical stuff just as enthusiastically as other barbershoppers all over the country, as well as continuing to serve on the Music Leadership Team.

Our club maintains a steady performance program, averaging between two and three appearances each month, and we are never short of invitations to sing. We even have a major client who is looking at rescheduling their public event because we were unavailable on the date they asked us to sing! We are always on the lookout for new members so if you know anyone aged 55-65 or older who would benefit from an invigorating, fulfilling and fun hobby, please send them our way!

*Kim Sebabbage*
In February, a record number of Sydney Harmony chorus members attended the annual Greenhills Eastern Region Workshop in Canberra. In March, our chorus and quartets had the privilege of being coached by top American judge and coach, Jim DeBusman as part of his Australia-wide coaching tour. We also took the opportunity to contribute our talents to an East Timor Children’s’ Charity fundraiser. While in April we’re booked to perform at a high-profile charitable event.

Such opportunities and our ongoing coaching programme support our goals of continuously improving as singers, raising the profile of the chorus and attracting new members. Being hospitable is part of SH’s DNA, as we always we invite fellow barbershoppers visiting the Sydney area to join our weekly Monday night rehearsal.

Check out Sydney Harmony Website (www.sydneyharmony.com.au), or call Paul Meller, our VP Membership on 0419 635 537 for details.

Ian McKenzie,
VP Marketing

Fleurieu Harmony Chorus has had a fairly active start to the New Year with several Singouts, a very profitable fundraising Sausage sizzle at Bunnings and a Singout at the local Farmers Market in aid of Prostate Cancer Research.

We have also formed a joint committee with the Festival Statesmen and Harborside Harmony for Voices in Harmony 2012 which is a bi-annual event held with the WA Groups, Westcoast Chordsmen and Southside Harmony, this time in Adelaide from 22nd –26th May, with a week of workshops, rehearsals and social events culminating with a Grand Concert at the Royalty Theatre in Adelaide.

The Concert will include guest artists gold medallists The Fishbowl Boys, the Festival Statesmen Youth Chorus, The Adelaide Sound Connection ladies chorus and the Adelaide Allsorts mixed chorus. We are also lucky to have a coaching session with Jim de Busman who is visiting Adelaide for a week in April.

It has not been a good year for the chorus health-wise with several members being hospitalised and one member still seriously ill and causing us great concern and always in our thoughts as are all our fellow barbershoppers who are indisposed.

Gordon Tomlinson
The big news is that we are happy to announce the appointment of Lionel Pierson as our new Music Director for 2012.

Lionel was previously our Assistant Music Director and has been singing with Vocal Evolution for many years, having joined when he was still in high school. Lionel has previously sung with the AAMBS National Youth Quartet Champions 3 Men and a Tenor. He is currently studying Music and Engineering at university. Everyone at Vocal Evolution is pleased and excited to have Lionel in this role and are looking forward to working with him.

The Vocal Evolution year began on the weekend of 20–22 January with our annual Kickstart Weekend retreat at Rottnest Island. The Music Team introduced some new repertoire and it was a good chance to sing and socialise together. Regular rehearsals began on 23 January and everyone has been raring to go.

Our first Learn to Sing Harmony course started on 20 February and this will go until 26 March. We have 15 men joining us for these sessions and we hope to be able recruit as many of these guys as possible into the chorus.

The fabulous Jen Howson was in Perth recently and we had the pleasure of her teaching us the choreography plans she has designed for us for a couple of our new songs. It was certainly a busy time getting all that learning in over the course of the Saturday and Monday night sessions but Jen did a fantastic job in getting the moves happening.

Our quartets are looking forward to the Western Region Quartet Contest on 12 May. Other performances coming up are a concert with our very own National Quartet Champs, Alliance, prior to their next trip to the USA for this year’s BHS International Chorus contest. We have also confirmed a concert in Albany, in southwest WA at the new Albany Entertainment Centre.

Dan Millgate
President
New MD needed!

The Sunshine Statesmen are seeking the services of a new musical director to replace our wonderful Karina Gough who, for family reasons, is returning to Melbourne.

