

The Newyorker Times

The newsletter of the Poughkeepsie, New York, Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society



New Series, Volume 11
Poughkeepsie, New York

Number 3
March 2009

From the President
By Steve Miller

Well, it's another Singing Valentines come and gone. A great thanks to all those who were able to participate, especially Renée for providing a much-needed baritone at Starbucks in Fishkill on Friday, and Rick Greenop for stepping up to make his debut performance with the Saturday quartet. Special thanks go out to Bud Fair, Ron Pierson, Jack Ostmark, and Breck Martyn, in yet another configuration of the Footlighters, for their quartet efforts on both Friday and Saturday. Their ability to meet the challenge of performing the bulk of the Friday valentines staved off what might have otherwise proved a disaster for the chapter. Thanks also to Bob Waltke, Duke Chisholm, Eric Dickstein, Mike Murphy, Dick Schaffer and Jack Tacinelli for providing the additional musical support and Scott Salladin for arranging the radio advertising. This year these individuals, in numerous quartet arrangements, performed a total of 19 Valentines for a net profit of \$1,034. That income, coupled with a rousing 40th Birthday performance in Fishkill by Butch Ashdown, Jim Cramer, John Hadigan, and myself, saw the chapter treasury increase by a total of \$1,200 in the week and a half around Valentine's Day. My personal thanks to the Newyorkers who took part. Be assured the rest of the chapter knows they also owe you their thanks.

Valentine's Day and Quartetting

by Rick Greenop

Hello again, fellow Barbershoppers. Here are some more thoughts from a not-so newbie. Time really flies when you having fun, and it's hard to imagine I've been coming for 2½ years now. I just had another new experience, my first time doing Singing Valentines. It was great. I was sorry when the day was over and there weren't more to do. I've tried my hand at quartetting now and then at our weekly meetings, but that was just one song, one chance, then maybe not again for several weeks. But Sing-

ing Valentines was an all-day affair. For me it was like an all-day practice and performance rolled into one. I learned an awful lot in just one day. There were many different experiences I had, all good.

Perhaps first I'll start with delivering the Valentine and the reactions of the recipients. When people first saw four tuxedo-clad handsome guys (yes, we were called handsome by some of the recipients) enter the room or place of business, it attracted attention. Heads would turn, people would stop talking. When they realized what was coming, smiles began to show, and when the songs were sung, that brought tears to the eyes of some of them (and it wasn't because we sounded bad, either). Some were sentimental. Over all everyone smiled and seemed to enjoy this new experience they were having. People gave us hugs and handshakes. Others took pictures and video taped it; one even had someone on the phone from California to listen while we did it. Other people that just overheard the songs, looked in, and peered around corners, wondering what was going on. I felt like it wasn't just singing songs for people; we were giving them memories to cherish. After each one, while it was not exactly like Santa giving out presents, it seemed close. You certainly went away with a glowing feeling.

As regards the quartetting. I learned so much in a day. I've been in bands for many years, and I know how to read the drummer when he's going to put in a fill or do something different or when the whole band has to pick up the beat or slow down. By the end of the day, though, I felt as if I was reading and anticipating what the other guy was doing. Just like being in a band, except no instruments, just voices. What it all comes down to is being able to practice and becoming familiar with each other. Another thing I had to get used to is not having a director giving you the beat or how long to hold, etc., After singing all day, I began to feel like, yes now I know how we are going to do this one. It starting becoming second nature. I also heard how singing in a quartet really helps you hear what your part is contributing to the song. Many times in the chorus it seems you (See "Valentine's Day" on Page 2)

The Newyorker Times

Published monthly by the Poughkeepsie, NY, Chapter
of the

Barbershop Harmony Society
Yankee Division, Northeastern District

Editor: George L. Trigg

18 Duzine Road, New Paltz, NY 12561-1304

845-255-9488; e-mail GeorgeL.Trigg@alum.wustl.edu

Chapter Officers

President Stephen Miller
VP, Chapter Development William Florie
..... 845-473-7027; e-mail wflorie@aol.com
VP, Music & Performance John Hadigan, Jr.
VP, PR & Marketing Dan Landa
Secretary Scott Salladin
Treasurer Michael Murphy
BOD Members-at-Large Eric Dickstein, Richard Schaffer,
Rich Merry
Immediate Past President John Hadigan, Jr.
Youth Outreach William Standish
Chorus Director Renée Silverstein
Assistant Directors .. John Hadigan, Jr., Steve Hagerdon
Chorus Manager Scott Salladin

Meetings

Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m.

St. Andrew's Church, 110 Overlook Rd. (Co. Rte. 46)

Poughkeepsie, New York 12603

ALL SINGING MEN WELCOME

Website address www.newyorkerschorus.org

**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 the
Barbershop Harmony Society



17–18 Apr NED Contests, Wachusett Regional High
School, Holden, MA—details TBA.

