River Harmony is now gaining impetus with early registrations strong including two from mainland USA.

Folks, please remember that early bird registration fees close on 31st May 2011. Registration rises by $30.00 on 1st June 2011.

Regarding early bird registration, it would be worth pointing out, with regional comps still happening in May, choruses will need to be well organised to get their delegate registrations in by the end of the early bird period, if they intend to wait until their eligibility for competition at RH is confirmed at their regional comp.

Four delegates from Spain have registered together with 28 from the host chorus “The Clippers”.

The Young Singers In Harmony (YSIH) component of River Harmony will be held at St. Laurence’s College (SLC), South Brisbane, which is a short walk from the Brisbane Convention and Entertainment Centre (BCEC). The SLC has been extraordinarily supportive of our convention offering competitive hire rates for the use of the magnificent new auditorium together with assistance for quartet rehearsal rooms. The SLC auditorium is a facility to behold, 1500 capacity with state of the art equipment. I’m sure the YSIH delegates will enjoy the experience of performing in such an exciting facility.

A concerted effort to attract schools & colleges to compete at the YSIH has been undertaken by Steve Griffin, the AAMBS Youth Development Officer.

Indications are that the YSIH component of River Harmony will be well supported by ensembles from all around Australia.

The 2011 Sunshine Region qualifying competitions will also be held at the SLC facility.

Many people have booked accommodation already via the convention accommodation specialists Ozaccom (contact details on convention website).

There will be two other conventions taking place at the BCEC throughout the duration of River Harmony, a ready made audience for the competition sessions and the grand concert perhaps.

The Clippers have chosen their competition pieces to be sung at River Harmony and have rehearsed well under the direction of Cathie Neil our MD. I’m anticipating a very interesting chorus competition this year with current champions, Vocal Evolution, working hard to repel, what I’m sure will be, a mighty effort by The Blenders to retrieve the upper hand, however, watch out for a few dark horses emerging from the pack.

John Shelton
Chairman
2011 Convention Committee
Our Thoughts are with our Brother Barbershoppers around the Pacific Rim of Fire

All members of AAMBS send their heartfelt sympathy and best wishes for a speedy recovery to our fellow Barbershoppers in New Zealand and Japan who have been affected by the recent horrific earthquake, subsequent after shocks and tsunamis, and to our members in Northern Queensland who are now battling floods after the recent Cyclone Yasi.

Please know that our thoughts are with you all and if there is anything at all we can do to help you—all you have to do is ask and we'll do whatever we can to try to help ease your trauma.

You can be assured of a very warm and friendly welcome when you come to Australia in September for the Pan Pacific Convention.

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Email to the Tokyo Barbers

“The Council of the Australian Association of Men Barbershop Singers extends the Most Profound Sympathy of the Council and of all Australian Barbershop Singers to all your singers and their families for the tragic events which have occurred following the terrible Earthquake and Tsunami which have devastated, and are continuing to devastate, vast regions on the north-east coast of Honshu.

We express the hope that you are managing to survive this terrible event, and we express the thoughts of every Barbershop Singer in Australia that you are safe and unharmed. We look forward to seeing you at the Pan Pacific Convention in Brisbane in September if you and your associates are still able to come.

You are assured of our heartfelt greetings as the time of the Sakura festival approaches.

Kevin White, Secretary AAMBS Inc”

Email from the Tokyo Barbers' President:

“Dear Sirs,

Thank you for the concern.

Tokyo Area is pretty much OK, but Traffic is disturbed since Electric service is short to run rails.

Though Tokyo Barbers guys are OK with their families and their houses are not so damaged, but there are so many men and women dead, lost, or injured in northern part of Japan.

Kazuo Matsumura, President, Tokyo Barbers”

Email to the Canterbury Plainsmen and NZABS

“Your Australian Barbershop Brothers are with you in spirit and send our most sincere wishes that ‘God will Defend New Zealand’ and the Canterbury Plainsmen in the face of the savage devastation which has wracked the Cathedral City with its wonderful memories.

We pray that you are managing to recover from the tragic events and that the Plainsmen and their partners may still be able to join us in Brisbane in late September for the combined Conventions.

Kevin White, Secretary AAMBS Inc”
Hi Barbershoppers,

It’s all happening in just six months – the biggest AAMBS/Pan Pac Convention ever – Young Singers in Harmony – a Judges and Contest Administrator School – and a Harmony College in a beautiful setting that will appeal to partners as well as barbershoppers. With all the things I could say, none seems more important than these great events, all scheduled together to save you airfare and time!

John Shelton and his Convention Committee have already put in hundreds of hours to make this the best Convention ever, for each of you. I sincerely hope that every one of our AAMBS’ choruses will afford their members the opportunity to experience the very best of barbershopping, by registering to enjoy the camaraderie, performances, education, and the World’s Gold Medal (and funniest) barbershop quartet, Storm Front.

Check out the details in this issue of In Harmony, and at the web sites: AAMBS - aambs.org.au or River Harmony/Pan Pac - http://www.panpac.2011.org.au. It’s a huge 10 days of barbershop activities, with a Contest Administrator and Judges School from Sunday 25 Sep to Tuesday 27 Sep; Young Singers in Harmony on the Wednesday 28 Sept; the Convention from Wednesday 28 to Sunday 2 Oct; and Harmony College from Sunday 2 Oct to Wednesday 4 Oct. Be sure to check all the available events before you book your trip to Brisbane.