The Statesmen is a happy group of about thirty active members and is based at Buderim on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. We were judged the second most improved chorus in Australia at last year’s convention in Brisbane – thanks to the chorus’s efforts and Karina’s coaching and direction. Further information is available on www.sunshinestatesmen.org.au. Expressions of interest can be directed to thesecretary@sunshinestatesmen.org.au or by post to Sunshine Statesmen, Box 5438, Maroochydore BC, Queensland, 4558.

In other news, this year started off, unfortunately, with the cancelling of our first appointment, which was to sing at Australia Day on Buderim, due to the wild weather — the same heavy rain that then proceeded to the other east coast states. Our thoughts are with those communities who got flooded out.

On a brighter note, we took delivery of our new chorus shirts - which are red. This gives us a costume choice between red, white and blue.

At the time of writing we are half-way through our third annual voice-coaching program. We have about ten interested participants and we’re hoping that most of them will recognise the joy of barbershop and sign up as members. On top of that, we had the pleasure of a visit from David Leeder from the USA and very much enjoyed hearing about the Barbershop Product.

Regards to all
Bruce Laming

The River City Clippers are making a name for themselves in Brisbane city. Since the latter part of 2011, the Clippers have performed in the City Mall approximately twelve times. The first of the series of appearances was associated with River Harmony celebrations when the Clippers gave a ‘Flash Mob’ performance of The Lion Sleeps Tonight in the food court of a prominent store – an experience thoroughly enjoyed by diners and passers-by. This was followed up with the magnificent massed sing out in the City Mall by hundreds of barbershoppers during River Harmony celebrations last September.
The next assault on the Mall came with an invitation from Brisbane Marketing to do some carolling in the Mall in the weeks leading up to Christmas. The Clippers took to this with great glee, meeting Brisbane Marketing’s request for approximately ten quartet appearances and three Chorus performances in the heart of the city.

To complete a busy December, the chorus once again entertained patients and staff at the Mater Hospital – a traditional event, which reaches back almost twenty years. To be involved in the annual Mater Hospital performance is not a chore for the Clippers. Indeed, it is a privilege to be able to help put a smile on the faces of many who find themselves ill and not able to be home with family at Christmas time.

After a short break, it’s been back to rehearsals since mid-January. As this edition of In Harmony goes to print, it’s off to Boot Camp for the Clippers. Under the guidance of our Director Cathie Neil, the “boys” are gathering at Mt Tambourine for what will be a focussed and rewarding experience as we work our way through new repertoire and refresh some songs that are already “in the bank” but need a little polishing up to remove the rusty spots that develop through inactivity. Once again, under the leadership of Clipper member, Ian Mathieson, the Clippers are back at work at Bunnings sausage sizzles. We are very grateful to Bunnings for the opportunities they provide via the weekend barbeques to raise funds for our Chorus expenses.

Keith Druery
With new members joining almost every week and a completely new repertoire, it is an exciting time to be a member of the **Festival Statesmen Youth Chorus**!

The boys are still coming down from the amazing time had by all in Brisbane and our end of year paintball day, and we have jumped straight into this year’s busy schedule. So far we’ve stolen the show with the help of *Now in Stereo* and *The Fishbowl Boys* at ‘Get Vocal’ - the first South Australian all a cappella concert produced by Vocal Australia.

Up next, the boys will be supporting over 160 young singers as we head into this years Barbershop Big Day Out with support from Hi-Jinx, a SAI quartet from Western Australia. Other upcoming performances include providing the musical backing to the installation of the next grand master for the Freemasons Guild and a number of combined concerts with well-established south Australian vocal ensembles.

Other changes in the FSYC include our new committee members. Anne O’Dea is our new President and Margy Maley has taken over as secretary. Kieran O’Dea is now looking after Membership, Lorraine Smitham and Sandy Bartel are General Members and Cam DuRieu is the new Event Co-ordinator.

On a final note, we would like to wish our immediate past president, founding member and great friend Trevor Anderson the fondest of farewells as he leaves the chorus to pursue his career in Western Australia. The entire FSYC Family cannot thank you enough for all your efforts and there will always be a spot on the risers for you.

