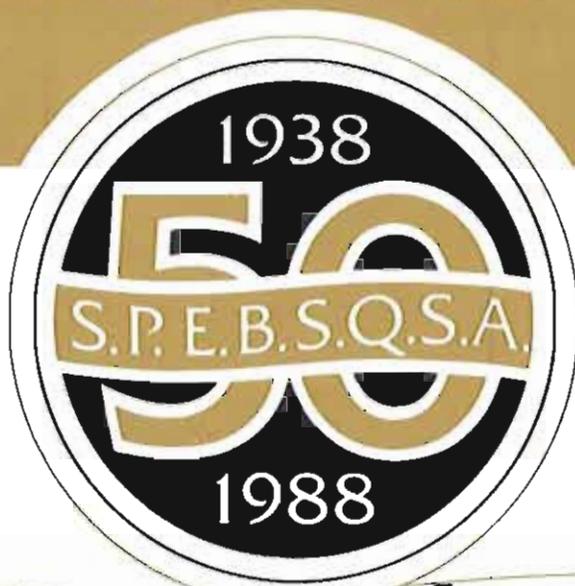


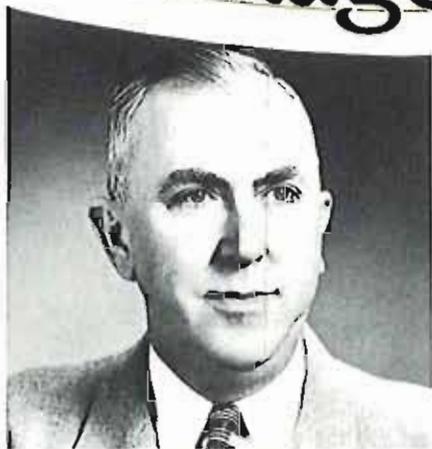


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Harmonizer

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1988



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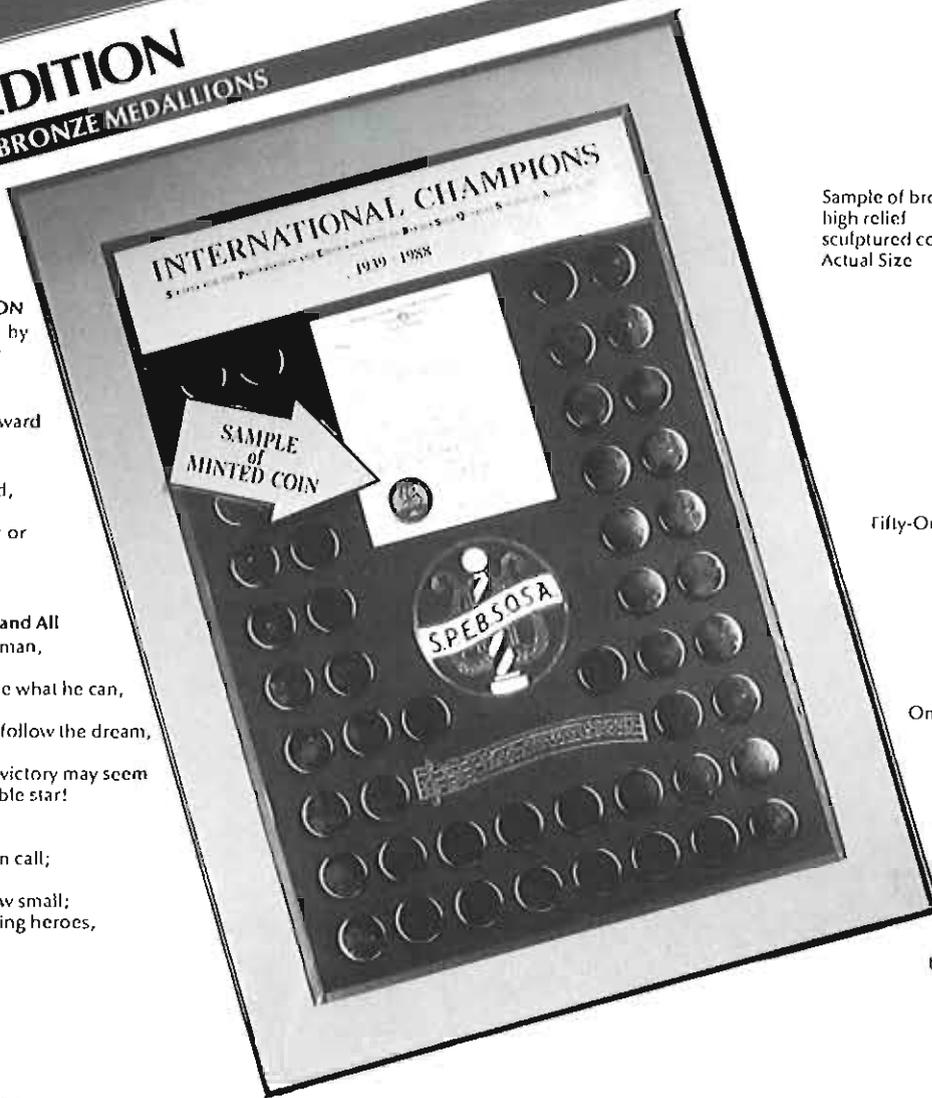
Deep in the heart of every man,
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No matter how great or how small;
Sing "Hail" to the conquering heroes,
Victorious proud and tall;
Every man is a winner
Champions, one and all!

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November/December 1988 Volume XLVIII, No. 6

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The Song in this Issue

Every year since 1981, with the exception of 1987 when they did not compete, **Vaudeville** has placed in the Top 10 at the international quartet contest, collecting five silver and bronze medals along the way. One of their outstanding songs is *The End of the Road*, which they have performed several times in the international quartet contest. The song was composed by Scott Werner and John Hohl, who sing lead and baritone in the quartet.

John has arranged other songs which have been released by the Society, including *Call Me Back*, *Pal O' Mine*, *I Love You Just The Same*, *Sweet Adeline* and *The Key To Success With The Beautiful Girls*.

Scott has achieved success not only with Vaudeville but as a chorus director, leading the **Alexandria Harmonizers** to the international chorus championship in 1986. In addition, you may have seen Scott leading the Harmonizers (and singing with Vaudeville) on nationwide TV early in 1988 in a broadcast from the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Scott has been a member of the Alexandria chapter since 1964.

We sincerely thank Scott and John for graciously giving the Society permission to publish their song and arrangement for the enjoyment of all our members.

Convention listings now appear on our new *Barbershop Travels and Conventions* page (see page 24 of this issue).

On our cover:

O.C. Cash, Society's Founder. *Bartlesville Barflies*, First Quartet Champions. *Singing Capital Chorus*, First International Champions.

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The Harmonizer

A BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE PUBLISHED FOR AND ABOUT MEMBERS OF SPEBSQSA, INC. IN THE INTERESTS OF BARBERSHOP HARMONY.

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This special Golden Anniversary issue, including a 49-page tribute to 50 Years of Champions, is the largest *Harmonizer* ever published. Even at a total of 76 pages, however, limited time and budget forced curtailment or delay of many regular *Harmonizer* features and photos, which will be carried in future issues.

Happy Holidays to all Barbershop Families!



In "Seventh" Heaven

by Joe Liles
Executive Director



Dear Friends,

I wrote a song in 1984 that expresses my Happy Holidays message to you. Please accept it with my love and good wishes for a world of singing.

LET THERE BE MUSIC!
LET THERE BE LOVE!

"All the world really needs is love," so they say,
For love is the way we share every day.
Although I am praying love will be staying,
Yet, I am saying that forevermore:
Let there be Music!

Let there be melody,
Let there be singing,
Let there be harmony,
Let there be children,
Let there be laughter,
Let there be Christmas forever after.
Let every nation, in celebration,
Today release a dove of peace,
Then every war will cease.
If there be music,
There will be melody.
If there be singing,
There will be harmony.
And with the magic of rainbows,
The sun up above,
LET THERE BE MUSIC!
LET THERE BE LOVE!

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
June 29, 1988

I am pleased to send warm greetings during the 50th anniversary of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America.

It's hard to imagine a more engaging experience than that of listening to the delightful sound of a barbershop quartet in full voice. I've always been a fan, and barbershop quartets never fail to remind me what a wonderful pleasure good music is in general and vocal virtuosity in particular. What harmony the barbershop quartet brings to our world! Happily, your 50th anniversary gives ample testimony that this original American art form is alive, well, and flourishing. I commend your society for making that so.

I commend you, as well, for your generous spirit of voluntarism, exemplified by your activities in behalf of the United Service Project and countless local community service organizations. Your efforts are in the best American tradition of neighbor helping neighbor.

Nancy joins me in congratulating all of you for 50 years of joyous sounds. May the next 50 be equally bright, and may the harmonies never end. God bless you.

Ronald Reagan

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Reflections of a Golden Ring

by Jim Warner
International President

As the year draws to a close, my thoughts have naturally turned to reflecting upon what this Golden Anniversary Year, and these fifty years, have meant to us and to those whose lives have been touched by our music, our service and our fellowship. Pictures and accounts of our activities provide great material for scrapbooks or for story swapping sessions at afterglows, but unless they also demonstrate forward momentum, they might just as well be filed away, to gather dust and be forgotten.

This has been a year in which we have focused on momentum - the momentum which has brought us through those fifty years to this time and place in our journey, as well as the momentum which will propel us onward for the next fifty years and beyond. We have revisited our history, not merely for the nostalgia generated by the exercise, but also to examine, affirm, and perhaps adjust, the goals, purposes and philosophy which will guide us in the future. Not surprisingly, we found positive signs of our own maturity, but we have also identified challenges presented by the changing musical, social and global environment in which we, and our music, exist. The importance of this year has not been in the answering of the questions, but in the asking; arriving at our golden anniversary has not marked the end of a journey, but only the passing of a mile post along the way.

Had O. C. Cash been asked in 1938 to set some long range goals one of those goals might have been to provide a means and method for barbershop harmony to flourish over the next fifty years - to 1988 and beyond. From reading many of O. C.'s writings and visiting with his daughter, Betty Anne, and talking with others who knew him,

I'm confident that if O. C. were with us today he wouldn't just sit back, smile and say, "Well, we did it." He would gather up some more men, take another pitch and be on his way again - singing. And that's exactly what we must do.

The studies and recommendations of our Future II Committee have provided us with the information and strategies needed to increase our momentum - to enhance our enjoyment of our music and our hobby, and to gain wider public acceptance and appreciation of barbershop harmony. The media attention focused on us during the year - by *Time* and *Delta Sky* magazines, by *CBS NEWS*, *Voice of America* and *National Public Radio*, and by hundreds of local radio and television stations and newspapers - has not only encouraged us by demonstrating a broad based public interest in the Society and our music, but has also provided us with the opportunity to reach out to an ever widening circle of potential singers and audiences throughout the world. One of our primary goals for the year was to achieve expanded world-wide recognition for, and appreciation of, barbershop harmony and its golden ring. From the travels of the Society staff quartet through Australia, to the active participation at our International Convention by our friends from Great Britain, Sweden, New Zealand, Germany and Australia, to the thousands of performances by quartets and choruses in our local communities, we have fulfilled that goal - but only temporarily. We must keep that momentum going, and growing, by performing in public more and more often, and with a greater degree of professionalism. It's not only a matter of better marketing, it's a matter of pride.

Our Golden Anniversary Year has flown

by, leaving me with many treasured memories, a large measure of satisfaction, but some lingering frustrations and concerns. I am concerned that our membership trend has not yet reversed its course, in spite of improvements in our musical product and the increased publicity which we have received, and I am frustrated by my inability to reach maximum momentum in the process of implementing the recommendations and strategies which were developed by the Future II Committee, and enthusiastically endorsed by the International Board. I am, however, encouraged and reassured that we have talented and dedicated leaders at the international, district and chapter levels, who share the vision and who will diligently pursue the projects, until the job is complete. All it requires is determination, patience and a constant reminder that our primary purpose is to share the enjoyment of singing barbershop harmony.

The opportunity to serve as your president during our Golden Anniversary Year, and to meet and sing with so many of you, has been an exhilarating experience and a privilege which I appreciate more than I can adequately express. From your experiences which you have generously shared with me in letters and calls and conversations, I've come to a full appreciation of the impact which our music and our fellowship has had on the lives of many people - both inside and outside of our Society. I can assure you that there is, within the Society today and within the Family which surrounds us, a deep commitment to perpetuating our music and the values which we treasure; and I'm confident that, for at least the next fifty years, the world will continue to experience and love Barbershop Harmony...a Golden Ring. 

Meet the 1988 Champions

A little luck and a lot of dedication: 'secrets' behind The Vocal Majority

by Bob Arnold

Founder & Charter Member
Dallas Metropolitan Chapter

This past July on a beautiful weekend in San Antonio, 150 singers from **The Vocal Majority** won their fifth gold medal as international chorus champions. And because of what seems a long string of contest victories with such large choruses, people seem to be very curious about how a barbershop chapter in Dallas, Texas, can maintain such a high level of performing excellence over an extended period of time.

They don't understand how any amateur group can consistently perform so well with so many singers without possessing some "secret" ingredient.

I'd like to describe that secret in the next few paragraphs.

How it all began

The nucleus of Dallas Metropolitan Chapter first met in 1972, composed of a handful of area singers. Their only goal was to form

an all-male choral group that would attempt to be the best in the world, singing whatever music they collectively enjoyed.

Since a majority of those founders had previously participated in several barbershop chapters, the type of music most of us liked to sing tended to be "in the barbershop style." And, since SPEBSQSA had (and still has) the most sophisticated and well organized competition and judging program for male choral singers in the world, those early Vocal Majority singers found a comfortable home in a new Dallas chapter of the Society.

The audition procedure that was formulated by VM charter member (and Society contest judge) Charlie White in 1971 is basically the same one we use today. It is virtually the same program that has been recommended by the Society for many years.

Because many chapters have asked for copies of The Vocal Majority audition procedure, a video and study guide have been



Vocal Majority director Jim Clancy triumphantly brandishes (for the fifth time) the O. C. Cash Memorial trophy, as Dr. Greg Lyne, **West Towns Chorus** director (left) and Joe Frazier, VM president, look on.

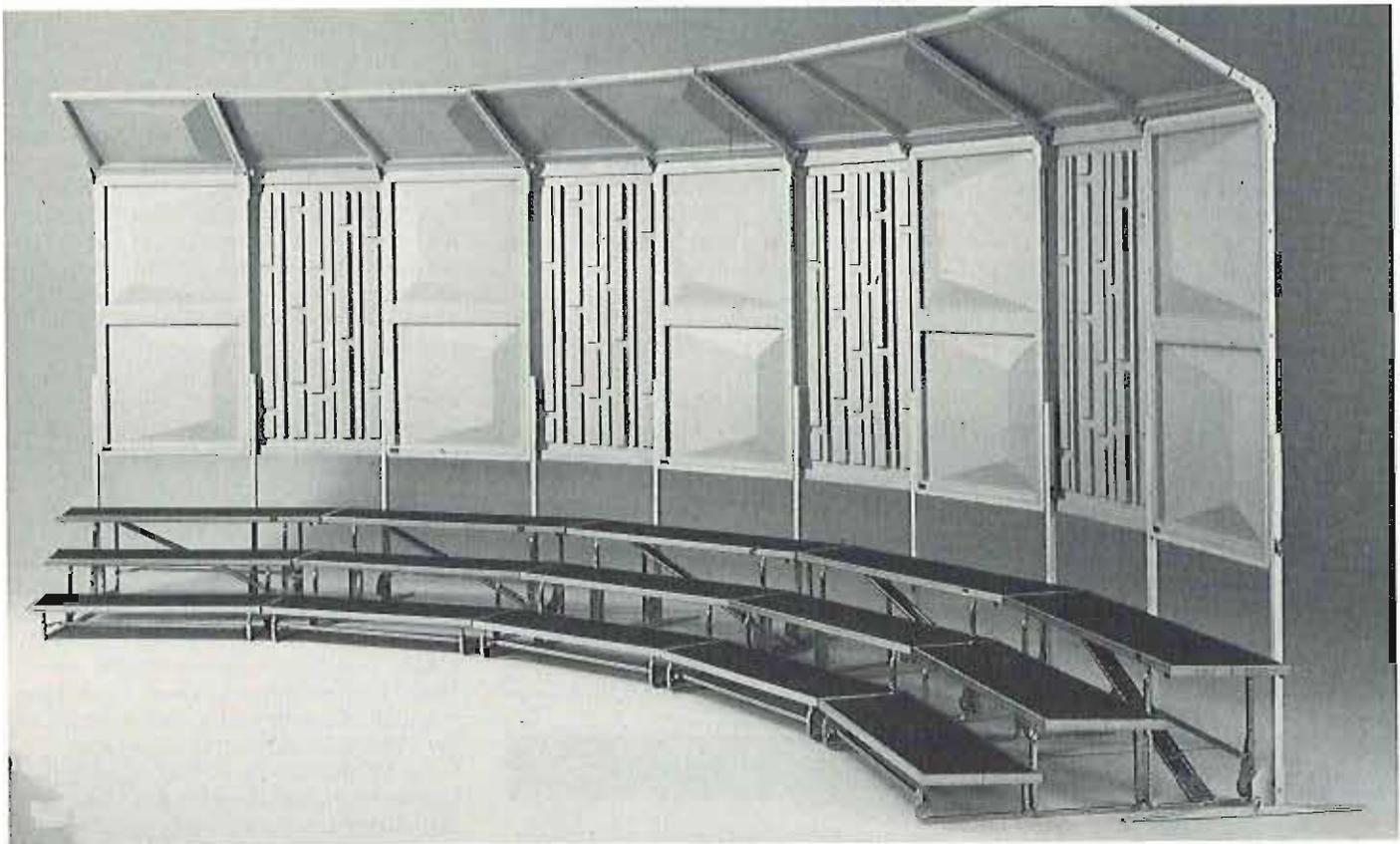
continued on page 6

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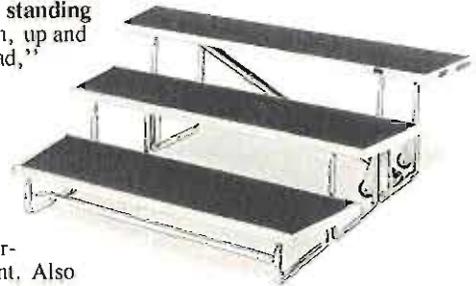


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The VM 'Secret' . . .

continued from page 4

produced for those who inquire. We believe that the only difference between The Vocal Majority audition and that of most other chapters is that *we adhere to it strictly.*

"Cloning" the VM

Over the years, The Vocal Majority has hosted many barbershoppers whose chapters sent them to Dallas to discover the secret of the VM's success. Their objective was to "clone" that success formula for their own chapter.

We enjoy hosting these folks and attempt to spend sufficient time with them to have their questions answered. We generally show them our prospective member orientation materials, our performing chorus guidelines, our promotional materials, our music staff and chapter organizational charts, and our audition procedure.

They attend one of our weekly 3-1/2-hour rehearsals and find that the fellowship is as great and genuine as any chapter in the Society. Many times we attempt to have them meet with our Musical Director Jim Clancy, if his time permits, to draw on Jim's experience and unique perspective.

Most of these representatives go back to their own chapters and report a very surpris-

ing observation: The Vocal Majority doesn't do anything that's much different than any other successful barbershop chapter. *They just seem to do it with more dedication and more consistency.*

Recruit singers, not members

Some say an audition scares away potential members. But we've found that it doesn't seem to scare away good singers. We've never recruited members, only singers.

An average of 10 good singers seem to show up at VM rehearsals each week, curious about what it takes to join the chorus. When they've attended at least three rehearsals, and are aware of the chorus attendance policy (67% for rehearsals, 75% for shows or performances), they may request a private audition prior to rehearsals.

They are also encouraged to share with family members the considerable time commitment necessary to fully participate in chorus activities. We feel very strongly that each member's family must be included in as many chapter activities as possible.

If a singer doesn't successfully complete a particular portion of the audition, he's provided with suggestions for correcting his deficiencies. He is then encouraged to come back again to re-audition.

Luck and dedication

Space here doesn't allow for a complete run-down of VM procedures and techniques. Your best source for this information is the

Barbershop Society's instructional materials — both musical and administrative. If there is a major difference between The Vocal Majority way of doing things and the way YOUR chapter does things, it may involve two ingredients: (1) luck, and (2) dedication.

The Vocal Majority has been very lucky for the past sixteen years to have held onto a talented, inspiring and dedicated musical director, Jim Clancy. The primary job of the chapter's administration over the years has been to commit 100 percent support for the music program of Jim and his Music Staff, and to provide them with every tool they need to keep the chorus in top form.

We've also been lucky to have acquired and kept motivated a great many "role players" — members who are good at a particular job and like to do that job year in and year out. Our chapter officers encourage these people and reward them with recognition as often as possible.

And the VM has been lucky in keeping a great many of our past chapter presidents active in the chorus, using their wealth of experience in an advisory capacity to benefit each ensuing administration. (The group has formalized their existence by naming themselves the "PAPAS" — Past Active Presidents Association in Service.)

Luck has also been involved in obtaining the voluntary services of some of the finest talents in the Society. People like Jack Hines, Don Clause, David Wright, Darryl Flnn, Connie Keil and Brian Beck have contributed greatly to the improvement of the VM during the past sixteen years.

As for dedication — that becomes ingrained in the minds of singers when they attend their very first VM rehearsal. They are told "up-front" the amount of time and dedication necessary to fully participate with the chorus. They are informed that, in addition to regular attendance at weekly rehearsals and frequent shows, they will be expected to participate in quarterly Saturday workshops where they will learn the fundamentals of good singing.

And they are told of the rewards for their "Commitment To Excellence."

Prospective members learn that they could possibly appear with The Vocal Majority every two or three years at the Barbershop Society's annual convention...on at least six locally produced sold-out VM shows for the general public annually...on possibly a dozen convention or banquet bookings a year...and on a record and video production at least once every two years. And a few times each year they will take off work on a Friday and be gone all weekend singing with the chorus in a show as guests of a barbershop or Sweet Adeline chapter somewhere in the country.

They will be admired (and envied) as one of the finest male groups in the world. They will also discover the unique fellowship and love that develops between members while striving for vocal and artistic perfection.

But the strong dedication seems to be worth it every year for about 150 singers from Dallas, Texas. 

The Way I See It

by Steve Ross

Editor, *The New Yorker Times*
Poughkeepsie, NY. Chapter

In the short time I've been editor of the *New Yorker Times*, I've read at least eight editorials lamenting the phenomenon of what are being called "super chapters".

This term is used to describe chapters which have grown large (100+), especially if they have done so in a short time, usually under the leadership of a great Musical Director and a hard working music team. Almost always it refers to a chapter which fields a spectacular winning chorus.

We are told that these chapters "raid" nearby chapters, draining off the best singers. And we are told that the membership of these chapters are regimented, stressed out, and devote time to barbershopping unavailable to the common man. And we are told that these chapters are ruining barbershopping, and that our Society will cease to exist if they are allowed to continue. We are asked to write to Kenosha with our protests.

Well, I hope people of different opinions can agree to disagree in a friendly spirit, because I think that's plain wrong thinking.

Ruining our Society? Who? West Towns? VM? The Thoroughbreds? For gosh sake, these chapters are the ones who expose the

most non-barbershoppers to our art form. They are the ones who are putting out the best performances. They have some of our Society's best quartets. They are the ones who are showing the rest of us what's possible if we put our whole heart into it.

Do they work very hard? You bet they do! Is it necessary to work that hard in order to get to be the best? You bet it is. Whether it's fishing, model trains — or barbershopping. Nothing truly excellent is easy.

I belong to a relatively small chapter. I love my chapter, and the men in it. I'm not against small, hardworking, good chapters.

But if anyone should bear any guilt for making our hobby less successful than it can be, and reducing our marketability to other singers, it's the chapters who have unchallenging, lack-luster programs and such poor performance that talented singers are driven away out of boredom. It's the chapters who have so little discipline that they drive their Directors crazy with riser cross-talk, and who have so little respect for our art form that they can't be bothered to learn the craft that makes barbershop harmony the glorious thing it is when it's done right.

Singers, including barbershoppers, who

continued on page 26



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by Judy Allen

Chiefs! — Chiefs! — **CHIEFS!**

Almost imperceptibly the chant began to pulse and gain momentum in the darkened arena, then exploded into applause as the four men in gray tuxedos bounded onto the international competition stage.

Since winning the Illinois District championship in 1984, it was their fourth International: 12th place, 5th, 3rd - and now the thrill of that golden announcement in San Antonio: "Your 1988 international quartet champions - **Chiefs of Staff!**"

It all began at a picnic in the fall of 1983.

Don Bagley (bass), fresh from the Seattle International, sang a few tags at a barbershop picnic with Chuck Sisson (lead). That week he called Chuck and asked, "How'd you like to start a new quartet?"

"And so," says Chuck, "the two of us started looking around for a tenor and a baritone."

Word of their quest brought out the name and availability of southside Irishman, tenor Tim McShane. All that remained was the right baritone.

Finally they heard the combination they wanted while singing tags in the Illinois hospitality room after the 1984 St. Louis International. Unfortunately, Dick Kingdon was a lead subbing on bari.

Persuading him to switch was no easy task. But by August, Dick agreed to give bari a try.

With Dick came commitment to be an active quartet. Stage presence was to be part of their performance from the beginning. And they had just the man to help: George Gipp (bari, **Cincinnati Kids** and **Chicago Chord of Trade**).

Additional kudos go to sound/Interpreta-



The Bagleys: Don and CarolAnn with (l. to r.) Kathleen, Lorene and John.

tion coach Jay Giallombardo, with special thanks to David Wright for his musical arrangements.

From the beginning, non-singing mike time belonged to Don. A natural storyteller, he brings a friendly warmth and openness that carries to the audience.

"We decided right away that while technical expertise was important, we wouldn't give up anything on the emotional level," explains Don. "A real barbershop experience is the perfect combination of harmonics and lyrics and emotion."

Chuck says it most eloquently: "We can actually feel what the audience is feeling and there's a connection with them, a feedback. We say 'here, feel this, share this.' And...all of a sudden, you feel it come back. When that happens I can sense the level of the quartet

improve...and it's possible to give even more. It's no longer a performance for the audience but *with* the audience."

The support of wives and families has also been critical to the Chiefs' success, with indirect coaching from wives an immeasurable help.

Chiefs always enjoy meeting and singing with other barbershoppers. So whenever you see them perform, take a moment at the afterglow and introduce yourself - maybe even sing a tag. They'll be glad you did, and so will you.

And now meet the Chiefs of Staff:

Don Bagley

(Bass, Arlingtones Chapter)

Don and CarolAnn Bagley are the quintessential barbershop couple.

He is a 30-year member of the Society who first started competing in 1961 with his NED championship quartet **B-Sharps**. They met at the International competition in Chicago in 1966 while he was in the Army serving in San Antonio, singing with and directing the **Chordsmen**; she was working for the international Sweet Adelines organization in Tulsa.

Don admits today, "I believe of all the gold medalists, I've been trying the longest to win!" His other two quartets, **Soundtracks** and **Tin Pan Allies**, were Illinois District champs in 1971 and 1981 respectively, with Soundtracks also 5th-place International medalist in 1974.

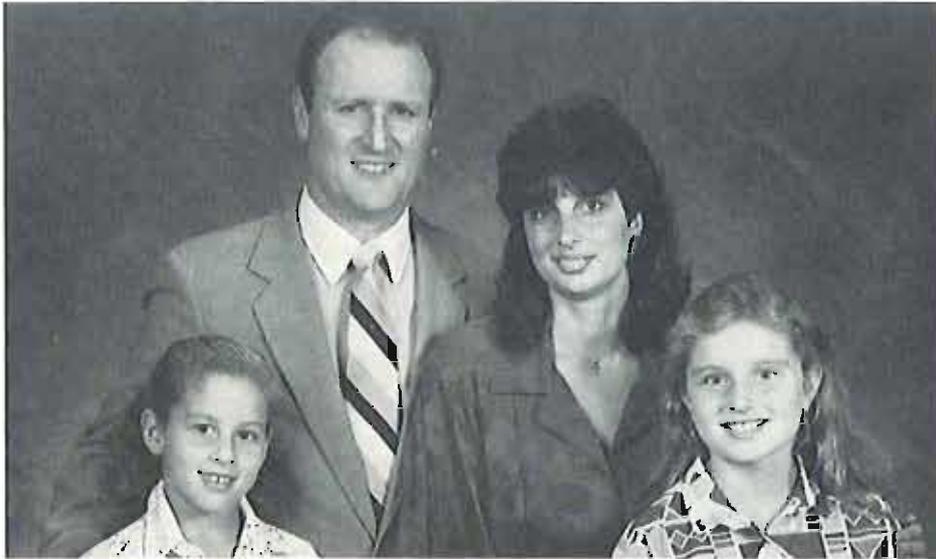
Even CarolAnn was one up on him. She sang lead when **Jubilation** won the 1985 Sweet Adelines' Queens of Harmony crowns and now sings with the **Melodeers** chorus in Northbrook. Don is a long-time member of the Illinois District's **Arlingtones** from Ar-



Chuck and Becky Sisson, daughters Jodi (l.) and (Mrs.) Francine Safstrom.



