



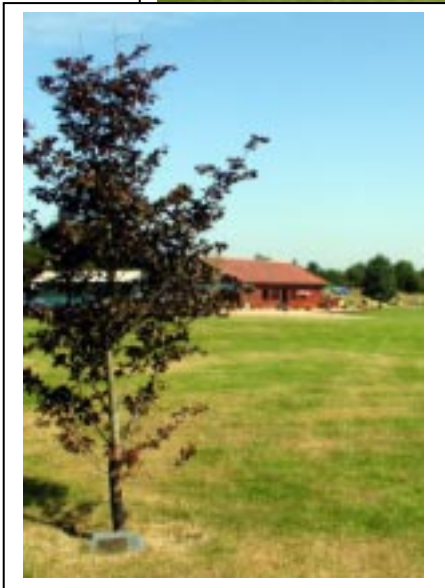
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# TRAG AND NEWSLETTER

JULY 2007



Including 4-page  
Düssharmonie visit  
photo centre-fold



Steve's tree as it is today and as it was in 2004 on the left.

# READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

A LOOK AHEAD TO

## AUGUST 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>August 2007</b>			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 <b>Rehearsal</b>	8	9 Daytimers Donnington House Nursing Home	10	11
12	13	14 <b>Rehearsal</b> TAG RAGCOPY DEADLINE	15	16	17	18 Small Chorus Woocote Crowthorne
19	20	21 <b>Rehearsal</b> TAG RAG DISTRIBUTION	22	23	24 Harmony College Worcester	25 Harmony College Worcester
26 Harmony College Worcester	27	28 <b>Rehearsal</b>	29	30	31 RBHC Exec mtg	<b>August 2007</b>

**Calendars showing the remaining days of July 2007 and the month of September 2007 are at the back of TAG RAG**

**MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY** \* indicates an addition or update to last month's Tag Rag 2007

	AUG	9	Thu	Daytimers	Donnington Nursing Home
	AUG	18	Sat aft	Small Choru	Woodcote Crowthorne
	AUG	24/26	Fri-Sun		BABS 29th Harmony College Worcester
*	SEPT	11	Tue	Learn to Sing	Week 1 of 6
	SEPT	13	Thu	Daytimers	Abbeyfields
	OCT	6	Sat	Full Chorus	For Duchess of Kent Hospice in worldwide 'Voices for Hospices' at the Reading University Great Hall.
pos	OCT	13 or 20	Sat	Full Chorus	Concert for Action against Breast Cancer Abingdon
*	OCT	16	Tue	Learn to Sing	Week 6 of 6
	OCT	27	Sat (aft)	Full Chorus	Emma Taylor's wedding singout - Hambledon nr Henley.
	NOV	5-12	Mon/Mon	Full Chorus	Krakow & Warsaw trip.
		8-12	Thu/Mon		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	2	Sun	Full Chorus	Desborough Suite Maidenhead
	DEC	4	Tue	Daytimers	Thamesfield Nursing Home Henley
	DEC	6	Thu	Daytimers	Bracknell Stroke Club
	DEC	12	Wed	Daytimers	Christchurch Court, Reading 2.30 sing
	DEC	19	Wed	Daytimers	Weirside Court, Orts Rd, Reading

# READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

## TAG RAG JULY 2007 CONTENTS LIST

Page	
2	A LOOK AHEAD TO AUGUST 2007
2	MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY
3	CHAIRMAN'S SPOT JOHN PRICE
3	EDITORIAL STARKIE
3	BOF?
4	THANK YOU MCCANN
4	YOU'RE HAVING A LAUGH! PRICE
4	POLAND STARKIE
5	WIELICZKA SALT MINE
5	2B OR NOT MP3 WILSON
7	BARBERSHOP BABES
5	INTERNATIONAL CHORUS RESULT LEATHEM
8	A VISIT TO THE TIDELANDERS CLARK
8	SELECTED WEEKLY NOTICES
9	GERMAN EMBASSY WEBSITE
10	TIPS, AIDE MEMOIR OR WHATEVER HEARN
11	ASSOCIATE MEMBER NEWS RIDLEY
11	ASSOCIATE MEMBER LETTERS & EMAILS
11	HISTORICAL NOTES FOR HAYDN ADAMS
12	SHANNON EXPRESS
13	SUPPORTERS IRENE STARKIE
16	DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

NEXT COPY DEADLINE:

**14TH AUGUST FOR 21ST DISTRIBUTION**



### **CHAIRMAN'S SPOT**

Quack! Quack! Quack!

It has been a busy time for the club of late. Our enhanced score at Convention, and the Twinning Show with Düssharmonie and Vox Concordia, set new standards for our chorus, and the work will continue to build on this excellent foundation.

Fresh challenges await us. In September we will be running a new Learn to Sing course, this time clearly aimed at men with some recognisable, if as yet undeveloped, musical talent to recruit into the chorus. We have a growing band of volunteers to push this forward – thank you all – but we need

everybody in the club to do their bit to help make this a success.

Work is also proceeding apace on the Poland trip. You may have noticed that each of the section leaders has been given responsibility for developing one of the four songs that we shall be singing in the competition. Please give them your attention and support.

When we return from Warsaw, we shall be preparing for the Christmas show at the Desborough Suite once more. Richard has some imaginative ideas to create something fresh for our audience, so be prepared.

