

Working together in Fellowship and Harmony, the Gentlemen of Fortune Chorus enriches Society with excellent Barbershop Music Entertainment

2011 - No.3 – April

Division I Champs



After some weeks of small group coaching, over 90% of the chorus qualified for the two contest songs. This allowed performance coaching to get going. Director Charlie conducted a 4 hour retreat in North Vancouver on March 19th and 52 members appeared on stage in Abbotsford on April 2nd competing in the Division I Chorus Contest. Once again the **Mighty GoF** came through with 1st place. Close behind were **Bellingham** and **Nanaimo**. Kudos to **Taro** and **Shoji Whittier** who had gastric flu but still performed well.

Convention hosts **Langley** had suggested to the judges that the 1st place chorus evaluations be done on stage and the 3 judges have wireless mics. The other choruses and audience were invited to sit in and see how the champs were coached. Contest Administrator **Ken Galloway** said: "the evaluation went very well; many questions from the Director Charlie Metzger, chorus members and the audience were asked as the 15 minutes for each category approached the end of the time." Chorus members felt that they benefited greatly as did others.



The evening Show of Champions featured **SAI West Coast Harmony Chorus** and top scoring quartet **Glee Club Riot** (from Div II) who sang in place of champs **VocalWorks** (their lead had left). **San Juan Island Chordsmen Plus** (including ladies) were mic testers and anthem singers.



Private Reserve (Arthur Loyie, George Gregory, Ray Fallan, Bill Martin) were the sole GoF quartet competing in Division and did well.

Barry Smorenburg Award

The Award goes to a Division I Chapter member who exemplifies the ideals of promoting harmony within the Division. He must be a member of a Division I Chapter and have contributed significantly to the furtherance of barbershop fellowship in the Division.

2010 winners: Dave Vincent & Paul Melhus

In April 2004 Lower Mainland Chapters formed a Group called "**Young Men in Harmony**". It was spearheaded by the late Vern White, Eric Janzen, and **Dave Vincent** and **Paul Melhus** from the Vancouver Thunderbird Chapter. They met with the idea of introducing young people to the sound of Barbershop Harmony.



Single-day Harmony Camps were organized and, with great interest shown by young ladies, the group's name was changed to "**YOUTH in HARMONY**". Dave and Paul organized these Camps each year. Many workers have helped, but these young men from Thunderbirds continue their efforts to this day--- over seven years!

Inside this Issue

- Division I Champs
- Barry Smorenburg Award
- Gord Cousin's Farewell
- Valentine's
- Down Memory Lane
- What the Directors Discussed
- New Members
- Happenings & Reminders
- Calendar

When Insults Had Class

(Before English got boiled down to 4-letter words)

"He is a self made man and worships his creator."

- John Bright

Gord Cousin's Farewell

By Peter Lissett

On March 14th a service to celebrate the life of Gordon Cousins was held at the Como Lake United Church. Just before we left the rehearsal room we were asked to stand along the side of the aisles as the church was completely full. Well, fortunately, there were some extra folding chairs placed in front for those that hadn't managed to squeeze in on the ends of the pews. The large crowd was fitting testimony in itself to the high regard in which Gord was held in our hearts.

Abe Klassen spoke of his many experiences with Gord as part of The Model T Four quartet. Gord's son Wayne followed with an outstanding eulogy. Then more than sixty GOF members, past members and men from other choruses went forward to sing *The Irish Blessing* and the *Lord's Prayer* under the direction of Charlie Metzger.



Dear Gentlemen of Fortune

Some men live their entire lives without ever having friends like you. But my father was blessed to have all of you in his life for so many years, not only as friends but as brothers. The compassion, spirit, kindness and respect you showed yesterday by honouring my father at his memorial service was the most treasured gift he could have ever received.

He once told me that to have a chorus of his peers recognize him in song would be the finest goodbye he could ever imagine. Yesterday, you exceeded even his wildest dreams. Your performance was impeccable, your emotions so visible, and your passion and generosity were heartfelt by everyone in attendance.