The Chiefs recording their new album.



Tim and Carolyn McShane with daughters Sheila (left) and Kelly.

lington Heights.

When he's not barbershopping, Don is a certified registered nurse anesthetist at St. Terese Medical Park in Waukegan, Ill. The Bagleys reside in nearby Mundelein and have three children: daughters Kathleen and Lorene are students at Eastern Illinois University, and son John is a high school senior.

Chuck Sisson

(Lead, Northbrook Chapter)

Chuck Sisson is a relative newcomer to barbershopping who joined the Society in 1982 and attended his first district contest that fall. "You know," he recalls, "I listened to every quartet that trip. At one point, the MC mentioned the Society's 50th anniversary and I remember saying to my wife, 'Wouldn't it be great to be the champs during that year?'"

Chuck has long sung in a church choir; he sang in a gospel trio as a teen, played the lead Billy Bigelow role in his senior class production of *Carousel*, and entertained with a folk

trio "hootenanny-style" during his college years at York Academy of Arts, York, Pa.

"I liked performing," he says. "after a show or play, I always left the theatre saying 'I could do that.' One of those times I remembered a friend telling me about SPEBSQSA. That Monday, I went to a rehearsal of the local chapter, Arlingtones. I was hooked!" Within a few months, he was singing lead in his first quartet, *Four On The Floor*.

Originally from Vestal, N.Y., (near Binghamton), the Sissons came to Chicago after Chuck graduated from college in 1969.

Today Chuck, a graphic designer and illustrator, owns a graphics business in Des Plaines. Wife Becky is a group insurance underwriter, and their oldest daughter, (Mrs.) Francine Safstrom, works for her father. Their other daughter, Jodi, is a freshman at Oakton Community College.

Tim McShane

(Tenor, Oaklawn Chapter)

Tim McShane is the youngest member of

the quartet, the only native Chicagoan and the only one who admits to any formal musical training: a "vocal music major" elective course as a high school senior!

He was president of his high school's select glee club and a member of the Chicago All-City High School Chorus. That's when Tim put together his first quartet after seeing Meredith Wilson's *The Music Man* on TV!

It was only natural that he would hear about SPEBSQSA and join the Southwest Suburban Chapter (now Oaklawn) in 1970.

His first Society quartet, *Melody Four*, had only been together about a year when "our bari heard about quartet auditions for a production of *Music Man*. We auditioned and got the part!"

Before getting together with the Chiefs, Tim sang with two other former Illinois District quartet finalists: *Soundfitters Union* in 1976 and *Daily Favorites* in 1983.

Besides barbershopping, Tim is an avid sports fan cheering for the White Sox in the summer, Bears in the winter and Notre Dame all the time.

In his spare time Tim has managed to spend 20 years working at Commonwealth Edison Company. He is a load dispatcher at the utility's Western Division Headquarters in Lombard, Ill.

Wife Carolyn and Tim have been married for 12 years and have two daughters, Kelly, 11, and Sheila, 9. The McShanes make their home in Glen Ellyn.

Dick Kingdon

(Baritone, Lombard Chapter)

Born and raised in Huron, S.D., Dick Kingdon graduated from South Dakota State University in 1965 with a degree in pharmacy. A year later, via the Public Health Service, he joined the U.S. Food and Drug Administration as an investigator and moved to Chicago. Today Dick still has offices in

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Dick Kingdon with his dad, Gene, and daughters Alicia (left) and Stephanie.



Don at work the first day back after San Antonio.

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downtown Chicago and owns a home in suburban Elmhurst.

The only single member of the Chiefs, Dick has two daughters from an earlier marriage, Alicia, 17, and Stephanie, 14. They live in a Kansas City suburb but keep in close contact with Dick. Alicia has attended the last five international contests and was

there along with Dick's dad, Gene, to share the Chiefs' triumph in San Antonio.

Growing up in Huron, Dick attended many family gatherings highlighted by singing and harmonizing. "It wasn't until I joined the Society that I realized those early songfests were based in barbershop harmony," he says now. His early music background also included singing in high school and college glee clubs, choruses and church choirs.

"Stage fright kept me out of school plays and solo appearances," he admits. "Barbershop helped me overcome some, but not all, of that fright!"

Since joining the Society in 1976, he has been active in quartets and chorus. He sang lead in his first quartets, the most notable of which was **Friends**, international semifinalists from 1980 to 1982.

One of the unusual things about the Chiefs is Dick singing baritone - the only time he sings bari. He is still lead section leader and front-row man in the 1987 International Champion Lombard **West Towns Chorus**.

Singing remains Dick's favorite pastime, and barbershop gatherings always find him teaching and singing tags with anyone who wants to stay and sing.



His masters' voices: this registered Shetland Sheepdog belongs to John Mulkin, director of the **Mt. Vernon Chorus** in Harrisburg, IL. His name is *Barwood's Chief of Staff*; he was named for the famous foursome, and John says the dog frequently has left welcoming hairs on each of the Chiefs' uniforms.

(Judy Allen is a free-lance writer and editor, a principal in the firm of Allen Associates with her barbershopper husband, John Allen, currently president of the Lombard West Towns Chapter.)

Chapters in Action

The **Dixie Heritage Chorus** has 100-plus members and three directors and has given at least three barbershop shows. But you won't find it listed in any directory of musical organizations.

The chorus was the 1987 brainchild of Don Bruce, then Dixie Division 4 vice president. Realizing the Nashville and Chattanooga, Tenn., and Huntsville, Ala., chapters all had spring shows scheduled in 1988, he broached the idea of combining the three choruses and giving the same show in all

three cities. It would be the Society's "Heritage of Harmony" production developed at Harmony College.

All sorts of problems had to be worked out: joint rehearsal times and places, transportation, the learning of 16 songs (with the same interpretation) by each chorus, how to use the local chapter quartets in each city and many more. But somehow it all came together, and the show played to packed houses and standing ovations in all three cities.

Sadly, Don Bruce became ill during re-

hearsals and died just before the final show in Nashville. But his loss only strengthened the members' resolve to keep the Dixie Heritage Chorus intact for future performances.

•••

Artist/Editor Ray Thomas of the *Edenaires* bulletin of the **Eden-Hayward Chapter** in California has designed an eye-catching member-recruitment poster or flyer for

continued on page 12



The three-chapter **Dixie Heritage Chorus** and its three directors (L to R): Paul Blazek, Chattanooga; Russ Adklinson, Huntsville, and Larry Deters, Nashville.



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Chapters in Action . . .

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free use by any Society chapter. Headlined "Barbershop Quartet Singing Lives," it may be posted on bulletin boards or used as a handout at fairs and shows. For details contact Ray at (415) 865-1844 or write him at 1237 Park Street, #1, Alameda, CA 94501.

The **New Tradition** of Northbrook, Ill., fourth-place medalist chorus in San Antonio, is a major participant in another honor. Its cable TV Christmas program last winter won an award for the producer from the cable company as most original access (local) production during the preceding year. Entitled "Holiday Harmony," the show was produced by Holly Field, wife of chorus baritone Carl Field. It also publicized The New Tradition's then-upcoming Christmas program.

Speaking of Northbrook: Don Goss, editor of the chapter's *Harmony Gazette*, points out that San Antonio's 50th anniversary convention marked the first time one chapter had members singing in three of the five medalist quartets. Chuck Sisson of the champion **Chiefs of Staff**; all four members of third-place medalist **Chicago Chord of Trade**—Scot Berry, Tim Reynolds, George Gipp and Jay Gialombardo—plus Dick

Johnson and George Peters of **Chordiac Arrest** are members of the Northbrook chapter. D'ya suppose this had anything to do with **The New Tradition's** 1988 chorus medal?

The **Singing Buckeyes** chorus of the Columbus, Ohio, chapter exposed several thousand spectators to barbershop harmony during a 4th of July parade in Upper Arlington, a suburb of Columbus.

Members of the chapter built a float depicting an old-time barbershop complete with barber poles, an antique chair and, of course, a quartet. It was one of more than 30 floats in the parade, which annually attracts thousands of spectators.

As it moved along the street, the float broadcast recordings of the Buckeyes singing *God Bless America*, *Stars and Stripes Forever* and *This Is My Country*.

Toby Balsley has been appointed director of the **New Mexi-Chords** of Albuquerque, N.M., replacing Bill Biffle who had resigned, effective October 21.

Toby, 26, is baritone of **Bank Street**, 4th-place bronze medalist quartet at the 1988 international contest. A barbershopper since the age of 15, he is former co-director of the **Boulder, Colo.**, chorus and also sang with the **Partnership Quartet**.

Biffle, a certified sound category judge, had directed the **New Mexi-Chords** to two Rocky Mountain District championships and

an appearance on the international contest stage. He said he was "burned out" as director but "will continue to be an active New Mexi-Chord."

The **Macon, GA**, Chapter is prouder of no one than it is of long-time member Howard V. Williams Sr., age 90. When he was just 19, Howard organized and directed an Easter sunrise service on Coleman Hill, one of the highest hills in Macon. It has been held each year since, without interruption, and Howard has been in charge of every service.

When it was clear the ceremony had become a significant, permanent part of Macon's heritage, the city constructed concrete platforms for the clergy and performers. About 500 people attended this year's service, and the **Macon Heart of Georgia** chorus and a number of Sweet Adelines are now regular participants.

In a "Chapters in Action" item earlier this year, the Alexandria **Harmonizers** suggested they may have been the first chapter to send three quartets to an international contest: the 1988 convention in San Antonio.

Bob Dykstra of the **Minneapolis Chapter** begs to differ. In 1960, he says, Minneapolis sent three quartets—the **Hut Four**, **Lake-Aires** and **Mel-O-Dons**—to the

continued on page 14

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Chapters in Action . . .

continued from page 12

contest in Dallas. "I'm not sure we were the first," he adds, "but we did beat Alexandria by 28 years."

...

The Ridgewood, N. J., **Cavaliers of Harmony** came up with a novel theme for their Oct. 22 show. Assisted by choruses from the **Morris County, Sussex County** and **Rockland County** chapters, they decided to try to show their audience what it's like to attend an annual barbershop convention.

"The message to our audience will be the camaraderie, fellowship, good times and good singing that we as barbershoppers look forward to each year," said Editor Dom Nizza of Ridgewood's *Town Crier*. The program was to include a mock contest and a community sing "a la Mel Knight," Dom reported.

...

Tuscaloosa's **Heartland Harmonizers** recently were called upon to sing the National Anthem before a sellout crowd of 78,000 at the Alabama-Penn State football game in Birmingham, AL.

The chorus had only a week's notice to prepare for the engagement, member Bobby Wooldridge reported. Members had to buy their own tickets, he added; "they don't give tickets to an Alabama game to anyone!"

...

The **Wilmington, Del. Chapter #1** celebrated its Golden Anniversary September 9—50 years to the day from the date the chapter was founded.

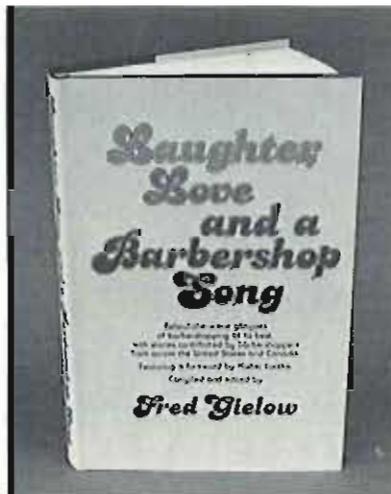
At the festive dinner and dance, letters, resolutions or other congratulatory messages were received from Delaware Gov. Michael Castle, U.S. Senators Daniel Frawley and Joe Biden Jr., Congressmen William Roth and Tom Carper, County Executive Rita Justice, Society Executive Director Joe Liles and President Jim Warner, President Joe Stangl of the Mid-Atlantic District, Society Historian-Emeritus Dean Snyder and, in a single resolution, all the members of the **District of Columbia Chapter**.

...

The **South Bay Chapter** in Redondo Beach, Calif., includes an organization called **OLDDOGS** which is composed of past presidents of the chapter. The name, says Editor Herb Bayles of the chapter's *New Hey Hey Herald*, is an acronym for the full name which is known only to its members.

In August the **OLDDOGS** put on its (their?) fourth annual South Bay Family Picnic at which everything was free— food, drinks, professional entertainment and a private park for the party—to members and families.

Funding comes from the **OLDDOGS'** hot dog stand at the Manhattan Beach Community Fair each September. 



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The Founder's Column

by O. C. Cash

O. C. didn't count 'squats'

This article originally appeared in the September 1950 issue of *The Harmonizer*.

In one of the popular magazines there has been appearing for a month or two a series of articles about Ernie Pyle, the famous war correspondent and columnist. It is disclosed in these stories that Ernie so thoroughly disliked writing a column and meeting a deadline that when required to do so, he almost always took to his bed in fright. There seems to be a strange similarity among us literary people. I have ducked my last two assignments in the *Harmonizer* and each time the deadline has passed I was exhausted but relieved. This is a much truer explanation of my failure to write my piece than that offered by the editors in the last issue of the *Harmonizer*.

I recall at one of the earlier conventions someone introduced himself to me and mentioned reading my column. More recently, after I had missed the last two issues of our magazine, someone told me in a roundabout way that an Illinois Brother had intimated that somebody else had noticed the absence of my column. I never could find out whether he was disappointed or pleased about it. No one else seemed to notice its absence.

I can't understand this indifference to talent. If Spaeth, O'Brien, Boardman, Martin, et al. should miss their stint in the *Harmonizer*, the magazine would likely suspend publication. Not a soul at the Omaha Convention made reference to the column, but my enjoyment of that affair has inspired me to make this effort at cooking up something for this issue. A great many things impressed me about the Omaha meeting.

For one thing, this was the first convention I remember where the decision of the judges in selecting the champion quartet was not criticized by anyone. At most all the other contests, the competition was so close that naturally there would be some dissatisfaction with the outcome. The **Buffalo Bills** were just simply "on the beam" and from their first appearance in the preliminaries, there was no stopping them. This circumstance should give encouragement to every future contesting quartet. It proves too that the judging

panel, although it gave the **Okie Four** a dirty deal at Grand Rapids, is, after all, doing about as good a job as any human organization can do.

One of the visiting Brethren called my attention to something I want to pass on as it may help some of the quartets on their way up. This Brother had a "Geiger counter" with him and noted that a member of one quartet bobbed up and down, or "squatted," as the Brother put it, 27 times in one song. The complaining Brother insisted this was entirely too many "squats" per song. I was so absorbed in the chords I didn't notice it until it was called to my attention, but thereafter I did note that this was about the only gesture some of the quartets made use of. To us sensitive artists, appropriate gestures, use of hands, animated facial expressions, etc., give emphasis to a pleasing rendition of a song.

Even the entrance and exit of a quartet on and from the stage is important. For instance, did you observe Art Patterson as he lead the **Four Chorders** from the stage at the conclusion of each appearance? Even my Betty Anne agrees that he has finesse in this particular maneuver and that it adds to the attractiveness of the quartet. *Of course I could show him a thing or two about his baritone.*

I also noticed a few quartets continue, as they did in the early days of the society, to split or break off a chord in three staccato tones like "There's a tear in your eye-eye-eye." The last two "eyes" are short and snappy with the middle one dropped about an eighth of an inch; the last is yanked back up rather abruptly to the level of the first "eye." I spoke to Phil Embury about this and after I had explained to him what "staccato" meant, and he understood what I was belly-aching about, he said that since he was on the Int'l Board this year, he would put a stop to the practice. In every case of this annoying (to me) habit, I believe a single sustained chord is much to be preferred.

As an expert on many subjects, I think I can give quartets aspiring to be champions some advice concerning selection of songs. If the Okie Four were competing again I would insist that it select three pairs of contest numbers that had not been used in other contests. One of each pair would be a fairly lively tune, like *The Old Piano Roll Blues* and the other a sweet type of song. Fred Gregory, of Indiana, and I have been kicking *Georgia Moon* around for the past Convention or two and we think it might have possibilities. Then there are such songs as *Sunshine of Your Smile*, *Garden of Roses*, with possibilities for a bass lead in the chorus, *In the Garden of Tomorrow* and other old ballads of this character. And what's wrong with *Johnny Doughboy* with the two sweet, though difficult, chords I ribbed up (with very little help from Dwight Olds and Bill Anderson of Houston).

In other words, the pattern set by the Buffalo Bills in trotting out new old numbers, is a good one. The song they wound up with in the finals, *Roses of Picardy*, is one that we

used to bounce around in the first World War. It was really too tough for us Buck Privates but when given the business by a bunch of experts it seems as easy as pie.

Then a lot of old timers, when worked over by a good quartet are simply superb. Have you heard The **Chordettes** recording of *Carry Me Back to Old Virginny*? There is a tune, like *Silver Threads Among the Gold*, that used to simply nauseate me when some bird would start it in the kitchen while we were frying hamburgers. But the way The Chordettes do it makes one wonder if something couldn't be done with *Mandy Lee* and *Coney Island Baby*. I heard Meredith Willson's *Singing People* work over *My Wild Irish Rose* the other night with a lot of new stuff in it, and it brought tears to these bifocally enslaved old eyes of mine.

Hoping you are the same, I am

OCC

**The Okie Four, built around the inimitable baritone of the Founder, was an integral part of all Society conventions during the early years. Why it never attained international champion status is still a mystery to the Okie Four . . . Eds.*



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An audio tape and booklet termed "the next best thing to a private voice lesson" is now available from the International office.

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Dr. Tom Shipp of the Speech Research Department at the San Francisco V. A. Hospital wrote Mayo: "This is an avowed fan letter... Your information to barbershoppers is entirely consonant with the current state of knowledge about laryngeal physiology and acoustics."

Mel Knight, Society director of music education and services, called the kit "the next best thing to having a private voice lesson. It can be of great help to the member who wishes to improve his singing ability." The tape may be used by an entire chorus or an individual member—perhaps singing along as he drives his car, Mel said.

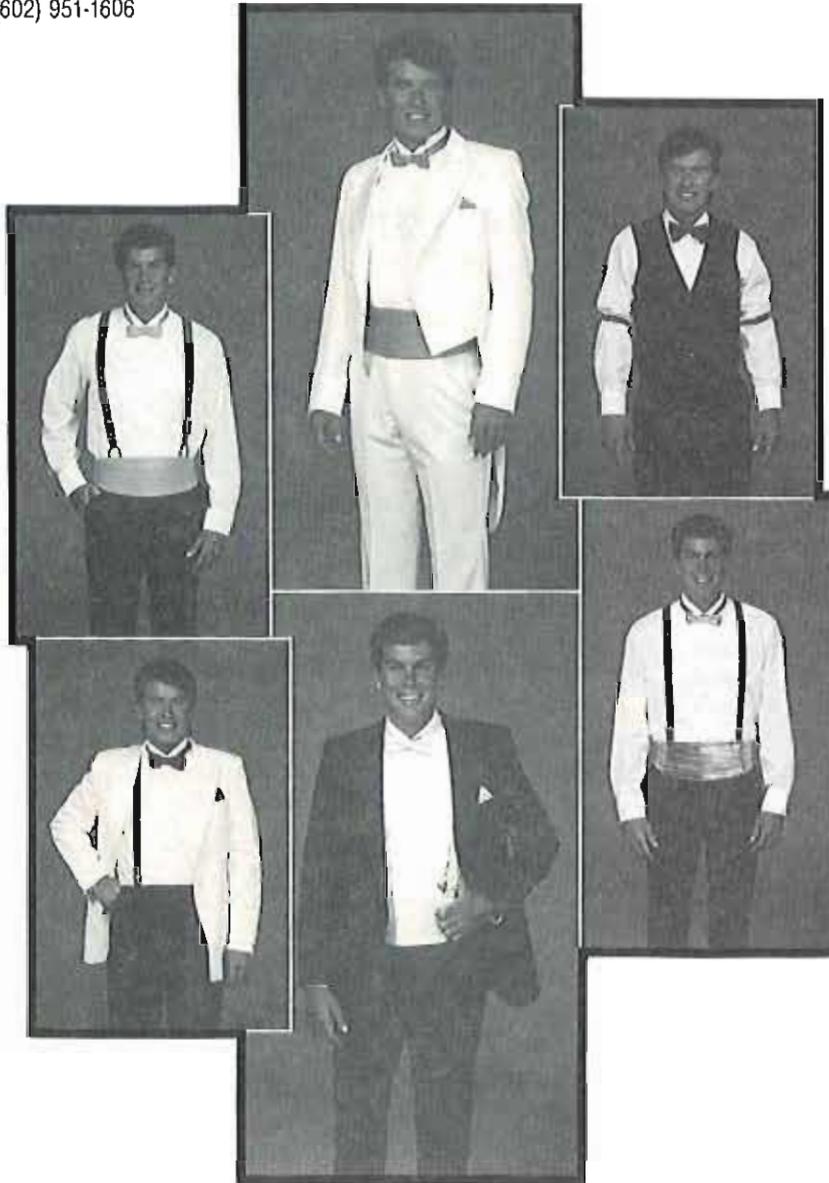
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Our Barbershop Ambassadors

In what may have been the most ambitious overseas barbershop expedition yet, 140 barbershoppers and their families from the Northeastern District made an 11-day concert tour earlier this year of Holland, Germany and Belgium.

As NED Bulletin Editor Norm Mendenhall put it, "If that doesn't sound like a monumental undertaking, I don't know what does!"

Included on the May trip were the **Racing City Chorus** from Saratoga Springs, NY, the **Latham Circle Chorus** from Sweet Adelines, Inc., **The Adventurers** quartet from the Nashua, NH, chapter and a few men from The Schenectady, NY, and Framingham, MA, chapters, plus assorted families and friends.

The tour started out as a return visit to Dutch barbershoppers and other musicians who had visited Framingham and Saratoga Springs in 1986. The first stop was in Bussum, Holland, and from there the group traveled to Bremen and Dortmund in Germany, to Brussels, Belgium, back to Holland (where they presented a barbershop craft session) and finally to Brussels again for the final day.

Along the way they presented sold-out concerts in every city and impromptu performances for television cameras and for a visiting Russian group: partied at afterglows, saw all the sights they could squeeze in and were hosted by and sang with barbershop choruses or quartets in all three countries.

These included, Norm said, the **Dolphin Barbermates**, **Why Four** and **Crystal Sound** quartets and the **Ijsselstein Sweet Adelines** and **Heart of Holland** choruses, all in Holland; the **Melodious Four** and **The Ruhrpott Company** quartets in Germany and the **Capital Chordsmen** chorus in Belgium. Both German quartets were presented with pitch pipes (one for each man) and made official members of the Racing City Chorus.

"As far as we can tell," Norm said, "this was the first barbershop chorus ever to tour the main continent of Europe."

The exciting performances, magnificent sights and "sinfully great" food and drink were still secondary, he added, to "the warmth, sincerity and love felt by every one of us on the tour from everyone we met.... Every time we thought it couldn't get any better, it did!"

•••

As a postscript to the above story, one of the members of the **Melodious Four** reported in September that he had formed the first men's barbershop chorus in the northern part of Germany, and the second in the entire country.

Klaus Ulrich Gschwind said 16 men organized the as yet unnamed chorus on September 6 in Bremen. Their first song was "Keep the Whole World Singing" and the second was "After Dark."

"We hope the founding of a chapter will help to spread out the idea of barbershop



The **Racing City Chorus** of Saratoga Springs, N. Y. (top), under the direction of Bill Iovinella, sings for the TV cameras at a museum in Bremen, Germany. Bill also conducted a craft session (bottom) for Dutch barbershoppers in Holland.

singing in Germany," Klaus wrote. "Please, wish us good luck."

•••

A month or so after the Northeastern District group toured Europe, 47 members of the **Gold Coast Chorus** of San Luis Obispo, Calif., paid a two-week visit to Australia. The total of 85 people who made the trip included four quartets: the **North County Chordsmen**, **California Stampede**, **Just Us** and **Old Town Harmony Four**.

The group performed 30 times in two weeks, including formal concerts in Gosford, Wagga Wagga, Canberra, Bathurst and Katoomba and informal shows in shopping centers, retirement homes, hospitals, at luncheon engagements and on a TV program.

Co-sponsors of the tour were the Rotary International clubs in each city and the New South Wales Society for Crippled Children. Proceeds from the concerts will support the charitable work of both organizations.

Chapter Bulletin Editor Gil Brown Jr. said the trip is expected to further spur the growing interest in barbershopping in the land "down under." He forecast a possibility of up to six new choruses being formed in the New

South Wales area to augment the Australian Association of Men Barbershop Singers (AAMBS), which recently affiliated with the Society.

•••

Three prominent Society members were on hand to help judge the spring contest of the Society of Nordic Barbershop Singers (SNOBS) in Växjö, Sweden. They were Jack Pitzer, Alexandria, Va., stage presence; Jan Muddle, Rochester, N. Y., interpretation, and Emmett Bossing, Sun City, Calif., sound.

Ten quartets and six choruses competed. Jack said, and the **Evening Swingers** repeated as quartet champions. (Because of the scarcity of registered quartets, SNOBS allows the champs to continue competing.) They will be at the 1989 contest in Kansas City. The chorus contest was won by the **Vocal Vikings**, which later appeared at the International Extravaganza in San Antonio.

"All in all, it was a wonderful experience," Jack said of the trip. "(It's) a great joy to see men who want so much to sing barbershop and sing it better... They subscribe to the Society (music) services but always want some of the 'hot' songs being sung around." 

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News About Quartets

'Tis the stuff of which new quartets' dreams are made.

Organized in January 1988, the **Keynoters** of the Covington, Ky., **Sons of Dixie** chapter found themselves just six months later singing both the U.S. and Canadian national anthems at the opening of the Cincinnati Reds-Montreal Expos game in Cincinnati's Riverfront Stadium. And that was just one of eight engagements in July alone!

The quartet consists of Lou Delaney, tenor; Roger Bray (a brand-new barbershopper), lead; Bill Dunnett, bari, and Norb Schlecht, bass.

•••

The **Checkered Flag Four** of the Elmira, NY **Mark Twain Chapter**, combine two hobbies: barbershopping and auto racing.

As a result, literally hundreds of thousands of racing fans have been exposed to barbershop harmony over the last four years at the famed Watkins Glen road racing course in New York.

For four seasons the quartet has sung the U.S. and Canadian national anthems at the professional racing events at Watkins Glen. Crowds have been as large as 100,000 at NASCAR (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) events. This year they were treated also to an all-expenses trip to the Dover Downs International Speedway in Dover, Del., where they sang at a Grand National race and on a nationwide radio show.

The quartet wears black-and-white checkered shirts made from authentic checkered flag material, which they found ideal for collecting autographs such as Unser, Andretti, Allison and Petty.

•••

The **Sidekicks** from Tampa and Winter Park, Fla. eighth-place finalists in this year's international quartet competition, have a new baritone. Bill Billings, veteran quartet man, three-time international competitor and a chorus director, has replaced Don Barnick, who asked to be relieved. After years of singing with **Grandma's Boys** and the Sidekicks, starting a family and getting a new position with his company, Don was finding too few hours in the day.

But Bill will have only a year of Sidekicking. Contact man Dave LaBar says the quartet will retire after completing its show schedule in November 1989.

•••

Okay, guys, we'll try one more time. The contact person for the **Second Edition**, 1988 silver medalists, is **not** lead Jamie Meyer, as listed in the July/August *Harmonizer*, or any other member of the quartet. It's their business manager, Larry F. Knott, P. O. Box 4010, Jefferson, IN 47131-4010.

And ignore the phone number, too, under the quartet's picture in the *Harmonizer*. It



In fast company are the **Checkered Flag Four** of Elmira, N.Y. Members are (from left) Bob Kelchner, bari; Greg Emelski, bass; Maurice Radford, lead and Reeve Ammerman, tenor.

belongs to some little old lady who keeps asking, "The second what?"