At the executive committee meeting it was pointed out that, in our memory lane spot in Tag Rag, it was recorded that our green uniforms first appeared on stage at the 1992 Convention at Birmingham. They are 15 years old. Time for a change! A small group is considering this problem, but we could do with one or two interested and artistic chorus members to sit in and help with the long-term planning of all our uniform requirements. Please speak to me if you wish to help. The committee also approved a variation in the formal walk-out uniform for the benefit of the Daytimers. When it's hot, short sleeved white shirts may be worn. Heather knows where to get these quite cheaply.

Please note that it is becoming increasingly difficult to source uniforms for new members, and for those members whose waistline has expanded. Heather does a wonderful job finding these items, and I am very grateful for all her hard work. Please make her job easier by looking after your uniforms and taking the jackets, particularly the navy blazers, to the cleaners at regular intervals.

The committee also discussed our forthcoming EGM and AGM. The committee is already one man short of full strength, and Barry and Andy have announced that they intend to stand down this year. We need three volunteers to take on the tasks of Administration, Membership, and Musical Events. It may be possible to divide the work among small teams, but this needs to be co-ordinated by someone prepared to attend a committee meeting every six weeks or so. Please think hard and give your nominations to any committee member before the EGM in September. Heh! Heh! Heh!

In Harmony,  
**JOHN PRICE**

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# READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

## EDITORIAL

I hope you'll find Tag Rag a good read this month. Once again we past the anniversary of Steve's passing and I reproduce a current photo of his tree at Billingbear Golf Club. If you've keep your Tag Rag's you'll be able to how it has matured over the years. Long may his memory stimulate enthusiasm.

There's a most interesting selection of copy. Thank you to all the contributors. I have space this month to cover the Town Hall show when we hosted the visitors from Düsseldorf.

The Poland trip has now passed that crucial milestone of confirming the seats on the flights to Poland. We have paid 68 deposits, 53 for a Gatwick to Krakow flight and 15 for Heathrow to Warsaw. In each case we have one extra seat that, if needed, we can allocate up to the next milestone with BA when we pay the balance. If we don't use them we can give them up at no penalty because they are within the 10% variation we are allowed.

Neil Watkins came to share his knowledge of BABS judging and singing in general with us on the 10th of the month. After sharing his thoughts with us about how we performed at the Scarborough Convention he introduced us to some ideas we could use to make a much brighter sound.

I don't think there was anything new or surprising in Neil's assessment of what we did at Convention. He did compliment us on regaining the ground that we lost last year. The old chestnut about whether the judges award a package of songs differently to separate numbers was categorically answered "No". The same answer was given to the question of whether two ballads would be penalised. Both songs in BABS Contests are scored as individual pieces. It was pointed out that that doesn't mean you can do anything you want in the non-singing time because whatever we do is assessed for its distraction value.

Many thanks to Haydn Adams for reminding us that Harvey the van is celebrating its 15th birthday with us. Hasn't it done well after all this time and it can still be turned-out to look smart with a bit of spit 'n polish. We shouldn't forget that this van is a D registration that means it was first registered between August 1986 and July 1987. That makes the van around 20 years old! Haydn refers to a horsebox - yes, we did own one but it was never used in earnest because its purchase coincided with Peter Rowe buying the van. The box was sold on eventually or, was it given away? I know the issue of its disposal went on for a long time.

I reckon that the van is one of our most valuable assets, without which we would be seriously compromised. 24 hours a day 7 days a week the van stores for the risers and makes them are available at a short notice to be deployed almost anywhere. In this respect Harvey does a superb job because it is fitted out to carry them as a secure load. If you've ever been involved with moving these risers in any other form of transport you understand what I mean. Add to that the love and care we don't lavish on it I'm impressed that it complies with our demands so faithfully. Talk to any motor engineer and they'll tell you that the way we use the van driving on its weekly ten-minute task is one of the most destructive ways of using a combustion engine imaginable. Add to that the fact we are running the van close to its maximum kerbside weight I'm sure you'll join me in raising a glass to our most loyal member Harvey on this significant birthday. With a bit of good management we may be able to put Harvey out to grass soon for a well deserved rest.

## **GRAHAM STARKIE**

Editor

PS. My apologies to Meyrick Wyard for not including details of his new landline telephone number in Notices of late. I'll wear sackcloth and ashes and give the information prominence as he requested.

Meyrick now has a new BT telephone number 0118 9674367 as well as the mobile number 0794 686 1630.
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Please update your Yearbook accordingly.  
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## **BOF?**

My mailbag has been bulging with responses to Aidan's challenge of last month. Most of them are unprintable but here are a few sane ones from Mike McKeown that may get that pint out of Aidan:

Bellies Out Front,  
Barrels Of Fun,  
Basses Often Flat,  
Baritones Of Finesse,  
Barbershoppers Openly Frivolous,  
Band Of Funsters,  
Blending Old Fruits,  
Bright Open Faces, and my favourite  
Best Of Friends!

I suggest that all the others that submitted entries whisper them quietly into Aidan's ear when you're standing by him at the bar next time and then wait to see what you get!

