

# The 20th Anniversary Book



2005



## **FOREWORD**

It is with great excitement and pride that I look at the way Region #35 of Sweet Adelines International has developed through the years.

We can now say convincingly that Barbershop music is established firmly in New Zealand. From a small start in 1981 in Wairoa with a query to Sweet Adelines International, to the first chartered chorus in 1985, to the present time 20 years later where we have just under 700 members throughout New Zealand.

A number of founding members are still in our organization and it is due to their foresight and nurturing from visiting coaches that this craft is thriving within our region. The strength of our craft comes from hard work and dedication of our members both past and present and we continue to invest in our future with a thriving "Young Women in Harmony" programme.

May the continued sound of harmony and music bring peace to the world.

**Judy Chan.**

Regional Management Team Coordinator Region #35.

August 2005.



**SWEET ADELINES  
INTERNATIONAL**

**Dearest Region #35,**

Something truly wonderful happened in 1985 for all of us. New Zealand became Region #35 of Sweet Adelines International. We couldn't be more proud of you and your accomplishments over these 20 years. You've built this region of fine choruses, quartets with strong leadership. You have developed your own Education Symposium. Members of your region are now members of the international faculty of Sweet Adelines. You have directors at every level of the Director Certification Program including 4 master directors and you have been the recipient of the Ann Gooch Award. You have an outstanding Young Women in Harmony program and for this you are truly the envy of many other regions of the world of Barbershop singing. Here's to 20 more years of good singing and lasting friendships.

Happy Anniversary, Region #35!

Love

**Diane Huber**  
International President  
Sweet Adelines International.

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## **HOW IT ALL BEGAN**

*1981*

Patti Cooke came from the USA to live in Wairoa, a small farming community in Hawkes Bay. The first meeting of women interested in barbershop singing was held by Patti in Wairoa on 20th September, 1981. Twelve women began with Patti as musical leader but, in Auckland, unknown to the Wairoa ladies, Jan Smith was forming a women's barbershop quartet for a local show.

*1982*

Ann Gooch, International Faculty member, visited the now eighteen strong Wairoa Chorus.

*1983*

Jan Smith and Evelyn Hadfield formed the second New Zealand Sweet Adelines chorus, the "Harmony Belles", with thirteen members, in Auckland.

*1984*

Patti Cooke moved to the Bay of Islands and "converted" a local musical group to barbershop harmony. Ann Gooch and Bron Dixon from International Faculty visited again, this time to meet with three fledgling Sweet Adeline choruses. 5th to 7th September, 1984, saw the first New Zealand Convention in Auckland, and later the development of a National Committee to help continued communication between the choruses, especially by means of "Harmony Hi", a national magazine. Another chorus was formed just outside of Wairoa, in Nuhaka.

*1985*

The Wairoa Chorus became a fully Chartered Member of Sweet Adelines Inc. on 29th August, 1985, and fifty one members of the Greater Dallas Chorus from the States visited and performed the first live barbershop show in New Zealand and attended the second annual convention in Auckland. Bridget Byrne, president of the Auckland chorus, moved to Christchurch and came in contact with Virginia Humphrey-Taylor who had previously sung barbershop in Canada on a year's study leave. The first South Island chorus was formed with six members but grew rapidly. A mid-winter seminar was held with Ann Gooch and Donna Patterson in attendance from International and this also saw the first meeting of the National Committee.

*1986*

Jan Smith was appointed as the first National Musical Coordinator, Standing Rules for the National organization were set in place, and, there was a renaming – the National Committee became the NZ National Board. In September, Carolyn and Bill Butler visited and introduced the new concept of 'voice placement' - it did make a difference where someone stood on the risers. In September, the Har-

mony Belles chartered as the Greater Auckland Chapter of Sweet Adelines Inc.

### *1987*

Four new barbershop choruses were born – Gisborne, Hutt Valley, Timaru, a second Wellington chorus. A combined New Zealand chorus of sixty nine women attended International Convention in Hawaii and received a standing ovation for their performance in the Showcase. Ann Gooch presented the Christchurch and Bay of Islands choruses with their Charters at International Convention. Greater Auckland was the first chorus to have their own risers which they built themselves.

### *1988*

Marilyn Weekes, who came to New Zealand from Canada (North Metro Chorus) for a year's exchange teaching, with help from Greater Auckland Chapter, started King Country Chorus on 22nd May, 1988. The third National Convention was held in Wairoa in June. Because of the rapid growth of prospective choruses, New Zealand was designated by International as an Area – the Board became known as the NZ Area Board, the president as the NZ Area Administration Co-ordinator (NZAAC) and the music co-ordinator as the NZ Area Music Co-ordinator (NZAMC).

### *1989*

Shirley Kout spent a month in New Zealand coaching Christchurch City Chorus, and returned later in the year to run a workshop. She also assisted in re-directioning an established harmony group in Dunedin to barbershop. It was the year when the NZAAC became the Vice-Regent and the NZAMC became the Assistant Director of Musical Activities, the Vice-Regent being then eligible to attend the Regents' Roundtable at International Convention. Chris Noteware also visited for coaching and the first Directors' Workshop was held.

### *1990*

At the start of the year, there were four chartered choruses and five active prospectives. The first NZ Area Competitions were held and Christchurch City became the first Area Champions with 'Export Quality' as winning quartet. Both winners headed off to International Conventions – 'Export Quality' to Salt Lake City in 1990 and Christchurch City to San Antonio in 1991. Because of the growing number of prospective choruses, International sent Char Gurney to visit all of them, and with a whirl wind trip and lots of coaching classes later, even more choruses were formed. As Char was accompanied by the Vice-Regent and ADMA, she was able to share ideas about administrative issues as well, and let New Zealand know that it was time to become more self-reliant, to submit a budget to International, to build their own resources. The Sweet Adelines Inc. title was changed to Harmony International.

### *1991*

The year started with visits from Queens of Harmony 'Growing Girls' and SPEBS-QA champions 'Second Edition' who featured in shows and coached all around the country. Kathy Carmody visited and took a leadership training weekend, as well as traveling all over New Zealand, helping Christchurch City to prepare for International Convention, and meeting prospective and chartered choruses alike and coaching. There had been some hiccoughs with the Harmony International name for the world-wide organization, and so a different name – Sweet Adelines International – was chosen. The Young Women in Harmony Program was launched into schools in Christchurch and Wellington.

### *1992*

New Zealand Faculty members started doing visits to choruses and found it very worthwhile. So, the first ten years of Sweet Adelines in New Zealand ended with a total of nine chartered choruses and four prospectives.

### *1993*

There were more name changes – the Vice-Regent became Regent and the ADMA became the DMA. A new appointment of Membership Development Representative in the Worldwide Areas went to Joy Leonard.

### *1994*

Karen Breidert, an International Faculty Leader, Chorus Director, coach, Queen of Harmony and member of the Education Direction Committee, came in February/March to teach all chartered choruses.

## **The Last Ten Years ...**

### ***CAPITAL HARMONY CHORUS***

Capital Harmony Chorus started out as “The Wellingtones” at the end of 1993, as a splinter group from Faultline Chorus. David Brooks came on board as Musical Director in 1994. The Wellingtones competed in national competitions in 1994, 1996 and 1998. Shortly after the 1998 competitions in Wellington, there was a parting of the ways, and some Wellingtones left with David to form the Wellington City Chorus. The rest stayed on as the Wellingtones with Mary Sagato taking the helm as Director until early 1999 when the current Musical Director, Joanne Oliver, took up the post.

1999 was the last time that the chorus competed at Convention as the Wellingtones. Throughout 2000, the chorus underwent a rebranding exercise, and at the end of that year, emerged as Capital Harmony Chorus.

Capital Harmony Chorus describes itself as a small friendly chorus who love to sing together. They are particularly fond of backbeat, do-wop, and songs with a bluesy/jazzy feel. They sometimes even like to perform items that are not strictly Barbershop! As a small chorus, they choose not to compete annually at Convention – they last competed in 2002 but were back in 2005. The main focus of Capital Harmony Chorus is the enjoyment they gain from singing four-part harmony, and from each other’s company.

### ***CHRISTCHURCH CITY CHORUS***

1985...12 enthusiastic women... Wigram Air Base Band Room - that was how it all began for Christchurch City Chorus! Having chartered in 1987, they competed in New Zealand’s very first National Competition in 1990 and came first. The following year, they traveled to San Antonio and competed internationally.

In 1992, with Virginia Humphrey-Taylor in the role of Musical Director (a position she took up in 1988), Christchurch City Chorus competed again in the National Competitions in Wellington and gained first place again with revamped blue dresses. Of course, as every chorus knows, making the money to support our hobby is always a daunting, continuous task and the chorus was involved in lots of little fundraisers, singouts, etc, etc, along the way.

The annual chorus retreat for 1993 was held in Hanmer and the facilitators were Joy Leonard and Barbara Letcher. Hanmer is a great place and so too was the R&R in the hot pools later on, where chorus members sang and sang. In fact, it was while singing there that a Bass who still sings with the chorus, heard them, thought “Hey I love that”, and made the initial enquiry “Tell me about yourselves and where can I contact you ?”

1994 was another busy and fun-filled year, this time with Christchurch hosting the National Competitions. They retained their title and “Jazz Talk”, a quartet consisting of Sue Davis, Fiona Grey, Virginia Humphrey-Taylor and Leigh Smith, won the National Quartet title as well. They wowed the audience with red dresses with gold beading, feeling very glamorous – top marks to the costume team; in fact, they still love to wear these dresses even today.

The chorus and “Jazz Talk” were off to International competitions in October 1995. They were lucky enough to be able to break their journey and be hosted by Shirley Kout and

the Mission Valley Chorus. What a wonderful group of ladies they were, so gracious and sincere. They opened their hearts and homes to the travelers. New Orleans was the place and they loved every minute of convention and meeting up with Sweet Adelines from all over the world. And what an amazing venue New Orleans and its Superdome was. Sweet Adelines International was celebrating its 50 year milestone and all the events were coloured with this anniversary in mind. For the group that was traveling, the song that Barbara Letcher had introduced at a chorus weekend workshop titled “One Moment in Time” became their catchword. The group of 57 ladies certainly sang their hearts out on that International stage and loved their own personal “moment”. How proud they were to hear the words “Kiwi Kiwi” being shouted out in that huge superdome from the members of the NZ group that had come to New Orleans too. And how they all choked up with pride when “Jazz Talk” stepped out onto that huge stage the day before.

In 1996 Christchurch City Chorus were delighted to be hosting Kim Hulbert and loved their time with her and all the coaching that they received. They were also being very proactive with successful membership drives and using the “Ready Steady Grow” program. It was also the year of the LEGS. Yes, that’s right, Choreographer Nicky McCaughan put all the front row into fishnet tights and what a show of legs were displayed at their combined show with The Plainsmen, aptly titled “Putting on the Ritz!” – the front row has never been the same since. Perhaps that was the catalyst needed because the front row routines have gone from strength to strength since that show.

What a full year’s program was had in 1997 – Brenda Smith from Australia, Lori Lyford Director of Scottsdale Chorus, Betty Clipman International Faculty, a wonderful trip to Melbourne for quite a few of the chorus as part of a NZ group. There were members from Whangarei and Tauranga and NZ Quartet Champions “Perfect Timing” were there as well. Their Ten Year Charter Party was another great occasion that year.

1998 has to be one of Christchurch’s biggest, most successful and heart-wrenching to date. They were coached by Jim Massey, membership numbers increased again, they sang to Peter Blake (and wore red socks), bass Thea ended their “Big Spender” song with her “How’s about it Blakie!”, and, horror or horrors, Virginia ended up ill in hospital. With Contest in Wellington looming, everyone had fingers crossed hoping that Virginia would make a speedy recovery. And when she came out of hospital, their hardest task was to make sure that she rested up! 82 members were going to be competing in May and they were frantically fundraising, practicing, taping, polishing the contest packages and making lists! Their catch phrase was “Trust yourself, Test your limits.” 1998 was also the year that New Zealand Area 35 became NZ Region 35. What a buzz there was all over the auditorium as the Judges announced winners. And when the moment came and we heard Christchurch City Chorus...SIX...there was an eruption of joy, hugging, and, yes, tears. Such a milestone for the chorus! They had set a new benchmark for Australasia – the attainment of over 600 points, and Virginia, their Director attaining the status of Master Director. It was even more satisfying to realize that Christchurch had won the first ever NZ Area Medal and now had won the first NZ Regional Medal as well. This was also the year they cut their first CD – “Red Hot”. Their Christmas show in the Great Hall was aptly named “Christmas Allsorts” and it was, as the name suggests, a colourful mixture.

For a number of good reasons, the chorus could not commit to going to International in 1999 in Atlanta. Jo Ellis and Nicky McCaughan went to IES in San Antonio, they had



visits from Australian Brenda Smith, American Choreographer Lynne Smith, and Karen Breidert, an International past president, took a workshop weekend too. Virg has always been innovative and committed to challenges – well, wouldn't you know it, she auditioned and became a member of Kim Hulbert's San Diego Chorus and competed with them in Atlanta. She wanted the experience of what it was like from the riser perspective and to be able to bring all the knowledge she had gained back to the chorus. And she did! In November of 1999, a very successful "South Island Open to All" weekend workshop with Karen Breidert was held and the chorus thought it was really great to be billeting and hosting the visiting Sweet Adelines who came. The Chorus's dear friends, "The Canterbury Plainsmen", won gold in their regional competitions this year – there are very strong links with the Plainsmen...quite a few husband and wife duos within the choruses... and this added to their delight in the men's success. The chorus has always loved singing songs from "Phantom of the Opera" – try to imagine what a thrill it was to be asked to sing at Michael Crawford's book launch, and he was there in person. He approved of the chorus's singing too. At the Christmas party that year, the surprise of the night was the awarding of 10 year pins – a new first for the chorus. The recipients were delighted. Since then, there have been 15 year pins and 20 year pins are not too far away for some.



The year 2000 began with Virginia announcing that an exciting, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity was available this year. A visit to Christchurch City Chorus by Queens of Harmony Judy, Dale, Charla and Peggy – wow! "Rumors", International champions, was visiting and taking an open to NZ weekend workshop. All the chorus members were so excited, and then, once they came down to earth, were heavily involved in all the organizing, planning, financing and fundraising. A lot needed doing, and so the idea of marketing a beautiful new rose with a gorgeous perfume (would you believe it, the rose was named "Harmonie"! ) came into being, and proved to be a significant fundraiser. The "Rumors" visit was just awesome – these delightful Americans were so generous with their time and expertise. The chorus came to love this very special quartet. Christchurch was again winner of the Regional Convention "Millennium Music 2000, much to everyone's delight, and this meant Portland 2001. And of course Virginia had been thinking...

"How about opening up the trip to Portland in 2001 to chorus members from outside

Christchurch?” said Virg. “There is a lot of interest out there and what a great way to give so many more people the opportunity to see and experience for themselves an International Convention.” And that is exactly what happened. The Out of Towners (Ooters) were a great bunch of girls and the chorus got on fabulously with them. It was hard work and needed a bit of juggling rehearsals, coaching weekends and all the other arranging that goes into an overseas trip, but the sheer thrill for the chorus to hear Virg announce that they were 17th when they gathered together after competing – they cheered themselves hoarse, it was just magic. Another first! Just over a month out from the Portland Convention, the terrible September 11 Twin Towers tragedy occurred. It affected many American Sweet Adelines and Christchurch had to rethink about even going to Portland with all the unease around the world. How glad they were that they did not waiver in their resolve to go. And when they made the American flag as part of their choreo routine on that International stage, the audience erupted with thunderous applause and quite a few tears. An unforgettable moment with all the emotions it roused! Virginia was now the bass in “Perfect Timing” who were competing as NZ quartet Champions – the chorus felt it was great to be there and part of their day as well.

“A Cappella Gold” quartet were brought out to New Zealand by the NZ Regional Management Team in 2002. They held a workshop weekend in Christchurch and, along with a visiting group of Australian Sweet Adelines, performed with Christchurch City Chorus in a show held in the Aurora Centre.



The 2003 Convention in Auckland saw Christchurch competing again with their colourful Doll package, and what a thrill for them to achieve first place again. What a lot of fun they had with their dolls – each type of doll challenging the others to fantastic dares! It was also the year of their big “Absolutely Fabulous” Show Stoppers Show, featuring members of the NZ Army Band, two highly talented Canterbury actresses known as the “Court Jesters” performing as the well known Patsy and Edwina – the script was a journey round New Zealand by these two ladies. They had smoking geysers, a kapa haka group, mystical Waitomo Caves, Sky Tower, Auckland Harbour Bridge, and lots lots more. The chorus combined to sing with the Plainsmen for a couple of numbers, and their chorus and some quartets sang too. All the while progressing their song and dance trip round New Zealand. It was held at the Aurora Centre and was a great success.

International Convention was in Indianapolis in 2004. The chorus focused on this and

took Ooters with them again, this time from Australia as well. Most of the Australian Ooters had never experienced singing on an international stage and this was their chance. Again, the organization and all the behind the scenes work and the rehearsals were challenging but the traveling group was willing and determined. Cindy Hansen and Mary Dick coached them – two fantastic ladies in every way! Working with keen, fun-loving Aussies was a blast for those traveling, and the love and support from the non-travelers in the chorus was awesome too. Again, they loved their “moment” on that international stage. “Perfect Timing” accompanied the chorus as current NZ Quartet champions with both Virginia as bass and Sue Davis as bari from Christchurch City Chorus.

In 2005, the chorus is looking forward to celebrating its 20th birthday, boasting 130 members currently, and is happily anticipating Convention 2006 in Christchurch.

