

The Newyorker Times

The newsletter of Poughkeepsie, New York, Chapter, SPEBSQSA Inc.



New Series, Volume 4
Poughkeepsie, New York

Number 12
December 2003

Editorial A LOOK BACKWARDS

The end of another year seems like a good time to look at what has appeared in the Newyorker Times over that period. There have been 11 issues (not counting this one), comprising 65 pages on which there was at least some editorial content. There were three bios of new members (maybe more, depending on whether either or both of the two that are in the files can fit into this issue), lots of publicity about the International Convention in Montréal, several articles about activities of "Oldyorkers," notices of other chapters' shows when we received them in time for an article to beat the show dates, information about doings at the International level, and, most important, reports on the activities of the chapter as they related to the rest of the world. These included much discussion of HarmonyFest 2003, this year's annual show, and other items that would take too much space to list. We have tried to keep the membership informed.

We must acknowledge the help of several members who have provided articles, usually without even being asked. Prominent among these are Eric Dickstein, Bob Hitchcock, Bob Chieffo, and Bill Standish; in addition, Scott Salladin and Renée Silverstein have passed on information that came to them over the Internet that would not have reached the Editor's attention otherwise. A big thank you to all of these people. If we have omitted anyone, it is not intentional and we apologize.

We wish to note one other development that most of the chapter probably is not aware of. Early in the year, our president at the time, Dick Schaffer, arranged to have an entry for the Times in the "Bulletin Editor of the Year" contest. We have no knowledge of the outcome, except that the entry won no prize. We could have predicted that, as the criteria that are used are published and we knowingly do not adhere to them. We feel that many of the items that are essentially required are of little interest or use to the membership. (We are a little put out that we have received no response to the entry; if any was sent to President Schaffer, it has not reached us. We would be pleased to see how the judges reacted to our approach.) We like to think of this publication not as a bulletin but as a newsletter, and we publish what we regard as news. We take pleasure in the fact that we have received several complimentary comments, not only from Oldyorkers but also from editors of other newsletters/bulletins with whom we exchange subscriptions. That doesn't get the publicity that BETY would, but it satisfies us.

Again, we thank those who have helped us make this publication what we regard as a success. We couldn't have done it without them.

George L. Trigg

HARMONYFEST 2003: BARBERSHOP NEVER SLEEPS!

By Bill Standish
Chairman, HarmonyFest 2003

It's been eight years since the Newyorkers began its Youth Outreach program. But it seems like only yesterday that the planning began, to take the "barbershop experience" into local classrooms. Our first exposure in the schools came at Washingtonville High School with a coaching session for a quartet called "The B#'s." Three of those quartet members went on to attend our Northeastern District's Harmony Explosion Camp in the summer of 1997. We have continued the tradition of sending high school boys to this same camp each year. The Newyorkers followed

with a program at Ostrander Elementary School in Wallkill, NY. The chorus performed for a large group of students in grades 4 through 6. Later in the year, The Footlighters attended the same elementary school and serenaded first and second graders, then performed for the Middle School students. Our involvement did not end there. John Hadigan and Butch Ashdown have both worked with high school quartets at Arlington and Kingston High Schools in preparation for their annual Spring musical of "The Music Man." And now, F.D. Roosevelt High School has spawned a girl's ensemble, "The First Ladies", because of their involvement with HarmonyFest.

With schools far too many to reach during the daytime, we decided to plan a coaching and performance festival at a central location and bring the schools to us. A two-year planning session took place (See "HarmonyFest" on Page 2)

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Meetings
Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m.
First Reformed Church
70 Hooker Avenue
Poughkeepsie, New York
ALL SINGING MEN WELCOME
 Website address www.newyorkerschorus.org



7 Dec Harmony for Hospice—4 p.m. performance, Poughkeepsie Galleria
 11 Dec Shriners' performance, Grand Hotel, Poughkeepsie; meet there at 4:30; dinner after performance by reservation only
 12 Dec Greystone Manor performance—meet at Wappinger Town Hall at 6:30 p.m., carpool from there
 24 Dec Christmas Eve—NO meeting
25 Jan–1 Feb 2004
Mid-Winter Convention, Biloxi, MS



