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TAG RAG AND NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2007

BEST WISHES FOR A
HAPPY and
SUCCESSFUL 2007



Can you rise to Haydn's challenge on page 10?

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

A LOOK AHEAD TO

FEBRUARY 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
February 2007				1	2	3
4	5	6 Rehearsal	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Rehearsal TAG RAG COPY DEADLINE	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 Rehearsal TAG RAG DISTRIBUTION	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 Rehearsal	28	February 2007		

Calendars showing the remaining days of January 2007 and the month of March 2007
are at the back of TAG RAG

MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY * Addition/Update to last month's TAG RAG

2007

*	JAN	25	Thu	Daytimers	Abbeyfields home Maitland Rd (First left off Tilehurst Road from Castle Hill) sing at 2.30pm
	MAR	2-4	Fri-Sun	Full Chorus	Chorus Away Weekend Marsham Court Hotel Bournemouth
*	APR	12	Thu	Daytimers	Maidenhead Alzheimers Club - Denis to provide detail
	MAY	15	Tues	Daytimers	Maidenhead Blind Club 2.30 sing
	MAY	25-27	Fri-Sun		BABS Convention Scarborough
	JUN	9	Sat	Full Chorus	Show Reading Town Hall 60th Anniversary of Düsseldorf twinning.
*	JUN	28	Thu	Daytimers	Kennet Court Woosehill Wokingham at 2.30pm
*	JUL	4	Wed	Daytimers	Notrees Nursing Home Kintbury
	OCT	27	Sat (aft)	Full Chorus	Emma Taylor's wedding singout - Hambledon nr Henley.
	NOV	9-11	Sat	Full Chorus	Potential Warsaw trip.
	NOV	13	Tues	Daytimers	Tuesday Club, Hungerford Town Hall to sing at 2pm
*	NOV	29	Thu	Daytimers	Kennet Court Woosehill Wokingham at 2.30pm
	DEC	12	Wed	Daytimers	Christchurch Court, Reading 2.30 sing
	DEC	19	Wed	Daytimers	Weirside Court, Orts Rd, Reading

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NEXT COPY DEADLINE:

13TH FEBRUARY FOR 20TH DISTRIBUTION



CHAIRMAN'S SPOT

Here we are, already three weeks into another eventful year of close harmony singing! I hope you all thoroughly enjoyed the festive season and are looking forward, as I am, to what the new year has in store for us. If the evening with Mike Taylor last Tuesday was anything to go by, we're in for a cracking time! (Not vocally cracking, you understand – perhaps exciting would be a better word?)

When I allowed Bob Ridley to persuade me to stand for this post, I had forgotten that Graham would expect me to write a piece for Tag Rag every month. This does not come easily to me. I remember at

school, how envious I was of the children in my class who could write long essays, covering page after page, while few of mine spilled over onto the second side of the paper. The art of communication is important to us all in this day and age. There is a need to improve communication within the club, particularly between the executive committee and the majority of the members, and I shall be addressing this task in future months.

At the executive committee meeting last Thursday, I raised the issue of how we as a club communicate with the outside world. Email is both a blessing and a curse in this area. There have been instances in the past year where members have sent emails to outside parties which have caused the club a great deal of embarrassment. We must be more careful in our dealings with other people, and I propose that we adopt the following simple code of practice.

For any outside party, there will be a single person nominated to act as their contact point with the club. For day-to-day business, this will normally be a member of the executive committee. It becomes more complicated when we involve professional help and have to liaise with other performers taking part in our shows, but the same principle applies. All communication must be passed through the single contact person, and that person must take care that any third party details, such as telephone number or email address, is not distributed in an uncontrolled way around the club membership.

For example, if the club had lots of money and decided to build its own rehearsal facilities, and employed me, as an architect, to design the project, I would not accept every member sending me their own ideas about paint colours and door knobs: all these would have to be fed through the single contact person whose job it would be to manage me on behalf of the club.

The same simple professional courtesy should apply to all outside parties, professional or amateur. Our reputation depends on the quality of our communication.

On a more positive note, I have been greatly heartened to receive the emails from Barry and Davina chronicling Ron Collis' steady recovery. We want you back on the risers a.s.a.p., Ron, and our fondest thoughts and best wishes go to you and Stella.

In Harmony
JOHN PRICE

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EDITORIAL

Well that was a surprise. Irene and I took the opportunity to take a short break at very short notice in Barbados and depending on which copy deadline you adhere to will make this month's Tag Rag late or on time! Or, did you not appreciate that there were two different deadlines on pages 2 and 3 of last month's issue? Irene tells me that is one of the things she always checks that I've updated correctly!