*The last 20 years have all been good ones for our chorus and one of the most constant factors has been leadership that is visionary and goals that demand excellence. Our strength has been the caliber of our leaders, management teams, general membership and the personal commitment they all make weekly. Right from the very beginning, Christchurch City Chorus has seen for themselves the benefits of having visits from international coaches, quartets and Faculty. We have learnt a lot from experiencing International Conventions, Regional Conventions and have been pleased to share what we have learnt with all other choruses.*

*Mabel Knight, Christchurch City Chorus, June 16<sup>th</sup> 2005.*

## **COASTAL HARMONY CHORUS**

It all started in August 1991, when a public meeting was held in Tauranga to gauge interest in forming men’s and women’s barbershop choruses. About 100 people attended and Graham Nobbs, the then President of City of Sails men’s chorus, and Beverly-Anne Nobbs, the then Vice-Regent for the NZ area of Sweet Adelines, spoke. Beverly-Anne pledged assistance of the New Zealand Board to get a women’s barbershop chorus established in Tauranga.

The enthusiasm of Jackie Napier and Christine Giddens, both of whom had been members of Sweet Adelines International, started events moving and, after a seminar in Hastings, Joy Leonard (then President of the Greater Auckland Chorus) and Loro Shandler (Musical Director) were on hand as friends and sponsors, to assist and encourage.

Coastal Harmony was chosen as the name for the prospective chorus and by 1992 Tuesday evenings were set as chorus rehearsal nights in St. Enoch’s Church Hall. Coastal Harmony chartered on 15th September 1994 and many messages of support, encouragement and friendship were received from all around New Zealand.

Jackie became, and remained, Musical Director until around 2002 when her contract ended and she chose to sing with her quartet “Take a Chance” and the Waikato Rivertones. Jackie’s experience, enthusiasm, and singing ability were an inspiration to all. Laurette Mears followed as Musical Director and, as her training and background was operatic, they were all on a learning curve. Chorus member and Assistant MD, Bernice Tweed, took over for a while until Dina Wickers, of “Perfect Timing” quartet fame, came to coach and stayed as Musical Director for 2 years. When Dina left to further her career studies, another chorus member and Tenor Section Leader, Penny Lee, stepped into the breach as MD for a few months. Currently, they feel blessed to have Jenny Shepherd from the



Waikato Rivertones as MD and are on a roll again, they say.



Coastal Harmony members' first taste of Convention was in Wellington in 1992 when four members attended as spectators. Then, in 1994, 14 members went south to Christchurch. 1996 saw Coastal Harmony competing for the first time, in Auckland, and what excitement that proved to be. Coastal Harmony has had a presence at every convention since, predominantly as competitor, but a couple of times in a supporter's role. In 1998 and 1999, their quartet, "Coastal Rhythm", competed and in 2001, "Take a Chance" took to the stage.

Coastal Harmony members have taken advantage of music workshops and seminars held by International Faculty and NZ Regional Faculty, as well as visiting champion quartets. MD Jackie Napier was funded to attend IES in Chicago, and Gael McMimm, who served as MDR and then Chapter Co-Ordinator, did a great job visiting choruses all round New Zealand and representing New Zealand at International conventions.

There have been numerous coaching weekends with various members of the Regional Music Team where members have worked hard and played equally hard. Most of the chorus attended the first NZES and are planning to attend the next. Some members have traveled to the USA to attend International Conventions and a group went to Melbourne to support, and to sing with, Christchurch City Chorus.

As with every chorus, Coastal Harmony has fundraised with raffles, singouts, catering and concerts, and applied for grants whenever possible. Most members have been involved, one way or another, in the Management Team, the Music Team, and various committees. All have worked hard.

They have entertained in shopping malls, parks and gardens, civic and private functions, rest homes, schools, and have kept their early links with the Tauranga men's chorus, "Harmony A Plenty", joining them on numerous occasions in shows and concerts. They have

celebrated their 5th and 10th anniversaries together and hope to celebrate many more. They are building strong links with the Waikato Rivertones from Hamilton who show great support to Coastal Harmony.

A flick through their photograph albums reveals a kaleidoscope of colour and smiling faces. Most members joined because they wanted to sing, but stayed because of the huge learning experience and the wonderful friendships they made. Coastal Harmony is a close group who know how to enjoy themselves together.

The history of Coastal Harmony is a microcosm of Sweet Adelines everywhere: the struggle to raise funds to assist members to attend every possible opportunity for learning, and to gain and keep members, but all illuminated by women joining in love and friendship to perform and sing in harmony. They acknowledge that barbershop singing is highly addictive and seriously good for your health, and that a cappella four-part harmony, in the barbershop style, is alive and well in Tauranga in 2005.

### **CORO A CAPPELLA CHORUS**

In March 2004, a gathering of interested women started the newest Auckland Sweet Adelines' chorus. Eighteen months later, they have a solid core of dedicated singers, some familiar with the barbershop craft and some brand new. A good blend in both harmony and friendship.

Chorus members feel that their biggest advantage is the wealth of knowledge and talent that their Master Director, Barbara Letcher, imparts. Barbara's directing, coaching and mentoring experience within and without New Zealand has proved invaluable to corò a cappella's success.

Although the smallest chorus on stage at the 2005 Regional Competition, they were able to perform at an acceptable standard and their pride in their achievement was visible both on and off the stage.

The chorus is based in a community hall which enables them to participate in local events where they enjoy singing for, and being sung to, by others within this close-knit community.

It is a great source of pride to corò a cappella that three of its new members are actively involved in the music arrangers' program. The members feel that they have great talent in their group and there is no hesitation to give of their experience as well as seeking new avenues to explore and enhance their knowledge for the good of the chorus.

Social occasions are necessary to members' wellbeing and are participated in regularly. One of the biggest advantages of a small chorus is sharing the fun times with people they know well. They appreciate and support each other.

Corò a cappella welcomes new members on Wednesday nights at 7.15pm at the Grey Lynn Community Hall, 510 Richmond Road, Grey Lynn, Auckland.

*Contacts are: Barbara Letcher (09) 620-1441 and Marilyn Miller (09) 626-4901.*

### **DUNEDIN HARMONY CHORUS**

Dunedin Sweet Adelines came into existence in 1989 and chartered in 1991. One of the big events for these ladies in the last 10 years has been the celebration of their 10 year anniversary on July 24th 1999. They invited their past members and friends to a social evening entitled "A Touch of Tartan". Of course, the haggis was piped and addressed.



Later that year, in September 1999, they had a name change to Dunedin Harmony Chorus of Sweet Adelines.

Over the years, the chorus has had as many as 50 members, and at the moment, there are 24 members, as the Barbershop craft competes with many other singing groups for women in Dunedin. Like the rest of us, they have enjoyed fundraising through garden parties, garden tours, tea dances, catering, book sales, jumble sales, and quiz nights. The Dunedin girls have also been able to perform their music. These singouts included the Art Deco weekend in Ranfurly, Central Otago; the Victorian Fete weekend in Oamaru; the Arrowtown Autumn Festival where one of their quartets sang in the town, and in recent years at the church service as well; Rhododendron Week in the Botanical Gardens; the Sing Out for Peace for the last 3 years on September 11th at the Otago Art Society. They have featured in two special events in Dunedin where they joined with the Dunedin Royal Male Choir and other choral groups. They have also been guests at concerts put on by the Royal Male Choir, the annual concert of the Returned Servicemen's Association, and a large concert in aid of their local Hospice. They have been busy singing at the Hospice, in shopping malls, and at the local hospital at Christmas time. In fact, for the last 2 years, they have been very proud of the fact that they have an average of one singout every two weeks for 46 weeks of the year. Dunedin's quartets have always been in demand over the years, and are still busy entertainers. The whole chorus has also entertained at the Pipe Band Concerts, and country concerts where "God Save The Queen" and our National Anthem are still honoured.



Dunedin Harmony Chorus has also organized a Christmas Variety concert held at the Commerce Building at the University of Otago, as well as an opportunity for every women's singing group in Otago to perform in the atrium of the Otago Museum. In August of 2004, they organized and hosted the Young Singers In Harmony national competition in Dunedin. This took place in conjunction with "Highland Harmony", the male Barbershop

group, and the combination of the two groups worked well together.

The chorus has had several weekend workshops including ones in Sutton in Central Otago, at the Girl Guides camp in Waikouaiti, and in Millervale in Warrington. Numerous coaches have come to expand their expertise including Virginia Humphrey-Taylor, Barbara Letcher, Cathy Rainey, Anne Gooch, and Sarah Rae, to name a few. They have attended nearly all the regional Sweet Adelines competitions over the years, and also performed at the Green Island Performing Arts Competition and the Choral Federation Classic Sing Competition.

## **FAULTLINE CHORUS**

From the humble beginnings as the Hutt Valley Chorus of Harmony International in the late 1980s, Faultline became a Chapter of Sweet Adelines International in May 1990. With a modest membership, Prue Blythe was appointed the Musical Director and so began barbershop for women in Wellington.

The Faultline membership grew steadily and as with all choruses, members came, sang a while, and some left. But the chorus is extremely proud of its two foundation members, Val Brown and Nan Knox, who continue to sing on the risers and who provide the inspiration to the rest.

Prue Blythe was a dedicated practitioner of barbershop harmony and the results the chorus achieved under her guidance are a testimony to this. Prue was instrumental in bringing the “Young Women in Harmony” programme to New Zealand and devoted time to coaching and encouraging young women. After 13 years of learning and teaching, Prue was recognized for her talents and invited to become a member of the International Faculty. She resigned as Director of Faultline, took her place on the risers, and began planning for her new challenge. Very sadly, Prue passed away 6 weeks before she was to present her first class at the International Education Symposium.



When Prue resigned in December 2002 to concentrate on International Faculty duties, Carolyn Currington took up the challenge of directing this well established chorus.

An objective that Faultline committed to very early on was the development of its members in the barbershop craft. As a result, Faultline takes advantage of every coaching opportunity that presents itself and has built up long standing relationships with local and international coaches such as Barbara Letcher, Lynne Smith and Jo Kraut. These ladies have made an outstanding contribution to the growth and development of the chorus, and to them, and the many others that have taken the time and

the patience to work with the chorus, the members are deeply indebted.



Faultline is well known for its unique character, which has been described as fun, friendly, innovative and dedicated. While continually striving to maintain and extend the knowledge of barbershop, the chorus upholds a caring philosophy.

“Faultliners” lead from the front! From the talented director to the Management and Music Teams, Faultline is fortunate to have highly motivated and efficient people. It was the first New Zealand chapter to have a strategic plan and a member’s handbook and has been used as a role model for other choruses in the country. A number of members play an active role in the Regional Management Team, take part in international competitions as out-of-towners, and attend IES. Eight Faultliners joined the He Tangata Chorus in Perth in 2004 for the Voices Down Under convention. Members return inspired and enthusiastic to share their newly gained knowledge. One of the members is a dual member with Kansas City Chorus and will be competing on the international stage in 2005.

Over the years, Faultline has performed in all main venues in New Zealand’s capital. Concert highlights include live appearance on TV One’s Morning Show in 2004 and appearing on national radio in the documentary “Spectrum” in 2002 with Jack Perkins. There have been Musical Garden Trails, a Music and Matrimony show, and unforgettable events like the “a Cappella Gold” concert. Memorable and innovative performance packages include “I’ll Fly Away” and “The Boyfriend Medley”.

Faultliners enjoy wonderful afterglows, where laughter with tears is not unusual. A special highlight every year is the challenge for the Tatum Shield at the annual chorus retreat weekend. This Saturday evening extravaganza sees teams competing for the ultimate trophy – a brilliantly decorated toilet seat! Coaches who have been part of these weekends believe we hold some of the best retreats they have attended! True testament to the Faultline ethos of having fun while learning.



With a solid background and foundation, a motivated management team and a commitment to improve develop and have fun, Faultline are looking forward to even bigger and brighter things to come over the next 15 years.

## **FOVEAUX HARMONY CHORUS**

1995 saw the beginning of Sweet Adelines in Invercargill. Margot Buick and Annette Little had been interested in starting a singing group in the city and, to this end, had asked the director of the Dunedin Sweet Adelines Chorus, Anne Limburg, to travel south and demonstrate how female barbershop singing was done. Margot and Annette were both singers of note in their own rights but were interested in getting together with other women to simply enjoy singing.

Anne Limburg and her group's visit took place on 6th May 1995, and from this, a group of 12 women began to meet regularly on Thursday evenings in the Music Room of Rosedale Intermediate School, with three Musical Directors – Marion Allen, Sarah Rae and Winsome Humphries. In August of that year, Fay Quinn from the NZ Sweet Adelines Board visited and “redirected” the focus onto Barbershop music that was written for women and not men, as had previously been sung by the group. She also enlightened the members about voice placement and balancing voices to achieve the smooth four-part sound that we know so well.

Numbers grew gradually until there were 18 members on 18th March 1996, and Debbie Scott, NZ National Musical Director, came to audition the group and make a decision about working towards chartering with Sweet Adelines International.

By 1997, Musical Directors were still three in number but Glenys Carson had replaced Marion Allen. October 1997 saw Foveaux joining with Dunedin and Balclutha choruses for a weekend workshop led by Virginia Humphrey-Taylor, who continued to pop down from Christchurch and give guidance and assistance at intervals.

Numerous singouts and concerts were being performed now and by 1998 the numbers had swelled to 28. On 20th February 1998, Kate Veeder visited to present Foveaux Harmony with its charter. May 17th 1998 saw Foveaux Harmony marching on stage for their first taste of competitions at Convention in Wellington. The group competed again the next year after coaching from some of the greats – Prue Blythe, Nicky McCaughan, Jan Smith, Marilyn Weekes, and Barbara Letcher – as well as fundraising and generally singing their hearts out through the year 2000 as well. Sarah Rae became the sole Musical Director, and still is at writing this.

Not content with “heavies” (meaning Sweet Adelines of merit) in the New Zealand scene, there were coaching visits in 2001 from the Canadian Bob Armstrong, and Ron and Jo Black from San Diego. By 2002, numbers were up to 36, and there was a fantastic, grueling and never-to-be-forgotten two weeks in May with Anne Gooch from Florida, where the chorus's catch phrase became “Breathe, you fool!” and “Thighs, baby!”. This year was also memorable as Foveaux Harmony Chorus was voted Southland Entertainers of the Year. It was also the year of the chorus's own concert with 1960s icon, Ray Columbus.

Sandy Robinson, Sweet Adelines International Coach extraordinaire and member of winning quartet “Brava”, led a coaching workshop in March 2003. She revamped “Toot Toot Tootsie” which the group had sung at competitions the year before but Sandy took it and the chorus to the next level, with not a dry eye in the house. This year at Convention, the chorus placed 5th overall and 2nd in the small chorus section – their best showing so far! Buoyed up by this success, Foveaux put on another concert in September with Suzanne

Lynch from “The Chicks” as guest artist. November brought another, if shorter, visit from Anne Gooch, again with inspiration as only Anne can deliver.



March 2004 swept Barbara Smith from the “Waikato Rivertones” down south for coaching with the chorus; also Ed Dempsey from “Phoenix Rising” (Christchurch) visited in April with Convention in the same month. This year, the group moved up to being a “B” grade chorus, and one member, Raewyn Birss, became National Education Coordinator for Sweet Adelines New Zealand. Melody Lowe, Musical Director of Greater Auckland Chorus, cracked the whip with coaching in November. Numbers now are up to 43, so Fo-veaux Harmony Chorus is ever-growing and always enjoying the art of female barbershop singing.

## **GREATER AUCKLAND CHORUS**

The return to rehearsals in the New Year of 1993 heralded a hectic schedule. A program of sing-outs and social events included a Waitangi Day trip to Whangarei, joining other Sweet Adelines at the Wood Theatre complex. A special open day in Hamilton set up by Beverley-Ann Nobbs and a Hamilton contact followed: this event gave birth to the Waikato Rivertones. There were changes to the structure of the chorus leadership. In February, Fiona King retired from the Presidency and Vice-President Margaret King assumed the President’s role until the April AGM. At Regional level, a new position of Membership Development Representative (MDR) to the area was formed and Joy Leonard, a member of the chorus, was appointed. Fifteen new members were recruited from a membership drive and a new program was adopted for this intake. The program consisted of free vocal lessons spread over 6 weeks and was devised from several successful ideas of Sandy Kerr and Kathy Carmody. A \$3100 grant from the Northern Regional Arts Council was expected to subsidize the cost of Wenger Aluminium Risers – a joint purchase between Greater Auckland and the City of Sails Men’s Chorus. A contract was drawn up between the two choruses and delivery was due mid-year. A weekend retreat was held at the Rugby League Clubrooms in Parnell Road where Virginia Humphrey-Taylor inspired the chorus members with her motivational talks, and at the Annual General Meeting in April, Ngaire Lee was appointed President. The Aotea Centre building site had been a focal point for



sing-outs over the years and so it was a momentous occasion in April when the chorus performed in the ASB theatre at a concert organized by Les and Sonia Andrews. In June, the chorus gave two successful performances of a show called "Sweet Adelines On Tour". The storyline, scripted and devised by Barbara Letcher, was based on a group of New Zealand Sweet Adelines leaving on an airplane for a tour of the USA. In August, the radio program "On Stage NZ" featured the chorus in an episode which provided a pleasing, good quality and marketable tape, and a fee of \$500. Jan Mauck arrived on November 14th to give coaching sessions in preparation for the 1994 area competition. The sessions were quite arduous but the progress made was exciting. Greater Auckland and South City Harmony Chorus (now SouthCity Soundz) shared the costs of coaching and a Christmas party/farewell function for Jan. In December, Ngaire Lee resigned from the Presidency because of illness, and once again V-P Margaret King took over the role. The chorus year ended with the traditional Christmas Carol sing-outs and participation in a show presented by the Waitemata Little Theatre.