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# READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

## THANK YOU

This is just to thank everyone for making Robert (lead), Matthew (tenor), Peter (baritone) and Josh(ua) (bass) welcome last week. They all said they enjoyed it and would like to come again, which is great news as it was the first time any of them had done any barbershop singing. Being busy teenagers they all have other appointments this week, but hopefully be back the following week with another friend in tow hopefully. When I said they were all 'musicians' last week, I should have said they were all 'students' and will all be off to University in October. Actually, they all play a musical instrument in various bands and orchestras at the South Berks Music Centre - the music teaching centre for schools in the Bracknell/Wokingham area - which is how they know each other. They are off on a tour to Strasbourg with those orchestras in a couple of week's time - and so will miss another week or two.

So do please continue to make them feel welcome over the summer months, and make sure you include them in any small group singing you do - I think that is what will make them want to sing more.

Thanks again.

**IAN MCCANN**

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## YOU'RE HAVING A LAUGH!

To give a lift to our shows, we need some humorous songs to sing. We all know the success that Cambridge have had with their light-hearted renditions of old favourites, and Sid Boyd has produced some hilarious words for "Tree in the Meadow".

So we're going to hold a competition for the best parody. Think of some funny words to a song, and write them down. It may be a song we've sung in the past, or something completely new. No big prize - just the pride and satisfaction of hearing your entry being sung by the chorus. Please let me have your entry before the last Tuesday in August, and the Performance Team will pick the winner.

John Price

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## POLAND PROGRESS

All travellers have now had two letters. One is the confirmation of their booking showing details of their chosen tour and the excursions that have been selected. The second is a personalised Payments Schedule showing the staged payments spread over the coming months for all the fixed costs. The next task is to chase the timely payment of money by the travellers to ensure that we can forward the payments by their due dates. Apart from my thanks the next communication to Maciej is the rooming and excursion schedule. I am cooperating with the Performance Team with an ambitious Performance Improvement initiative for the Competition songs.

I have now signed a contract with the Polish Travel agency MARK-TOUR that commits us to the Festival prices previously quoted. Since the contract is no more than a compilation of the emails already exchanged with Maciej I have no particular worries.

Irene and I have now completed the trip (4th - 7th July). We arranged our own flights through BA. We attended at the invitation of Maciej (pronounced 'Matchey') the Festival organiser cum Travel Agent. Maciej agreed to pay for two of the three nights we spent at the Novotel Centrum hotel in Warsaw, the same hotel we'll use. The trip almost coincided with Irene's birthday so it was easy to justify the expense!

We achieved everything that we set out to do. Met Maciej, saw the competition venue and its stage and checked out the hotel we'll be using. We also checked out the location for public transport, sightseeing and shopping as typical city weekend visitors.

WARSAW HOTEL - The Novotel Centrum hotel is very central as its name suggests. It's a 740-bed tower block in an adjacent block to the city's central edifice the Palace of Culture and Science and the main shopping district. It's a modern hotel serving good breakfasts with very helpful staff. It is also a convenient hub for every mode of transport in the city - Busses, Trams, Underground Metro, Taxis,

## READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

shank's pony and Polish Rail if needed. It is a 15-minute walk away from the Chopin Music Academy where the competition is to be held. That same journey can easily be done on busses.

STARE MIASTO - The Old City can be walked to in 30-40 minutes or bussed in 15 from our hotel. The Old City square is not on the same scale as Prague but it is non the less very interesting because it has been completely rebuilt to it's original form from the ruins that the Nazi's left in 1945. The remaining old city walls have been restored and the Royal Castle has been completely rebuilt. Time didn't allow for Irene and I to visit inside the Castle but we are assured that it is well worth the time. We've returned after learning just how little we know of the World Wars and just how badly the Polish nation fared in those times. We feel we need to do some reading before we return!

EATING, DRINKING & SHOPPING - The immediate area surrounding the hotel has lots to offer. We can't imagine anyone not finding something very agreeable within a 10-minutes walk. We reckon that prices are just below what you would expect to pay in Reading; considering that this is Poland's capital it represents good value. The choice was very wide and the food we had was very good. We are told that prices will be cheaper in Krakow.

Not everything went to plan as you would expect. Finding our allocated bedroom on the 30th floor already occupied started the trip off in good style around midnight on our arrival, and our determined efforts to understand the bus schedules was floored by weekend road works. Oh! It rained and rained and rained. I don't think the weather in November can be any worse!

WEBSITES - There are a lot of web sites to visit for those that are interested. I had a good birds-eye view of where we were going from Google Earth before we arrived. It makes even more sense now that I've been. You may like to try the following:

- The Academy of Music web site is [www.chopin.edu.pl/angielskie](http://www.chopin.edu.pl/angielskie).
- The award winning shopping mall site is also worth a visit at [www.zlotetarasy.pl/en](http://www.zlotetarasy.pl/en).

### GRAHAM STARKIE

Poland Tour 2007 Coordinator.

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### WIELICZKA SALT MINE

The following is a short extract from a report in the CSMA Motoring Magazine of a visit to the Salt Mine we plan to visit in November. The article is entitled 'Salt of the Earth'. - Editor

"One mine of historic significance is that of Wieliczka in south-east Poland which I recently visited. It makes for a unique destination. Just 15 kilometres south-east of Krakow, this mine has been operating for at least 700 years. It is formed of a labyrinth of tunnels - 300 kilometres of them - distributed over nine levels, the deepest being 327 metres underground. Today the Wieliczka mine is on UNESCO's World Heritage list with part of it open daily to the public as a museum.