Poughkeepsie Chapter Mission Statement
 The mission of the Poughkeepsie Chapter shall be:
 To perpetuate the art of Barbershop Harmony, and
 To promote and provide opportunities for vocal harmony activities for its members and potential members such as, but not limited to
 Quartetting,
 Vocal crafts and techniques,
 Coaching,
 Chorus singing, and
 Competitive preparation and participation,
 and
 To provide public appreciation of barbershop harmony through public and charitable performances, and
 To promote good fellowship and camaraderie among its Membership, and
 To foster and enhance the ideals and principles of SPEBSQSA, Inc.

Happy Birthdays in December (date order):

Lou Simmons	1
Vittoria Sprague	2
Jim Facciolla	6
Scott Salladin	16
John Hadigan	19
Eric Bram	21
Marian Harlow	25

Happy Wedding Anniversaries in December:

Bill and Barbara Booth	26
Jack and Carol Ostmark	30

HarmonyFest (From Page 1)

with a committee of very energetic and enthusiastic workers, and HarmonyFest 2001 was born. Our chapter, with the help of Song of the Valley and Evergreen Sweet Adeline Choruses, has never fallen asleep during this time, having recently completed another fantastic musical experience for young people throughout the entire Hudson Valley Region, HarmonyFest 2003. These festivals seem to run into each other from the ending of one to the beginning of another, because the excitement of each one seems to keep us in constant motion. Because of the dedication of the entire chapter and assisting chapters, I have had a wonderful experience meeting so many students and teachers, and my e-mail continues to be packed with gratitude from participating schools and even the parents of several students. I even had a couple of holiday wishes from parents long after the festival had ended.

My latest thrill was to participate as a judge for an Orange County talent show for students, where I found a wonderful baritone voice whose owner I convinced to join us for this year's festival. He was totally overwhelmed when he was asked by Overdrive to step into the (Continued on Page 3)

HarmonyFest (From Page 2)

quartet and sing a tag. How special was that?!

So many people have been involved in the planning, setup, and execution of HarmonyFest and in fact the entire Youth Outreach Program. I thank ALL of you. From Northeastern District, Region 15 Sweet Adelines, and even the Mid-Atlantic District: special thanks to our three-year festival clinicians and quartets Kirk Young, Michael Martin, Harriette Walters, Sharon Vitkovsky, Reveille, Overdrive, Xclamation!, Moondance, Men In Black, Footlighters, and Swing Shift; and to our assisting choruses over the last three years Song of the Valley, Evergreen, Racing City Chorus, and of course the Newyorkers! Think for a moment what success really means. If the central purpose is to teach and involve our young people to keep music alive in their lives, to fill it up with barbershop, and to bring them into quality interaction with each other, then our Youth Outreach program is succeeding big time—and HarmonyFest has provided the stage! HarmonyFest IS all of you. What a journey...115 students...**barbershop never sleeps!**

SCOLLAY SQUARE TO SING AT NEWYORKERS ANNUAL SHOW

By Bob Chieffo
Chairman, 2004 Annual Show

I am pleased to announce that "Scollay Square," NED 2003 Quartet Champion, will be the featured quartet on our next annual show, "Big Top Barbershop," 15 May 2004 at F.D. Roosevelt High School in Hyde Park. Here is what contact man Steve Barrett said: "Bob, we're looking forward to it, and hope to help make your show a big success."

We, too, are looking forward to Scollay Square thrilling our audience with their smooth, rich sound just as we were thrilled in Saratoga Springs.

NEW QUARTET FORMED WITH POUGHKEEPSIE MEMBERS

By Garry "Butch" Ashdown

I want to announce officially one of the newest quartets in the NED with two members from our Chapter. "Sophisticated Sound" has been established and has Greg Howard singing lead and myself as baritone. Two SPEBSQSA members from the Mid-Atlantic District round out the other two parts. Clayton Echan is the bass and is the Music VP from the Morris County, N.J., "Music Men" Chapter. He's been a barbershopper for about 10 years. The tenor, Andy Harris, is the director of the "Music Men" and has been barbershopping for over 20 years. Andy is a distinguished arranger and brings a lot of technical talent to the quartet.

