



THE RAG AND NEWSLETTER

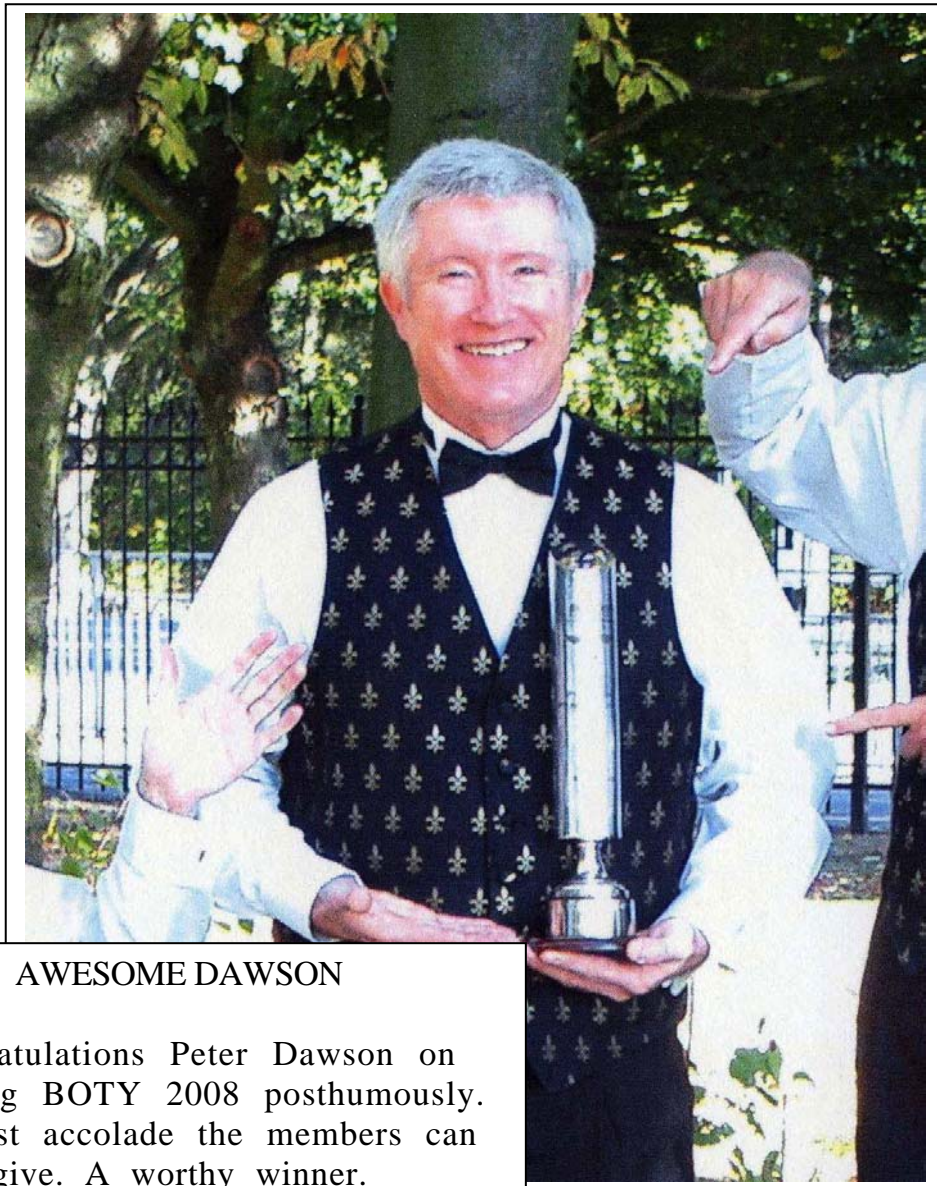
FOUNDED 1974

www.tvchorus.co.uk

Registered Charity number 1125742

NOVEMBER 2008

SECOND-TIME AROUND!



AWESOME DAWSON

Congratulations Peter Dawson on becoming BOTY 2008 posthumously. The best accolade the members can give. A worthy winner.

Photo of Peter's 2002 win supplied by Aidan Brand

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

A LOOK AHEAD TO

DECEMBER 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
December 2008	1	2 Rehearsal	3 Daytimers Kennet Court 1pm for 2pm	4	5	6 Christmas Show Desborough Suite Maidenhead
7	8	9 Rehearsal	10 Daytimers Thamesfield House Henley 1.45 for 2.45 sing	11	12	13
14	15	16 Singout Reading Minster. No Rehearsal TAG RAG COPY DEADLINE	17 Daytimers Chequers Hotel Newbury 1pm for 2pm sing	18 TVC Singout Bearwood Lakes Golf Club 8.15 for 9.15 sing	19	20
21	22	23 Family & Friends Evening TAG RAG DISTRIBUTION	24	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day	27
28	29	30 No Rehearsal	31 New Year's Eve	December 2008		

Calendars showing the remaining days of November 2008 and the month of January 2009 are at the back of TAG RAG

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

DEC	3	Wed	Daytimers	Kennet Court Woosehill Wokingham at 2pm
DEC	6	Sat	Full Chorus	Christmas Show Desborough Suite Maidenhead Evening Performance
DEC	10	Wed	Daytimers	Thamesfield House Henley sing at 2.45
DEC	16	Wed	Chorus	BBC Carol Service Reading Minster 6.30pm for 7.30pm
*	DEC	17	Wed	Daytimers Chequers Hotel Newbury 1pm for 2pm sing
DEC	18	Thu	Chorus	Bearwood Lakes Golf Club Christmas dinner. 9.15pm sing for 30-40 mins (Full Chorus required)
*	DEC	30	Tue	Chorus No Rehearsal
2009	JAN	14	Wed	Med Chorus Goring Fine Arts Club. Goring Village Hall 45 minutes for medium sized chorus
JAN	20	Tue	Daytimers	WAMSDAD Maidenhead for the Maidenhead Blind Club. 1.30 for 2.30 sing.
JAN	24	Sat aft/eve	Memorial Celebration	Party for our members, their families and friends at Loddon Hall Twyford for Pat Dawson
JAN	31	Sat	Full Chorus	Oxford Music Festival Headington Oxford
MAR	5	Thu	Daytimers	Twyford Townswomens Guild
MAR	7-8	Sat-Sun		Away Weekend 2009 Bournemouth
JUN	28	Sun	Full Chorus	Sonning Mill Show
JUL	6-8	MonWed	Host/Show	With the Westminster Chorus
SEP	14-20	Mon/Sun	BABS	National Barbershop Week
SEP	20	Sun	BABS	Provisional booking of London Palladium

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NEXT COPY DEADLINE:

11TH DECEMBER FOR 18TH DISTRIBUTION



CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

From your New Chairman

Please sign up for this Fun packed program

- 6th Dec Christmas Concert
- 16th Dec BBC Carol Concert
- 18th Dec at Bearwood
- 23rd Dec Family evening
- 14th Jan Goring Fine Arts dinner
- 24th Jan Peter Dawson Evening
- 31 Jan Oxford Music Festival
- Mid Feb Away Weekend

If I ever cause you offence, please forgive me and put it down to misplaced enthusiasm. Please pick up

the phone and talk to me before anything else. The same principle should apply to all of us please.

TARGETS FOR THE YEAR

I hope to base this year on the following key points:

- Fun and Harmony – meaning everything we can do to produce a great sound and excellent teamwork.
- Listening to You.
- Involving You

Fun includes the buzz we get from steady progress and ringing chords. I am currently working on these:-

The Christmas Concert 6 December – a major team effort and a sell out in two weeks! All we need is your commitment to the event and perfection in performance

8 July Westminster Chorus with TVC at Reading Town Hall – This is definitely on and Peter Cookson kindly accepted my invitation to chair the event based upon his good work on the Twinning event.

Visual Performance – You will know we have lacked coaching on formal moves. I am happy to create dramatic performances but we desperately need traditional coaching. With the agreement of Rhi and Brian, I am able to present Alex as Director of Performance. He seeks your support.

The Club Diary is to become a comprehensive plan and central point of reference for all activities. Through Andy Pearce and Lawrence it is to be available on the web and through Graham in print.

Recruitment - As a team member I am working with James and Peter Cookson on phase 2. Lawrence is to give access to the Web library to recruits. Roger has agreed to teach Rhythm.

Harnessing Excellence and Enthusiasm – We are incredibly lucky to have talent like Rhi, Brian and our other deputies including Phillip, Meyrick and now Peter Cookson. I want to encourage small groups and quartets and ensure lots of new songs find their way to us and our audiences so that no-one can say they are not musically fulfilled. A small group is rehearsing Baby It's Cold Outside and hopefully a quartet will be performing a new chorus song soon. I was able to secure the services of John Ward to coach the quartet for O Holy Night.

Teamwork. I am working to bring together individuals and their talents.