In conclusion, the World has thrown some catastrophic events our way over the past month. Regarding our worldwide barbershop fraternity I can report that through the Queensland floods, and the Christchurch and Japanese earthquakes, our barbershoppers appear to all be safe, although several have sustained property damage. Our AAMBS Secretary, Kevin White, sent a letter of condolence to our counterparts, the Canterbury Plainsmen in New Zealand and to the Tokyo Barbers, on your behalf, which they appreciated (see Page 2) They are OK, but are awaiting final word on family and friends. May I suggest an “Irish Blessing” or appropriate remembrance, at your next rehearsal.

Mike Donnelly
President, AAMBS

The program for Young Barbershop Singers is once again shaping to rise to new levels this year with confirmation that the venue for the Pan Pacific Young Singers Harmony Festival has been confirmed as the brand new St Laurence’s College Auditorium just a stones throw from the PanPac’s Convention headquarters.

I was lucky enough to attend the very first concert in the venue a few weeks back and was blown away by its suitability for the YSIH Competition and Festival. Check out the College and in particular the New Auditorium that seats 1500 http://www.slc.qld.edu.au

The program for Youth at Pan Pacs kicks off the convention.

Wednesday 28th September 2011
Morning — Youth Quartet Competition
Afternoon — Youth Chorus Competition
Evening - Gala Youth Concert with the winners strutting their talent and a guest appearance from the Convention’s headline quartet Storm Front

Thursday 29th September 2011
Youth Master Classes and coaching workshops

Full details of the complete program including nomination form for the event and ticket sales for the concert will be available on the YSIH website very soon and will also be forwarded to AAMBS’ youth coordinators in the near future.

If your Club has not registered an official youth co-ordinator with the AAMBS Secretary don’t waste time in doing so as you may miss the opportunity to be part of this great event. Better still if your Chorus does not currently have an active Youth Chorus Program then you need to make contact with me so I can assist you with the establishment of your program— stephen.griffin@apexdental.com.au

Steve Griffin
VP Youth Development
This past month has seen your Secretary on the road visiting three of our lively Choruses as they and their Quartets strut their stuff on their path to the Regional Contests, with an eye on the Medals on offer at the National and PanPac Conventions to be held in Brisbane in the last week of September.

Our first port of call was to Newcastle, the home of The Novatones, where we were welcomed by members of the Club committee and their very keen and talented MD, Ian Miller, whose skills were soon demonstrated as he produced a number of very evenly balanced songs as part of his medium size Chorus’ preparation for their Convention debut in Brisbane.

As a mark of their keenness a number of pitch pipes were purchased as a desirable aid to maintain correct pitch. The atmosphere was very relaxed.

On Thursday 24 February we, along with the AAMBS VP Marketing, Derek Churchill, drove through the slowly recovering Lockyer Valley to the City of the Roses, Toowoomba, to witness the ultra keen efforts of the High Altitude Harmony Chorus, under the baton of the very experienced Mike Ludwig, aided by his very capable Section Leaders.

Mike’s technique of inviting visitors onto the risers to sing a well known song or two was calculated and simple, free of the trauma that often accompanies the usual testing of voices, before visiting wives have time to relax. This is an exciting Chorus – they are enthusiastic and have great potential. And, when the Chorus rehearsal ended at 9pm, lo and behold a number of Quartets spread out singing in true barbershop harmony over the following hours ending at 11pm. A great night!

Our final visit was, on Monday 28 February, to The Blenders – as we all know – a highly disciplined body – spurred on, with panache, by their highly skilled MD Andrew Howson. Each song was delivered – needless to say - with the utmost professionalism.

At the side Jen Howson was manning a Camcorder recording individual reactions and expressions, as a guide to studied formation of the chorus members designed to achieve the maximum visual and vocal effect. The final selection of convention songs was clearly one of the important aims.

After each of these visits we joined the members and supporters for a welcome supper, and departed to the sounds of “Let’s get together again” – A rewarding experience.

Yours in Harmony,
Kevin White
AAMBS Secretary

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Ever wondered how the Judges arrived at a score in a contest? How often did you agree with it?

Whether you did agree with it or not, here is your opportunity to join the Judging Program and find out first-hand how it’s done - by attending the Judges’ School in Brisbane being held prior to the Pan Pac Convention, from Sunday 25 September to Tuesday 27 September 2011 inclusive.

Attendance at the Judges’ School does not necessarily guarantee that you will become a judge. The standards are high and the assessment is rigorous, and there is an application process to go through.

Nevertheless, at the very least you will have received 3 days’ tuition in judging that is as valuable a Barbershop education tool as anything else you’ll get.

Expressions of interest should be sent to Ian Mulholland, Chairman of the Guild of Australasian Barbershop Judges, either by email, imulholland@roxxresources.com.au, or phone, 0418-956-492
Applications will close 31 May 2011

As the members of your Council come from all over Australia—Perth, Hobart, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Toowoomba, Hobart and Gosford — their regular monthly  meetings take the form of  2 hour Teleconferences.