31 May Annual Show, Cuneen–Hackett Arts Center
Theater, 12 Vassar St., Poughkeepsie, 2 p.m.
and 7 p.m.—further details TBA

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
25 MARCH

Happy Birthdays in March:

Chris Schulze	17
Jack Tacinelli	30

No Anniversaries in February

Directions

By Renée Silverstein

I am so looking forward to this year's annual show on 31 May at the Cuneen Hackett Arts Center for lots of reasons. Actually, I should say annual shows, since we will be performing twice on that day. The venue is a drastic change from our usual staged productions. When we do public performances we connect with our audiences because we are a lot closer to them physically and can see their faces even though they are not familiar. That adds to our energy when we sing. When performing on a stage in the school auditorium our audience is mostly made up of our families and friends, but we can't connect with them because we do not see them. That is going to change with this show. It will be more exciting as we are close to them—no curtain to allow our energy to fade until it opens, at which time we have to put on that happy face. It will always be there.

Cuneen Hackett contributes to the entertainment world with their show productions throughout the year. We do the same with all our performances. What a wonderful opportunity to perform in this arena and celebrate the arts in Poughkeepsie—actually, to celebrate Poughkeepsie, which is our theme. It's who we are, the Poughkeepsie Newyorkers! All our entertainment will be in-house, the chorus and all the chorus quartets.

It'll be different, it'll be great.

Valentine's Day (From Page 1)

are so involved in just singing your part and just hearing the others around you in your section, you don't get to hear it as a whole. Quartetting really lets you hear it as it is. For all of you experienced quartetters, (Continued on Page 3)

Valentine's Day (From Page 2)

I don't know if it ever gets to be just another day (I can't imagine it would), but for me it was truly a great experience that was fun and learning and gave me a wonderful glow for the rest of the day.

Memories of New Yorker Ralph Harlow 22 February 1922 – 31 January 2009

Bob Chieffo (New Yorker)

I remember Ralph as a great barbershopper and "Tenor for All Seasons". Over the years, I sang several Singing Valentines and annual Show promotion gigs with him at local radio stations. He was always there and ready for those performances. I am not a morning person, and as the 'local' singer I always marveled at the other three (typically Booth, Harlow, and Schaffer) who drove up in the wee hours from the Newburgh area. Now that's Chapter dedication!

Ralph loved quartetting. He was always in one or more at the same time. He performed on our annual Shows regularly, once again, often in more than one quartet. And he was always quick to step up for our weekly Chapter quartetting activities.

We will miss Ralph. But he set a high (tenor pun?) quartetting and barbershopping standard in the Chapter. Let us strive to match that.

Mike Murphy (New Yorker)

[This message speaks for (New Yorker) Bob Hitchcock too.]

When I first joined the chorus 9 years ago Ralph was one of the first to get me to quartet. When Ralph invited you, you could not refuse. He was always encouraging and helpful, but also very honest. He taught me to listen and to sing softly when necessary. As time went on, we sang together in two registered quartets: "Just 4 A While" with Al Cavallari and Dick Schaffer, and "Hudson Valley Edition" with John "Duke" Chisholm and Steve Miller. While we never achieved greatness we had a great time preparing for District contests and performing in the Chapter Show. We also sang with Bill Booth and Dick Schaffer in a long-standing informal quartet. Ralph loved singing in a quartet more than singing in the chorus. His great tenor voice always provided the perfect top to a chord.

In January 2007, my wife Nancy and I were lucky enough to be invited to accompany Ralph and his wife Marion along with Bob and Lois Hitchcock to Ralph's vacation house in Puntarenas, Costa Rica. Ralph wanted a whole quartet to go, but wasn't able to get a lead to go. In order to have a foursome he sent his son, Steve, who lives in Puntarenas, some learning tapes. Steve did a creditable lead, having obviously gotten Ralph's gene for musicality. Ralph had owned the house in Costa Rica for many years and had a lot of friends there, some of whom he had helped a lot over the years. We received a wonderful reception, and Ralph, ever gracious and able to speak Span-

ish, was the perfect host. He knew the best restaurants that only the locals knew. He knew great places to see and how to get there. In a rented Toyota van, on its last legs, we maneuvered the very windy roads of Costa Rica, often singing without the lead part or with one of us faking the lead part. Ralph loved Costa Rica as he loved barbershop music. We visited a volcano, beautiful beaches, cool, out of the way villages, waterfalls and bird sanctuaries. It was great to be with Ralph on this adventure, and I learned to know Ralph in a much fuller way. This wonderful man is dearly missed.