While coal mines are looked upon as the cause of an unhealthy environment that of Wieliczka is the opposite. Renowned for the preservative qualities of its micro climate and health-giving properties it even contains a subterranean sanatorium at a depth of 211 metres where chronic allergic diseases are treated. Sufferers spend hours daily in the mine just to imbibe its healthy air."

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### 2B OR NOT MP3

I am sure that most of us (and that definitely includes myself) have found the change over to having our learning material in digitised MP3 format of great benefit. Being able to download new songs or teaching tracks and store them on one small MP3 player is a great boon – and it must be so much easier for Graham and helpers than reproducing cassette tapes and/or compact discs for every member.

However, I know some of you did a lot of your learning in the car, and do not find headsets as flexible as the old cassettes/CD's. Many will have already found a solution to this problem, but for those who haven't I can suggest two easy ways to listen to your learning material (or any other MP3 stored music) through a car audio system.

SUGGESTION 1. Purchase a "Mercedes-Benz CLS 63 AMG" which has a superb 10-speaker audio set up, complete with USB2 socket for your MP3 player and a docking station for your iPod. The V8 model is suggested as it is very quiet and you will be able to hear every note perfectly. This suggestion will require an initial investment of circa £73,000.

SUGGESTION 2. Purchase an "FM Transmitter" which will require an invested of well below £10. These small transmitters plug into your MP3

## READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

headphone socket and transmit your chosen MP3 music track to a free channel on your in-car radio (or your in-home radio/HiFi system) and Hey Presto your little MP3 player is filling your car (or home) with beautiful sound.

They are available from

- Total filling stations at about £9
- Ebay at 1 penny plus £4.99 postage
- and many other outlets

Most are supplied complete with batteries and a lead so you can if you prefer use the cigarette lighter socket in your car to power the transmitter. If your radio has “station buttons” you can assign one of them to the frequency you have selected on your FM Transmitter: you then only need to press this pre-set station button and switch on your FM-T and select the track you wish to listen to.

Speak with me if you want to know more.....

### PHILIP WILSON

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### BARBERSHOP BABES

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO  
JULY'S TRIO**

**RON COLLIS  
ED DEACON  
MIKE McKEOWN**

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### INTERNATIONAL CHORUS RESULT:-

AMAZING NEWS 1 - from Denver in the International chorus competition. Cambridge have come 12th. The best ever by a UK chorus. An astounding performance to nearly get into the top 10. Ingenuity, top voices, quartet practice etc, Singing the same song in competition many times must also be a major factor – Mother in Law – went down a storm. They sang beautifully and the audience loved the comedy. The only major move they made was when they come to the front of the stage after “recognising” mother in the judges

seats. They brought the house down with an “improper” suggestion involving mother in law and a well known US judge. They put in a number of neat adaptations.

They beat such top choruses as The Big Apple Chorus and Alexandria Harmonizers (The *Harmonizers* have won the International Chorus Championship four times (4 gold medals) and been finalists 13 other times, including 11 silver & bronze medal)

In quartet competition our guys, Pitch Invasion came 42nd. You can see them on Youtube. The competition in quartets is fierce. They entertained the audience with their bowler hat parody routine. They said they appreciated a lot of support from BCC – who have within them several who have performed in quartet internationally. The Swedish quartet from our Convention in Brighton did quite well.

AMAZING NEWS 2 - A tie for first place between Ambassadors of Harmony and the young Westminster Chorus – only happened once before – thousands of points involved.

The rules say that the Chorus which scores higher in the singing category win and so Westminster become the champs because they had 11 more points in that category.

Youngest chorus and probably the smallest chorus to win. They did it in only three years from formation. The performances will surely be viewable on Youtube shortly.

PS Westminster Chorus are also competing in one of those national talent competitions on TV (NBC) in the USA and are through to the second round. That exposure should be very good for recruitment in the USA.

The Ambassadors had nearly as many on the risers as before – about !50. Westminster sang with a light bright sound. The basses really did sound like leads.

The official Scoresheets are now online for you to peruse at [www.barbershop.org/ID\\_106682](http://www.barbershop.org/ID_106682)

1. Westminster Chorus
2. Ambassadors of Harmony
3. Sound of the Rockies
4. Northern Lights
5. New Tradition
6. Voices in Harmony
7. Midwest Vocal Express
8. The Alliance

## READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

9. Atlanta Vocal Project
10. Heart of Texas

### **RICHARD LEATHEM**

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#### **A VIST TO THE TIDELANDERS**

As is my wont, I went on holiday with the contact details of several Chapters/Choruses seemingly reasonably close to my holiday spot on Galveston Island, Texas. I had unfortunately underestimated the scale of the map in my World Atlas, and in reality most of them were many miles from our location. Everything is larger in Texas of course, and so were miles on the map.

The closest was a Chorus in Houston, The Tidelanders, about 30 miles away, and I had the telephone numbers of two members who lived in Galveston. They readily agreed to drive Janet and I to their rehearsal on our first Monday there. Like most Choruses in The States I have visited they rehearse in a Church hall, and it was fortunate that we were driven there. It would have been a bit difficult to find unaided.

Janet and I were, as ever, warmly greeted and spoken to by most of the members during the evening. Two members especially, asked for their good wishes to be sent to Gerry Holland and Bob Walker. Their reputations were quite high in the Chorus.