But in February they gathered in our 2011 Convention city, Brisbane, for what they affectionately call a Face-to-Face meeting which took place over 2 1/2 days. As you will appreciate, there was much discussion and debate on all matters relating to AAMBS, and a lot was achieved.

They were pleased to welcome John Shelton and Neil Robertson (Chairman and Treasurer of the 2011 AAMBS / Pan Pac Convention Committee) from our host Chorus, The River City Clippers, who joined them for the early session on Saturday morning when they were brought up to date with the arrangements for September, with all agreeing that the Committee is doing a fantastic job, due to the many, many hours they are spending planning and refining details.

It was also good to have Trevor Remphrey, Sunshine Region Chairman, join them for morning tea and a chat on all things Regional.
The membership portfolio is about recruitment and retention. Your chorus needs to attract new members and then keep them; well, at least the ones who like what you do. So it’s critical that you conduct yourself at rehearsal in such a way that visitors are going to want to come back (and join). Ensuring that rehearsals are fun, productive and educational is fundamental. Below is a summary of chapter 7 from the BHS Music Team Manual. It’s written for the music leadership but is still relevant for every barbershopper. This is because it will help you see things from their perspective and it will help you identify how you can contribute to great rehearsals. I would encourage you to (respectfully) take some of these ideas to your Music Director or Music Vice President (and let me know how you go!).

Weekly rehearsal is the very heart of barbershopping, perhaps more important than contests, conventions, paid performances or charitable activities. Rehearsal is the place where, week after week, members come to celebrate four-part harmony.

Making things happen takes planning. Simply “winging it” isn’t good enough for two very good reasons.

First, your chorus deserves better. The members have taken time out of their busy schedules to turn up. They expect to enjoy it. Don’t squander their precious time by not being organised and efficient with the limited time you have together.

Second, and equally important, the music leadership deserves better. They have to prepare for shows, contests and other performances, and never have as much time as they would like. Waste time during a chapter meeting and you diminish the musical growth as well.

It is important that rehearsals have variety and that different members of the music team are involved (we want to ensure that the MD is not the only one out the front all night, every night). Also consider your chorus’s mission statement and goals. Below are some of the basic elements to help the overall enjoyment and quality of rehearsal. Experiment and find out what works for you.

Vocal warm up
Open the rehearsal and prepare each man physically and mentally to sing. It should last no longer than 15 minutes and should be led by the most capable vocal technician in the group. Try to start on time as a sign of respect to those men who have arrived on time.

Gang singing
Barbershop Polecats, old repertoire, tags: just “fun” singing.

Craft
Basic musical information, special lessons to be learned or barbershop history and lore to be investigated. Craft also is a constant thread during the rehearsal segment.

Break
Important as a period of relaxation and social interaction. Also a good time to try a tag or sing with a guest.

Quartet activity
Informal quartetting, registered quartets, intra- or inter-chapter competition. Just get the guys singing with three other men. Having experienced men sing with those of lesser experience can benefit the quality of chorus singing.

Woodshedding
Great ear training. Music and tapes are available to get this activity started if you don’t have an experienced woodshedder to lead the segment.

Business meeting
Keep it short. Introduce guests and make only necessary announcements of late-breaking changes in plans or upcoming events. Print an information sheet to eliminate lengthy discussions.

Chorus rehearsal
The major portion of the night. Learning new songs, section rehearsals, polishing the repertoire and other musical activities. A substantial part of the rehearsal should be held on the risers, practicing performance.

These are some easy to follow concepts that are tried and true. I’m sure that you will be familiar with most of these ideas but I also bet your chorus isn’t making use of them all. I’d love you to let me know if you think you are. Make sure your chorus rehearsal is tailored to the ability and goals of your group to ensure that it’s both interesting and enjoyable.

I also encourage every chorus to regularly invite feedback from members about how they’re finding their chorus experience. More about that next time.

Until then, keep the whole world singing.

Richard Reeve
Membership VP
Convention— less a destination, more a point along the singing journey

How is your convention going to be a triumph for you?

For that certain select few, a gold silver or bronze medal in quartet or chorus competition will be the ultimate goal but what for us lesser mortals?

The medal illustrated above was handed out at the recent International Convention in Philadelphia by members of the Alexandra Harmonizers. It encourages us all to think differently about conventions and our singing journey.

For some ensembles, simply to appear on the Convention stage will be a triumph in itself. For others, to see an improved score will be reward enough. Maybe to outscore that rival chorus or quartet will be significant. A chance conversation in the foyer with a barbershop colleague from somewhere else “You know I really enjoyed your performance today ...”

For me, the absolute highlight of my last convention was the member who said to me “You know, the highlight of my convention was standing next to you and singing a polecat on the convention stage during mike testing.”

Every moment at convention is a potential highlight for you or someone else. Can you afford not to be there?

See you in Brisbane in September.

Richard Gardam
VP Conventions

To the Club Marketing Man— 6 Months to PanPac

This is addressed to the recently appointed MARKETING MAN in every Chorus and indeed every nominated similarly titled member of each Quartet, but we do hope that all AAMBS members will read and absorb it to be kept in the loop.

