

pioneer

TROUBADOUR

INTERNATIONAL

SEND-OFF

JUNE 23

8:30 p.m.

FORD AUDITORIUM

DETROIT



Musical Americana

by

Duane H. Mosier,
District Historian

SPBSQSA SIDELIGHTS AND CHUCKLES
By Duane H. Mosier
Historian

They will be tardy by three days, but that should make no difference to the thundering herd of barbershoppers who will descend upon Portland July 9th. They should assemble and raise a mighty Happy Birthday to SPBSQSA for, on July 6, 1938 our Society was officially, that is, legally born. O.C. Cash and Rupert Hall and others who were necessary, signed, sealed and delivered to the proper authority, Articles of Incorporation to let the world know that a new and wholly unique organization had been formed in the life of Musical Americana to give singing pleasure to thousands of men ringing out chord after chord of pure barbershop harmony and to millions of listeners crying for more. Our great Society has been doing just that for 35 years with prospects of continuing life for another 35 years.

The early days were like a baby creeping, stumbling, tumbling and finally making it to the nearest chair. Hectic is a mild word for it. The news media scattered the story to the four corners of the country. O.C.C. and Hall were flooded with requests for information on how to start a chapter, but none could be given since none existed until 1940, when the first chapter was developed in Kansas City.

O.C. Cash was not only a good lawyer for a pipe line company, but he was blessed with a terrific sense of humor that overflowed whenever he spoke. He early proposed a barbershop parade inviting Herbert Hoover, Alf Landon, Al Smith and Jim Farley, all top figures in the news, to form a quartet at the forthcoming show in Tulsa. He also proposed inviting the Duke of Windsor and the Archbishop of Canterbury to attend and sing "Dear Old Girl" as a duet. He thought of petitioning the WPA to conduct a survey to determine the vocal range of American males.

For many years Cash was a steady contributor to the Society magazine (first called Re-Chordings, later changed to The Harmonizer) under the heading "The Founder's Column". Culled from one of the issues is a story of a bum who was kicked off a freight train and became a schoolteacher. O.C.'s father was a member of the school board in an adjoining school district. The district constructed a log school house for the children who were a mixture of races principally Indian and Mexican. The board had given no thought, however, to the hiring of a teacher. When the bum heard of the vacancy he applied for the job. Mr. Cash, Sr., quizzed him carefully about his qualifications and warned him that "About half the people around here think the earth is round and the other half argue that it is flat." "How would you get around that?" The applicant replied, "That's no problem. I can teach it both ways." Cash, Sr. said, "That's good enough for me. You're hired." The imposter stayed and taught for two years.

Events were shaping up to the point where the Society could look forward to the most advanced and exciting decade of barbershopping under the leadership of Carroll P. Adams and a strong board of directors. Adams was elected president in 1941. Three of his board members were Michiganders: Roscoe Bennett of Grand Rapids; E.G. Schwoppe of Lansing and Joseph P. Wolff of Detroit. Bennett was sports editor of the Grand Rapids Press, editor of the Michigan Troubadour, untiring in his efforts to make the 1942 contest in his city a great success. It was all of that. Sixty quartets enrolled and on Saturday night when the finals were run off, 5,000 people jammed the Civic Auditorium to enjoy a wealth of good close harmony. The Elastic Four from Chicago were declared winners, altho' they had to top the laurels of The Turners from Detroit, Port City Four from Muskegon, The Hall Brothers of Grand Rapids, The Gay Nineties from Kalamazoo and The Acoustical Persecuting Four of Jackson, all among the top fifteen quartets. The Society was beginning to take shape if not much form. The late Hal Staab of Northampton, Mass. had been chosen President in 1943. The choice was a good one. He was a top organizer with a good barbershop background. He was a prolific song writer and arranger. He started things

moving. Dr. Norman Rathert of St. Louis who succeeded Staab as President, and a thorough musician, directed the first chorus. In 1940 New York City staged a world's fair. As outdoor entertainment the fair authorities commissioned Sigmund Spaeth, prime musical critic and devoted barbershopper, to scour the country for quartets. He did a masterful job bringing over 50 quartets to New York. On some nights they sang to ten thousand listeners. There was no welcoming chapter as New York had none. However, they were royally received by the crowds. Spaeth M.C.'d the programs. The judges were top politicians altho' the record does not indicate that any of them could carry a tune. They were Ex-Gov. Al Smith, Mayor LaGuardia, Park Commissioner Robert Moses, Harry Armstrong and George P. Rea. The point system was something to be achieved later. So the quartets were judged on all around performance. They chose The Flatfoot Four, all policemen of Oklahoma City, as National champions. The Flatfoots were so exalted over their success, they went out next day and took over the traffic at Broadway and 44th Sts., causing a traffic jam such as the city had seldom seen. They were singing, of course.