Many thanks to all our members who supported the Christmas Greetings appeal in Tag Rag. We raised the princely sum of £540 that will go to the local charity Daisy's Dream. I hope to get one of their officials along to a Club night in the near future to make the presentation and publicise the success.

There's lots of good copy this month - read on. My thanks to Bob Ridley for taking over Ron Collis's responsibilities hopefully short term because I know Bob would want Ron back on his feet again just as much as we do. The new item A PEEK IN THE PAST (page 13) will feature interesting articles from early Tag Rag's when I need to fill up space.

My prediction about FIELDS OF GOLD being 'out' shortly after Christmas was a little awry. However I can say with confidence that the teaching tracks and the music score are in good shape and we are now getting Andrew Sentinella's approval for the changes we've made. The good news is that the teaching materials for A TREE IN A MEADOW are now available and with most members. This song will pair IF YOU LOVE ME (REALLY LOVE ME) in our contest package for Scarborough this year. The next song to be issued to the chorus will be HAVE A LITTLE TALK WITH MYSELF. This song was used at the 22nd BABS Harmony College in 2000. I have ready access to both the score and teaching tracks. Rod has just obtained copyright permission for the score and I've received permission from BABS to use the teaching tracks. I expect to be preparing the teaching materials for WITH A SONG IN MY HEART soon. If our plans for June 9th come to fruition we'll sing this song with volunteer Learn to Sing students at the Twinning Show at Reading's Old Town Hall.

GRAHAM STARKIE

Editor

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

This is a synopsis of some of the points discussed at the last Exec meeting held on the windiest day in 17 years. We risked life and limb to travel to the far flung reaches of Oxfordshire to meet at Julian's ancient, but humble pile, for a four and a half hour

meeting (not sure who did the most talking, but I didn't). We have to thank Marge for plying us with coffee and tea, and her daughter for baking us a lemon cake, which was delicious. There are benefits to being on the Exec, this is the only one I have found!

AWAY WEEKEND

We have decided that the Club will have "an a away weekend" at home next year. The Exec is concerned that there are less people going to the event and some people have voiced concerns over the expense and distance. The Exec fully understands the benefit of a weekend away from home life where we can pursue team building type activities, however this may be divisive. With this in mind we will be looking to have a weekend in 2008 that does not involve the cost of a hotel. More on this in the future. We would welcome any suggestions as to a venue nearer to home.

There has been several suggestions that the Club as a whole should pay for the rehearsal rooms for the away weekend. As the room rate is a fully inclusive one and the actual event room costs can't be calculated the Exec has decided to give each attending member that stays overnight a £10 subsidy per night that they stay. This will be given in cash after the event. So if you stay the Friday and Saturday night you get £20 back, if you are only staying the Saturday night you will get £10 back.

FINANCIAL CONTROL

In an attempt to maintain control over our running costs, anyone having to spend over £10 for items for the Club will have to get prior approval from the appropriate Exec member or Alex Russell.

RECRUITMENT

The Music and Performance team will support a Recruitment Event in the Autumn, Sept/Oct. It will not be a Learn to Sing (LtS) type event open to all comers, but a men only event where we use the material from LtS to assist the new people. We need to have a small team to run this, if you are interested; then please contact me, Andy Pearce.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are going to set up a small Uniform team. They will look at our walk out and performance uniforms on an ongoing basis and put forward a plan to the Exec for any changes they see the need for. They will work with the Performance Team and be the group that commission any new stage clothing for future shows. We will approach some of the members and invite them to join this team. We are also looking for a Stack Manager that will ensure a stack is always created for any performance, taking into account voice part groupings, height,

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choreography, and especially people for the front row. We will announce the names of these two "groups" when we have finished "recruiting" them, (that's PC talk meaning when we have twisted their arms to do it! I jest).

SINGING COMPETITION

Some members may be aware that Southern Union (Bournemouth) are trying to create a singing competition in the south each year. They held it last year on the same Saturday that we sang with Peter Kennedy's Quartet. This year it's to be the 30th June in Bournemouth. We looked at attending this event but considered that with the Convention and then the Reading Twinning event on the 9th June we had enough on our plate. Maybe we could consider it next year.

MARKETING

On the marketing front we are preparing promotional material for the Reading Twinning event - some publicity will be on the Reading Arts web site from 1st March, and ticket sales will also start then; our posters will be displayed on all the Reading Arts Council sites including the Hexagon. An article is being submitted to Harmony Express covering our Maidenhead Show with Paul Ross, and an article about the joys of barbershop singing is being prepared for the web site "Later Life" which focuses on activities for the over-50's.