Yes it really is just six months to the planned largest a cappella event ever held in Australia. The songs are planned. The rehearsals begun. The choreo evolving from the two left feet stage. In Brisbane the flood damage repairs are proceeding apace and the man made lagoon at Southbank will be ready again in a few weeks.

Thousands of tons of sand are being freighted in for the replaced beach, the crocodiles both located and relocated. A bite size job on a large scale!

So, Marketing Man, is your plan well under way with your Committee’s support? How many public appearances is your chorus undertaking before the big event to ensure each member on the risers is crowd proof and not only ready to entertain, but able to entertain. So many otherwise worthy performances in Competition have been derailed on the day, marking-wise, by lapses by one or several singers in being able to create and maintain just six minutes of concentration. Performing for your public again and again in the next six months will overcome this. Sausage sizzles at Bunnings don’t count though they are invaluable in raising money to enable choruses to subsidise their members for the trip to Brisbane. Quartets similarly can be almost self supporting financially by the judicious choosing of gigs with similar intent. Retirement homes have entertainment budgets too.

The River City Clippers biggest audience stands at 42,000. Well yes it was the Broncos versus the Bulldogs game and over two days of the Ashes at the start of the season a similar exposure was obtained. The Blenders achieved Australia wide recognition for Barbershopping by being on TV. Exposure to real people remains one of the most effective tools to ensure good performances.

Oh! And Marketing Man. Line up those interviews on local radio in the next six months. Provide photo opportunities for your local paper to spread the word that you are off to compete against International Competitpted and that the World Champions, will be there too.

Derek Churchill
VP Marketing

Roll Call for any WW2 Veteran Harmonizers Still Standing

When we first formed AAMBS and started spreading the “barbershop bug” across the country in the 1980s, I recall meeting, in various places, a few fellow World War 2 veterans who were joining in the fun and enthusiasm in those pioneering choruses and quartets.

I don’t remember specific men but when my ex-Navy, RAN Corvettes Association folded last year due to dwindling numbers, it occurred to me that there may be one or two other vets in the Australian barbershop singing movement still raising a tune.

If you are out there and will be attending the 11th National Convention, it might be nice for us to catch up at that gathering and do a bit of “dit spinning” before we all disappear completely.

I’m at (08) 9330 4159 or aberles@internetexpress.net.au

Andy Aberle
Founding Member and Life Member, AAMBS
AAMBS Victorian Region Established

AAMBS VICTORIAN REGION
Chairman: Doug Moody
37 Tristania Street
Doncaster East 3109
(03) 9848 2421
dougmoody@optusnet.com.au
Vice Chairman: Chris Daria
Secretary/Treasurer: Maurice Deans

John Gerber’s resignation as the ebullient Chairman of Eastern Region set in motion a re-think of the way the region was operating. Bob Haynes also needed a break from his secretarial position. And so there were some months when the future of Eastern Region was uncertain.

With a concentration of Barbershoppers from NSW, the Victorian and Tasmanian choruses were remote from the Eastern centre of operations. Despite the best efforts of the Eastern Region Board it proved very difficult to get any substantial involvement of those from outside NSW in Eastern Region activities.

The Eastern Region weekend workshops at Greenhills just out of Canberra were of great value to members but, with travel added, cost Victorian members more than $400 and Tasmanian members much more (and so they didn’t attend). Most Victorian and Tasmanian members gained little value from the fraction of their AAMBS’ subscription that was returned to Eastern Region to support its activities.

Those in the southern states were starting to ask whether they might run their own regions. With the quartet qualifiers for the Brisbane PanPac Convention needing to be organised it became imperative that any reorganisation of Eastern Region take place quickly.

AAMBS gave the green light for the establishment of separate Victorian and Tasmanian Regions in December and we have been working since then to get the Regional organisation off the ground.

With only two clubs in Victoria it was decided that each would nominate three delegates to the Regional Board. AAMBS asked Doug Moody from The Melbournaires to be the first Chairman of the Victorian Region and undertake the initial organisation of the region. The Board then elected Chris Daria from the Geelong Bay City Conchords as its Vice-Chairman (and designer of our new logo) and Maurice Deans from The Melbournaires to be its Secretary/Treasurer.

Our first task has been the organisation of the Regional quartet competition which is the event that serves as the qualifying round for the forthcoming Convention. Our colleagues in the old Eastern Region will be delighted to know that we are now starting to appreciate the amount of work they were putting in to make these events a success.

Bill Purdue (Eastern Region Treasurer) and Barry Joy (AAMBS Treasurer) have helped us get our finances organised and AAMBS President Mike Donnelly has been very encouraging. David Brown is guiding our organisation of the quartet contest. Our thanks go to all those who have been so willing to share their expertise.

We hope to justify AAMBS willingness to allow us to run things in our own part of Australia.

Doug Moody
Chairman—Victorian Region

Timely advice to Quartets

If your quartet is not listed on the AAMBS’ Website then you are not currently registered with AAMBS and cannot compete in any Regional, National or International competitions.
**Letters to the Editor**

**Reply to John Hill from Men in Harmony**

Good Morning John,

First of all, there is no way of logging into the members’ area of BHS (even as a member of AAMBS as an affiliate) unless you are an actual member of BHS.

