Our 59th show has come and gone. We’ll never forget the process of putting “The Big Chief Chorus Remembers the Ed Sullivan Show (…but our memory isn’t very good!)” on the stage at the wonderful Clarkston High School Auditorium. Chris Miller started fleshing out the concept months ago, writing script, selecting songs, and putting parody lyrics to “Darkness on the Delta.” It was in rough form when Chris went in for surgery. Then the Music committee took over and honed it, with the help of many people. Bruce Brede and Jeff Doig helped revise the parody. Actors were auditioned and chosen. Stage antics were tried out and refined or eliminated. Dick Johnson distributed ad kits and assembled the final program (and what a treat it was, not just a one-page outline buried in ads, but lots of interesting stuff!) At a critical stage, Bruce Collins agreed to see the process through as interim Director. Jim Owens took on the detailed task of keeping track of tickets and money. Quartets arranged old jingles harmonically. Bruce Brede arranged the afterglow. In the meantime, Pete Mazzara took up leadership where Chris had left off and worked on the script, praised us and cudgeled us, kept the whole process rolling along (I don’t know how he had time for anything else in his life. Note: check with Hermine!) Mike Frye, Howard Lynn, Tom Blackstone, and Ted Prueter handled staging. Ron Clarke the costumes (wonderful in their simplicity). Thanks also to Roger Holm as House Chairman, and Walt DeNio for Publicity. Wasn’t it wonderful that we could tell potential ticket-buyers that they would hear the best quartet in the world? (Thanks to Jack Teuber for his role as liaison.)

A new quartet got baptized – LOCAL COLOR. Ex-band leader Lew Mahacek got the rust off those old tooters – Bob Marshall, Jack Teuber, Len Barnes, Mike Keith, Bob Legato, Bruce Collins, Orville Marlowe, and Mike Frye. Actors were researching and studying their characters for accuracy – Doug Corliss nailed all those old Ed Sullivan poses. Wasn’t Neal Braun’s clown outfit remarkable? Pete
Art Carinci, as Frank Sinatra, (Barbara I Burns)

as Elvis and Art Carinci as Frank Sinatra brought the house down (and brought a few hysterical fans with them, obviously). And Jeff Doig, my goodness, he was everywhere, MC’ing, arranging taping, firing the canon, preparing the afterglow video, singing with Harmony Knights and (whew! how did he have any breath left!) with the chorus. Gene Downie pulled it all together as show chairman.

Who would have thought, a week earlier, that the chorus would sing “New York, New York” so well. Or “Back in the Old Routine.” The thousand or so ticket-buyers obviously loved it (though probably none so richly as the 50/50 winner, who took home $630 for his $15 investment, thanks to Raffle chairs Bill Dabbs and Chuck Murray.) One downside was that John Smith’s treatment for cancer left him unable to participate.

Chris was right on target about the nostalgic value of old jingles. People loved them – Brylcream, Coca Cola, Ajax, Faygo, Gillette.

AROUND THE PATCH

MEMBERSHIP (at 55)

Renewals: Tom Ford (2), Walt DeNio (7), Len Barnes (49)
Non-Renewals: Jerry Howington (but intending)
Birthdays: December: Stan Mersino (5th), Chris Elmore (13th), Jack Teuber (15th), Howard Lynn (18th), Mike Frye (23rd), Zaven Melkonian (26th), John Smith (26th), Jim Owens (28th)
January: Len Barnes (3rd)

BSOM: November – Bob Marshall (for hosting bari sectionals), John Cowlishaw (for Bari tapes)

December – Wayne Cheyne (for hosting bass sectionals), Bruce Brede (for arranging lead sectionals)

Illnesses – John Smith, at home, under pain-management for his cancer.

Christmas Chorus

Almost a dozen new and “re-new” singers have joined us in the Christmas chorus (Ralph Chambers, Dean Nelson, Gil Carlisle, Pat Newkirk, Don Place, Tim Hemmer, Mike Garrison, Don Stewart, Ron Arnold, and Dennis Robinson). Roger Holm, Walt DeNio, and Bruce Brede have arranged the singouts, at thirteen different venues (at last count). Bill Holmes had our Christmas songbooks ready, and Bruce Collins and Dick Johnson handled the directing.