TWINNING SHOW

Tickets for the Twinning Show will only be available from the Reading Concert Hall box office. We were asked to provide exact numbers and types of tickets that we would want them to print for our own use (e.g. the number of top-price, medium price, and concessionary) which we don't feel we can provide with any accuracy. Not only is this a difficult guess to make, it could mean that we would have empty seats in the venue if we failed to sell all that we asked for. Instead, a special advertising flyer will be produced that members can use to encourage friends to buy tickets, but it will be the responsibility of each member to acquire the tickets from the box office. Ticket prices will be £12 and £10 with a discount of £2 for concessionaries.

ANDY PEARCE

AWAY WEEKEND 2007

Plans are now well advanced on the hotel-booking front. Forty-five members have booked their attendance and are listed below. Written confirmation of their actual booking showing the costs will be sent out soon - definitely by the end of the month. Key * = partner attending, † = day attendance f = Friday. If you expected to see your

name there and it isn't please give me a call. Remember also that the Marsham Court Hotel offer advantageous rates for B&B on the Friday and Sunday nights that will let you make a long weekend break for you and your partner. There's good shopping and sightseeing around Bournemouth for partners when you're doing your chorus thing. I can thoroughly recommend the Friday night dinner and dance (if it's on this year).

Rod	f	Adams
Mike		Ayres
Chris		Bradley
Aidan	f	Brand
Brian		Campbell
Julian		Charman
Derek		Chisholm
Mervyn	*f	Clark
George		Colquhoun
David	f	Colver
Peter	f	Cookson
Peter	f	Dawson
Jim	f	Downing
Murray		Downing
Dave	*f	Elson
Gary	†	Evans
Paul	f	Gordon
Peter	f	Groves
Malcolm		Hall
Barry	*f	Howard
Don		Jeffery
Simon	f	Laight
Richard		Leathem
Ian		McCann
Lawrence		McNulty
Brian		Milbank
Sean		O'Shea
Rhiannon	f	Owens-Hall
Philip	*	Paine
Andrew		Pearce
James		Porter
John	f	Price
Bob	f	Ridley
Alex		Russell
Andrew		Rzysko
Chris	f	Schrier
Maurice	*	Scott
John		Shackleford
Graham	*f	Starkie
Phil		Stewart
Colin		Thatcher
Phillip	f	Ward
Barry	†	Wills
Philip	†	Wilson
Denis		Wright

GRAHAM STARKIE

Away Weekend Hotel Coordinator.

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RON COLLIS

The news on Ron is encouraging but it's clearly going to take time for him to regain his normal self. Let's all wish him the best of luck and keep him in our prayers. The following texts are slightly edited email messages that were circulated around our members in the last few weeks from Barry Howard and Denis Swift.

11th Jan - Davina and I went to see Ron on Tuesday afternoon. There was a significant improvement since the previous week, he was quite lively, was speaking a lot more and more of what he was saying we could understand. This improvement, may in part, be due to the fact that this was the first occasion we had visited him in the afternoon, rather than the evening & he may have been less tired. Speaking to Stella later, she confirmed that there has been a gradual improvement every day although his condition does vary. We took along the Christmas CD and our old player and he listened to this quite intently and at times moved his right arm with the tempo and actually tried to sing some of the songs, which was a great thrill. He is still unable to move the left side of his body. On Friday this week a small group of Daytimers, plus Jim Downing & Colin Thatcher are going to the hospital to sing him, so more details later. Barry Howard.

11th Jan - Hi guys, Just to follow up on Barry's email earlier today, I thought I'd tell you how I found Ron yesterday afternoon. Ron was sitting in a chair in the room while I was there, presumably because the hospital prefer patients not to be lying down all the time. As Barry says, he certainly is able to articulate quite well and he formulated some quite long sentences while I was with him. On the other hand, he did show signs of confusion at times. When I mentioned Stella, he told me she was in the room! He found it difficult to comprehend that she just wasn't there. And, as I was with him for just under 30 mins and she didn't come in during that time, one must presume that she hadn't just popped out for a moment. Also, at one point Ron told me he didn't have "a clue where this place is. I don't know if it's in Britain, in Europe or where". I was very surprised by this. When I told him he was still in Reading, his comment was (it was quite a sunny day yesterday) that "we don't have sunshine like this in this country at this time of year".

He was able to indulge some chit-chat with the nurse who came to re-attach his drip. It was the first time I'd managed to catch him awake, so I can't compare with any previous visits but, by all accounts (mainly Barry and Davina's) it does

appear that he's making progress, slowly but surely. Denis Swift

15th Jan - A small group of Daytimers plus Colin Thatcher and Jim Downing sang for Ron on Friday afternoon. Ron was wheeled into the Day Room, and we sang to him as he entered. He recognised most of us and could also remember our names. We sang mostly polecat numbers and he joined in and when he wasn't singing he tapped his fingers in time with the music, it was quite emotional to see him respond in this way.