But you don’t need to pay for multiple copies of the two songs. You simply fax them on your Men in Harmony letterhead and give them your credit card particulars in the fax. If in the order you provide your email address they will usually forward the copies you order by email, or even fax them, saving time.

You then notify APRA that you will be making 40 copies of each of the two songs “for the instruction and learning of your members only”, giving APRA the particulars of the Titles, the Composer(s) and the Arranger(s) – and they (APRA) will bill you – the cost of Copying of the music in Australia is subject to payment to APRA here under the Australian Copyright Act.

Sending the direct fax will protect your privacy.

Yours in Harmony

Kevin White

Secretary—AAMBS Inc

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**Sent to Kevin White, AAMBS Secretary**

Hello Kevin

Could you please inform me is there any way of logging into the members area of BHS. I obtained a preview copy of a couple of songs 4 weeks ago and didn’t bother trying through the members’ area although I mentioned in my email that our chorus was a member of AAMBS. But now I wish to order 40 copies of the two songs and wish to pay the members price.

I was also put out when ordering these preview copies that there was no convenient way of paying for them other than giving my credit card number in an unprotected email.

I don’t know any other organisation which expects you to do that - it’s very risky.

Surely AAMBS can organise something better for its members! How do the other choruses get their music these days?

I would appreciate your urgent advice although I know making any changes to the system would take time even if it’s possible.

For now I’d be happy with a member number and password or some other method of obtaining member prices.

Kind Regards

John Hill (Men in Harmony)

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**Sent to Mike Wells, our VP Music**

From: Joe Johnson <bbshopmusic@yahoo.com>

Date: 9 February 2011 1:42:05 PM AEST

To: music@aambs.org.au

Subject: AAMBS Music VP

Hello Mike ...

This is Joe Johnson, a barbershop arranger, writing to you as the Music VP for AAMBS. You may be familiar with my collection of hymn and gospel arrangements which are available for free on my website and on the BHS website. These arrangements have been welcomed and appreciated by many quartets and choruses.

I am introducing a beautiful new arrangement of "Sweet Hour of Prayer" which I would like to share with as many folks as possible.

It can be downloaded, with learning tracks, at http://www.box.net/shared/4rke63mqmo

If you or one of your colleagues could forward this information to all of your chorus music directors, I would be most appreciative.

Thanks and best regards ... Joe

JOE JOHNSON

House of Joseph Music

www.bbsmusic.com

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**Are you always In Harmony?**

Your AAMBS’ Secretary has received a new shipment of Pitch Pipes at the special price of $30.00 each.

Get yours now ..

to ensure that you are always on the note for the forthcoming competitions

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In Harmony Issue 121— March / April 2011
Singing is Good for You

With a song in their heart

More and more people are singing singing’s praises, writes HELEN PIT.

Sydneysiders embraced the notion of the redemptive power of choral singing when they flocked in record numbers to the Hayden Orpheum at Cremorne to see the 2004 Swedish film As It Is in Heaven. The movie, about a conductor who returns to his home town to run a choir, became Australia’s longest-running film, playing for more than two years.

Across the country, people are coming together to sing in unison — if not always in harmony — in jails, retirement homes, hospitals and hospices. The “feel-good factor” for those who come together to sing has been well documented and includes decreased social isolation, depression and asthma symptoms and increased endorphins and confidence.

The benefits are not only for those singing but also those sung to, as members of the Sydney branch of the US-based Threshold Choir, which sings to the dying, can attest. The Threshold Choir Sydney’s Susie Nelson-Smith says the all-female group uses singing to offer compassion and comfort.

“We consider what we do as kindness made audible,” Nelson-Smith says.

Evolutionary biologists claim singing in a group answers a primal urge and that language evolved from wordless singing. In his 2006 book The Singing Neanderthals, Steven Mithen maintains that singing expresses our most basic emotions more effectively than speaking.

“It was music that helped early humans find a mate, soothe a child, cheer a companion or provide a group’s social glue,” he writes.

Singing is up there with praying and playing sport as a way to bring people together. Stuart Davis, who has been bringing people together to sing for 20 years and runs six choirs throughout Sydney, says there has been a boom in community choirs.

“There have always been serious choirs, like philharmonic and church choirs and barbershop quartets but the growth area has been the community choir that doesn’t fit into any category,” he says. “The choir is not attached to a church or a particular genre of music. It is just a bunch of people who get together in a community to sing because it appeals to them.”

Davis likens singing in circles in a choir to gathering around a campfire.

“It strengthens the bond if the goal is to become a tight band of people working together to sing in harmony,” he says.

Tina Broad, who runs the Music Council of Australia’s national music advocacy campaign, Music. Play for Life, as well as an a cappella choir, the glorious MUDsingers in Milton/ULLadulla, agrees community choirs have been growing largely because they offer havens for those wanting to reconnect with their voice.

Broad says people carry singing-related baggage that is so often entrenched, thanks to careless remarks made to budding singers in their youth.

