

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Australia “Brings Back Barbershop”!

Perth, WA, 8 June, 2011 - Benchmark, *Australia's Got Talent* resident barbershop quartet, is only a small example of the amazing revival of barbershop quartets in Australia.

The Australian Barbershop community is a vibrant collection of male singers, ranging in age from 13 to 90, from all over Australia, who gather together to sing tight, exciting four-part harmonies in quartets and in choruses. There are choruses and quartets in every major city and town across Australia, and numbers are growing daily. The Australian Association of Men Barbershop Singers (AAMBS) is the association to which these men belong.

AAMBS organises a national convention and competition every two years to find the best choruses and quartets in the country. More than 800 barbershop quartet singers, from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and Hawaii will be appearing alongside Benchmark at this major barbershop quartet event being hosted in Brisbane in September this year.

AGT Judges praised the quartet on screen last night, with Dani Minogue commenting “their harmonies sounded like they were broadcasted direct from another era - bring back barbershop!” and Brian McFadden declaring Benchmark “were the highlight of the show so far!”. President of AAMBS, Mike Donnelly, says “Benchmark did our wonderful artform proud. I know barbershoppers, male and female, all around the country are phoning and SMS-ing to vote for Benchmark right now”.

About barbershop-style a cappella music: Barbershop harmony is a unique musical art form, known for its four-part harmony and the “expanded sound” created by its unique chord structures. The Barbershop Harmony Society is the world's largest all-male singing organisation, with more than 35,000 singers in Australia, the United States, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, The Netherlands, Finland, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden.

Barbershop in the community: Barbershoppers actively support community service projects and local charities, and contribute many man-hours singing for churches, schools, and hospitals. As well as attending the national convention and competition, most of the organisation's clubs stage at least one annual show, bringing featured quartets and choruses to the community. In addition, AAMBS' Young Singers program is dedicated to supporting the many hundreds of young people who enjoy singing in the a capella style around Australia.

With such a wide range of activities to enjoy, it's easy to understand why barbershop harmony is indeed “bringing back barbershop”. Although men join for the music, most stay in the organisation because of the strong, deep friendships they build by raising their voices together in song.

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