The Chorus were in the final throes of rehearsing for International two weeks away, so Janet and I were treated to a quite well polished performance of "The way you look tonight" and their upbeat medley of "Hey look me over/If my friends could see me now"

The ballad was exquisitely sung, and the opening notes and moves of their upbeat were enough to grab any judge's attention. Exactly what we have been told over a number of years. They achieved 21<sup>st</sup> place in the Competition, and I would expect they were a little disappointed. They were aiming for mid 80's score and achieved 80.2. (Still A Class scoring!!).

There were a number of similarities with the TVC, in terms of chorus numbers and age range, and there were even some who sat out on occasions during the evening. They also had a warm up routine of breathing exercises, rhythm clapping, and note interval singing. Janet said that their riser discipline was better than ours, and I had to agree.

One aspect of their rehearsal programme which, if I may, I would like to pass on to our decision makers is that they have changed to rehearsing in smaller four part voice groups ( about 10/12), and not sections. They felt that this was a better method, putting more emphasis on the need for members to learn the song and to hold their own in such groups. Listening to one group who rehearsed in the main

hall I tended to agree. I know that this cuts across the "single unit sound" concept for the sections, but they have gone for unit sound amongst the groups and moulded all the groups for a Chorus unit sound. There is also a front row move that I would like to share with Alex.

Like a number of the other US Choruses I have visited, they are a not into "a beer afterwards" culture, so it was in the car and a return trip to Galveston.

An enjoyable evening, a friendly bunch of guys, and it was a pity that the distances precluded us from visiting the other "local " choruses. I did however visit two Lions Clubs on the Island, and experienced the same friendly welcome. I would recommend to any member of the Club, holidaying, or visiting on business any area with a Barbershop Club, to try to visit them. Apart from the friendly welcome of kindred spirits in the Barbershop fraternity, you do get to talk to "the locals" and find out what makes them tick and you also get away from the tourist sites and environment.

### **MERVYN CLARK.**

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#### **SELECTED WEEKLY NOTICES**

##### **TONIGHTS 'CROWD' RECORDINGS (19 June)**

Tonight's rehearsal starts with a (experimental?) recording session. My friend and neighbour Peter Stallwood is directing Christopher Fry's 15th century romantic comedy (akin to Shakespeare) featuring witchcraft THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING. He's doing it with the Wokingham Theatre Group first to be played at Wokingham and then at Reading's Abbey ruins as part of the summer festival.

The play calls for some crowd sound effects that we are going to help Peter get. Peter has some script ideas that should enable us to be ourselves which is exactly what he wants - a rowdy crowd - well not all the time.

##### **WARSAW FESTIVAL SONGS (19 June)**

We are taking our first step tonight with the idea to make sure we have four Festival songs in tiptop shape before we go by recording a baseline performance later on tonight. I'm also making available A5 sized versions of the score booklets that the Festival judges will have in their hands when we appear in Competition.

## READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

**EMAIL - Subject: Visit Düssharmonie  
(26 June)**

Dear John,  
After having spent another week in England I have returned now to Germany and I want to express the feelings of Düssharmonie and their accompanying partners.

We enjoyed the time with all of you very much and we want to thank you for the hospitality, which we were happy to receive. We really had a wonderful time and we shall not forget this highlight of our rather young existence of the chorus.

Above all I want to thank Peter Cookson who was an excellent partner of organising everything in Reading; Peter Groves who gave me plenty of information for our coach trip on Friday; Lawrence McNulty who did a splendid PR-job and last but not least Ed Deacon who kept the show running and insisted to line up in time.

Our tenor Hartmut, who came to Reading on Saturday because his wife was expecting, is now proud to announce the birth of his second son Freek Johan. So, we have taken care of the next Barbershop generation.

Thanks again. Whenever you plan your next visit in Düsseldorf, please let me know and we will try to keep the standard we had a chance to experience with your great chorus.

Best regards and in harmony  
Ralf Zeyssig  
Chairman Düssharmonie

### **FROM PETER COOKSON (26 June)**

Many thanks for the kind gesture of presenting me with the Düsseldorf "cart wheeling child" in recognition of the work put into organising the Twinning visit. It is also important to recognise the substantial team effort behind the event. Currently the engraving is proudly displayed at my home, but ultimately I don't think I should be the long-term custodian of what was a present to the Club. I will therefore return it to the Club at the next AGM and leave it to the Exec to decide its future home.

### **'CROWD' RECORDINGS (26 June)**

Success! Peter was ecstatic with our efforts last week - says he went down to the pub after rehearsal to buy us all a drink but we stood him up! I have put the recordings on to a CD for him to preview then later on when he's decided just how he's going to use them I'll mix them appropriately and put them onto a minidisk with other pseudo 15th century

music I've recorded. The minidisk will then be used for the run of the shows. Thank you for your help.

### **TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME (10 July)**

Again we are in the Drama Studio because the School is holding its annual art exhibition in the school hall.

We welcome Neil Watkins who will deliver the POST CONVENTION ASSESSMENT on behalf of the BABS Guild of Judges. Rhiannon is also with us.

Last week under the guidance of Peter Dawson and Peter Cookson we revealed some aspects of our abilities and the music we sing that we've been hiding of late. Peter got us to make our own critical assessment of the first half of EVERYBODY STEP. The result was quite astounding in that most members thought that we could do much better, and then proved the point by doing it! Our task now is to make that improvement repeatable so that the Team can add the next layer of musicality to make it sound even better.