•••

And while we're on the subject of contacting the contacts, a couple more corrections or changes: The phone number for David Nyberg, contact man for Hilltop's **HarmonyWorks**, was listed incorrectly in the July/August issue. It should be (612) 936-9656.

Earl Hagn, bass and contact of the Champion **Side Street Ramblers**, said he moved some time ago but neglected to mention it to anyone (maybe not even the rest of the quartet). He may now be reached at 1217 Stratford Dr., Richardson, TX 75080.

•••

At almost any given time, somewhere in the U.S., a Society quartet probably is singing in a local or road-show production of Meredith Willson's "The Music Man." The latest to report in are **Four Harmony's Sake** from the **Clarksburg-Fairmont, W. Va., Chapter**, and the **Adirondack Harmony Company** from the **Canton**

Goldminers Chorus of Canton, N.Y.

Age (or lack of it) was an obstacle in the play at Fairmont State College. Bass Ben Haught at 39 and lead Skip Wilson at 29 could pass for school board members, but bari Jeff Houghton, 19, and tenor Brian Haught, 16, posed problems. Makeup and good acting, however, brought them through with flying colors.

The New Yorkers did ten shows in a two-week period at the theater in Potsdam, N.Y. and reported standing room only for every performance. Quartet members are Bill Rowe, lead; Lanse Laraway, tenor; Wes Wight, bari, and Stan Smith, Jr., bass.

•••

A couple of recent name changes: **Taking the Fifth** in Minnesota is now called **Under Construction**. The contact man is Peter Bliss, 4625 208th St. E, Prior Lake, MN 55372.

And **Sounds Great** has been renamed **Metropolitan Uproar** in the Brooklyn area. Contact Daniel R. Rivard, 7220 72nd Ct., Brooklyn, NY 11209.



The **B-Four-My-Tyme** of the Bradford, Pa. chapter is one of few quartets that can boast of being immortalized in etched glass by a friend of bass Karl Barth. The members (left to right, both photos) are Glenn Chapman, tenor; Dan Barton, lead, Barth, and Jim Cole, bari.

In Memory

Willis A. Diekema

Willis A. Diekema, composer of the Society's theme song, "Keep America Singing," died October 27, 1988 at the age of 96. In addition to writing music, he was an arranger and served as a member of the international board of directors.

Born in Holland, Mich., Diekema was a graduate of the University of Michigan, where his studies included voice, harmony, counterpoint and composition. Although his first love was music, in 1930 he took over management of his father's business, the De Pree Co., a firm of pharmaceutical chemists.

The elder Diekema had been a banker, attorney and noted orator and at the time of his death was the United States' ambassador to The Netherlands.

Diekema joined SPEBSQSA as a charter member of the Holland, Mich., chapter in 1945. In 1947 he became a member of the Society's international board of directors.

A composer of popular music, Diekema had written a song entitled "The Language Of Love," in 1913 while he was a student at the University of Michigan.

Diekema was a member of the Society's Song Arrangements Committee in 1946 and '47 and was chairman of that committee in 1948. The committee evolved into the College of Arrangers and Diekema was named chairman of that group in 1957.

His composition of "Keep America Singing" was introduced at the international convention in Milwaukee in 1947.

Diekema's family included his wife, Beatrice, who died October 22, 1988. He and his daughters, Sally and Doris, lived in Largo, Fla., but he also maintained a home in Michigan. Memorial services for Willis Diekema were held at 11:30 Friday, November 4, 1988 at Hope Church in Holland, Michigan, where he had been choir director and was a member for 85 years. The Holland Chapter chorus sang at the service.

George N. Cotton

George N. Cotton, director of the Vancouver Thunderbird Chorus, is dead from a heart attack suffered moments after he directed the Thunderbirds to sixth place in the Evergreen District contest in Spokane.

George, 61, collapsed as he was walking offstage after the performance. One of his last comments, chorus members reported, was a satisfied "Way to go, guys!" (The placing for the chorus was the highest in many years.) He was rushed to a Spokane hospital where he suffered a second attack and died the next day, Sunday, October 2.

Born June 9, 1927, in Medicine Hat, Alberta, he had directed the Thunderbirds since 1981 and was also a certified interpretation judge. He is survived by his wife, Barbara, two sons and two daughters. 

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Letters

Dutch singer wants mementos

Dear Sir,

Dutch barbershopper wants to receive things you don't use anymore. Things that are lying around in your cupboard. Such as records, cassettes, video tapes (VHS), photographs of your chorus, etc.

For return you will receive a photograph of my chorus.

Please send them to:

Roel Ten Klei
't Voorhuis 36
3902 CC Veenendaal
Holland, EUROPE

With barbershop greetings,
Roel Ten Klei

Concern over 'Joe's' future

Dear sir:

I recently read Int. Pres. Jim Warner's May/June *Harmonizer* editorial headed "A Golden Circle of Friendship," and from my 20 years in barbershopping I too know what a great pleasure barbershop friends can be.

The statement that caught my eye, however, was, "...there is a practical and realistic limit to the size of our membership." Rightly or wrongly, I interpreted this cryptic statement to mean that the decision has been made to move in the direction of an ever higher level of musical talent even though this results in a significantly smaller total Society.

This may be a very wise decision, but I'll bet I speak for more than myself in asking for an article by one of our knowledgeable leaders on "The Future of Joe Barbershop in Our Society."

By "Joe Barbershop" I mean the guy who is not a "crow" but who probably would not be welcome in a picked competition chorus, nor asked by three other fellows who want to go for a medal to sing with them and who (as in my case) may sing for 20 years without being among the winners at any level, but who in many chapters is relied upon to fill the offices, chair the committees, transport and set up the risers, sell the majority of the show tickets and who is so numerous that his dues are what keep the Society solvent.

I hope this letter will be received in the spirit in which it is written. I've had my 20 years of thrills from barbershop harmony and in no sense do I want to turn "harmony" into "dis-chord," but could we have a straight-shooting article on "The Future of Joe Barbershop in Our Society"?

Chordially,

Scott Anderson
Berkeley, Calif.

Scott, your letter arrived too late for the September-October Harmonizer, which carried the report and recommendations (most of which were adopted by the Inter-

national Board) of the Future II Committee. If you read it, you know that your particular concern was shared by the committee, and both it and the Board have moved toward trying to resolve the issue. We hope it answered your questions.—Editor

Praise for Lew Shonty

Dear Editor:

Thanks for the tasteful recognition of Lew Shonty (May/June *Harmonizer*). I had the pleasure of meeting Lew several years ago while visiting another great barbershopper and long-time friend, Al Christianson in Lauderhill, Fla. (Al, incidentally, just happens to sing lead in Lew's current quartet.)

But getting back to Lew, you really have to see and hear the **Goodwill Blenders** to appreciate what Lew has accomplished. I have had that privilege, and I hope the Society will make a concerted effort to pinpoint other "Lew Shontys" in our Society.

Lew is the essence of "preservation," and what he has done for our hobby is outstanding. If you want to learn how busy this tremendous crew is (the "Blenders"), I suggest you contact Lew or Al Christianson and request a recap of appearances they have made this year. You'll be amazed!

Please let Lew know I was thrilled to see him recognized, and it couldn't happen to a nicer guy.

"Tad" Wallace
Worcester, Mass., Chapter

New Zealander loves 'Heritage' songbook

Dear Editor,

Greetings from Christchurch, New Zealand.

I bought the "Heritage of Harmony Songbook." What a lot of enjoyment we have had from this beautiful book! I remember as a boy in the early 1950s singing these songs as we travelled in the South Island of New Zealand in our De Soto. Even then, Mum and us younger kids would sing the tune, while Dad and my two older sisters would harmonise. Now I know why I love barbershop singing so much.

Some of those songs were "Just a Prayer Away," "Goodnight, Irene," "On Top of Old Smokey," "My Happiness" and the perennial favourite "Forever and Ever."

Secondly, could you, through the magazine or in other ways, let the American barbershoppers know that we would be very delighted to hear from them when they are down in Christchurch, New Zealand.

By "we" I mean the Christchurch Chapter of Barbershop Singers. Our chorus is known as **Canterbury Plainsmen**, with one quar-

ter already formed called **Rivertown Ramblers**.

I am the president of this chapter, and our chorus numbers 40 very keen members with a good balance in all four sections. At this time we would be the world's most Southern chapter! Something for the books!

So please pass on our greetings to all at Kenosha and America. Regards to you all.

Fellow barbershopper
John A. Buckley
West Melton
R. D. 6
Christchurch, New Zealand

Phone STD(03) 478672

VM member responds to gold

Dear Editor,

Regarding the article, "How it feels to win a gold medal depends on the chorus," it feels great! The release of tension after months of work and build up, the pure physical surge of excitement of performing in front of the most rabid barbershop audience in the world, the sheer joy of competition, this is what it's all about for any competing chorus member, the **Vocal Majority** included.

The tears in so many members' eyes after the curtain came down on Saturday night July 9, 1988, in San Antonio were just as salty and just as flowing as the tears in many of the same eyes when we won the first time in 1975. With the men, the exhilaration and emotion is undiminished no matter how many times you've been there, and that's a fact; it's just a difference in manifestation among choruses.

Any member who doesn't feel the excitement of the Vocal Majority is either not involved or is not putting forth the dedication that's demanded into each performance. When I checked the 1975 Vocal Majority Chorus roster I couldn't locate Jim Berryhill's name; surely Jim must have confused us with someone else. Personally I can't wait til 1991!

Frank Harkness
Charter Member
Vocal Majority

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Convention tickets won't be mailed

Tickets for the 1989 international convention in Kansas City will not be mailed to registrants but will be held for them at the convention registration desk.

That's the word from Ken Buckner, conventions manager, who added the new procedure will apply to tickets for both the contests and special events. Those who order (or have already ordered) registrations will receive confirmations of their orders, Ken said, and notice of their seat assignments.

A seating chart of Kemper Arena, the convention site, will be published in *The Harmonizer*, probably in the March/April issue, so convention-goers can determine where their seats will be. Registration forms and further details of the convention and special events will be carried in the January/February *Harmonizer*.

A halt to the advance mailing of tickets and brochures will save the Society several thousand dollars a year, Ken said. All of the material will be held in the registrant's name at the Kansas City registration desk.

Sorry, Tulsa . . . 'tain't so

Unidentified gremlins (possibly with Oklahoma accents) somehow got at the calendar on Page 1 of the July/August *Harmonizer* and tried to move the 1991 Midwinter convention to Tulsa.

'Tain't so, of course; the convention is still set in Sarasota, Fla. for January 21-27, 1991. But the error went unnoticed until after not only *The Harmonizer*, but nearly 20,000 copies of the 1989 Barbershopper's Pocket Calendar, bearing the same misinformation, had rolled off the press.

So relax, Sarasota, you still have the shindig; corrections have been made in all printed matter, and a crack team of Kenosha Kops is investigating the attempted sabotage.

CONVENTIONS

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MIDWINTER

1989 Honolulu, HI January 16-22

1990 Tucson, AZ January 23-28

1991 Sarasota, FL January 21-27

See Hawaii at Midwinter Convention in January

Barbershoppers attending the Mid-Winter Convention in Hawaii in January can go sight-seeing for a week, if they choose, by taking advantage of all the daily tours and special entertainment offered by their Hawaiian hosts.

Convention sponsors are offering five daily tours plus special events on three evenings, at prices ranging from \$13 to \$65 per adult, during the January 16-22 get-together. Costs are as of press time and may vary a few dollars by convention time.

In addition, the Saturday night (Jan. 21) show at the Neal Blaisdel Concert Hall, as well as the annual Seniors Quartet Contest Saturday afternoon, are included in the \$20 registration fee. The show will feature the International Champion **Chiefs of Staff**, Silver Medalists **Second Edition** and Third-Place Medalists **Chicago Chord of Trade**. The afterglow will be at the headquarters Pacific Beach Hotel.

Daily tours will be:

SEA LIFE PARK/PALI LOOKOUT—9:30 am to 1:30 pm—A 60-mile land tour of eastern Oahu, including Sea Life Park show and view from Pali Lookout. \$24 adult, \$22 children 7 to 12, \$18 under 7.

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PEARL HARBOR—8:30 am to noon or 12:30 to 4 p.m.—Cruise along Waikiki shoreline and into Pearl Harbor past Arizona Memorial and Battleship Row. \$16 adults, \$12 children 7-12, under 7 free.

CITY/PUNCHBOWL—1 to 5 pm—Tour of the most beautiful sections of the city to Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Punchbowl Crater, return through downtown, Chinatown, other attractions. \$13 adults, \$9 children 7-12

PICNIC/SAILING ADVENTURE—10 am to 4 pm—Full day at one of Oahu's finest beaches; transportation, snorkeling, sailing, picnic and entertainment included. \$65 adults, \$45 children under 17.

Special events will be:

CATAMARAN SUNSET DINNER SAIL—Wednesday, 4:30 to 7:30 pm—Cruise for barbershoppers along Waikiki shoreline toward Diamond Head; includes cocktails, dinner, show and dancing, plus hotel transfers. \$37 adults, \$25 children 16 or under.

PARADISE COVE HAWAIIAN LUAU—Thursday 5 to 10 pm—Special for barbershoppers, old-Hawaii luau 35 minutes from Honolulu; feast, Polynesian show, cocktails and round-trip transfers included. \$41 adults, \$20.85 children under 12, one child under 7 free.

CLAMBAKE HAWAIIAN BARBERSHOP STYLE—Friday, 6 pm to midnight—Fabulous multi-course feast, unlimited beverages, all the singing you can manage at Dr. Hank Hammer's beach estate on the windward side of Oahu. \$34.50 adult or child.

In addition, two post-convention island tours are offered: visits to three islands or a three-day stay on Maui. Details of these trips or of any of the other special events may be obtained by writing USA Hosts-Hawaii, 2222 Kalakaua Ave., Suite 1100, Honolulu, HI 96815, or by calling 1-800-367-5130.



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and
Jim Miller

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The Way I See It . . .

continued from page 6

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“...AND HOW THEY GREW” from *The Harmonizer*, September, 1944

In 1988 when the Society is 50 years old, somebody will take his pen in hand (or perhaps a microphone) to tell about the founding, early days and progress of the Society. He'll have plenty of facts about the development, how the chapters grew, the apparent phases that are written into the records which include the columns of *The Harmonizer*.

Why it grew in the early stages is clear to today's comparatively small group that muddled through the early stages but many of that group won't be here in 1988. This, then, is an attempt at evaluation for the benefit of the 50th anniversary.

In the beginning, Owen C. Cash's idea was like seed "that fell on good ground" in many places. As in Biblical parallel, some also fell among thorns and stonyground. But, to change the metaphor from sacred to profane, Owen passed the ball and a lot of men were ready to run with it.

Unfortunately, in the late '30s and very early '40s most of us didn't know which way to run. There were many conflicting ideas, too, as to where "home plate" was located.

Local chapters sprang up around someone's enthusiasm, then often had a difficult time to survive. Owen Cash couldn't spend all his time and money to be everywhere at once, though he spent plenty of both. Sound national organization had to take effect, else the founders' splendid start would be wasted. The Society couldn't keep going as loosely integrated local chapters, each with its own idea of procedure.

SPEBSQSA was dangerously close to a bottomless precipice in 1940. Many members were willing to work but the society needed leadership and synchronized effort.

That arrived with the teamwork of Harold B. Staab as presi-

dent and Carroll P. Adams as secretary. Those two, at an appalling expenditure of personal effort, income and time, conducted the Society across the border into the Land of Organization. Fortunately, they had Joseph E. Stern, a rock to tie to, as national treasurer.

Forty-four years ago this fall, when the Society was barely six years old, a far-sighted, optimistic *Harmonizer* editor looked forward with confidence to the 50th anniversary of SPEBSQSA in 1988.

He was perceptive enough to realize that only he and his contemporaries knew the problems and pitfalls that had faced the struggling organization in its infancy, and that most of them would not be around in 50 years to tell the story. So he set it down in black and white for the barbershoppers of 1988.

The editor (presumably Carroll P. Adams; the article carried no by-line) also was wise enough not to try to predict what the future might hold. Even if he had been able to foresee it all, a dozen *Harmonizer* issues could not have accommodated the story.

Nor can this one. Time and space do not permit even an abbreviated history of the Society, let alone accounts of the contributions of men like C. T. "Deac" Marlin, Bill Diekema, Maurice "Molly" Reagan, Dean Snyder, Bob Johnson, Floyd Connett, Lou Perry, Dave Stevens, Hugh Ingraham and dozens more of equal stature. Fortunately, these records already exist.

The most complete (and most absorbing) account of the Society yet written is *Heritage of Harmony*, the 50-year history edited by Dr. Val Hicks and released at the San Antonio convention. It is available from the International Office for \$25.00 per copy.

This special edition of *The Harmonizer* recognizes primarily the "winners" in both the administrative and musical branches of the organization: the international presidents from **Rupert Hall** through **Jim Warner**, the championship choruses from the **Great Lakes Chorus** through the **Vocal Majority**, the quartet champions from the **Bartlesville Barflies** through the **Chiefs of Staff**.

They had just started to emerge when the story on this page was written...



oil consumption prove that most of those on the national board of the late '30s and early '40s worked -plenty. As in any other social organization, a few felt that the labor involved in furnishing their name for the Society letterhead was sufficient. But for every board member or local chapter officer who took that

National surveys of midnight

view there was another willing to work double shifts.

The Staab-Adams team learned who's who. Often they had to pile tasks on the worker, but never to the extent to which they completed assignments for themselves. Both were fired with enthusiasm that at times made them impatient when plans for Society welfare slowed down. Quick in the trigger to shoot constructive ideas at the membership, they were equally alert to "I'm wrong — do it your way," when shown the facts unknown before, or later developments.

When the 50th anniversary story is written, it should lead with the Founder and his co-workers in the '38-'40 era, the early impetus phase. It should then present the '41-'44 phase when the Society attained real national organization with a long step internationally under the Staab leadership and the Adams coordination, now on a full-time basis at the beginning of the third period. Names of those who ably assisted this pair will be a matter of record.

Under International President Phil Embury, the Society is now entering the third era, that of consolidation, healthy expansion and broader activities. Willing to build on such parts of the Society foundation as have been proved sound, Embury also has original designs of his own, and welcomes suggestions from others, toward the end of building the Society's structure into a model for such organizations. He has a splendid board back of him.

The above, Mr. 1988 writer, is not to be taken as a record of events and personalities of "the early days." If no other records were available, back issues of *The Harmonizer* would furnish a wealth of material covering plans, actions and those who contributed to those actions. This is an attempt to draw a period just passed into focus with the era the Society is now entering.

28

“Presenting the Landino Trophy to the new champs will be....”

Every barbershopper who has ever attended the finals of an international quartet contest has heard those words. After the new chorus champion is announced, the phrase becomes: “Presenting the Owen C. Cash Memorial Trophy will be....” But it’s really a Landino trophy, too.

So who is or was this Landino? A past international president, perhaps, or a philanthropist who donated a million dollars to the Society? The first gold medal winner?

None of the above. He was Joe Barbershopper—a chubby, feisty and rather unorthodox little guy who walked into the Grosse Point, Mich., Chapter 43 years ago, announced decisively that his name was Ben Landino, that he was a bass singer, that he was ready to sing and wanted to become a member.

He also was a superb craftsman, his long-time friend, Mark Roberts, related in a 1970 article in *The Harmonizer*. And it was he who designed and handcrafted, down to the smallest details, both the International Quartet and International Chorus trophies. “It was all done as love’s labor simply because he so enjoyed his membership in our Society,” Mark said of the trophy that still bears Landino’s name. “Barbershoppers and barbershopping were absolute tops in Ben’s evaluation of things.”

Ben was 50 years old when he joined the chapter, and almost from the first night he was in a quartet. He registered a name, the **Vocallaires**, and over the next eight years, although other personnel changed, the bass was always Landino.

Ben was continually surprising his fellow members with awards for special occasions. When the chapter honored the **Progressives**, he made up four individual trophies. For the **4 Fits**, his all-time favorite quartet, he crafted four rings with beautiful matching stones.

Ben made his first trophy in 1948 for the Michigan District (as it was then known) quartet champions. It is still being used today, passing along from champion to champion of what is now the Pioneer District.

That contribution was so well received that Ben decided early in 1949 the Society needed a trophy for its international champions. Typically, he didn’t bother to check with the International Board or anyone in the international office; he just went ahead and made it.

“Then he was mildly shocked to find that just maybe International wouldn’t want the trophy,” Roberts wrote. “It was pointed out... that

members of the championship quartet received individual medallions, and once we start the presentation of trophies to our champions, who knows where it would end. Ben had no answer for this sort of logic....”

But once international representatives saw the trophy, their reservations vanished, and they even arranged for Ben to be on hand at the 1949 international contest in Buffalo to make the first presentation to that year’s champs, the **Mid-States 4**.

The chorus trophy came into being after Mark Roberts, who was chairman of the 1953 Michigan District convention, asked Ben to create a suitable award for the ‘53 district chorus champion. “I told him we didn’t need anything as elaborate as the International Quartet Trophy, and he agreed and went to work,” Mark wrote. But it was not in Ben’s nature to do a halfway job.

“When Ben arrived at the contest with the trophy, the folks from International were among the first to see it,” Mark said. “They were so impressed they immediately asked Ben to give it to International for the ‘big’ chorus contest.”

Ben neatly sidestepped the issue by saying the decision was up to Mark, who ordered the trophy. With Bob Hafer, then international executive director, standing by on one side and the district representatives on the other, Mark gulped a couple of times but agreed the beautiful, elaborate trophy should go to the international champions.

So this time Ben went to the 1953 international convention in Grand Rapids and personally presented his trophy to the chorus contest winner, which happened to be the **Great Lakes Chorus of Grand Rapids**.

A month later, in August 1953, Society Founder O. C. Cash died at age 61. With the permission of his widow, Corrine, the chorus trophy was officially named and inscribed as the Owen C. Cash Memorial Trophy, the name it bears to this day.

Ben’s only remuneration for either of the trophies was a lifetime membership in the Grosse Point Chapter, awarded in recognition of his many services. He died in December 1969 at about 75 years of age. But his name will live on as long as masters of ceremony continue to announce: “Presenting the Landino Trophy to the new quartet champs will be....”

Chapters celebrate golden anniversaries in 1988

During the first year the Society was in operation, a number of chapters were chartered. Of that group, four are still in existence.

Tulsa, Okla. is, of course, the oldest chapter listed on Society records because it was the birthplace of the organization, the home chapter of Owen C. Cash and Rupert I. Hall. Charter date is listed as April 11, 1938, the Society’s birthdate.

On June 2, the Kansas City, Mo. chapter celebrated its 50th anniversary. Next year the chapter will host the international convention for the fourth time. Kansas City was host to the convention in 1952, 1962 and

1974. U.S. President Harry S. Truman became an honorary member of the Kansas City Chapter in 1945.

Oklahoma City Chapter was chartered July 6, 1938; the final chapter chartered in 1938 that is still on the books is Wilmington, Del., which celebrated 50 years of existence on September 9. Wilmington was one of the first chapters in the society to feature chorus singing.

St. Louis, Mo. chapter was chartered June 1, 1938, but the charter was later revoked. The group rechartered in August 1951 but does not have a continuous record of activity.



Ben Landino



Rupert Hall

Co-founder Hall first president

Rupert I. "Rupe" Hall, co-founder in 1938 of the Barber-shop Harmony Society, claimed for himself the office of "Keeper of the Minor Keys." But he was forced to relinquish that title in 1939 when he was named the Society's first president.

The story of how Rupe, an investment broker in Tulsa, met up with O. C. Cash one stormy night in Kansas City, then went on with him to form SPEBSQSA, is famous in barbershop lore. He served for a year as president,

but his contributions to the Society continued until his death in 1972 at the age of 70.

Born in Indiana, reared in Iowa and a graduate of Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., Rupe learned barbershop as a boy, listening and harmonizing at Pat Doyle's barbershop in the small town of Neola, Iowa. He grew up loving the sound and helping to create it when he had the chance.

In 1936 he moved from Chicago to Tulsa. His chance meeting with Cash two years later at

the Muehlbach Hotel in Kansas City led to the first meeting in Tulsa of the group that would grow to a worldwide singing organization.

After his retirement in 1955 from a long career in investment financing, he continued to devote his energies to the Society. When the Institute of Logopedics was made the Society's unified service project in 1964, Rupe pitched in to raise nearly \$40,000 for the Institute before his death eight years later.

Bartlesville Barflies' name came from founder Cash

In 1937 the American Legion in Bartlesville, Okla. decided to put on a minstrel show. A newcomer in town, a wiry little man by the name of Harry Hall who was born and raised in England, had produced a minstrel show in Pawhuska, Okla. so he got the job of putting the minstrel show together.

All the men in town were invited to participate and sing. Having some experience with singing close harmony, George McCaslin was appointed as a committee of one to come up with a quartet. Just like that—abracadabra.

McCaslin listened around and discovered that one of the minstrel end men, Herman Kaiser, was doing a good job of putting the bass to the choral songs. Harry Hall volunteered to sing tenor but as chairman of the quartet committee, McCaslin made Hall sing the lead part and took the tenor part for himself.

Someone suggested that there was a young, just-out-of-college baritone down at the First National Bank. With the usual skepticism of a quartet man searching for a good baritone, McCaslin dropped in to have a look at him and invited him to a quartet rehearsal. Their first session sounded good; the resulting Bartlesville American Legion Minstrel Quartet was the hit of the show.

The following year, O. C. Cash was looking for a quartet to sing at the state teachers' convention in Tulsa and asked McCaslin if his quartet was available. They were willing to sing and O. C. informed



BARTLESVILLE BARFLIES, 1939 As the Phillips 66 Quartet, they took third in 1941 and 1942. They were: George McCaslin, tenor; Harry Hall, lead; Bob Durand, baritone, and Herman Kaiser, bass.

the local newspaper. Cash told a reporter covering the story that the quartet was called the **Bartlesville Barflies**.

Owen Cash not only founded the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, but he named what would turn out to be its first championship quartet.



Dr. Norman Rathert

Rathert gave Bing Crosby start

In addition to being the Society's second president, Dr. Norman T. Rathert could claim at least two other distinctions during his 74 years, according to Historian-Emeritus Dean Snyder. He was responsible for giving Bing Crosby his first big break in show business, and he was the first man to assemble and direct a barbershop chorus.

Born in St. Louis in 1902, he taught himself to play guitar, banjo and violin. At 17 he was

recording with the Gene Rowland band (Brunswick label), and by 1925 he was with the famed Paul Whiteman Orchestra.

It was while he was with Whiteman that he became acquainted with a singing duo. Bing Crosby and Al Rinker, who were performing in St. Louis. He introduced them to Whiteman, who hired them on the spot, and Bing's career was launched.

In addition to his musical career, "Norm" Rathert earned a

medical degree and practiced dentistry in St. Louis until he retired at 73. He also found barbershopping in St. Louis, and at the midwinter convention there in 1940, he got together 30 members of the St. Louis chapter, arranged a medley of popular songs and directed them in a performance for the International Board.

Elected president in 1940, he served until 1941. He died in St. Louis on October 16, 1976.

Flat Foot Four won in '40 as quartet of policemen

The **Flat Foot Four** was organized in the Oklahoma City Police Department by the mayor, O. A. Cargill, in 1923. The quartet's personnel changed many times over the years but Johnny Whalen was always the tenor.

The original foursome was Whalen, Frank Sheppard, lead; Roland Cargill, the mayor's brother, baritone, and Bill Parrish, bass. The quartet made its first public appearance at a meeting of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce.

Losing and replacing an average of one man per year, the quartet was still functioning in 1939 when Whalen, with Britt Stegal, lead; Granville Scanland, baritone, and Sam Barnes, bass, competed against some 20 quartets at the first SPEBSQSA national contest in Tulsa and came in third. In the summer of 1940 at the New York World's Fair, with Red Elliott in the baritone spot, the Flat Foot Four copped the championship from a field of 200 entrants.



THE FLAT FOOT FOUR, 1940--from left, Johnny Whalen, tenor; Britt Stegall, lead; Red Elliott, baritone and Sam Barnes, bass

1941



Carroll Adams

Third president first executive

Carroll P. Adams of Detroit was the Society's third president, serving from 1941 to 1942. But his tenure as president would be neither as long nor as significant as the next 11 years, when he operated as the Society's first paid executive.

The terms of Adams and of the president who followed him, boyhood friend Harold B. "Hal"

Staab, had tremendous impact on the future of the Society. Together they changed the association from a loosely knit, fun-loving group of men to a business organization on a firm financial footing.