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Club Structure (A revised and more comprehensive structure through the Executive including a re-draft of the Year Book)

Coaching of individuals - Rhi allowed me to get coaching materials onto our web site through Lawrence. I am trying to get a complete set of tools there for our in house coaches to use for recruits and for you.

Peter Dawson Evening 24 Jan – Heather is working with Pat. John Ward has very kindly agreed to sing with the remnants of Figaro. Pat wants her family to have some idea of what they missed. It should be a real fun evening. *Please plan your contributions.*

RICHARD LEATHEM

Chairman

EDITORIAL

Within a few weeks of proudly accepting the Director of Musical Events role I have sadly tendered my resignation. I'm afraid my optimism was short lived. I was soon made to realise that the responsibilities which I thought went with the role to make or influence decisions were not available to me. Therefore I decided that the post was not for me. Thank you for your support and I apologise for wasting time. Instead I will continue with a smaller subset of tasks.

One of my continuing tasks will be Tag Rag, a job I enjoy doing even after twenty-nine years. The March issue in 2009 will start the 30th anniversary year. I could have not done this without the sustained support from a wide range of regular contributors to whom I am very grateful and particularly to Irene my editorial assistant in the backroom! Without the executive role to worry about I will be able to spend more time writing my monthly Editorial to complement the activities we get up to. Whenever I missed out on that job in the Geoff Sassé era he was always keen to remind me that it was a duty I shouldn't overlook.

My goal has always been to meet the publishing deadline believing that regularity is the hallmark of a quality publication. In my mind it provides a heartbeat of news and information on Club activities that readers can rely on.

My thanks go to all this month's contributors particularly Barry Howard who has crafted the BOTY nomination citations into a concise article. ~~Thanks also to Bob Ridley for providing the ad for the King Singers visit to the Swan Theatre at High Wycombe. I know it's early notice and so does Bob but it fills a page that would otherwise be blank!~~

This month I get the opportunity to print the AGM reports which give us an insight into the 'State of the Union' from the people that matter. Thanks to Rhiannon, Julian and Alex for putting their thoughts onto paper. This is the first year for a long time that we have had a written report on the financial state of the Club. It is very welcome coming at a time when we are changing over the accounting procedure from Accruals to Cash to align to the needs of our newfound charitable status. Thank you Alex. I can see a few Tag Rag articles explaining these different methods to enlighten us all.

I have also decided to put the Christmas Greetings in Tag Rag on hold for this year. It is sad that a charity will miss out from our members' generosity but it is a lot of extra work that I would prefer not to have to do at this time. This work unfortunately will coincide with the work needed to get the accommodation arrangements sorted for the Away Weekend. I have spoken to Sean O'Shea who provided the stimulus for the idea. Another year...

GRAHAM STARKIE

Editor



BOTY 2008

The Barbershopper Of The Year award was very well supported this year with 9 nominations for the prestigious Peter Rowe Memorial Trophy. This year, I believe, we had more nominations than we have had for many years.

Below is a selection of the citations each nominee received. The nominees are in alphabetical order.

PETER DAWSON

'Peter was a great guy who demonstrated untold dedication to the club. He was always cheerful and a great inspiration'

'Tireless help and inspiration to us all, Peter was a team player 'par excellence' and a constant source of encouragement'

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'For his dedication and never ending support in the last months of his life, even though he must have been suffering'

Bearing in mind his terminal condition which he obviously knew about but did not make public, just emphasises the character of the guy, and the obvious regard he had for the club'

BRIAN MILBANK

'Brian has given many years of sterling service to the chorus. He is the longest serving section leader. He possesses quite outstanding musical ability'

'Brian leads the chorus with energy and enthusiasm and always brings a sense of fun to rehearsal'

'Brian devotes huge amounts of time and energy - often behind the scenes - to the effective running of the music side of the club's activities'

KEN MILLS

For his continuing loyalty to the club as Treasurer. In particular his tenacious approach to the challenging and difficult role that he makes look so easy'

LAWRENCE MCNULTY

'For his outstanding work in publicising the club and its activities to the general public through the media, for many years and complete renewal of the club's web site, which he has carried out with enthusiasm'

JAMES PORTER

'As a member of last years MiH course James has been a great help in settling us in to the chorus. He has taken on leadership of the tenor section and the organisation of this year's MiH course'

BOB RIDLEY

'Fantastic work to get Charity Status for the club. also an excellent secretary'

ALEC RUSSELL

'His work on choreography and behind the scenes on the accounts. Alec's dedication to the chorus in a quiet unassuming manner, also his reliable support and contribution to the Daytimers'

GRAHAM STARKIE

'Graham continues to produce Tag Rag and Notices regularly, has designed and seen through the design of the ingenious trolleys to carry the risers, gets the riser van MOT'd. He helped Andy in assessing the weekend venues and produced extremely detailed evaluations'

PHILLIP WARD

'The hard work on behalf of TVC organising hotel, transport, etc. at the Cheltenham 2008 Convention. His role as an assistant chorus director with Day Timers and the full chorus'

'Excellent stand in for Rhi'

Peter Dawson received nearly 50% of the votes and so the Award goes to him posthumously. It will be presented to his wife Pat at his memorial evening on the 24th January. He was a very popular winner. Thank you for your support.

BARRY HOWARD.

2008 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORTS

CHORUS DIRECTOR'S AGM REPORT 07/8

This is probably one of the most challenging reports I've had to write in my career as a CD/MD.

This has not been an easy year for any of us, with so many unexpected things happening to individuals and to the chorus as a whole. However, I believe that TVC is strong enough to overcome all of the trials that we have experienced to date so that we can grow into a more cohesive unit that works better together.

We all know the highs and lows of this last year.

We were lucky enough to retain several very talented and committed men from our MiH course last year. They continue to make a very worthwhile contribution to TVC and bring with them an added dimension that is so necessary for the continued growth of TVC. Let's hope that we attract more men into our chorus from this year's initiative.

The Christmas Show was a success, even if it did mean me driving straight from Birmingham to get there in time to be on stage with you all!! A very happy time for us all I think!!

The Away Weekend was a success, and attendance was good. The follow-through from this event enabled us to build towards the forthcoming competition.

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Also, we were fortunate enough to have Mark Grindall working with us throughout the year consolidating the work he begun with us previously. I know from conversations and feedback from the PDT that his work on Training the Trainers was excellent, and that they valued his teaching. They had the opportunity to put into operation the skills that he had taught in small group teaching sessions and the information/knowledge is now beginning to filter down into the chorus. It is very difficult for people to stand and teach/deliver to a group of people that is essentially their peers. It requires strength of character. It will take time and consistent and continued effort from everyone to make this initiative successful. Mark's feedback from Convention identified the areas of development in both songs.

It was also good to have Emma back with us. Her rapport with the chorus is always refreshing and she reminded us in her own way of the things we should be doing to make our performance better. I hope that her association with TVC continues.

Perversely Convention was a kind of high for me as I really expected to come lower than we did! However, we were in the right position. The sad thing was that we all knew it could have been better. I know that different individuals in the chorus will have their view as to why this happened, and some of them will be blaming me. They may be right. They may also be wrong! The burden of responsibility for me out the front is huge! The position of CD/MD is a very lonely and vulnerable one, and this position that has brought me a whole range of anxieties and disappointments over the last year. I was also acutely embarrassed that I was not on the stage representing TVC as you all have a right to expect. I have apologised for this but it still remains an area of discomfort for me.

Post convention was very difficult for us all, with harsh words and emails circulated around the chorus. My thanks to the large number of guys who took the time to send me personal emails wishing to disassociate themselves from the sentiments and contents of the general emails; they helped me feel a little more positive about my return to TVC at the end of a long, teaching intensive June.

As a chorus we are still coming to terms with events that happened after convention, and it will take us time to readjust to the altered needs of us all. Firstly we lost Trevor, a strong and committed member of TVC. Then there were a series of bereavements for members and friends, and finally we lost Peter.

When Peter died I lost a dear friend, one that listened, shared, supported and advised, with no

conditions, a very rare commodity. We talked for hours on phone, communicated by email and crashed out over drink and meals when Figaro came up to my place in Halkyn!! We talked about music, people, and granddaughters, a subject very dear to both our hearts. His sunny personality and wicked sense of humour, together with his inherent understanding of what was fair, right and possible always brought the voice of common sense to many things that were getting out of hand. He kept us going. We owe it to him to keep things going now in the same way.

We are just over the half way mark with our current MiH course. I think the team would agree with me that it is successful, as a course. The impact on TVC still remains to be seen. I fervently hope that many of the MiH guys stay to become members of TVC. We need them, and I think they would like to be with us as well. Let's hope that in a year's time we'll be able to say that the initiative was really successful. A big "thank you" to the Buddies who have taken over their roles within MiH with commitment and energy, it's good to see you all so totally involved.

I would like to thank the teaching team (I'm not naming individuals) for willingly stepping into the role/s, so as to take the chorus forward in their development programme, while several of us are engaged with MiH. This dimension of chorus development is so important to us all as a music community.