Rudy Veltre (New Yorker)

I, for one, will miss Ralph. Where else could I go to find a tenor that will know all the oldies- tags and songs. Ralph: We will sing again in that big VLQ in the sky.

Until then, your bass to be... .

Richard Glyn (barbershopper from U. K.)

It's a shock to receive such bad news, he was a good guy. Please give my condolences.

Garry "Butch" Ashdown (New Yorker)

It was a true pleasure knowing Ralph and singing with him.

George Trigg (New Yorker)

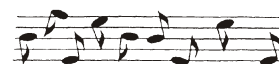
I never got to know Ralph well. I think I must have rubbed him the wrong way early on, and I don't recall his ever inviting me to quartet with him. But I admired his tenor voice and his extensive repertoire. He will definitely be missed.

Don Bunch (New Yorker)

Ralph came into the chapter after I moved south. But each time I visited he welcomed me and frequently sang in a pickup quartet with me. May he now find peace with our Lord.

Renée Silverstein (New Yorkers Director)

Ralph Harlow made such an impression on me, not only for the stamina he displayed standing on the risers for long periods of time, but for his ear-singing ability. When we would be learning a new song using the sight reading method, section by section, inevitably the tenor section was the last to join in. His remark was always "I've got it" (this was when he was our only tenor present that evening). He'd then add his part. The notes were not what the arranger had intended; however, they worked! That's not to say he didn't learn what was actually written when it was brought to his attention; he'd just smile and say he liked his notes better. Always eager to quartet during the evening, whether he knew the song or not. He'd just smile and take a bow. I will miss him, a lot.



A Letter from Bob Chieffo

February 9, 2009

Dear Newyorkers and friends,

Since the discovery of my leg tumor, it's been a trying journey. Fortunately with successful surgery at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and follow-on prostate surgery at Vassar, I am feeling good and on the road to recovery.

After getting hit in the head with the proverbial "2x4," one's mortality looms large. For someone who's had a reasonably healthy life, this was a shock. As such I've been doing a lot of thinking about life and the future.

I'm committed to do what is necessary to live a long life. But after much thought, I have decided to retire from the Footlighters quartet. Eventually I'll be whole again and get back to a normal life. But even then, the clock will be ticking—for how long, I don't know.

I can no longer commit to what is necessary to remain the Footlighters' baritone. Diane and I have to focus more on ourselves, our family and our home. We have always given of ourselves to our singing (and other) organizations. Now we have to start focusing inward.

I will remain a Barbershop Harmony Society and Poughkeepsie, NY, Chapter member and plan to continue singing with the chorus.

As the founding quartet Lead in 1975, performing



1975 - Version 1: (L-R) Lew DiStasi, bari; Bob Chieffo, lead; Bud Fair, bass; Fred Richter, tenor.

with the Footlighters has been a long and fun ride for me. 1975 was a good year. We won our first of three Division Championships and I was chosen Newyorker of the Year. From then through the 2008 Newyorkers' Annual Show in May, with all the voice and personnel configurations, it was always exciting. The "Feet" are definitely a brotherhood of "zanies." Creating our skits for the Annual Show was undoubtedly the most wild and fun times. The support we have received from the Newyorkers through the years and the hundreds of performances we have sung have left indelible photos in my mind.

So I say, "Thanks for the memories, Footlighters!" Now follow this: Thanks to Fred Richter, original Tenor; Bob Johnsen, our next Tenor; Lew DiStasi, original Bari-

tone, then Bass, then Tenor, then Bass; Bud Fair, our original and current Bass; Jack Ostmark, second and cur-



2008 - Version 8: (L-R) Bud Fair, bass; Ron Pierson, tenor; Jack Ostmark, lead; Bob Chieffo, bari

rent Lead; Ron Pierson, third and current Tenor; and last but not least, Dave Reynolds our third and longest lasting Bass.

I was 41 when we started. Bud and I spent many a lunch hour thinking up a name for the quartet. The "Footlighters" was our second choice. The "Electric Pitch Pipe" was taken (thank goodness for that).

It's been a long and fun ride, but now it's time to get off. It's time to bow out and applaud from the audience. I plan to continue the close "family" ties I've developed with all the Footlighters, current and past, because...

"Once a Footlighter, always a Footlighter!"

With peace and harmony,
~chief

Promotion of Singing Valentines

By Bob Chieffo



On Saturday February 7, a new approach was tried for promoting our Singing Valentines fund-raiser. Several quartets from the Chapter went out and sang to the local malls. The photo, by Nancy (See "Valentines" on Page 5)

Valentines (From Page 4)

Murphy, is of the Galleria quartet: (L-R) Tenor, Alex McCoy; Lead, Steve Miller; Bass, Bill Florie; and Bari, Mike Murphy.