He had definitely improved since Davina and I had last seen him on Tuesday and he even joked with us. We all enjoyed it, so did Ron plus the doctors and nurses on the ward who asked us to return. Barry Howard.

TWINNING VISIT - JUNE 2007

We have now received confirmation that 24 "barbershop" visitors will be coming from Düsseldorf for the Twinning visit in June: 16 singers and 8 partners. They will arrive on Thursday 7th June (20 at 11:20 and 4 at 16:50 at Heathrow) and depart on Sunday the 10th (fly from Heathrow at 17:30, or 19:05 from London City). We therefore need to provide accommodation for them on the nights of Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

They will travel to and from Reading by the shuttle bus.

On the Friday Düssharmonie are making their own arrangements for the day (with a visit to Winchester, Salisbury and Stonehenge). They have invited us to join them if we wish.

Saturday – Show starting at 7:30pm in the Town Hall in the evening. Rehearsal in the afternoon.

If you are able to provide accommodation for our guests please will you let me know what you can provide by completing the list on the board at the Piggott school. Please could you also identify if you or your spouse/partner can speak German. NOTE - There is a separate list to sign up for those performing in the show on the Saturday evening}.

Many thanks

PETER COOKSON

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

QUARTET MATTERS-TAKE FOUR

Not having a big profile within the Club, it is perhaps appropriate to pen a few words on how we are doing. Our December outings were varied and enjoyable, in their own individual way.

Firstly there was an appearance at a Christmas fund raising event for the Wyfold Riding for the Disabled Association at Sonning Common. We sang at 6pm on a Saturday evening in the open air in a highly decorated stables environment. There were stalls selling gifts, cards, mulled wine, and a concert band. It was a bit cold, but at least it was dry. The days before and after were very wet.

Paul Daniels was our warm up act. He came down especially from London in his Scrooge pantomime hat to entertain the crowd of riders, parents, and well wishers with his particular brand of patter and magic tricks.

We sang three songs and led a community sing of "The twelve days of Christmas", aided by the Chorus boards which worked a treat, held up in turn by twelve youngsters. Lots of camera flashes from proud parents.

Secondly we performed at a "Daytimers" type of engagement in a residential nursing home in Shinfield, where an aged relative of our bass, Graham Swatridge, lives. It was a return visit, having sung there last Christmas. We were treated to mince pies and mulled wine afterwards, and spent some time talking to the residents, a la Daytimers' routine. The vote of thanks was delivered very eloquently by a dapper, very smartly dressed ninety five year old man, who had celebrated his birthday, anonymously, that very day; it was mentioned to us by his niece who was there with her family.

The third and perhaps the most well received sing out was at the Bearwood Lakes Golf Club near Wokingham. We were the after dinner entertainment for the Easthampstead Rotary Club members and their wives, at their Christmas Dinner. They were a superb audience, and that lifted us even more. The whole forty five minutes were brilliant. The Chorus boards for "Twelve days" made a second appearance and we distributed one to each table to sing their individual part. This prompted a superb competitive session amongst the diners. The audience seemed to enjoy the whole event, and we certainly did. Many thanks to Les Hearn for recommending us to some of his golf buddies at Bearwood.

We were delighted with the outcome of our two songs on the superb Chorus Christmas CD, and

many thanks to those Chorus members who complimented us either by word of mouth or e-mail. We appreciated, and were lifted, by the comments.

Finally, a quick note to reassure those who thought that Andy Wheeler's appearance with another quartet at the Club Christmas "do" indicated the demise of "Take Four". No, Andy is determined to go to Convention in a competitive quartet. We in Take Four are divided equally on this matter. So Andy has joined up with another group with that as its intention, but will also retain his membership of Take Four. It certainly puts more pressure on Andy, but he is willing to take it on, and so far the rehearsal timetable we have agreed seems to be working.

Thanks for taking the trouble to read this missive, and get this far.

MERVYN CLARK

on behalf of Geraint, Andy, and Graham of "Take Four"



BARBERSHOP BABES

**Happy belated birthday to
JAMES PORTER
our only December Babe.**

*At last we've found one! My apologies for
this omission in last month's list*

and

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO
JANUARY'S QUARTET**

**DEREK HIRD
IAN McCANN
CHRIS SCHRIER
JOHN SHACKLEFORD**

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NOTES FROM A SMALL OXFORDSHIRE VILLAGE

Nothing much happens in Goring-on-Thames but then I moved in! The village is relatively crime free and our nearest police station is Henley. However, shortly after my arrival an unknown villain walked over a gravel drive in the middle of the night and chiselled a 3 inch slot below the driver's door lock on the Mondeo which was parked outside the house. Apparently with this access, the locks could be opened without triggering the car alarm. The glove compartment was emptied on the floor but nothing was stolen. Be careful if you have a SatNav!!