Adams, who became known as "Mr. Barbershopper" with his dynamic energy carried much of the load for the next ten years. With increasing work year after year, his staff had to increase to ease the burden. At the end of that decade his staff had eleven helpers, four men and seven women including his late wife, Frankie, who was his only assistant when he took office. Necessary personnel has since increased three fold to keep our Society on the track.

Adams wrote the first SPEB constitution and Joe Wolff was commissioned to write the Code of Ethics appearing on the membership cards almost verbatim as he wrote it.

After nearly twelve years Adams decided he needed a rest. A reluctant board accepted his resignation and, in 1963, he retired to his beloved New England State of Vermont where he now resides in Montpelier. Bob Hafer succeeded him as Executive Director. Bob now is in business in Florida.

Early in the spring of 1956 rumors were afloat that the Society headquarters would be moved. Conceded that the store building on Penkell Ave., Detroit, was inadequate to handle the work efficiently, Michigan still wanted the headquarters to remain in the Detroit area. Bob Hafer set up a committee to work on the plan. The International Board at the forthcoming convention to be held in Minneapolis would make a decision. Bob's committee had scanned buildings adequate for Society purposes and many building sites if a new building were indicated. Precedent seemed like the only argument in favor of the Detroit retention. The writer was delegated to present our argument to the board. Altho' not on the agenda, the board reluctantly granted permission. The success of his effort was analogous to a camel going through the eye of a needle. The board had already negotiated the purchase of a \$650,000.00 mansion on the shores of Lake Michigan in Kenosha for \$75,000.00 so the vote was merely a formality. In 1957 the moving vans were loaded and moving across state lines.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SPBSQSA

ENGLISH CLUBS AFFILIATE WITH PROBE

The March-April edition of the PROBEMOTER lists the names and addresses of the four Barbershop Harmony Clubs' bulletin editors who have affiliated with Probe. Since they are not yet members of the Society, they can only have affiliate status. The word is that they are good! For those who may wish to exchange bulletins, here are their addresses:

BRIGHTON AND HOVE CLUB
Don Tyrell, 83 Vale Rd., Portsedale,
Brighton, Sussex, England

BOURNEMOUTH CLUB
Alan Northeast, 24 Arcadia Rd.,
Christchurch, Hampshire, England

CRAWLEY CLUB
John Jones 11 The Pasture, Pound Hill,
Crawley, Sussex, England

TYNESIDE CLUB
David Logan Wood, 7 Belmont Ave., Melton Pk.,
Newcastle-on-Tyne, Northumberland, England

WANTED - - -

Editor for the Pioneer Troubadour

AT THE APRIL MEETING OF THE DISTRICT BOARD, THE RESIGNATION OF YE OLDE IDIOTER ROGER LEWIS, WAS ACCEPTED TO BE EFFECTIVE AS SOON AS A REPLACEMENT EDITOR CAN BE SECURED. ANY INTERESTED PARTIES SHOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH BILL WARNER, OR ROGER LEWIS - - ADDRESSES AND PHONES ARE LISTED BELOW.

ALSO, ACTION WAS TAKEN TO BEGIN NECESSARY PAPERWORK TO CHANGE THE TROUB TO A BI-MONTHLY, 6 ISSUES PER YEAR PUBLICATION TO BE PUBLISHED ON ALTERNATE MONTHS TO THE HARMONIZER.

THE TROUBADOUR OWNS A TYPEWRITER, PLUS NECESSARY EQUIPMENT TO LAY OUT EACH ISSUE AND FURNISH TO A PRINTER IN CAMERA READY FORM.