I would like to thank all the members of the Executive Committee and Performance Development Team in their various roles. I do not want to single out any one individual. They have tried to support me fully over the last year, particularly through the challenging times pre and post convention. Their help has kept me going when I was close to stopping.

I hope this next year will be fulfilling and positive for us all. I will finish where I began, I believe that TVC is strong enough to overcome all of the trials that we have experienced to date so that we can grow into a more cohesive unit that works better together.

Onwards and upwards!

RHIANNON

STOP PRESS

The late arrival of copy means that John Price's AGM report is printed on page 23 instead of the King Singers ad I used from Bob Ridley.

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PERFORMANCE TEAM AGM REPORT 07/8

The underlying theme of the year was the quest for improved quality in our singing underpinned by more consistent coaching especially from Mark Grindall, but also of course from Rhiannon and the TVC members who participated in the “coach the coaches” training. The ongoing aim is to exploit more fully this latter in-house resource. At the pre-Convention friends and family evening our visiting international judge remarked on the significant improvement in the quality of our singing, and, more especially, in its consistency.

Our singouts kicked off with a happy and successful contribution to Emma’s wedding, including the only public airing of “I’m Beginning to See The Light” ever achieved by TVC! Those who were lucky enough to participate in the Poland trip will carry fond memories of the preceding concerts in Krakow and Warsaw and, of course, the standing ovation afforded us by an audience comprised largely of youngsters young enough to be our grandchildren!

Despite our best efforts our performance at Convention was a bitter disappointment to all of us, no less, I can assure you, to the Performance Team. Somehow it simply got away from us and, after due deliberation, the Team carries forward for next year a notebook of perceived problems and, more importantly, potential solutions. At least we can say that we halted our downward trend and can hopefully regard our second consecutive fifth place as a platform for a fight back. Our overall score was only 3.5% down on our 2006/7 performance and to have gained the fourth place this year would have needed, coincidentally, only that same 3.5% improvement. That has to be achievable as a minimum - and hopefully more. The Team will be ensuring that Rhiannon is in the driving seat for next year’s Convention.

We delivered a quality performance at the “Voices for Hospices” charity event. Henley Craft Fair, Ferrari Fun Day and RHS Wisley, all outdoor events, were tackled well in all the circumstances. However, one of those circumstances was the no-show of many members of the chorus. It is difficult to reconcile the plea for more singouts with the frequent absences at those which we do secure. We need commitment for all singouts, however modest and inconvenient.

At this point I should like to congratulate Meyrick and the Daytimers on their high volume of singouts during the year.

2007/8 also saw the need to consolidate the five new songs which we had learned during the previous year. The Team is making every effort to deliver quality learning materials but, once again, more commitment to private learning is required from the chorus. Nevertheless we managed to add a further four new songs to the repertoire during 2007/8, two short of our “Back to Basics” annual target.

I should like to thank the chorus for their replies to both the “Back to Basics” questionnaire and the Post- Convention Survey. Those frank and positive responses will continue to be taken into account by the Performance Team under Brian’s direction.

As I stand down as its director my thanks go to all members of the Performance Team for their hard work and energy over the past 33 months. If at times we appeared not to succeed, it was certainly not for the want of trying. Rhiannon continues as a tower of strength and is supported well by Brian and, ever more ably, by Phillip. Our thanks go to them for that difficult job up front.

Our year opened with a happy participation in a church service. More recently we have joined in two deeply sad services for both Trevor and Peter. Trevor’s enthusiasm and commitment were palpable. He would have contributed a lot to the Club.

Peter was an innovative and driven member of the Performance Team, continually striving to expand his technical knowledge and to find relevant ways to share that knowledge and his own consummate performance skills with the chorus. Along with the other six members of “NOTH” and Figaro I had the privilege of doubling with Peter on three octet singouts. I regard those as the highlights of my barbershop experiences. I can think of no better way to finish this report than by recommending to you a narrative which Peter penned almost exactly a year ago and which he entitled “THE TVC DREAM CAME TRUE”. Peter himself described it as somewhat whimsical, albeit it was written after a rather successful rehearsal evening. Above all he wrote it as an encouragement to all of us to do better. I have asked Graham to publish it in Notices and the Year Book. Please read and digest it.

Note - Peter's paper follows Julian's report.

Convention is only five minutes out of the whole year and the rest of the year is when our external audiences experience us. But let’s start that Convention climb back at Llandudno. Let’s do it for Peter.

JULIAN CHARMAN

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THE TVC DREAM CAME TRUE

It's a Tuesday evening in October 2007 at 7.45 and Rhi is taken aback because all the guys are on the risers ready for the warmup. It's a good natured warmup because the guys go for it enthusiastically and everyone is smiling – of course smiling is infectious so Rhi's already looking forward to an agreeable evening. The warmup progresses for 20 minutes and Rhi can't help being impressed by how responsive the chorus is to her direction.

Halfway through the first song Rhi notices something, the basses are singing like the smoothest Rolls Royce and the impact on the song (Everybody Step) is staggering – the basses have given the rest of the chorus something really powerful, light and pleasant to work with and it brings to the song a whole new lease of life. Perhaps this is just a fluke she asks herself.

Into the second song and it's the same story from the Basses – they've maintained the lightness of touch and added a previously unheard energy and rhythm to Swing Low. So much in fact that the leads are able to take advantage of it and add a brightness and vitality to the melody. The chromatic sequence is faultless with all parts listening carefully to the meter and bringing a glow to Rhi's face.

By now of course Rhi is asking herself if she's been hitting the sauce too hard or maybe she needs a rest from singing altogether!!!

But on it goes. The Leads soar up to all the notes in Let All Mortal Flesh and the Baris and Tenors add all the magic that only they can bring to such a beautiful piece of music. It's simply breathtaking.

In Have a Little Talk, the tag is executed brilliantly with lots of silkily controlled power from the basses that allows the Leads, Baris and Tenors to sing their notes with a perfect blend of excitement and composure.

The practice comes to a close with two stunning presentations of Tree in a Meadow followed by the cream on the cake – the chorus gets Once Upon a Time just right, thanks to beautifully blended singing combined with total attention to Rhi's direction.

Rhi is overjoyed with the evening. The chorus are transfixed by the enormity of what they have achieved.

So who made all this happen ?

The answer is simple – you did!!!

The practice described above can happen to the TVC all the time. There are times throughout an evening (most evenings in fact) when it does happen but we do often let the quality slip through our fingers.

How good does the story sound – it's magical and for the TVC it's all within our grasp.

But there's a price to pay; we have to put in the right kind of effort to get out the right kind of rewards. By effort we're not referring to Rhi, Brian and the SLs standing out front picking up wrong notes or mistuning – there will always be a need for some of that but we can reduce it dramatically by doing the right things right.

So what is the right kind of effort?

The right kind of effort is a back to basics approach – let's start by doing things properly. We all know what that means and no doubt everyone in the chorus has weaknesses that they are ready to own up to and want to improve upon.

What follows is a collection of helpful hints and tips that we can all refer to as preparation for this wonderful hobby. For ease of presentation they are separated into the 3 P's of Practice, Preparation and Performance. In reality they are all interrelated and apply equally whatever you are doing.

So, let's have a look at how we can start to achieve the RBHC dream.

PRACTICE

First things first. Tuesday night is a rehearsal night and not a practice night. Occasionally there will be a Section Practice on a Tuesday but these are few and far between.

Practising is something for you to do at home alone or, if you wish with other guys in the chorus. It's personal time for you to work on your singing and performance. Aim to sing at least once a day. 30 minutes daily is excellent but just 15 minutes work every day will pay massive dividends. Try and set a standard time and place to do it so that you are in the right mental frame when you practice.

Here are some PRACTICE things to work on:

PRACTICE

- P ut life into what you do. Look for pleasure in practising what you do with enthusiasm and gusto
- R esonance – is what we need from your voice – use Vvvvv Cluck

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- Aim to use all the good singing techniques you've been taught – every time you sing. Don't be lazy
- Clean vowel and word sounds are the way we communicate – work to eliminate your spoken dialect
- Try to be the very best every time you sing – like Pavarotti or Streisand – don't settle for second best
- Isolate your own hot spots by listening carefully to yourself – get help to deal with them from SLs etc
- Collect your thoughts and plan your practice – make sure you enjoy achieving your aims each time
- Every day is practice day – make it part of your life – it will bring you fulfilment and joy

PREPARE

Preparing is about getting ready to sing and staying that way through a performance. It's the hardest part of singing!!

You'll want to prepare yourself mentally for the song to make sure that your personal level of concentration is right. You'll want to prepare yourself physically so that you know you can support the breath management requirements and presentation elements of the song and of course you'll want to prepare Rhi and the audience for what you're about to deliver. So there's a lot of thinking to do here and the more you put it into practice the better prepared you'll continue to be.