The main railway bridge was built when the railway arrived and enlarged when more tracks were added. Railtrack decided to replace the bridge with the major work on Christmas Day. The bridge was closed in the middle of November 2006 and will not open until the end of February 2007. Meanwhile, there is a diversion round a narrow country lane with a traffic light that sometimes works, sometimes not. Peak times are chaotic.

And then four days before Christmas Thames Water cut into a 6 inch gas main! 650 houses in Goring and Streatley were without gas and each house had to be visited to check that the gas was cut off properly. Every street had to have one or more holes dug for some reason or other to further inconvenience residents. Somewhat as in wartime complete strangers who never speak to one another shared their experiences in frequent conferences in the street. It was warmer outside than inside! Some without cooking facilities had tried the local pubs but they too had no power. The switch on process had to take place one house at a time and we were relieved after 48 hours of freezing cold to have a visit at 11.00 pm from a very nice gas man from South Wales who carefully checked for leaks and then relit the boiler.

And then after three days of freezing fog the thaw came. The melt from the top of the trees fell prettily in a snow like way and settled as ice on the lower branches and the ground. Many branches broke and fell under the strain. One of these snapped the overhead telephone line and we were without a landline over the Christmas period.

All this was a precursor to the main entertainment - the removal of the old bridge and the lifting in of the new. All went well and because of the television coverage they tried to ensure that the villagers could see as much as possible. Three 20-ton sections were hoisted in place with an enormous crane spanning the adjacent road. Two of these were bolted together

perfectly. But the last section was distorted such that there was a 2-inch gap in the centre of the bridge even when the two ends were bolted up tight together. Much of Christmas Day was spent closing that gap with some very large nuts and bolts, very long spanners and a lot of physical effort. Again an opportunity for everyone in the village to meet, chat and enjoy the show. As I write nothing more has happened. No doubt everybody will be looking to place blame on someone else for what happened between the perfect fit achieved in the dry run at the 'works' and the distortion on assembly in Goring.....

As a 'friend' of mine said none of this happened before I arrived here.

BOB RIDLEY

SELECTED WEEKLY NOTICES

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS 2006 (18th Dec)

Many thanks for all your support; it's a bumper crop! The project this year has netted £540. This is a significant increase over the £405 raised last year; many thanks for your generosity. There is action in hand for us to have a representative of Daisy's Dream along to a rehearsal night in the New Year to receive the money.

THANK YOUS (18th Dec)

You may get a glimpse of a couple of wrapped bottles that we'll leave in the hall tonight addressed with our thanks to the Piggott School Bursar (Bill) and Caretaker (Frank) who provide us with such good support throughout the year.

RON COLLIS & KEN HOPPER (18th Dec)

I'm hoping that Barry Howard will have an update on Ron's situation. Les Hearn tells me he was in the Royal Berkshire hospital last week visiting past member and Associate Ken Hopper who's had a fix done to his replacement hips. Isn't it ironic that Ken and Ron should be in there at the same time? Both Ron (Bt) and Ken (Tr) used to sing together in a Club quartet FOUR NO TRUMPS with Pete Powell (Bs) and Ron Beal (Ld). Ken is now at home being discharged ahead of his expected schedule because things have gone so well.

ROBBIE WILLIAMS - AND THROUGH IT ALL (18th Dec) Article by Andrea Krudde (off internet)

And Through It All boasts more than 50 live tracks over two DVDs, but fans will be dismayed to find no extra footage apart from a few budget-looking text 'info' options. The fourth rousing rendition of 'Angels' certainly sorts the woosies from the die hard Rob fans. Close up shots of Robbie blur to focus on the adoring fans transfixed behind him as he intermittently gets his audiences to do the singing for him: it's a positive theme.

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In general the footage from Robbie's various formative gigs does make up for the repetitive tune choices. Highlights include Robbie's duets with Kylie and the legendary Tom Jones, the awesome Glastonbury, Live 8, and even an Ant and Dec Christmas special. Funnily enough, they're mostly the bits that aren't just Robbie. The filming is cracking, the production less so - leading to confusion after a solid four and a half hours.

And Through It All is undoubtedly a treat for the extreme Robbie fan. To others the lack of extras means it is Robbie, in a succession of different T-shirts, banging out hits to several similarly gargantuan crowds. They, at least, know all the words.

ITV COMEDY AWARDS (18th Dec)

Ant and Dec's Christmas Takeaway was beaten by Harry Hill's 'Burp' for the Best Comedy Entertainment Programme in the 2006 awards.