We met earlier this year when a post on the Harmonet went out with a quartet looking for a baritone down in New Jersey (90 miles from me). So I auditioned and was accepted in the quartet. Within a week, the former lead had to resign from the quartet because of personal issues, and I

suggested bringing Greg in for a tryout. Needless to say, here we are.

We're all excited and looking forward to performing in the NED and MAD. However, since contest rules state we can compete in only one District, we decided to compete in NED! We're pretty much right now going to focus on contests and see where we go from there. But, make no mistake of it: all four of us love to sing.

So, hopefully, within a couple of months we can come to a chapter meeting to introduce our new quartet brothers from MAD to all of you. Just as typical barbershoppers are, they truly are amazing guys and already feel like they're true family to Greg and me.

INSTALLATION DINNER SET FOR 17 JANUARY 2004

By Scott Salladin

The Poughkeepsie Chapter's Installation Dinner will be held at the Casa Mia Restaurant, Route 9W, Highland, on 17 January 2004. Cocktails will be available at 6:30-7:00 p.m.; dinner will be served at 7:00 p.m. The Installing Officer is NED VP-Chorus Directors Chuck Eaker.

The program:

- Installation of the 2004 Officers
- Newyorker of the Year Award
- Chorus and quartets perform

The menu:

- Clams Oreganato
- Cold Antipasto
- Baked Ziti
- Entree choices:
 - Veal Parmigiana
 - Chicken Parmigiana
 - Stuffed Filet of Sole
- Salad
- Wine or Soda at table
- Dessert
- Coffee, Tea

The price is \$25 per person. For reservations, send check to Scott Salladin, 2633 South Road G-4, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. Indicate how many of each entree is wanted.

HELP NEEDED

By Scott Salladin
2004 President Elect

In 2004, we will need every member's help in pursuing what is necessary to raise the level of commitment for each member of the chapter. Learned music and strict attention to the director will aid in accomplishing this.

We will be asking all members to be involved with the chapter to help our treasury in raising funds for the programs like HarmonyFest 2004 and District Fall Contest in Halifax in 2005.

With Valentine's Day approach- (Continued on Page 4)

Help Needed (From Page 3)

ing in just a few short months, it is time for members to form your quartets. You will be asked to sing on both Friday, 13 February, and Saturday, 14 February, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. This is the way we can make more money this year than in previous years. We did 57 paid Singing Valentines last year and made \$1728.30, with only four quartets and one day. Just think what we can do with four quartets for two days.

Steve Hagerdon is our VP Music & Performance Elect, and is looking for a person to act as our Chorus Manager. The Chorus Manager is to have good organizational skills, communication skills, and willingness to dedicate extra time necessary to care out his duties. For more information please see Steve.

We will need a Public Relations person for the chapter. The PR person is responsible for promoting the chapter by putting articles in the newspapers and on radio and also by getting TV spots, to help get the chapter known to the public not only in Dutchess County but all over the Mid-Hudson Region. If interested contact Bill Standish, who has been the chapter PR person for the last few years.

If you have any fund-raising idea for this next year, please let me know. The chapter will be having a planning meeting in January, and every member is invited.

Is there anything that the chapter has done this year that you would like to change or maybe help to make better in the New Year? Please let us know. The board is here to serve the members of the chapter.

NARRAGANSETT BAY CHORUS HOLIDAY SHOW SET FOR 6 DECEMBER

Happy Holidays from The Narragansett Bay Chorus. Please join us on Saturday, 6 December, at 2:00 p.m. for our Annual Barbershop Harmony Holiday Show at The Columbus Theater, 270 Broadway, Providence, RI. Adults \$10, Seniors/Students \$5. Featuring The Narragansett Bay Chorus, "Applause!", "Casino," "P's & Q's," "Alley Cats," "Coast to Coast," and "Avante Gard." Call 401-578-2260; e-mail: singNBC@aol.com.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

By Scott Salladin

NEW ADDRESS FOR HARMONY HALL

Please be sure that mail addressed to Harmony Hall has the correct new address: 7930 Sheridan Road, Kenosha, WI 53143.