SUNNYSIDE (Keith, Barnes, Johnson, Holm), IMPRESARIO (Howington, Arnold, Collins, Mohler) and HOLIDAY SPIRIT (Ford, Nevaux, Cowlishaw, Melkonian) provided the quartet dimension, and Walt Bachmann the German dimension. We began Dec 2 at Bortz Health Car on Green Lake, and Independence Village. Thursday noon, we sang for the Oakland County Retiree’s Christmas Lunch at Silver Lake Golf Club, then found our way around a stalled railroad train (not “Little Toy Trains”) to the Inn at Cass Lake Senior Center. Sunday’s Summit Place Mall Concert was sponsored by Dittrich-Olds once again. At the Oakland County Medical Care Facility, we sang for Pearl Franklin’s 100th birthday, and then on to Lakeland Place Senior Apartments. A new gig Wednesday noon had us performing for the Christmas Luncheon at OCC Highland Lakes, along with their outstanding guest baritone. (Feedback: “The entire campus is buzzing about how wonderful your group is.”) The annual bus tour included gigs at Tenuta’s and two VG’s grocery stores, before freezing for an appreciative audience at the Holly Dickens’ Festival. The season concluded at Canterbury on the Lake.
**Director Search**
On October 21st, the Executive Committee led us through the process of thinking what qualities we desire in a new director (published by email). Now that the Christmas season is behind us under Bruce Collins’ capable leadership, we need to move forward quickly on the search. The next few months will be critical to us in maintaining the vitality of the Big Chief Chorus and deciding who will lead us into the future. Any suggestions for directorship should be forwarded to the Director Search Committee – Dick Johnson, Mike Frye, and Bruce Collins.

**AROUND THE DISTRICT**
Steve Sutherland writes:
“A great time was had by all at ‘Canada Night’ last evening. The Macomb mini-chorus took home the Old Oakland Bucket when they won first place. We had eight mini-choruses in the competition. The DOC chapter has to give special thanks to Border Crossing who stepped in to judge the contest when our other scheduled quartet came down with an ill member. They sang a couple of numbers too and sounded terrific! Thanks to all that attended.

Pete Peters writes that D.O.C. would appreciate Detroit-area-chapters coordinating Valentines singing in February.

From outgoing District President Al Bonney, via Doc Mann:
I just noodled around with the 11/30 district membership report (nothing else to do now that I am a has-been ;-) ) Consider these figures: While the district actually had a larger loss in 2003 than in 2002, viewed in detail our chapters are doing much better in their pursuit of increasing membership. Overall: 28 chapters had 1331 members in 11/30/02 – that dropped to 1306 same date in 2003 – a collective loss of 25 members. But two chapters had large membership drop-offs (Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids). Combined they lost 39 members – more than the whole district combined. We don’t know why they lost so many members but it might be a good guess that the reduction is in dual members due to their exit from competing at international. The other 26 chapters collectively gained 14 members!! Nine chapters losing 23 members collectively, but 19 chapters gaining 44 members collectively. Bravo to the membership development guys – and congratulations.

**AROUND THE COUNTRY**
A new quartet is creating quite a stir – MAX Q – with Greg Clancy – Tenor, Tony DeRosa – Lead, David Lewis – Bar; and Jeff Oxley –Bass. WHAT A GROUP! They performed locally on Nov 1 at the Spirit of Detroit Show in Dearborn.

The Midwinter International will feature the five medalist quartets from Montreal -- Power Play, Gotcha!, Metropolis, Uptown Sound and Riptide.

**Kennedy Center Honors**
This past weekend, the ALEXANDRIA HARMONIZERS had a return engagement on the Kennedy Center Honors show -- their fifth such appearance. The 2003 honorees were James Brown, Carol Burnett, Loretta Lynn, Mike Nichols and Itzhak Perlman. The performance was taped and will air Friday, December 26 on CBS. Check local listings for time and channel.

**QUARTET NEWS**
B Natural sang for a couple hours with John Smith at St Joseph Mercy Hospital in early December.

Harmony Knights…
…have been busy boys this holiday season. On November 21st we drove out to an old barn in the Hadley area for to sing for a Hunters’ Annual banquet. We found a bunch of hunters that actually hunt on this farm each year and as part of their tradition take one evening to dress up in formal attire (tuxes or suits), prepare themselves a fabulous prime rib dinner with all the trimmings and hire some form of entertainment. What a treat for us as well as the hunters. They were late getting the meal served, so we sang and kibitzed with them till after the meal was finally served (great cooks these guys) and then did our repertoire. What was supposed to be a 45-minute performance turned into an entire evening of interaction with these great fellas, and we didn't actually get home until about 11 pm.

We did a Saturday afternoon gig at the Yates Cider Mill. We had been working up our commercial jingle for the show…. you know the Coke-a-cola thing and we decided at the last moment (actually while driving to the cider mill) to adapt it to the Cider Mill...boy was that a winner…. the owner loved it and booked us for next fall already. While there we sang for many patrons, one of which happened to be a staff director at the Good Shepard Lutheran Church of Birmingham … which led to a request to sing at their staff Xmas party for about 65 people. Nice fancy banquet hall called Farinia’s on Coolidge Ave.

