



Harmo-News

Welcome to HarmoNews, the Newsletter of The Plainsmen.

Local News

In my rush to bring you all the news of the Ch-ch City Chorus's success at the Sweet Ad's convention I ran out of time in the last edition to tell you about our own "man of the moment" - John Buckley, who was awarded the BHNZ Outstanding Achievement Award at the Blenheim Convention



This is a new award and John was the worthy first recipient.

John was a founding member of the Plainsmen and its first President. Along with his late wife, Carole, he founded the mixed *a cappella* group Accord, and has featured as the bass singer in many successful quartets. At one time - it may still apply, he had the highest medal-count of any Barbershop singer in NZ. He's kept all his medals and can

name the occasion on which each one of them was won.



I had the pleasure and privilege of travelling to Long Beach and rooming with John 3 years ago when Men Aloud sang at the Mid-Winter convention. He is just a lovely guy to be around and a wonderful Bass to sing with. His many friends, both here and abroad, will be delighted, I'm sure, with this recognition of his contribution to our chosen craft.

The photos show John being presented with his award at Convention and being congratulated last night by President Carl after being similarly honoured at our Christmas Show.

International News

Over the past few weeks the Regional Convention season has been in full swing in the US of A. I have every reason to believe it was a more dignified process than that other, contemporaneous attempt to find a winner.

The scores I've seen were not as high as I had expected - the best were around the 88 mark, whereas last year's Int'l contest had the top 3 quartets all singing 93. There may yet be other qualifiers from Affiliate organisations around the globe - Oz, NZ, Sweden etc. No sign of Main Street, which more or less confirms the rumour that they have cried "Enough!" And fair enough. I checked out their results going back to 2011. Here's how they stack up

2011, 2012	5th
2013	4th
2014, 2015, 2016	3rd.

Three years in a row stuck on 3rd !!! - a bit of *deja vu* for their Lead singer, Tony de Rosa, who also got stuck on 2nd for 3 years in a row with Max Q. Tony has already won 3 Golds and needs one more to equal Joe Connelly on top spot with 4. Doesn't look like Main Street is going to do it for him.

Still, he's only 43 (won his first gold at age 19!!!!!! sang in his first Int'l quartet contest at age 14, sang on-stage in his first quartet at age 4!!!!), so he's still got time up his sleeve.

This Month's Competition.

Here's how it works. Write your answer and your name on a piece of paper and hand it to me at our ***first rehearsal next Year.***

Here's the question - I'll make it easy - it's multi-choice.
Winners will be announced on the night.

How many medals (gold, silver and bronze) has the above mentioned Tony de Rosa won in International Quartet competitions?

1 5 9 14 17?

Essential info - Int'l medals go down to 5th place.

For clues, wise men will follow this star who rises in the East (Florida) and hasten to the place where his profile is to be found - on the BHS website and/or Wikipedia. Then, as commanded by Herod, you shall return to me with news of what you have found, that I too may go there and verify your report.

A Christmas Treat

Earlier in the year I introduced you to Voctave whose singing, IMHO, is simply sublime. Here's the link to their take of "All is well" which I've chosen partly because it's a Christmas song and partly because it's my personal 'best song' for 2016.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXp8LOeTZFA>

The soloist is Tiffany Coburn. Apart from her singing, I just love the way she settles her neck and head at the end of the song - all the grace and elegance of a swan. And that little smile that suggests she's pleased with her performance - as well she might be.

The alto in the red sweater is Ashley Espinoza. She sings Lead in the Windsor Quartet which placed 4th in 2015 and 2nd in this year's Sweet Ads Int'l contest. The bump is now a bouncing baby boy.

Tony de Rosa, mentioned above, is the red-shirted director cum Bari. He's lost a LOT of weight since this photo was taken.

A couple of Late Entries.

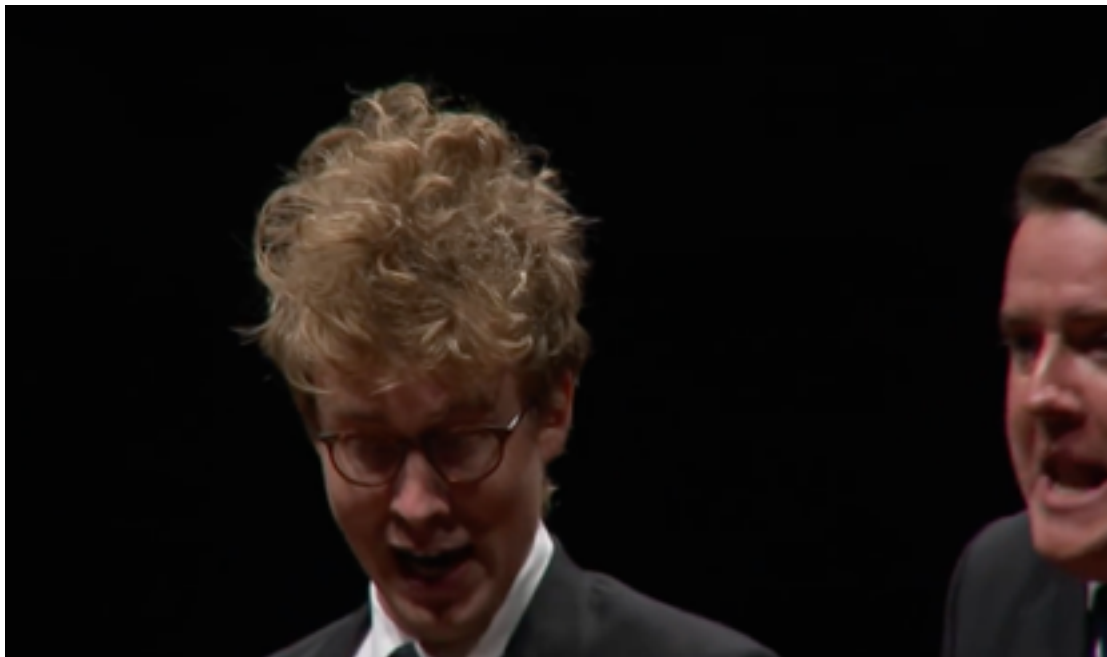
I've done a lot of talking about and praising Tony De Rosa this year - next year I'll find someone else to obsess about - promise. But this has just come through. It's an ad hoc choir made up of male attendees at the NAFME conference in America. That stands for National Association for Music Educators. They have just discovered Barbershop and this year they featured Dr Jim Henry (Ambassadors of Harmony) and Main Street (Lead - You Know Who) on their teaching staff. You can find other members of Main Street scattered through the chorus.



Despite watching a lot of Main Street and his former quartets, I've never heard Tony sing solo. What a pity ! What a lovely voice ! Follow this link and enjoy their rendition of Loch Lomond. Solo by Tony, directed by Dr Jim.

<https://youtu.be/qXNFo6oM0E0>

Just had to put this last photo in. It's Martin Wahlgren, Bass in Ringmasters.



Eat your heart out Donald.

Have yourselves a Merry Little Christmas.
Stay safe over the holidays and we'll meet next year on the risers.

B.T.