“At the MUDsingers’ black-tie gala, an 88-year-old chorister sang his first solo in front of an audience in 67 years. “He hadn’t sung solo publicly since he was 13, hormones raging,” Broad says. “His still-breaking voice cracked when he hit a note and it scarred him for life.” Older people in particular seem to benefit from joining community choirs, the creativity and ageing manager of Musica Viva, Jenny Ainsworth, says.

Through a grant from the Australia Council, Musica Viva has been funding a Campbelltown choir, Sweet Tonic — Music for Life, for people aged 55 to 80, since 2007. Almost all members reported improved fitness and flexibility thanks to physical warm-ups, as well as increased relaxation, calmness and social inclusion.

The particular intimacy of single-gender choirs, whatever the age range, can also be a form of group therapy, according to Cathy Wilcox, Herald cartoonist and member of all-women’s inner-west Sydney choir Swing Out Mama.

“It’s a very forgiving environment,” Wilcox says. “Everybody has good nights and off nights, nobody’s judging if we’re not good enough. If anyone’s having a crisis, we all hear about it and share wisdom — between singing or after.”

“For a previously averted ‘non-team player’, it’s been a valuable experience to find a group in which I don’t feel like an outsider.”
**Club News**

### Just your typical barbershop chorus?

Twenty six men, every Tuesday night, sometimes a rag-tag mob struggling to find the opening chord despite the best efforts of our director, Nick Ellis; sometimes a highly disciplined well-oiled machine snapping to attention with the precision of a guards regiment (well, not really, I just made that last bit up). Still, we sing for the sheer joy of singing and we strive always to improve the quality of our harmony and our presentation. Harmony and good fellowship, like a comfortable pair of slippers, has been a feature of our Club for all sixteen years of its existence. We actively support and encourage all our members to participate in quartet singing and can boast no fewer than four established quartets. (Well, three maybe.)

After each practice night a few of our members adjourn to a nearby McDonald's eatery for a late night snack. It is not unusual for these adjournments to turn into a sort of mini random act of culture and the fellow patrons (usually young people) will smile and often take out their mobile phones to record what they see and hear. Sometimes they'll even make a follow-up visit to our rehearsal night.

In addition to participating in AAMBS conventions and local eisteddfods, Bayside Harmony has been entertaining the people of Redland City and surrounding districts for over sixteen years. While the primary motivation for joining a Barbershop Chorus is the joy of singing, it is always nice to receive some recognition and token of appreciation from those whom we seek to entertain. It was, therefore, very pleasing for us to be the recipients of the Redland City Australia Day Cultural Award in a ceremony conducted in January of this year. Such recognition and appreciation of our efforts gives each member of the Club a great sense of satisfaction.

Hope we see many of you at the forthcoming conventions in Brisbane.  

*Peter Lovegrove*  
VP Public Relations  
info@baysideharmony.org.au

### Toowoomba gets on with it!

Greetings to all of our brothers in harmony. After the chaos of the local floods (thank you so very much for your calls and emails of support) our chorus is finally settling into 2011. Chorus attendance was intermittent during the early weeks but we now average 37 on the risers each rehearsal. Like all choruses, ours is no stranger to new members doing it tough and our thoughts and prayers stay with Paul Matthews and Roger & Carol Oyston.

Having introduced 3 new repertoire songs late last year, our initial work in 2011 has been to consolidate those to a sharp performance level. Additional work is also focused on our competition package and we very much look forward to singing in the Sunshine Regional Convention in May, and again at the AAMBS National Convention / Pan Pacs later this year. Additional coaching from Jen & Andrew Howson is having a great impact on our progress and we plan to take our singing and performance levels up another couple of notches by September.

Recently we had the pleasure of a visit from National Councillors Derek Churchill, and Kevin White and his wonderful wife Nerida. Along with Mike Wells (AAMBS VP Music) who is an integral part of the HAH team, we had quite an audience and we made every post a winner. This visit also coincided with our first New Faces Night for 2011 and we were thrilled to host 12 visitors (and their families) of which 3 look almost certain to join our ranks.

HAH is clearly focused on performing for a variety of functions on Mothers Day and we continue our short but proud tradition of serving our local community for sing outs including the Leprosy Foundation, SQIT Graduation and Bunnings. We also plan to host another highly successful Singing Restaurant on 20 August before heading into our annual camp prior to convention.

Our Australia Day performance to a massive flood-recovery crowd at Picnic Point in Toowoomba was very well received and featured our Australiana package interspersed with a set from Left Field and bush verse from our own Ross Fulloon. The crowd ‘went off’ and we gained subsequent interest from one of the local schools who have since visited a rehearsal.

There are several key elements in our Chorus and club I would like to recognise. We have a very committed Executive led by Peter Devey, a strong and switched on Music Team led by Mike Wells, a simply wonderful Ladies Support Team, and a bunch of guys on the risers who are really stepping up to the plate by qualifying their songs and increasing the overall level of performance. I am also really excited by the emergence of up to 3 new quartets from within our ranks. Uncalled For are well on their way to the Regionals and two others are experiencing the sheer delight of singing polecats as they take their first steps to quartetting.

We still have a long, long way to go but the feel is good, the structures are in place and I am one very proud MD. Thanks guys – you are sensational!

