



Harmony-News

Welcome to HarmoNews, the Newsletter of The Plainsmen.

In this first edition we'll have some local news, some International news, and a Competition. Seat belts on ?? Let's go.

Local News

Word from Harmony University , held recently at Tawa College, is that Wellington is growing quartets like mushrooms. Vocal FX is producing them at an alarming rate. Still, given that their Director, Charlotte Murray is one of Barbershop's elite Directors worldwide and they now have the Musical Island Boys on the coaching and directing staff, this is not surprising.

Also heard - Harbour Capital Chorus is chasing the Most Improved Chorus award!!!!!!!!!!!!

Pictured - The Mission, Current BNZ quartet Champs who have qualified to sing at the Int'l Collegiate (under 25) contest AND the BHS Open Quartet Contest. They can't sing at both - will have to choose.



Members will be aware that we have a new quartet, of which I'm proud to be a member. Chance



Encounter, formed out of several chance encounters, consists of Ben Sewell, Bass, Gary Kennett, Bari, Bryan Taylor, Lead and Rob Beale, Tenor. We all have past experience in quartets and hope that we can ring a few juicy chords and produce a nice blended sound.

Chance Encounter's first performance.

There has been some confusion about the qualifying procedure for quartets wanting to compete at Convention. Word came out that we were all expected to perform at one of the Harmony University events being held last month at Hamilton, Wellington and Dunedin. Which suited some quartets but not all - none of the quartets from the Plainsmen were able to attend any of these events as a foursome. And no alternative arrangements had been made.

Gary made some enquiries at the Wellington HU and found the reason behind this new process. It appears that, when comparing results from Australia against those from NZ over recent years, the quality of their quartet singing has risen year on year, while our results have been in steady decline. Encouraging quartets to attend HU in order to receive top-class coaching and more competitive experience was the reason for the change.

It now appears that video qualification will still be allowed, so look forward next month to a Monday night when all our quartets will strut their stuff before the camera.

International News

Qualifying is now complete for the International Chorus and Quartet contest which will held this coming week, starting tomorrow - this year in Nashville, the home of Barbershop HQ as well as C&W.

Top qualifier this year is last year's Silver Medalist quartet, Forefront, who will once again go head-to-head with another quartet I fancy, Main Street. Main Street has one of the best Barbershop singers ever IMHO - Lead, Tony De Rosa. Remember that name. It might appear in a future quiz!!!



Forefront Quartet. Brian O'Dell 3rd from left.

Forefront, will be the guest quartet at the Blenheim Convention, so you'll all get a chance to see and hear them.

They have what I consider to be one of the very best Basses currently competing, Brian O'Dell.

When Men Aloud were at Long Beach 2 years ago, I saw him standing quietly in a corner and went over to shake his hand and tell him how much I enjoy his singing. Still haven't washed that hand!!!!

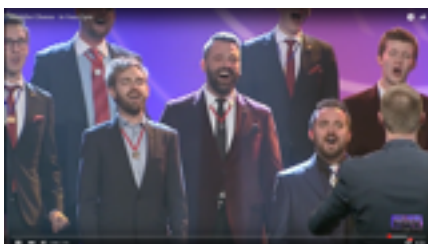
Basses - you would do well to check him out on YouTube. Watch how expressive he is, how involved he is in the song. He sings just like a Lead!

If you intend watching the competition live - you can buy access from the BHS - there's an added bonus. This year the commentary team includes two new members - Alex Morris, the young Australian judge from our last Convention, and our very own Matt Gifford. Nice to see some young, contemporary guys doing this. The previous panel, who had been doing it since forever, had become a bit passé

Qualifying at #25, with a score of 79.8 is a quartet by the name of Late Shift. Been keeping something from us guys ????

This Week's Competition.

Here's how it works. Write your answers on a piece of paper and hand it to me at next Monday's (July 11) rehearsal. Winners will be announced on the night.



Go to this link <https://youtube/ppdJfOyGyjl> (copy and paste it into your browser - Google?) to hear some magical Barbershop from this year's Medallist Chorus. Some of these guys are Collegiate medallists but the rest have medalled in the Open Contest. Two guys in this photo have sung recently in NZ - both in the same quartet.

Name 2 or more quartets represented in this Chorus.
You'll need to see the full Chorus on You Tube to do this.

A special commendation if you can name all four members of those quartets.

Clue - the Barbershop Harmony Society website has a lot of info about winners, scores, who's who etc. Check it out. Also, check out the photos in this newsletter.

News Comment.

I'm sure that you, like me, were astonished to hear on the 6 o'clock news that a man, Thomas Manning, had received a penis transplant in a 15 hour operation. Having lost the original to cancer, he is now restored to, what he and his surgeons hope will be, full working order.

Several avenues of comment are immediately obvious, not the least being how society has changed during my lifetime - and yours. Such an item would never had made the news in any form a few years ago, but not any more.

I'm not by nature a vindictive person - a grumpy, old, hard-to-please perfectionist maybe - but usually I like to wish people all the best. However, in this case, I can only wish Thomas a hard time and many of them.

SING like no-one's listening.

Cheers

BT.