January 1994 and the return to rehearsals brought the prospect of another busy year ahead. Loro Shandler and Colleen Ashworth, members of the quartet "Perfect Timing", took part in a well-received performance in the Showcase of Excellence during the Royal visit to the Waitangi Day celebrations. Sally Willmot was appointed as the new editor of Harmony Hi, assuming the role for the March issue. Beverley-Ann Nobbs term as Regent ended in June. In March Karen Breidert spent a day with the chorus. She made many constructive but rewarding changes to the competition songs. A social retreat was held at Algies Bay, and around this time Joy Leonard was reappointed MDR. At the AGM in April Beverley-Ann Nobbs became the new President. Shirley Kout visited for four coaching sessions in May, making some revolutionary changes to the competition songs which enhanced the overall sound and showmanship. In June at Convention, held over the Queens Birthday weekend, Greater Auckland Chorus placed 2nd with a score of 518 points. Events during the next few months included hosting the 2nd YWIH (Auckland) competition; a combined show with the Belmont Tappers; visits by Maureen Holcombe, Marianna Hammarkid (Swedish Regent) and Marge Zimmerman. In September the program included a new members night, a successful cabaret, and the management Team took up a membership with the Choral Federation.

A survey in March 1995 showed that 91% of members requested more Section Practices, and a more professional standard to sing-out performances. As a result, Jan Hart was appointed Performance Coordinator. The first of the Area Workshops was held in Auckland on Sunday of Queens Birthday weekend with International Faculty members Bev Miller and Maureen Brzinski in attendance. Beverley-Ann continued as President for another year and Joy Leonard's term as Area Membership Development Representative ended in May. The first issue of Team GA News and Views was presented in June – this monthly newsletter replaced the "Team Tattler" and "Board Blurp". Increasing membership necessitated the purchase of two extra riser sections. In July, Barbara Letcher attended the International Directors' Seminar in Mexico. A successful show, "One Moment In Time", was staged in August, and a large contingent of chorus members took part in the One Big Voice Competition for Spiritual Music at Manukau City – they were placed 1st in the 40 plus voices section. In October Sweet Adelines International celebrated its 50th Anniversary in the colourful city of New Orleans – an event which was truly memorable for all

those who attended. A group of 18 chorus members was part of a much larger New Zealand contingent attending the convention – they provided great support for the competing quartet “Jazz Talk” and chorus Christchurch City. They also participated in the World Wide Celebration Show with a package which included “Poi E”. A new carol called “A New Zealand Christmas Carol” written by Doreen Peers, and arranged by Doreen and Pat Neilsen, was given its public debut at a Christmas cabaret on Dec 2nd.

1996 began with rehearsals early in the New Year and the schedule promised a busy year ahead. An enjoyable weekend retreat was held in mid-March at Carey Park, Henderson, and the next big event was a sing-out at a special homecoming for former Governor-General Cath Tizard, held at Highwic House. Debbie Johnston was appointed as the new President at the AGM in April. Ann Gooch visited in May for 2 weeks of coaching sessions. Following the coaching, on May 25th, the chorus took part in a Benefit Concert for the West Auckland Hospice Home Appeal at Holy Trinity Cathedral – a great opportunity to try out the competition package and debut the stunning new red costumes. The Sheraton Hotel in Auckland was the venue for the 1996 “Women in Harmony” Convention where the Greater Auckland Chorus competed with 74 singers on stage and won with a score of 540. Greater Auckland had become a chartered chorus on 15th August 1986. To celebrate the 10th anniversary, a commemorative dinner was held at the Avondale Racecourse and a book was published, chronicling the activities and achievements of the previous years.

1997 came and a fashion parade was held at Harrahs Sky City and a weekend retreat was held at Carey Park in mid-March, to prepare for an upcoming show. “For All the World” was staged on May 3rd, and the chorus welcomed back Ann ‘Guru’ Gooch. In July, Barbara Letcher attended the Directors’ seminar in Chicago. The “goggle-eyed gals from far away parts” flew off in October for the Salt Lake City Convention. They had fun in the snow, practiced in the parking lot, and when the power went off in the hotel, had to apply their make-up outside. It was the first time Greater Auckland Chorus had gone overseas to take part in the International Competition: they were second in order of appearance.

Shirley Kout arrived in February 1998 for a month long stay, and despite a bout of illness carried out her coaching as planned. What a trouper! During this time a weekend retreat was held in Piha. Recoding sessions commenced for the CD ‘For All The World’, and on 10th March, chorus members sang for Shirley at the airport as she left for home. At the AGM, Margaret Thomas was appointed President. The Convention was during 14/15 May and Greater Auckland placed 2nd to Christchurch City. Sing-outs and other fundraising events continued throughout the year. A second recording session for the CD was held in July. In October, Lynne Smith arrived for choreography coaching, and in the same month, the ‘For All The World’ CD went into production. A Christmas Cabaret was held at Pakuranga Rugby Club on November 28th, and Christmas sing-outs ended with the traditional carol singing at Greenlane hospital.

The America’s Cup Regatta happened in the summer of 1999 and the chorus appeared on stage at the Village. On the same day, they also took part in the opening ceremony of the newly refurbished Civic Theatre. Zoe Thompson arrived from the US to do some coaching. A Friends and Family show was performed in April, prior to the Competition in Wellington, where the costume that year was a short blue dress with green trim. Greater Auckland was declared regional champions once again. On July 17th the chorus staged a show called “The Spice of Life”. Later in the year photographic sessions were under way

for the production of a year 2000 calendar featuring members of the chorus.

Chorus members returned to rehearsal in early January 2000, and planning was well under way for the trip to Orlando in October. Judith Eeles assumed the President's mantle. A small group traveled to Christchurch in late April for the Convention/Competition. Lynne Smith arrived in early June to put the chorus through its paces, exhorting the girls to "throw open the shower curtain" – what a dynamo! In late June, rehearsals were relocated to the Carlton Bowling Club in Newmarket, and at the end of July the chorus competed and was placed first in the Barbershop section of the North Shore Choir Competition. Barbara was also awarded the Director's Trophy. Pre-Orlando coaching continued when Ann Gooch was welcomed back for more coaching session in August and rehearsals were also underway for the 'Show of Shows' in late August. In mid-September, the Orlando contingent left to fly to the sticky humid heat of Florida. The chorus performed creditably (placed ahead of two American Choruses) and was well-received by the international audience. Post-Orlando, the chorus prepared for the Christmas season of sing-outs.

As usual, 2001 saw rehearsals restarting in January and the first big event on the calendar was the Rotorua 'a cappella Festival' where the chorus performed to great acclaim. Melody Lowe was appointed Director of SouthCity Harmony Chorus and divided her time between both choruses. In March, Ron and Jo Black arrived from San Diego to conduct coaching sessions and planning was underway for the Christchurch Convention in May. Jocelyn Ngare was appointed President at the Annual General Meeting. A contingent of chorus members attended NZES in Hamilton over a foggy Queens Birthday weekend, and the next event on the calendar was a performance in the Dalewool Brass Band Show at Sky City Theatre. Further events included a visit by Lori Lyford, a quiz night, sing-out for the Airport's Bluecoats, a show put on by the City of Sails Chorus, an Open Night in September, an afternoon matinee and Cabaret on 29th September. Eight members of the chorus joined Christchurch City Chorus for their trip to the Portland Convention where they were placed 17th. In November, Cathy Rainey came across from Perth to coach, and was followed soon afterwards by Shirley Kout. December rolled around again and with it the usual round of Christmas sing-outs and a concert.

Mid-January 2002 saw chorus rehearsals resuming for the year but with an earlier start time of 7pm. Lynne Smith (a slimmer version, but still huge in personality) arrived to coach the chorus again for a couple of weeks with a weekend retreat also on the schedule. Shirley Kout returned to assist in the preparation for the next competition and the Easter show provided opportunity to impress the public for three successive days. Late April – and Cathy Rainey returned to coach the chorus in lead-up to Competition Day. A new blue coat with black camisole and pants was introduced for this big event. With 97 members on stage, the judges were very impressed – Greater Auckland was declared First place chorus with a score of 600 and ... the roar of the crowd was so loud all were left wondering for some minutes exactly how many points over the magic number the chorus had achieved. Well, it was 605 and of course this meant that Barbara Letcher had achieved Master Director status. Following the Convention, the chorus calendar remained busy with a Fashion Show in May and the return of Ann Gooch. In August Kim Hulbert arrived for more coaching sessions. 9/11 was marked by Sing Out For Peace in Aotea Square, followed a few days later by the Juke Box Gold Show at the Parnell Cathedral. Next up was the Blessing of the Animals service at St Mathews-in-the-City in October. A Members'

Workshop was held in November at the North Harbour stadium Function Centre. Faculty members were “a Cappella Gold” quartet, who featured in a show at the Bruce Mason Theatre – Greater Auckland Chorus also performed in the show. December, as usual, was another busy month with several Christmas singouts. Prior to the chorus Christmas party, members were somewhat shocked to learn that Barbara Letcher had requested leave of absence for one year.



Rehearsals resumed on January 14th 2003 with Melody Lowe as Interim Musical Director. Events scheduled for the year ahead were many and varied, starting with a singout at the Viaduct Harbour on January 19th. The successful performance at the inaugural a cappella Festival in Rotorua two years earlier led to an invitation back for two shows in February of this year, and the large contingent also took part in the workshop conducted by the Australian quartet “Idea of North”. In March, Cathy Rainey was present at a retreat weekend, which all the Ooters traveling to Phoenix also attended, including the contingent from Hawaii. Government House was the venue for a singout later that month, and the chorus was filmed in rehearsal for the program ‘Location, Location, Location’ – Melody featuring in her role as Real Estate Agent and Judith Moore as a Vendor. The Carlton Bowling Club building had been sold the previous year and in April the Balmoral Bowling Club became the new rehearsal venue. At the end of this month, Greater Auckland hosted the Convention at the Aotea Centre. The chorus was singing for the purpose of Evaluation and the new red coat was given its debut showing. Marcia Massey had provided pre-Evaluation coaching, and Jackie Hall some post-convention advice. Jocosa Lowe, who had taken on the Director’s role at SouthCity Harmony Chorus, spent two weeks in Canada and the USA Trial Scoring as a Showmanship Judge Candidate. Through May and June rehearsals continued for various singouts and shows. A group of touring American Sweet Adelines, “Kiwi Krew”, had a stop-over in Auckland, taking part in a show at the Parnell Cathedral. Preparations for the trip to Phoenix were well under way – Virginia Humphrey-Taylor provided coaching assistance, and this was followed by a visit from Ann Gooch. Also on

the calendar was a Quiz Night, more singouts and a Friends and Family Night. Then before you could say “take your sinuses to Arizona”, the chorus was there (by the way, it is not really true what they say about sinuses and Arizona, judging by the number of chorus members who left Phoenix with sore throats and blocked noses.) It was an exciting time for many first timers, particularly for one young Angela Tsai who was on stage (front row) as a member of Young Women in Harmony Chorus. (YHIH took part in the Showcase of the opening night of the Convention.) Headlining the Showcase were the brilliant and entertaining Knudsen Bros. Greater Auckland performed creditably on competition day to beat 10 other choruses and Kim Hulbert was prompted to say “my, my, look what’s going on in New Zealand”. Post- Phoenix, life went on as usual – the dust was blown off the Christmas Carol folders, the October fundraiser featured Annabelle White, TV’s ‘cuddly cook’, the new members night was scheduled for late October, and Melody passed her DCP to become a certified director. December was a busy month with several Christmas singouts, coaching sessions with Ann Gooch, and on the final chorus night members partied around several places in Auckland with the aid of a double-decker bus.

January 20th 2004 marked the resumption of chorus rehearsals. Melody spent a few days in Tulsa at the inaugural Novice Director’s School. Preparations for Convention in Wellington were well under way with the expected arrival of Shirley Kout for 2 weeks of coaching sessions. The chorus was happy to sing at a wedding in late January, but this was followed by a very sad occasion when chorus members were asked to sing at the funeral of a former member, Raewyn Subritzky. Kaye Hall took on the rains as Team Leader replacing Jocelyn Ngare. After a year’s leave of absence we learned that Barbara Letcher had made a decision not to return to the position of Musical Director, and subsequently Melody Lowe was appointed to that post. On to the late April Convention in Wellington and at the end of the chorus competition, Greater Auckland placed first with a score of 618 points, giving our new director the title of Master Director. This was, and still remains, the highest score achieved by a New Zealand chorus. A small group of chorus members flew off to Perth for the inaugural “Voices Down Under” Convention and were part of the well received He Tangata Chorus, which performed on three occasions during the event. Back in Auckland, plans were in hand to welcome the dynamic Doug Harrington for a spell of coaching. Rehearsals continued for upcoming shows at Auckland Girls’ Grammar School. The one matinee and one evening show – billed as “In The Mood” – were highly successful. From here on, the pre-New Orleans preparation was well under way with new songs introduced, and Sandy Robinson (tenor in champion quartet “Brava”, from Canada) arrived in early December. Coaching included a weekend with a large number of Ooters joining the chorus. Throughout December, rehearsals continued with several Christmas singouts on the calendar and the year concluded with a Christmas party at the home of Dee Parks.

Over the past ten years, the Greater Auckland Chorus has undergone a few changes, different faces have graced the front row and the risers, but the essential spirit remains.

### **MANAWATU WOMEN’S CHORUS / BROADERLINE (prospective)**

The Manawatu Women’s Chorus or *Broaderline* had its inaugural meeting on September 1st 2004 with about seven interested people attending. The roll currently stands at fifteen keen members with a few interested parties in the wings. After six months of invading



Linda Edge's (President) home on a weekly basis, it became imperative in late February 2005 to move to our new practice venue at the Milson Combined Church in Palmerston North. Practice sessions are on Tuesday evenings at 7pm.

*Broaderline* boasts a wide range of ages and musical/performance experience from those who vaguely remember being part of a choir at school to those who have devoted a large portion of their lives to music. Amongst the latter are our Musical Director, Olwyn Jones, and Assistant Musical Directors, Sylvia Fountain and Liz Watts. Despite their differences, and perhaps because of them, they are all supportive of one another and are enjoying the challenge of creating harmony in the barbershop style.

Having been accepted as a prospective chorus by Sweet Adelines International in June 2005, they are currently in the throws of working through the requirements of Step One. At the moment, the challenges are to set up or formalize their Management Team and processes, and to decide upon a name that will reflect their region and the barbershop craft.

## **MARLBOROUGH HARMONY CHORUS**



Wow! How do you even begin to write a farewell article that could do justice to all the years of fun, sharing, caring, laughter, tears and new opportunities that go along with the amazing musical experiences that have come along for the members of Marlborough Harmony.

From the first night, 15 years ago, in Noelene Blackler's lounge, to the last night in the Spring Creek Hall, being part of this chorus has meant many things to many people.

The big thing that they all share is the love of the music, and the friendships that develop round that. The riser buddies, section buddies, chorus buddies, quartet buddies. Some very close friendships are forged over the years. Instant friends in every chorus just through the music sung in common. How special is that! To be able to be friends and rivals all at the same time when competition time comes around. The buzz of expectation and excitement as the transformation takes place from ordinary people to glamorous performers, false eyelashes and all; from individuals into a well-rehearsed chorus prepared to perform for the judges and peers. The ups and downs as the results are announced. But through it all, the enjoyment of being part of a singing organization where women from all walks of life could stand side by side, drawn together by their common love of singing. The end result being so much more than any could achieve on their own. Not something any of the Marlborough Harmony members will forget.

What fun they have had performing in their own community! Starting off at the hospitals and rest homes with members of the audience falling asleep, telling everyone to be quiet or go away, and leaving the room in the middle of the performance (to go to the toilet, of

course) to the building up into a chorus capable of putting on their own shows and joining with other musical groups to add variety to their programmes. Variety is the spice of life, and Marlborough Harmony certainly got to sing in a wide range of places. A highlight would have to be the cruise ships. Such fun to sing to people who are on holiday, and they saw inside some beautiful ships!

They will all miss the social side of the chorus. Most of their fundraising efforts required full chorus participation and what a laugh! Making pizzas for hours, and hours, and hours on end! Thank heavens for a zippy tomato slicer and some willing souls who managed to chop all the onions without dissolving into a crying mess. What an amazing team they were! Renowned for their pizzas for several years until every other organization in town decided it was a great fundraiser...

Then came the grape harvest. How many Sweet Adelines does it take to pick 12 tonnes of grapes? A lot!!! Friends and family all pitched in and they always managed to get the picking done on schedule. Tired bodies, a few cut fingers and a bit of sunburn were all forgotten when the harvest was finished and the first bottle of bubbly came out! They had some great times. Terrific spirit and cooperation within the chorus saw us achieve some amazing things over the years.

They feel that they may not have been the most competitive chorus but they were a chorus with spirit and determination and a lot of heart. They worked very hard at their craft and took advantage of all the education they could get. It is very hard to let that all go and say goodbye to something that has given them all so much. How do you replace something in your life that has given you fun, laughter, encouragement, acceptance, a support network beyond all others, opportunities to develop and use skills, opportunities to learn new skills, a date every week with friends, a chance to do things you have never done in your life before (e.g. riding around Marlborough as a chorus on the back of motorbikes with the Ulysses Club), to be someone you've never been, a chance to travel, a chance to see new places and meet new people, to work together to achieve things you never thought you could, to bring joy to others through your singing, to be part of something that is bigger than the individuals combined. Wow!!! There will be a big hole in their lives.

Marlborough Harmony has not gone down without a fight. Thanks so much to our Ooters from last year. They were there when needed and they kept things going for another year. Their last competition experience was a very positive one and one that they will all treasure. The chorus has worked hard to attract new members, but as fast as they found new ones, they seemed to lose others. It is hard to maintain numbers in a small population base, and then that is compounded by the constant risk of burn-out. If those doing the work are not getting enough out of it, it is hard to convince them to stay. They lost a lot of members over the years – rules, regulations, paperwork and pressure to achieve and maintain standards all took their toll in one way or another. Sometimes there is the worry that all these things overtake the joy of singing. Hindsight is a wonderful thing, and looking back, Bridget Byrne knows there are a lot of things she could have done differently – whether anything would have changed the outcome, will never be known. Through all the ups and downs though, Bridget feels that it was an absolute privilege and pleasure to direct this chorus for over 13 of the 15 years. She feels that she has learnt so much about so much!!! The chorus has thanked Bridget for her dedication, patience and enthusiasm, but Bridget feels that any Director will know that it is all very easy when it is all being

returned by the people on the risers. Those things were never lacking from Marlborough Harmony and Bridget says she will treasure the memories of this time in her life. So finally, on behalf of the members of Marlborough Harmony Chorus, Bridget would like to thank each Sweet Adeline for making the last 15 years a very special time for them.