As usual we welcome all visitors to our beautiful part of the world. Check the AAMBS website for our rehearsal details or go to our ever-changing website www.haharmony.com

*In harmony, Mike Ludwig - MD*
New Chorus in SA

The chorus has had a busy couple of months, some members of our chorus plus some from The Festival States-Men and Harborside Harmony have formed a joint SA Chorus, Sounds of A-Chord, to compete at the Convention in September and we were busy fundraising for this event, then along came the Cyclone, Floods and Earthquake so our priorities changed.

We did a fund raising singout in our local Shopping Centre, the words of My Country never rang truer when we sang it, we raised $705 and also took part in a fund raising concert organised by Christies Beach Uniting Church which raised about $2,000, for the Flood Appeal. We are now fundraising for our friends across the Tasman after the terrible earthquake they suffered, hopefully there are no more disasters on the horizon then we can get back to our own needs, selfish as it may seem.

We are at the present organising a Barbershop Variety show to be held in July again this year, with all the local Male and Female groups and quartets taking part.

The Chorus send their condolences to all those who have lost friends and loved ones in Queensland, Christchurch and other areas affected by the floods and earthquake and hope that your lives return to normal, if that is possible, in the near future.

Gordon Tomlinson, Secretary

Fresh Energy in the West

Men In Harmony

The new year has brought fresh energy and enthusiasm to the Men in Harmony Chorus and it flows from the appointment of our new Music Director, Bec Mutton. Multi-skilled and very talented, Bec came to the West from Wagga Wagga in NSW and joined the new ladies chorus, A Cappella West, as Assistant Director. That chorus placed fourth in its first appearance in the Sweet Adelines National Championships last year and Bec’s quartet, iCappella, took out the Silver – add a working week and you have one very busy lady!

So, we are delighted that Bec has found time to fit us into her heavy schedule and the men are responding very well to her lively and interesting teaching and coaching program. Also, Men in Harmony’s annual recruiting drive is off to a great start with a very good response to the “SIX WEEKS FREE SINGING LESSONS FOR MEN” invitation, which we strongly promoted through leaflets, posters and local newspaper, radio ads and editorials. The first night produced a great rollup of interested “prospects” and the indications are excellent.

Our annual Citizenship Ceremony outings for local Municipalities went very well. One on the eve of Australia Day and a second at “crack-of-dawn” (actually 7.15 call for 7.45 start) on the day itself.

They are moving occasions and one does feel very proud singing the Aussie songs, which are always well received by the candidates and their supporters. There is no doubt that music, in any form, is a wonderful, universal form of communication.

Although the usual cyclonic weather up North seems to be easing, autumn is slow to arrive in the Perth metro area and we’re pretty tired of the over 30s days with no rain for some time. But our thoughts have been with our fellow harmonizers in the Eastern States and the soakings you’ve had – I assume You’re As Welcome As the Showers in May, won’t be included in the Mass Sing program at the Pan Pac. Men in Harmony members are looking forward to our eleventh national gathering very much - bolstered with overseas choruses and quartets it will be a really grand occasion. See you all there!

Singcerely

Andy Aberle

I was always taught to respect my elders, but lately they are more difficult to find.

Gordon Tomlinson
Secretary
Singing at all three Citizenship Ceremonies at the City of Stirling on Australia Day, Wednesday 26 January, was quite a commitment. In addition to singing prior to the commencement of each ceremony, we sang a bracket of Australian songs for the new citizens and their guests as they moved out of the auditorium after the ceremony. The joy on the faces of the people and their gestures of appreciation to us as they moved past to their picnic gave us a real buzz. We are booked to sing at a further 13 ceremonies with the City this year.

During our warm-up at the first of these ceremonies, we were interrupted by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Giovanni Italiano, who presented us with a framed memento of Australia Day 2011, and expressed the special thanks of the Mayor and Councillors for our contribution. The letter of appreciation included the following paragraph.

“The Westcoast Barbershop Harmony Club have performed at the City’s formal citizenship ceremonies since 2008, creating a vibrant atmosphere that has become an essential part of all our ceremonies. The City is grateful for the energy, dedication and excellence demonstrated through each and every performance enjoyed by the recipients, guests and VIPs.”

Data from AAMBS, 1 June 2010, showed us as the largest of the seven clubs in the Western Region and the (equal) sixth largest of the 29 AAMBS clubs. However, many of our members are of mature years and it is vital that we continue to attract new members. At our last Committee meeting, we formed a recruiting working party to develop and implement strategies for publicising and promoting the chorus to men aged 55-65, our target range for recruiting.

Finally, we acknowledge that keeping rehearsal nights refreshing and satisfying is of critical importance to the recruitment and retention of members. The following personal view of rehearsals was delivered in verse by our resident poet, baritone Doug Davies, at our recent Annual Dinner.

**Comin’ Down to Chorus on a Friday Night**

I’m not sure I can make it
Seems my energy is spent
I’m feeling all lethargic
Me ‘get up and go’ is went.
But I grit me teeth, let in the clutch
And drive with all me might
Comin’ down to chorus on a Friday night.
We jump about and wave our hands
Cos warm-up’s all the go,
We ‘oo’ and ‘ah’ and smile and sway
And hum and puff and blow.
But hark! I hear a pitch-pipe,
Sure enough the note’s B-flat!
How can a bloke feel weary
With a bugle call like that?

