



The Burlingtone



The Voice of the Green Mountain Chorus of the Barbershop Harmony Society since 1947

We meet Tuesdays at 7:00 PM at St. Francis Xavier School, Winooski, Vermont-Call 879-3105

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WEB SITE: www.nedistrict.org/greenmntn/

Barre Opera House Caroling Performance

By David Stonecliffe-

This was a Picket Fence Theater production with profits going to the Good Samaritan House in Barre. The Good Samaritan House is a shelter for the homeless. Last week we had rehearsals Monday night and Wednesday night was a dress rehearsal. The 3 performances were: Friday night 7:00 and Saturday 7:00 and Sunday 2:00. For each performance we needed to be there 1 hour head for warm ups. The performance was the play "The Gift of the Magi" starring Charlie Cerutti and Jennifer Voyer as a young poor married couple in New York who at great cost purchased paradoxical Christmas gifts for each other. The 45 minute play was followed by the singing of Christmas carols by the Monteverdi Girl's Chorus, the Community Chorus, the Very Large Quartet (VLQ). Then we went down front and sang 4 more Christmas songs in a sing-a-long with the audience. The VLQ was a pickup quartet from the Green Mountain Chorus composed of:

(See VLQ, p. 2)

Rutland First Night Logistics—

By Ray Foulds, Acting Chorus
Manager

Our final concert of December and 2004 is here! We will be performing at Rutland First Night on Friday, December 31st. The sign-up list currently has 15 singers - we need your help. The First Night venue will be Grace Congregational Church on Court Street in Rutland with shows at 5:00, 6:00, and 7:00 p.m. A map is attached below for those driving separately. Warm-up in Rutland will be at 4:00 p.m. We will be loading up a Mathieu Enterprises 32 passenger coach at 2:00 behind the Merchants Bank in the KMart Plaza on Shelburne Road. Spouses and significant others are welcome to come along. The bus will depart at 2:15 p.m. and will make stops in Shelburne and Vergennes if scheduled. Our own Glenn Allen will be driving. The uniform will be the same as the recent contest in Lowell, MA - new black shirt, new white straight tie, black tux trousers, paisley vest, and black shoes & socks. Warm-up in Rutland will start at 4:00 p.m. (see Rutland, p. 2)

12/27/2004

(Rutland, Cont' d.)

The final performance will end at 7:45 p.m., we expect to be back in Burlington at 9:30ish.

We will not be stopping for meals - please plan ahead and bring a sack lunch/dinner and beverages. Questions/concerns will be cheerfully handled by Al or Ray - just give them a call or send an e-mail. (Ray can be reached via Charlie Church)

In order to review and brush up our First Night Package, there will be a rehearsal this Tuesday (12/28/04) at the regular time and place,. There will be no rehearsal on 1/4/04 as the 2005 Officer Installation banquets will be the next evening at the So. Burlington K of C..



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(VLQ, Cont' d.)

- Mo Cerutti all performances
- Charlie Cerutti all performances
- Neil Cerutti Sunday only
- Eric Oberg all performances
- Chuck Laufer all performances
- Ed Hutchison all performances
- Bob Cauley Friday & Saturday only
- Dave Stonecliffe all performances

The audience seemed to like our sound and responded well to the two barbershop Christmas songs we sang: "Jingle Bell Rock" and

"Winter Wonderland". As I mentioned it was very time consuming but a lot of fun. And can I say - building a potential audience base in Central Vermont future barbershop ventures.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec. 28-REHEARSAL FOR 1ST NIGHT!

Dec. 31- First Night Rutland-5,6,7 pm

Jan. 4-No Rehearsal

Jan. 5- Wed., Installation Banquet!!

Jan 7, 8-COTS, N.Conway, NH

Jan. 14-Wild Game Dinner-Berlin

Feb 5-HEP School, Montreal-Reg.by 1/10!!

Feb. 9-Farmers' Night-State House

Feb. 13, 14, Singing Valentines

Feb. 25-27- VACSummit-Burlington

The following article may have been sent to everyone, but I am copying and resending since it describes well the state of our hobby—LET'S MAKE 2005 THE YEAR OF THE NEW MEMBER AND EVERYONE TAKE SOME RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP MEMBERSHIP VP CHARLIE CHURCH ACHIEVE OUR GOALS.

By Peter Goodwin, Staff Writer, Newsday (12/17/04)

One bright Sunday afternoon recently, a platoon of men wearing maroon jackets, dark slacks and white shirts filed onto the stage at the Bethpage Public Library. Everything about them said "retired": white hair, careful steps, thickened bodies, a cane or two. Then they started to sing, the basses pumping "dumba dumba dumba dumba" as a foundation, the lead & tenors just "Sittin' on Top of the World." The vigor of their voices, the richness of their harmony, the swing of their movements swept the years away. One school-day evening recently, a cluster of boys gathered on risers in the Syosset High School auditorium. (See **Barbershop, p.3**)

(Barbershop, Cont'd.)