The very next day we sang for the Strouble Chapter Air Force Association down in the Lawrence Tech center. You'd love these folks as they are God-loving Americans and not afraid to show it. They start out their meetings with the Pledge to Allegiance and play the Star-Spangled Banner while displaying the American Flag on the wall (duct taped no less…. but effective). Our rendition of God Bless the USA was a big hit with these vets. We were actually awarded a
plaqued certificate of appreciation of service to their organization … which we'll proudly display on the wall of our rehearsal basement.

Wouldn't you know it.... one of the members asked if we knew of a fella named Bill Pascher.... but of course. Seems we get asked that question at just about every gig we have.... Pascher must have been quite busy in his day also.... not that he isn't still.

On Sunday (12/7) we all rushed from church services to be at the Lake Orion Nursing home where, for the second year, we performed for their annual Xmas party. They loved it and we even pulled a young lad up on the stage with us to sing Jingle Bells. I think he will remember that for the rest of his days. Thanks to Mel Parrish and Sister Mary for arranging it.

Great Hobby Fellas. PS – Harmony Knights has purchased the outfits that Ron Clarke showed to the chorus earlier this year.... you know the blue blazer jacket and contrasting gray pants...looks good.... sure hope the chorus goes ahead with their plans to purchase it for the chorus.

Ross Ensign

From the Prez:

Big Chief Chorus - A Shared Vision & Mission
As we search for a new Director, choose music for next year, and establish goals and activities FY 2004, the Big Chief chorus is at a critical point in its history. What kind of chorus do we want to be? Since our Vision & Mission defines everything we do as a chapter, it is important that everyone is in agreement with that vision and mission. At the Executive Board meeting last night, members of the '03 & '04 Boards unanimously reaffirmed the direction our chapter should follow. We want to continue to promote the quality of our chorus and quartet singing, and preserve the barbershop style. We want to continue in the 'Chris Miller' tradition of having fun while providing quality musical entertainment in our community. A chorus which: competes at District Convention; puts on an annual show with comedy and shtick; participates in singing retreats; chooses contemporary and classic songs; sings parodies; continues to improve our singing; recruits new members; and does it with Fun, Fellowship, and Good Singing.

Pete Mazzara

Men:
Here is my report card on how I think the Big Chief Chorus did on our 2003 Goals #1-3, (Despite loosing Chris Miller) - This is a Great BCC report card. Congratulations!

"The difference between a Dream and a Goal is a Time Line and Accountability."

Please keep in mind that these are chorus goals, and therefore it takes everyone's cooperation to make them happen.

Chorus Goals for 2003…
1. Improve Chorus Singing by:
   • Scoring 750 points in Fall Competition - Chris Miller (A+ 764 pts.)
   • Holding a Singing Retreat with a minimum 80% attendance - Pete Mazzara (A+)
   • Establishing a Chorus Ensemble with Performance Criteria - Dick Johnson (E)
   • Expanding & Developing Associate Directors - Chris Miller (A+)
   • Providing Outside Coaching - Executive Board (A+)
   • Expanding the Use of Sectionals - Section Leaders (B+)
2. Increase Membership to 65 members - 'Doc' Mann & BCC Members (A+ to E, 66 to 56)
3. Fall Show 2003 - Gene Downie (A+)

Plus many 1st timers:
   Jan - All Board Members to COTS
   Feb - Bill Pascher BD party
   Feb - Free Pizza Night
   Apr - 60th year for Pontiac/Waterford Chapter
   Apr - 5th place in District Competition
   Apr - The Best After Glow Party at Convention
   Sep - Chris Miller passes.
   Nov - Fall Show a Total Team Effort!

HOW DID YOU DO ON YOUR INDIVIDUAL GOALS?
Check your goal sheets!

The Executive Board is NOW taking all suggestions (in writing) for Goals FY 2004.

Next Fall’s Show: 'The Big Chief Chorus Does Broadway'
We need to pick 7-10 songs (in Barbershop style) very soon. We also need to work in our quartets, and do some kind of shtick with characters like: The Phantom (Of the Opera); Professor Harold Hill (Music Man); Tevia (Fiddler...); King Arthur (Camelot); etc. I would appreciate any creative thoughts (in writing) you might have in this regard. Check out this web site to find Broadway Show Musicals. http://musicals.net/ If you click on the show, it will allow you to view the show song list. Let's keep sharing show/song ideas.

Pete
Executive Board Meeting minutes, Jeff Doig (Excerpts)
October 2nd, 2003
The Future of The Big Chief Chorus: The board discussed and formed a Director’s Search Committee. John Smith was asked to head the committee with Bruce Collins and Dick Johnson to assist.
Bruce Collins said that he could direct the chorus until the first of the year.
Motion by Dick Johnson to Donate $250 to the Harmony Foundation in Chris Miller’s name.
The Nominating committee presented their Report.
Spring training will be March 26th through the 28th, 2004, if at least 40 members attending.
Motion by John Smith for the Chapter to send the new Executive Board to COTS.
The board and attending members agreed that the Chorus should compete in spring contest.
Motion by Doc Mann: That the position of director be removed from the board as a voting member and be placed on the board as an ex-officio member of the board.