Here are some PREPARE things to work on:

- Posture is king!! Stand like a singer – tall, relaxed, comfortable and above all **CONFIDENT**
- Remember to warm up right through your range. A good warm up is invaluable. Take time over it
- Expect and aim to sing well using well supported breath and accurate breath management
- Placement of word sounds should always be forward. Work on this to create focussed sound
- Awareness of your fellow singers is vital. Sing for them as well as yourself. Do not compete!!
- Resonant singing is your aim. Think about Vvv Cluck and forward placement as you sing
- Everyone you sing with and for wants you to do well – never let them or yourself down – be the best

PERFORM

This is why we sing – to perform to an audience. Never forget – the audience is the judge of what you do!!!

This is where you'll bring all your craft, technique, discipline, concentration and knowledge into something that the audience will love you for. You own the performance and the audience is who you have invited to share it. So make sure that you give the audience at least as good an experience as you have performing the song.

Develop the habit of performing fully every song every time you sing – you will be a much better singer for doing so and you'll find that people will want to hear more when you do.

Here are some PERFORM things to work on:

- Put everything you've brought along into your performance – especially rehearsal performances
- Energy is the lifeblood of your performance. Let the audience hear and see that energy always
- Refresh your posture, breathing and singing throughout your performance – do not go asleep!!
- Feel the audience. Work with them and give them what they want to hear. That's your job not theirs
- O means nothing – that's what you're allowed to keep back in reserve - **NOTHING**
- Remember that at all times you are the person telling the story and doing the entertaining – do it!!
- Maximum performance effort is repaid by a great audience reaction – learn that and you'll love it!!!!

SIMPLE SINGING REMINDERS

- Posture – legs, back neck, head, shoulders, eyes
- No competing, light singing
- Vvvvv Cluck, Drainpipe structure
- Zoooo for 'ooooo'
- Lose your spoken dialect when singing
- Clean vowels, Short consonants. Big vowels, small consonants
- No competing, light singing
- Listen to the pitch. Sing cleanly and lightly enough to keep on pitch
- Sing all the word sounds

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- Maintain the rhythm – by making sure you watch the CD and manage your breathing effectively
- No competing, light singing
- Do not conduct for the CD
- Coffee breaks are for the interval
- Through the song - Refresh your posture
- Through the song - Refresh your voice
- Through the song - Refresh your energy
- Through the song - Refresh your breathing
- No competing, light singing
- Do not want to be a good singer – just be a good singer
- Practice every day – push yourself a little at a time so that you can do more and better. It works
- Look for areas where you know you can improve and ask for help in the club from BM, Rhi, SLs etc
- Praise yourself for doing things well – celebrate success!!!!!!
- Work on the basics all the time – they will get better and so will you
- Can you do more with your voice than you're doing now? You know the answer to that!!
- Sing mentally. Imagine soaring up to high notes and gliding over low ones
- Well supported, freely produced, resonant singing – how hard could it be??
- Only the audience has the luxury of getting lost in the music – you must control it to let that happen
- Never sing louder than beautiful

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The registration on 8th September 2008 of RBHC as a charity has provided the opportunity to change from accruals to receipts and payments accounting. It is intended to provide a single set of accounts for both the AGM and the Charity Commissioners. Although the latter do not need to receive anything until the end of the 08-09 year, draft accounts have been prepared for 07-08 in a form thought to be acceptable to them, and are presented to the AGM as a 'work in progress'. The previous year's figures (06-07) have been re-analysed as receipts and payments and are included for comparison.

The figures show that, in this year (07-08) compared with last year (06-07), income from singouts, daytimers and sales of CDs has significantly decreased, whereas income from bank interest has risen. Expenditure has risen because of the purchase and equipping of the new riser van, and the employment of singing coaches, although chorus director expenses and support for social activities has decreased. The net result is a trading deficit of about £13,800 this year - approximately the cost of the new riser van, compared with a surplus of about £24,500 last year - approximately the value of Gordon Redhead's legacy to the club. Both of these are exceptional items, apart from which the club's finances have been fairly stable during these two years.

Decisions have yet to be made about the best way to manage and present the balance of transactions of members' money, paid through the club's bank account for hotel accommodation, air fares and similar services associated with 'away events', such as Away Weekends, Conventions and Overseas visits. The last two of these usually involve receipts and payments spread over 2 or 3 accounting years, which requires representation in the club accounts to balance these with the end of year bank statements. Although the Charity Commissioners are unlikely to be interested in the transaction details of members' money, as this is strictly outside their remit, they will doubtless require an explanation of these amounts, sometimes quite large, and reliable auditing. A second issue is that receipts from members for 'away events' and subsequent expenditure on their behalf have not always summed to zero, with a small surplus, or more usually a deficit, paid into or from club funds. This will no longer be acceptable, as the charity funds may not be used to benefit members. Advice is being sought about the best way to deal with these matters.

ALEX RUSSELL

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE PIGGOTT SCHOOL, WARGRAVE ON TUESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2008

1. Welcome

The Chairman, John Price, welcomed the members to the meeting. Those present were listed in Heather Mill's club register.

2. Apologies

These were received from Brian Callaghan, Craig Baker, Richard Leatham, Peter Groves, Colin Thatcher and Syd Seward

3. Matters arising from minutes of the last AGM held on 23rd October 2007

The minutes had been issued in the 2007/2008 Year Book.

The AGM was invited to endorse the 2006-2007 accounts which had been independently examined. (these are unchanged from those presented in the Yearbook). Endorsement was proposed by Graham Starkie and seconded by Jim Downing and carried unanimously. There were no other matters arising.

4. Child Protection

The meeting was invited to reaffirm para 5.1 of the Club Rules :

'5.1 The RBHC believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people under the age of eighteen by a commitment to practise which protects them. This is laid out in the RBHC Child Protection Policy Statement. This statement shall be affirmed and renewed at each AGM of the Club.'

This was proposed by Andy Pearce and seconded by James Porter and carried unanimously.

5.1 Chairman's Report: John Price

A full copy of John Price's report is attached to the minutes.

5.2 Finance Report: Alex Russell

Alex presented a summary of the accounts which is attached to these minutes.

Alex explained that the layout of the accounts was different from previous years as he was following the recommendations of the Charity Commission. The accounts will be 'independently examined' in the next few months. Alex thanked Ken Mills for his unstinting efforts as the treasurer for the club.

A full copy of Alex's report is attached to the minutes.

Mervyn Clark suggested that the accounts should be audited by a paid outside professional. Bob Ridley pointed out that we were following the Charity Commission guidance. The model accounts that they published for our level of income used a member who was not a Trustee to 'independently examine' the accounts.

5.3 Performance Report: Julian Charman

A full copy of Julian's report is attached to these minutes. Julian referred specifically to Peter Dawson's document 'TVC Dream' and copies were available. Julian said that this would remain valid for 25 years.

5.4 CD Report: Rhiannon Owens-Hall

A full copy of Rhiannon's report is attached to the minutes.

John presented Rhiannon with the CD trophy which is given in recognition of our CD at Convention. He pointed out that we were indeed fortunate to have such a talented CD. The Chorus supported this presentation with a standing ovation.

6. Confirmation of Officers 2008-2009

At the EGMs held on 30 September and 21 October 2008 the following Officers/Trustees were elected to form the new Executive Committee for the year 2008/2009. They were welcomed by the members present and take office at the end of the AGM.

Chairman	Richard Leatham
Finance	Alex Russell
Membership	Ken Mills
Marketing	Lawrence McNulty
Performance	Brian Milbank
Administration	Bob Ridley
Musical Events	Graham Starkie

7. Presentation Of Quartet Trophies

This trophy consisting of 4 tankards was given to the Club by Gerry Holland in 1975. It is awarded to the highest placed Club quartet in

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competition. John was pleased to present Andy Rzyzsko on behalf of *Figaro* with the award for coming 7th overall in the UK Convention last May.

8. Barbershopper of the Year (BOTY) Award

Barry Howard said that there was a long list of those nominated for Barbershopper of the Year. Following a vote by those members present he announced that Peter Dawson was the BOTY for the year 2008 and that more than half the votes cast were for Peter. The trophy will be presented to Mrs. Pat Dawson later.

presented to the AGM. As the accounts had not yet been 'examined' he announced that the 2008 AGM would be suspended and that he would give appropriate notice of the date when the AGM would be resumed. The sole business would be the presentation of the examined accounts. The suspension was timed at 2240pm.

Bob Ridley
D. Admin.
30 October 2008

9. Honorary Members Review

The list of honorary members was printed on the agenda - Haydn Adams, Gerry Holland, John James, Heather Mills, Barry Nowell, Tony Searle, Irené Starkie, Barry Towner, Sharon Towner, Rhiannon Hall and Peter Powell. Bob explained that all those on the list had performed meritorious service on behalf of the Club and this was summarized on the back page of the yearbook. Continuance was proposed by Andy Pearce and seconded by Denis Swift. The vote was carried unanimously.