Adams was named part-time secretary in 1942 at \$50 a month, and the first headquarters were in his home in Detroit.

In 1944 he moved as full-time executive secretary into a three-room office, also in Detroit.

He was the second editor of *Barber Shop Re-Rechordings*, which he changed to *The Harmonizer* in 1943.

Adams retired in 1953 but remained active in the Society until his death in Belin, VT, in 1973.

Tulsa's Chord Busters won top '41 prize in St. Louis

The 1941 national champions were organized in Tulsa, Okla., in the spring of 1940 with Virgil Dow, tenor; Bob Holbrook, lead; Bobby Greer, baritone, and Tom Masengale, bass. The next year, Norman T. "Doc" Enmeier replaced Dow, who had moved to another city.

The quartet set a goal of placing high in the SPEBSQSA national quartet contest. To meet that goal, they met on an average of four nights per week, singing from three to five hours per night.

At the 1941 contest in St. Louis, after two afternoons of eliminations, eleven quartets were selected to face the audience on the night of July 5. When the final scores were totaled, The **Chord Busters** were selected as national champions.

The Chord Busters were invited to compete again in 1942 but declined. They agreed to attend the convention in Grand Rapids as non-competitors to receive recognition as champions and "sing up a storm" in hotel lobbies. They firmly established a tradition for, since that time, a quartet champion, once crowned, was never to compete again and, therefore, was never to be dethroned.



THE CHORD BUSTERS, 1941--Members were Norman "Doc" Enmeier, tenor; Bob Holbrook, lead; Bob Greer, baritone, and Tom Masengale, bass.



Harold Staab

Staab first to serve two terms

Harold B. "Hal" Staab succeeded his friend Carroll Adams as the Society's fourth president.

He was the first to serve two terms, from September 1942 to the same date in 1944.

When Staab began his term, the Society for the first time had an accurate count of its members: 1,802 men in 55 chapters.

During his second term this number increased to 96 chapters with 4,490 members.

Earlier he had founded the first chapter in Massachusetts and served as its president.

Utilizing his business experience and training, he formulated the Society's first long-range plan and during his second term the

Windsor, Ontario chapter was chartered, making Staab the first truly international president.

Although not an active chorus or quartet member, he was a composer; his two best known songs were *Violets Sweet* and *Beautiful Isle of Make-Believe*. He died in 1949 at age 48.

Frank Thorne assembled 1942 champs

Roy Frisby enjoyed singing as a young man and made some extra money as a professional singer while attending high school and college. He studied voice at the Indianapolis Conservatory of Music.

After college, Frisby worked in the development division of a bank. In 1940 one of his accounts was National Aluminum Corp., where Frank Thorne was vice president and director.

One evening in October, 1941 Thorne invited Frisby, Jimmy Doyle and Herman Struble to his home for dinner. Frisby was hopeful of drumming up some bank business, but Thorne wanted him to sing in his quartet. **The Elastic Four** was organized that night in Thorne's parlor with Frisby singing lead.

Struble had won scholarships at Valparaiso University and DePaul as a tenor soloist and sang with the American Opera Company for three years.

Doyle was also a tenor and sang for two years with a foursome known as the **Trevette Quartet**. He then sang lead in the **Old Oak Four**, a travelling vaudeville quartet, before being enlisted as baritone in the Elastic Four.

Thorne was an accomplished instrumental musician but enjoyed quartet singing. Once described as a lyric bass, he confessed that he did not know what that meant. He sang in the **Plow City Four** in Canton, Ill. and wrote many Elastic Four arrangements.

The quartet rehearsed about eight hours per week in 1942 to prepare for that year's SPEBSQSA national contest in Grand Rapids,



THE ELASTIC FOUR, 1942. L. to R.: Herman Struble, tenor; Roy Frisby, lead; Jim Doyle, baritone, and Frank Thorne, bass.

Mich. Sixty quartets competed; there was no preliminary round of competition. The quartet appeared in straw hats, canes, suits and spats; some quartets objected to their "fancy attire."

The Elastic Four were named winners and their picture appeared on the back page of the *Chicago Herald*—right next to the photo of a girl who had killed her grandmother.

Harold B. "Hal" Staab's presidency continued into '43.

New bari led 1943 champs to victory after two tries

The **Four Harmonizers**, a Chicago quartet, competed in the 1941 and 1942 national contests and finished just out of the medalist class. They were considered a top-flight foursome, composed of Charles Schwab, tenor; Leo Ives, lead; Ed Young, baritone, and Fred Stein, bass.

In March, 1943, just a few months before the Chicago contest at which they won the national championship, a new baritone, Huck Sinclair, joined the group. All four members had years of experience as quartet singers.

Sinclair had grown up in a harmonious family. His mother sang



THE FOUR HARMONIZERS, 1943--L. to R.: Leo Ives, lead; Charles Schwab, tenor; Huck Sinclair, bari and Fred Stein, bass.

1943 continued

lead, his sisters took the tenor and bari parts and Huck sang bass. He had sung in quartets in high school and college and before joining the Four Harmonizers he was a member of the Capital City Four of Topeka, Kan.

Bass Fred Stein began singing at the age of three and he won a prize as the best alto in his eighth grade class. He began singing in quartets at the age of seventeen and for eight years toured the vaudeville circuit

with the **Troy Comedy 4** and other groups.

Leo Ives, lead, sang in a quartet called the **Ives 4** with three of his children. Charles Schwab had sung with the **Music Box Four** for seven years.

The Four Harmonizers claimed that none of the arrangements they sang were written down; all four quartet members participated in woodshedding their numbers.

1944



Phil Embury

Embury 2nd two-term President

Phil Embury became the Society's second two-term president, occupying the office from 1944 to 1946. Following the policies and methods of his two immediate predecessors, Carroll Adams and Hal Staab, he saw membership increase from about 4,500 to nearly 13,000.

Born in Rochester, N.Y. in

1902, Embury graduated from Hamilton College, worked four years with a life insurance company, then joined his father and brothers in a lantern-manufacturing business.

He knew where his true interest lay from the moment in 1939 when he listened to a quartet on radio, then heard founder O. C.

Cash tell about his new society. A short time later he was in Kansas City, telephoned Cash in Tulsa and met him there the next day.

By 1940 he was a member of the Board, then rose through the offices to become president in 1944. At 86, he remains active in the Society today.

Harmony Halls' origin dated back to Lincoln

The **Harmony Halls** came from a background of quartet singing that dated back two generations. Grandpa Hall sang bass in a quartet during Abraham Lincoln's presidency.

Pop Hall, his son, was a choir and quartet singer at the turn of the century and when O. C. Cash founded the Society it was only natural that some of the six Hall brothers would become barbershoppers.

Harold, Ray and Gordon Hall, singing lead, bari and bass respectively, formed the Hall Brothers quartet with tenor John "Slim" Peterson. At the 1942 national contest in Grand Rapids, the quartet made the finals with Frank Clark as tenor.

In March of 1943 the quartet was reorganized; Ray, who was known among barbershoppers as "Curley," and Gordon Hall sang with Bob Hazenberg, lead, and Ed Gaikema, tenor. That year, the Harmony Halls placed fifth. During a year of intensive work, they became Michigan champions the following spring, then entered the international contest in Detroit and won first place.

After winning the championship the Harmony Halls were in great demand as entertainers. They made guest appearances with the Grand Rapids Municipal Opera company, produced a number of recordings and had a daily radio program on station WJR in Detroit.

They sang for war bond drives and many other community activities in addition to barbershop shows throughout the Midwest. They also continued to be active chapter members.

In 1950 the Harmony Halls became the first Society quartet to tour army posts in Europe as guests of the U. S. Army Recreation Service. They sang 250 scheduled and unscheduled performances in 23 days and were enthusiastically received by the troops.



THE HARMONY HALLS, 1944--Bob Hazenberg, lead, left; Ed Gaikema, tenor, top; Ray Hall, bari, bottom, and Gordon Hall, bass at right.

Phil Embury's presidency continued into 1945.

Champion Misfits formed aboard convention train

Art Bielan, lead; Joe Murrin, tenor, and E. V. "Cy" Perkins, bari, formed three legs of a quartet on a train en route to the national S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. convention in July, 1941. They shanghaied Pete Buckley to sing bass. All were members of the Chicago No. 1 Chapter.

Lacking a name and a costume, they exchanged coats and christened themselves the **Misfits**. They placed seventh.

The Misfits placed fifth at the national contest in 1942. The following year they did not compete due to the absence of Buckley, who spent nine months in Mississippi helping Uncle Sam build ships, but in 1944 the group finished in second place.

To comply with regulations of the War Committee on Conventions, the preliminary round of competition in 1945 was held in four different cities: New York, Cleveland, Chicago and Kansas City. The top fifteen quartets then competed in the final round at the Detroit Masonic Auditorium in June. The Misfits won top ranking.

Tenor Joe "Moose" Murrin had sung in a quartet while in the navy during World War I and he sang with the **Chicago Police Octette** for nine years. Art Bielan, lead, had sung with a number of quartets, among them the **Superba Four**, the **State Four** and the **Forges Post** quartet, the latter group an American Legion foursome.

Cy "You're Wrong" Perkins, who had sung baritone for a quarter century, was happy to point out other fellows' mistakes, thereby endearing himself to many barbershoppers. Pete "Butch" Buckley had previously contributed his resonant bass voice to the **P & O**



THE MISFITS, 1945--L. to R.: Cy Perkins, bari, left; Joe Murrin, top, tenor; Art Bielan, bottom, lead, and Pete Buckley, right, bass.

Quartet and the Variety Four.

The Misfits were a popular quartet on the barbershop show circuit until their retirement in the fall of 1952.



Frank Thorne

Thorne first gold-medalist chief

Frank E. Thorne was the first quartet gold medal winner to hold the high office of international president.

The foursome with which he sang bass, the **Elastic Four**, had won the international championship in 1942, singing several of Frank's arrangements along the way.

Joining the Society in 1941, he breathed new life into a falter-

ing Chicago chapter, then turned his considerable energies and talents to the national organization. He was named to the Board in 1941 and was a vice president from 1942 to 1945.

Thorne had been introduced to barbershop harmony more than 30 years earlier by his close friend, Maurice "Molly" Reagan. He had a variety of musical interests, played at least nine differ-

ent instruments and eventually became one of the few men qualified in all categories of contest judging.

On October 24, 1956, the Chicago chapter gave a testimonial dinner for its best-known member. Two days later, on October 26, the sixth president of the Society died of a heart attack at his home in Riverview, IL. He was 65 years old.

Garden State members had showbiz backgrounds

The **Garden State Quartet** came to life in 1941. Jimmy Verdick, bari, and Ted Rau, tenor, worked together at Western Electric. Jim knew a lead singer named Bob Freeland in Newark and the three of them met at Ted's house in Jersey City with Joe Marrese, bass.

These four sang together for about a year, then Verdick enlisted in the navy. The search for a fourth part began and in May of 1943, the trio found Jack Briody, who had recently been discharged from the army.

Rau was a former night-club entertainer and Freeland had been a member of a tumbling and singing act in vaudeville during the 1920s.



THE GARDEN STATE QUARTET, 1946-- Jack Briody, bari; Bob Freeland, lead; Joe Marrese, bass and Ted Rau, tenor.

1946 continued

He had also appeared in Irving Berlin's Broadway show, *Yip, Yip, Yaphank*.

Briody had sung on the radio and in night clubs with the Garden State Trio and Marrese was a glee-club baritone until he began singing with the quartet.

The quartet became New Jersey State champion in 1943 and 1944. They entered international competition in 1944 wearing bathing suits and finished in fifth place. They dropped down to finalist ranking in 1945 but, with hard work, were able to take the championship at the convention in Cleveland in June, 1946.

1947



Charles Merrill

Merrill became high court judge

Although he could not have known it at the time, the Society's seventh president, Charles M. Merrill, was to chalk up two distinctions after he completed his 1947-48 term of office.

A prominent lawyer in Reno, NV and founder of the Reno chapter, he went on to be elected Chief Justice of the Nevada

Supreme Court and later was named to the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco.

And he became the first half of the only brother team ever to lead the Society. His brother, Art, was president in 1957.

But the practice of law was not his only talent. As a member of

Bonanza Four he competed in three international quartet contests; he was an arranger and a frequent contributor to *The Harmonizer* with columns on his musical research.

Today, at age 81, he remains busy with writing and the occasional practice of law at his home in the San Francisco area.

'Docs' prescribed hard work to win 1947 gold

When the Elkhart, Indiana Chapter of S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. was formed in September, 1943, Ron Younce, lead; Lee "Reverend" Kidder, bass, and Elton "Butch" Hummel, bari were already looking for a tenor they could push around. They found H. H. "Jumbo" Smith, standing five feet tall in his socks and weighing 125 pounds.

Kidder and Hummel had sung together in a high school quartet; Smith had sung as a baritone with two professional quartets and had been an acrobatic performer on the vaudeville stage. Younce went into the navy and was replaced by Max "Junior" Cripe in the spring of 1944. The **Doctors Of Harmony** became the first Indiana state quartet champion at a contest held in January, 1945. Thirteen quartets competed.

The quartet entered international competition in 1945 and placed fifth. The following year, they finished in third place and in 1947 they won the international championship.

According to the Doctors, a prescription of hard work earned them the gold medals. One of the songs they sang in competition was a new tune entitled *Mississippi Moon*, written by Jumbo Smith, ending a rumor that judges only liked familiar songs.

The quartet disbanded in 1950. Kidder sang bass in the 1953 Cardinal District champion **Clef Chefs**, a quartet that became an international semifinalist in 1953 and '54.



THE DOCTORS OF HARMONY, 1947--from left, Max "Junior" Cripe, lead; Elton "Butch" Hummel, baritone; Lee "Reverend" Kidder, bass, and H. H. "Jumbo" Smith, tenor.

Murphy's laws for chapters . . . ain't it the truth!

John LeFrancois, editor of the *State College, Pa., Chapter* bulletin, *The Nittany Notes*, has come up with a set of "Murphy's Laws for the Nittany Knights," which will ring true for the members of almost any chapter. They are:

1. No announcement will ever be completed without at least one smart remark.
2. Twenty minutes after an announcement, no one will remember what was said.
3. Five-minute breaks are always longer; the same is true of one-minute announcements.
4. The music for "We Sing That They Shall Speak" and "Keep

America Singing" will not be found until the guest hears the last chord.

5. At no pre-performance rehearsal will everyone be present.
6. No one in the chorus knows (a) all the notes, (b) all the words, or (c) all the moves.
7. By dress rehearsal, all stage-presence moves will have been changed— or omitted.
8. At any performance, there will be one more member than there are ties.
9. Our annual show is always held one week too soon.
10. There is always at least one uniform that appears to have been slept in.



O. H. "King" Cole

'King' Cole imposing president

O. H. "King" Cole, the Society's eighth president, was an imposing figure, both physically and intellectually. He served for two years, from 1948 to 1950, and by the end of his second term the Society numbered nearly 27,000 members.

His greatest interest was in continued growth, and he was personally responsible for the formation of eight chapters in his home state of Wisconsin. It was "the King" who established the Society's first expansion fund, and he pressed continuously for

the location of a permanent headquarters, or "shrine," as he called it—a drive that culminated in the acquisition of Harmony Hall in 1957.

Cole died in 1978 in Palm Springs, CA where he had made his home after retirement.

Pittsburghers never used sheet music or pitch pipe

Anthony "Zebo" DiPiero first instilled a love for barbershop harmony in Tom Palamone. The two were part of a quartet that rattled the walls in the back room of Zebo's Pittsburgh grocery store in 1938. Palamone sang lead, Harry "Chummy" Conte was tenor, Zebo sang baritone and "Turp" Marcanello was the bass.

Zebo knew hundreds of songs and quite a few parodies that he taught the quartet. They never used a pitch pipe; the lead would hang out a note and off the quartet would go, woodshedding the harmony.

In 1946 the quartet, then known as the **Allen Club Four**, went downtown to the Fort Pitt Hotel and joined the Pittsburgh Chapter of SPEBSQSA. The quartet attracted the attention of Maurice "Molly" Reagan, founder of the chapter, who was an accomplished arranger of quartet music.

After a month under Reagan's coaching, the Allen Club Four decided to take a shot at the 1946 international quartet competition in Cleveland, Ohio. They placed a respectable sixth.

Zebo sang with the group for a few months more, then the demands of his business compelled him to reluctantly part from the quartet. He was replaced by John "Jiggs" Ward who had sung bari with Bob Holbrook, lead of the 1941 champion **Chord Busters**, in the **Serenaders** quartet in the 5th Marine Corps Division during the final years of World War II.

Bill Conway took over the bass spot when Marcanello left Pittsburgh to sing with a band in New Jersey. Eighteen months later, still under the tutelage of Reagan, the quartet, renamed the **Pittsburghers**, won the gold medal at the 1948 international competition in Oklahoma City.

The quartet continued singing for more than three decades and underwent a number of personnel changes. In 1955 Tom O'Malley moved into the lead spot and Palamone moved up to tenor when



THE PITTSBURGHERS, 1948--Top left, Tommy Palamone, lead; top right, Harry Conte, tenor; bottom left, Bill Conway, bass; bottom right, Jiggs Ward, bari.

Conte dropped out. O'Malley had sung lead in the 1952 Johnny Appleseed District Champion **Four Maldehydes**. By the end of the decade, Conway was replaced by Dutch Miller at bass. In 1963, Nick Kason, who had sung with the Selectones, took over the bass spot.

Two years later, the name Pittsburghers was retired when Jiggs Ward decided to withdraw, leaving Palamone as the only remaining member of the championship foursome. With Jack Elder, formerly of the **Town & Country Four**, singing bari, the group continued to do show dates as the **Pittsburgh Four**.

The Pittsburgh Four was active until the 1980s when Tom O'Malley died.

Want to donate a barbershop book to your library?

Fred Gielow is editor of a popular book on barbershopping: *Laughter, Love and a Barbershop Song*. As the book jacket proclaims, it contains "behind-the-scene glimpses of barbershopping at its best, with stories contributed by barbershoppers from across the United States and Canada."

Now he wants to give them away. Well, not all of them, and not to everyone, you understand. But he'd like to donate them to libraries across the country, and he needs the help of other barbershoppers to do so.

As Fred explains it, "Much of my motivation for compiling and editing *Laughter, Love and a Barbershop Song* was to spread the barbershopping word. I found this hobby so delightful and rewarding, I wanted to let others

in on the fun. I hope now that by donating copies to libraries I'll be able to entice more singers to join our ranks.

"With barbershoppers' help, I've already donated dozens of books to libraries around the country, but I'd like to donate *hundreds* of books! If interested barbershoppers will send me the names and addresses of their local libraries and will cover the cost of postage and handlings (\$2.00 per library), I'll do the rest: complete the paperwork, box the books, enclose a letter indicating who paid the postage and handling, and mail them out.

"Send your requests to me, Fred Gielow, 110 Crestview Court, Cary, NC, 27511-8602." Fred may be reached evenings at (919) 467-5614.

O. H. "King" Cole's presidency continued into 1950.

Mid-States began career as Bell & Howell quartet

A quartet was organized by four employees at the Bell & Howell Co. in Chicago in 1943. The group consisted of George Kledzik, tenor; Marty Mendro, lead; Forrest Haynes, baritone and Bob Corbett, bass.

Haynes had been a member of a quartet that was one of the last to appear on the Keith road show circuit on stage and radio. Mendro, a soloist in church choirs during his younger years, was introduced to barbershop harmony at Bell & Howell during World War II.

The foursome became 6th-place international finalists in 1945 and 1946 and were Illinois District champions in 1946.

When three of the quartet members left Bell & Howell, the group changed its name to the **Mid-States Four**. The president of the Mid-States Insurance Company had taken an interest in the quartet and offered to sponsor them, providing uniforms and expenses in return for jobs done for his firm if they would use the corporate name.

Art Gracey, formerly with the Fort Dearborn Four of Illinois, joined the quartet replacing Corbett, who was forced to give up singing with the group due to the pressure of business obligations.

The quartet finished third at the international contest in Milwaukee in 1947 with Bob Rodriguez singing tenor. Rodriguez, later known as Bob Mack, had studied voice in Chicago. The Mid-States Four were second at Oklahoma City in 1948 and became the Society's eleventh quartet champion in Buffalo in 1949.

The quartet became famous for its ability to combine smooth styling of currently popular songs with madcap comedy and serious barbershop ballads. They were featured on barbershop chapter shows throughout the United States and Canada and appeared with many big-name entertainers on commercial shows.

In 1950, during the Korean conflict, the Mid-States Four traveled more than 24,000 miles, doing a total of 33 shows for more than 52,000 United Nations troops. Their schedule took them to the front



THE MID-STATES FOUR, 1949--Bob Mack, tenor; Forrest Haynes, bari; Marty Mendro, lead, and Art Gracey, bass.

lines as well as to recreational areas and hospitals in Korea and Japan.

They left the show circuit around 1966 but came out of retirement in 1982 with Phil Hansen replacing Art Gracey who had died. They performed in the Association of International Champions show at the 1983 international convention in Seattle.

Hansen came from a singing family and was a veteran of several quartets, among them the **Memories and Madness Quartet**. With the addition of Hansen to the quartet, all four members were now residents of Florida.

Tenor Bob Mack died in the spring of 1988. The quartet made a cameo appearance on the golden anniversary Association of International Champions show with Don Barnick of the 1979 Champion **Grandma's Boys** filling in as tenor.



Jerry Beeler

Beeler busy, active as 1950 chief

Serving as president in 1950-51 was Jerry Beeler, an Evansville, Ind. businessman who had chalked up a notable career in the storage and transportation field.

In addition to business activity, he was active in every sort of

fraternal, civic and philanthropic organization. But his real hobby was barbershopping; he had sung in a quartet as early as high school. Later he organized a four-piece dance band—which also sang as a quartet—and still later sang in other foursomes.

After his election as president he traveled almost constantly to visit chapters and attend shows and contests in every part of the country.

He moved from Evansville to Sebring, Fla. in 1958 and died there in 1968 at the age of 67.

Buffalo Bills most famous of all champion quartets

In 1945 a quartet called the **Barber Shop Four** had a radio program that aired every Sunday at 12:45 in Buffalo, N.Y. Al Shea sang lead; the other quartet members were Bill Delfield, tenor; Ross Davis, bari, and Ralph Bone, bass. The group made many appearances at USO shows and war bond drives in the area.

Two years later, Shea and baritone Hershel Smith were ready to start a new quartet. They invited tenor Vern Reed and bass Bill Spangenberg to Smith's house to do some singing; Reed and Spangenberg were not Society members at the time.

As an unnamed foursome they began singing for community groups. During an appearance at the Buffalo Quarterback Club they were introduced as the **Buffalo Bills** and the name stuck.

The quartet had an inauspicious beginning in international competition, placing 16th at Oklahoma City in 1948. However, they

1950 continued

became district champions that fall and moved up to sixth place the following year. At that point Smith left the quartet and was replaced by Dick Grapes.

In Omaha in 1950 the gold medals were hung around their necks and a new era of barbershop harmony began. There was something different about the Buffalo Bills; their big sound, combined with the work of Phil Embury and other talented arrangers, kept them busy singing on barbershop shows and gave them a popularity no other Society quartet had achieved.

The Society's Armed Forces Collaboration Program brought requests for them to sing before military audiences. Soon they were touring military posts in Germany, France, Austria, Japan, Korea and other far-flung places.

In 1957 a famous conductor and radio personality, Meredith Willson, wrote a stage musical about his home town of Mason City, Iowa. His plot included a quartet.

Willson had heard the Bills' records and suggested they come to New York and audition for the role of the Iowa quartet. They were immediately accepted but joining the musical meant leaving their jobs and moving to New York City. Dick Grapes decided to stay behind and Wayne "Scotty" Ward, former tenor of the international finalist **Great Scots** quartet of Steubenville, Ohio joined them for the adventure.

The move to New York brought them radio and television appearances, including the Arthur Godfrey show, where they met Walter Latzko, a CBS staff music arranger. Latzko, who later became well-known throughout the Society, provided much of the quartet's show material during the next ten years.

The Music Man was a great success and ran for many years on Broadway. A motion picture was made, featuring the Bills in the same roles. In 1962, after filming was completed, illness forced Bill Spangenberg to leave the quartet. He died the following year.

Spangenberg was replaced by another Ohioan, Jim Jones, bass of the **Sta-Laters**, Johnny Appleseed District champs. The quartet made personal appearances for another five years and were featured on almost every kind of stage. They continued to sing on the Arthur



THE BUFFALO BILLS, 1950--Vernon Reed, tenor; Al Shea, lead; Bill Spangenberg, bass; Richard Grapes, bari.

Godfrey radio program.

When the final curtain rang down on the Buffalo Bills, they left behind a record that may never be topped in the world of barbershop-ping—1,510 performances on Broadway, 728 concerts, 675 radio shows, 672 night club and hotel appearances, 626 conventions, 216 television shows, 137 state fair performances and a major motion picture. Their fifteen record albums are another permanent record of their great singing.

The Buffalo Bills sang their last show at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York on May 24, 1967.

1951



James Knipe

10th president printing executive

Jim Knipe, the Society's tenth president who served in 1951-52, got his start in barbershop-ping in 1940 in Cleveland, where he had moved from his native Brooklyn in 1934.

A printing executive whose firm for a time published *The*

Harmonizer, Knipe jumped with both feet into strengthening the Cleveland chapter, soon became its president and from there began a 10-year rise through international offices to the Society presidency.

Deac Martin, former Society

historian, wrote in 1951 that Knipe's "singular devotion to the Society's interests has led to committee memberships and chairmanships which, if laid end to end, would look like a nervous breakdown." He died of a heart attack in July 1964 at age 56.

Popular Schmitt Brothers won gold medals in 1951

Joe, Jim, Paul and Fran Schmitt began singing together as a quartet in September, 1949 at their mother's home in Two Rivers, WI.

Two months later a local businessman and international president of the barbershop harmony Society, O. H. "King" Cole, heard them singing and invited them to visit the nearby Manitowoc chapter. The brothers soon became members.

The quartet received a great deal of help from two men in the chapter. Milt Detgen, the chorus director, arranged many of their

songs and John Means, later to become president of the Society, became one of their coaches.

In 1950 the quartet became Land O' Lakes District champion. The brothers had made only about five public performances at the time.

While preparing for the international preliminary contest the following spring, they met Rudy Hart, another man who assisted them for many years as coach and arranger. Selected as one of four quartets to represent the district at the international contest in Toledo, the Schmitts began rehearsing at least once each day, met with Means three days per week and learned two more songs.

In the semifinal contest round they sang in last position and earned a standing ovation. They won the international contest and the hearts

1951 continued

of the audience.

Being a new quartet, they were in need of a repertoire. They went home and learned 20 songs before their first barbershop show in September.

During their championship year the **Schmitt Brothers** sang 110 performances including the Ed Sullivan network television show and the Arthur Godfrey radio show. In 1952 they made a two-week USO tour of military installations in Alaska.

In 1956 the Schmitts were featured in a color filmstrip explaining the Voice Expression judging category, produced by the Society. The production received an award as the best instructional film of the year.

Each year the quartet sang on a show produced by the Society's Association of International Champions (AIC). At the 1966 convention in Chicago the four brothers rented a bus and loaded their wives and 32 children aboard. All 40 of them appeared on stage at the AIC show.

The quartet became active as teachers at district and international schools and clinics. In 1980 the Schmitts received an award from the Wisconsin Music Educators' Conference for outstanding service to school music.

The Schmitt Brothers from Two Rivers entertained barbershop audiences for 34 years, traveling more than two million miles and appearing on nearly 3,000 shows.



THE SCHMITT BROTHERS, 1951--Jim, lead; Joe, tenor; Paul, baritone, and Fran, bass, were crowned the barbershop harmony society's 1951 champion in their first international contest.

1952

Ed Smith sought Society building



Edwin Smith

In 1952 Edwin S. "Ed" Smith was elected as the Society's 11th president. A resident of Wayne, Ind., he had founded the Wayne chapter, and in 1946 he became a member of the International Board. He was vice president in 1947 and again in 1951 before stepping into the presidency.

Later—from 1962 until 1966—he served a second term on the Board.

Both as international vice president and president Smith worked to bring to reality "King" Cole's dream of an international headquarters building. In 1951 he headed a committee which

came up with drawings of a proposed one-story, 14-room structure. Although the building was never constructed, the proposal kept alive the drive for a permanent office.