Peter Cookson uncovered the syncopation that has been lying fallow in the arrangement of SWING LOW SWEET CHARIOT. Wow! Let's hope that we can make it a consistent feature because it makes the song much more exciting to listen to and sing. Commit the five elements to memory and don't miss an opportunity to show Rhiannon that you can handle them: Vocal Expression, Shaping, Dynamics, Accuracy and Forward Motion.

### **NEXT YEARS EXEC (10 July)**

Andy Pearce advises that there are various people standing down this October and the Exec is seeking nominations to fill the vacated places,

- Membership
- Hon Secretary (Admin)
- Events Manager/Mangler

Please talk to any of the Exec to make nominations, or if you are interested to find out more about the roles.

The 2005/2006 Members Yearbook has all the roles published in it.

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### **GERMAN EMBASSY WEBSITE**

The following is a reprint of the web site report of Düssharmonies visit to Reading. I've substituted our own photos of the proceedings. You can visit the site yourself using the following address: [www.london.diplo.de/Vertretung/london/en](http://www.london.diplo.de/Vertretung/london/en)

## READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

Reading and Düsseldorf celebrate town twinning success with 'In Harmony' music show



Deputy mayor of Reading, Councillor Peter Beard, addresses the audience

On Saturday 9 June, the deputy mayor of Reading, Councillor Peter Beard, led the thanks of the town at the Reading Concert Hall for the highly entertaining 'In Harmony' music show which was presented by BBC Radio Berkshire's Andrew Peach to mark the 60th anniversary of the twinning of Reading and Düsseldorf.

50 men of Reading's own Barbershop Harmony Club (a.k.a. the Thames Valley Chorus) had invited the Düsseldorf choir Düssharmonie to join them in an acapella extravaganzy which also included ITV's X-Factor boot campers, Vox Concordia. The large audience was treated to a wide range of songs which included Düssharmonie's special close-harmony arrangement of the German classic "Brahms Lullaby", sharply contrasted by their version of the modern classic "I Found A Million Dollar Baby"!



The chairman of the German choir presents the Reading chairman with a replica of Düsseldorf's cart-wheeling boy

Since the Reading Barbershop Harmony Club first offered to help the twinning effort by performing in

Düsseldorf in 1992 they have given their support to Düsseldorf's growing barbershop movement.

In his speech the deputy mayor responded to a letter sent by Joachin Erwin, the mayor of Düsseldorf in which he expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the Reading singers in helping to develop the harmony between the two towns.

In an extract from his letter he says: "The links between Düsseldorf and Reading have now existed for 60 years. Above all it has been the contacts between ordinary citizens that have moulded and continue to mould this relationship. It is seen as one of the oldest community links worldwide, because Düsseldorf and Reading were amongst the first towns to establish close community ties shortly after the end of the second world war. Thus they were the forerunners of a worldwide town twinning movement that has now been uniting people and nations for 60 years."

Certainly, it was the ordinary citizens of the Reading Club who helped to foster those relationships by opening their homes to accommodate the 22 cheerful German visitors. More inter-town visits will be considered for the future with the Reading Barbershop Harmony Club presenting their special brand of large-choir acapella singing in a variety of venues in Düsseldorf and, hopefully, a return visit by Düssharmonie can be arranged.

For further information please contact Lawrence McNulty on 0845 301 0449 or email [lawrence@rbhc.org.uk](mailto:lawrence@rbhc.org.uk) or visit [www.rbhc.org.uk](http://www.rbhc.org.uk).

Editor's notes

- If you want to see better quality photos visit the German Embassy web site or [www.rbhc.org.uk](http://www.rbhc.org.uk).

- Town Hall photographs taken JIM EWAN a friend of Lawrence McNulty's.

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### **TIPS, AIDE MEMOIRS OR WHATEVER**

Are you, like me, and many others no doubt, struggling with bars 101-108 in HAVE A LITTLE TALK? That's It! All those words ending in ZING. Remember 'ARIC ROSO' a local red wine produced in the rling foothills of Wokingham! Just remember 'Recognising' is before 'Realizing' (C before L). Try it. It worked for me. I also have a prompt for all those "tions"! This is a visual one bordering on the rude, but not crude! So if you need help come and have 'a little private conversation' For an orderly line.

### **LES HEARN**

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## READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB



### ASSOCIATE MEMBER NEWS

By BOB RIDLEY Acting Assistant to the Associate Member Coordinator

Ron continues to make progress. When I called he was fast asleep! Stella and Ron would welcome visitors but please call Stella first.

Just when I thought I would have nothing to report I see the nice letter from Phil and Pat Hadfield. As I will just be heading off to Texas for three weeks I am grateful for the assistance of Maurice Scott in stuffing envelopes this month. The Acting Assistant has a Temporary Assistant!

My thanks to Associate Members who have let me have their email addresses. I will welcome receiving others to [bob.ridley@btinternet.com](mailto:bob.ridley@btinternet.com).

Tag Rag is available on our website [www.rbhc.org.uk](http://www.rbhc.org.uk) and I (and this month Chris) have started to send an alerting email out to the select bunch who have agreed to read it there when Graham Starkie/ Chris Bradley add a new issue to the site. We will, of course, continue to send Tag Rag to everyone else unless I have a similar request.

Thank you to all the AMs for their continuing support of the RBHC.