VERDI'S 'RIGOLETTO' QUARTET

If you want to study the faces and characterisation of the words of a song you could do worse than taking a look at the quartet from 'Rigoletto' on Youtube :-

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYRZOEzoOgQ&feature=related>

Briefly each character is telling their part of the story which is :-

10. Any Other Business

A question from the floor queried the progress in replacing the stage uniform. John replied that a major effort on this failed as the colour/material combination selected performed badly under stage lighting. This is a continuing action.

Syd Seward asked if there were plans to have a coach for travel to Convention in Llandudno. John said that this would need to be considered. Roger Wilkinson said more effort should be made to encourage quartets. He was disappointed that the success of the Rockaholics in achieving second place in the BABS Seniors Quartet Competition had not been promoted in the club. Also three members of the club in Catch 22 had reached the semifinals of the BABS quartet competition. Roger rejected the suggestion that the quartet members should have written this up for TagRag.

Geraint Lewis noted that in his other clubs they had an Executive Committee post for a Vice Chairman who became Chairman after a period in this post. This was effective in both supporting the Chairman and learning ahead of time what the Chairman's job entailed. John said that this needed to be considered.

The heroine Gilda(soprano), daughter of the court jester Rigoletto(bass), has fallen in love with the duke of Mantua(Pavarotti-tenor), much to her father's chagrin. To cure her of any illusions about the duke's good intentions, Rigoletto takes Gilda along to watch the duke's actions with Maddalena(contralto), a woman of easy virtue. The duke and Maddalena appear inside a dilapidated shack, Gilda and Rigoletto outside. In the quartet Maddalena playfully rebuffs the duke's advances. Gilda asks herself how she could have fallen for such a man, and Rigoletto promises revenge.

You don't really have to know any Italian to understand from the phrasing and particularly the faces of each member of the quartet to know what they are actually saying, just study the eyes, eyebrows, cheekbones in addition to the stance of each performer quite apart from the beautiful singing.

CHRIS BRADLEY

SMILES

"How late does the chorus sing?" -

"Oh, about a half a beat behind the director."

"How do you put a twinkle in a tenor's eye?" -

"Shine a flashlight in his ear."

11. Suspension of the AGM

Bob Ridley noted that the new Constitution required that the examined accounts be

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BARBERSHOP BABES

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO
NOVEMBER'S TRIO**

**MURRAY DOWNING
ALAN HILL
ROGER WILKINSON**

BBC CHOIR OF THE YEAR

**JUDGES ACCLAIM
COTTONTOWN CHORUS.**

I have just returned from Liverpool where the semi finals of the BBC Choir of the year competition were staged at the weekend.

I was there to cheer on my daughter Catherine and Mike McKeown's wife Gabi whose chorus Signature (LABBS champions 2006) were down to the last six in the Adult category. Cottontown Chorus from Bolton (2005 and 2007 BABS Champions) had also progressed to this stage. One winner was to be named on the night for automatic progression to the final, with the possibility of a wild card award at the end of the weekend allowing another chorus to progress.

The six choruses/choirs from very diverse backgrounds were hosted by Aled Jones. Cottontown had what I thought might be the disadvantage of being first on, but they gave a stunning performance of 'If I give my heart to you' followed by a fully choreographed version of 'South Rampart Street Parade'. I don't know how the moves came over on the radio(!) but the performance wowed the audience and judges. Signature performed third, a lovely sensitive version of My Funny Valentine, a second song whose name I don't know, and a fabulous version of 'Ain't no Mountain High Enough' which received prolonged applause.

There was a judging panel of four (no barbershoppers), a couple of whom gave 'first impression' comments after each performance before the full panel retired to reach their considered verdict at the end. Cottontown were praised for their energy and for not letting their choreography interfere with their musicianship (sound familiar?).

Signature were commended for the warmth of their performance and their engaging stage presence.

Summing up, the head judge highlighted how the competition has developed over the years. He said many more choruses, even those with a classical background, are realising the need to perform and engage the audience rather than just delivering the notes. He also commented on how the competition helps choruses compare themselves across genres and to learn from each other. Announcing the winner, the Radio Three man said they had demonstrated musicianship and the highest performance standards, and he named Cottontown to deafening applause.

I learned later that Signature did not achieve one of the wild cards, but they must have been mighty close.

CHRIS SCHRIER



ASSOCIATE MEMBER NEWS

By BOB RIDLEY Acting Assistant to the Associate Member Coordinator

I called to see Ron and Stella Collis on 13 November and we enjoyed a long chat. We discussed the recent letters and several news items he had picked up from the television. As a second world war veteran of Africa and Italy, he had appreciated the moving ceremonies at the Cenotaph. Ron is continuing to get out in the wheelchair when the weather permits. The social services have insisted on fitting a wooden rail to the front door ramp and they have done a nice job.

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It was good to hear from Martyn Lapworth. I hope his bumpy ride gets smoother. Peter Simmons sang with the chorus despite the onset of MS until it was not possible to continue. Our best wishes go to him and his wife Anne and the new dog Herbie. Ron and Stella much enjoyed the letters.

TagRag is available on our shiny new website, www.tvchorus.co.uk, thanks to the efforts of Graham Starkie and Lawrence McNulty. The link is half way down the member's page and access does not require a password. A brave few take TagRag this way which saves postage. If you are willing to join them please email me.

Thank you to all the Associate Members for their continuing support.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER LETTERS

Martyn Lapworth

Dear Ron

How are things with you? I hope the recent bout of damp weather hasn't affected you.

Firstly may I say how sorry I was to hear of Peter Dawson's passing. I have many memories of singing tags with him and Aidan late at night after rehearsal, usually until the neighbours told us to go away! Also Peter and Bagatelle sang at Debs and my wedding, I remember the glee in his face as he sang Side by Side in the church while we signed the register. I hope the chorus will find suitable opportunities to remember his achievements.

My year has been somewhat eventful! Out of work for 3 months, in work for a day, out of work for a couple more months, in work for 3 months, out of work for another 3 months then get 2 jobs at once! Contract work can have its benefits but this year I can't say I've seen many of them! Knowing I was out of work a friend offered some part-time chauffeur driving to me, all I needed to do was get CRB cleared, do a 'taxi' driving test and apply for the badge. Easy I thought - I've 3 other CRB clearances already, passed my advanced driving test 20 years ago so would be good to earn a bit until a permanent job arrives. Easy, well kind of, but quick? No. Waiting for a test date was nearly 3 months! So I got offered a perm job the same week I got my private hire badge! Still, I've been able to squeeze a few weekends of airport and local weddings in around the various other things going on.

Coming to which, I've moved house, competed at quartet prelims, been to ladies convention - only to watch you understand - and had flu. That was just

since the beginning of October. So I'm looking forward to a rest sometime, unpacking sometime earlier, and finding my cheque book sometime before that! Obviously I'm still seeing the children regularly, James was 4 in the middle of October, and Hannah was 8 in the summer. Hannah particularly is very busy, Brownies, Flute and piano lessons and singing in the school choir keep her occupied. James is still enjoying pre-school, he starts big school next year.

Anyway I've rambled for long enough. Pass on my apologies to Bob for not paying on time, one year I will get the right month and be able to find my cheque book at the same time!

Best Wishes

Anne and Peter Simmons

Dear Ron

Anne and I are pleased to hear you are settled near your family. We are also pleased to be near some of Anne's family whom we see fairly regularly. We are still enjoying life here in Yaxley. Our big garden keeps Anne busy, off the streets and out of my hair. We lost our wonderful Labrador Oaki in April who was very old. Then one Friday morning Anne went to Wood Green Animal Shelter and came home with Herbie, a fifteen month old Lurcher. He is a greyhound crossed with a German Shepherd and we are really enjoying him. I actually think he is 99% greyhound so Anne is getting a lot of fast walks. He has had one or two re-homing issues but Anne is getting on top of all that.

We were so sorry to hear of the death of Peter Dawson and indeed Sylvia Wills. We knew Sylvia quite well from our time with the chorus and feel so sad for Barry. Our deepest sympathy to him and to Peter's family.

Regards and best wishes to all.

SMILES

"How does a lead change a light bulb?"

"He just holds the bulb and the world revolves around him."

"How many basses does it take to change a light bulb?"

"None. They just light candles and open some beers."