You truly are Gentlemen in every sense of the word. It was my father's, and our entire family's, extreme good Fortune to have you as friends. Yesterday, today and always. With our deepest thanks and gratitude. **Verna; Wayne and Diana; Dean, Jennifer and Holly Cousins.**

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Valentine's

By Carl Gung

The **C.A.R.S. Quartet** (right to left: **Carl Gung, Andy Holisky, Robb Sorenson, Shanti Ghose**). The desire to



bring joy to loved ones in our community brought together the formation of CARS. With new member Robb Sorensen, as our new tenor, listener and advisor, we were able to utilize the fine tuning techniques learned from our small group chorus sessions and implement them into the melodious sound mix for our quartet group. With two prior practice rehearsals at Shanti's home we were primed and ready to go forth and sing on Valentine's Day. Our day consisted of seven scheduled sing outs. The tough ones were where the recipient was of the male gender. They were too embarrassed at first and required that female staff were present when we sang. Although, at the end they realized that someone loved them so much, that it was worth it.

But, our most memorable one was to Andrea, a young lady who worked at the Richmond Sheraton Hotel. She was kind of embarrassed when we informed her of her special treat, for she was now the focus of attention of all those within the lobby area. We sang our first song "Heart of My Heart" and, upon its completion, we knew we had hit her emotionally for she had started to cry. Fearing more embarrassment from this, she started to turn and walk away when we informed her that it was okay. That a loved one sent this message to tell her that she was deeply loved and our second song "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" reflected this also. More crying!! It was heart felt by all in attendance. Yes! The joy of song by four guys can bring back many, many cherished thoughts in our busy daily lives. Way to go GOF!!



March 2011 Down Memory Lane

By Ross Hood

40 years ago this month (1971)

The Headline for the May 1971 issue of the *Lake City Reflections* reads "YAHOO". It was the sentiments of yours truly, winning the Evergreen District Bulletin



Editor of the Year award for the second time. The Big Wheel cup was won by **The Casualaires: Bob O'Shaughnessy, George Meehan, George Metzger and Charlie Metzger.**

Four new members signed up after recent Auditions for Admissions. The **Howe Sounds** from the Thunderbird Chorus: **Barry Shields, Moe Jones, Al Hayward and Don West** won the District Spring Prelims in Great Falls MT with the **Most Happy Fellows** placing second.

30 years ago this month (1981)

The Spring Prelims were in Portland. The **High Rollers**, the **University Way** and the **South Sounders** won the right to go to the International contest in Detroit. In April '71 Charlie established a useful study group structure where a group is given a particular focus for its efforts. A chairman endeavoured to keep the process functioning smoothly. A recorder writes notes. They were to be groups working on Skills such as Music Language, Directing, Coaching and Arranging, and Workshops on Staging, Mood Analysis, Interpretation, Sound etc.

20 years ago this month (1991)

The headline in the *Fortune Teller*, edited by **Wayne Tamkin** in April '91, said "G.O.F. TAKES FIRST PLACE". The article describes how the chorus shed its munchkin skins and sailed down Chesapeake Bay and captured first place in the Division Contest at Eric Hamber High School in Vancouver. The quartet contest saw a pretty good race between the top five quartets. **Pacific Standard Time: Bill Kowk, Neil Phelps, Charlie Metzger and George Metzger** took first place. **Gordon Ross** sat out the competition because he had missed several rehearsals prior to the contest so he wrote a great article giving his personal thrilling analysis of our performance. The Friday Lunch Group was still munching at the Sheraton Landmark Hotel.

What the Directors Discussed

By Peter Lissett



The most important item on the agenda for the **February 28th** meeting was the 2011 budget. The document had been previously distributed by Honorary Treasurer **Rich Clark**. There was considerable discussion! The budget included a projected deficit of around \$7000. The expected \$3850 cost of coaching is to be covered by the Ian McGillivray Legacy.

Several ideas for generating revenue were reviewed. One of the best sources of income for the chapter are 50/50 performances. Chorus members will be encouraged to contact any organizations they belong to with regard to a 50/50 performance. The budget, complete with its deficit, was passed... however, adjustments will have to be made if revenue sources are not forthcoming.