The three programmes nominated in this category were Ant and Dec's Christmas Takeaway (ITV Productions for ITV1), Harry Hill's TV Burp (Avalon Television for ITV1) and Have I Got News For You (Hat Trick Productions for BBC One). On the web site www.britishcomedyawards.com there are three still photos representing the programmes. Ant and Dec's (cropped) photo is the one with Robbie Williams in front of TVC and Peter Dawson can be clearly seen - these people have no taste!

SONGS OF PRAISE (2nd Jan)

Look out for Rhiannon directing a choir made up of pupils from the Cheshire area schools on next Sunday's programme from Chester Cathedral (BBC1). *Editor's note - There were no reported sightings and I misled you a bit - Rhiannon was singing with the choir!*

BABS CD COLLEGE (2nd Jan)

It's the Directors College this coming weekend in Coventry. Unfortunately there'll not be any Reading students there this year but the Club will have some representation by Rhiannon who is the architect of the event and me helping on the technical side. The 'show' runs from Friday evening through until Sunday afternoon - it's an action packed weekend of learning.

TWINNING SHOW (9th Jan)

Peter Cookson says "This show is 2 weeks after Convention. It is an important high profile show for the Club in our hometown. We are aiming for an audience of 600. There will be rehearsals immediately following Convention and we will also be hosting guests from Germany in the week before the show. Many of you book holidays to immediately follow Convention but this year please could you ensure you are available up to and including June 9th."



ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP NEWS

By BOB RIDLEY Acting Assistant to the Associate Member Coordinator

You will all have read the up dated health bulletin on Ron Collis. Shortly before he was taken ill I had agreed to act as an Acting Assistant for him in his capacity as the Associate Member Coordinator. I expected this to involve solely stuffing envelopes etc. We had agreed to meet to discuss how he did his job and we reminded ourselves at the Desborough show. We did not get to have this meeting but Stella Collis and Graham Starkie have both been very helpful. Stella has loaned me Ron's records which are meticulous. Graham made the labels for Ron and his Appleworks data is now transferred to my imac. I did visit Ron early on but he was fast asleep all the time!!! A visit on 17 January was more successful and I was able to run through with him what I was saying here on his behalf. He was sitting up in bed in a ward with a total of six beds. He seemed alert but he was complaining that a physiotherapy session that morning had left him in some pain.

Graham sent out the December TAGRAG to Associate Members and Honorary Members. On Ron's behalf I have started to send out reminders for AM subscriptions which are due for renewal in January but I will never match his inimitable style.

Ron had nice Christmas cards from Ken and Gina Heath and Bidy Reading and a get-well card from Dave Heighway with their renewal cheques.

It was great to receive renewals from the Wards -- Joan, Aileen and Colin. Thanks for their solid family support.

It was good to see Bruce Beer on 9 January at the Tuesday evening rehearsal looking fit and well. He joined TVC 22 years ago and left for Dallas, Texas

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12 years ago. 4 Gold Medals with Vocal Majority is quite an achievement and we are proud to have him as an Associate Member of RBHC. His warm up of the chorus was appreciated. He emphasized that this was similar to TVC warm-ups from all those years ago with the exercise of individual vowel sounds. However, Vocal Majority insist on the need for everyone on the risers to listen hard and to match their neighbours in pitch and tonal quality. Bruce pointed out that he can now read TAGRAG on our website www.rbhc.org.uk so he has requested that we do not post them to him. We will, of course, continue to send them to everyone else unless I hear a similar request.

It was also good to see Martin Lapworth on 16 January at the evening rehearsal/coaching session with Mike Taylor. I even caught Martin singing 'A Tree in the Meadow' in a scratch quartet in the break!

Ron has put so much enthusiasm and organizing skills into his job over nearly thirty years and I pray that he is soon fit enough to provide the TAGRAG input himself. He sends his best wishes to you all.

Ron usually closed with an exhortation to Associate Members to visit us whenever you can. I do not know all of you as closely as Ron does but I am looking forward to knowing you all better as time goes on. It would help me to help Ron if I had the email addresses of Associate Members so why not say 'Hi' today to bob.ridley@btinternet.com. Thanks and a Happy New Year to you all.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS' LETTERS

Ken and Gina Heath

Send a nice Christmas card 'Herewith cheque for my subscription. Best wishes to all the chaps. In haste..'

Biddy Reading

Also sends a nice Christmas card

' Heres wishing everyone a Merry Xmas and a Happy Healthy New Year. Sorry I didn't make it this year but do hope I can make it in 2007.'

Rod Clark

I noticed that Rod had promised a longer letter to Ron so I gently reminded him. This interim response gives a flavour of what is to come and it just met the TAGRAG deadline. His poor spellchecker must be in meltdown!:

'Whatho there young Bobert

Many thanks for your two recent Emails.