### ASSOCIATE MEMBERS LETTERS

Phil and Pat Hadfield

Dear Ron,  
Pat and I were so sorry to hear about your recent spell in hospital. We're delighted that you are now back home again and hope you continue to improve over the coming weeks. Give our love to Stella. If there is anything we can do to help please let us know. We would love to visit you when convenient and will check with Stella before we do so.

We have a new addition to our family since I wrote last year. Jeremy and Annabel presented us with a beautiful little granddaughter, Isabella Grace, last October. We are, of course, doting grandparents and just love to look after her whenever we get the

chance. Pat really took on a challenge for Isabella's christening by agreeing to make the cake. She had, of course, made a fruit cake before but had never decorated a cake to such a high standard. She had lessons in the art and did a truly magnificent job. The finished article was better than anything we could have bought.

It's good to keep in touch through Tag Rag. Graham and Irene do a really outstanding job keeping us all informed. Get well soon and pass on our regards to all at TVC.

Best wishes.

\*\*\*\*\*

### HISTORICAL NOTES

#### **5 Years Ago July 2002**

**20<sup>th</sup> Small Chorus at Hurley Garden Party.**  
The 30 man chorus was directed by Phillip Ward, Meyrick Wyard & Roger Wilkinson.  
Rockaholix (Roger Wilkinson, Alan Hill, Chris Oliver, Brian Callaghan) also performed.

Roger Wilkinson was elected as Chairman of RBHC following the retirement of George Colquhoun.

Tag Rag devoted 13 pages to the memory of Steve Hall, Chorus Director, who died of cancer on 28<sup>th</sup> June at the age of 43. His personality and influence in the barbershop world was reflected in the dedications received from all over the world.

#### **10 YEARS AGO JULY 1997**

**5<sup>th</sup> Full Chorus at Sindlesham Masonic Centre for a Rotary Club dinner.**

**17<sup>th</sup> Audio recording session at St.John's.**

**19<sup>th</sup> Flying High** (Pat Deeble, Graham Frampton, Jim Downing, Ed Dolan) were at Wycombe Abbey School with the Royal Grammar School Jazz Band.

**Time Out** (Simon Adams, Adrian Cox, Denis Swift, Mervyn Clark) were at Wokingham Red Cross Day Centre.

**Bagatelle** (Aidan Brand, Peter Dawson, Ian Douglas, Andy Balchin) appeared in a concert at Wargrave Church.

#### **15 YEARS AGO JULY 1992**

An ex-BT van was purchased to store and transport the risers. After modification, and painting on the outside with the RBHC nomenclature it was

## READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

superior to the horsebox and trailer previously used. Thanks to Adrian Cox & Mike McKeown for all their time and energy in obtaining and customising the van.



Southern Comfort (John Carter, Alan Hill, Gerry Holland, Colin Thatcher) are claiming a record for the shortest ever live TV appearance by a barbershop quartet. They reported: 'We were asked by Rotary International to contribute to the entertainment at Gabriel's Wharf, on the South Bank, next door to London Weekend Television, where various fund-raising events for Telethon '92 were being staged on Sunday July 19<sup>th</sup>. Having been briefed by one of those frantic individuals who wears a headset and calls everyone "lovey", we duly lined up behind Claire Rayner and awaited our cue. At last it came – the trembling finger of "lovey" pointed at us and straight into 'Zipadee Doo Da' – and that was it, total performance in eight seconds. Three hours later, there we were again, "We're going to close the show with a goodbye song from you "loveys". This time the valiant four were ready. The watching millions got the tag to 'Coney Island Baby' at full chat with all the SP. Time 11 seconds. Total time 19 seconds.....If you blinked you missed it.

26<sup>th</sup> RBHC Social Funday and BBQ at St.John's.

### 20 YEARS AGO JULY 1987

4<sup>th</sup> Full Chorus at a wedding reception at Micheldever. Also performing were Rogues Gallery (Dick Coles, Nick Carter, Ian Douglas, Dave Heighway). Chorus Director was Gerry Holland deputising for Derek Smith.

The Chorus also performed at the Henley Festival following the Regatta.

### 25 YEARS AGO JULY 1982

23<sup>rd</sup> Full Chorus at Hurst Centre Sports Hall, Tadley with:

Tadley Silver Band

Hurst Choir

Basingstoke Ladies Choir

Graham Lawrence, Chorus Director, joined the Hurst Choir for one of their Gilbert & Sullivan items.

During the month we had 11 new faces showing interest in joining the club. Among them were Philip Wilson and a 15 year old Tim Cockell who, years later, was the Club Chairman for two consecutive years.

### HAYDN ADAMS

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### SHANNON EXPRESS

Les Hearn tells me that he took a well deserved five-minute rest from reading his comics to peruse the Great Western Society National Newsletter. Much to his surprise he learned something about fellow barbershop singers that he'd like to share with us. Thanks Les.

'Shannon' Celebrates 150 years

'Shannon', one of the world's oldest steam locomotives, is celebrating its 150th birthday on Sunday 15th July. It was built in 1857 at George England's Hatcham Ironworks at New Cross, London for the opening of the Sandy & Potton Railway in Bedfordshire. This was a private line built by William Peel, a Royal Navy captain who named the locomotive after the frigate he commanded in the Crimean War, and who was awarded a Victoria Cross for his service in the Indian Mutiny. Later the Sandy & Potton Railway was acquired by the London & North Western Railway to form part of its cross country route from Oxford to Cambridge and 'Shannon' became a works shunter at its Crewe works.