## **NELSON BAYS HARMONY CHORUS**

Marion Strickland, the founder of Nelson City Chorus, placed an advertisement in the Nelson Evening Mail in March 1993 inviting ladies who were interested in singing and fun to attend an open day. Forty ladies attended as well as Beverley-Anne Nobbs and Joy Leonard and the "Sounds of Picton Chorus" dressed in costume and standing on risers. By 22nd April, 1993, the chorus was 30-strong. Rehearsals were held at Victory School in Nelson, and June Hewitt (an accomplished musician with a background of singing on radio broadcasts in Christchurch and Invercargill) was the first Musical Director. In September of that year, they held their first Convention at Lake Rotoiti along with "Sounds of Picton Chorus" and were coached by Virginia Humphrey-Taylor's quartet – they were all wide-eyed and soaked up all the knowledge, and were hooked.

1994 saw several changes of Musical Director as Joanne Oliver took over in April, then was transferred to Wellington, and Ros Lee took over. Costume making bees, earring making bees and lots of rehearsing led to 22 members attending the Convention "Attune in Harmony '94" in Christchurch. One Saturday working bee which included supportive husbands resulted in risers made from apple boxes! Perhaps that is why their first quartet was called the "Apply Chords". A training camp with "Vocal Affair" quartet from Christchurch and coaching in December from Marge Zimmerman (USA) made for a very busy year.

Janet Rowland stepped into the shoes of Musical Director in 1995 as Ros Lee and her family were transferred north. Another training seminar with Debbie Scott, Bev Miller and Maureen Brinzinski (USA) happened that year as well as the usual round of sausage sizzles outside The Warehouse, busking, rest home singouts. 1995 was a year of firsts. In August, they held their first big concert at the Nelson Suburban Club featuring their "Octangle" group and the quartet "Chordiality". Another big event occurred when they joined with the "Nelson Male Voice Choir" to stage a concert at the Nelson School of Music – a wonderful old historic building with lovely acoustics and cramped dressing rooms. Another first was their Open Day where several prospective members attended and, by the end of that year, there were 34 members. The Chorus also hosted the Presidents and Directors Seminar weekend – the huge effort that everyone put in was rewarded by favorable comments afterwards. 17th September 1995 saw the chorus becoming chartered, with Alison Hughes as well as other Area Management Team members attending a memorable evening of song. Other events for the year included singing at the Nelson Home Show BBQ, the New Zealand Garden Art show and the Inner Wheel Leprosy mission singout. Seven members attended the International Convention in New Orleans, USA, and thoroughly enjoyed every moment. They received their first cultural grant of \$2,000 from the L.B. Kain Trust.

The chorus competed in 1996 at the "Women of Note" competition in Auckland. A training weekend with Jo Ellis (Christchurch) at Teapot Valley Camp created many wonderful

memories including items from the Motueka ladies (“The Mot Lot”) and others. This year also saw the chorus becoming the proud owners of their first real risers and Celia Rodley being appointed as Musical Director.

1997 began with an excellent workshop by Jamie Bull and Bridget Byrne, and a change of rehearsal venue to Salisbury School in Richmond. The chorus has lasting memories of Prue Blythe taking a training camp at Teapot Valley, and sadly fare welled their founder, Marion Strickland, who left to live in Brunei in April of 1997. This year saw several successful quiz evenings which were excellent fundraisers, and the purchase of elegant white costumes with gold fringing from “Gold Coast Harmony” in Australia – these were worn at their “Showcase Concert” at the Richmond Town Hall in November. They also had a singout at the Trafalgar Centre where the Governor General, Sir Michael Hardie-Boyes, was present.

Coaching sessions from Prue Blythe and Virginia Humphrey-Taylor were highlights of 1998, as well as attending Convention in Wellington, and another concert at the Nelson School of Music with a saxophone quartet as guests and their own quartet “Jus 4 Fun” and “Octangle”. One of their dedicated members, Jean Russell, moved to Blenheim and was fare welled in style; another member, Cindy, thought she would get married without the chorus knowing about it but the “mock wedding” staged on the following Thursday night rehearsal resulted in a whole new set of Mother of the Bride, Father of the Bride, bridesmaids, ring carriers, flower girls, minister and a new “groom”, all captured on camera. What a Hoot! A new Quartet formed in December, “Ajazz Attack”, with beautiful voices and a classy costume.

By 1999, the chorus membership has risen to 45! The “Century Singout” competitions in Wellington in April saw the chorus placing 5th overall and winning “The Most Improved Chorus” award – the members were over the moon and their families and friends greeted them at Nelson Airport like Olympic gold medalists. The “Harmonize the Coast” Tour of 1999 began with a concert on 9th September in Nelson, and then a big red and white bus being driven round the coast, stopping to perform concerts in Westport, Greymouth and Reefton. Jo Kraut (USA) provided coaching this year. A “Bride of the Year” evening was held at the Teapot Valley Camp – members dug out their wedding gowns and modeled them, but, amazingly, most of the dresses had shrunk with age as members struggled to appear as they had done years before on their wedding days. The chorus suffered their first bereavement this year – Dorothy Williamson, founding member of the chorus and part of the “Octangle” passed away and is so sadly missed by her chorus friends. A farewell also to Felicity Dawson, Assistant Musical Director and Lead section leader, who was transferred with her family to Auckland.

There was a sad start to the year 2000 with the passing away of Alison Kroon’s husband John – Alison has been chorus choreographer for years. Elder stateswoman, Joyce Rowland, turned 80 and this was celebrated with a special afternoon tea and a song or three from chorus members. There was a sponsored walk, garage sales, rest home singouts, stocktaking at H&J Smiths, a stall at the “Hobbies Craft Expo” at the Trafalgar Centre, a new members’ night, and coaching with Prue Blythe and Barbara Letcher. The chorus was invited to be guests at the “Last Night of the Proms” concert put on by the Nelson City Brass Band and it has become an annual event ever since. Their own concert at the Nelson School of Music featured the quartet “Perfect Timing”, George Rutledge who is a

local tenor, and Nigel Seaton, NZ Champion Bass player from the Woolston Brass Band. At this concert also, the chorus wore their new costume of sparkly red tops and long black skirts. The year ended with “Carols by Candlelight” at Motueka Park and a “Mad Hatters” Christmas evening.

2001 saw the passing away of Dr. Janet Richardson’s husband, Dennis – Janet is in the Baritone section and chorus members sang at the graveside. Chorus membership was 44 then. Coaching with Ron Black (USA) and “No Boys Allowed” quartet from Christchurch featured this year, and a new purchase of black and silver costumes.

2002 featured lots of singouts: Probus, Tahunanui Church, Motueka Carols by Candlelight where the chorus rode along High Street on a float drawn by two draft horses and arrived at the Park to lead the community carol singing. There were also two concerts singing to packed theatres – “A Night of Harmony” Concert with Golden Bay Mens’ quartet “Reminisce” and the Waimea Country Club concert with male quartet “Vocal Accord” and the “Bays Barbershop Boys” Chorus. The chorus did a sausage sizzle at the Richmond show grounds to promote Sweet Adelines, and “Rhythm Riot”, a quartet from the chorus, sang. The arrival of new blue sleeveless jackets was a highlight of the year.

The pace seemed to pick up in 2003, if that is possible, with coaching from Sandy Robinson (Canada), Jo Ellis and Nicky McCaughan (Christchurch), and Ann Gooch (USA). Three chorus members who were school teachers organized exchange concerts between their schools. The Nelson School of Music hosted chorus concerts in June and July. Members were saddened and shocked at the death of their coach, mentor and friend Prue Blythe on May 26th. Joyce Rowland retired from the chorus in her 80s and choreographer, Alison Kroon, transferred to Oman to teach. Inga Cotton, ex-treasurer and member of the Baritone section, became RMT Finance Coordinator. In June, Musical Director Celia Rodley tendered her resignation after 6 years – Janet Rowland stepped in while advertising for a new MD took place. Fay Ruddenklau was auditioned and given a contract as Musical Director in September. The risers were sent to Christchurch for an overhaul and to fit wheels. 2003 also saw the chorus competing in Auckland along with their quartet “Key Change”. Singouts included “The Night of the Proms”, Songer Street Church, Nelson Floral Society, “Home and Leisure Show”, and Friendship Force Association. Ann Crozier, who had been a Lead in the chorus from 1993 to 1997, passed away in October. The year ended with a “Wear Something Outrageous Night” and they did.

Birchwood School in Stoke was the chorus venue at the beginning of 2004, and then they moved to the Nelson Car Club. Barbara Smith (Waikato) did a 3 day coaching stint in March, Sarah Rae (Foveaux Harmony) ran a weekend workshop with youth, vibrance and excellent choreography. Faye Ruddenklau resigned as Musical Director in April as she and her husband moved with work to Cairo. Janet Rowland, who had been appointed as Regional Librarian in March, again filled the Musical Director gap. Members had the privilege of singing at the wedding of Dr. Janet Richardson, one of their baritones. May brought a concert at Waimea College Hall and a small group from the chorus began attending the two-monthly Nelson City Council Citizenship Ceremony, singing the National Anthem in Maori and English in 4 part harmony. In September, 7 chorus members participated in the “He Tangata Chorus” at Voices Down Under in Perth, Australia. Many singouts, quiz evenings social events dotted the calendar.

2005 saw the chorus resuming with 25 members. Janet Rowland is Musical Director and,

so far, Bridget Byrne has coached the chorus in their competition package. It has certainly been a full and eventful 10 years for Nelson Bays Harmony Chorus.

## **RHYTHM OF CANTERBURY CHORUS**

Rhythm of Canterbury Chorus had its inaugural meeting in August 2001. Nine people attended that first meeting, and most of them are still members of the chorus today. Marion Hounsome was the founding Musical Director, and Rosemary France, the Team Leader. There was a good mix of voice parts from the beginning, and in the first year or so of development they mostly learned New Zealand massed songs, as they had no idea at that stage of what their chorus style and personality might be.

Their very first public performance was at the local YWIH and YMIH contest in 2002. Looking back on it now, it was a rather daunting place to start, in front of a knowledgeable barbershop audience, but they were delighted to be invited to sing and readily accepted the invitation. In fact, they had to do a special audition of the two songs they planned to sing, as they had not yet auditioned to become a permanently singing-out chorus!!

Once the chorus audition was over and they had passed, they began regularly accepting singout invitations. One of the largest undertakings to date was in December 2003 when they accepted 36 hours of singing Christmas music in one of Christchurch's largest shopping malls in the two weeks leading up to Christmas. They felt it was a fantastic opportunity for them but that it also really developed their showmanship and confidence at singing in public. A number of members had only been in the chorus for a few months at the time, but they accepted the challenge with aplomb and did a great job. This venture also really helped the chorus coffers!!

Rhythm of Canterbury Chorus chartered as fully fledged chorus in January 2004. Marion Hounsome did a great job of leading them all to chartering level. She resigned as Musical Director about the time they chartered, and after advertising extensively, Rosemary France was appointed Musical Director in March 2004.

They went to contest for the first time in 2005. Members felt that they had such an amazing weekend together in Wellington, full of fun and laughter, and with 21 on stage, they were both stunned and delighted to place 2nd in the Small Chorus Division, and 5th overall in the contest. What a long way they have come from the humble beginnings four years ago.

At their Strategic Planning Day in 2004, chorus members came up with four words that they would like to use to describe themselves. These are "witty", "sassy", "joyous" and "moving". Members will endeavour to always keep these words in mind even as they develop and grow as a chorus – and they are enjoying the challenge of making them into a reality in their chorus life. Despite their short history to date, Rhythm of Canterbury Chorus is looking forward to being a part of the 20th Anniversary celebrations!!

## **SOUNDS OF HAWKES BAY CHORUS**

2005 has seen the amalgamation of two smaller Hawkes Bay choruses – Art Deco City Chorus and Twin City Sounds Chorus. It was decided that it was better to have one big chorus in the Bay rather than two smaller choruses.



## **ART DECO CITY CHORUS**

Lesley Standing had been a foundation member of the Wairoa Chapter of Sweet Adelines (the first chapter in New Zealand). When she moved to Napier in 1986, Ann Gooch suggested that she keep her music in the hope that she might start a chorus in Napier.

Lesley became a member of the Napier Operatic Society, and in May 1993 she was in an all-women show called "Nonsense". They sang a Grace in 3 parts, unaccompanied, and for Lesley, the joy of singing in harmony with other women rekindled memories of Sweet Adelines. The "Nonsense" cast held a reunion immediately following the show in June, and Lesley suggested starting a Sweet Adelines chorus in Napier. The idea was received enthusiastically by 13 of the women present, and 10th July 1993 was the date set for the inaugural meeting.

Lesley became the Musical Director in the beginning because no one else knew anything about Barbershop singing, and has remained in that position for most of the past 11 years. The chorus was originally known as the Bay City Singers, but in 2002 their name changed



to the Art Deco City Chorus in order to identify more closely with the city of Napier. Art Deco has been a happy and popular chorus in their district, entertaining at many functions throughout the years.

One of the events which attracts thousands of visitors to Napier is the Art Deco Weekend, celebrating the architecture of the city. As this event has grown over the years, the chorus has become involved. They sing in the streets during the day on the Saturday; a quartet sings at restaurants on the Saturday evening; and another quartet sings at the Gatsby Picnic on the Sunday. Everyone dresses in the appropriate clothing, and they choose songs from the 1920s and 1930s – the chorus and audience have a great time.

So 2005 will see the end of Art Deco City Chorus. Members feel that they have had a lot of fun, and have given a great many people great entertainment for 11 years. Nothing lasts forever, however, and it is time for a change. Lesley says that she will be sad to see the

end of Art Deco but she is excited about the future. She hopes to be on the risers singing in harmony for many years to come.

## **TWIN CITY SOUNDS CHORUS**

On Thursday 27th September 1990, a small group of women gathered in the Hastings Baptist Church where the chorus of Twin City Sounds was born. Fourteen enthusiastic local singers with the careful guidance and encouragement of six Wairoa Chorus members began the long journey of building this chorus.

Present on that historic day were:

### *From Wairoa*

Kathy Tipoki (Director)  
Sue Perry (Regional Management Team)  
Claire Dickie (President)  
Fauna McNair  
Alison Curtis  
Jenny Rolfe

### *Local Attendees*

Catherine Barker  
Dorothy Bisley  
Colleen Cotter  
Janet Freeman  
Phylis Gammon  
Margaret Haliburton  
Lyn Hawkins  
Flur Hickey  
Peggy Hope  
Tui Martin  
Jacque Shimawski  
Lesley Stranding  
Anne Van den Berg  
Hine Waitere-Ang

The first six weeks of the chorus was directed by Margaret Haliburton (McAllister), an ex-Wairoa member, but soon Dorothy Bisley was persuaded to take the reins, and followed this path with dedication until 1998 when she “retired” to the risers. Karoline Roberts took over and remained as the Chorus Director up until the dissolving of Twin City Sounds in March 2005.

From this small beginning, and with the passage of 11 years, Twin City Sounds grew to be a strong proud “small Chorus”. This year of 2005, however, its members made a brave move and closed the doors to the past and moved forward to join the local sister chorus, Art Deco City, to form one large group – “Sounds of Hawkes Bay”. Although it has not been an easy step for either chorus to take, we knew that this joining of two small choruses had to be good for members as a whole as well as for the community of Hawkes Bay. From that very first meeting in 1990, it is interesting to note that two women remain involved today. Both are talented women who played a major role in the development of the two choruses in Hawkes Bay in those early days. They are Dorothy Bisley – former Musical Director of Twin City Sounds and now on the risers – and Lesley Stranding – former Musical Director of Art Deco City and now on the risers. Other women from the inaugural year still with the chorus are: Shirley Allen-Wallis, Helen Blake, Jane Fisher,



Sue Seawright, and, friend of the chorus, Shirley Johnston (Lepper).

Initially, the chosen name for the newly formed chorus was “Hawkes Bay Harmony” but this was found to have one more letter than was allowed by International so Twin City Sounds was the final decision. These first steps began a proud history of Community involvement, coaching and education, Competition, personal growth of members, and wonderful friendships.

Twin City Sounds Director, Karoline Roberts (1998-2005) came from the United States in 1998. She brought with her a wide background of musical experience, but Barbershop singing was a new field for her! She had previously worked with student and adult musicians in instrumental, choral and stage performance. As Musical Director, she took up the challenge to take the chorus forward. She became involved in Education through NZES seminars and Directors’ seminars, always making quality her aim. She saw competition as a valuable tool to learn and advance the skill level of the chorus. Karoline also believed that while bringing the art form to the public, it was always necessary to “have fun” as the basics were expanded into emotional and aural pictures. She takes the newly formed combined chorus into 2005/6.

### **Notable dates over the years:**

#### **1991**

- May: the first experience of members meeting with other Sweet Adelines for a workshop in Gisborne.
- August: Membership drive – guest night where 30+ women came through the door.
- November: Twin City Sounds hosted Directors/Presidents Seminar. The chorus was officially cleared to sing out. The first singout – the “Stall in the Mall” in Hastings.

#### **1992**

- First ever Convention/Competition, in Wellington, evaluation only. A total of 48 singouts this year. First entry into the local Performing Arts Competition.

#### **1993**

- Twin City Sounds charter documents signed.

#### **1996**

- The highlight of achievements for Twin City was the fourth placing overall and “Most Improved Chorus” at the annual national competition.