I have a note on my desk to compose a small piece for Tag Rag. I must await the Muse. 'Twill come as soon as I can find me bag of commas and grammar. In the meanwhile, keep taking the tablets and give our warmest good wishes to Ronnie C and Stella.

The condiments of the Seasoning to you and Errin Dawes

Yours for ' thong



HISTORICAL NOTES

As there is very little to report this month I will throw open a challenge to all the members of the Berkshire Barbershoppers Chorus, now known as the Thames Valley Chorus, to search their records back to 1976 and tell us what was sung by the BBC at the combined BABS/LABBS Convention held at the University of Birmingham in September of that year. This is the only year in the history of the TVC that I am missing the convention songs. The chorus were in 5th position under the direction of Pete Powell.

Graham had a guess at it in the last Tag Rag and I would point out that MARGIE was sung at the 1975 convention and JUST A COTTAGE SMALL did not enter the repertoire until 1982. It is possible that Margie was sung at both conventions but is most unlikely.

Come on you old-timers (of which I am now a senior member) and don't rely on your memories (if they are like mine you haven't a chance) and dig out your programs or printed sheets.

5 Years Ago January 1996

29th Daytimers at Woodley Retired People's Club

10 Years Ago January 1991

We held our weekly rehearsals and had a quiet month.

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

15 Years Ago January 1986

3rd Full Chorus at Thatcham British Legion Club, Tadley.

18th Full Chorus at the Village Hall, Marlow Bottom for a Senior Citizen's party.

20 Years Ago January 1981

10th Full Chorus at the Methodist Hall, Spencer's Wood, Reading.

The Club repertoire at the time was:

- Sing A Song With Your Heart
- Back In Dixie Again
- Alexander's Ragtime Band
- An Hour Never Passes
- Just A-Wearyin' For You
- Have A Happy Day
- The Sunshine Of Your Smile
- Goodbye My Lady Love
- Who'll Take My Place When I'm Gone
- Summer Sounds
- South Rampart Street Parade
- Now Is The Hour
- I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen

Regards

HAYDN ADAMS

ANY OFFERS?

I am looking to dispose of approx 250 vinyl LPs, perhaps some of the club members might be interested in some of them. About a third of them are big band jazz, the artists include, Stan Kenton, Billy May (8 off), The HI LOs (5 off), Singers Unlimited (6 off), Count Basie (10 off), Shorty Rogers, and various West Coast Jazz musicians, also there are 16 - Frank Sinatra and Peggy Lee,

ALAN HILL



SUPPORTERS

Gosh - that was a great surprise to get the last minute opportunity to travel to Barbados for a week with our son and his family. I have never packed as fast in all my life. We had a great time and are still trying to get used to the cold weather. We did miss the storms here and were relieved to return and find no damage to our property. I hope none of you suffered too much with house or garden damage. As I type this Rhiannon and Whitney are still without electricity!

So, that was the reason for this edition of Tag Rag being a week late - what a choice - to produce Tag Rag or go to Barbados.

I thought that the Christmas Party rehearsal night went very well and it was good to catch up with old friends. I trust you all had a good Christmas and Happy New Year. We did, and it all seems such a long time ago now.

Graham and I went off to see Ron in hospital a couple of Mondays ago only to find out that afternoon visiting on Mondays and Thursdays starts at 4 pm and not 2 pm. Denis also tried to see him that afternoon without success. It was good that a group of singers went to sing to him; I am sure he appreciated it.

Luv 'n' hugs as always,

IRENE

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

INTERNET SCAMS & FIDDLES

Scams - Despite constant warnings from the Police, Trading Standards, Department of Trade and Industry and other organisations, dishonest tricksters continue to come up with plausible schemes designed to catch you off your guard and to con you to part with your money. A website that offers some very useful points and advice on fraud is: www.met.police.uk/fraudalert."

E-mail Fiddles - Usually appeals from overseas, typically Africa, from wealthy individuals seeking assistance to set up bank accounts so they can transfer money from their country. In return for your help you will receive a financial reward. **DON'T DO ANYTHING** other than forward copies of these fiddles to the TVP Fraud Squad at: Pravina.Makwana@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk.

Thanks to Haydn Adams, Mervyn Clark, Peter Cookson, Barry Howard, Andy Pearce, John Price, Bob Ridley, Denis Swift and Irene for supplying copy.

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Advertisement lineage will be accepted and printed free of charge in TAG RAG (subject to editorial discretion). Display advertising is available in exchange for a donation to club funds as agreed between the sponsor and the editor before the publication date. Please note that advertisements will be carried for two months only and then will be dropped (at the editor's discretion) unless requested otherwise.