Ed Smith died at his home in Wayne On March 7, 1982, at the age of 84.

Air Force let Four Teens rehearse for 1952 gold

The **Four Teens** originated in the Eau Claire, Wis. Chapter in September, 1949. Three members—Jim Chinnock, lead; Don Lamont, baritone, and Gene Rehberg, bass, were high school students; the fourth, tenor John Steinmetz, had graduated the previous year.

On January 8, 1950 the four young men plus a friend, Mike Egan, enlisted in the Air Force. They had decided to try to keep the quartet together and enlist as a group.

The five were sent to Lackland Air Force Base near San Antonio, Texas, for boot camp. There, bass Gene Rehberg was found to have a foot problem and was given a medical discharge.

It looked like curtains for the quartet. They were scheduled to appear on a base show built around Bob Hope and on the night before the show they found a new bass, Don Cahall from Cincinnati.

They sang on the show and came to the attention of Dr. Norman Rathert, who had served as the Society's third international president in 1941. Rathert, from St. Louis, was helping one of the generals at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois stage shows for military entertainment.

At Rathert's request the Four Teens were assigned to Special Services at Scott, making it possible for them to rehearse six to eight hours each day.

...continued on page 40



THE FOUR TEENS, 1952--Jim Chinnock, left, lead; Don Lamont, top, baritone; John Steinmetz, bottom, tenor and Don Cahall, right, bass.

1952 continued

The quartet entered the Central States District contest in 1951 as representatives of the St. Louis Chapter, and won. Requests began for performances on chapter shows and at other Air Force bases.

In June, 1952 the four were crowned Society champions in Kansas City. They were the second successive quartet to win its first international contest and the youngest quartet ever to reach the top spot; Chinnock was 19 and the other three were 20.

As military personnel, the quartet would not ordinarily have been allowed leave to appear on chapter shows. However, an agreement

was reached between the Air Force and the Society to allow bookings on chapter and military shows, with arrangements to be handled by the quartet's "business agent, bodyguard, nursemaid and general factotum," Mike Egan.

After their championship year, the Four Teens toured military posts throughout the world with an all-Air Force show called *Tops In Blue*. They also made an appearance on Arthur Godfrey's television show.

All four quartet members were discharged in 1955 and moved to Belleville, Ill.

1953



John Z. Means

John Means coached Schmitts

John Z. Means, the Society's 12th president, was deeply involved for most of his adult life in both the administrative and musical sides of barbershopping.

Joining the Society in 1945 as a charter member of the Manitowoc, Wis. chapter, he attended the 10th International Convention in 1948 in Oklahoma City, where he decided to enter the judging field. At the same con-

vention he was elected to the International Board.

Ultimately he was certified in all categories of the judging system and helped coach the **Schmitt Brothers** to the international quartet championship in 1951. He became international president in 1953 and worked to develop respect for the Society's program among national music educators. His

efforts bore fruit in 1953 when he and the Schmitts presented the first barbershop demonstration at the Music Educators National Conference.

He remained active in Land O' Lakes District affairs, was district Barbershopper of the Year in 1957 and served on the Harmony Foundation Board. He was 51 when he died in Manitowoc after a brief illness in 1963.

Donations allowed Vikings to attend first convention

Bob Lindley, baritone; Bob Maurus, tenor; Bruce Conover, lead, and Cal Stuhr, bass, were ex-service men who liked to do a little harmonizing. All four were attending Augustana College in Rock Island, Ill. on the GI Bill. The year was 1946.

They decided to form a quartet and made their first public performance at the college the following spring. Soon they were singing for churches and PTA meetings as well as at college gatherings.

They joined the Rock Island chapter of the barbershop harmony society in 1947 and sang in their first district contest that fall, placing third. With \$25 donated by the mayor, another \$25 from a local radio station and another \$50 from various friends, the quartet was able to attend the international convention in Buffalo in 1949.

Bob Livesay joined the quartet as bass in 1951 when Stuhr moved out of the area and the foursome became Illinois District champions. Livesay had sung as a high school student in Moline and was an experienced quartetter. The following year the **Vikings** placed second in international competition.

The quartet won the championship in Detroit in 1953 after having sung seven songs in competition. They were asked to sing an extra song after a hail storm falling on a metal auditorium roof made it impossible for the judges to hear the quartet. The Vikings made appearances at New York's Carnegie Hall, the Chicago Opera House and Philadelphia's Academy of Music in addition to many chapter shows. At one point the quartet had its own airplane.

They disbanded in 1955 when Conover returned to active duty in the Air Force. Livesay later sang with Max Lauser, tenor, and Jack Moore, lead, with Maurus moving down to bari, as the **Vi-Counts**. That quartet became Illinois District champion in 1958 and placed in the top ten in international competition in 1959.



THE VIKINGS, 1953--L. to R.: Robert Maurus, tenor; Bruce Conover, lead; Robert Lindley, baritone, and Robert Livesay, bass.

1953 continued



1953—The 38-man **Great Lakes Chorus** from Grand Rapids, Mich. (Michigan District), won the first chorus contest, an open "trial" event in Detroit in which any chorus could compete. It was directed by J. R. (Bob) Weaver.

1954

Simner headed C & J committee in '50s



Berney Simner

Berney Simner of St. Louis, who became the 13th international president in 1954, was, like John Means before him,

deeply involved in the contest and judging system.

He served as international C & J chairman in the years both preceding and immediately following his presidency.

And he won wide recognition for developing a system which accurately measures the training and experience of judges and judge candidates, ensuring that only the most qualified men serve as contest judges.

An officer in a firm specializing in developing business administration techniques, he applied his training to the barbershop field.

From chapter through the international level, the list of assignments he held would fill a typewritten page.

Simner died in 1973 at the age of 70.



THE ORPHANS, 1954--Pete Tyree, left; Bud Bigham, top; Jay Bond, bottom; Bob Groom, right.
...story on page 42

Ed Sullivan show featured 1954 Champion Orphans

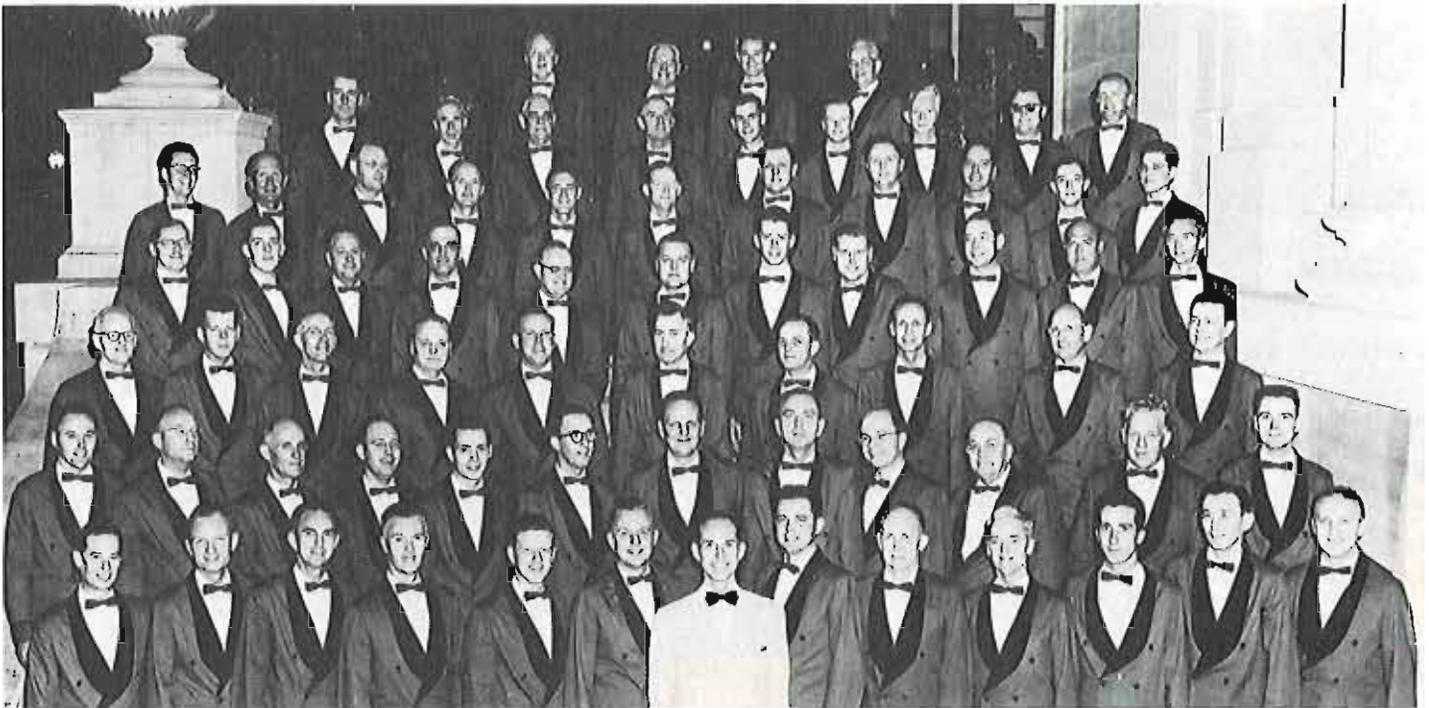
"We probably had the shortest reign on record," laughed Pete Tyree, baritone of the 1954 international championship quartet, the **Orphans** of Wichita, Kan. But during their championship year—and especially in the 24 hours following their winning of the Landino Trophy—they may have made as many Americans aware of barber-shop harmony as any quartet in history.

On Sunday evening, June 13, 1954, they appeared on Ed Sullivan's famed *Toast of the Town* television show in New York City. An estimated 24 million viewers watched tenor Bud Bingham, lead Bob Groom, bass Jay Bond and Pete Tyree. They heard Sullivan say the other performers—the dance team of Mata and Hari, Janis Paige,

Johnny Rait and Victor Borge—were applauding vigorously in the wings.

The quartet, organized in the early 1950s, made only one change of personnel, when Pete replaced the original bari in August 1953. Although it had competed once before at the international level, it did not make the semi-finals. But in 1954 it zoomed from obscurity to the championship.

Like all champions, the Orphans made numerous appearances during the year following their victory. But they broke up in the winter of 1955. Jay moved to North Carolina and then back to Wichita, where he sang with the **Cavaliers**. Pete went to Colorado Springs, where he directed the Pike Peak chapter chorus for many years and where he now sings with a quartet called the **Pusillanimous Posse**. Bud and Bob also left Wichita, and both died in the late 1950s or early '60s, Pete said.



1954—The **Singing Capital Chorus** of Washington, D.C. (Mid-Atlantic District) was the first true international champion, winning in Washington. Composed of 72 men, it was directed by Lew Sims.

1955



Arthur Merrill

Merrill followed brother's steps

Arthur Merrill followed in the footsteps of his brother Charles, the seventh president of the Society, to become international president for the 1955-56 term.

An executive of the General Electric Co., Art became interested in the Society through his older brother and organized the Schenectady, N.Y. chapter in 1944. He was active in the North-eastern District, served on a

number of international committees and acted as a contest judge for several years. A man of many talents, Art became even busier and better known after his retirement from GE at age 55. Long a stock market analyst, he started *Technical Trends*, a weekly newsletter he still publishes from his home in Chappaqua, N.Y.

He also is a historian, writer,

president of a book-binding company and author of several books on topics ranging from financial investments to gourmet cooking to chess. A perpetual calendar he designed has sold more than 15 million.

But he remains active in barbershopping, singing regularly at 80-plus years of age with the **Golden Chordsmen** of the Westchester County chapter.

Ever-changing Hearsemen finally won gold in 1955

In 1934, members of the **Blackburn-Shaw Quartet**, sponsored by a funeral home in Amarillo, Texas, were paid a dollar each for singing at funerals or on the firm's Sunday radio program. Tenor Wendell Heiny joined the quartet in 1935 and was soon working full-time in the funeral business. The quartet stayed together until World War II when three members went into the service.

Heiny, along with Paul Ellis, lead, and bass Willard Grantham came home from the service in 1946 and started looking for a baritone. They found Dwight Elliott and in 1947 won a quartet contest sponsored by the American Legion. Two years later, Grantham dropped out of the group and was replaced by Jim Bob Nance.

A chapter of SPEBSQSA was started in Amarillo in 1948 and the **Blackburn-Shaw Quartet** became members. They entered international competition in Omaha in 1950 and began receiving invitations to appear on chapter shows.

Because the name Blackburn-Shaw didn't mean anything outside of Amarillo, the four men began thinking about a name change. They incorporated a funeral-director routine in their act and became the **Four Hearsemen**, walking on stage carrying an imaginary casket.

Paul Ellis withdrew from the quartet in 1951 and Al Autrey replaced him as lead. In 1952 the Four Hearsemen were semifinalists at the international contest in Kansas City, but more personnel changes were in store. Autrey moved to Austin, Texas and Nance entered a

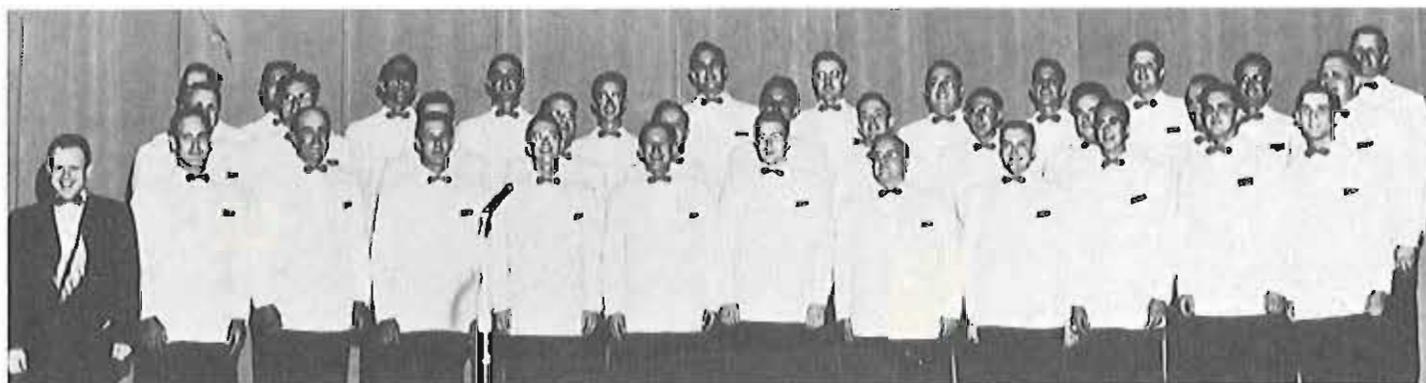


THE FOUR HEARSEMEN, 1955-- Hoisting their trophy instead of a casket are, from left: Dwight Elliott, bari; Wendell Heiny, tenor; Deane Watson, lead, and Dick Gifford, bass.

new business that made it impossible for him to participate.

Survivors Elliott and Heiny "dug up" a new lead, Deane Watson, and a new bass, Dick Gifford. Nance continued to write arrangements for the quartet; he knew their voice ranges and routines.

In 1953 The Hearsemen were second in international competition. They won the Southwestern District championship in 1954 and the following year they became international champions at the convention held in Miami, Fla.



1955—The Janesville, Wis., Chorus (Land O' Lakes District) won the international crown in Miami with just 35 men, including Director D. Schuyler Davies.

1956



Rowland Davis

Davis continued push for HQ

Rowland F. Davis, the Society's 15th president, became a barbershopper in 1946, joining the Manhattan, N.Y. chapter. By 1949 he was chapter president and was named to the International Board the same year. Rising through the offices, he became president in 1956.

Continuing the efforts of several of his predecessors, Davis was a prime mover in the search for a permanent international headquarters, a campaign that culminated the following year in the establishment of Harmony Hall in Kenosha.

He retired in 1963 as a prod-

ucts planning engineer with the American Telephone and Telegraph Company but remained active in barbershopping.

At the time of his death in 1968 at the age of 70, he was serving his second term as president of the Harmony Foundation.

Champion Confederates left treasury of songs

"Save your Confederate money, boys, the South shall rise again!"

That song by the **Confederates**, 1956 international champions, was to go down in history. And the quartet went on to become a true legend within the Society over the next 13 years.

Organized at a Memphis Chapter party in September 1953, the Confederates were a popular quartet even before they won the championship. Composed of George Evans, tenor; Dave LaBonte, lead; Bill "Bus" Busby, bari, and Wally Singleton, bass, the foursome appeared in authentic-looking Confederate officer uniforms, complete with dress swords, or as white-haired, frock-coated Southern "colonels."

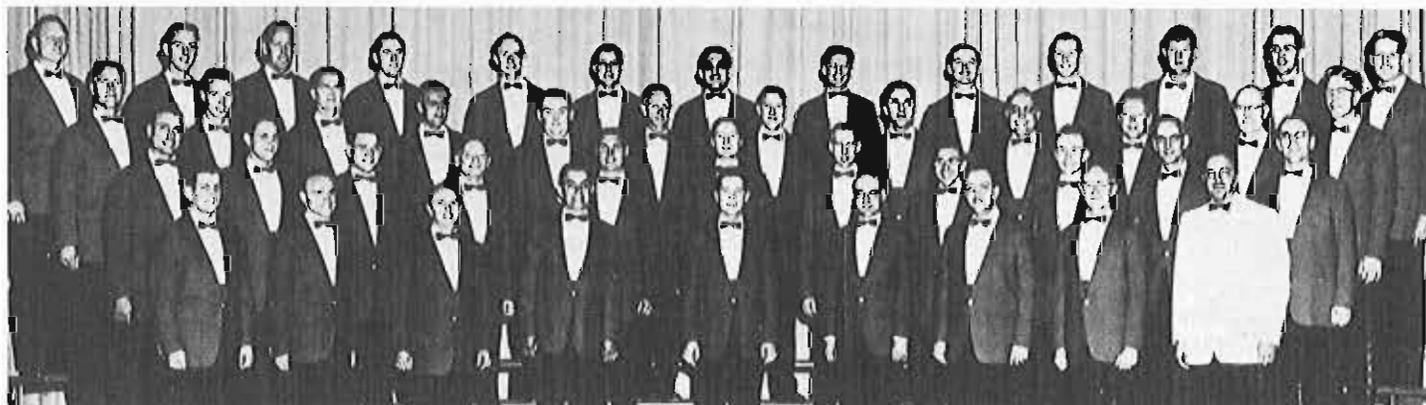
But it was the songs they sang, the arrangements they introduced and the way they sang them that contributed even more to their fame. *Chloe*, *Red Head*, *Down Where the South Begins* and *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square* are only a few of the songs still identified with the Confederates.

In their first international contest in 1954 they finished 31st. But the next year, in Miami, they leaped to second place, and in 1956 in Minneapolis they won the gold.

Bus was seriously injured in an auto accident in about 1960, and the quartet laid out of the show circuit for about a year. Except for that period, however, they continued entertaining audiences throughout the country until 1969.



CONFEDERATES, 1956—L. to R.: George Evans, tenor; Dave LaBonte, lead; Bill Busby, bari; Wally Singleton, bass.



1956—Winners of the contest in Minneapolis were the **Ambassadors of Harmony**, Michigan City, Ind., under the direction of Rudy Hart. With 45 men, it represented the Indiana-Kentucky (now Cardinal) District.

1957



Joseph E. Lewis

Lewis helped buy Harmony Hall

Joseph E. Lewis of Dallas, the Society's 16th president, was the last to be elected to two consecutive terms of office. He served from 1957 to 1959.

It was during his administration that the former Alford mansion in Kenosha was acquired, and the long dream of having a permanent international headquarters, Harmony Hall,

came true.

A native of Pittsburgh, Joe moved to Dallas in 1939 and became a personal friend of O. C. Cash in neighboring Oklahoma.

An early member of the Big D chapter, he also was one of the founders of the Garland, Texas chapter (which later became Dallas Town North).

He sang with the **Dallasaires** quartet, Southwestern District champion and a finalist in the 1952 international contest. In 1954 he was elected district president. Joe also was a certified stage presence judge and was active in the judging program.

He died in February 1987 in Dallas at the age of 74.

Lads of Enchantment made mark despite short reign

While some quartets continue singing for years as international champions, others are forced, for one reason or another, to "hang up the pitch pipe" soon after winning the gold.

The **Lads of Enchantment**, 1957 winners, was one of the latter. And yet tenor Don Pitts, lead Dan Aycock, bari Carl Wright and bass Gil Wallace, all from Albuquerque, left their mark in some areas as indelibly as did the **Suntones**.

How many quartets since then, for example, have sung Hal Staab's *There's a Rose on Your Cheek* or *Ro-Ro-Rollin' Along*, borrowed from the Sweet Adelines' **Big Four** quartet and arranged by Floyd Connett? The "Lads" introduced both songs. When they sang what they thought was Frank Thorne's version of *Love Me and the World Is Mine*, Frank asked them for the arrangement.

They proved, also, that at least for two successive years, they were the best in their league. In the 1956 international preliminary contest, they qualified although losing to Lou Laurel's **Desertaires**. In Minneapolis they won third-place medals, while the **Desertaires** placed ninth. The following year the **Gaynotes** beat them in the prelims. But in Los Angeles the Lads took the gold, and the **Gaynotes** had to wait until 1958.

Don Pitts dropped out of the quartet after its championship year,



LADS OF ENCHANTMENT, 1957—L. to R.: Don Pitts, tenor; Dan Aycock, lead; Carl Wright, bari; Gil Wallace, bass.

and the others decided to disband. But Carl is still active in Savannah, Ga. A recent call to Gil's Albuquerque home was answered by his wife. "I'll have him call you," she said. "He's at quartet practice."



1957—The **Callifornians** from Berkley were the first Far Western District winners, taking the trophy in Los Angeles. The 49-man group was directed by Dave Stevens, later a Society music man.

1958

Joseph E. Lewis's presidency continued into 1959.

Gaynotes in 1958 brought gold medals back to Tulsa

The SPEBSQSA was born in Oklahoma, so it was no surprise when Oklahoma quartets captured the first three international (then national) crowns. But it would be 20 years after the Society's formation before the title returned to the Sooner state.

In 1958 in Columbus, Ohio, four Tulsa men called the **Gaynotes** won the gold medals as international champions. They were Harold Jones, tenor; Howard Rinkel, lead; John Loots, bari, and Morris "Mo" Rector, bass.

Howard and John had sung in a couple of earlier quartets, including one sponsored by an ice cream company which required that they



GAYNOTES, 1958—L. to R.: Harold Jones, tenor; Howard Rinkel, lead; John Loots, bari; Morris "Mo" Rector, bass.

1958 continued

perform at least twice a week.

When the Gaynotes formed in 1953, Larry Stayer was tenor and Dick Galloway the bass. Dick soon moved away and was replaced by Mo, who had started singing with quartets in high school. This combination won the Southwestern District championship in 1956, but Larry already was planning to leave. The others contacted Harold Jones, a tenor in the Tulsa chorus, as a replacement.

Although Harold had no quartet experience, he showed up at a rehearsal with a tape recorder, taped 13 songs and within two weeks had learned the tenor part to all of them.

It took the Gaynotes only three tries to win the gold; they placed third in 1957. They stayed together, with a two-year hiatus while Mo sang in a touring company of *The Music Man*, but disbanded when Mo moved to Texas in the mid-1960s.



1958—The Dixie Cotton Boll Chorus from Memphis (Dixie District) is the smallest chorus ever to win at international. It competed in Columbus with 32 men, including Director Bill "Bus" Busby.

1959

Jalving had led Pioneer District



Clarence Jalving

Clarence F. Jalving, Holland, Mich., became the Society's seventeenth president in 1959 after

several years on the International Board.

Earlier he had served as president of the Holland chapter and then as treasurer and president of the Pioneer District. He also had directed the Holland chorus.

During his term as international president, Jalving had the pleasure of presiding at a long-awaited ceremony: burning the mortgage on Harmony Hall.

But his service to the Society did not end there; after retiring as president he served as secretary-treasurer of the Harmony Foundation, Inc., which originally had been set up to finance the purchase and equipping of Harmony Hall.

A former school teacher and retired banker, Jalving died in February 1985 at the age of 89.



FOUR PITCHIKERS, 1959—L. to R.: Keith Keltner, tenor; Larry Hedgepeth, lead; Keith Young, bari; Joe Delzell, bass.

...story on page 47

Grundy coached Pitchikers from Ozarks to 1959 gold

From a high school in the heart of the Missouri Ozarks to the winners' circle onstage of the Civic Opera House in Chicago is an even longer trip than the miles indicate. The **Four Pitchikers** made it, though, in 1959, to become international quartet champions.

But they might never have arrived if it hadn't been for a chance, once-in-a-lifetime involvement with a man who was to become one of the Society's leading arrangers and coaches.

The original Pitchikers, natives of two tiny farming communities in southwest Missouri, were high school students: Larry Hedgepeth, Keith Keltner, Keith Young and Johnny Marriott. Bitten by the barbershop bug, they joined the **Heart of the Ozarks** chapter and competed at a couple of district contests while still in school. They

called themselves the **Teen Tuners**.

At about that time (around 1950) another chapter member with a lot of musical talent was trying his hand at writing barbershop arrangements. But he couldn't find a combination of voices that "played back" the songs to his satisfaction. The arranger's name was S. K. Grundy.

The **Teen Tuners** graduated, and Johnny left to take a job elsewhere. It occurred to S. K. that the two Keiths and Larry, plus an experienced bass, might prove the combination he was seeking. He coaxed Joe Delzell from another quartet to join what then became the Pitchikers.

The rest is history. With Grundy's coaching and arrangements, the Pitchikers won bronze medals in 1956 and '57, took the silver in '58 and the gold in 1959. S. K. Grundy went on to coach other quartets and become one of the Society's best-known, most prolific and most respected arrangers.



1959—The Pekin, Ill. Chorus, under the direction of Jim Moses, won the first of its three championships in Chicago. Representing the Illinois District, it had 48 singers.

1960

Clarence Jalving's presidency continued into 1960.

As kids, 'Evans' sang song 'Lucky Lindy' to Lindberg

Trivia question: What quartet sang *Lindy*, *Lucky Lindy* for Charles A. Lindberg in 1927 and, with a couple of personnel changes, was still singing as an international champion 50 years later?

Answer: the **Evans Quartet** of Salt Lake City, the 1960 gold medal winners.

The song to Lindy came as he was making a triumphal tour of the country and his motorcade passed through Salt Lake City. Four young brothers, ages 7, 9, 11, and 13, stepped out from the curb to sing, in full barbershop harmony, the popular song. Lindberg ordered the car stopped, listened to the song, thanked them and shook their hands.

The brothers were Turk, Pres, George and Clarence Evans. Thirty-three years later, when the Evans Quartet won the gold in Dallas, the quartet was composed of Turk, tenor; Pres, lead; younger brother Jack, bass, and Gene "Smitty" Smith, baritone.

Jack at age nine had ousted big brother Clarence, and Turk, Pres, George and Jack continued to sing as a quartet until 1940. Then Al Nielsen stepped in for George to sing bass through the 1957 international contest in Los Angeles. When he left, the brothers switched voice parts (Jack from lead to bass and Pres from bari to lead) and brought in Smitty as bari.



EVANS QUARTET, 1960—L. to R.: Turk Evans, tenor; Pres Evans, lead; Gene Smith, bari; Jack Evans, bass.

With a couple of interruptions, the quartet continued active for the next ten years. Bob Evans (a cousin) replaced Smitty in 1971. The same combination (Turk, Pres, Bob and Jack) got together again later for a production of *The Music Man* in Salt Lake City. That was in 1980—just 53 years after Turk and Pres had sung for "Lucky Lindy."



1960—The San Antonio Chordsmen, under the direction of Ray Anthony, won the championship in Dallas in its own Southwestern District. The chorus had 47 members at the time.

1961



John Cullen

John Cullen wore gold medal

By 1961 the Society had adopted a system of electing its officers on a calendar-year basis, and John Cullen, a Washington, DC attorney, became the first president to serve a January-to-January term.

Cullen had helped organize the District of Columbia chapter

in 1945 and was a charter member of the group. He was on stage when the **Singing Capital Chorus** won the first international chorus contest in 1954, and he also sang with a quartet, the **Capitolians**.

After a three-year term as executive vice president of the

Mid-Atlantic District, John was named in 1958 to the International Board. He was elected a vice president in 1959 and held that post until being elevated to the presidency.

Born in 1904, he died a few days before his 75th birthday in April 1979.

Champion Suntones stayed together for 25 years

A young Florida quartet crowned as international champion in Philadelphia in 1961 was destined to become one of the most popular, active and long-lived in the Society's history: the **Suntones**.