#### **2003**

- 10th Anniversary Party where a number of the inaugural members were present.

Every Kiwi Sweet Adeline knows that singing in a Sweet Adeline Chorus costs! So developing fine skills in applying for Grants, and innovations in fundraising are necessary member attributes! Twin City talents lay in such things as:

Sausage sizzles – raised \$1,000 ( a dollar at a time !).

Event catering – which utilized their fabulous culinary skills.



Stalls at the Fair – in particular, the “Pickle” team who became sought after for their jams and pickles.

The Mission – chorus members and families will never forget the 3 years of the “Mission” clean-up following the huge annual outdoor concert. This involved a 8-9 hour marathon effort starting at 6am – moving the thousands of bottles, retrieving of cell phones, expensive jewelry and clothing, etc.

Other fundraisers included an Abba night out, Jazz at the Tav luncheon, movie nights, fabulous fashion featuring Laurel Judd garments, carols on the double decker, Swim and Swing at Beaumont Pool.

It did not take long for Twin City Sounds to become known in the community as a “top” entertainment group. A wide variety of audiences have enjoyed the energy and enthusiasm of our sparkly group of women who always worked hard to produce a quality performance. Some of the singout features have been: Carols in the Park, Art Deco weekend, citizenship ceremonies, local business Street promotion, Christmas Festival of Lights, Country Garden Hospice sings, Matairiki Mid-winter festival, elderly fellowship sings, family celebrations, “A Bit of a Do in the Bay” (a sing featuring Dame Malvina Major), Harcourts Garden Party (in the rain!).

Twin City Sounds has played a part in International Sweet Adeline events where small groups have traveled to Conventions in New Orleans (1995 and 2005), Orlando (2000), and Portland (2002). They also participated in the first ever IES in 1999 in San Antonio, and “Voices Down Under” in Perth (2004). Several Twin City members have served on the Regional Management Team:-

Dorothy Bisley who served as the Panel Secretary at Competition in 1992, 1999, and 2000 (before the introduction of computerized assessment). She was also a member of the Steering Committee (under direction from International) to form a New Zealand Area Board – the equivalent of today’s RMT.

Louise Hamilton who has become an accomplished and recognized Arranger since starting in 1993. Her arrangements are widely used in both the national and international fields. Louise initiated the Arrangers Home Study Course in 1993 and is now an IMAP member having reached the Approval Level. She co-ordinates the NZRMAP and has a total of 27 members at present.

Julie Tairua – in the days before our present RMT, Julie served as the Membership Development Representative. After the change, she became Membership Marketing Co-ordinator and was recognized for the sterling work she did on behalf of all members.

Sue Seawright was appointed Editor of “Harmony Hi” in 1998. This was done rather unceremoniously but led to a most satisfying broadening of her horizons as she gained a greater understanding of the wider Sweet Adeline arena. This was evident in her many thought-provoking editorials. In 2004, regretfully “Harmony Hi” became part of “Add-a-line”, the new newsletter format.

The chorus was fortunate enough to be served by excellent Leaders over the years who sacrificed much to give time and energy to the cause. These include Sue Perry, Julie Tairua, Shirley Allen-Wallis, Jane Marshall, Sylvia McKenna, Bev Withers, and Helen Blake.

Education has always featured strongly on the Twin City calendar and they fondly remember their association with such talented women as Prue Blythe and Petra Markham, Nikki McCaughan, Barbara Letcher, Virginia Humphrey-Taylor, Karen Breidert, Cathy Rainey, Chris Noteware, Marg Zimmerman, and Jo Lund.

Throughout the years, members were encouraged to sing in Quartets. Various groups were formed including “In Moderation”, “Invoice”, “Deep Harmony”, and “In Accord”. For various reasons, it was not easy for a quartet to stay together for any length of time. It seems however that there are always a couple of singers who stay together as a core. Probably the most long associated group was “4 Sure” which competed three times at Competition, increasing their score each time. Three of this group were together for 8 years – they were Sue Seawright, Lana Morgan, and Jean Beaumont. Another group which stayed together was “Sound Proposal”. During its four years, this quartet, comprising Julie Tairua, Royala Goldfinch, Louise Hamilton, and Jane Fisher, competed at Convention, and later, Louise and Jane were joined by Bev Withers and Shirley Eddy to become “Emphasis” which still sings out today.

In 2000, a small committee of male and female singers met to set up a Young People in Harmony movement in Hawkes Bay and began working towards an annual Competition for Secondary Schools. From that time, along with the men from “Bay Harmony”, Twin City Sounds actively worked with students to promote young singers. Each year, competition numbers grew and, since the formation of the national Young Women in Harmony Chorus, they have been represented on the risers as well as in the administration of that group. Two very successful workshops were conducted and interest has continued to grow.

For some years, many people were of the view that having two Sweet Adeline choruses in Hawkes Bay spread membership and created competition that neither chorus needed, and that amalgamation would create a stronger group. Eventually in August 2004, initial discussion was held. It was a unanimous vote that a Steering Committee be set up to look into this possibility. The Committee was chaired by Sue Seawright and spent many long hours working on the process. Kate Veeder and Sue Rigby from RMT greatly assisted then and over the next seven months. On February 5th, 2005, a combined chorus meeting voted 100% approval in principle for consolidation. March 12th, 2005, saw the dissolution of Twin City Sounds and Art Deco choruses as separate entities and their consolidation as one.

Twin City Sounds has just seen the final curtain go down on their very last Convention! Wow! What a final bow! 38 singers from both Art Deco and Twin City competed together. After much hard work over many months, assisted by Jo Lund, their visiting American coach, they competed in the small chorus section and gained third place! Not only that, they were the Most Improved Chorus overall, with a difference of 52 points from 2004. Everyone was delighted and can now look forward to "Sounds of Hawkes Bay" with optimism.

Members of Twin City Sounds look forward to new horizons with this amalgamation. For some, it extends out to an exciting future of a bigger and more efficient Sweet Adeline group in Hawkes Bay. To others, however, it closes the book on 11 years of very special experiences in singing together, wonderful friendships and often, sheer hard work which made the Chorus what it was. To many, it was a lifeline. To others, it was an opportunity to grow and learn. And yet others, saw it as a chance to hone their administrative skills. But, most of all, it has been the caring and sharing and the lifelong friendships...The "Family".

## **SOUTHCITY SOUNDZ CHORUS**

(AKA SouthCity Harmony and Soundz of Counties!)

In 1990 a group of women met in a private home in Papatoetoe to bring Sweet Adelines to South Auckland, under the enthusiastic direction of Jan Smith. A very successful open night early in 1991 saw many new members become addicted to the barbershop sound. As the chorus grew, they moved to the Radio club Rooms, and five members traveled to Gisborne for the Queens Birthday weekend Convention to announce our presence to the Region. They continued to grow, and expanded into the Town Hall at Papatoetoe (where they actually had storage room for the risers).

The charter for SouthCity Harmony Chorus was presented by John Robertson, MP for Papakura and a trustee of the ASB Community Trust, at the Drury school hall. Members from other choruses celebrated with them, and "Export Quality", the first Regional Champion Quartet, entertained all that were there. This day and evening function meant that there was a lot of singing. Nobody wanted to go home and they were exhausted.

The chorus competed for the first time in 1992 and this was a great learning weekend in Wellington for the members.

In 1995, several members were part of the 167 strong NZ contingent who attended the 50th anniversary celebrations of Sweet Adelines in New Orleans. It was a tremendous thrill to be on stage at International Showcase and receive a standing ovation for their performance.

A small group of chorus members, with the assistance and under the guidance of Beverley Anne Nobbs, was responsible for organizing the Competitions held in Auckland in 1996. This was the last time that a single chorus was responsible for the organization of a National Convention. Imagine doing that now!

A new chorus was formed late in 1995 under the leadership of Adrienne O'Connor. It was based in Papakura, catering for the large number of members from that area. Soundz of Counties Chorus became well established and was known in the area for their singouts and the shows they produced.

Meanwhile, SouthCity Harmony Chorus moved their rehearsal venue to Pakuranga,



where they flourished under the leadership of Melody Lowe. Melody and Jocosa were members of the chorus from its earliest days. When Melody was appointed Director of Greater Auckland Chorus, we were fortunate that Jocosa was ready and willing to take over the Directorship of our chorus.

At this time, Adrienne felt that she had to resign as Director of Soundz of Counties because of a health problem, and discussions began between the two choruses as to whether they could amalgamate. Rehearsals were held on alternate weeks in Pakuranga and Pakuranga until a more central rehearsal space was found. The members of both choruses were unanimous in the decision to unite, and the resulting camaraderie and warmth has made SouthCity Soundz THE BEST !

The combined chorus has gone from strength to strength under Jocosa's inspiring leadership culminating in their victory in the Small Chorus category in Wellington this year. And we plan to do even better – we've only just begun!

## **TARANAKI HARMONY CHORUS**

Taranaki Harmony Chorus (then known as Energy City Chorus) chartered in 1998. However, it was in October 1994 that the first gathering of women, interested in women's barbershop, was held at the home of Fauna McNair. Fauna had moved to New Plymouth with her husband and missed her involvement in Sweet Adelines, having been a member of the Wairoa Chorus. Ten women attended that night and resolved to meet on a Monday evening to sing. That number became six, two of whom are still members of the chorus. Fauna arranged for a workshop to be held in May of 1995 to recruit more singers. "Copywrite" quartet of the King Country Chorus demonstrated the art of women's barbershop to a small group of women who had faced flooding in New Plymouth to get to the Senior Citizen's Hall. Those attending were able to forget the rain while listening to Faye Quin's humorous and informative address. Faye, together with her quartet "Copywrite", led the gathered group in a few tags and those ladies were hooked!

There was one brave man in attendance that afternoon – Ted Easter – who had sung barbershop for a number of years. He offered to help the group with some directing. They decided to meet on a Monday night, pay the sum of \$2 each per evening to cover expenses and decided to call themselves "Soundz Eazy".

The development of this fledgling chorus continued during 1995. Members attended the June Music School in Te Kuiti, a management team was formed and by the end of June, the group officially received prospective status from Sweet Adelines International. Two members attended the Presidents and Directors Seminar in August, and in September, a guest night was held for the public to hear "Soundz Eazy". With ongoing visits and support from members of King Country Chorus, who agreed to be "big sisters" in harmony, the chorus continued to progress and become more involved in Sweet Adelines in New Zealand. The year finished with what has become an annual event, Friends and Family Night.

In February 1996, the group officially became the Energy City Prospective Chorus. Education continued with the chorus traveling to Otorahanga for a coaching weekend, to Auckland to observe Women of Note Convention, participation in the International Presidents and Directors Seminar in New Plymouth and the Spring Music School in Te Kuiti. An RMT visit in February gave the chorus encouragement and permission to sing out,

which the group did on a number of occasions during the year, ending in the Friends and Family Night in December.

Progress continued during 1997, with a huge effort by the management team to gain full membership of Sweet Adelines International. It was 1998 when the chorus became chartered and the women celebrated in February 1999 with Charter Party Night by RMT members Kate Veeder, Julie Tairoa and Gail McKimm.

1999 was also the year of great change for the chorus. Energy City competed for the first time, in Wellington. There was high excitement as the members set off from New Plymouth. However, on the morning of competition, the Chorus Director, Ted, was taken seriously ill and was rushed to hospital. Team Leader, Maggie Malin and Fauna McNair knew that it was right that the chorus should continue and compete, so with Fauna stepping in



as Director, the team stepped out on stage and performed the best they could. Ted passed away the next day and the Chorus sang at his funeral and missed him greatly.

Pat Green stepped in as Director and the chorus continued to make progress. Jack Bourke, a young tenor who was living locally, also came in each Monday night and helped with vocal production. The year continued with fundraising and education ongoing, and in December, the chorus won an international prize for membership retention – a boost to morale and the bank balance.

In 2000, Gill Holmes, a keen participant in the original workshop in 1995, was appointed as the new Musical Director. She has continued to go from strength to strength.

The Chorus has competed in competitions in Auckland in 2002 and in Wellington in 2004 – each time improving their presentation, performance and grade. Members have come and gone and with a dedicated Management Team the chorus continues to learn and participate in this great organization of ours, learning the craft of women's barbershop. Fundraising is a priority to allow them to take advantage of educational opportunities

– and, above all – they have a lot of fun!

Their name was changed in 2004 to Taranaki Harmony Chorus to reflect the membership that is drawn from areas of Taranaki outside the city of New Plymouth.

## **WAIKATO RIVERTONES CHORUS**

It was October 1992 – Labour Weekend – Jenny Magee and her husband attended the Men’s Barbershop Convention in Wellington. While in Wellington, Jenny met Jill Rogers, Musical Director of the men’s barbershop chorus, “The Hamilton Hair Razors”. Jill asked Jenny if she could sing, and had she ever thought about setting up a women’s chorus? On her return to Hamilton, Jenny met with Judy McDonald to discuss setting up and organizing an Open Day. This was arranged for February 1993 to be held at the St. John’s Hall in Hukanui Road in Hamilton.

Some members of the Greater Auckland Women’s Barbershop Chorus came down to Hamilton, and gave a demonstration of their songs. Enthusiasm grew, and with the permission of Gerry Sullivan, Principal of Marion School, the first rehearsal was held in a small classroom at the school under the direction of their first Musical Director, Mary Heberley. A group of twenty women attended that first rehearsal. In mid-1993, the group known as “The Hamilton Harmonettes” was visited by officers of the Sweet Adelines organization, and was introduced to the idea of becoming a chartered chorus.

A new Musical Director, Carolyn Smith, was appointed and the chorus was renamed “The Waikato Rivertones”. The first singout for the chorus was for Women’s Suffrage Day, 19th September 1993, at the Hamilton Gardens Pavilion.

The chorus grew in leaps and bounds, and the first National Competitions were entered in 1994 by a quartet called “Soundzabound” made up of Jenny Shepherd, Jenny Magee, Ngaire Olesen and Barbara Smith.

In 1995, after 2 years as a prospective chorus, the chorus with 33 members was accepted into full membership of Sweet Adelines International, becoming chartered in May of that year. Numbers grew along with skills, confidence and understanding of the barbershop style in a growing repertoire. Many members enjoyed what was to be the first of many Sweet Adeline experiences. Two of the most important ones that year were attending the Queens Birthday Weekend Musical School and the opportunity of performing with the International Chorus – Water Wonderland from Michigan, USA. The chorus hosted their one and only New Zealand concert in Hamilton, organized in conjunction with the “King Country Chorus”.

The biggest challenge that the chorus took on in 1996, was participation in their first national convention during Queen’s Birthday weekend in Auckland (“Women of Note”). Under the direction of Carolyn Smith, the chorus gained 12th place singing “Alexander’s Ragtime Band” and “Sing Me to Sleep”. After this convention, there were many changes – sadly, their director resigned and they lost a few members. Not to be deterred, they were delighted when their assistant MD, Barbara Smith, stepped in and led the chorus with energy and commitment to move onward and upward. In August, with a chorus of 25 members, they had an Open Night. They were thrilled and overwhelmed to find the school hall packed with friends, family and visitors. Members of the Greater Auckland Chorus dazzled the audience with their singing, choreography and sparkly outfits. That didn’t seem to deter prospective members however as 30 new women returned the follow-

ing week to be a part of their very first Ready, Set, Grow Program. They wondered how long it would be before the risers needed extending – it was so exciting to have membership numbers more than doubled in one hit! The chorus continued to be challenged whilst growing and changing. That year, they attended 15 concerts and also the weddings of two chorus members – Julie Poot and Irene Bell. Sadly, these women are no longer members, and it was with sorrow also that they fare welled their choreographer, Joanne Phillips, at her funeral just a few short weeks before convention. The year continued with many coaching sessions, many new members passing their auditions, and work towards the Christmas season. 1996 concluded with the Christmas lights performance at the Mormon Temple in Temple View where a large and enthusiastic crowd enjoyed their entertainment package.

1997 was a year of consolidation. They began with another open night and through the Ready, Steady, Grow program introduced a further 13 members, taking them to 68 in number and going from strength to strength. This was also made possible with the guidance of their Co-Directors, Barbara Smith and Faye Quinn, both complimenting each other's styles magnificently. Two Assistant MDs were appointed and the Music Team grew even more with the increase of Section leaders. The year was filled with further coaching and performances which included a fun-filled day trip singing their way around the Coromandel as a build up before Convention 1998.

The Rivertones had an exciting build-up to the Capital Harmony Convention in 1998 in Wellington with a pre-competition concert emceed by Ray Columbus. The "Full House" sign was placed outside the Trustbank Theatre. "Rivertones with Ray" was a highly successful night thanks to the wonderful efforts of all chorus members. Ray topped the entertainment provided by our supporting artists – the Hamilton Hair Razors, quartet "Copyrite", and the McCaffrey School of Irish Dance. A fabulous evening indeed. To follow... in Wellington in 1998, under the co-directorship of Barbara Smith and Faye Quinn, the chorus gained sixth place after singing "Goody, Goody" and "Will It Be Me?". They were also thrilled to find that they had improved their score by 96 points, with a total of 487. But once again, they were sad to lose a director – Faye Quinn brought many skills she had developed over the years as a Sweet Adeline and her contribution to the chorus was most appreciated. They had visits from international coaches throughout the year including Dixie Dahkle, Beth Varsake, and Jim and Marcia Massey. None of those present will forget Jim Massey's new introduction to San Francisco Bay Blues, followed by that corresponding choreo!

1999 took the chorus to the "Century Singout" Convention, again in Wellington, with Barbara Smith as the Director. They came third in Division A, the Small Chorus Award, and gained fourth place overall. The year continued with many singouts, enhanced with the addition of the coaching received through international and regional visits. International coaches included Lynne Smith, Jo Kraut and Karen Breidert. In between coaching, there was their concert "The Best of Times" in October at the Trustbank Theatre. Guest artists included "City of Sails Chorus" from Auckland, internationally known opera singer Katherine Wiles, Drury Lane Dance Studio, and Young Women in Harmony from the Hamilton Girls High School senior choir. An excellent variety performance. The Rivertones also assisted with the promotion of Sweet Adelines in Rotorua, along with the Greater Auckland Chorus and Coastal Harmony Chorus.