*Cam DuRieu*

FSYC Event Co-ordinator

The **Festival Statesmen** haven’t put an article in the newsletter for a while, but yes, the senior chorus does still exist. We have lost some members from our risers for various reasons, including our longest serving life member Paul Kaye. He was one of the group that that formed our club in 1992. He decided that at 92 it was just that little bit too difficult.

Our programme for the year is almost full, with engagements for local organisations. In addition in conjunction with Fleurieu Harmony we will be welcoming our friends from West Australia at the end of May for our bi-annual Voices in Harmony get together, culminating in a public concert on Saturday 26th May. We will also be taking part in the Adelaide Eisteddfod in June.

We are looking forward to the visit of Jim de Busman next month, with his experience in the area of senior voices, he should feel right at home with us. We are very proud of the achievements of the Festival Statesmen Youth Chorus and its associated quartets - they have really put South Australia on the Barbershop map. The appointment of their director Jonathan Bligh as AAMBS VP Youth Development is an appointment well deserved.

*Ken Withers*
Get your own copy of the BHS Publication - LiveWire

As we know that some of you have trouble opening the files when we send them to you, AAMBS will not be forwarding them to you in future, so we strongly recommend that if you want to continue receiving copies of this most informative newsletter that you and your Club members go to http://www.barbershop.org/news-and-events/livewire.html to register for them to be sent directly to you.

They are certainly worth reading!

WHO WILL WIN THIS YEAR?

Will it be the Ringmasters from Sweden? Or the Musical Island Boys from New Zealand?

Every year, thousands of quartets and choruses worldwide spend countless hours rehearsing and preparing for district, national, and international level competitions hosted around the world for the chance of being crowned champions.

Enjoy watching others vie for the crown, experience the thrill of victory and witness world class barbershop harmony being sung at the highest level by some of the most dedicated singers you’ll ever see.

Your very own Pan-Pacific and Australian Champion quartet, Alliance, will be representing AAMBS at the height of international competition. Keep in touch with all the latest news at http://www.barbershop.org/portland-international-main.html.
Hobart quartet Acappellago was honoured to be invited to take part in the International Seniors Barbershop Quartet competition as part of the Midwinter Convention at Tucson, Arizona in January of this year. Enduring a fourteen-hour flight across the Pacific, Ric Finlay, David Frampton, Rhett Knight and Richard Gardam arrived in the desert city five days before the event, allowing plenty of time for acclimatisation.

We were accommodated comfortably in the Hotel Arizona, a four-square thirteen-storey 1920s structure that is starting to look its age. There was no criticism of the adjacent Music Hall, though, where the events that constituted the Convention were held. Magnificently appointed, and holding around 2500 people, it was a wonderful “live” place to sing and to listen to others.

Having sung in competition on the Thursday afternoon, we were treated to three consecutive evenings of top–class barbershop singing from the best in the world. You know you are in the heartland of this genre when you are treated to performances from the top four quartets from last year’s International at Kansas City, as well as the Collegiate champions and the top Sweet Adelines Chorus from nearby Scottsdale in Arizona.

Old School, Masterpiece and A Mighty Wind gave amazing performances, as did our brothers across the “ditch”, Musical Island Boys, who surely have an excellent opportunity to earn international gold at Portland later this year. Former champions OC Times also performed brilliantly on the first evening, and when the fifth placed quartet from last year’s International, Main Street, had to withdraw, their place was taken by the highly entertaining Humdingers from Disneyland. Another highlight was the Youth Chorus competition held during the day on the Saturday, which gave us an opportunity to catch up with our old friend and coach Eddie Martinez.

Although not in the same class as this talent, Acappellago gave a good account of itself in finishing 23rd out of the 28 quartets entered in the seniors competition. There are some seriously good singers in the 60-and-above age group, and we were honoured to share the stage with them. The only other non-North American quartets came from England and Sweden, both of whom were placed below us!

It wasn’t all about singing, though. We spent a day at the amazing Pima Air and Space Museum just outside the city, and another wandering around the Sonora Desert Museum, a wonderful wildlife park west of the city. And on our scheduled penultimate day in the region, we drove to Tombstone, scene of the OK Corral shootout, and now a village dedicated to maximising its tourist potential.