It was reported that the 73 Valentines singouts netted \$2230. Advertising in the Sun and Province newspapers cost \$1200. This was considered to be too much for the benefit received. However, this will be reviewed. The cost of advertising in the 5 local papers was \$350. A further review of the whole Valentines' enterprise will take place at the next directors' meeting scheduled for **Wednesday, March 30th**.

Music VP, **George Gregory**, reviewed the planning meeting that had taken place on February 26th with 18 chapter members in attendance. It was followed by a music planning meeting. Both were considered to be time well spent. One of the outcomes was that there will not be much in the way of new music this year as we concentrate on qualifying members on the current repertoire in order to produce a first rate CD.

More Directors Stuff - By Al Alain

All the board members were present for the March 30th meeting, including **Charlie Metzger** our Director.



Al Alain, Secretary, reported we have 59 active members and 52 members on stage for Division. That was great news and the best attendance for contest in some time. **Rich Clark**, Treasurer, reported we remain on target with the budget but that isn't great news as it forecasts a deficit.

George Gregory, Music VP, presented the reports on the Singing Valentines including our much appreciated coordinators **Don** and **Roxie Giles**. Good suggestions were made including a reduction in the singing valentine cost. Discussion on promotion led to publicity overall. **Sean Murch** will head up a group to look at improving event promotions and continued membership growth.

Carl Gung, VP Chapter Development, presented his draft of the chorus brochure and it was agreed to refine the brochure, include a picture from the Division contest, and bring back a final draft for approval at the next meeting. He suggested an open house to attract new members. Considered a good idea, this led to discussion on an open house for media and prospective agents to help us get the word out.

Ed Arnold, VP Marketing and Promotion, reported that the target of a sing out per month is a struggle mainly because the chorus members are not exactly flooding him with contacts for potential sing outs. Ed pleaded that the chorus members reach out in their communities, churches and other organizations to get contacts for possible performances and 50/50s.

Sean Murch will address the possibility of getting an agent to help get us more regular singing engagements. **Sean** proposed that we post our albums on iTunes for a nominal fee of less than \$50 each which could get us some revenue from sale of CDs and individual songs. That was supported by the board and is being acted on.

Charlie Metzger said he was pleased with the small group process although it was suffering because of the qualifying process. There was a discussion about getting quartets to sing after the break and the board suggested that perhaps quartets could be "created" to sing repertoire songs after the break. Charlie to consider.

Ed said that if we want to put on a Cabaret in 2012 we should start working on it now. He will contact a chorus member who might be interested in leading this project. President **Doug Affleck** advised that our Sunshine Man **David Jones** was stepping down but an excellent man will be replacing him, another David, **Dave Ellis**.

New Members

David Meehan



Being a son of the long-time barber-shop, **George Meehan**, I couldn't help but be influenced musically by barbershop. When I was an adolescent I was exposed to the sounds of the many quartets my dad was involved in over the years, as they would periodically rehearse at our home. As well, there was

no shortage of barbershop audio cassettes around the house; one of our favourite groups was the **Bluegrass Student Union**, and I recall fondly their rendition of *Java Jive*, which was played more than once on our old portable tape player and in the car on road trips.

Growing up, my parents made sure we were trained in music of various styles. My sister and I as kids learned to play the piano and took lessons from some talented musical acquaintances, during the school years. When I got to high school I played tenor saxophone in the concert and jazz bands, and after high school helped form an alternative rock band with some friends, in which I played lead guitar. For many years I sang in different ensembles, but one of the best was my own church quartet, where we even sang one or two of my dad's arrangements, much to his delight.

In 1990 the family travelled to San Francisco for the International show and witnessed **The Acoustix** win the grand prize at the Cow Palace. Sometimes when my dad came back from a barbershop show or convention he would give me some of the tapes he had purchased, often of the championship quartets. In the early 90's it was the cassettes of the **Gas House Gang** and **Keepsake** that inspired me. Barbershop definitely stuck with me over the years, although I'm just officially joining GOF now; but it's better late than never. Vocationally, I'm employed full-time in sales and customer service at Stanley Black & Decker, where I've been for the past 4 1/2 years, and I reside in New Westminster.