The chorus opted not to attend the “Millenium Music” Convention 2000 in Christchurch but were represented by two quartets – “All 4 One” and “Chord Connection” – who were placed 12th and 15th respectively. Rivertones members attended and were most supportive. As a social event, they arranged an “Alter Ego” night where everyone let their hair down and dressed up – Marilyn Munro, Ella Fitzgerald and Superwoman, to name just a few. A very entertaining evening indeed. Apart from their singout engagements, they were involved in a number of events, all of which have increased their exposure to the public. These included taking part in the A Cappella Festival in Rotorua, a fundraising concert for “Perfect Timing”, and having a “spot” at the Hamilton Hair Razors’ (now Mighty River Harmony) annual concert. Many chorus members also received a special certificate for participating as an extra in the shooting of the American-made feature film, “Her Majesty”, in Cambridge... a long day for everyone involved but the film was critically acclaimed. Christmas 2000 saw the chorus inviting members of the public to join us for the Christmas season and they were delighted with the interest shown. Some of the women continued to attend in the New Year and soon became members. This was a fun way of undertaking a membership drive.

The chorus gave Convention 2000 a miss but in May 2001, at the “Tune ‘n Bloom” Convention in Christchurch, after much coaching and tuition from Cathy Rainey (Master Director, Perth Harmony) and Jamie Bull (motivational expert from Wellington), the Waikato Rivertones had their “One Moment in Time” and won the overall New Zealand Champion Chorus Competition and the Mid-Sized Chorus award (Division AA). That was an incredibly exciting day. As they were called to the stage to sing one more time, there were “false eyelashes” flying everywhere! The glue just couldn’t hold out against the tears of joy! One month after convention, they were privileged to host New Zealand’s first Education Symposium, over Queen’s Birthday weekend at the Waikato Diocesan School for Girls. And everyone will remember a cold weekend blanketed in fog! That was a nightmare for some travelers, but a very enjoyable educational opportunity for all who attended. Following their win was 18 months of intensive fundraising and grant applications to get them to the November 2002 International Convention in Nashville, Tennessee, where they represented New Zealand. Their fundraising activities were many and varied – 97 in total. To name just a few...sporty activities included standing on street corners directing marathon runners, putting up goal posts for a soccer sports day, and assisting in marshalling the World Cup Women’s Cycle Race; food-related activities included a Celebrity Breakfast with John Mitchell, an evening with Alison and Simon Holst, their own Food and Fashion Extravaganza featuring Caroline Eve Fashions, assembling pizzas, baking mini Christmas cakes, picking apples and creating their very own recipe book; other activities included a movie night, producing a chorus CD, “Money and The Law” night with financial advisor Muriel Dunn and lawyer Helen Monckton, a silent auction and stock takes. It was a lot of hard work for all but it consolidated this very friendly and kind-hearted group of women into keeping their one goal in mind – to experience their first International Convention together. Their Publicity person also made sure that the public knew of their excitement with regular media releases, radio interviews and advertising posters throughout the Waikato area. When all the fundraising was done, they sang their way to the U.S.A. – singing in buses, airports and airplanes, eventually arriving in Nashville after 26 hours non-stop traveling. The first night was a nightmare for some

– they had arranged to have 3 or 4 chorus members per room, but on arrival, found that some rooms only had one bed! This took a bit of sorting out. Daily rehearsals started on Monday morning and they were fully encouraged by Cathy Rainey and Barbara Letcher – what a wonderful combination. Most rehearsals saw us having visits from NZ RMT, International Faculty and Sweet Adelines attending the Convention. There was much swapping of badges and trinkets and stories along the way. The evening Showcase gave them their first view of the stadium, which could hold 23,000 people – a great night of entertainment for everyone. Competition day, Thursday, started at 5am with breakfast together at 6am. Then they continued preparing make-up, costumes, hair, nails and false eyelashes. They got together again for one last coaching session with Cathy Rainey and Barbara Letcher. While waiting for the bus to take them to the competition site, Sweet Adelines in the hotel requested a song – they chose “One Moment In Time”. On arrival at the stadium, they were warmly welcomed by our very own Elizabeth Lee, Events Coordinator for Region 35, who led them to the warm-up room, where they were able to continue primping and preening and vaselining their teeth. They were so fired up and Director Barbara Smith led them in singing “Straighten Up and Fly Right”. Then they walked the walk of champions to be met by International Headquarters staff friend, Lorraine Barrows. They could hear chanting while they were waiting, “Kiwi, Kiwi, Kiwi”, and the Waikato “Moo-Loo” song. What an encouragement that was for them. They felt really ready to go and do New Zealand proud. They were the opening act for the chorus competition and waited with energy and excitement for the announcement made by Emcee Marge Zimmerman who was dressed appropriately in a sparkly cowboy outfit – “We are ready for the first contestant. Please be seated. Representing Region 35, under the direction of Barbara Smith... THE WAIKATO RIVERTONES”. Huge applause erupted from the 8,000 strong audience encouraged further by our supporters and pulled the best out of us. They felt that they sang out of their skins and the response from the audience was exhilarating. From the very first note of their up-tune, Original Dixieland One-Step”, they could all feel the power of their connected energy and the surrounding sound. They felt like their six minutes was over much too soon. They came off the stage buzzing, knowing that they had sung their very best – Marge Zimmerman said “That was awesome”. From then on they were able to relax and thoroughly enjoy the very best of the International quartet and chorus performances. Later, they heard that their ballad, “If You Love Me, Really Love Me”, had produced an emotional response from many in the audience and even one of the judges. They even got a standing ovation. Their Regional Competition scores had led them to believe that they would come last, but when they got the results and started looking for their name at the bottom of the page at 33rd out of 33, they were delighted to find that they were not there – they placed 30th, having out-scored 3 choruses. All the hard work had paid off. They came home from their first international experience exhausted.

International Competitions was the highlight of 2002 and they received considerable support from family and friends. But there was some sadness – they were very sad to lose three previous chorus members to cancer: Betty Buchan, a teller of tales, poet, a beautiful bass, and their Wise Owl; Susan Brown, a real character, funny but oh so generous; and Kerri Buhla, one of their very early members, a beautiful young mother with an angelic voice and lovely personality.

What a year they had had! They had laughed together and cried together. Now they felt

they had new challenges to face and the expectation of new songs, but time for a well-earned rest first...or so they thought! They welcomed new members at an Open Night in mid-February 2003 and then on 3rd March, celebrated their tenth birthday. Guests included those who were instrumental in introducing Sweet Adelines to Hamilton, as well as many former members. All were treated to a nostalgic journey through Chorus history, including costumes, videos of early rehearsals and shows (scary!), and amusing anecdotes. The video of their Nashville performance followed by a live performance reminded members how far they had come under the guidance of Barbara Smith who so willingly shared her talents and skills with all. Celebrations over, it was time to knuckle down to their annual retreat in preparation for the "Sail 'n Song" Convention 2003 in Auckland, where they placed 2nd in Division AA and 3rd overall, and what a thrill for the chorus to hear Barbara Smith being announced as the recipient of the Spirit of Sweet Adeline Award at the Convention Dinner. At the end of April, the chorus was yet again thrilled to celebrate with Barbara Smith her selection as a Faculty Associate of Sweet Adelines International. A huge honour for Barbara personally and the chorus. A Family and Friends pre-competition concert was held at Southwell School in April providing an opportunity to perform their competition package – the Mighty River Harmony Chorus added to the entertainment. Further performances throughout the years included singing for the blind, retirement homes, participating in a fundraiser for abused children and singing to cancer society volunteers in recognition of their work, followed by the Christmas season. They were also invited to sing at the Men's National Barbershop Convention Opening Ceremony, firstly supporting the current Champion Men's Quartet "Phoenix Rising" in "Ten Feet off the Ground", and providing entertainment with their own bracket of songs. This year was the highlight of quartet "4th Avenue" – becoming regional champions – the Rivertones decided to assist in fundraising for them to attend the Phoenix International Convention 2003. They arranged performances at four Hamilton schools, and the culmination of the day was a combined concert with the Mighty River Harmony Chorus and quartets at Central Baptist Church. An Open Night was held in August 2003, gaining a few more members, followed by an October rehearsal interspersed with nostalgia when Ann Gooch visited for an evening of coaching. Interspersed throughout the evening were snippets from Ann about a very early visit when she came to New Zealand and made her way to Wairoa, Bay of Islands. Transport wasn't the same as it is today!

The year 2004 began in February with a weekend workshop for Choreographers and Section Leaders. Taranaki Harmony, Coastal Harmony and Thermaltones were invited to attend this workshop conducted by Sarah Rae and Barbara Smith. 53 women attended and the feedback on the success of the weekend was most encouraging. Voices rang at the "Let it Ring" Convention 2004 and this year they placed 2nd in Division AA and 4th overall. The year ended with the happy news of the imminent weddings of three members and a November rehearsal was dedicated to a rehearsal of our Brides-to-be: Barbara Gordon-Watkins, Tracy Napier and Linda Thompson. Both physical and vocal warm-ups had a wedding theme with many references to happy relationships and matrimony followed by the designing of a selection of wedding dresses for all three ladies using only newspaper and pins.

And 2005 began with the wedding of Linda Thompson at Waihi Beach where the whole chorus was invited. During the build-up towards Convention 2005, we wanted to add

depth and understanding to our performance of the ballad “The Bandstand in Central Park”. To aid this, members shared fond memories of attending performances played in a bandstand and being in an area with a bandstand with their loved ones. Combined with coaching weekends and performances, the chorus was able to perform this song in bandstands in Leamington (Cambridge), Hamilton Gardens, and Te Aroha, which also created much interest from the public encouraging further impressions for us and enjoyment of the sound produced under a bandstand. In March, the Waikato Rivertones turned 12 and currently has a strong membership of 65 very keen ladies. They were thrilled to have a Queen in their midst at their annual retreat – Queen of Harmony Sandy Robinson (Brava quartet and MD of Lions Gate Chorus, Canada). Further coaching was given by Master Directors Virginia Humphrey-Taylor, Cathy Rainey and Jamie Bull. “Harmony in Wellington” Convention 2005 saw them receiving 3rd place in the AA Division (mid-size chorus award) and 3rd place overall.

The Waikato Rivertones would like to give a heart-filled thank you to each and every family member and friend who have helped them achieving their goals to date, and to the members of the Mighty River Harmony Chorus who continue in mutual support of each other’s efforts as they share their love of this style of music.

They feel blessed to have retained the same director for the last 10 years. Barbara Smith has continued giving of herself over this time. Her constant commitment and dedication to the Waikato Rivertones and Sweet Adelines has been an inspiration to many and even though there have been changes in membership over this period, this has not stopped them continuing to have a very happy chorus for 10 years. Long may it continue, they say.

### *SWEET ADELINES*

*We are just ordinary women, but we do extraordinary things!  
and always remember  
If your dreams don’t scare you, they are not big enough!*

### **WELLINGTON CITY CHORUS**

The prospective Hutt Chorus began in 1987 and the prospective Wellington Chorus began in 1988 – they merged in 1990 to form Faultline, and then in 1993, the Wellingtones Chorus (later to become Capital Harmony Chorus) broke away with David Brooks as the Director. Tensions simmered beneath the surface – from January 1998 the Musical Director and President held diametrically opposing views on where the chorus should head, and over time this took its toll. The atmosphere after contest was not particularly good, and the Chorus’s new board sought to turn it around. On July 27th, they held a Chorus meeting where they announced a decision not to renew the Director’s contract. This came as a shock to many chorus members, who had been unaware of events behind the scenes. At this point, things moved quickly, and astonishingly.

Twelve chorus members felt strongly enough about the events that they sought to establish a new chapter with David Brooks as Director. Another group was very unhappy about the change but was willing to stay with the Wellingtones to keep the peace. A third group was in favour of finding a new director.

David felt ambivalent about becoming director of the new group and so, set some conditions by asking for the sort of chorus that would be too good an opportunity to miss – it would have to be a ‘competitive’ chorus, rehearse in central Wellington away from



the other chapters, have a strong and supportive environment, and would have to have enough singers to compete the following year. He also asked for a balance of ages so that any woman who came along would feel that she had a place; and a new audition for everyone. This is exactly what transpired! Much of the impetus for forming a new chorus had come from the newly formed quartet “Vibes”: Val Taylor (tenor), Bernadette Takacs (Lead), Eileen Gordon (bari) and Sfax Metera (bass). Within a few days, the nucleus of a fine group had emerged and met at Bernadette’s house on 10th August, 1998. That was a Wow! Moment, and from that instant Wellington City Chorus was on its way. Bernadette brought along two of her sisters and two of her daughters; Eileen and Lia (who had been a Wellingtons prospective member) brought friends from their singing classes; and Sfax brought friends from church. They watched a video of “Sunlight Chorus”, sang tags, and voice placed singers – essentially the same agenda as a guest evening in a membership drive. But personnel, energy, and singers’ ability were such that it was a membership night like no other. By the end of the evening the group had its first new quartet, composed of four young ‘newbies’ to barbershop – Erika and Claire Takacs, Sharon McCaw, and Lia Mapa – and huge enthusiasm to go ahead.

However, there was business to resolve with the Wellingtons. Julie Tairua and Kate Veeder from the Regional Management Team did an exceptional job, allowing a defusion of tensions that would otherwise have built up. First, the RMT insisted on the Wellingtons holding a second meeting as the first had not been conducted according to Standing Rules – provisions that the new board had not realized were there. At this meeting the chorus voted overwhelmingly in favour of renewing David’s contract as Director.

For a few days, David was torn. Should he accept the offer and continue directing the friends he had in the Wellingtons, or stay with the new group that had begun with such a Bang. He then realized that the decision was not his but that of the new group – could the two groups merge as one? The new group elected to say goodbye to the Wellingtons, and Wellington City Chorus was on its way.

Soon, there was an astonishing group that formed the core of the chorus’ distinctive energy, spirit and sound. They revelled in their diversity, not only in age, but in personalities and ethnic background: Maori, Tongan-Fijian, Cook Islands, Samoan, Niuean, Pitcairn, Chinese, Indian, Lebanese, Israeli, British, Irish, American, Latvian, Dutch... They had their quick wits, good voices, and, most important of all, a huge appetite for working hard at our music. They had a “secret ingredient” as well – Lloyd-Ellen Thomas, soon to be a Queen of Harmony with ‘Signature Sound’, and a section leader in ‘Pride of Baltimore Chorus’. Lloyd became David Brooks’ email mentor, following a posting on the Harmonet email discussion list in May 1998 about the rapid rise of ‘Pride of Baltimore’ – Wellington City Chorus shared the adventure. Most of the chorus’ development, philosophy, and repertoire – more than anyone could imagine – owes everything to those discussions. This chorus was Wellington’s template, more than any other, and their style is very reminiscent of David Brooks’ taste. More recently, Lloyd has coached and competed with the chorus.

Over the first months, they established some key patterns – craft, quartets, supper, time use, coaching, and contest philosophy. From the start, their key focus was the essence of barbershop – ringing chords, the excitement of tension and release. Craft work was the key, and they worked in a circle like a very large quartet, focusing on vowels and

tweaking each voice until that magic ping! appeared. The early rehearsal featured many tags, to get that barbershop “hit” and develop the craft, and today their repertoire has a strong “barbershop” feel. They established a quartet culture at their first rehearsal. They used singing in a quartet as a means of ensuring accuracy and confidence, in preference to riser taping, and tied quartet singing in with supper culture. Each week at 10pm they would have tea, coffee, and a luxurious supper, over which they socialised , and would give everyone a taste of informal quartet singing. Most of their quartets form during the social time as 10pm!

They avoided extra rehearsals as much as possible, believing that extras are often an energy-sapping substitute for work that could have been done at home. If they needed extras, they preferred to start early rather than setting aside another day.

Wellington City’s first coach has been their regular coach – Virginia Humphrey-Taylor. They suspect that she has seen more of them than any other chorus outside Christchurch. In 2000, they started flying her up after work one in every six Mondays, and in 2002, Virg directed the chorus at contest while David recovered from surgery.

The chorus is a contest-minded chorus, but in their preparation they focus on their own performance, measured by points rather than placement. When the score rises, the placement tends to improve too, but they avoid worrying about things beyond their control. Their aim on stage is to connect with the audience – to share their joy, and the gifts they have to present that are contained in the music. Wellington City finds this approach quite



liberating – far more relaxed than allowing that little voice inside to ask “am I doing it right?”

Their early progress was an eye-opener to David and other members of the chorus. They evaluated at contest after 8 months, and the following year, won Most Improved Chorus, and were one point away from being the winning chorus. In 2003, they scored 563, their third year as a B level chorus. The appetite for greater things took hold, but they felt that they needed to improve the way they operated. Ta’i George and her management team took to the task with earnestness, and set about developing their systems. 2004 saw a score of 598 - so near, but so far! 2005 has been The Year for Wellington City Chorus. They believe that if there is one thing that has got them over the magic 600 points, it has been that this year the music team has really begun to fly, including choreographer

Sheryl. They found that their strengths lay within. When their coach Carole Kirkpatrick had to pull out of their retreat with a week's notice, Lloyd agreed to come out at short notice. Chorus members felt that they had achieved their big moment on their own. "Even Time's" victory in the quartet contest was the icing on the cake - their perfect convention. 617 points - the highest score in the world by a mid-sized chorus in 2005. A 6 ½ year journey for Wellington City Chorus, 12 years for David, 18 years for those members present at the birth of Sweet Adelines in New Zealand. Their big moment, they feel, is built upon the success of others - Virge, Barbara Letcher, Cathy Rainey - who built from scratch. In New Zealand, they share coaches and help each other. It shows! In 1996, ten choruses scored below this years lowest score. Now, Region #35 can boast having several of the world's most improved choruses, and the Region's median score is the second highest in the world. Magic!

