

"WORKING TOGETHER IN FELLOWSHIP, WE ENRICH SOCIETY WITH WORLD-CLASS BARBERSHOP ENTERTAINMENT"

February 2006

Like Sons, Like Father

Excerpt from Livewire. "Sacramento, Calif. (Jan. 21) ...**Antique Gold** of Greater Vancouver, B.C., took the gold this afternoon in the hotly contested Barbershop Harmony Society's international seniors quartet competition. Only two points separated **Antique Gold**, with a score of 856 points, from the second place **Vintage Gold** of California's Bay Area. Only four points made the difference between first and the third-place **Chicago Times** of the greater Chicago area. A total of 26 quartets from the U.S., Canada, Sweden and England competed in the annual contest."



What a week for the GoF. This may be the first time a father and sons, not to mention two sets of brothers, won their respective international competitions within months of each other. **Antique Gold** members (l to r) are lead **George Wakeham** 63, tenor **Tom Bates** 70, bass **George Metzger** 58 and baritone **Charlie Metzger** 59. Charlie and George are father and uncle, respectively, of Tom and Mark Metzger of **Realtime**, the quartet who swept the internationals last July in Salt Lake City.

What a week for the District. This sets another precedent with two Evergreen quartets medalling at the Senior International Convention in the same year. **Antique Gold** with the gold and **Silver Chords** from Bellevue, WA with 5th place bronze. This is only the 4th Seniors Gold Medal for Evergreen in the 21 years of the Contest

– the others are **Close Harmony Tradition, Fatherly Advice and OverTime.**



At the Show that evening **Antique Gold** were joined on stage by the brothers Metzger (Jnr.) and, with John Newell and Tim Broersma (the other **Realtime** members), the octet sang "The Quest". This parade of gold medallists, with four from one family and seven from the Mighty GOF, epitomizes the "impossible dream" and the "unreachable star". You should have been there to hear the cheering

" Goldstrike In Sacramento"

By Don Frost

Nearly 150 years ago, Sacramento was the place to travel to in search of gold. Thousands came and tried vainly but only a few were rewarded with a meaningful showing of the elusive glitter that drew them there. This January, just more than a hundred came again to Sacramento with a similar quest for gold, but only one troupe of seekers came away with a glowing token of the much sought after metal. (ha! "medal")

"Antique Gold" charmed the Judges, audience, and fellow competitors with a golden performance and left the stage confident that their dreams for gold would be realized. As in all pursuits, there were unforeseen challenges to be met, and for a time, the perils seemed insurmountable. But, the hardy group persevered and proved their quality with a performance worthy of themselves and the due reward.

It was an honour to be among the entourage of supporters present for the golden occasion and a personal honour to have the acquaintance of these four fine gentlemen during the pursuit of their dreams. A tribute indeed to all the hard work, use of talent, fine coaching, and dedication involved.

For one family, their fortune in gold was doubled with the recent strike. For the Evergreen District good fortunes were earned at all levels, and the possibilities for future strikes were very evident. Congratulations to all.

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Direct from Charlie

Discrimination



Everyone in the chorus knows that singing the correct notes, words, and rhythms can be considered basic to achieving an A-level ensemble sound. It's clear to me that "correct" is also a variable term, and it depends on a person's ability to discriminate. One person may judge a note to be close enough, while another would call it a little sharp or flat. However, most chorus members can hear quite certainly when a note is off by more than a quarter tone. The same issues arise in discriminating vowel sounds or rhythmic precision.

The process is made more complicated by the fact that we hear ourselves partly through bone conduction and partly through the ear canal. Darker, heavier, more muscle-bound vocal sounds will sound sharper through bone conduction than they do through the air. Therefore a light, bright quality is more likely to tune.

One goal that we must adopt individually is to improve our tonal, vowel formant and rhythmic discrimination. Only individuals attending to their own improvement can achieve these goals.