THOSE INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT:

Bill Warner
23531 Meadow Lark
Oak Park, Mich. 48237
Bus. 313-542-5564
Home 313-545-8873

or

Roger Lewis
P.O. Box 1502
Battle Creek, Mich. 49016
Bus. 616-965-0557
Home 616-623-8384

The Four-in-Legion



CONTACT: WES DORSEY
Route #2
Napoleon, Ohio 43345
Phone: 419-762-5982

A BARBERSHOP QUARTET **THE BEAN TOWN** SAGINAW-BAY
DETROIT - FLINT

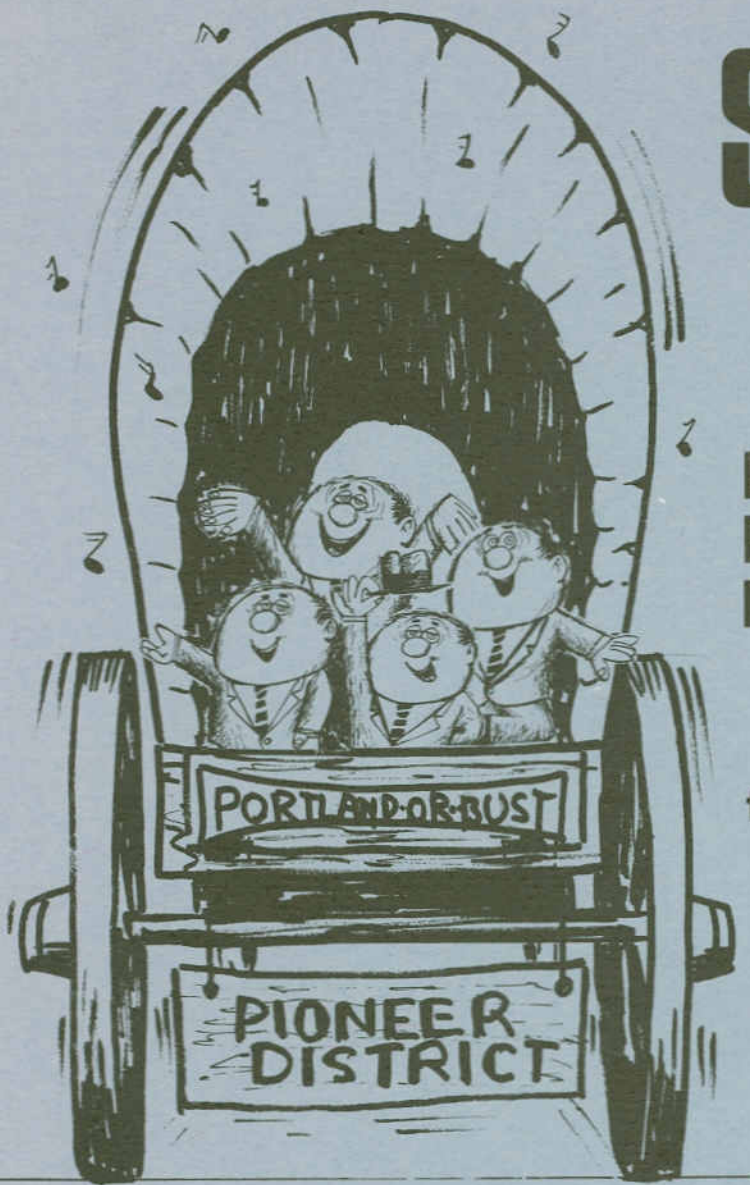
RON

FRED

DOUG

BOB

CONTACT: FRED KIENITZ, 5338 FLORIDA DR.,
SWARTZ CREEK, MICHIGAN PHONE 655-8694



SEND OUR BOYS TO PORTLAND

BY ATTENDING THE
PIONEER DISTRICT S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A.
INTERNATIONAL SEND OFF
SHOW

featuring:

- The GENTLEMENS AGREEMENT
1971 INTERNATIONAL QUARTET CHAMPS
- The MOTOR CITY CHORUS
CHOSEN TO REPRESENT THE DISTRICT IN
PORTLAND
- The TOP 3 QUARTETS OF 1973
FROM THE PIONEER DISTRICT
- The 1973 CHORUS CHAMPS
FROM THE PIONEER DISTRICT

TO BE HELD AT --- **HENRY FORD AUDITORIUM**

WOODWARD at JEFFERSON

June 23, 1973 - 8:30 P.M.

DONATION **\$3.50** ALL SEATS UNRESERVED

TICKET MAIL ORDER FORM

PLEASE SEND _____ TICKETS @\$3.50 EA. ENCLOSED IS MY
CHECK OR MONEY ORDER.

PLEASE ENCLOSE SELF ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE
TO:

E. UPTON
26630 GLENDALE
REDFORD TWP. 48239

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO
S. P. E. B. S. Q. S. A.