Our return to Australia was delayed a day when our first attempt was aborted two hours out into the Pacific owing to a defective radar system. An uncomfortable night at the San Francisco Airport ensued before a hotel was found for us to rest ahead of a more successful flight home 24 hours later. It is truly amazing what opportunities can open up to those of us who participate in this form of singing, and the memories of this trip will be with us forever. We are indebted to AAMBS, the Hobart Mens’ Barbershop Harmony Club and the Tasmanian Government for the assistance each gave to us in meeting costs.
This edition, we have included a special item of poetry sent in by a member of the Clippers. We are sure that all of you who have been to Harmony Colleges, chorus retreats, or overnight gigs will sympathise…

“Ralph’s Ruminations”

I do enjoy my Barbershop,
I am a loyal Clipper.
So when I heard about this camp,
I thought, “You little ripper!”

I loved it there at Tambourine,
The nights were quiet and deep.
But when we reached the midnight hour,
I could not get to sleep.

I’d hoped for restful hours of peace,
And soothing calm and quiet.
But what I got was elephants
Indulging in a riot.

I heard the sound of ghastly snores,
Like diesel tractors starting.
Of camels fighting to the death
Of giant rhinos --------------.

And so the morning came and I
Had barely had a blink.
I had to get some sleep and so,
I settled down to think.

I found an empty cabin, and
I moved my luggage in.
But fate moved in to punish me
For selfishness and sin

Two other Clippers came in late,
And moved in next to me.
After midnight I awoke
To a fresh cacophony.

“Oh Lord”, I cried, “what have I done?”
I heard an angel talk.
“This you must do my child,” it said,
“Take up thy bed and walk.”

I took my mattress up and walked
Up to the meeting hall,
And put it down and slept the night
And friends, that’s nearly all.

I got about an hour’s sleep
Upon the concrete floor.
With mossies, bugs and creeping things,
But at least they didn’t snore.

At dawn the sunshine woke me up,
So gently on my face.
And soon I’ll pack my luggage up
And leave this bloody place.

And next time someone mentions CAMP!,
I’ll say, “I THINK I’LL PASS”.
Just take your registration form
And stick it – “in the bin”.

In Harmony Issue 128 — March — April 2012
Benchmark CD now available!

*Benchmark* is proud to announce the release of its first CD, entitled “This Is The Moment”.

The title was chosen to summarise the journey to the Grand Finals of Australia's Got Talent 2011. As they progressed through the rounds, bass singer Tom Percy's Lymphoma got worse and worse. It was therefore a triumph for him personally, the quartet, our families and fans that we managed to go all the way in the contest despite Tom having to make frequent trips from the filming in Melbourne back to Queensland for more bursts of treatment. The emotions in the quartet, judges and audience as This Is The Moment finished was huge; in fact, Benchmark received standing ovations from audience and judges in all four rounds of the contest.

The CD contains 16 tracks, of which half feature Tom and the other half feature Mark Penman as bass. There is also a 50/50 split between Ray singing Tenor versus Paul, and vice-versa. It includes all of Benchmark's AGT and AAMBS contest songs. It's a credit to Tom that he came and recorded his tracks even when he was about to undergo Bone Marrow Transplantation. It's also a credit to Mark for being willing to commit to the huge learning curve necessary to be a stand-in, allowing us to complete the CD and keep up the schedule of gigs that flowed from AGT.

Based in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, Benchmark is Australian Seniors Gold Medallist for the last two AAMBS contests, and Sunshine Region Seniors Gold Medallists for the last four years, in three of which Benchmark won the Open as well.

People can order a CD by visiting [http://www.benchmarkfour.com/Contact_Us.html](http://www.benchmarkfour.com/Contact_Us.html).

The CDs are priced at only $20 each, plus $4.95 for postage and packing.
Barbershop Funnies....

How does a lead change a light bulb?
He just holds the bulb and the world revolves around him.

How many basses does it take to change a light bulb?
None. They just light candles and open a bottle of wine.

How many tenors does it take to change a light bulb?
Six. One to do it, and five to whine, "It's too high."