## **WHANGAREI HARMONY CHORUS**

Whangarei Harmony Chorus's beginnings were instigated by the woman who brought Sweet Adelines to New Zealand. Patti Cooke from the USA started the chorus in Wairoa, later moved to the Bay of Islands and got a great little chorus up and running in Paihia, and then got a great response to advertisements in Whangarei. An Open Night hosted by the Bay of Islands Chapter of Sweet Adelines International in 1992 resulted in 20 members forming the new chorus called "The Bellbirds", with Bev Brown and Kim Cairns as Musical Directors.

With a new name in 1993 - "Whangarei Harmony Chorus" - they hosted a Sing and Acquaintance Day with Bay of Island and Greater Auckland choruses. Their Assistant Director, Kim Cairns, attended the national workshop in Dunedin with Marge Zimmerman and Chris Noteware from the States as coaches. The chorus was visited on different occasions by Robyn Frew and Debbie Scott, Beverley Ann Nobbs, Joy Leonard, Lyn Cor and Patti Cooke as representatives of the New Zealand Faculty and New Zealand coaches, as well as Marge Zimmerman as visiting International Faculty Board member.

The chorus performed for the first time for evaluation as a prospective Sweet Adeline chorus in 1994, at the New Zealand area competitions at the Christchurch Convention Centre. Sixteen members performed "Goody Goody" and the Irish Blessing with Ed Hill, an experienced barbershopper, as Musical Director. Barbara Letcher, MD of Greater Auckland Chorus, was their visiting New Zealand coach this year, and Karen Breidert, their International one. Their first quartet, "Purple Patch", with Beth Miller as Tenor, Pamela Black as Lead, Leone Burgess as Baritone, and Colleen Cutts as Bass, enjoyed singing to friends and family informally.

In 1995, Pamela Black took over the Directorship. In spite of her contact with Sweet Adelines during a year spent in the USA, she felt very inexperienced and was grateful for the chorus's patience during her learning phase which, she feels, is ever ongoing as one never stops learning. This was the year that they chartered with Sweet Adelines International with 20 members. The chorus won the adult choir section at the Northland Performing Arts Society competitions, and "Razzamatazz" quartet won the small group section in this year as well. Their visiting International coaches included Jan Smith and Marilyn Weekes, and Maureen Brinzinski. 18 of the 22 members attended the 50th Anniversary of Sweet Adelines International in New Orleans and made up part of the New Zealand chorus of

157 members directed by Virginia Humphrey-Taylor in the World Wide Showcase. They joined with Auckland Sweet Adelines for a joint music school, were represented at the Presidents and Directors seminar and held their first chorus retreat at Pataua North.

The chorus went to competition in Auckland in 1996 and won the Small Chorus Award with 24 on stage. Again, they won the adult choir section of the Northland Performing Arts Society competitions, hosted a music school in Whangarei, and their leaders attended the Presidents and Directors seminars. Jan Smith and Marilyn Weekes were their coaches this year; Pamela Black (MD) and Kate Veeder attended International Convention, and Kate was appointed to the New Zealand Area Management Team in charge of Public Relations. The highlights of 1997 included sharing the bill at the Melbourne Chorus Show in Australia with International Queens of Harmony, "Showtime", and Christchurch City Chorus. The chorus presented their first public show at Tikipunga High School featuring the whole chorus, "Quarter to Four" quartet (Christien Oberholster tenor, Jan Hope lead, Sheryl Cumming baritone, Elizabeth Lee bass), and guest artists "Perfect Timing" (NZ area Champion quartet), a double quartet from the "City of Sails" men's' chorus in Auckland, and Marion Burns and Gary Bulliss on jazz fiddle and piano. Kate Veeder was appointed to the position of Regent for the NZ Area of Sweet Adelines International.

Whangarei Harmony enjoyed many further successes, not the least of which was their performance in 1998 where they achieved first place in the Small Chorus Award and The Most Improved Chorus and came into 5th place in the overall competition at Convention with a full attendance of 28 members on stage. That was a magical year!

The following year, 1999, they again came first in the Small Chorus section, and moved up to 3rd place overall in the competitions in Wellington. Other performances in 1999 included their "Crazy Love" show with guest artists "No Exception" (NZ quartet champion for that year), and going "on the road" to Dargaville Little Theatre where they appeared with local artists. They were coached in preparation for this by Virginia Humphrey-Taylor. They sang for a Black Tie dinner for the Workworth Rotary Club, and at the Basin City Pops, a free public concert presented at the Town Basin. This year was also memorable for them being awarded first place in the Small Chorus Membership Retention Award category of the Sweet Adeline International "Members Count" program – a prize of \$US2000. They found that "Guilt free membership" really paid off. All they asked was that members know their music, let other members know if they could not attend, be supportive of all chorus activities as much as possible, and be nice to each other! The chorus this year was able to fully fund their first International Faculty Coach, Lynnell Diamond – Certified Music Director and Approved Music Judge, a former member of the "Melodeers" and Musical Director of Zumbro Valley Chorus, from Rochester, Minnesota. They became the first Small Chorus to have two Certified Directors when Christien Oberholster (assistant MD) completed her Directors' Certification Programme. Karen Breidert presented Christien with her DCP pin at the Regional Membership weekend in Auckland, where Whangarei Harmony was the demonstration chorus for a class on ballad phrasing. Pamela Black (MD) was appointed as the DCP Coordinator for the NZ Region. The International Board introduced the Regional Management Team concept to regions around the world, and Kate Veeder continued her role as NZ Team Leader. She was also appointed to the Global Taskforce to report on ways to strengthen and extend Sweet Adelines around the world. Leone Burgess became the Finance Coordinator on the RMT, and Elizabeth Lee was Convention Transport Coordinator



for the third year running. Pamela Black, Kate Veeder and Leone Burgess attended the first IES in San Antonio, Texas.

The year 2000 brought more successes at Convention with first in the Small Chorus section, third overall, and the Most Improved Chorus again. Visiting coaches included Ann Gooch, Ron and Jo Black, Virginia Humphrey-Taylor, and Barbara Letcher. The chorus was again represented at both International Convention and IES. Chorus members filled three of the eight places on the RMT – Elizabeth Lee (Events Coordinator), Kate Veeder and Leone Burgess – a proud achievement for the chorus. There was no chorus show as such this year but they performed at Waipu for the Lions Club, as guest artists for John Boulter, star tenor of the former “Black and White Minstrels”, and his wife, Anna Dawson, at their show in Forum North, and at a host of other community singouts.

In the 2001 NZ competitions, Whangarei Harmony experienced a drop in score for the first time. The chorus was disappointed but took heart in the comments on the score sheets. Several long-standing members, including Kate and Leone, left this year, and they reflected long and hard how to grow their smaller membership. Cathy Rainey, Master Director of Perth Harmony Chorus, was their coach. The chorus had fewer public performances, however a smaller group, able to sing out during the day, entertained for many community groups and organizations. Members attended the first NZ Education Symposium in Hamilton where they were coached by International Faculty members Kathy Carmody, Tori Postma, Marge Bailey and Mary-Ellen Stepanich.

By 2002, the chorus had two competing quartets – “Occasional Jazz” (Camilla Samson,



tenor; Kim Cairns, lead; Jane Langford, baritone; and Anne [Sooty] Trapski, bass) and “Unforgettable” (Christien Oberholster, tenor; Jan Hope, lead; Sheree Imeson, baritone; Elizabeth Lee, bass).

Christien Oberholster swapped roles with Pamela Black, becoming the Musical Director. Whangarei’s 10th anniversary year was celebrated in fine style with their show “One Voice One Song” at Tikipunga High School followed by a party at the Denby Golf Club attended by many former members and friends. The chorus performed as guest artists



for the Whangarei Pipe and Brass Bands at their respective concerts. A small group of members performed at the Cameron Street Mall as part of the global Sing Out for Peace by Sweet Adelines all around the world to mark the first anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Sing Out For Peace was a celebration of life through music and was dedicated to the world and its people.

Pamela Black came up with the idea for Whangarei Harmony Chorus to produce a Northland Idol in 2004. Auditions were held in June, semi-finals and finals in July – the Final Night was fully booked and proved to be a great success.

The Chorus stood down from contest in 2005 for the first time since they chartered, however 17 members attended the Convention held Wellington and two quartets – “Unforgettable” and “Total Addiction” (Dorothy Koops, tenor; Donna Finlayson, lead; Jane Langford, baritone; Sheryl West, bass) – participated in the quartet contest. Members were able to observe the rest of the Region’s standards at competition level, as well as bring back knowledge from education classes. The standard has certainly increased and the chorus is looking forward to the challenge of the contest stage again in 2006. One of the highlights of 2005 was when 15 members joined forces with other NZ Sweet Adelines to represent New Zealand in the “Voices Down Under” Barbershop Festival in Perth, Australia, as “He Tangata Chorus” under the Directorship of Barbara Letcher. Whilst “He Tangata” sang Poi E, members of Whangarei Harmony Chorus exhibited their skills in using the poi – you could have heard a pin drop as the poi were flying! It was a proud moment for Whangarei under the patient coaching of member Te Aurere Beazley.

## **YOUNG WOMEN IN HARMONY**

By Melina Perry.

I wanted to write an article that celebrates and talks about the success of the Young Women in Harmony programme in New Zealand and how it has helped me in the journey from a high school singer to a Sweet Adeline. Without the Young Women in Harmony programme I literally wouldn’t be where I am today.

I was first introduced to the Young Women in Harmony programme when I was 15. I auditioned for the Hamilton Girls’ High School Barbershop Chorus called the “UpTown Girls”, which was directed by Barbara Smith (NZ Coordinator of YWIH) and got in. Little did I know how this would change my life. It was a great introduction to a form of singing that I knew nothing about. I have always loved to sing and I never imagined that I would become as involved in it as I am today.

I began my first years of barbershop singing in 3 different quartets and entering the YWIH competitions, for both quartet and chorus. I sang Lead, Bari and Bass in each of my quartets as well as in the chorus. As I entered the competitions each year I became more and more confident and was able to challenge myself by changing voice parts.

The highlight of my time at high school, was traveling to Christchurch with the “Up-Town Girls” and winning the National competitions in 2001. This was the same year that I joined the Waikato Rivertones and became their youngest member at age 17. After a couple of months learning the competition package and all the choreo, I traveled to Christchurch again to compete with the Rivertones in my first ever Sweet Adelines Convention. This was my first taste of a Sweet Adelines event, and I was absolutely blown away, especially because this was the year that the Rivertones won first place. Previously

having known nothing about barbershop or the Sweet Adelines organization I was totally amazed that New Zealand was so involved in this craft, and I became totally hooked! The experience of being on stage was indescribable and to actually be a member of the winning chorus was such a thrill. When standing on the stage with a gold medal around my neck I suddenly realized that I had found my passion in life, as well as making so many wonderful friends.

Traveling to Nashville in November 2002 to compete in the International Sweet Adelines Competition was a dream come true. I grew closer and closer to my friends in the Rivertones and I learnt so much – the competition was absolutely amazing and to be a part of all that was something I will never forget. I know that I am so lucky to have been there and experienced all that when I was only 19 – I know that if I set my sights high that I will definitely get back to the international stage.

Since joining the Rivertones four years ago I have competed in many more Sweet Adeline competitions and have competed in my fourth YWIH quartet which won the under 25 section of the National Competitions in 2003. I was fortunate to be a member of the inaugural 2003 NZ National YWIH chorus and was part of the chorus again in 2004. I am also a member of the newly formed Waikato Regional YWIH Chorus.

I am so grateful to Barbara Smith and the Waikato Rivertones for introducing me to the YWIH program and to Sweet Adelines! I really feel that YWIH program gave me the perfect introduction to singing and learning about four-part harmony. It also helped to transform me from a person who loved to sing, to a Sweet Adeline who lives for barbershop. My six year journey from a beginner to a more experienced singer has been a very enjoyable experience and I am so thrilled that I was introduced to barbershop at such a young age. The YWIH program has helped me to learn the skills needed to sing barbershop. It has taught me the basics in music theory and most of all has given me the confidence to be a performer. I have many great moments to be proud of and many great memories of my first years of being a Sweet Adeline. I feel that I have come such a long way so far and am really looking forward to all the years I have ahead of me where I can become even more involved in this wonderful organization.

My next big dream is to attend the IES and watch the rising star competitions; I would also love to be a part of the YWIH festival at an International Convention. And then, after that ... who knows, become a queen of harmony, an international champion??? My sights are set, and I know I will be a Sweet Adeline forever!!!

***Post Script from Pam Russell, Team Coordinator, Waikato Rivertones:***

*At the Waikato Rivertones AGM in March 2005, Melina Perry won our Chorus Award. This is given to the member, who in the opinion of the Management Team, has made the best contribution to the Chorus in the preceding year. The choice of Melina was a very popular decision and our members appreciate her huge enthusiasm and contribution to chorus life. As well, Melina has used her skills to twice win the annual competition for designing the Convention badge.*

## AREA / REGIONAL MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBERS

YEAR	POSITION	NAME	CHORUS
1995	Regent	Alison Hughes	King Country
	Director of Musical Activities	Beverley-Anne Nobbs	Greater Auckland
		Debbie Scott	Christchurch City
		Faye Quinn	King Country
	Membership/Development Representative	Faye Quinn	King Country
	Public Relations Chair	Betty Cathro	
	Finance	Joy Leonard	Greater Auckland
	Treasurer	Evelyn Butler	
	Regional Steering Committee	Noeline Blackler	
1996	Finance	Melvena White	Christchurch City
	Public Relations Chair Steering Committee	Kate Veeder	Whangarei Harmony
	Membership Development	Gael McKimm	Coastal Harmony
	Standing Rules	Mabel Knight	Christchurch City
1997	Secretary	Jenny Hassell	Christchurch City
	Public Relations	Debbie Johnstone	Greater Auckland
1998	Director of Musical Activities	Barbara Smith	Waikato Rivertones
	Membership/Marketing	Julie Tairua	Twin City Sounds
1999	Education Coordinator	Virginia Humphrey-Taylor	Christchurch City
	Finance Coordinator	Leone Burgess	Whangarei
	Director Coordinator	Barbara Letcher	Greater Auckland
	Chapter Coordinator	Nancy Boyes	Christchurch City
2000	Events Coordinator	Elizabeth Lee	Whangarei
2001	Team Coordinator	Eileen Gordon	Wellington City
	Finance Coordinator	Maggie McFarlane	Marlborough
	Comm/Technology Coordinator	Leigh Whitelaw	Faultline
2002	Chapter Coordinator	Margaret Thomas	Greater Auckland
2003	Director Coordinator	Angela Blank	Christchurch City
	Comm/Technology Coordinator	Judith Eeles	Greater Auckland
	Finance Coordinator	Inga Cotton	Nelson Bays
2004	Education Coordinator	Raewyn Birss	Foveaux
	Chapter Coordinator	Sue Rigby	Faultline
2005	Finance Coordinator	Trish Batchelor	Christchurch City

## ***About the Regional Management Team:***

When Sweet Adelines first started in New Zealand twenty years ago, it was administered by an Area Management Team.

Sweet Adelines International decided that a new concept of team management would be introduced, and, after consultation with Areas/Regions around the world, the Regional Management Teams were introduced. Consensus decision making would be the order of the day.

In August 1997, New Zealand's "Draft" Standing Rules were sent to International for approval and we became a region in 1998.

Regional Management Teams now consist of:

- Team Co-ordinator,
- Finance Co-ordinator,
- Education Co-ordinator,
- Events Co-ordinator,
- Membership/Marketing Co-ordinator,
- Chapter Co-ordinator,
- Director Co-ordinator,
- Communications/Technology Co-ordinator.

Our first Communications/Technology Co-ordinator stated in her Add-a-line issue after becoming a Region that: "The RMT is like a new pair of glasses – we are advised that we need them - they are designed to fit our specific requirements – and we trust that they will improve our vision.

## ***Region #35 Education Scholarship.***

Each year, members of Sweet Adelines Region #35 have the opportunity to apply for a Scholarship to further their education in barbershop style music. The scholarship is valued at \$1500 and the recipient spends it on education workshops that will further themselves individually and the region. They are expected to present a class on what they have learnt at the following Regional event.

Each year the applications are viewed and voted on by the previous recipients.

Those who have received the scholarship to the present year are:-

- \* Prue Blythe
- \* Melody Lowe
- \* Dianne Bennett
- \* Sarah Rae
- \* Carolyn Currington

*All recipients have used their Scholarship to attend overseas training at International Education Symposium.*

## **Communicating to our members.**

It has always been very important to communicate with our members.

For many years we have been fortunate to have some dedicated members who did this on behalf of the Area/Regional Management Team.

The first publication of information to members on a regular basis was the Harmony Hi Newsletter. We can thank Sally Willmott who was a member of the Greater Auckland Chorus; Sylvia McKenna and Sue Seawright, members of Twin City Sounds, for producing this newsletter with the help of many contributions from members over the years.

Two years ago it was decided by the Regional Management Team that the Harmony Hi and Add-a-line Newsletters should be amalgamated so that all information, plus members' contributions, could be combined in one publication.

The very first Add-a-line was sent out in August 1999. The purpose of the Add-a-line was to distribute information from the Regional Management Team to members. It always includes a Regional Calendar of events, the Regional Management Team members contact details, chorus contacts, and regular features focusing on directors, "Sound Advice", information on membership issues, Regional library, competition results with photographs, and of course, members' contributions which always add interesting reading.

**The website** was first developed by Julia Hall who was a member of Soundz of Counties Chorus. In this day and age the majority of people expect to be able to find the information they require electronically. This was an important big step that the Regional Management Team made.