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

MORE RAMBLINGS FROM 34 YEARS

Episode Two(See August 2008 for Number 1)

Once into the barbershop “scene” life’s horizons continued to expand!! I well remember the first visit to a BABS Convention in Brighton in 1975. It was a great journey and wonderful experience, in more ways than one! We (LBHC) met on the Concourse of Lime Street Station on a Friday, I’m not sure exactly when it was, but you couldn’t fail to miss the group as they were singing... continuously, much to the amazement of the onlookers!! We were only given time to catch a breath and then Bob has us all singing again, and again... and AGAIN!! All of this was before we’d even got on the train!! Anyway, we eventually got on... hung out of the window and sang to those that were seeing us off, and then we sat down... to do more singing!!!! I guess by this time we’d learned in the region of about 20 – 24 barberpole songs. We did the usual thing of stringing a series of old songs into a medley and just enjoyed the thrill of the sound!!! LBHC made a good sound... if somewhat raw. Was this early resonance I wonder?? That aspect of the craft was an unopened book to me at the time! Anyway, we sang and we sang and we sang ALLTHE WAY TO EUSTON!!!

We arrived at Euston and got off the train. Bob made us sing on the platform!! We went through the ticket gate!!! Bob made us sing!! We arrived on the concourse, Bob made us sing!!!! We went down the escalators... and we sang!! We went to get our tickets... they refused to give us the tickets UNLESS WE SANG!!! We got on the tube... we sang! We got off the tube... we sang... By this time I think we were either at Waterloo or Victoria (I can’t remember!! I wonder why!). We snag our way onto the train and gently sang all the way to Brighton!!

We arrived late!!! Most of the welcoming party wasn’t there, but they heard us!! By this time I think I was hiding behind my case!!!! We were put onto coaches and arrived at BUTLINS!!!! I think this actually was in Worthing... but it could have been anywhere in the world as I’d lost all sense of time and was very tired!! We were welcomed with a small group singing You’re as Welcome as the Flowers in May. Bob immediately resolved to put it into our repertoire when we arrived home!!

We were given our rooms. And told we would be on “2nd sittings for meals”. Actually the rooms were more like small cupboards... with mildew and mould growing up the walls!! There was a tannoy system in the wall and we hoped we would not be called via this system!! WRONG!!!!!!!!!!!!!! We were called for 7.30 breakfast at 6.45... but we were also called

for 6.30 breakfast at 5.45, they weren’t able to differentiate between the rooms!! All you could hear from the adjacent rooms were sounds of people hitting the walls with shoes in an effort to try and switch off the noise!!!

Anyway, when we arrived we dumped our stuff and hurried back downstairs to see what was going on. I was met by Judith Sanders, who is now a lifelong friend, coming up the stairs to meet me. She said “There are 4 American ladies, wearing coronets being very serious about their singing in the lounge downstairs. They seem quite good.” However, I didn’t go there, I went with the guys of LBHC and found them being “courted”, I think that’s the best word for it, by guys from Great Western Chorus. They were, very slowly, plying our guys with more and more alcohol and... the singing became more and more raucous!! They were being nobbled!! Apparently the word was out on the street that LBHC was a force to be reckoned with, and the other contestants, who were there were very serious about their gold medal, were having none of it! They saw it as being a 3 horse race between Great Western, Crawley and Newcastle. Incidentally, this last chorus was made up of 65 men at that time! Where did they all go!!

There was also a quartet competition. The departing champions, The Ringleaders (made up of Paul Wren (tr), Bob Walker (ld), Ron Avis (br) and Bill Little (bs) were great!! They became my immediate heroes!! However, the winning quartet, The Five Bridge Four from the Newcastle area won, and if I remember correctly The Barrytones were 2nd. If they weren’t they were 3rd! I was bowled over by all the men singing.

I also went into another room, I can’t remember where, and saw a ladies competition, judged by the 4 American ladies. I heard the Minor Birds, the Newcastle ladies, The Avon Belles, Purbrook Sweet Adelines and there were several other quartets but I can’t remember their names!! Then the Americans sang! I had never heard anything like it in my life before!!! They were only the 1971 SA champions, The Brons Tones!!!! They were, and still are, my absolute favourite ladies quartet. I have all their recordings and their music is still as good today. During the weekend MIXED scratch quartets as well as unmixed scratched quartets were encouraged to enter a competition. Judith and I sang with Marcus and Laurence. We sang “Shine on me” with choreography and came 5th!! Great fun!!

In the last show at the convention The Brons Tones sang a song that became my immediate favourite of all time. You can hear the audience gasp as they sing their descending semitone passage in 4 parts on the

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recording!! It was even more exciting to hear it live. I knew I would just HAVE to perform that song, one way or another!! We (Liverpool Ladies Barbershop Singers, LLBS) sang it in 1979, when we were guests at a BABS convention in Caister and earned ourselves the first standing ovation in British barbershop history, and the men were on their feet first before the women!! Interestingly enough, it took us 3 weeks to learn it from page to stage, including the choreography, and we went "live" with it after our 3rd rehearsal of the song!! When LLBS had their 20 year reunion, in 1996, they sang together, and they asked me to direct. They requested the song and AUTOMATICALLY did the choreo, almost 17 years later!! It was part and parcel of the song!! Judith did a wonderful job with the choreography of that song, it felt right and we never got it wrong!

We arrived home safely after a fantastic weekend. I was exhausted but exhilarated and HOOKED!!! By the way, have you guessed the name of the song? Swing Low Sweet Chariot!!

RHIANNON

SELECTED WEEKLY NOTICES

SINGOUT 18th OCTOBER - Report (21 Oct)

I really don't think that we could have done any better - it was magnificent. My thanks to the nineteen members that turned out on a day when the weather showed us that it still has the ability to get our top-coats off and keep the word 'summer' in the dictionary. Also thank-you to Brian for waving his arms and keeping an eye on the way we performed the music.

We have Melanie the bride to thank for integrating our performance so well into her wedding service and the vicar, organist and verger for allowing such a radical departure from the norm. That's the only way I can describe the responsibility we had delivering those high spots of the Entrance of the bride with ZING WENT THE STRINGS OF MY HEART and the Recession with our WONDERFUL DAY MEDLEY. It's a model that I would like us to keep and use as often as possible. Just fancy we were competing against the likes of Handel's QUEEN OF SHEBA and Mendelssohn's WEDDING MARCH! This was a bold gamble and Melanie and Piers were ecstatic by the way we did it. I'm sure that that will also be the story others have to tell after talking to many of the guests as we did. This was a truly uplifting experience.

MEN IN HARMONY Week 4 (21 Oct)

We had twenty-two students last week who we anticipate to stay to the end of the course.

Richard Leathem writes - The six-week course now has two more weeks to go after tonight. Each student gets a form tonight to complete which is the basis of a personal singing development plan.

Within the next two weeks there'll be a package which includes an invitation to join us and a CD of the learning track for six songs. They are BIRTH OF THE BLUES, DO YOU HEAR THE PEOPLE SING, EVERYBODY STEP/ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND, FIELDS OF GOLD, ONCE UPON A TIME and SOUND CELEBRATION

The students will also be invited to join us after their lessons from now on. On the night of our AGM Rhiannon is planning to get them to sing CAN YOU FEEL THE LOVE TONIGHT.

At the end of the course we propose to use the seven o'clock session on Tuesdays to get them up to speed on all six songs and provide individual coaching from our trainers as necessary. Within a few weeks we'll provide them with an orientation session(s) to give them an idea of what it means to become a member.

Please check that you are carrying the music for the following four songs just in case you are asked to lend them temporarily to a student: DO YOU HEAR THE PEOPLE SING and BERTHA this week. SOUND CELEBRATION, ONCE UPON A TIME and HEART OF MY HEART the following week.

Don't forget to wear your INFORMAL WALKOUT uniform (polo and chinos) for the duration of the course. The variety of polo shirts usually on display when we request this does not matter and may well give rise to interested inquiries from the course members as to their history.

MASONIC SINGOUT 24th NOVEMBER (28 Oct)

You may have been contacted within the last week to give your support to this event. **Please note that we are no longer required.** Our attendance to sing at the Lodge's 60th Anniversary dinner in Staines did not get the approval of their board. At their meeting on Monday night it was decided that the time for after dinner speeches would be insufficient to accommodate both speeches from their guests and the TVC. Thank you for your cooperation; the Club executive meeting planned for that night will now go ahead.

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AWAY WEEKEND 2009 (28 Oct)

A new contract has now been signed with the hotel confirming the revised 13-15 February dates instead of the March ones. This change has been necessary to ensure that we can have the benefit of John Grant to coach us. He has a commitment in March at the European Barbershop Convention in the Netherlands.

Since the contractual deadlines with the hotel now fall early in the New Year the action to get your bookings is being brought forward to avoid clashing with the Christmas celebrations. Your cooperation is requested. Booking Forms are available from tonight.

(28 Oct)

PETER DAWSON'S

EVENING OF REMEMBRANCE SATURDAY 24th JANUARY 2009

4pm until midnight
Loddon Hall Twyford

There will be a cold-buffet and cash bar.

Pat has expressed a wish that the evening should be a celebration of Peter's love of Barbershop with lots of laughter and up-tempo singing with all his Barbershop friends

PETER DAWSON TRIBUTE PAGE (28 Oct)

Lawrence McNulty writes: A special page has been added to the TVC web site containing tributes to our friend and mentor, Peter Dawson. This can be accessed from either the "About TV Chorus" page or from the "Members Only" home page. If you would like to add your own tribute or have a special photo of Peter that you would like to see on the page, please send your contributions to me.