Formed less than three years earlier, the quartet sang for over 25 years, averaging 40 annual shows—more than 1,000 performances. It produced ten record albums and pioneered such show-business touches as individual microphones and a tall stool for each singer.

Original members of the quartet were Gene Cokeroff, tenor; Bob Franklin, lead; Bill Wyatt, bari, and Bill Cain, bass. Harlan Wilson replaced Wyatt before they won the championship, and that foursome stayed together until Drayton Justus, former lead of the **Gentlemen's Agreement**, took over the lead slot when Bob retired in 1980.

Next to the **Buffalo Bills** of *The Music Man* fame, the Suntones probably were the Society's best-known quartet, thanks mainly to their long run on Jackie Gleason's television show of the '60s. The quartet made numerous appearances and worked behind the scenes, providing background music and other services, for as long as the show originated from Miami.

The Suntones' last formal presentation was at a show in Montclair, N.J., in January 1985, honoring Society arranger Walter Latzko.



SUNTONES, 1961— L. to R., rear: Bill Cain, bass; Harlan Wilson, bari; front: Bob Franklin, lead; Gene Cokeroff, tenor.



1961—The 166-man **Chorus of the Chesapeake**, Dundalk, Md. (Mid-Atlantic District), remains the largest ever to win the international title. Directed by Robert D. Johnson, later Society music services director, it won in Philadelphia.

1962



Louis Laurel

Laurel: president, gold winner

The 1962 president was a man whose later exploits would overshadow even his presidency: Lou Laurel of El Paso, Texas.

In 1964, 18 months after his term as president ended, he directed El Paso's **Border Chorders** to the international chorus crown. And in 1972, following his move to Phoenix, he became the only man ever to direct two different choruses to world titles.

He led the **Phoenicians** to the first of three championships (1972, 1976, 1983) and to numerous other medals along the way. Earlier, in 1955 and 1956, his **Desertaires** quartet had finished as finalists in international quartet competition.

Lou's administrative experience almost matched his musical accomplishments: president of the El Paso chapter in 1953,

president of the Southwestern District in 1955 and '56 and a member or officer of the International Board from 1967 until his presidency in 1962.

He also is a certified senior judge who helped develop the Interpretation category, and he continues to direct the Phoenicians—most recently to a sixth-place finish this year in San Antonio.

Gala Lads had experience, talent to win gold in '62

"Experienced"—and proving it—might best describe the members of the 1962 international quartet champion, the **Gala Lads** from Alhambra, CA.

While a few gold medalists have been as young as in their teens, The Gala Lads averaged 36 years of age when they won the championship. Tenor Dave Panther was 28, lead Tom Keehan 35, bari Gordon Lees 36 and bass Bill Cockrell 45.

What's more, collectively they had sung in 16 quartets before getting together as the Gala Lads, and could count a total of 35 years of barbershopping experience.

One of Bill's previous quartets was the **West Coasters**, 1957 international silver medalists. For Dave, although the youngest of the group, the Gala Lads was his seventh quartet.

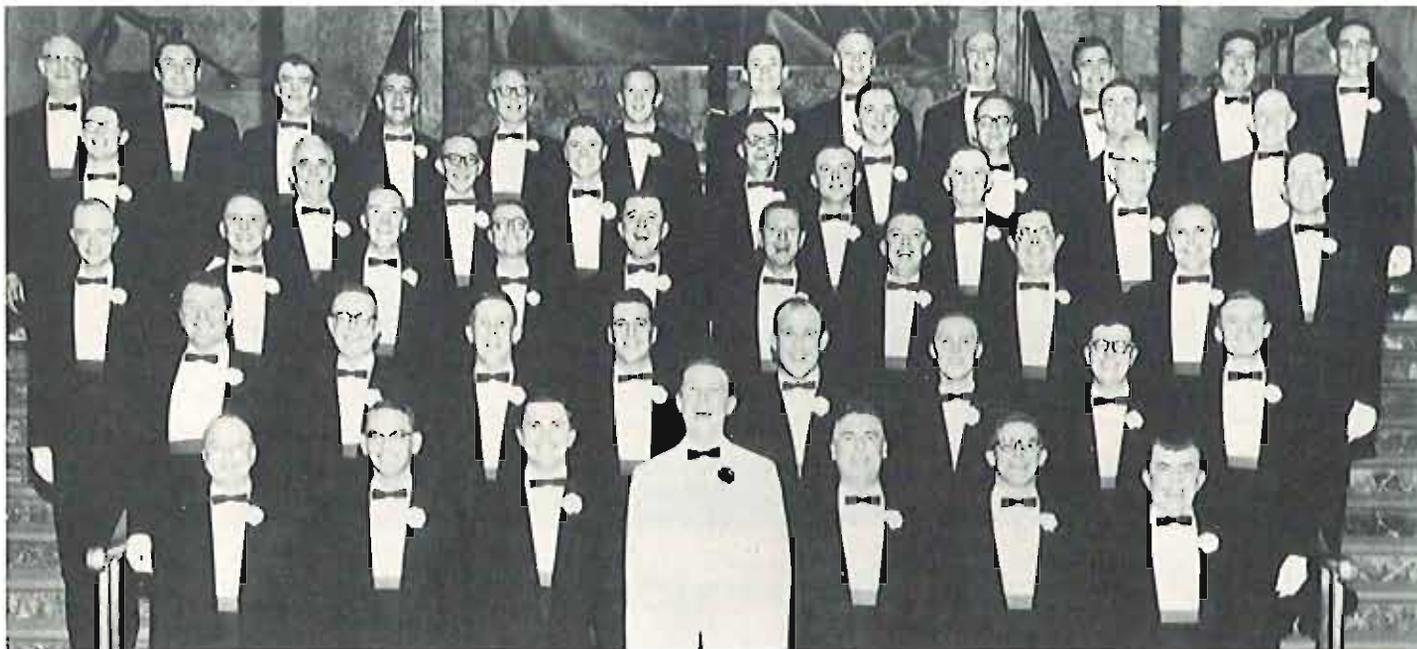
Although the foursome was organized in 1958, the winning combination did not get together until 1960. A year later, in its first international competition, it placed sixth, then jumped to the top of the heap the following year in Kansas City.

In 1964 Tom was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident, and California barbershoppers including the **Golden Staters** quartet staged a benefit to raise \$1,200 to help with medical expenses.

By 1968 the Gala Lads were back in business with all the original members except Dave, who had been replaced by Joe May.



GALA LADS, 1962—L. to R.: Dave Panther, tenor; Bill Cockrell, bass; Gordon Lees, bari; Tom Keehan, lead.



1962—The Louisville Thoroughbreds won the first of their seven international championships in Kansas City. Directed by Bill Benner and representing the Cardinal District, the chorus had 48 men.

1963



S. Wayne Foor

President Foor quartetter, judge

In 1963 S. Wayne Foor of Rochester, N.Y. succeeded Lou Laurel as the Society's 20th president.

Like Lou, he was a quartet man; his quartet, **The Note Crackers**, had been together since Wayne joined the Society

in 1947. They were international finalists in 1951, '52, '53 and '54.

Also like Laurel, Foor became involved in the judging program; he was a category specialist for secretaries.

He served as the Seneca Land

District contest and judging chairman and as president, then moved onto the International Board where he was an international vice president before taking over the presidency.

He is living today in Naples, Fla.

'T & C' Four won crown with original personnel

Many—in fact, most—championship quartets go through several changes in personnel before they finally reach the top. Not so the **Town & Country Four**, 1963 international champions.

The "T & C" first got together for some woodshedding at a picnic in August 1955. From that time on, like the school board of *The Music Man* fame, you seldom saw one without the others. They were Leo Sisk, Larry Autenreith, Jack Elder and Ralph Anderson.

The only change they made along the way was when Larry and Jack switched parts, with Larry winding up on lead and Jack on bari. Leo remained at tenor and Ralph on bass (frequently as a soloist). All had been members of the Pittsburgh Chapter since joining the Society.

From the beginning they set their sights on winning the international gold, and they were never deflected from that course. Even they, however, might have wondered at times if they were destined always to be bridesmaids. In their first contest (for novice quartets) they came in second. Seeking the Johnny Appleseed District crown, they



TOWN & COUNTRY FOUR, 1963—L. to R.: Jack Elder, bari; Ralph Anderson, bass; Larry Autenreith, lead; Leo Sisk, tenor.

placed second twice before reaching their goal. And in six consecutive appearances at international, beginning in 1957, they placed 27th, 8th, 3rd and 2nd, 2nd, 2nd. But at Toronto in 1963 they became the Society's 25th international champions.

1963 continued



1963—The Pekin, Ill. Chorus won its second championship at the contest in Toronto. Again directed by Jim Moses, and representing the Illinois district, it competed with 43 voices.

1964



Dan Waselchuk

Waselchuk still a force in Society

Dan Waselchuk became a barbershop officer (chapter secretary) two months after he joined the Green Bay, Wis. chapter in 1952. In the 36 years since then, he has seldom if ever not held an office; the post of international president in 1964 was just one stop along the way.

Between 1952 and 1961, when he was named to the International Board, he served in virtually every office in both the chapter and Land O' Lakes District, including the presidencies

of both. After two years on the Board he became the Society's 21st president.

Nor did administration occupy all his barbershopping time. He founded the Green Bay chapter bulletin, *The Sing-Chronizer*, in 1952, later sang bass with the **Bay Nineties**, then the **Packlander Four** and finally the **Packlanders** quartets, managed a chorus directors school in 1960, a district HEP School in 1961 and found time to become a certified judge in voice expres-

sion in 1962.

Following his term as the Society's chief officer, he remained on the Board for a while and then worked on many international committees. That service continues today; he is chairman of the Society Archives Committee (and was instrumental in founding the Heritage Hall museum at Harmony Hall) and was a member of the the prestigious Future II Committee which charted the course of the Society for its next 50 years.

Sidewinders and chorus celebrated wins in 1964

Saturday, June 27, 1964, undoubtedly was the happiest day in the history of the Riverside, Cal. chapter.

On that day the Riverside **Citrus Belters** chorus won 5th-place bronze medals in its first international competition. And four chapter leaders, a group known as the **Sidewinders**, became the new international quartet champions.

Some championship quartets, by necessity or by choice, have not always been strong members of the chapters to which they belonged. Not the Sidewinders. Tenor Jerry Fairchild had long been chorus director. Lead Joe Daniels had been president and was about to be named to that post again. Bass Jay Wright was three-term secretary. Bari Gene Boyd was past membership vice president, show chairman and perennial committee member. ...continued on page 52



SIDEWINDERS, 1964—L. to R.: Joe Daniels, lead; Jerry Fairchild, tenor; Gene Boyd, bari; Jay Wright, bass.

1964 continued

The Sidewinders immediately became popular ambassadors of the Society. They made two major network appearances two days after winning the gold medals. A crowd of 2,000 greeted them at their first engagement as champions in California. For the next eight years they

sang from coast to coast and from Maine to Mexico.

The Sidewinders stopped accepting engagements as of June 1969, but they emphasized they would continue to sing together from time to time "for our own amusement and amazement."



1964—El Paso's **Border Chorders**, 53 men from the Southwestern District, won the title in San Antonio under the direction of Lou Laurel, who would become the only man to direct two choruses to international crowns.

1965



Albert Smith

Smith youngest president in '65

Albert L. "Al" Smith of Fort Worth was 35 years old when he became the Society's 22nd president, the youngest man ever elected to that position. Fate must have planned it that way. Five years after he completed his term of office, on June 6, 1970, Al Smith died at the age of 41.

But he packed a lot of barber-shopping into the last 16 of those 41 years, both for his own pleas-

ure and for the good of the Society. Joining the Fort Worth Chapter in 1954, he was "hooked on the first chord," he later reported. He sang with both the Fort Worth and Dallas choruses and in more quartets than he could remember. Three entered competition: the **Chordialaires**, **Gadabouts** and **Jesters**. Along the way he also held nearly all the chapter offices and

served the Southwestern District in every post from area counselor to president. He was elevated to the International Board in 1962 and became the Society's 22nd chief in 1965.

He was a Fort Worth general contractor, and although he occasionally played bridge and golf, he freely admitted most of his spare time was spent barber-shopping.

'65 Champion Renegades became legends in Society

Every gold-medal quartet crowned by the Society in its 50-year history has been a great one. A handful—the **Schmitt Brothers**, **Confederates**, **Suntones** and a few others—went on to become legends.

The **Four Renegades**, 1965 champions, was one of the legends. Organized in 1957 for the Illinois District contest, the Renegades originally consisted of Jim Foley, bari; Joe Robinson, lead; Warren "Buzz" Haeger, tenor, and Tom Felgen, bass. Joe left the quartet in 1963 and was replaced by Ben Williams. For the next 14 years, by personal appearances, radio, TV and records, they would bring pleasure literally to millions.

In their climb to the top they had paid their dues: ninth in Dallas in 1960, seventh in '61, third in '62 and '63, second in '64. Finally came the announcement of the 1965 winners in Boston.

Bob Hockenbrough later wrote, "...It was the beginning of a great



FOUR RENEGADES, 1965—L. to R.: Jim Foley, bari; Ben Williams, lead; Tom Felgin, bass; Buzz Haeger, tenor.

1965 continued

career that would find them criss-crossing the continent and take them halfway around the world. From the stage of the great Carnegie Hall to our far-flung military bases in Guantanamo, Korea and Viet Nam, they sang, they entertained, they presented barbershop in that grand Renegades style."

Along the way they introduced songs that became classics: *All Out*

of *Step But Jim, This Is All I Ask, Mr. Bass Man* and many others.

Before Hugh Ingraham, former executive director, died this summer, he asked that his favorite quartet sing his favorite barbershop song at his memorial service. The Four Renegades willingly complied. With Buzz singing bass for Tom, who had moved to California, and Ray Henders filling in on tenor, they sang *Lost in the Stars*.



1965—The Miamians of that city became the Sunshine District's first international champions at the Boston contest. Directed by Bob Boemler, the chorus numbered 44 men.

1966



Reddie Wright

Reddie Wright Logopedics leader

The name of Reddie Wright, 1966 international president, is almost synonymous in the minds of many members with the Institute of Logopedics, the Society's unified service project.

From the time Reddie was elected to the International Board in 1963 to the present day, he has been a strong supporter of the institute in Wichita. He was a member of the committee which recommended adoption of the institute as an interna-

tional service project, an action that was taken in 1965.

And since 1972 he has been a member of the Society Logopedics and Service Committee, the last 12 years as chairman. He also is a trustee of Harmony Foundation, Inc.

A native of Taloga, Okla., he became a vaudeville song and dance man after finishing school in the 1920s in Oklahoma City. He "toured about every tank town in the U.S.," he said in 1966,

"until I finally killed vaudeville."

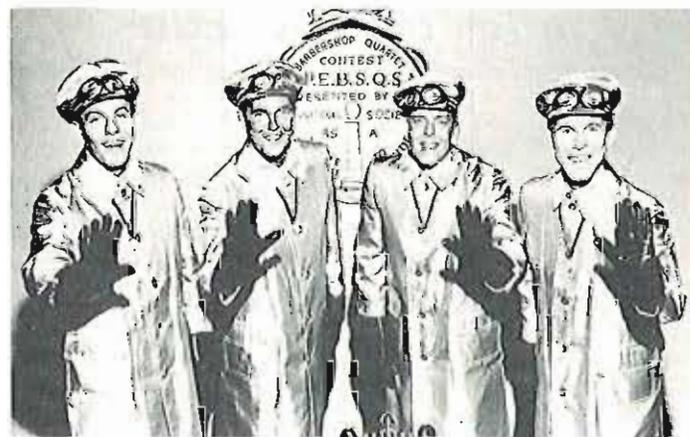
Migrating to California in 1937, he discovered barbershop in 1946, ran an ad in the paper for singers and started the Pasadena Chapter. He was, of course, the charter president, and five years later he was president of the Far Western District. He served on the International Board from 1952 to 1956, returning a few years later to work his way up to the post of presi-

Auto Towners' Bostick won gold to match his wife's

While several barbershop quartets have gone on to professional careers (the *Hi-Los*, *Four Freshmen* and *Osmond Brothers*, for example), the *Auto Towners*, 1966 international champions from the Detroit area, drew at least one of its members from a professional singing group.

Baritone Clint Bostick in the early 1950s was with the "Spellbinders," a mixed quintet that sang for two years on the Patty Paige television show, appeared for 13 weeks each on the Vic Damone and Tony Bennett shows and sang for 17 weeks with Judy Garland at the Palace Theater in New York City.

Female soloist of the group was Renee Craig, to whom Clint introduced his wife, Bobbie. Renee and Bobbie soon formed the *Cracker Jills*, who would claim the 1957 Sweet Adelines quartet championship. Thus Clint and Bobbie became the first husband and



AUTO TOWNERS, 1966—L. to R.: Carl Dahlke, bass; Clint Bostick, bari; Al Rehkop, tenor; Glenn Van Tassell, lead.

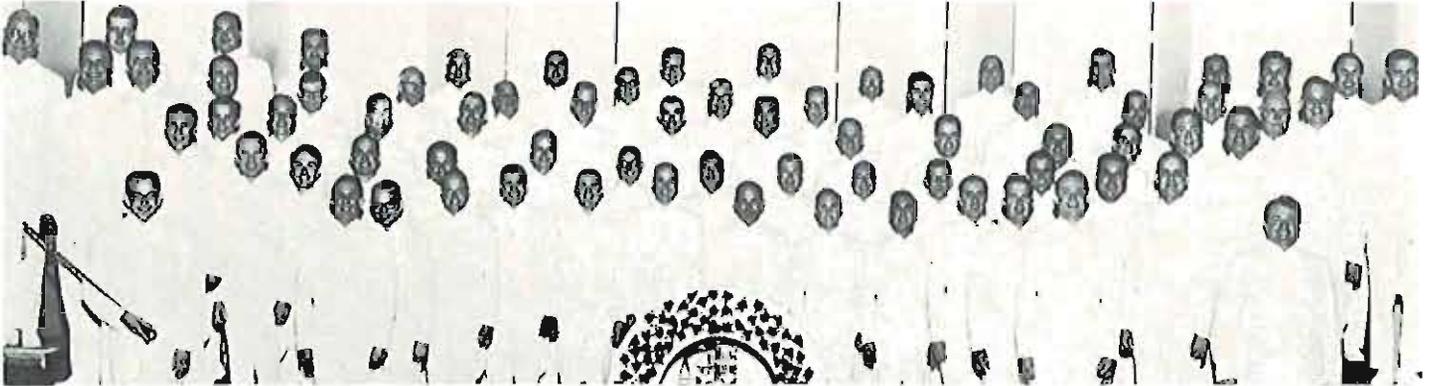
1966 continued

wife team to win gold medals in both the men's and women's organizations. (Don and CarolAnn Bagley became the second when Don's quartet, the **Chiefs of Staff**, won this year.)

It was two other members of the quartet, however—lead Glenn Van Tassel and tenor Al Rehkop—who would go on to make further headlines in the barbershop world. Both won their second gold medals

as members of the **Gentlemen's Agreement**, 1971 champions.

Rounding out the Auto Towners was bass Carl Dahlke, an 11-year barbershopper who had sung in several quartets and directed the **Chordomatic Chorus** to the Michigan District championship in 1965. The Auto Towners continued to thrill audiences throughout the nation until their retirement at the end of 1969.



1966—Louisville's **Thoroughbreds**, now directed by Jim Miller, won their second international title at the Chicago contest. They had 70 men to represent the Cardinal District.

1967



James Steedman

Steedman was from Scotland

Jim Steedman of Buffalo, N.Y., was the first foreign-born president of the Society. Elected in 1967 as the 24th chief officer, he had been born 52 years before in Glasgow, Scotland.

He and his parents emigrated to Buffalo when he was eight years old, but after becoming international president, Steedman liked to threaten changing the Society theme song to *Roam-*

ing In the Gloaming.

A barbershopper for 40 years until his death in 1987, he had joined the Buffalo chapter in 1947. He went on to become chapter president and then area counselor, vice president and president of the Seneca Land District. In 1962 he was named to the International Board to serve out the unexpired term of the next president, Wayne Foor,

and he rose through the offices to the 1967 presidency.

Jim had worked after school in a restaurant during his high school years, and he stayed in the restaurant business or related fields for the rest of his life.

A tenor, he sang with the **Frontiersmen** and **Bison City** quartets and with Buffalo's **Queen City Chordsmen**, acting as chorus manager.

Four Statesmen traveled 800 miles to rehearsals

It's not unusual, with today's modern highways and plane connections, for members of a quartet to live some distance apart. But in the mid-1960s, when the **Four Statesmen** were working their way toward the 1967 international championship, it was almost unbelievable that a quartet could live in four different states.

Yet such was the case for tenor Frank Lanza, Rhode Island; lead Dick Chacos, New Hampshire; bari Richard "Doc" Sause, Connecticut, and bass Don Beinema, Massachusetts. Twice weekly they drove a total of 800 miles to rehearse. What's more, they continued the long-distance harmonizing from the time the quartet was organized in 1963 until it disbanded at the end of 1978—a total of more than 15 years.

The Statesmen were all "old pros" in the barbershopping world when they first got together. Frank, from Providence, R. I., had been a member for 17 years and had sung in four quartets from three chapters. Dick Chacos, Nashua, NH, a 14-year veteran, had made the international finals five straight years, 1959 through 1963, with his quartet, the **Merry Notes**.



FOUR STATESMEN, 1967—L. to R.: Richard Chacos, lead; Don Beinema, bass; Dr. Richard Sause, bari; Frank Lanza, tenor.

Doc Sause, Meriden, Conn., had been a member for 22 years and had sung in both chorus and quartet competition on the international stage—in the latter case with the **Connecticut Yankees**. And Don, Worcester, Mass., had been a member of three different quartets in his 12 years with the Society before joining the Statesmen.

1967 continued



1967—The Dapper Dans of Harmony, Livingston, N.J., directed by Dave Mittelstadt, won the first of their two international titles in Los Angeles. The 69 men represented the Mid-Atlantic District.

1968



Wesley Meier

Meier met barbershop in Navy

The international presidency shifted to the West Coast in 1968 when Wesley R. "Wes" Meier of San Diego was named as the Society's 25th president.

A barbershopper since 1946, he first visited the San Diego chapter while serving in the Navy. He found himself singing tenor in an organized quartet the first night, and he later recalled "that did it for me.... I stayed about as close to four-part harmony from that time on as the Navy would allow.... When my Navy retire-

ment came up in 1954 (after a 20-year career) I didn't waste much time in making barbershopping a permanent part of my life."

Which it has been. He spent ten years as a certified harmony accuracy judge and served on at least five international contest judging panels, earning the rating of Senior Judge. For the four years preceding his election to the top office, he was chairman of the International Contest and Judging Committee. He sang

tenor with a half-dozen different quartets and two choruses.

Administratively, he held most of the offices, including that of president, of the San Diego chapter, then took on Far Western duties which culminated in a three-year term as district president. He was elected to the International Board in 1963.

Wes Meier today still lives in San Diego, sings with the **Sun Harbor Chorus** and attends as many contests and shows as he can manage.

Continentials stumbled, came back to win in '68

A funny thing happened to the **Western Continentals** on their way to the 1968 international quartet championship.

In 1965, only a year after they first got together, Dr. Curt Kimball, Ted Bradshaw, Paul Graham and Terry Diedrich placed eighth in the international competition. Then Curt, the tenor, was called to service in Viet Nam and was replaced by Al Mau. They dropped to 21st in '66.

Some might have figured Al was the problem, but the quartet didn't. They went to Los Angeles in '67, not only with Al but with a new bass, Phil Foote, replacing Terry. They won the silver medals. The next year, in Cincinnati, they captured the gold.

If a native Arizonan still lived in Phoenix in the 1960s, he wasn't with the Continentals. Al was from Wisconsin, Ted (the lead) from Ohio, Paul (bari) from Michigan and Phil from Detroit (by way of El Paso, thanks to the Air Force). Curt had come from Oklahoma.

The quartet was "on again, off again" for a decade after winning the championship. Al moved to California in 1971 and was replaced by Frank Friedemann, but they disbanded in '72. Phil also had left, but by 1973 both he and Al were back, and the Continentals resumed



WESTERN CONTINENTALS, 1968—L. to R.: Ted Bradshaw, lead; Paul Graham, bari; Phil Foote, bass; Al Mau, tenor.

shows until a job transfer took Phil away again. He returned a second time in 1977, but the quartet hung up the pitch pipe for good in 1979.



1968—The Pekin, Ill. Chorus became the first three-time winner at the contest in Cincinnati, with 48 men on stage. Still directed by Jim Moses, it represented the Illinois District.

1969



Robert Gall

Prez Bob Gall: singer/sportsman

The wonder is that Robert D. "Bob" Gall ever had time to be a barbershopper, let alone serve as 26th international president.

But in his nearly 40 years with the Society, all in his native Kansas City, he has been about as active in both the musical and administrative sides of barbershopping as one man could be.

Even in high school Bob was a singer, sportsman and athlete (football, basketball and Golden Gloves boxing); in the Army he

sang briefly in a quartet; later at the University of Missouri he and his brother Bill joined another quartet.

Meanwhile he had joined the Kansas City Chapter in 1949. In the next 20 years he served in virtually every office at the chapter, Central States District and international levels, ending with the international presidency.

And at the same time he "quartetted" with the **Cross Towners, K.C. Mo-Ners,**

Rudy Flick Royalaires, Crackerjacks and finally the **Merry Mugs**, which became one of the most popular show quartets in Society history.

Bob's three sons all are or have been barbershoppers, while wife Harriet is a leading Sweet Adelines singer, director, judge and coach. What's Bob doing now? Planning for the 1989 International Convention in Kansas City, where he will be assistant general chairman.

'Mo' got second gold medal when Mark IV won in '69

Luck and the U.S. government—combined, of course, with the well-known Rector talent—won Morris "Mo" Rector his second international gold quartet medal in 1969.

San Antonio's **Mark IV** was the champion that year, and C. O. Crawford had been the bass of the quartet from its beginning. He was with tenor Franklin Spears, lead Al Koberstein and bari Dale Deiser when they placed third in Los Angeles in 1967, and again—although he barely made it—when the quartet won the silver in Cincinnati in '68.

But C. O. was a State Department employee, subject to being sent on short notice to the Mideast or some other trouble spot for a few weeks or a few years. Mo, who had won his first gold medal with the **Gaynotes** in 1958, usually filled in for C. O. on shows while C. O. was gone.

In 1968 C. O. made it back from Jordan just one day before the Southwestern District prelims, qualified with the quartet and won a silver medal in Cincinnati. A week later Uncle Sam called again. The message this time: two years in Morocco.

So Mo was the bass at the '69 prelims and again when the Mark IV won the championship in St. Louis in July. C. O. later returned, Mo left, and the quartet filled engagements for several years before disbanding. Most went on to other quartets or to even greater accom-



MARK IV, 1969—L. to R.: Franklin Spears, tenor; Dale Deiser, bari; Al Koberstein, lead; Morris "Mo" Rector, bass.

plishments— especially Franklin Spears, who is now a justice of the Texas Supreme Court.



1969—It was the Louisville Thoroughbreds for the third time at a contest in St. Louis. Now 88 men strong, representing the Cardinal District, it was again directed by Jim Miller.

1970



Wilbur Sparks

Sparks still involved in Society

Wilbur D. Sparks of Alexandria, Va. is a former international president who remains as involved in the Society today as he was when he filled the top spot in 1970.

Now the international historian, he also has served recently on the Future II Committee, is a member of the 50th Anniversary Committee and for the last 14 years has edited the Alexandria chapter bulletin, *The Echo*.

Involvement, in fact, has been Wilbur's watchword since joining the Alexandria Chapter in 1954. He immediately became involved in his first quartet, **Professors of Harmony**, and within the next few years was wrapped up in the judging program (as a certified Voice Expression judge), quartet coaching, bulletin editing, chorus directing, show production, Chapter Officer Training Schools

(COTS)—you name it.

He and Dee Paris wrote the first training manual for bulletin editors, and just this year another collaboration, with Historian-Emeritus Dean Snyder, resulted in the first manual for chapter and district historians.

Involvement in administrative duties paralleled other activities as he served in nearly every office at the chapter, Mid-Atlantic District and international levels.

Real start of Oriole Four traced to high school days

The real beginning of the **Oriole Four**, 1970 international champion quartet, was in 1951 outside a Baltimore high school—although no one, of course, knew it at the time.