One other matter pertains. The only way to improve one's discrimination is to exercise it. That can be done by listening to recordings of your own voice and noticing when notes or vowels or rhythms are as perfect as you can hear, and when they are not as perfect as you expect them to be. The recording comes only through the air, so we hear the distortions in pitch and tone caused by tension in the voice. Listening critically to others singing and giving them feedback about tuning, vowels and rhythm improves discrimination as well. Listening repeatedly and critically to almost perfect singing will eventually allow you to hear more and more minute gradations in pitch, vowel match and rhythm. Pick a song on **Realtime's** "Four Brothers" CD and listen to it repeatedly. Along with being impressed at how much they do superbly, you'll begin to hear things that could be improved.

Again, however, this is something that each man must do for himself. So, here's how we're going to check our contest songs:

1. Improve your discrimination by doing some intent listening, as above.
2. Listen to recordings of yourself singing and improve your ability to both discriminate more

closely and improve your singing to eliminate as much vocal tension as possible.

3. Elect someone in your section who will keep records of the section's achievements.
4. Find two other guys to listen to you sing. Give them your music. Allow them to use their growing ability to discriminate and give you feedback by circling problematic words, notes and rhythms. Make improvements. Put your powers of auditory discrimination to work.
5. Report success to your section record keeper

When we sing in performance, especially when we are competing, we all expect all our members to be pulling their weight by singing notes, words, and rhythms as perfectly as possible. Let's get those recorders out, use them, and improve our ability to discriminate these things. No one in this chorus deliberately sings incorrectly, but many make mistakes. Let's improve our ability to discriminate and create "world-class barbershop" for our audiences and ourselves. Think of the possibilities!

Directly,
Charlie

An Ex-Limey at Mid-Winter

By Peter Lissett

As it turned out, there were some real limeys at Mid-Winter and they performed pretty well, but I'm getting ahead of myself. I casually mentioned that I wouldn't mind going to this convention to see what went on and, of course, to support **Antique Gold**. Then Harry Gray 'phoned and said he'd heard I was thinking.... So, arrangements were made and I'm glad they were. It was a wonderful experience.

Most people from the chorus who went flew to Mid-Winter. Some, with an added '*je ne sais quoi*' like renting a car in San Francisco, traveled to Sacramento via numerous vineyards, singing as they went. There is no truth to the rumour that these nice folks cornered unsuspecting ladies in elevators and sang Valentine songs to them. Two others drove down but had some expensive repairs to pay for before they could return.

Harry and I met at the YVR and got an earlier flight to Seattle to find ourselves across the aisle from Chester, and Erik Jansen from Thunderbirds. At Seattle, we joined forces with **Antique Gold** and their entourages. It was good to see the bass section maintaining his strength at the Cinnabon counter.

Once at the Hyatt, we went for a beer to replenish our electrolytes, which had been sorely depleted at high altitudes. Well, coincidences abound, Chester and Erik were already ensconced at the bar. While sipping our first very pleasant Nevada Springs Pale Ale, Harry noticed a bevy of gorgeous girls, not overly covered, at the other side of the bar. Cor' blimey!! Fortunately, they stayed for the duration of three pints and were still there when we went to dinner. It turned out Playboy were holding 'auditions' on the ninth floor. I won't mention the extremely scantily clad young lady who got on the elevator with us later.

On the Friday afternoon, several past Senior Quartet champions treated us to some great singing, together with **Men in Black**, the collegiate champion quartet. In the evening, the show included sets by the 2005 International fifth, fourth and third place quartets. They all put on great performances.

The drama didn't set in until the next day. We were enjoying a 'question and answer' session with **Realtime** (who were

doubtful starters at one point as Kari Metzger started contractions more than a little ahead of time), when there were

cries, gasps and a certain amount of restrained pandemonium in the crowded room. As most of you know, George Wakeham had more or less collapsed and required medical attention. We all thought that that was the end of **Antique Gold's** day, the competition being about to start in just over an hour.

Well, in the end, George pulled through and there was nothing seriously wrong, but not before we all spent an anxious afternoon trying to listen and evaluate the performances of so many quartets while thinking of George's plight. Rumours kept coming through - yes George was in hospital, maybe he will be okay but most likely not and finally, YES, they were on!