How many baritones does it take to change a light bulb?
A whole section. One to climb the ladder while the rest calculate the Pythagorean implications and argue about the pitch of the roof.

How many directors does it take to change a light bulb?
I don't know, I wasn't watching.

How many barbershoppers does it take to change a light bulb?
Five - one to change the bulb and four to sing about how much they miss "that old lightbulb of mine"

(Ed - It actually takes nine. You forgot the four to plan the afterglow).

In Harmony Issue 128— March—April 2012
BSQ Productions proudly presents

The Old Fella and Benchmark
Australia’s Got Talent Grand Finalist 2011
For the first time together in one big show!

“Viagra”

“This Is The Moment”

Friday 25th May, 8pm
Empire Theatre, Toowoomba
With Toowoomba’s own barbershop choir
High Altitude Harmon

Tickets on sale!
BOOK NOW!
1300 655 299
www.empiretheatre.com.au

Parental Guidance Recommended
TAGS OF THE MONTH

To quote from David Wright: "Barbershop tag singing is surely one of the grandest traditions arising from the field of vocal harmony. A tag is a short passage consisting of an arrangement’s ending, or coda, which is taught and sung in sessions of informal chord-ringing. The tag allows four singers to quickly blend their voices in a few seconds of blissful harmony without the burden of learning an entire song."

Have a go at the below tags – learn different parts!

CHEER UP, CHARLIE

This is the tag that was used by 2006 International Champions Vocal Spectrum when they sang Jim Henry’s arrangement of the song during their championship year.

LAST NIGHT WAS THE END OF THE WORLD

This tag was sung by 2011 international champion quartet OLD SCHOOL in 2010 when they scored an average of 90.7 for second place – just pipped at the post by STORMFRONT.
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, check it out —


YOUR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

- Deadline: 5.30pm EST on 15th day of each odd numbered month
- Length: Articles to be 150—500 words maximum.
- All articles will be edited for spelling, grammar and length.
- 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. This helps Council plan events in your area. Send all your details to secretary@aambs.org.au.

2012

- Apr 21—Sunshine Region Workshop & Mini-Harmony College. 10am City Church, 35 Thompson Street, Bowen Hills Qld. Enquiries: martinet@bigpond.net.au
- Apr 21—Sunshine Region Concert featuring Alliance + Choruses and Quartets
- May 12—Western Region Quartet Contest— Hale School Auditorium
- May 17-22—Sweet Adelines Convention 2012, Llewellyn Hall, Australian National University, Canberra ACT www.sweetadelines.org.au

In Harmony Issue 128— March—April 2012
• May 21-22—Sweet Adelines Harmony College 2012, Woden Southern Cross Club, 92-96 Corinna Street, Woden Canberra ACT 2604 www.sweetadelines.org.au
• May 25—The Old Fella and Benchmark Concert, 8 pm, Empire Theatre, Toowoomba, with High Altitude Harmony. Bookings: 300 655 299 or www.empiretheatre.com.au
• June 2—Central Coast YSIH Workshop, Central Coast Leagues Club, Dane Drive, Gosford, 9.30am—3.30pm. www.soundwaveschorus.org
• June 3—Central Coast YSIH concert, Parkview Room, Central Coast Leagues Club
• Jul 1-8 – BHS International Convention, Portland, Oregon USA
• Aug 25—Sunshine Region Contest. Detail TBA
• Aug 31— Tasmanian Region Contest. Details TBA
• Sept 28-30—NZABS Convention, Bruce Mason Centre, North Shore, Auckland NZ www.nzabs.org.nz
• Oct 13—Eastern Region Contest. Details TBA

2013
• Jun 30-Jul 7 – BHS International Convention, Toronto Ontario, Canada
• 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—followed by…
• Harmony College Oct 13-15—Harmony College, Perth WA

CHECK THE AAMBS WEBSITE FOR OTHER NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BARBERSHOP EVENTS

All enquiries to:
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

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF MEN BARBERSHOP SINGERS INC.
ABN 54 083 784 810

KEEP THE WHOLE WORLD SINGING!

In Harmony Issue 128— March—April 2012