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS

We still have about 18 Entertainment Books to sell. The books make a good Christmas presents.

ITEMS FOR SALE

Remember last year when Al Cavallari was selling items

from our chapter store? Well, we still have a few items left for sale:

2 Auto Shades \$5.00 ea.

Voice Part Hats, 1 each of Lead, Tenor, and Bass \$9.95 ea.

Water Bottle Holder \$5.95

6-in. diam SPEBSQSA Embroidered Patch \$9.95

4 SPEBSQSA Member decals \$1.50 ea.

2 Bari Barberpole Cat tapes \$5.00 ea.

Get your bargains; save shipping costs.

A NEW MEMBER INTRODUCES HIMSELF

By Jim Larkin

This is just a brief note to introduce myself to the group. My name is Jim Larkin and I have been a barbershopper for two years. I am the proud father of seven children and four step-children, ranging in age from 47 to 24. In addition, I have six grand-children and ten step-grand-children.

My main career was as a Corrections Officer for New York City. I retired in 1984 with the rank of Deputy Warden. I was in charge of a large prison facility on Riker's Island at the time of my retirement.

On a social note, I was one of the New Hyde Park Players and appeared in seven of their productions. I also sang in my church choir at Holy Spirit R.C. Church for over fifteen years. In addition, I have done some em-ccc-ing and some public speaking.

Two years ago a friend invited me to his annual barbershop show. I enjoyed it so much that I went to the group's rehearsal the following week; I auditioned and was accepted. I have been at it ever since. I love "The Old Barbershop Style," and I'm proud to be a member of the Poughkeepsie New Yorkers. Thanks for having me.

MUSICAL HISTORY OF ANTONY TAKAHASHI

By Antony Takahashi

Editor's note: This is an exceptionally long and detailed new member's biographical sketch. However, it is an exceptional story, and it shows the wide variety of experiences that can influence a person's musical life. It is rare that a single person encounters as many samples of that variety as are recorded in this article. Under the circumstances, we felt it was worth including as is.

Antony was born in Tokyo, Japan, from the marriage of a Japanese central banker and a young farm girl from Canyon City, Colorado. Although somewhat musically unpromising, this union produced three children, of whom two were gifted musically—and Antony was sandwiched between them.

As a believer in "hard work" (See "Antony" on Page 5)

Antony *(From Page 4)*

conquering all shortcomings” and having had her own musical career at the University of Colorado truncated by an early marriage followed by an immediate move to Japan, Antony’s mother made sure that he was immersed in music, ranging from piano lessons to singing lessons, as a young child. No talent or interest was particularly evident, but she persisted.

Throughout the years in Japan, the only music (other than Japanese children’s music) that made an impression on Antony was a recording of the Vienna Boys Choir from 1960, which an uncle stationed in Germany had sent as a Christmas gift to Antony’s mother. The record was cracked entirely through on one side, courtesy of who knows which international postal system, but it was still playable, with much skipping, on the decidedly “lo-fi” record player. Even through the popping noises, the harmonies on this album really stood out.

At 9 years old, Antony moved to the U.S. with his family and began a life in the San Francisco Bay area. They were exposed to a whole new culture and way of thinking along with the whole American versus Japanese issue. Antony’s family attended Baptist churches from then on, and he continued his musical odyssey, off and on, singing in church choirs. The singing, however, was very strait-laced and did not contain any of the fun elements that make informal gospel music such a popular medium. For musical enjoyment, Antony wore out the Beach Boys and Simon and Garfunkel records that he checked out from the local public library and played, on his lo-fi record player, quietly and out of the reach of his parents’ ears. During this time of secret listening, Antony learned to harmonize.

At 17 years old, Antony enlisted in the Marine Corps and learned a whole new kind of singing. Most of the lyrics were decidedly not fit for polite company, nor was harmonizing—or staying on pitch, for that matter—as important as having excess volume.

A year later, Antony was released to the Marine Reserves and allowed to continue study at the University of California, Berkeley. The popular music tastes shifted from folk rock and acid rock to disco and punk during this period, and although these forms of music were interesting to him, the general lack of good melodies and harmonies left Antony cold. He sang with a community Mozart choir for a year during this four-year period, and upon graduation with a physics degree returned to the Marine Corps as an undersized infantry second lieutenant.