They had been allowed to sing last in the contest, so we had a while yet to wait for the big moment. When they finally took the stage, we were all on the edge of our seats listening for just one wrong note or a fumble somewhere - but there wasn't. And, as though the afternoon hadn't been anxiety ridden enough, the organizers wrung out the tension while announcing the



fifth, fourth...places. We all erupted in a great roar when **Antique Gold** was declared the winner. It couldn't have been more exciting.

The highlight of the evening show was **Antique Gold** and **Realtime** joining forces on the stage to sing The Quest. Our traveling troubadours of the vineyards had procured half a dozen bottles of champagne during their excursions to celebrate the gold medal win. How prescient of them! We all gathered in their suite and toasted **Antique Gold's** success and enjoyed some more singing.

What an experience!

2005 GoF Awards Nominees

Here are the 2005 Award Nominees showing the award(s) for which they were nominated:

Barbershopper of the Year (BOTY), **Barbershop Fellowship Award (BFA)**, and **Barbershop Woman of the Year (BWOTY)**. Ballot vote was on January 31 with presentations to be made at the Awards & Installation Night Saturday Feb 11.

Jim Bates (BOTY)

Behind the scenes guy - opening and closing rehearsal hall, copying music & learning tapes/CD's, choreo, front row, always present, upbeat and positive attitude.

Ray Fallan (BOTY)

Riser and Trailer man (he never claims for gas), MC, Chorus Manager, Christmas Show Director, and a good attitude in endeavouring to maintain order on the risers.

Don Giles (BOTY)

Big job managing ticket sales for our almost sold out Christmas Show.

Andry Lavarda (BOTY) (BFA)

Directs, teaches, all 4 parts for learning tapes and CD's, Brings in many guests, time and effort boundless, enthusiastic and basically a nice guy.

Arthur Loyie (BFA)

Always there, on time, you-can-sing-too committee, guest man, riser helper.

George Metzger (BFA)

Welcome back to a very strong supporter of the GOF. Takes on duties willingly, quartet promotion and administration.

Ben Ong (BOTY)

Influential and prepared as a co-director, grown tremendously in his confidence, musical ability, leadership and teaching capabilities.

Gord Ross (BOTY) (BFA)

Young Men in Harmony representative, raises funds for kids to attend Harmony Explosion. Show producer/script writer and director. Demonstrates a high degree of fellowship and harmony.

Pat Bates (BWOTY)

Continues to support the chorus wherever she can including stuffing and labelling for the Christmas Show mail out, afterglow decorations and socials.

Linda Borden (BWOTY)

Supports the chorus in conjunction with the Evergreen President. Also, helps at chorus functions, socials and contests.

Sue Gibson (BWOTY)

Sue contributes to the chorus in the areas of makeup, costuming, special events, conventions and socials.

Yvonne Martin (BWOTY)

The CD lady. Helps Bill in all CD sales and assists at shows and conventions

Octogenarian



In Sacramento on January 20th we found out that one of our group had just celebrated a significant birthday the day before – without telling anyone of course. So, that afternoon before the evening show, all the GoF folk and families gathered together to sing “Happy Birthday ” and toast Chester

Colpitts on his 80th Birthday. As expected Chester not only cut the cake but also served it up to us all. Congratulations Ches!

Deadline for the next issue is March 4, 2006

CALENDAR

2006

Feb 11	Installation & Awards Banquet Fleetwood Rec. Centre
Feb 14	Valentine's Day
March 18	Big Wheel, Division I Novice Quartets, Vancouver
April 7-8	GoF host Prelims & Division I Convention Abbotsford, BC
April 14	Easter
June	GoF AGM
July 3-9	International, Indianapolis
July 22-23	Harmony College NW, Tacoma
July 30	Anacortes Salmon Bake
Sept 1-4	Harmony Hollow, White Rock
Sept 8-10	Squamish Retreat
Sept 29-30	District Convention Spokane, WA
Oct 9	Thanksgiving
Oct 10	GoF Election of Officers
Nov 18-19	COTS, Boise, ID