Ezra Parker



I first learned of barbershop from my grandfather, who sang in the **Senate-Aires**. I hadn't much interest in it at the time, but it grew on me as I went to performances and listened to music over the years. By the age of 11, I frequently listened to recordings of music by various choruses.

The first school I attended had no choir, but the class did multiple musical and theatre performances to parents. At the age of 9, my father and I prepared to move to

Vancouver, but while we were waiting for our immigration to be accepted, we lived in China for a year. For the latter portion of the year, I learned how to play the “er hu” which is a two-stringed instrument reminiscent of a cello.

Our immigration accepted, we moved into Vancouver. I wished to continue learning Mandarin, so I attended Jamieson, which had a Mandarin bilingual program. However, the program included mandatory violin or cello classes. So, for the three years I was there, I learned how to play the violin, as well as taking part in the school choirs.

My graduating year, I was quite interested in barbershop, so I asked my grandfather’s advice as to what chorus would be good to join. He recommended the **Gentlemen of Fortune**, regarding them highly. With a bit of searching, I learned more about them, and then attended their 2010 Christmas concert. At the beginning of the following year, I attended several practices, and joined. So far it has been a happy and joyous time, and it shall be even better in the coming years.

Happenings & Reminders

John Metzger Remembered

On Friday April 1st a service of remembrance was held in Chilliwack for John Metzger, father of Charlie and George, and grandfather of Tom, Mark and Donya. Charlie told of the life of this remarkable man and the service had plenty of music and singing. Some 25 men from the GoF sang the *Lord’s Prayer* and the *Irish Blessing* (although John wasn’t Irish) and Charlie led the congregation in a spirited rendition of “*Don’t fence Me In*”. The service closed with John’s children, grand children and great-grand children singing from the altar.



Octogenarian

On March 28th a couple of dozen GoF guys gathered at lunch to honour **Tucker Goodwin** for achieving the grand age of 80 years young. He still sings with the GoF and Vancouver Thunderbirds, as well as his church choir. Way to go Tucker!

Advance notice of a fund raising GOF Meat Sale

Please run your freezers down in order to make room for some delectable food as we approach the summer season

1. Order forms will be available Mid May
2. Last day for ordering will be Monday **30th May**
3. Delivery of Meat, Fish, Poultry, and Gourmet items will be **11th June**. Last year the sale was very successful, both for the Chorus financially, and the patrons who enjoyed the standard and quality of the product.

David Jones (Organizer)

Riser Chair Fund

By Ray Fallan

A couple of weeks ago I said I wanted to fund-raise enough money to buy a riser chair. I would like to start with donations, loose change, loonies, bills, or cheques - I will open a special account at the bank and keep saving until we have enough. The chair will cost approximately \$900.00 delivered. I plan to have something every month to raise money.

Congratulations my friends, on April 5th we, you, collected \$418.90; that is a fantastic way to start. On April 12th we collected \$150.00. I will have the donation box every week. On the 19th we will have a 50/50 draw, 5 tickets for \$2.00 or one arm length for \$5.00. Once again thank you for the contributions; this is a worth while cause. I don't think it will take that long, thanks to the generous donations from the Chorus Members.

Dilbert’s Rules of Order

#11: You are slower than a herd of turtles stampeding through peanut butter.

Comment #71 by Bill Gibbons

“Singing barbershop is the illusion of perfection. I delude myself regularly.”

Deadline for the next issue is May 10, 2011

CALENDAR

2011

April 22	Easter
July 3-10	International, Kansas City, MO
July 22-24	HCNW Tacoma, WA
July 31	Anacortes Salmon BBQ
Jul 31-Aug 7	Harmony University, St Joseph, MO
Sept 2-4	Harmony Hollow, Squamish, BC
Sept 9-10	<u>Chorus Retreat</u>
Sept 28-Oct 2	PanPacific Convention, Brisbane
Sept 30-Oct 2	<u>District Convention</u> Spokane, WA
Oct 10	Thanksgiving
Dec 3	<u>Christmas Show</u>

2012

Jan 17-22	Midwinter International, Tucson, AZ
April 6	Easter
July 1-8	International, Portland, OR



Trophy Holders:

(r) Doug & Charlie
(l) Ezra