_Pender Pedler_
_President_

**gotta sing!**

_In Harmony Issue 121—March / April 2011_
Club news (cont’d)

Exciting news from South Australian Youth

The past six months have been hectic for us at Festival States-men Youth Chorus. The last term of 2010 saw me take on the challenge of acting MD as Jonathan Bligh became Musical Director for the critically acclaimed SA premiere musical Spring Awakening. The lads were also honoured to win the Today Tonight’s Carols by Candelight Choir Competition, awarding us the opportunity to not only sing in the Adelaide Carols by Candelight in front of some 35,000 people but to also have a spot of our own. The guys had a fantastic time and were so well received that we were asked to do an impromptu encore.

This year is shaping up to be our biggest, since our formation two years ago next month.

With a number of performances with some of the best choral groups in Adelaide, including Adelaide’s premiere male voice choir (The Metropolitan Male Voice Choir) and Gospel Choir (Soul Factor Gospel Choir) we are maintaining a very busy schedule throughout the year. On top of this, we are heavily involved in preparations (as I’m sure most choruses are) for the Pan Pacific Competition in Brisbane in September. We have been focusing on improving ourselves constantly since Hobart and are looking forward to showcasing ourselves in September with the best in the pacific region.

Our membership has also expanded significantly in the last 18 months. With 25 current members we are just shy of doubling our number since we competed in Hobart in 2009. Such membership growth brings with it a shift in dynamic and a significant change in sound which has proved a great joy and welcome challenge for the music team to explore and develop.

We are also in the final stages of planning for South Australia’s Big Barbershop Day Out (BBDO); a whole day workshop for school choirs and a fantastic way of promoting a Capella singing, especially in the barbershop style.

This year, we are very excited to have our National Champion Quartet Alliance flying over to lead the workshops with an expected 150 students from 8 schools. Alliance will also be doing a substantial volume of coaching with both men’s and women’s choruses and quartets in SA before a fundraising concert on April 2nd to raise funds for Alliance and the SA contingent competing in the international competitions in June, which includes our current Silver Medallist Youth Quartet The Fishbowl Boys. Tickets are $20/$15 and can be booked by phoning (08) 8261 8107.

FSYC will soon be launching its own website, so watch this space for details once it has been launched. Please remember to ‘Like’ us on Facebook and contact us at contact.fsyncl@gmail.com to be added to our mailing list.

Following Anna Bligh’s request to support QLD after the recent natural disasters, we will be coming with a touring party of over 50 and look forward to seeing you all in 6 months time.

Yours in Harmony, Trevor Anderson

First International Mixed Barbershop Quartet Championship

BinG! barbershop in Germany announces the first international mixed barbershop quartet championship to be held on Sunday 4 March 2012 at the German national barbershop convention at the world famous Konzerthaus in Dortmund, Germany, from 2-4 March 2012.

Application information The definition of a mixed barbershop quartet is that both genders are represented in the quartet.

Applications are made using the application form to be downloaded under www.barbershop.de and sent by FAX or email to WorldMixed@barbershop.de. The application deadline is May 30th, 2011.

A video recording of the quartet singing two contestable songs (according to the guidelines of the BHS) live is to be provided on a server of the quartet’s choice with an access code sent to BinG! This link to a video recording (without any post production like autotuning or melodying) could also be in the form of a complete recording on youtube or on the quartet’s homepage.

Neutral certified judges will view the material and make a selection. The 10 best applicants will be accepted for the competition. Decisions will be made strictly according to the results of the preliminary judging and independent from the nationality of the applicants.

Notice of qualification will be sent out by 30 August 2011. Quartets who will be invited to compete are asked to respond and pay the registration fees by 15 September 2011. After this point the next quartets on the waiting list will be notified.

Registration fees (€ 95,- per person) includes complete access to all events during the German Barbershop Convention.

http://www.barbershop.de
http://www.konzerthaus-dortmund.de

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**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

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**COMING EVENTS**

**2011**

Mar 24—Central Coast Film Night Fundraiser—6pm at Avoca Beach Cinema, Avoca Beach, Gosford NSW. After nibbles and drinks on the lawn patrons will move into the theatre to hear songs from SOUNDWAVES followed by the new Australian Film directed by Gillian Armstrong A Heart Beat Away about a local Marching Band. Tickets: $15 each from Ray Bale 4329 5314

Mar 26—Sweet Adelines’ Workshop— 9 am—6 pm at Adamstown Uniting Church, 228 Brunker Road, Adamstown. Cost $25 per head. Information: elidia.rymer@bigpond.com or phone Elidie on 0408 737 714

Apr 2—South Australian Fundraiser Concert—to help our National Champion quartet Alliance and Gold Medal Chorus, Vocal Evolution on their way to Internationals. Tickets at $20 / $15 each—08 8261 8107

Apr 3—AAMBS Council Teleconference

Apr 8-11—SABS 3rd Annual Convention
San Pedro del Pinatar, Marcia, Spain

May - Region Regional Qualifying Events
14-15 - Sunshine Region
14-15 - Western Region
28-29 - Tasmanian Region

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2012

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

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