They sang and handed out SV info. Thanks to Steve Miller who managed the 13-14 February 2009 Singing Valentines program.

Show Program Ads

By Scott Salladin

Once again it is time to go out and get the program ads for our show program. We will be keeping the prices the same as last year's: Broosters, \$10, 1 line; ¼ page, \$35; ½ page, \$65; full page, \$120; inside front or back cover, \$120. The outside back cover was once again bought by former member Bix Doughty for the Index Page. This year will we NOT be giving out free tickets to advertisers. This is because we are in a much smaller venue, Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center.

Program ad sales will start on 4 March and end the middle of April. I will be handing out the show contracts, size sheet, and a copy for each ad purchaser from last year. Every Member that sold an ad last year will get his list with extra contracts. Please try your best to get out and get as many ads as you can this year. Please go out and talk with the people you do business with every day or every week.

Ads will be collected weekly so please don't wait until the last day to get your ads in.

Please don't leave it up to only a few people who get the ads. This is a chapter and we need everyone's help with this project.

The Annual Show

Adapted from material supplied by Steve Miller

As indicated under the heading "Coming Events" on page 2, this year's annual show will take place twice, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., on Sunday, 31 May, at the Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center, 12 Vassar Street, Poughkeepsie, under the chairmanship of the Chapter Board of Directors. The theme and title is "Celebrate Poughkeepsie." It will feature the Chapter chorus, the Newyorkers, and Chapter quartets Swing Shift, Hudson Valley Edition, and Four to the Power of One. (The line-up is subject to change pending quartet availability.) There will be no guest quartet.

The cost of all tickets is \$15.00. Ticket sales will begin on Friday, 27 March. Eric Dickstein will handle member ticket sales, while Scott Salladin will deal with mail sales. For further information about tickets, contact Scott by telephone at 845-471- 5845 or 845- 790- 3339, by e-mail at events@newyorkerschorus.org, or by au.S. mail at 166 Academy St A-2, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

For information regarding show journal ads, see the article by Scott Salladin.

**Networking**

By Scott Salladin

Many members of the Chapter probably do not know that we have been a member of the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce (DCRCOC) for the past year. Networking is the way for the members of this Chapter to get out to various activities that are offered by the DCRCOC. Every member of the chapter can sign up to go to any of the activities offered each and every month. All you need to do is call the Chamber office at 454-1700x 1000 and put your name on the list.

We all need to network with other people to get the word out to let them know who the Poughkeepsie Newyorkers are. When you are going out and representing the Poughkeepsie Chapter, like when getting ads, selling tickets, performing Singing Valentine, or whatever, you should always wear your name badge to let people know who you are and that you are who you say you are. You should also have business cards from the chapter.

If you want the Chapter to grow in size you need to network by looking for singers and inviting them to a rehearsal. To look for booking for the chapter you must network to get the word out. Let us all try to do some networking for the good of the chapter.

I will ask George to put some information about chamber events into the Newyorker Times on a monthly basis. I welcome any member of the chapter to come to some of the functions of the DCRCOC.

Singing in Tune (Part 4)

By Fred King, International Coach
From the PROBE website, by way of
Lake County Chapter's *Overtone*s,
Al Ries, Editor

Breath control is certainly an important factor, and material is available to make it possible to learn or teach how to breathe properly. It's important to avoid flattening in particular because it is necessary to keep an adequate supply of air exerting pressure against the vocal cords. Wasting breath initially by uncontrolled attacks at the beginning of phrases or taking too little breath causes the singer to run out of air before reaching the end of the phrase. This will result in flattening.

Singing softly seems to cause special problems for many singers. They have the tendency not to energize themselves sufficiently, thus permitting the pharynx to collapse, eliminating the resonance and destroying breath support. This results in a lowering of tone.

To control this, have the singer show his upper teeth slightly when singing softly. This helps take the weight off the voice. An elongated movement of the jaw should be minimized. On the other hand, singing loudly with too heavy a tone quality also leads to flattening, as will excessive vibrato and tremolo. (See "Singing in Tune" on Page 6)

Singing in Tune (From Page 5)

These last two do not allow the other parts to tune to the problem voice.

A quartet or chorus that fails to embrace the basic balance rules of volume relationships as written up in the singing category and the Basic Barbershop Craft Manual will sometimes produce a rough or dissonant sound. This

impedes the singers' ability to hear good tuning. The dissonance also may be perceived as being out of tune.

Next part, we will touch upon other causes of flatting. Remember, there's a test coming. Actually, the test is given each time we have a chance to sing together. Next part, we'll get into more of the discussion of control aspects needed for good singing.

Website for Poughkeepsie Newyorkers: <http://www.newoyrkerschorus.org>