After a five-month stint with the Marine Corps in Quantico, VA, where Antony sang with the Basic School chorus, he ended his performing career for 23 years. During this period, he often sang in the shower and occasionally sang along with his old Beach Boys albums but did not do much more.

While in the Marine Corps, Antony had been stationed for four years at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and picked up an appreciation of gospel music, both black and white. During this period, he often thought about singing

in a small group (instead of a local church choir), but did not want to spend a great deal of time looking for that special group that took singing seriously and (more importantly) sang on pitch. He has thought often about why he didn’t just do it; but the only thing he remembers is that he only wanted to do things that he could do perfectly, which would have been very difficult in that environment. That attitude seems silly to him now, but he was still young and idealistic at the time.

Following the years in North Carolina, Antony was stationed in Tokyo for three years and worked as a translator for the U.S. Forces Japan. Musically, this was a quite interesting time. Japan is a country where it is still quite acceptable to list “drinking and singing in bars” as a legitimate hobby, along with “playing golf” or “running in marathons.” Antony was not a drinker, but he did pick up an enjoyment of Japanese “enka” music, and occasionally sang the tunes in bars (karaoke) with his Japanese counterparts. Along with singing “enka,” he was often asked to sing songs by Elvis, Paul Anka, and Frank Sinatra, since he could actually read and pronounce the words on the karaoke music (text on a monitor).

In 1989, Antony, by then a captain, left the Marine Corps, married Lynn, and attended graduate school at the University of Virginia. In 1992, he graduated and went to work for IBM in Vermont as an entry-level financial analyst. During this period in school and with IBM, music was still very much in the background.

In 1996, Antony moved back to Virginia to set up and run the accounting systems at an IBM–Toshiba semiconductor joint venture. After seven years and two ownership changes, the semiconductor plant shut down, and Antony was laid off in 2003. A couple of weeks before the layoff, however, on Valentine’s Day, his wife bought him a singing Valentine, and the quartet invited him to come along and sing with them. Of course, Antony thought he was too busy then, but . . .

Within one month, Antony had plenty of time to sing, and he felt pretty confident that the quartet that invited him could sing (mostly) on pitch; so he visited the “Blue Ridge Barbershoppers” in Warrenton, VA. He did not know what to expect, but he felt that it would be better than sitting at home thinking about the employment situation. The chapter needed tenors, and he had the range, so he sang tenor. (He did not realize how high barbershop tenors actually sing when they asked him what he sang.) He was happy that nearly everyone there could sing on pitch and cared about how they sounded.

Six weeks later, in April 2003, with a little help from his friends, Antony received an offer of employment as a financial analyst with IBM in East Fishkill, New York; and although he and his wife were not 100% keen on moving to New York he took the position. (When times are tough, it really has to be a bad position to say “No” to a job, especially if your friends found it for you.) Upon arrival in New York, Antony looked up the New Yorkers in the person of John Fortin, who gave him instruc- *(Continued on Page 6)*

Antony (From Page 5)

tions on how to get to the practices. After a couple of weeks here, Antony switched from tenor to baritone—and now he is learning the parts and singing lead. Interestingly enough, when he was growing up and singing in church choirs, he sang bass because they needed basses. So you can say that he has come full circle.

Antony hopes that he will have the lead parts learned soon.

BARBERSHOP.NET

From *SPEBSQSA Live Wire*, 20 October 2003

Take advantage of this special offer for BARBERSHOP.NET, official Internet Service Provider (ISP) of the Barbershop Harmony Society. As a Subscriber, you will get

high quality, easy-to-use access to the Internet;
a "yourname@Barbershop.net" e-mail address;
a new, easy way to generate additional funds for your local chapter; and
outstanding customer service.