Objectives of the RBHC - To encourage the singing and enjoyment of Barbershop Harmony in both Chorus and Quartet form. It is a non profit making organisation and shall support such worthy

charitable causes as the Executive Committee think fit. (paraphrase of Club rule number 2)

Contacts - The Club's Thames Valley Chorus rehearse on every Tuesday (with few exceptions) at the Piggott School Wargrave near Twyford Reading from 7.45pm until 10.30pm. All visitors are welcome. See website www.rbhc.org.uk for directions.

SECURITY NOTICE *The best place to park your car at the Piggott School is in the main car park at the side of the school; this area is under constant surveillance by four CCTV cameras. The camera over the front door only looks at the main entrance to record movements coming off the road.*

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READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB



A PEEK IN THE PAST

From TAG RAG Number 2 January 1975

WHY UNACCOMPANIED?

To answer this, first let us see how an instrument such as the piano is tuned. What determines the pitch of any note is the frequency at which the string, larynx, etc., is vibrating, expressed in cycles per second (c/s). This table shows the frequencies of some of the notes of a correctly-tuned piano around the note A = 440c/s, the standard to which orchestras, and our pitch-pipes are tuned:

C#	554.4 c/s
C	523.4 c/s
B	493.8 c/s
Bb	466.2 c/s
A	440.0 c/s
Ab	415.3 c/s
G	392.0 c/s
F#	370.0 c/s
F	349.3 c/s
E	329.7 c/s
Eb	311.2 c/s
D	293.7 c/s
C#	277.2 c/s
C	261.7 c/s
B	246.9 c/s
Bb	233.1 c/s
A	220.0 c/s

Note that the A an octave below the standard has half of that frequency, i.e. 220c/s, and the same applies to all other notes an octave apart. -The intermediate notes are tuned so as to have the same ratio between adjacent ones. An exact analogy would be a table of the yearly growth of a deposit of £220 at just such a rate (about 6%) which would double the investment in 12 years.

The result of this 'scientific' method of tuning is that one can play a tune, such as 'The Old Songs', starting on any note and it will sound OK. —in musical parlance, one can play equally in any key.

Well now, what system of tuning does Barbershop Harmony use? The answer is to be found in the

harmony of naturally occurring sounds. When one plucks a taut string, for example, one finds that, besides the basic note to which the string is tuned, other notes are produced of 2, 3, 4, etc., times the basic frequency. It is the strength of these various harmonics or overtones that give the different musical instruments their distinctive sounds. A flute, for example has few overtones, but an oboe many.

So, a string tuned to A=440c/s would also produce notes of 220, 330, 440, 550c/s, etc. Conversely, if one plays together four notes of exactly these frequencies, then they blend together in a satisfying way due to their 'common denominator' of 110c/s. They are locked 'in phase', as it were. Now these four notes are precisely those that would be taken up by a Quartet tuning on A=440c/s, i. e.,

Tenor	550 c/s
Lead	440 c/s
Bari	330 c/s
Bass	220 c/s

The Adelines would find this particular example easier than the men, but this simple relationship holds, whatever the tuning-up note.

Now, comparing these with the notes of the piano, we find that the Bari's 330c/s is very close to the E at 329.7c/s, but the Tenor's 550c/s is flatter than the (C#, 554.4c/s on the piano. The human ear, even an untrained one is quite capable, even if unconsciously, of detecting such differences.

Another harmonic frequently used in Barbershopping is the 7th, 770c/s in our example. At an octave below it is half this, i. e. 385c/s. The nearest that the piano can produce is G = 392.0c/s, which is 7 cycles per second different.

This is only just an insight into the complex subject to Barbershop harmony, but I hope it does get over one of the differences between ours and other forms of music, and in particular why one cannot get the true Barbershop sound with instruments having fixed tunings like the piano.

PETE POWELL

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RBHC's

50 CLUB

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action?

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Borrowing requests should be made either by email or a
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at andy.wheeler@sportscentre.org.uk. Andy will
coordinate the loan and put the lender in touch with the
borrower to complete the deal.

A charge of £1 per item loaned per week is payable to
Andy. The money will go into Club funds and Andy will
review the need to purchase recorded material on behalf of
the library.

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

A page to rest your eyes.

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

THE REMAINING DAYS OF

JANUARY 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
21	22	23 Rehearsal TAG RAG DISTRIBUTION	24	25 Daytimers Abbeyfields Home	26	27
28	29	30 Rehearsal	31	January 2007		

February 2007 Calendar is on page 2

A LOOK AHEAD TO

MARCH 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
March 2007				1	2	3 Chorus Away Weekend Bournemouth
4 Chorus Away Weekend Bournemouth	5	6 Rehearsal	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Rehearsal TAG RAG COPY DEADLINE	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 Rehearsal TAG RAG DISTRIBUTION	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 Rehearsal	28	March 2007		