VAN MATTERS - TAILIFT FENCE (28 Oct)

Riser trolley loaders will have noticed that in recent weeks (nay months!) one of the tailift fences has been broken at the top where the horizontal bar fits onto it. That has now been fixed. This didn't stop the fence from doing its stuff but it was an issue that needed sorting because it was a potential hazard.

If you should notice anything that you think is unusual or needs fixing with the van and its fitting please draw them to the attention of either Dave Colver, Graham Starkie or Bob Ridley. Thank you.

STOP PRESS (28 Oct)

QUARTET WANTED - Meyrick has had a request from 'Daniel' for a quartet to sing a couple of songs this coming Sunday to his girlfriend who works in a

Hartley Witney hotel. There isn't a special occasion he just wants to make a romantic gesture. If there are any quartets that would like to take this up I have the telephone number to follow it up, speak to me - Graham.

BBC CHOIR OF THE YEAR (4 Nov)

Richard Leathem writes - As you may know the BBC Radio3 Choir of the Year competition is reaching a climax. Three of our choruses are right up there with the very best of the nation

Cotton Town Chorus and Signature (LABBS) will be competing as 2 of the 6 finalists on Saturday. It will be broadcast the following weekend probably (watch the paper). The National Barbershop Youth Chorus will be competing in the Open Category Final on Sunday evening.

The Grand Final will be broadcast live on Radio3 and BBC4. One choir/chorus will be declared the BBC Radio3 Adult Choir of the Year and, together with the other category winners and 2 wildcard choices from judges/organisers, will progress to the Grand Final (where an overall winner is declared) which takes place on 7th December in the Royal Festival Hall in London.



HISTORICAL NOTES

5 Years Ago November 2003

6th Daytimers at Thamesfield House Nursing Home

12th Daytimers at the Village Hall, Bray for the Handicap Club.

20th Daytimers at St.Edmunds Court, Bracknell for the Stroke Club.

28th Full Chorus at Donnington Priory, Nr.Newbury for Dreweatte and Neate auctioneers.

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Tributes were paid to Geoff Sasse who died on 31st October. Geoff was one of Tag Rag's greatest contributors over the last 12 years on a wide range of subjects but his forte was travel and cooking. He also used to design the packages of songs that were sung at various venues. He was an entertainer with one of the highlights being his monologues.

10 Years Ago October 1998

7th Chorus appeared on Chiltern Harmony show at the Swan Theatre High Wycombe and shared the stage with this fine ladies chorus under the direction of Wendy Searle. Headlining the bill was Pam Ayres. Pam entertained the audience royally and sung a humorous rendition of the 'Wonderbra' song backed by the ladies chorus.

10th & 24th We enjoyed joint rehearsals with the Guildford Club in preparation for the Christmas shows at St John's Woodley and in the Rhoda McGaw Theatre at Woking on the 6th and 13th December respectively.

After a Club-wide vote it was announced that 90% of our members were in favour of accepting the offer for the TVC to represent BABS at the SPEBSQSA International Convention Anaheim in June 1999. Philip Wilson would be the Project Manager.

15 Years Ago November 1993

13th Southern Prelims held at the Dome Theatre, Brighton

Chorus results:

1st Solent City Chorus	1268 points
2nd Great Western Chorus	1244 "
3rd Thames Valley Chorus	1232 "

TVC incurred a performance time penalty and had 45 points deducted. They had 70 singers on the risers and sang 'Mistakes' and 'Somebody Stole My Gal Medley'. Chorus Director Tony Searle. 16 choruses competed. In the quartet competition won by By Appointment (Bournemouth) our own quartet Bagatelle (Aidan Brand, Peter Dawson, Andy Balchin, Ian Douglas) were in 9th position out of 18 competitors.

During the month the Chorus appeared on the BBC TV show Record Breakers. Also the Chorus toured with the Central Band of the RAF appearing at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Brentwood and Eastbourne with Tom O'Connor as Compere.

At the BABS AGM Tony Searle was elected Chairman.

20 Years Ago November 1988

8th We held the rehearsal night at Theale Green School to include the boys interested in barbershop singing, encouraged by their teacher Jill Yorke. This was the night that Barry Towner of Toronto made his first visit to the club. Barry with his wife Sharon was to return many times to coach us for convention. They are now both Honorary Members of RBHC.

11/13th At the LABBS Convention at Harrogate the Barberettes were in 3rd place behind **1st** Liberty Belles (Stockport) and **2nd** Chordettes (Teignmouth). The Barberettes sang 'Broadway On Opening Night' and 'You Can Have Every Light On Broadway', 16 choruses competed. On the Friday night show a chorus of ladies made up of past quartet champions appeared calling themselves 'The QC's', they were coached and conducted by Pete Powell.

25 Years Ago November 1983

12th Full Chorus at Julian's Garage, Reading, for Arthritic Society.

23rd Full Chorus at St.Mary's School, Maidenhead. For North Town Women's Club.

30th Full Chorus at Hurst Village Hall for Whisley Women's Club

During the month Pete Powell took over as Chorus Director from Graham Lawrence who, after five years with Reading, would now concentrate fully as the Chorus Director of the newly formed Wantage club.

30 Years Ago November 1978

11/13th BABS/LABBS combined convention at Caister. We all boarded a special train at Reading station. The Train had started from Bristol and had the Blue Peter TV cameras and presenters moving up and down the compartments with us all singing all the way to Caister.

BABS Chorus results:

- 1st Crawley Chordsmen
- 2nd Roker Peers Of Harmony
- 3rd Great Western Chorus
- 4th Berkshire Barbershoppers

(TVC) had 35 members on the risers singing 'Back In Dixie Again' and 'South Rampart Street Parade' Chorus Director Pete Powell. 16 choruses competed. Whatever happened to all those black gloves that Dick Coles spent hours sticking on white fingers? Reading provided an award (The Jim

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

Carter Memorial Trophy) to be presented at each convention to the highest placed small chorus. The first winners were Westering (Bridgewater).

The quartet competition was won by the Newtown Ringers (Crawley) with our own Harmony Heritage (Pete Forrest, Nick Carter, Peter Bugden, Ron Collis) in 6th Position. 16 quartets competed and the visiting American quartet was Dealers Choice the 1973 SPEBSQSA champions.

LABBS Chorus results:

1st Tyneside Ladies 507 points
2nd Reading Barberettes 1504 points
Chorus Director Pete Powell. 13 choruses competed. The quartet contest was won by the Barberettes quartet Shades (Lesley Culver, Val Woods, Dorothy Bosley, Rosemary Carter). In 4th place was a new Barberettes quartet Spectrum.

A great achievement by Pete Powell at this convention where he was Chorus Director to the 4th placed Berkshire Barbershoppers at the BABS competition and also to the 2nd placed Barberettes at the LABBS competition where they were only 3 points behind the winners.

20th The venue for club night was changed to the Municipal Buildings, Reading where we hosted other clubs in the area, the main attraction being Dr. Robert Johnson of SPEBSQSA. This was the first time we were introduced to Bob's famous expression "Dummy, where's the tip of your tongue".

26th Celebration 78 at the Hexagon, Reading

On the Hexagon's first birthday show were:

Sainsbury Singers
Reading Amateur Operatic Society
Reading Bach Choir
Kennet Morris Men
Berkshire Barbershoppers

We were the only performers with two spots, closing the first and second halves of the show.

HAYDN ADAMS

SMILES

"What do you call a lead who can sight read?"
"A baritone."

"What's the definition of perfect pitch?"
"When you toss a baritone into the toilet bowl without hitting the rim!"

OBITUARY OF THE LATE MR. COMMON SENSE

London Times: October 3rd, 2008, 5:29 PM

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as: Knowing when to come in out of the rain; why the early bird gets the worm; Life isn't always fair; and maybe it was my fault. Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an Aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live, as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He is survived by his 4 stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, I Want It Now, Someone Else Is To Blame, and I'm A Victim.

Not many attended his funeral, because so few realized he was gone.

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

A LOOK BACK TWENTY-YEARS

What were the issues in the Club in 1988? Read Tim Cockell's Chairman's chat to find out. I've also included the text of an insert detailing the last minute thoughts of the Prelims organiser. I'm sure they were typed on a mechanical typewriter so I've left a lot of formatting in there for you to enjoy! Yes in those days we used to have to compete in November for a place in the Convention finals. Read on...



CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Hi guys, this is my first chat from the chair, as it were. Firstly I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for allowing me to become your Chairman. It was slightly disheartening to know that you are the only candidate and that there is no opposition in gaining the position.

Still enough of my moaning. I would like to say that it is my firm belief that this year's committee is going to work extremely well together. In the four short weeks of our respective offices we have accomplished much - and without lengthy committee meetings.