For the first time, you can now have an e-mail address "@barbershop.net" that shows everyone your love for barbershop singing. You can select an e-mail address like

tenor1@barbershop.net to highlight the harmony part you sing; or
bigd-bass@barbershop.net to highlight your chapter; or
chrisc@barbershop.net to use your own name.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER AND THE SOCIETY

Our Barbershop.net dial-up ISP service is only \$18.95 US. per month (less than AOL)—and \$2 of your monthly subscription will be allocated back to your chapter! If you already have broadband Internet access like cable or DSL, then add our Barbershop.net Email Only service for \$9.95 per month—and \$1 of your monthly subscription will go to support your Chapter.

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"HARMONY FOUNDATION PRESENTS" HAS TOP TALENT LINEUP

From *SPEBSQSA Live Wire*, 3 Nov 2003

The 2004 edition of Harmony Foundation Presents will feature Four Voices, The Voices of Lee, and the Swingle Singers. The show will be Tuesday of convention week (June 29) at the beautiful Kentucky Center for the Arts, a modern 2,500 seat facility with great acoustics and short distance to the stage. It is in downtown Louisville, just one block from the Galt House (headquarters hotel).

The first half will feature our 2002 International Champs Four Voices, and The Voices of Lee. Each group will do its own set before their combined presentation at the end of the first half. If you have ever heard (or heard about) their rendition of "All Rise," you know what is in store for you!

The second half will feature the Swingle Singers, eight young, mixed voices from London who will show you the versatility of the human voice as a musical instrument. If you are not familiar with this group, try going to www.swinglesingers.com for history and some sound clips!

Tickets are not yet available, but are expected to be priced the same as the last two years. VIP seats will also be available with a post-concert reception with all the performers. And most important, the proceeds will help us keep young voices singing! As you start making plans for travel to Louisville, plan to be there by 8 p.m. Tuesday for one of the biggest events of the week.

YOU JUST NEVER KNOW...

By Steve Shannon, AHSOW VP—Education
Forwarded by John Fortin

Once again, life has reminded me that you never know how sharing the Barbershop experience will affect people.

Recently, my quartet was doing a "Ladies Night" for a big shopping mall, strolling to give female shoppers a rose and a song. (What a fun gig!) While we were taking a break in the food court, the crowd's roar suddenly softened to a dull murmur and our attention was drawn across the room to a huge fellow in a very oversized wheelchair. He had to be well over 500 pounds. As he slowly maneuvered the motorized chair through the walkways, (Continued on Page 7)

You Just Never Know *(From Page 6)*

the cruel crowd either stared at the “freak” or they turned their eyes to avoid any visual contact.

We returned to our refreshments and were discussing quartet business when the monster chair suddenly bumped into my chair! The driver was in his early thirties, his clothes were disheveled and he clearly was in terrible physical condition. Yet, his eyes sparkled as he extended his hand and said, “Hi, I’m Bill. You probably don’t remember me, but you saved my life.” He went on to explain that in the late ’80s, he was doing his best to be a high school drop-out. One Saturday, he hung around the school auditorium because there was some kind of choir event, and he was going to harass the wimpy boys who chose to sing rather than do sports or join a gang.

It turned out that the event was a Young Men In Harmony Workshop and I had the privilege of being the Dean. I found Bill standing near the registration desk, in the hall. Not knowing (or caring) that he wasn’t in the boys choir, I coaxed him into singing some tags. He was good. He loved it. And, he wound up staying for the whole session!

Bill went on to say that that was a turning point in his

life. He joined the choir, graduated from high school, and went on to become a policeman to work with “problem” kids—just as he had been. Then, about ten years ago, he stepped in to break up a fight, was thrown to the ground and broke his back. The damage also did something to his nervous system, causing him to fall asleep without warning (narcolepsy); and he began to retain fluids, eventually reaching more than 540 pounds!

Years of medical treatments and diets seemed incapable of reducing his incredible bulk, and without special surgery, he soon would die. Not surprisingly, this situation also affected his attitude. Major surgery was scheduled, but he didn’t see any reason to live. Then, he happened upon our quartet, remembered his high school experience and decided to take charge of his life, once again.

With tears in his eyes, he asked for our quartet card, saying, “Next time you see me, I’ll be 300 pounds lighter, and I want you to sing at my wedding. Thanks, man. You Barbershoppers are the best.”

Whew! You just never know whose heart you’re going to touch.