Everything about them "teenager": the back-facing baseball caps, baggy pants, hands in pockets, nonstop jiggling and jerking.
> Then they started to sing "Coney Island Baby," and suddenly they sounded as mature, as resonant and as solid as their elders sounded youthful.
> One heard in the two ensembles the warmth and enjoyment that make crowd-pleasers of such annual events as the Big Apple Chorus' ongoing holiday "Chorus Tree" performances, Fridays through Sundays through Dec.26 at the South Street Seaport in Manhattan.

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> **PICTURE'S MISLEADING**

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> Between the showmanship of the Tree, the strength of the veteran Chorus of the Mid-Islanders' program in Bethpage and the energy of the youthful

> Syosset **Choral Pride's** rehearsal, you'd think that barbershop singing in America was thriving. But you'd be wrong.

> The a cappella style that calls up visions of red-striped shirts, handlebar mustaches and concerts in the town square is starting to fade. Membership in the worldwide Barbershop Harmony Society (legally known by the lumbering name Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, or **SPEBSQSA**) is slowly dwindling and its participants aging. There are now about 31,000 men in the more than 800 chapters in the United States and Canada, president Rob Hopkins said, down from a peak of 38,000 in the 1980s.

"The members are kind of going down the tubes," said semi-retired publicist and Mid-Island

Chorus tenor Bob Heim of Wantagh. "The older guys are dying."

> That's the problem groups such as **Choral Pride** may ultimately address. "We want it to still be around, not just 70-year-old men," said Syosset choral director Kristin Howell. The group was founded three years ago at the instigation of the boys themselves, who were envious of the Adelettes, the school's long-standing girls' barbershop ensemble.

> "The guys enjoyed singing, and the girls always had a group," senior John Roth, 17, said.

"Everyone enjoys listening to it. It's fun." Which was the whole idea from the beginning.

> Barbershop singing, as distinct from classical or pop vocal music, has been seen as a hobby at least since the SPEBSQSA was founded in 1938 by a group of Tulsa businessmen. The enduring Norman Rockwell image of four men harmonizing in a barbershop had appeared on a Saturday Evening Post cover in 1936. And decades before that, African-American men sang in quartets to serenade their girls.

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> **SINGERS GRATIFICATION**

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> The famous black comedian Bert Williams had a hit in 1910 with "Play That Barber-Shop Chord." (Mid-Island Chorus director Maurice Debar says it's the dominant seventh, which leads the ear to expect a satisfying major key conclusion, as in the final "a-men" of a hymn.)

Whether at its African-American roots or its contemporary image primarily as a province of the white male, barbershopping is something its fans do mostly for their own enjoyment. Society
(See Barbershop. P.4)

(Barbershop, Cont'd.)

members often sing in large choruses, such as the Mid-Island group, as well as quartets.

At one point during a rehearsal before the Bethpage concert, the chorus took a break and the men split into groups of quartets singing in different corners of the room.

> "That's probably what makes it so enjoyable," said conductor Paul Huppert, 69, of Point Lookout, a former auto-parts salesman. "You can take four guys and sing something."

AN EVOLVING SOCIETY>

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The biggest problem, as society president Hopkins sees it, is the ongoing change in American society from a culture of participants - volunteers and club joiners - to one of observers - audiences and TV viewers.

> "We've become a society more apt to be a listener than a performer," Hopkins said, "whereas, community singing used to be big. We don't have that kind of culture right now. And yet, there are many, many men who enjoy singing and would like to do it."

> That's why SPEBSQSA changed its name recently to the more explanatory Barbershop Harmony Society, did research to find out how to attract men who like to sing, encouraged arrangements of more contemporary songs, and began trying to raise its profile and develop a more up-to-date image.

> "The fact is, other fraternal kinds of organizations have found the same kinds of problems we have had," Hopkins said.

> *Perhaps the seeds of renewal lie in groups such as **Choral Pride**. One of its newest members*

is tenor Brian Bergin, a 16-year-old junior. A quarterback on the football team, he had to wait until after the season to sign up. "I heard it last year, and I thought it would be a neat thing to do. I'd never heard [barbershop before," he said. "It's interesting to hear how the other harmonies blend. It makes a neat sound."

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➤ **WHEN&WHERE IN VERMONT:**

You can find out where to hear the Green Mountain Chorus by contacting: C. Church—655-2949

**HAPPY NEW YEAR
2005 !!!**