November 12th, 2003
Jeff read a thank you card from Eileen Marshall for the flowers the chapter sent to her.
Dick’s Treasurer’s Report as of 11-12-03 $ 14,359.20
Doc thanked everyone for help and support during his term as VP of Chapter Development & Membership. He recounted his programs: Buttons, Name Badges, Ribbons for officers, section leaders, and chairman, The Christmas and Patriotic Chorus.
Pete polled the board to find out where we as a chorus are going Goal-wise. The board agreed that we are still interested in the comedy aspect of our performances. And also wish to compete in the spring. (We wish to continue on the path Chris started.)
Pete stated that we have to change the way we teach our songs. Our old methods just don’t work.
Director search: Ongoing.
Show Report: Next Meeting. Note: There were 43 members on stage for the show this year. Nov. 6th 2004 is our preferred date for next year’s show. Someone to check with Clarkston and Waterford for venues.
It will cost $873.00 to send the board to COTS this year.
BSOY: Dick says it’s on track.
Approved to sell 2003 Show Tapes for $10 with the board to pay the remaining cost.
Spring training: Suggestions for coaches, Jeff Taylor, Linda Liddicoat, Al Fisk, Russ Seely.

Board Induction: December 16th will be the awards and board induction ceremony.
BSOM The board voted on two members for November, and two for December.

RANDOM THOUGHTS (by JC)
How did Bruce Collins learn so much about directing barbershop in one week at Harmony College?
Isn’t it time to kiss Summit Mall goodbye as a Christmas singout venue? We put more men on the risers than the Mall put in the seats, and most of them were friends and family. We need to use this opportunity to sing to potential new members.
Good to see Nancy Miller, Jerry Twomey, and Mike Frye’s brother in the audience though.
Is there anyone out there that does more work in a less assuming manner than Gene Downie?
What kind of “musical gravity” drags our pitch down so much on some occasions and has no effect on us on other occasions?
How does Harmony Knights get so many gigs?
How about “Back in the Old Routine” and “Old St Louis” as our stage package at District?

Calendar
Dec 16 Christmas party, Canterbury
Dec 23 No rehearsal
Dec 30 No rehearsal

“Play the old Winston jingle.”

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Dec 23 No rehearsal
Dec 30 No rehearsal

“Play the old Winston jingle.”
Jan 3-4    COTS, Lansing
Jan 6       BCC Rehearsal, Crary
Jan 8       Exec. Bd. meeting, 7:30, Pete’s
Jan 13      BCC Rehearsal, Crary
Jan 16 Fri  Uncle Sam Night, Windsor Host, 7:30pm
Jan 20      BCC Rehearsal, Crary
Jan 25-Feb 1 Midwinter Convention, Biloxi
Jan 27      BCC Rehearsal, Crary
Feb 3       Rehearsal
Feb 13-14   Fri-Sat Valentine's Day Sing Outs
Mar 26-8, 2004 Spring Singing Retreat, MacMullan
Apr 2 Fri   48th Annual Woodshed Contest, Pontiac CC, BCC Host
Apr 23-25   District Spring Convention, Gaylord
May 14-16 Fri-Sun Harmony Round Up, @ MSU
June 27-July 4 International Convention, Louisville, KY

Chapter Executive Board (Change)

**Officers: (2004)**
- Interim Chorus Director: Bruce Collins (248-666-9147)
- President: Pete Mazzara (313-563-4026)
- Immed. Past President: Gene Downie
- VP: Chapter Dev: Jim Owens
- VP: Music and Performance: Roger Holm
- VP: Marketing & PR: Walt DeNio
- Secretary: Bill Holmes
- Treasurer: Dick Johnson
- Members at Large: Jack Teuber, Zaven Melkonian

**Chairmen:**
- Associate Directors: Dick Johnson
- Bulletin Editor: John Cowlishaw
- Chorus Manager: Art Carinci
- Grants: Dick Johnson
- Historian: (open) JC’s bulletins
- Music Librarian: Bill Holmes
- Picnic: Gayle Mohler
- Pole Cats: Zaven
- Quartet Activity: Bruce Brede
- Service (Charity): open
- Singing Valentines: Wayne Cheyne/Gene Downie
- Sunshine (Chaplain): Bill Dabbs
- Tagmeister: Mike Frye
- Uniform Manager: Ron Clarke
- Woodshedding: Len Barnes