When Julia's life became so busy with work and family, someone else was sought to take over and develop the site even further. There was discovered in our own ranks a member who was a website developer. Jan Malone from the Whangarei Chorus has developed a wonderful site and it has proved to be so popular. Features such as education events, downloadable forms, New Zealand-grown coaches, chorus and quartet contacts, calendar of events and much more can be accessed.

The website statistics can be viewed and indicate that this site is accessed regularly by Region #35 members and that there are also many hits from overseas.

The Regional Management Team wishes to thank all these people who have contributed to the success of RMT communication to members.



# REGION #35 CONVENTION RESULTS (courtesy of David Brooks)

	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
CHORUS 1st	Christchurch City 535 pts	Christchurch City 584 pts	Christchurch City 555 pts	Greater Auckland 540 pts	Christchurch City 616 pts	Greater Auckland 585 pts	Christchurch City 606 pts	Waikato Rivertones 547 pts	Greater Auckland 605 pts	Christchurch City 599 pts	Greater Auckland 618 pts	Wellington City 617 pts
CHORUS 2nd	Greater Auckland 500 pts	Greater Auckland 526 pts	Greater Auckland 518 pts	Dunedin Harmony 487 pts	Greater Auckland 577 pts	Faultline 522 pts	Faultline 545 pts	Wellington City 546 pts	Faultline 544 pts	Wellington City 563 pts	Wellington City 598 pts	Faultline 587 pts
CHORUS 3rd	Wellington 455 pts	Wellington 499 pts	SouthCity Harmony 488 pts	Faultline 481 pts	Dunedin Harmony 528 pts	Whangarei Harmony 476 pts	Whangarei Harmony 528 pts	Faultline 530 pts	Wellington City 544 pts	Waikato Rivertones 534 pts	Faultline 559 pts	Waikato Rivertones 581 pts
CHORUS 4th	Eastlands 422 pts	Dunedin Harmony 493 pts	Dunedin Harmony 434 pts	Twin City Sounds 410 pts	Faultline 519 pts	Waikato Rivertones 462 pts	Wellington City 491 pts	Dunedin Harmony 506 pts	SouthCity Harmony 460 pts	Whangarei Harmony 477 pts	Waikato Rivertones 556 pts	SouthCity Soundz 546 pts
CHORUS 5th		South City Harmony 454 pts	Faultline 418 pts	Sounds of Picton 404 pts	Whangarei Harmony 498 pts	Nelson City 444 pts	Dunedin Harmony 475 pts	Whangarei Harmony 501 pts	Twin City Sounds 453 pts	Foveaux Harmony 461 pts	SouthCity Harmony 533 pts	Rhythm of Canterbury 522 pts

1st small			King Country 406 pts	Whangarei Harmony (<21) 394	Whangarei Harmony (28)	Faultline (40)	Whangarei Harmony	Wellington City (34)	Faultline (40)	Whangarei Harmony (53)	Faultline (37)	SouthCity Soundz (40)
2nd small						Whangarei Harmony (c30)	Wellington City (34)	Dunedin Harmony (29)	SouthCity Harmony (27)	Foveaux Harmony (33)	SouthCity Harmony (39)	Rhythm of Canterbury (21)
3rd small						Waikato Rivertones (c40)	Dunedin Harmony	Whangarei Harmony (25)	Twin City Sounds (29)	Coastal Harmony (24)	Dunedin Harmony (23)	Twin City Sounds (37)

1st midsize							Faultline (40s)	Waikato Rivertones (43)	Wellington City (43)	Wellington City (49)	Wellington City (48)	Wellington City (60)
2nd midsize							Nelson City (40s)	Faultline (47)		Waikato Rivertones (51)	Waikato Rivertones (56)	Faultline (44)
3rd midsize												Waikato Rivertones (63)

Most Improved Chorus	6			Twin City Sounds (+85)	Whangarei Harmony (+102)	Nelson City (+44)	Whangarei H, Marlborough H (+52)	Wellington City (+55)	SouthCity Harmony (+116)	Whangarei Harmony (+45)	SouthCity Harmony (+116)	Twin City Sounds (+52)
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QUARTET 1st	Export Quality (1,2,3,4) 576 pts	Perfect Timing (5,6,7,8) 579 pts	Jazz Talk (9,10,11,12) 511 pts	Perfect Timing (5,6,7,8) 508 pts	Perfect Timing (5,6,7,8) 567 pts	No Exception (13,14,15,16) 531	Perfect Timing (5,6,17,8) 584 pts	Perfect Timing (5,6,17,12) 591 pts	Perfect Timing (5,6,17,12) 592 pts	4th Avenue (18,19,20,21) 602 pts	Perfect Timing (1,6,11,12) 594 pts	Even Time (22,23,24,25) 575 pts
QUARTET 2nd	Positive Image 535 pts	Export Quality 545 pts	Vocal Affair 510 pts	Copyrite (18,20,21) 500 pts	Copyrite (18,20,21) 482 pts	Fascinatin' Jazz (11,12) 518 pts	4th Avenue (18,19,20,21) 547 pts	4th Avenue (18,19,20,21) 545 pts	4th Avenue (18,19,20,21) 561 pts	Perfect Timing (1,6,17,12) 581 pts	Hot Ash 570 pts	Perfect Timing (1,6,11,12) 564 pts
QUARTET 3rd	Velvet Touch 467 pts	Sneak Preview 519 pts	Perfect Timing (5,6,7,8) 502 pts	Jazz Talk (9,10,11,12) 486 pts	Jazz Magic (11,12) 482pts	Aristocats 499 pts	In Full Swing 502 pts	Something Else (14,8) 517 pts	Something Else (14,8) 544 pts	Something Else (14,8) 557 pts	Even Time (22,23,24,25) 539 pts	Hot Ash 530 pts
QUARTET 4th	Bedazzled 442 pts	Vocal Affair 509 pts	Canz 480 pts	Southern Lights 454 pts	Tall Order (17) 480 pts	Four Gone Conclusion 488 pts	Ringinz (12) 486	Idolizin' Jazz 478 pts	Golden Souz 507 pts	Idolizin' Jazz 506 pts	Java 514 pts	Swing 'n' Mischief 530 pts
QUARTET 5th	The Curates Egg 418 pts	Kiwi Magic 485 pts	Copyrite 479 pts	Tall Order (17)	Arist 475	Order its	Four Gone Conclusion 470 pts	No Boys Allowed 465 pts	Frenzy 467 pts	Java 501 pts	Audacity 511 pts	Audacity 529 pts

## MEMBERS OF THE BLUE RIBBON CHORUS

- |    |                          |    |                   |
|----|--------------------------|----|-------------------|
| 1  | Patti Cooke              | 13 | Jackie Bish       |
| 2  | Jan Smith                | 14 | Margaret Thomas   |
| 3  | Chris Reynolds           | 15 | Raewyn Hawksworth |
| 4  | Barbara Letcher          | 16 | Beverley Kentwell |
| 5  | Dina Wickers             | 17 | Sharon Wilkins    |
| 6  | Toni Griffin             | 18 | Fiona Bevege      |
| 7  | Loro Shandler            | 19 | Jill Rodgers      |
| 8  | Colleen Ashworth         | 20 | Helen Symonds     |
| 9  | Fiona Gray               | 21 | Roey Wyeth        |
| 10 | Leigh Smith              | 22 | Liz Clark         |
| 11 | Sue Davis                | 23 | Clare Takacs      |
| 12 | Virginia Humphrey-Taylor | 24 | Frances Williams  |
|    |                          | 25 | Henrietta Hunkin  |

# REGION #35 SCORES 1994-2005 (courtesy of David Brooks)

CHORUS NAME	CHORUS LOCATION	1994	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	TOP SCORE	CURRENT DIRECTOR
		CHC	AKI	WLG	WLG	CHC	CHC	AKI	AKI	WLG	WLG		
GREATER AUCKLAND	Auckland	518	540	577	585			605		618		618	Melody Lowe
WELLINGTON CITY	Wellington					491	546	544	563	598	617	617	David Brooks
CHRISTCHURCH CITY	Christchurch	555		616		606			599			616	Virginia Humphrey-Taylor
FAULTLINE	Wellington	418	481	519	522	545	530	544		559	587	587	Carolyn Currington
WAIKATO RIVERTONES	Hamilton		391	487	462		547		534	556	581	581	Barbara Smith
SOUTHCITY SOUNDZ <i>(formerly SouthCity Harmony)</i>	Auckland	488	398	356			344	460	417	533	546	546	Jocosa Lowe
WHANGAREI HARMONY	Whangarei		394	498	476	528	501	432	477	485		528	Christien Oberholster
DUNEDIN	Dunedin	434	487	526		475	506		445	491		526	Traci Voss
RHYTHM OF CANTERBURY	Christchurch										522	522	Rosemary France
TWIN CITY SOUNDS <i>(to be Hawkes Bay Harmony)</i>	Hastings	325	410	348			484	453		458	510	510	Karoline Roberts
FOVEAUX HARMONY	Invercargill			353	393	398	424		461	482		482	Sarah Rae
COASTAL HARMONY	Tauranga		402	401	407		401	413	449	469		469	Jenny Shepherd
NELSON BAYS HARMONY <i>(formerly Nelson City)</i>	Nelson		336	400	444	458	457		405		438	458	Janet Rowland
ART DECO CITY SINGERS <i>(formerly Bay City Singers)</i>	Napier			404		371		447		420		447	nearly defunct- merger <i>(Hawkes Bay H.)</i>
CAPITAL HARMONY <i>(formerly Wellingtones)</i>	Wellington		397	443	386			405			416	443	Joanne Oliver
MARLBOROUGH HARMONY <i>(formerly Sounds of District)</i>	Blenheim	346	404	402	375	427	402			436		436	defunct
TARANAKI HARMONY <i>(formerly Energy City)</i>	New Plymouth				290			348		427	425	427	Gill Holmes
CORO A CAPPELLA	Auckland									417		417	Barbara Letcher
SOUNDZ OF COUNTIES	Papakura			398	410	399		369	400			410	defunct-merger <i>(SouthCity Soundz)</i>
KING COUNTRY	Te Kuiti	406	340	338								406	defunct
HOOKED ON HARMONY <i>(formerly Bay of Islands Harmony)</i>	Paihia		351									351	defunct
THERMAL TONES	Rotorua								349			349	defunct
SOUTH IN HARMONY	Balclutha											0	defunct

note: a chorus in GISBORNE chartered and became defunct in 2002 or early 2003; I'm not sure if the chorus in Timaru ever chartered

## LEVELS

Other cell colours:  
 Green = not yet chartered  
 White = didn't compete  
 yellow = disbanded

	ave.	total
A+	94	752
A	86	688
A-	80	640
B+	74	592
B	66	528
B-	60	480
C+	54	432
C	46	368
C-	40	320
D+	34	272

**With Grateful Thanks to ...**

*Lesley Standring*

*Wendy Falconer*

*Jo Rusk*

*Rebecca Llewellyn*

*Mabel Knight*

*Fauna McNair*

*Winsome Simmons*

*Judy Cunningham*

*Natalie Sullivan*

*Shirley Eddy*

*Sandi Adams*

*Christine Godfrey*

*Eileen Gordon*

*Pam Russell*

*Ilka Pelzer*

*Ta'i George*

*Val Rippey*

*Melina Perry*

*Judith Teles*

*Elizabeth Lee*

*Bridget Byrne*

*David Brooks*

*Jan Hope*

*Rosemary France*

*Barbara Letcher*

*Judy Chan*

*PRINT CENTRAL, Invercargill*

*Linda Edge*

*Justin Reid*

*Raewyn Birss*

*Sue Rigby*

*Jo Ellis*

*Göran Widfeldt*

*COLLEEN PHOTOGRAPHY*

*Nicky McCaughan*

*Diane Huber*

*...and all of you Sweet Adelines of Region 35 who  
have kept singing for 20 years!*

*Pat Reid, EDITOR*

## **Anecdotes...**

*...from Barbara Letcher:* “Export Quality”, NZ’s first quartet to sing at International in 1990, was asked to sing at a Returned Servicemen’s Association and arrived a little late – unable to find our way to the performance hall. We asked a man outside in the carpark, and he said ‘This way’, pointed vaguely and started walking. We followed behind through corridors and ended up at the door of the Mens’ toilet which he entered without a look behind!!!

*...from Judy Chan:* Sue Roberts was doing a choreography move and one of her legs landed in thin air. Only quick thinking by stepping onto the top of an adjacent piano saved her from a tumble off the top of the risers. The show carried on without a hitch.

Singouts at old folks’ homes brings its share of problems, laughs and rewards. The oldies usually love our singing, so much so that they will sing along with us albeit at different pitches and timing. It is always lovely to see that our songs bring back lost memories to these old dears. However we did sing to a disorientated fellow who kept shouting out “Shut up” throughout our performance.

Colleen Troup was directing the Bay of Islands Chorus at an old folks’ home. One old chap close by kept pinching her bottom and he followed her while she tried to scoot further away whilst directing.

Then, the recent singout at another old folks’ home with Sharon Connor directing – she had serious worries about an old chap who was making a lot of gurgling sounds and the fell suddenly silent. She wondered if the staff should check on him to see if he was still breathing. She decided the show must go on.

Costumes can be problematical. In the days when Greater Auckland had a blue dress with green seaweed-like cluster on one shoulder and home made dangly earrings, there was a film crew filming the chorus. Diana Maher was getting right into the choreography when her earring got caught in the seaweed tassles and refused to budge. Short of tearing her earlobe off, which seemed more likely to give than the earring or the dress, she was reduced to singing the whole song with her head on a 45 degree angle.

A Greater Auckland competitor had to use the ‘loo’ urgently while in the traffic pattern and dashed back just in time to walk on stage. Luckily her riser mate from behind happened to look down to see a large bottom fully exposed in its panty-hosed glory and managed to pull the tucked in skirt out as the lady put her first foot onto the stage.

In a Greater Auckland show many moons ago. The front row had to use top hats and canes for one number. When it was time to retrieve the canes from under risers, there was a moment of panic and “\*\*\*\*\*@@@###\*\*\*\*\*” was heard only by those close to chorus members. It was only afterwards when an audience member asked “Why did Jan Hart only have a black cane when the rest of the front row had silver ones?” did we realize what had happened. When Jan could not find her cane, she danced the whole routine with an imaginary one and no one noticed the omission as the optical illusion made the audience see a black one.

We Sweet Adelines are resilient, or is it because we are women? While dressing to go on the International stage, the power went from the motel where Greater Auckland was staying. Hordes of women came out of their rooms onto the parking lot to do their make-up in the light. They provided a wonderful side show to the American public. Nothing fazed

these women.

We Sweet Adelines face hazards well too. There was a time when Greater Auckland Chorus went carol singing at the multi-storeyed National Women's Hospital, carrying candles for added ambience. Melody Lowe's carefully coiffured hair came in contact with a candle flame, whereupon it ignited. Anne Sturgeon standing right next to her had visions of a towering inferno and had no alternative but to smacking her around the head to extinguish the fire. Little did she know that she was slapping around the future director of Greater Auckland Chorus. She says that she did NOT enjoy that experience!

At a recent Greater Auckland weekend rehearsal, a person who shall remain nameless, was appointed as Assistant MC at lunchtime. By the time she came to do her lines again, she thought she had the script sussed. The written words were: "...and she is driving the men WILD!" – unfortunately she brought the house down by saying these immortal words: "...And she is DOING the men wild." She is now holding the record for the shortest tenured MC in Greater Auckland history.

*...from David Brooks: "Your Regional Champions, with a score of six hundred and..."* SCREAM!!!! For Wellington City Chorus, 2005, the sweetest of moments. An instant of pure joy, in which hugs came in such abundance that one tuxedo jacket (mine) ended up with a drycleaner's nightmare of stage makeup. A sense of shared joy. In the vastness of the Town Hall it seemed that everyone was imploring the judges to score more above 600 points, and were just as delighted as ourselves when it happened. All weekend, Sweet Adelines the length of New Zealand had willed us on, assuring us that it was 'our year'. With the convention in our own city, just about everyone who had played a part in our journey was present to share the moment, and for those further afield in Norway, Scotland or North America, cell phones performed their magic.

On stage, our 60 different members had arrived by different journeys. One had been a Sweet Adeline since the 1970s, five had started in the 1980s, and four had been charter members of all three Wellington chapters. Forty-five had started their Sweet Adeline 'careers' with Wellington City Chorus. Fourteen were singing at their first convention, holding the rest of us in awe at their achievement at becoming 600+ level singers in less than a year – from the photos, no one could tell who were the new members!

Standing there on stage, I re-lived my own twelve years with Sweet Adelines, and all that had built towards this moment. Five years with Wellingtones Chorus. That first night back in '93 – the dream shared by Eve and co. who led the chorus and got me thoroughly addicted. The excitement of learning a new style from scratch – I'd say we were D+ level those first few weeks! Picking up every morsel possible at educational events, but-tonholing Barbara Letcher in particular. Cathy Rainey's coaching, the key to propelling us forward. Those moments at retreats, including the times when a large group of women forgot there was one man in the room! The inspiration of seeing Christchurch City Chorus on stage for the first time.

There's another side, that brings out the thought "we know that feeling!" when we hear about it from small choruses today. The times when we didn't have all four voice parts. The devastating dose of reality brought by our first score sheets; it's only now that we can look back and see that 397 points was actually a great achievement! The frustration of a chorus stalwart when her daughter earned a 1st place medal after only a few months with Christchurch City, who seemed so unattainably far beyond our own small chorus.



...*from Jo Ellis*: One of the highlights of New Zealand Young Women in Harmony history was when “Backchat”, 2001 YWIH winning quartet, from Cashmere High School flew to San Antonio, Texas, to participate in the International Rising Star Competition, putting New Zealand well and truly on the barbershop map! Not only did they Wow! the audience and receive standing ovations, but they won the contest! They were then invited back to perform in front of 8,000 people in Portland at the 2001 International Convention. Topping off their trip was a performance with “The Beach Boys” in Los Angeles on the way home!!

## **Autographs:**

## **More Autographs:**