It appears that some Chapters have been so busy getting set for shows and competition that they have taken a great big pause in the Barber Polecat Program. Really, Directors, ten to fifteen minutes a week could help get the program back on the track. For those who don't remember the titles, they are:

QUARTET KORNER

NEW QUARTETS

FORFEITS

Russ Seely
15563 Chestnut
East Detroit, MI 48021
(Detroit & Grosse Pointe)
I08 - I13 #3274

THE USED PARTS
Gene Johnson
701 Sparrow Ave.
Lansing, MI 48910
(Lansing) I21 #9430

THE BACK PORCH MAJORITY
Clifford Douglas
788 Fourth St.
Pontiac, MI 48055
(Pontiac, Flint, Holly-
Fenton) I32-49-16 #377

UNRENEWED REGISTRATIONS

Range Finders - 7521
Lansing, Mich.

Past Presidents Four - 7095
Gratiot Co., Mich.

Original Choice - 6781
Saginaw-Bay & Grosse Pointe, Mich.

CHANGES TO BE MADE

VOICE QUAD - 9637
Dick Barron
35986 Summers
Livonia, MI 48154

GALAXIES - 4040
Al Van Iwaarden
1483 - 54th St. S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49508

YOU HEAR WHAT IS HERE

or Whadda ya mean, Interpretation?*

by Dick Robbins

Our chorus director, Ed Jensen, was drilling us on connected sound (a la Preh-dWeh - ring) when I realized that I had been overlooking some of the advantages of this technique. It can give new meaning to a song - the meaning being tailored to the individual listener. For example, take the first four phrases of the chorus of the late Billie Hannon's "That Old Quartet":

- "One Sang the Lead (1)
- One Baritone (2)
- One Tenor Sweet (3)
- One Big Bass Tone" (4)

With "white space" eliminated, consonants and closing diphthong sounds shortened, and vowels sustained into the next syllable, the listener might very well hear it like this: (If you have a weak stomach, don't read on!)

"Juan Tsang, the lead (translation below)
One bare red tone
Want Ten-Nurse Sweet
One big bay stone."

Now the song is about a Chinese-Mexican actor, something naked and red in color, a telegram ordering hospital accommodations for Howard Hughes, and a rock in the water.

1. DOWN OUR WAY
2. MY WILD IRISH ROSE
3. SHINE ON ME
4. WAIT 'TIL THE SUN SHINES NELLIE
5. WE SING THAT THEY SHALL SPEAK
6. I'LL TAKE YOU HOME AGAIN KATHLEEN
7. SWEET AND LOVELY, THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE TO ME
8. GIVE ME THAT BARBERSHOP STYLE
9. IN THE SHADE OF THE OLD APPLE TREE
10. LOVE ME AND THE WORLD IS MINE
11. I'D GIVE THE WORLD TO BE IN MY HOME TOWN
12. ON THE BANKS OF THE WABASH
13. HONEY, LITTLE LIZA MEDLEY

President Chuck Abernethy suggests that we could all apply the "PAPA" principle to the Polecat program. What's PAPA? A POSITIVE ATTITUDE toward the program and POSITIVE ACTION to further its use.



Still another way of listening to the same connected sounds would hear:

"Once, hang the lead
Wan bear, atone!
1/10 Norse Wheat
Won big-based hone."

Lo and behold, we are now singing about the demise of our melody singer, a pallid Grizzly being told to do pennance, a commodity market order for Scandinavian grain to be delivered on January 10th, and a cable from the winner of the door prize at a Tool and Die Convention.

This could, of course, go on and on, but I'll leave you with a few of the lines I rejected:

- "Want Beirut home" (ad for a house in Lebanon)
- "One Bay, Raton" (abbreviated waterfront address in Boca Raton, Fla.)
- "Want 10-horse Swede" (ad for a Swedish groom who can care for 10 horses)
- "Wan tenor's weed" (cigarette for a pale singer)
- "One big baste hone" (large tool for sharpening a cooking utensil)

One parting shot. Do you know a song in which a political agitator tells an apathetic hog caller named 'Tad' to join his movement? How about:

"Sooeey Tad, align!"?

*From ATTACKS & RELEASES Official Publication of the Illinois District Association, Fall, 1972

IF YOU'RE TOO BUSY TO SING - - YOU'RE TOO BUSY!