That's when students Fred King and Jim Grant first met, discovered they had a mutual fondness for harmony and sang an impromptu duet. They joined the Society a couple of years later, found two other students who liked to harmonize and formed the **Deacon Four**, with Jim as lead and Fred on baritone.

The quartet, with occasional personnel changes, was still getting together now and then after its members had graduated, and in 1956 the name was changed to the Oriole Four. Bass Don Stratton came along in 1957; tenor Bob Welzenbach joined the others in 1958, and a winning combination was solidified.

All were members of the Dundalk, Md. Chapter, and three weeks after their first rehearsal they won the Dundalk Open and later the Chesapeake Bay Open. It was in 1958 also that they met Bob Loose, who was to become their permanent coach and close friend. After working with him for only three months, they won the Mid-Atlantic District championship.

But then the hills got steeper. Although they placed eighth in their first international competition in 1959, it would be 1965 before they again reached the finals and '69, in St. Louis, before they won their first medal, a fourth-place bronze. But the next year, in Atlantic City,



ORIOLE FOUR, 1970—L. to R.: Bob Welzenbach, tenor; Jim Grant, lead; Don Stratton, bass; Fred Kirg, bari.

12 years of work and dedication paid off, and the Oriole Four were the new champs.



1970—The Dapper Dans of Harmony repeated their 1967 success with a victory in Atlantic City. From Livingston, N. J., representing the Mid-Atlantic District, the 86 men were again directed by Dave Mittelstadt.

1971

Ralph Ribble long a quartet man



Ralph Ribble

Ralph Ribble of Dallas, who in 1971 became the Society's 28th president, has played a multitude of roles during his 37 years of barbershopping. But at the time of his election (and to an only slightly lesser extent today), he was known primarily as a quartet man.

Within months after joining the Dallas (Big D) Chapter in 1951, Ralph had organized his first foursome, the **Mel-O-Notes**. Ever since, there have been more than he can recall—

the **Mel-O-Men**, **Chord Cops**, **Tonics**, **Hobos**, **Casualaires** and more. But neither he nor thousands of others have any trouble remembering the **Mad-caps** of the 1950s, one of the most popular show quartets to come out of the Southwestern District.

A Dallas banker, Ralph was instrumental in organizing the second Dallas chapter in suburban Garland (now known as the Town North Chapter) and was its director for many years. He

also helped form the Longview and Sherman, Texas chapters.

Inevitably, with his many talents, he was drawn into the administrative side of the Society, rising through most of the chapter and district offices, including two terms as Southwestern District president. He was treasurer and then vice president of the International Board before assuming the presidency.

In the period since 1971 his service has continued almost unabated.

'G. A.' almost qualified as 'overnight' success

The **Gentlemen's Agreement**, 1971 international champion, is one quartet that really was an "overnight success." Almost, anyway.

Organized in December 1969, it qualified for the international contest in the spring, went to Atlantic City in July and came home with fourth-place medals. The following year, in New Orleans, the Detroit-area quartet won the whole ball of wax. But why not? Two of its members (baritone Glenn Van Tassel and tenor Al Rehkop) claimed their second gold medals in New Orleans; they had been half of the **Auto Towners**, 1966 champions. And the other two, lead Drayton Justus and bass Bob Whitledge, were equally talented, long-time barbershoppers, even though they didn't have medals to show for it.

Glenn, Bob and Drayton had been directors or assistant directors of three different choruses; Al is an accomplished composer and arranger who was responsible for many of the quartet's songs.

One week after winning the gold the G. A. accepted an invitation to make a 17-day tour of South Vietnam. From the decks of ships to forward-area bases to hospitals they entertained U.S. servicemen, singing 41 shows in a little over two weeks. Greg Backwell, formerly of the **Nighthawks**, replaced Glenn in about 1973, and Drayton later joined the **Suntones**. The quartet retired, then reorganized two or three times but finally shelved the pitchpipe in the mid-'80s.



GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT, 1971—L. to R.: Al Rehkop, tenor; Bob Whitledge, bass; Drayton Justus, lead; Glenn Van Tassell, bari.

1971 continued



1971—The Chorus of the Chesapeake won its second set of gold medals in New Orleans. The Dundalk chorus, from the Mid-Atlantic District, was directed by Fred King but this time had "only" 86 men.

1972



Richard deMontmollin

deMontmollin active youth leader

Richard "Dick" deMontmollin, the 29th president of the Society, has been involved with youngsters during most of his adult life.

It was fitting that the *Young Men in Harmony* program was adopted during his administration in 1972.

As an active civic leader in Columbia, S. C., at the time of his election, one of Dick's positions was chairman of the Board

of Trustees of Thornwell's Children's Home. He had himself been reared in the home.

As an elder in the Covenant Presbyterian Church, he also taught Sunday school. Interestingly, it was his church work that led him into barbershopping.

A barbershop quartet hired for a church social in 1961 wanted to cancel at the last minute because the baritone was not available. Desperate, Dick

(who had sung in a choir in college), offered to sing bari with them. Apparently he passed the test; the **Unmentionables** became one of the most popular quartets around, logging 97 engagements over the next two years.

Since that time Dick has served as a trustee of the Harmony Foundation, including a term as president, and remains active in the Columbia chapter.

'72 Champ Golden Staters trod long road to gold

The long road to the gold by Southern California's **Golden Staters**, 1972 quartet champions, was marked by a number of "firsts."

They were the first foursome ever to win all five medals (although the **Boston Common** later duplicated this feat), the only one to place in every position from seventh to first, and certainly the only quartet to compile this enviable record with three different leads: Jim Meehan, Ken Ludwick and finally Milt Christensen.

Organized in 1960, the original quartet consisted of tenor Jack Lang, lead Joe Rook, bari Buddy Yarnell and bass Mike Senter. Through dozens of personnel changes over the next few years, Mike was the only original member who remained, and all the others freely acknowledged him as the leader, composer-arranger, musical director and in-house coach of the **Golden Staters**.

The composition of the quartet stabilized somewhat in late 1961 with the return of brothers Gary and Jack Harding (their second "tour of duty") as tenor and bari, respectively. But it was 1970 before Milt Christensen was transferred by his company from Salt Lake City to California, and he became the final GS lead. Milt had been lead of the **Salt Flats**, one of the nation's most popular comedy quartets, which decided early in 1970 to retire the pitch pipe.

Milt was the lead in New Orleans in 1971 when the **Golden Staters** placed third (for the second time), and he was on hand the next year in Atlanta to help them win the gold.



GOLDEN STATERS, 1972—L. to R.: Gary Harding, tenor; Milt Christensen, lead; Mike Senter, bass; Jack Harding, bari.

1972 continued



1972—Leading the **Phoenixians** to victory in Atlanta, Lou Laurel became the only director in the Society to direct two choruses to the gold. The Phoenix (Far Western) chorus had 87 men on stage.

1973



Charles Abernethy

Chuck Abernethy president in '73

For the fifth time since Rupert Hall served as the first president, the Society in 1973 turned to the Southwestern District for its chief executive.

Charles E. "Chuck" Abernethy, owner of a menswear store in Ponca City, Okla., had helped form the Ponca City Chapter in 1959. Born in Ohio in 1923, he had been involved since 1953 in barbershopping

in Decatur, Ill., Wichita, Kan., and for a while in the Frank H. Thorne chapter-at-large. When he moved to Ponca City in 1959 and found no chapter there, he moved quickly to remedy the situation.

He sang in one of the chapter's first quartets, held most of its offices and served as chorus director for about eight years.

Active in the judging program,

he served on many district and international panels and was an international specialist in the stage presence category.

Inevitably, he moved on to the District Board, was named to the International Board in 1966 and was international vice president-treasurer from 1970 through 1972. In 1973 he became the Society's 30th international president.

Dealer's Choice won crown in Portland on first try

In 1973 four dedicated, determined young men from Dallas, with two years of grueling, almost daily work behind them, "came out of nowhere" in Portland to win the international title on their first try.

The **Dealer's Choice** thus became the first quartet in 21 years (since the **Four Teens** in 1952) and the last, so far, to collect the gold in its first international competition. They were (from top to bottom) Al Kvanli, Bill Thornton, Brian Beck and Gary Parker.

The championship was the goal they had set for themselves in 1971, and with one change of personnel (Bill moved from bari to lead, replacing Louie Mullican, when Brian arrived), they made it in less than two years.

Ten weeks after Brian joined the quartet it placed fifth—out of the money—in the 1972 international prelims. It was the last contest the D.C. would fail to win. They passed up the international contest in Atlanta that year to attend a Society HEP (Harmony Education Program) school in Racine, Wis. They came back raving about the talents of Harlan Wilson, Don Clause and other faculty members, and with 54 hours of cassette tapes of their training sessions.

Rehearsing over and over the HEP School techniques, they won the Southwestern District Contest in October 1972 and the international prelims in March. Then the work intensified—a minimum of one rehearsal each day of the contest songs, each run-through timed by stop watch. They lived with their contest material 24 hours a day.

In Portland they "followed the book"—bypassing the fun and late



DEALER'S CHOICE, 1973—L. to R.: Al Kvanli, tenor; Bill Thornton, lead; Gary Parker, bass; Brian Beck, bari.

hours, rehearsing steadily, keeping their voices in shape (and drawing curious glances from other contestants) by speaking seldom and humming constantly into small hand towels.

It all paid off, as the retiring champs, the **Golden Staters**, hung gold medals around the necks of the "unknown" Dealer's Choice.

1973 continued



1973—The Southern Gateway Chorus, from the Cincinnati Western Hills chapter, Tom Gentil directing, brought the Johnny Appleseed District its first chorus championship in Portland. It had 65 men on stage.

1974



Leon S. Avakian

Avakian aided in BABS affiliation

The Society's 31st president was a key figure in extending organized barbershopping for the first time across the Atlantic to the United Kingdom.

It was during his term of office in 1974 that Leon Avakian and 192 other barbershoppers from 75 chapters made the first Society-sponsored tour of Great Britain. It led, the next year, to affiliation with the British Asso-

ciation of Barbershop Singers.

A quartet man from the time he was in high school and an avid woodshedder throughout his barbershop career, Leon had first joined the Society in Hollywood, Calif., in 1949. Returning to his native New Jersey (where he still lives), he founded the Asbury Park Chapter in 1954.

His administrative ability caught the attention of Society

officials when he staged the Mid-Atlantic District's first big convention in 1959. From then on his rise through the ranks was steady, culminating with his election to the international presidency for 1974.

Leon served as a Harmony Foundation trustee after his term as president, and he remains active today in his home chapter of Asbury Park.

Regents' victory in 1974 not as easy as it seemed

When the **Regents** won the international quartet championship at Kansas City's 1974 contest, it may have seemed to some that they had an easy road to the gold. It was their fifth international contest, and they'd placed third on two previous tries, in 1972 and '73.

But collectively tenor Harry Williamson, lead Joe Mazzone, bari Ron Knickerbocker and bass Hal Kauffman had logged 44 years of experience in nearly 25 different quartets. They lived in four different (albeit small and neighboring) states. And they comprised a quartet that had evolved through four editions since it was formed in the mid-1960s.

Harry was the only member who lasted through all four versions. In 1970 he teamed up with Ron (then a lead), Hal and Dave Reed as bari. When Joe left his previous quartet, the **Exclusives**, in 1971, to take the lead spot, Ron moved to bari.

Interestingly, Hal had been a tenor (and even, at one time, a boy soprano) until a few years before, when Harry had persuaded him to switch to bass of a previous quartet so that he, Harry, could sing tenor.

The combination, complete with the various part switches, proved the winning one, as the Regents made their "rapid" climb to the gold.



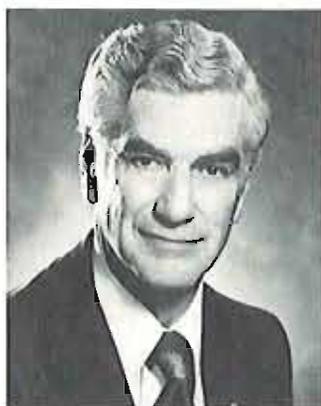
REGENTS, 1974—L. to R.: Harry Williamson, tenor; Joe Mazzone, lead; Hal Kauffman, bass; Ron Knickerbocker, bari.

1974 continued



1974—The Louisville Thoroughbreds captured their fourth international title (and their second in Kansas City), with Jim Miller and Joe Wise directing. The Cardinal representative had 88 men singing.

1975



Richard Ellenberger

Ellenberger has many interests

“Dick Ellenberger—Engineer, Musician and Administrator” read *The Harmonizer* headline that announced his accession to the international presidency of the Society in 1975. In his 34 years as a member, he has been all these things and more.

Engineer: As chairman of the Music Education Study and Membership Classification committees, he “engineered” recommendations that led to the publication of the Chorus

Director’s Manual, Basic Barbershop Craft Manual and reduced dues for students and senior members.

Musician: A soprano soloist as a child, he took up trombone when his voice changed, worked his way up to the Schenectady Symphony Orchestra, formed his first quartet six years before he (and the rest of the quartet) joined the Society and has sung in numerous others since.

Administrator: From Sche-

nectady to Montclair, N.J. to Marblehead, Mass., back to Schenectady and on to his present home in Fairfield, Conn., he has served in virtually every chapter, district and international office on the books.

Following his term as the 32nd president, he joined the Harmony Foundation and today serves as Northeastern District representative to Harmony Services Corp., the business arm of the Society.

Happiness Emporium never strayed from road to gold

The **Happiness Emporium**, 1975 international quartet champion, is living, still entertaining proof that experience pays off.

The “Emporium” members averaged 37 years of age when they won gold medals. A dozen years later they are continuing to prove one of the Society’s most popular foursomes. Their collective experience, even before they came together for the first time in 1972, included participation in 24 international contests and with three district championship quartets, plus four USO tours to the Pacific.

So they decided to put it all together and go for the gold. As *The Harmonizer* reported in January 1976, “It was a hand-picked quartet. They picked each other...” All from the Twin Cities of the Land O’ Lakes District, they were Bob Dowma, tenor; Rod Johnson, lead; Bob Spong, baritone, and Jim Foy, bass.

They recognized, of course, that know-how alone would not do the job. They dedicated themselves to their goal as probably few other quartets, before or since, have done. They scheduled rehearsals or performances at least three times, and often four or five times, a week. One stopped smoking. They took up jogging, aerobics and dieting. They continued voice lessons under Jeanne Traun, one of the top vocal teachers in the country, and began working with noted quartet



HAPPINESS EMPORIUM, 1975—L. to R.: Bob Dowma, tenor; Rod Johnson, lead; Jim Foy, bass; Bob Spong, bari.

1975 continued

coach Don Clause. At the same time, they never gave up the fun. As audiences throughout the nation have learned, the Happiness Emporium is one of the most aptly named quartets around, spreading

laughter and happiness wherever they appear. Seven months after formation they placed 24th at the contest in Portland. The next year they were 9th, and in Indianapolis in 1975, they leaped to the gold.



1975—The Vocal Majorlty, Dallas Metropolitan chapter, claimed its first world title in Indianapolis, under the direction of Jim Clancy. The Southwestern District chorus won with 89 singers.

1976



Plummer Collins

Collins saw service at every level

Unlike Dick Ellenberger, his immediate predecessor whose business took him all over the Eastern Seaboard, 1976 International President Plummer Collins has spent his entire barbershop career in the city in which he joined the Society and in which he still lives: Warren, Pa.

But that doesn't mean he

hasn't been around. He settled in Warren between two tours of duty with the Navy—during World War II and the Korean War—and a total of 4 1/2 years in the Pacific Theater.

And his successful performance in virtually every office of the Warren Chapter (including singing with its **Conewango Clippers** chorus in four international

contests) led inevitably to higher and higher posts with the Seneca Land District, topped off by two terms as president.

There followed service in every position on the International Board, certification in 1974 as an International secretary of judges and finally election as the Society's 33rd international president.

Innsiders credited 'alumni' with victory in 1976

The **Innsiders** of Houston, 1976 international quartet champions, may have more alumni than the University of Texas. In the Southwestern District they're an institution older than the **Vocal Majority**.

Only four, of course, won the gold medals in San Francisco, but they figure they owe at least an occasional wearing of the medallions to a host of other guys—most of them tenors. Those four were Mike Cox, tenor; John Devine, lead; Guy McShan, bari, and Tom Pearson, bass. That particular combination first got together in September 1971 and six weeks later placed third in the district quartet contest.

From that point it was a steady rise: 15th at the international contest in '72, district champs in '73, a quantum leap to 4th-place internationally in '74, silver medals in '75 and the top of the heap in '76. At that time Mike worked for an LTV subsidiary at the NASA Johnson Space Center; John was with Texaco, Guy with General Electric, and Tom had become an orthodontist. Only John and Guy, however, were original members of the **Innsiders**, which they formed shortly after John arrived in Houston in 1967. (By 1970 John also was director of the **Tidelanders** chorus.) The first tenor and bass were John Wiggs and Dick Oury, respectively.

At a reunion of the "Innsiders Alumni Association" in 1982, it was figured that the history of the 1976 champs, both before and after winning the gold, covered eight different versions of the quartet.



INNSIDERS, 1976—L. to R.: Mike Cox, tenor; John Devine, lead; Tom Pearson, bass; Guy McShan, bari.

1976 continued



1976—The Phoenix **Phoenicians**, with 118 men led by Lou Laurel, won their second gold medals in San Francisco. The win brought the Far Western District its third world chorus championship.

1977



Samuel Aramian

Versatile Aramian 34th president

Sam Aramian, the 34th president of the Society, is probably one of the most versatile, all-around practitioners of the many phases of barbershopping of any man who has held the position.

Elected to serve the 1977 term, he had been a quartet man (his **Desert Knights** was one of the most famous of show quartets), chorus director, show chairman, accredited judge (in both interpretation and the old voice expression categories), convention chairman, Chapter Officer

Training School faculty member and the holder of nearly every office at the chapter, district and international levels.

And since his retirement from the Society's top post he has continued active in his home Phoenix Chapter, served as a Harmony Foundation trustee and is still secretary-treasurer of the Harmony Services Corporation.

Born in Chicago in 1922, he and his family finally fled to the warmer climes of Phoenix in 1956 and have lived there since.

He joined the Phoenix chapter, was invited in 1958 to become bari of the **Desert Knights** and plunged into a barbershopping way of life that still continues.

A lover of classical, barber-shop and other types of music, his collection of classical recordings is matched only by his many barbershop records and tapes.

Eldest son Terry appears to have inherited both the musical and administrative talents of his father. In 1989 he will join the International Board.

Lucky number 7 led 'Haps' to Philadelphia gold

Seven has to be the lucky number of the **Most Happy Fellows**, the first and only medalists from the Evergreen District, who were crowned as international quartet champions in Philadelphia in 1977.

This edition of the quartet (which had almost as many alumni as '76 champs, the **Innsiders**) was seven months old; bari Jack Lyon had joined in December. In the three previous years the "Haps" placed 21st, 14th and 7th, all numbers divisible by 7. On this 7th day of the 7th month of the 77th year, they were the 7th contestant to appear in the finals—and won the gold. The plane that had brought them to Philadelphia was—what else?—a 747.

Bass Ken Hawkinson was the only original member of the foursome by the time it reached the top. He had organized and named the group in 1967 with the only-half-prophetic comment that "this will be a fun quartet, not competitive!" Tenor Bob Hodge came along about a year later, replacing Harry Aldrich as lead. Bob moved to tenor when lead Larry Hassler joined in '71. In December 1976, Jack replaced baritone Bob Jones. One of the unusual strengths of the Haps was that Bob, Larry and Jack, all experienced chorus or quartet men, could (and did) switch parts at will. Although long an entertaining foursome,



MOST HAPPY FELLOWS, 1977—L. to R.: Bob Hodge, tenor; Larry Hassler, lead; Jack Lyon, bari; Ken Hawkinson, bass.

thanks in large part to Larry's comedic talents, the Haps' popularity soared after they became champions and introduced their best known personalities: the Tin Man (Bob), Dorothy (Larry), the Scarecrow (Jack) and the Cowardly Lion (Ken) from the *Wizard of Oz*.



1977—The Dukes of Harmony, Scarborough, Ontario, brought Canada its first international chorus title with a victory in Philadelphia. Directed by Ray Danley, the Ontario District representatives numbered 105 singers.

1978



Roger Thomas

Thomas indicated ability early

The administrative ability of Roger Thomas, 1978 international president of the Society, was demonstrated within four months after he joined the Racine, Wis. chapter in 1962.

He and three friends had sung "what we thought was barber-shop harmony" for six or seven years before they were invited to visit the chapter. Roger was "disillusioned, to say the least."

Membership had dropped to four men, and the charter had just been revoked. Nevertheless, within weeks he found himself as chapter president trying to correct the situation.

He succeeded. Four months later the chapter had 40 members, its charter back, and both the chapter and Roger were on their way to bright careers in the Society. Three months after join-

ing, he was an area counselor for the Land O' Lakes District. By 1971 he was district president; he was elected to the International Board in '73, to the Executive Committee in 1975 and as the 35th international president in 1978. Along the way he also had become a certified stage presence judge, a chorus and quartet coach and a frequent faculty member of COTS.

Bluegrass Student Union's victory credit to Louisville

Still one of the Society's most popular quartets, more than 10 years after winning the international championship, is the **Bluegrass Student Union** of Louisville, Ky.

"Of Louisville" or "of the **Thoroughbreds**" might well be a part of the quartet name, so closely is it associated with the Society's winningest chorus. Three of its members—Al and Ken Hatton, tenor and lead, and baritone Danny Burgess—are sons of long-time Thoroughbreds singers. Bass Rick Staab's older brother brought him into the chorus. And the "kids" have played active chorus roles almost since they joined the group at age 16.

With Paul Morris first singing tenor, the BSU was organized in 1973. Rich finished high school that year and left for Washington, D.C. but returned in 1974 at about the same time brother Al came home from college and replaced Paul at tenor.

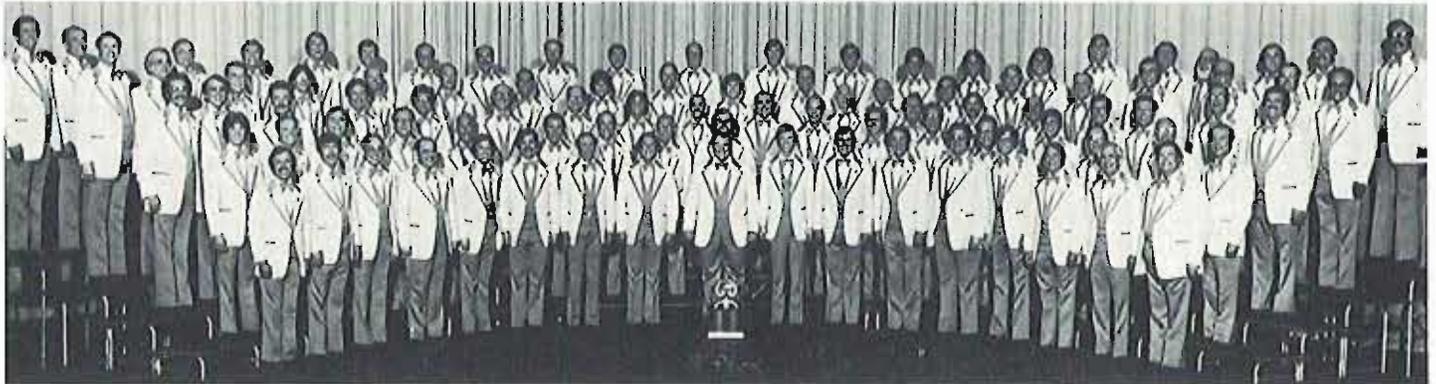
The Hattons' Sweet Adeline mother, Mary Jo, was their first coach, and others along the way included the eminent Don Clause and Ed Waesche. But the quartet admits its basic, most important training came from the Thoroughbreds and its "other" well-known quartet, the **Citations**.

The BSU won fourth-place bronze medals in its first international contest in 1976. It slipped one notch in '77 but came back the next



BLUEGRASS STUDENT UNION, 1978—L. to R.: Allen Hatton, tenor; Ken Hatton, lead; Rick Staab, bass; Dan Burgess, bari.

year to take the gold. It's been going strong ever since.



1978—The Thoroughbreds again, under Jim Miller's direction in Cincinnati, won their fifth championship. The Louisville chorus had 93 men representing the Cardinal District.

1979



Ernie Hills

Hills influential in town, Society

Few Oklahoma residents can tell you how to get to Medford. But the small town (pop. 1,419) near Enid, Okla., produced the Society's 36th president.

Born in Enid, Ernie Hills lived in Medford all his life until moving to Fresno, Calif., a few years ago. For a community of Medford's size, he held more than his share of important posts: mortician, operator of a family-owned furniture store, Chamber of Com-

merce manager and others. And his service to the Society became a reflection of his involvement in the community.

Although he joined the Society in 1953 while temporarily in Wichita Falls, Texas, he soon transferred his membership to the Enid chapter, where he eventually held almost every position, including that of chorus director. He also became a certified interpretation judge.

Progress through the Southwestern District offices followed, including two terms as president, and he then moved to the International Board and Executive Committee before being elected the 1979 international president.

Ernie's barbershop involvement is little lessened today; he's the current president of both the Society subsidiaries, the Harmony Foundation and Harmony Services Corporation.

Grandma's Boys bus trip led to gold in 11 years

In the summer of 1968 a high school quartet from Quincy, Ill. rode a Greyhound bus to Cincinnati, checked into the "Y," sat in the back row at the international contest and listened in awe as quartets like the **Western Continentals**, **Mark IV** and **Golden Staters** won the top medals. They had recently named the quartet, and 11 years later, when three of the original four ran onstage in Minneapolis to claim their own gold medals, it still bore the name **Grandma's Boys**.

Jay Giallombardo (bari), Hank Brandt (lead), John Miller (bass) and Jeff Calhoun (tenor) were singing in three different high school quartets when they first got together in the spring of 1968.

Their determination to stick together was rigorously tested over the next few years. John and Jay went off to college (in Peoria and Kansas, respectively); a year later Hank and Jeff enrolled in Dartmouth in New Hampshire, spreading the quartet over 1,500 miles. Somehow they continued to rehearse and give shows (usually at the same time, Hank later admitted).

Then Jeff moved to Denver and was replaced by Jim Sikorski, and the quartet jumped from 10th place in international competition in 1974 to 3rd place in '75. But Jim had to drop out, and Mac Huff, then a Society music man, recommended Don Barnick of Cleveland. After only a few weeks of rehearsals with a new tenor, Grandma's Boys placed sixth in the next year's contest. The combination proved the right one, however; in 1978 the quartet won the silver medals, and in '79 it walked offstage with the Landino Trophy.



GRANDMA'S BOYS, 1979—Jay Giallombardo, bari; John Miller, bass; Hank Brandt, lead; Don Barnick, tenor.



1979—The Vocal Majority, from Dallas Metro in the Southwestern District, claimed its second trophy in Minneapolis. Jim Clancy again was the director of the 110-man chorus.

1980



Leslie Hesketh

Hesketh proved his commitment

The devotion of Leslie "Les" Hesketh to his barbershopping duties was clearly demonstrated when he was president of the Society's largest district, Mid-Atlantic, a few years before he became the 37th international president.

During his 20 months as M-AD president, he drove his car some 62,000 miles to visit 71 of the 90 chapters in the district.

The action was typical of the

former, 35-year government official's dedication to barbershopping.

It was 1963 when Les joined the Society through the Prince Georges County, Md. chapter. Four months later he was its musical director.

He then moved to Fairfax, Va., joined the **Jubilaires** and by 1967 was president of that chapter. Meanwhile he had entered the judging program and

also had become a chorus and quartet coach.

Then came service on the district board, a term on the International Board and three years on the Executive Committee before being elected president for 1980.

His health began to deteriorate soon after the end of his term, and Les Hesketh died on Dec. 23, 1987 at his home in Clifton, Va.

Unique Boston Common sound paid off in gold

The **Boston Common**, a quartet with perhaps the most distinctive sound of any to top the medalist ranks, finally won the international championship in 1980.

"Finally" is the proper word. At its first international contest in 1971, the BC placed 12th. In 1972 it jumped to a fifth-place bronze medal. But the rest of the decade went like this: 1973, 4th; 1974, 3rd; 1975, 4th; 1977, 4th; 1978, 3rd; 1979, 2nd, and finally the gold in 1980. (The quartet had laid out of competition in 1976.)