As you must all be aware there are extensive refurbishments going on at Our Lady Of Peace. I do appreciate that some of these changes to date have been inconvenience but I am assured that when all the modifications are complete that it will be to the benefit of all users of the centre, but it must be said that there is an element of compromise no matter which club or society you are or where you, carry out your activities. The present committee is determined to look into the possibility of new venues. One such possibility was viewed just last week' but was found to be unsuitable due to only being open during school term time. It must be said however that we do have a very good deal at OLP in so much as we do get free storage facilities, use the hall later than we have paid for and get the use of the small committee room at the side at no extras cost, plus of course a bar - on the promises. I would like to just dispel one or two rumours from the camp on the right of the risers: OLP are not trying to get rid of us. They are very pleased to have us using their facility and most certainly appreciate the extra bar returns every Tuesday. They are even opening the

hatchway bar during the shut down week of the refurbishment.

I am very pleased to announce that Gerry Holland has accepted the club invitation to become an honorary member of the club. I am also pleased to announce that Derek Smith has agreed to carry on his role as chorus director for the forthcoming year, as has Haydn Adams as chorus manager.

Well in the last month we have had quite a few visitations with Barry Towner and Chris D'Amburminen from the Dukes in Canada no less! Also had Mr Boniface Mganga all the way from Kenya who was on an exchange visit to this country, On November 8th we had our rehearsal at the Theale Green School, which proved to be a very good venue. It was most pleasing to see Jill Yorke again and with two of her interested lads.

Just one or two last thing's to mention in this report, if you haven't already stopped reading it. After our first committee meeting on November 9th it was decided that the music team should also be in control of the education budget for the next year. Also that Mike McKeown's blue jackets will definitely be issued to you next month.

Anyway, time to sign off' now. Don't forget prelims are just round the corner, so let's get to Bognor and show 'em what for. Let's give 'em hell,

TIM

LAST MINUTE THOUGHTS ON THE SOUTHERN PRELIMS NEXT WEEKEND AT BUTLIN'S, BOGNOR REGIS.

Don't forget to bring Soap and Towels - they are NOT supplied by Butlin's. There may be a few in the Hire Shop, but first come, first served.

As Registration starts at 9.A.M. Breakfast will be served AT 8.A.M.; On Sunday it will be at 8.30 A.M. Unlike Hotel life, it appears that the timing for Breakfast is fairly crucial - try not to be late as you may miss out. Obviously for those requiring a 'Lay-in' after a hefty Afterglow' there will be other food venues open on the Sunday.

Remember to bring umbrellas for the dash across the road from the Ocean Ballroom to the Gaiety Theatre - it may just rain?

Those people staying ONLY for the Friday Night should vacate their accomodation by 10.A.M., even though they are staying at Butlin's all day on Saturday. The chalets are required for other visitors. Some who hoped for Double-bedded rooms may be unlucky - in the County Suites they are about 50-50 with Twin Singles. Please suffer in silencil after all it is a singing weekend.

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

Final Total of BOOKINGS - Friday Night - 402
Saturday - 810
Should be a good Weekend!

The B.A.B.S.Reception Desk in the Gaiety Theatre Foyer will be manned mainly by Chuck Odom, our Treasurer. If you have any problems see him. He will either give you an answer or get one from me, or our Secretary, John Smytherman.

For those who wish to assess the winners and other contestants, we have printed a Souvenir Programme. This gives space for scoring and details the day's programme. It will cost you 20p - on sale Friday Evening in the Ocean Ballroom; there and in the Gaiety Theatre on Saturday.

Don't forget the Barbershop Film Show on Sunday morning - we may have a surprise for you. Finally, the Riser Plan sent to all Choruses has been altered slightly to be more acceptable. You will receive details of this at the Briefing length is still the same. Do have a tremendous weekend - we have done our best to ensure that you do.

Yours Harmoniously,
Derek Smith, Worthing Barbershop Harmony Club



SUPPORTERS

I believe Derek is back on the risers and producing an ever better sound!!!! It was great to hear that Peter Dawson had been voted Barbershopper of the Year.

Graham and I went over to see Emma and new daughter Bettie-Mae a few weeks ago and they are both well. I just couldn't decide who she looks like but she is a beautiful baby and clearly adored. Emma and Nigel are loving their new parental roles. Emma sends her love to everyone.

Well, Halloween and Bonfire celebrations are now out of the way and Christmas is looming. We went to the new Westfield shopping centre in West London to do some Christmas shopping. I loved the Centre but the journey isn't easy and the cost of parking is very high - even higher than Reading!

The Desborough Show is the next event and so I look forward to catching up with everyone then.

Luv 'n' hugs as always,

IRENE

Thanks to Haydn Adams, Chris Bradley, Julian Charman, Barry Howard, Richard Leatham, Rhiannon Owens-Hall, Bob Ridley, Alex Russell, Chris Schrier, Phillip Ward 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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RBHC's

50 CLUB

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STOP PRESS

Chairman's Report

In my report to AGM last year, I was looking forward to the club visit to Poland, and with good reason. I'm sure all who went would agree that it was a complete success on many levels. From singing in an underground cathedral in a salt mine, to visiting the death camp at Auschwitz, to winning our category in the choral festival in Warsaw, to the ovation we received from the young singers of Eastern Europe, it was an emotional roller coaster ride which we shall never forget. Graham Starkie carried out the planning of this event in meticulous fashion, and the club owes him thanks for this.

It was not without cost to the chorus. It must be acknowledged that preparation for this event, combined with the Men in Harmony course which preceded it and Christmas show immediately afterwards, stretched our resources, resulting in a delayed start to the preparations for Convention this year. In the event, we managed a very creditable score, emphasising once again the benefit of the coaching which we had received over the preceding months. The fundamental singing techniques are now embedded in our performances.

The policy of obtaining top-quality coaching for the chorus continued with visits by Royce Ferguson in January, Mark Grindall at the Away Weekend and in the run-up to Convention, and, more recently, by John Grant. John will be continuing his work with us in the New Year, and will be attending the Away Weekend in February 2009.

As I cautioned last year, the club has not had many large-scale sing-outs this year. The Daytimers continued to fly the flag at homes and day-centres, and Rod Adams has taken up the challenge again, so that our diary recently and for next year looks much more healthy. December will be a busy month.

Once again, we are running a Men in Harmony course to show men the pleasure to be had from this hobby of ours. Students who decide to join the club will be very welcome.

This has also been a sorrowful year for the club, with the loss of Trevor Ball, Peter Dawson, and Barry Wills' wife Sylvia. Words are inadequate to

express our feelings at the loss of such friends. But to lighten our hearts, Meyrick Wyard and Dorothy were married, which was a truly joyful occasion.

Of course, all our activities require a considerable amount of work by a team of dedicated volunteers, and I would like to thank the other members of the Executive committee for their efforts. I wish to mention two members in particular for the outstanding results they have achieved this year. Bob Ridley has thrown himself into the role of Director of Administration with great energy and commitment. He researched the benefits of charity status and drove the project through to its successful conclusion when the club received its registration number 1125742 on 8th September. The club will reap the financial rewards for years to come. Lawrence McNulty, our Director of Marketing, continues to skilfully maintain the club's high profile in the media, and has completely rebuilt our web site, which now really does justice to us as one of Britain's premier singing groups. Already we have received bookings on the strength of it.

As director of Finance, Alex Russell maintains an overview of the club's cash flow and budget, and Ken Mills has been overseeing membership matters. Julian Charman is now standing down as Performance Director. His efforts to raise the standard of our singing have provided a firm foundation from which we can move to even greater things. It has been a privilege and pleasure to work with them all over the last year.

However, this committee relies upon a band of willing volunteers who help with projects and carry out all the necessary day to day tasks to keep the club running. There are many members, and their partners at home, who give freely of their time for the benefit of the club. Thank you to everyone who did something, big or small, to enhance our enjoyment of our hobby.

You now have a full-strength Executive Committee, and I am delighted to welcome Brian Milbank, Graham Starkie, and our new chairman, Richard Leathem, who I am sure will lead the club to new triumphs.

JOHN PRICE
October 2008

READING BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB

THE REMAINING DAYS OF

NOVEMBER 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
16	17	18 Rehearsal TAG RAG DISTRIBUTION	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 Rehearsal	26	27	28	29
30	November 2008					

December 2008 calendar is on page 2

A LOOK AHEAD TO

JANUARY 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
January 2008				1	2	3
4	5	6 Rehearsal	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Rehearsal TAG RAG COPY DEADLINE	14 Singout Goring Fine Arts	15	16	17
18	19	20 Rehearsal TAG RAG DISTRIBUTION Daytimers at Thamesmead House Henley	21	22	23	24 Peter Dawson's Memorial Celebration Loddon Hall Twyford
25	26	27 No Rehearsal	28	29	30	31 Oxford Music Festival