In 1872 'Shannon' was sold to the Wantage Tramway, which linked the town of Wantage with Wantage Road station on the Great Western Railway, a few miles west of Didcot. When the Tramway closed in 1945 the locomotive was somewhat surprisingly bought by the Great Western Railway and mounted on a plinth on Wantage Road station. After the station closed in 1964 it became part of the national collection and was later placed in the care of the Great Western Society.

On its birthday the locomotive will be on display and at 2.00pm visitors will be entertained by the Shannon Express Singers, a notable amateur choir who specialise in Barbershop music and hail from Captain Peel's home county of Bedfordshire.

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## READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB



### SUPPORTERS

What a great evening we had two Tuesdays ago when Ken celebrated his special birthday at rehearsal with many invited friends and relatives. Drink flowed and there was plenty to eat for everyone. Thanks to both Ken and Heather for a lovely relaxed evening.

Of course as you will have already read in Graham's report we flew to Warsaw for a little holiday at the beginning of July but mainly to meet with Marciej who is arranging hotels, tours and some meals in Krakow and Warsaw. We of course flew out a couple of days after the terrorist incidents and so security was very tight. Fortunately I had looked at the weather on the web and discovered we were to have 3 days of unusually cool temperatures, high winds and heavy rain! So I hastily repacked my bag and was relieved to have my long Winter mack with me as I wore it everyday. Marciej has assured me that the temperatures in November will be about 10 degrees C but I think it will be worth keeping our eye on the forecasts near the departure date!

The Chopin Music Academy where the Chorus will be competing is 15 minutes walk from the hotel. There will not be a coach as the area around the academy will be congested. However it is easy to reach by bus for those who need transport. We found the transport very easy. We bought a 12 Zloty ticket which lasted us 3 days. In our money that is about £2.50. This ticket has to be validated the first time you go on a bus in a little machine. An easy comparison to work out the rate is to divide the Polish Zloties by 5 to find the English equivalent.

Our hotel is right in the centre of the Finance and Shopping district. The best way to get to the other side of the road is to use the subways. Marciej assured us that Warsaw is a safe place to be.

As Graham mentioned we visited the Old Town which is probably the area tourists will graduate to. There are plenty of restaurants close to the hotel on the days we are not having a pre-booked meal. There are a few gallerias (shopping malls) plus a very large shopping complex which is housed under a sloping Eden Centre type roof. (I know you men

won't be interested in that info but I thought the ladies might be!!). 99.9% of people speak English which is a good job because there is no way you can interpret the signs. I was amazed to see a Marks & Sparks in the complex and found that they stocked all the ranges you will find here and about the same price. I think the restaurants were a bit cheaper than here but there wasn't much difference in the clothes.

On talking to Marciej he advised that those who are also going to Krakow should do any shopping for souvenirs etc there as it will be cheaper than Warsaw.

We have brought back some information books but not enough for everyone. We will try to get some more and then pass them on to you.

Oh just an afterthought - I didn't think they were going to let Graham out of Poland as they scrutinised his passport very thoroughly for over 5 minutes. Dodgy character I say!!

Luv 'n' hugs as always,

**IRENE**

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## Golden sandy beaches Lots of historic remains Relaxed nightlife

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(Bracknell) Evenings.

# 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](http://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](mailto:Pravina.Makwana@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk).

Thanks to Haydn Mervyn Clark, Les Hearn, Adams, Richard Leathem, Lawrence McNulty, John Price, Bob Ridley, Philip Wilson 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](http://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

RBHC's

# 50 CLUB

### Are you part of the action?

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Regular listening to recorded material improves your awareness of the barbershop style and will help you to work-smarter with your singing.

## Barbershop Recordings Resource Library

Save yourself the cost (and trouble) of getting your own recordings by borrowing other members through Andy Wheeler's Lending Library Service. Look for the Library List on the notice board for current titles.

Borrowing requests should be made either by email or a personal note that should include name of item required and a reply address. Speak to Andy on Rehearsal night or at [andy.wheeler@sportscentre.org.uk](mailto: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

THE REMAINING DAYS OF

**JULY 2007**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
15	16 Daytimers at the Datchet Monday Club	17 <b>Rehearsal</b> TAG RAG DISTRIBUTION	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 <b>Rehearsal</b>	25	26	27	28
29	30	31 <b>Rehearsal</b>	July 2007			

August 2007 Calendar is on page 2

A LOOK AHEAD TO

**SEPTEMBER 2007**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30	September 2007					1
2	3	4 <b>Rehearsal</b> TAG RAG COPY DEADLINE	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 <b>Rehearsal</b> <b>LtS#1</b> TAG RAG DISTRIBUTION	12	13 <b>Daytimers</b> <b>Abbeyfields</b>	14	15
16	17	18 <b>Rehearsal</b> <b>LtS#2</b>	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 <b>Rehearsal</b> <b>LtS#3</b>	26	27	28	29

2008

FEB	Feb 29	Fri-Sun	Full chorus	Away Weekend Marsham Court Hotel Bournemouth
	-Mar 2			
MAY	16/17	Fri-Sat	Full Chorus	2-days at Fawley Court Craft Experience Henley
MAY	23-25	Fri-Sun	Full Chorus	BABS Annual Convention The Centaur Building Cheltenham Racecourse