The BC's rich, full-bodied sound is immediately recognizable on its records yet today. Formed in 1971, it sang anywhere people would listen: on street corners, in Harvard Square, at coffee houses and in historic Boston Common from which it took its name.

Even before winning the gold, tenor Kent Martin, lead Rich Knapp, bari Larry Tully and bass Terry Clarke had become one of the most popular quartets in the Society. By the time they completed their championship year, they had appeared on U.S. and Canadian network radio and TV, at Carnegie Hall, Rockefeller Center, Canada's National Arts Center and at other major theaters.

Rich was injured in an automobile accident in 1981, and Tom Spirito replaced him at lead. But Kent had to drop out in 1984, and the quartet disbanded.



BOSTON COMMON, 1980—L. to R.: Kent Martin, tenor; Rich Knapp, lead; Terry Clarke, bass; Larry Tully, bari.

1980 continued



1980—The **Dukes of Harmony** were back for their second win, under the direction of Ray Danley, in Salt Lake City. The Scarborough, Ontario chorus, of the Ontario District, competed with 112 men.

1981 continued



Burt Huish

Huish dedicated to growth

If the size of the Society does not increase over the next 50 years, it's certainly not the fault of its 38th president, Burt Huish of Twin Falls, Idaho.

Throughout his 25-year barbershopping career, and especially during and since his 1981 term as president, Burt has made membership retention and growth his chief goal. He strongly believes this can be accomplished by every chapter providing varied and enjoyable programs for its members.

The theme for his term of office was "1981—the year to re-MEMBER."

Since that time he has plunged deeply into the Chapter Officer Training School program, specifically so he can teach program vice presidents the way to good, all-around chapter programming.

Although Burt did not join the Society until 1963 in Idaho Falls, his love of barbershop harmony goes back to high school days. He moved to Twin Falls in 1965,

and soon tired of driving 95 miles each way to rehearse with his quartet. His wife Gloria persuaded him to form a chapter in Twin Falls. This was accomplished by September 1966, and Burt became its first president and music director.

His success in Twin Falls led him to the Evergreen District Board, including two years as president, then to the International Board, Executive Committee and finally to the presidency in 1981.

Chicago News victory made 19 medals for quartet

To relatively new barbershoppers, the **Chicago News**, when it won the international championship in 1981, seemed to have come almost "out of the blue."

True, it had placed second in 1980 and 8th in its first competition the year before, but compared to foursomes that struggled a dozen years to reach the gold, the "News" was a rash newcomer.

In fact, however, the '81 victory gave tenor Ray Henders, lead Butch Koth, bari Greg Wright and bass Tom Felgen a total of 19 international medals—7 bronze, 7 silver and 5 gold—won in four different quartets. For Tom, bass of the 1965 champion **Four Renegades**, it was a second gold.

Tom and Greg had been singing in quartets since they were about 10 years old, while Butch was a singer in high school. Ray, however, had been quartetting for "only" about 25 years.

Among the four of them they had performed with dozens of quartets. Ray's included the **Midnight Oilers**, one of the first to perform overseas for U.S. servicemen, and the **Soundtracks**, bronze medalists in 1974. Greg and his brother Larry (now lead of the **139th Street Quartet**) had sung with the **Sundowners**, twice silver medalists, and later with a professional pop-singing group. Butch was lead of the **Landmarks**, district champs and international competitors.

With these backgrounds, the Chicago News became an "overnight sensation" in 1981.



CHICAGO NEWS, 1981—L. to R.: Ray Henders, tenor; Eugene "Butch" Koth, lead; Tom Felgen, bass; Greg Wright, bari.

1981 continued



1981—The record-setting Louisville Thoroughbreds, again directed by Jim Miller, won their sixth championship in Detroit, as 112 men brought the gold back to the Cardinal District.

1982



Merritt Auman

Auman emphasized planning

Long-range planning was (and still is) the forte of Merritt Auman of West Lawn, Pa., the 1982 president of the Society.

As a real estate broker, savings association executive and a former member of the Shillington, PA Planning and Zoning Commission, Merritt had long been interested in both financial and physical planning.

He applied his expertise in

this field to the offices he held in the Lebanon, Pa. chapter, which he had joined in 1956, and throughout his service to the Mid-Atlantic District, where he held every post: area counselor, vice president, executive vice president and, in 1974, district president.

Joining the International Board in 1977, he served as vice president and/or treasurer from

1979 through 1981, making major contributions in the fields of financial planning and supervision. And during his term as president in '82 the Society adopted a five-year plan it followed until formation of the Future II Committee in 1987.

Merritt continues his work for the Society today as secretary-treasurer of the Harmony Foundation.

Classic Collection record included 2 district crowns

Denver's **Classic Collection**, 1982 international quartet champion, has one distinction no other quartet can match. It is the only foursome ever to win the championship of two of the Society's 16 districts, before moving on to win the international title.

Formed in 1973 when Denver was in the Central States District, the quartet consists of Curt Hutchinson, tenor; Larry Wilson, lead; George Davidson, baritone, and Terry Heltne, bass. In 1975 it won the Central States championship.

No quartet may repeat as winner of either a district or the international championship. But after a realignment of the districts in 1977, Denver found itself in the newly created Rocky Mountain District. The "Collection" promptly won that area's first crown, as well.

The following year, 1978, the quartet made the top 10 of the international competition in Cincinnati. It jumped to 6th in Minneapolis in 1979, to 5th the next year in Salt Lake City and won the silver medal in 1981 in Detroit. The gold medals and championship trophies came the following year in Philadelphia.

The Classic Collection members all belong to the **Denver Mile Hi Chapter**. Curt is a commercial insurance underwriter, Larry a sales marketing director for a pet supplies business; George is an educational administrator, and Terry a pharmaceutical sales representative.



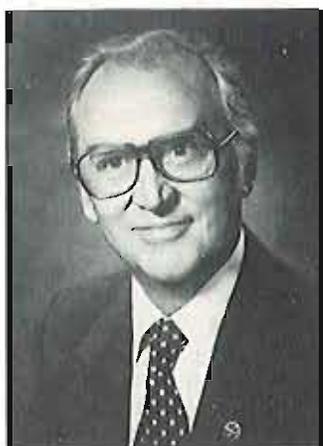
CLASSIC COLLECTION, 1982—L. to R.: George Davidson, bari; Terry Heltne, bass; Larry Wilson, lead; Curt Hutchinson, tenor.

1982 continued



1982—Then it was the **Vocal Majority's** turn again as the Dallas Metro chorus, with 133 men on stage, won its third championship under Jim Clancy's direction. The Southwestern District win occurred in Pittsburgh.

1983



Hank Vomacka

'Keep it pure' Vomacka's plea

Dr. Henry J. "Hank" Vomacka, the 1983 president of the Society, might be described as a "barbershopper's barbershopper."

Since long before he joined the Society nearly 40 years ago, he has recognized, loved and sung four-part harmony. And he is almost fanatical about keeping the musical style "pure."

Hank liked to harmonize with friends even in high school in Long Island, N.Y., but it was not until his Army days in Europe

during World War II that he formed his first quartet. It was while in the Army, too, that he discovered his beloved Sarasota, where he and wife Mary settled in 1946 and have lived since.

Hank helped organize the Sarasota Chapter in 1949, while he was a practicing physician, and ultimately served in most of its offices. Then came various posts on the Sunshine District Board, followed by his election to the International Board. Retirement from his medical

practice in 1980 served primarily to give him more time for barbershopping.

Of his term as the Society's 40th president, he is perhaps most proud of the formation of a study committee whose work led to participation by British and Scandinavian barbershop groups in their first international competition in 1986.

Now a trustee of the Harmony Foundation, Hank still works for preservation of the barbershop style.

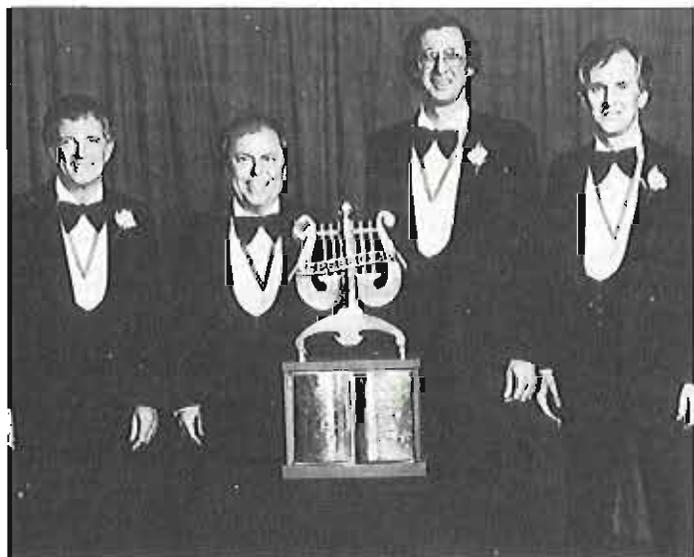
'Ramblers' had rocky road in quest for '83 victory

When the **Side Street Ramblers** of Dallas captured the 1983 international championship in Seattle, lead Brian Beck collected his second gold quartet medal. Bass Earl Hagn, however, was singing in his first quartet. Discrepancies in experience and height (Earl is 6-foot-5, Brian 5-foot-barely) seem to typify the quartet's ups and downs, ins and outs and backs and forths on its long road to the gold.

Tenor Keith Houts, bari Dennis Malone and then-lead Jim Law were seeking a bass in 1975 when Dennis' company suddenly transferred him to California, with only a slight chance he would return. But the other three found Earl (a guest at a **Vocal Majority** rehearsal), Dennis did return, and the Ramblers won the 1976 Southwestern District contest. They placed 28th at the 1977 international contest, qualified for the '78 contest—and Jim Law moved away. They had to skip the competition in Cincinnati.

Their coach, Bill Thornton, who with Brian had won a gold medal with the **Dealer's Choice**, stepped into the lead slot, and the Ramblers jumped to 7th place in '79, repeating that finish in 1980. Then Bill moved to Oklahoma City, and Brian became the Ramblers' third lead. The results were third-place bronze medals in both 1981 and '82, and finally, in 1983, the gold.

In the rare times they are not barbershopping (the quartet has taken a Caribbean cruise, made one trip to Europe and two to Australia) Keith enjoys his retirement from Braniff International in the log house he built near Tyler, Texas. Brian is a professional musician and jingle



SIDE STREET RAMBLERS, 1983—L. to R.: Keith Houts, tenor; Brian Beck, lead; Earl Hagn, bass; Dennis Malone, bari.

singer. Dennis is a piano technician and pianist, and Earl is an exploration draftsman for an oil company and a commercial artist.

Jim Casey of Dallas recently became the Ramblers' fourth lead when Brian returned to the newly reorganized Dealer's Choice.

1983 continued



1983—Phoenix won its third international title in Seattle as Lou Laurel directed the 105 Phoenixians, the Far Western District chorus, to victory.

1984



John Gillespie

Talents led Gillespie to '84 office

The sound of barbershop chords from the deck of a Navy destroyer in 1951 could be traced to a sailor and three shipmates entertaining the rest of the crew.

Thirty years later that same sailor, now a respected, middle-aged partner in an international accounting firm, might be found at a conference table in Harmony Hall. On both occasions he was promoting the "preservation and encouragement of barbershop quartet singing in America." He is John T. Gillespie, the Society's 41st president.

Born in Niles, Mich. in 1929, he joined the Niles Chapter in 1948. A few months later, he enlisted in the Navy and spent 3 1/2 years aboard a destroyer, where he and three shipmates formed a quartet that lasted until John was discharged in 1952.

After earning a degree in accounting in 1956, he resumed active participation in the Society, serving the Kalamazoo, Mich. chapter and the Pioneer District in almost every office available. During the same period he joined the Chapter Offi-

cer Training School faculty and was certified as a secretary in the Contest and Judging program.

His ability and dedication led John, a certified public accountant, to the International Board in 1978. A member of the Finance Committee, he was instrumental in financing the purchase and remodeling of the Sheridan Building in Kenosha for expansion of the international office.

From 1981 through 1983 he applied his talents to the office of international vp/treasurer, and was elected president for 1984.

'College kids' RapsCALLIONS took gold in just 4 years

The **RapsCALLIONS**, formed just four years earlier by four Bowling Green State University students, amazed the barbershop world when it won the 1984 international quartet championship in St. Louis.

The quartet, in fact, placed in the top 10 internationally each of the three years it competed: 9th in 1982, 6th in 1983 and first in '84.

Tenor Dave Smotzer, lead Dave Wallace, bari Tim Frye and bass Jeff Oxley formed the quartet in 1980 while working at summer jobs in Cedar Point, Ohio, to earn money to return to Bowling Green U.

All were members of the A Capella Choir and the Men's Chorus at the school and had had other musical training. Jeff had sung lead roles in campus productions of *Man of LaMancha* and *The Marriage of Figaro* and was studying for an operatic career.

Graduating in 1982, most of the foursome had moved on to business careers by the time they won the gold. Both Dave Smotzer and Dave Wallace were insurance agents and Smotzer was directing Cincinnati's **Southern Gateway** Chorus. Tim was a school teacher and music director in Wayne County, Ohio, and Jeff was continuing his musical training at the Cincinnati School of Music. Smotzer today is directing the San Antonio **Chordsmen**, while Jeff also has moved to Texas and is bass of the **Class of the '80's** in Dallas.



RAPSCALLIONS, 1984—L. to R.: David Smotzer, tenor; David Wallace, lead; Jeff Oxley, bass; Tim Frye, bari.

1984 continued



1984—It was Championship No. 7 for the **Thoroughbreds** in St. Louis as Jim Miller directed the 101 Louisville singers to the gold on behalf of the Cardinal District.

1985



Gil Lefholz

Lefholz second K.C. president

The Kansas City **Heart of America** Chapter in 1985 became one of a select group to produce two international presidents. Gilbert L. "Gil" Lefholz was installed as the 42nd chief officer, following in the footsteps of fellow chapter member Bob Gall, the 26th president in 1969.

Other chapters to breed two presidents were in St. Louis, Dallas (the Town North Chapter) and, believe it or not, the Manitowoc, Wis., Chapter.

Gil was a barbershop singer long before he entered the Society's administrative side. He was married to Donna, went to

work for Trans World Airlines (still his employer) and joined the Society, all in 1954, and at his first chapter meeting he was invited to try out for a quartet.

Probably Gil's best known quartet was **The Four Kippers**, Central States District champions who made a 1969 USO tour of the South Pacific to entertain American servicemen.

From Kansas City president in 1966 he went on to become Central States District president in 1974, moved on to the International Board and then the Executive Committee and was elected as 1985 president.

Today Gil is a trustee of the Harmony Foundation and will be general chairman of the 1989 international convention in Kansas City. He will be assisted by Bob Gall.

During and after his term as president, fate gave Gil a sad distinction he hopes no other president has to match. Ill health forced 1984 President John Gillespie to turn over many of his duties to Gil before his term ended. Gil's successor, William K. Park, died just 22 days after taking office on Jan 1, 1986. Gil agreed to return to finish out the 1986 term.



1985—Dallas Metro's **Vocal Majority** took its winning ways to Minneapolis as Jim Clancy directed 145 men to their fourth international title as Southwestern District representatives.

1985's 'TNT' all veterans better known as 'Marx'

The **New Tradition**—perhaps better known to thousands of barbershoppers as the Marx Brothers' clones—won the Landino international quartet trophy in 1985. All are experienced international competitors and medalists: tenor John Sherburn (Zeppo in their most famous impersonation), lead Dan Jordan (Chico), bari Bob Gray, Jr. (Harpo), and bass John Miller (Groucho).

The quartet is in a sense a spin-off of **The Grand Tradition**, international bronze medalists in 1980, '82 and '83, of which Dan and Bob were members. John Miller had won a gold medal in 1979 as bass of **Grandma's Boys**, and John Sherburn sang with the **Crown City Good Time Music Co.**, five-time semi-finalists, and the **Dapper Dads of Disneyland**, among other quartets. Although the Marx Brothers routine is their best known, the always-entertaining foursome has appeared also as the leading characters of *Star Trek*, as Charlie Chaplin, W. C. Fields and Laurel and Hardy and in other roles.

In "real life" Sherburn is senior x-ray technician at South Bay Hospital; Dan is operations manager for Jordan-Cameron & Reemer; Bob is program manager for Amex Systems, and Miller is advertising and promotions manager for NBC Television. The quartet has announced it will retire after the 1989 convention, when Sherburn will replace Larry Wright as lead of the **139th Street Quartet**.



THE NEW TRADITION, 1985—Top to bottom: John Sherburn, tenor; Dan Jordan, lead; Bob Gray, Jr., bari; John Miller, bass.

1986



William K. Park

Park only chief to die in office

William K. Park of Wilmington, Del., was elected at the 1985 international convention to serve as the Society's 42nd president in 1986. In October of '85 he was hospitalized for brain surgery, from which he never fully recovered. On January 22, 1986, just 22 days into his term

of office, he died at age 61.

Because his job with the DuPont Company required several moves, Bill Park had been active in chapters and districts across the country. He was one of two barbershoppers to serve as president of two districts: Mid-Atlantic in 1972 and the Far

Western in 1976. A member of the International Board, he was international vice president before being elected to the presidency.

Gil Lefholz, the 1985 president, returned to complete the term of the only Society president ever to die in office.

15-year cultivation grew harvest of gold for RR 4

When the **Rural Route 4** won the international quartet championship in 1986, it did not exactly qualify as an overnight sensation.

Organized in 1971 by four residents of Cass County, Mo., the quartet would not win the gold until 15 years and two changes of personnel later. Along the way were dozens of contests, from chapter to international level, and years of hard work. But there was fun, too, as the RR 4 gradually built a reputation as one of the most entertaining show quartets around.

Brothers Calvin and Willard Yoder, lead and bass, respectively, and the owners of a dairy farm, plus bari Rufus Kenagy, also a farmer, and tenor Everett Roth, a carpenter, were the original members of the group.

They qualified for their first international contest in 1976 in San



RURAL ROUTE 4, 1986—L. to R.: Jim Bagby, bari; Willard Yoder, bass; Calvin Yoder, lead; Don Kahl, tenor.

1986 continued

Francisco, finishing in 21st place. But the next eight years were a roller coaster—in the top 10 three times, out of it twice and laying out three years when the wives proclaimed, "We're not spending *this* vacation at a contest!"

Meanwhile Rufus had dropped out in 1977 and was replaced by Jim Bagby, an Associated Press newsman from Kansas City who had coached the quartet since 1972. Everett was replaced by Don Kahl

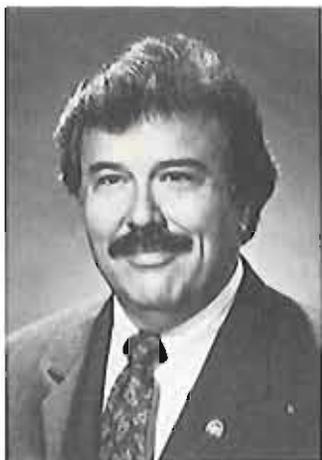
in 1983. Don is a respiratory therapist in the Kansas City area. Finally in 1985 in Minneapolis the RR 4 earned fifth-place bronze medals, and the following year, to their own surprise more than anyone else's, jumped to the No. 1 spot.

Most of the audience knew who the winners were before Chairman of Judges Ken Buckner ever got to the name, when he announced: "Our 1986-87 champions, four of the nicest guys you'll ever meet..."



1986—The Alexandria, Va., **Harmonizers** broke into the winners' circle in Salt Lake City. Directed by Scott Werner, the 105-man chorus gave the Mid-Atlantic District its sixth chorus championship.

1987



Darryl Flinn

Flinn versatile musician, director

While many of the Society's previous presidents had been primarily administrators, there is no doubt that 1987 president Darryl Flinn is first and foremost a music man. From his first quartet of high school freshmen (who didn't know that barbershop doesn't use piano) to six appearances on the international quartet contest stage, Darryl has done it all: as chorus director, district quartet champion, judge, coach, entertainer and, not least, administrator.

"D," as friends affectionately

call him, got firmly hooked on barbershopping during his Army service in 1957 and '58 at Fort Carson, Colo., where he discovered a collection of barbershop records at the USO. In 1962, after leaving the service, he wandered into a chapter meeting in Massillon, Ohio. Before the evening was over he had been recruited by a quartet that needed a lead, and he has never looked back.

Since then his quartets have included two district champs, the **Chordusters** and **Lime-**

lighters, plus **Chalkdusters**, **Antique Music Show**, **American Way**, **Antique Music Revue** and undoubtedly others. Since 1971, he has directed the Canton, Ohio **Hall of Fame** Chorus, most recently at the '88 international contest.

Along the way he has coached dozens of quartets and choruses, on his own or at Harmony College, become a sound category specialist and then chairman of judges, and has won the most prestigious awards given by the Johnny Appleseed District.

Barbershop blood paid off as 'Rivals' won '87 gold

Barbershopping blood flows in the veins of the **Interstate Rivals**, 1987 international quartet champions.

The original four members—Kipp Buckner, Joe Connelly, Geoff Mucha and Jay Hawkins—were all second-generation barbershoppers. Paul Gilman, who replaced Geoff at baritone in 1986, had been introduced to barbershopping by his uncle in 1980.

Geoff and Joe, the lead, are from Cincinnati's **Southern Gateway Chorus**. In 1982 they teamed up with tenor Kipp and Jay, the bass, from the Louisville **Thoroughbreds**, and finished in the top 10 in their first international contest in 1983.

They placed sixth in 1984, third in '85 and moved to second in 1986. But then Geoff's postal service promotion forced him to move to another city. The quartet drafted Paul (better known as "P. K.") from Cincinnati, and he had the rare thrill of winning a gold medal in his first



INTERSTATE RIVALS, 1987—L. to R.: Kipp Buckner, tenor; Joe Connelly, lead; Jay Hawkins, bass; Paul Gilman, bari.

1987 continued

international contest in 1957 at Hartford, Conn.

Despite their youth (they were the second-youngest quartet ever to win the championship), the original Rivals combined 45 years of barbershopping experience. Kipp's father had sung in an interna-

tional finalist quartet; Joe's dad was an international quartet medalist; Geoff's father had directed choruses to two bronze medals, and Jay's father had sung for many years with a Dayton, Ohio chorus.



1987—The West Towns Chorus of Lombard, Ill. under Dr. Greg Lyne's direction, won the chorus gold for the Illinois District in Hartford, Conn., with 98 men on stage.

1988



Jim Warner

Warner antics belie dignified title

The 45th and current president of the Society is James C. "Jim" Warner, a Memphis, Tenn., attorney and a barbershopper for 26 years. If you think all lawyers—especially a full partner in a prestigious, 88-year-old law firm—are reserved, stuffy people, you've never watched one of Jim Warner's quartets.

He has sung or is singing in such notable foursomes as **High Cotton**, **A Taste of Phunny**, **Riverfront Ramblers**, **Antic Notes** and **The Aching Heart**

Four, not to mention a perennial, constantly changing quartet of ex-Dixie District officers, the **Almagamated Music Aggravation**.

Jim graduated from law school, married his wife Ann and joined the Memphis chapter all in the same year, 1962. Since then the entire family, which now includes a son and daughter, have been dedicated barbershop lovers. Jim's barbershopping has all been through the Memphis chapter, where he held virtually every office, and the

Dixie District, which he calls "the best cotton-pickin' district in the Society." He served two terms as president of each body before being elected to the International Board, the Executive Committee and finally as president of the Society during its Golden Anniversary year.

Upon completion of his term, he will move on to the Harmony Foundation as a trustee, just as he will continue to be a leader in his church and a reserved, distinguished attorney-at-law. But only in the courtroom.



1988—The Vocal Majority became five-time international winners at the Society's 50th Anniversary convention in San Antonio. Jim Clancy again directed 145 Dallas Metro members to victory for the Southwestern District.

Society praised in Congressional Record

In honor of the Society's 50th Anniversary this year, Wisconsin Senator William Proxmire read into the Congressional Record his tribute to the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc.

His statement follows:

Congressional Record - Senate, May 11, 1988

IN PRAISE OF BARBER SHOP SINGING

Mr. President, today I want to sing the praises of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc.—S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A., Inc. This Wisconsin-based organization is celebrating 50 years of spreading goodwill through song.

The S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. has more than 800 chapters in North America and affiliates in Great Britain, Sweden, Australia and New Zealand. The Barbershoppers number almost 40,000 men dedicated to the preservation of this American art form. Two women's groups, Sweet Adelines and Harmony Inc., bring the total number of participants to about 75,000.

S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. was formed in 1938 by two Tulsa businessmen, O. C. Cash and Rupert Hall. The name was a takeoff on the "alphabet agencies" of the New Deal era. It is as accurate as it is amusing—S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. has



preserved and encouraged a literature and a style of music with a rich tradition of American life. This tradition predates television, the computer age, and the hustle and bustle of much of today's recreational life.

The dedication of the 75,000 men and women in this organization goes far beyond simple fellowship and fun. They contribute to the enrichment of the lives of many in their communities. Through singing they have helped to raise millions of dollars for civic, charitable, and patriotic purposes. The men, for instance, contribute substantially to the Institute of Logopedics, a research and service agency for persons with speech impediments and multiple handicaps.

The Barbershoppers' commitment to quality performance is exemplary. They carry on extensive educational programs to improve their singing. As amateurs, their best quartets are on par with professional groups and university performers anywhere. Last December, the Alexandria Harmonizers from Alexandria, VA, performed in the Kennedy Center Honors Program for the President, Members of Congress, and millions of Americans.

Mr. President, all of America is proud to honor the Barbershoppers on their golden anniversary. They enter upon their 51st year with the warm wishes and congratulations of Americans everywhere. Theirs has been an exceptional historical, social, and creative contribution.

PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, JULY 2, 1946, AND JUNE 11, 1960 (74 STAT. 208) SHOWING THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION OF THE HARMONIZER published in January, March, May, July, September and November at Kenosha, Wisconsin, for October 1, 1988.

1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc., 6315 - 3rd Avenue, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140-5199; Editor, Jack Bagby, 6315 - 3rd Avenue, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140-5199; Managing Editor, None; Business Manager, Frank Santarelli, 6315 Third Avenue, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140-5199.

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3. The known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (if there are none, so state.) None.

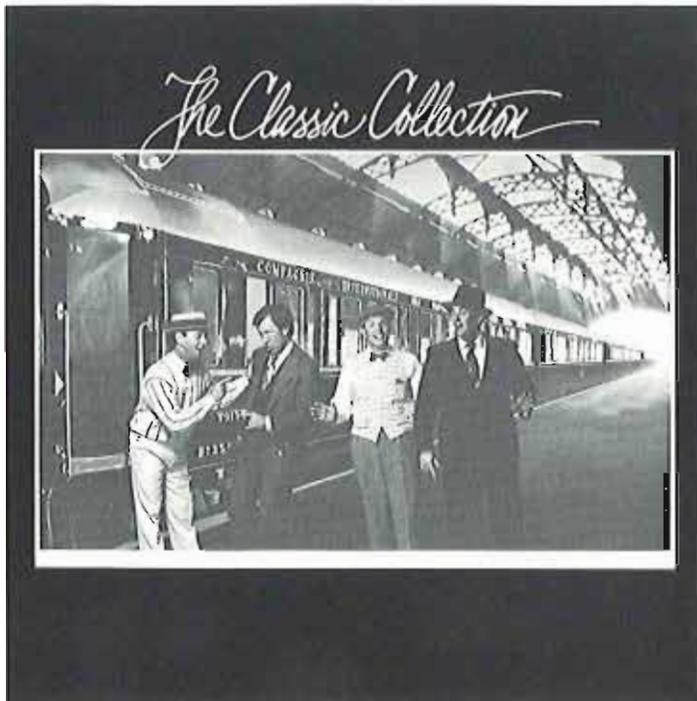
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5. The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the 12 months preceding the date shown above was (this information is required by the act of June 11, 1960, to be included in all statements regardless of frequency of issues) 36,957.

Jack Bagby, Editor

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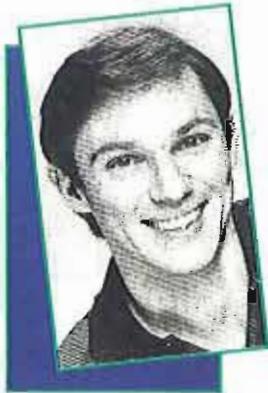
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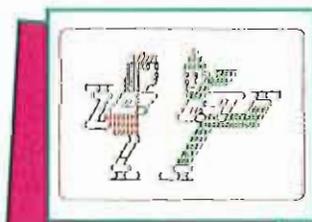
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