

2012 - No.5 – June

Evergreen Chorus Travels to Finland & Estonia May 10-12, 2012



By Moe Jones

A few years ago, the **Mount Baker Toppers** participated in the Vaasa Choir Festival in Finland. They were invited back this year through the initiative of **Markku Kanervikkoaho**, who is from Finland and is a member of the Toppers. The chorus was reconfigured with singers from **QCED**, the **Gentlemen of Fortune**, the Toppers, as well as from the previous Evergreen Chorus who had participated in a Russian choir festival. Our group comprised of 22 singers, several wives and the quartets **Realtime** and **Antique Gold**. There were 4 tenors, 6 leads, 6 baritones and 6 basses, directed by **Charlie Metzger**. Preparation included five rehearsals, and a show in Lynden, WA. With a dozen songs in our repertoire, we were ready to hit the road to Finland.

After an overnight stay in Helsinki, the first leg of the trip entailed a fast ferry trip to Tallinn, Estonia, where we performed in two concerts along with our hosts, the **Ravelia Chorus**. After two nights in Estonia, we travelled back to Helsinki where the chorus performed on Finland's national morning TV show. We also performed on two other concerts together with Realtime. Our Finnish hosts, **Part-A-Boys Barbershop Chorus**, and our chorus participated in a joint workshop. It was a wonderful experience singing Barbershop with a chorus from another country.

Vaasa is located on the west coast of Finland, a five and a half hour bus ride from Helsinki. Immediately upon our arrival, our first performance was at a seniors' retirement home.

The Vaasa Choral Festival was celebrating its 20th year. It has become a national and internationally respected choir music gala. This year the **King Singers** (UK) were the festival headliners. The Mount Baker Toppers, Realtime and Antique Gold were very popular attendees of the festival. Other groups were from Japan, China, Russia, Sweden and Holland; and there were over 40 groups from Finland as well. Most of the Festival participants were a cappella singers.

We had a number of performances ranging from singing in a mall, museums, seniors' retirement homes and a grand ballroom at city hall. The mall was a major venue with a stage and chairs for about 200 people where all the choirs performed on a continuous basis. The grand ballroom was spectacular with high ceilings and chandeliers. Venues were full and audiences very responsive, especially when we sang a Finnish folk song.

Our visit to Vaasa was complete with a special invitation from the festival producer to a party at his seaside summer home. Second to the wonderful hospitality was the sauna house and, yes, some hardy barbershoppers jumped into the ocean like Finns do after a sauna.

Inside this Issue

- Evergreen Chorus to Finland
- Down Memory Lane
- Obituary – Bob Thomas
- Obituary – Gary Austin
- Executive Board Meeting
- Barbershoppers of the Month
- Happenings & Reminders
- Calendar

The next day we started off early for our return bus trip to Helsinki where many from our group headed off to other parts of Europe on vacation.

What a unique and memorable experience to participate in musical events like this and to showcase barbershop music on a world stage.

A special thanks to Markku, manager; Scott Thompson, organizer; Charlie Metzger, musical director; Bruce Foreman, MC; Ira Allen and Josh Honrud, choreography; Doug Broersma, planning; and our quartets, Realtime and Antique Gold.[Other GoF members who were there: Moe Jones & Ed Arnold.]



June 2012
Down
Memory Lane
 By Ross Hood

40 years ago this month (1972)

Back in '72 we were meeting on Monday nights. This was changed the next year because there were too many Mondays that were holidays and members thought it best to be with their families. **Alex Hood**, president at the time, announced that the chorus had decided not to take the summer months off as was previously done. It went over quite well as in the summer of '72 there was little reduction in attendance. Assistant director **Ben Fast** (assistant to **Gerry Staton**) wrote how happy he was that we had gone from 12th place to 5th in the last contest and felt that all we needed to do was work harder and longer.

30 years ago this month (1982)

Chapter President **Orland Lee** wrote his article for the *Fortune Teller* as if he were at the International Convention in Pittsburgh, where we were intending to be in July, showing how excited we were to be chosen to compete in our first International contest. **Charlie's** two page article was fully inspirational and showing us what we had attained and learned to that point. He said "Sure it's wonderful, Sure It's frightening! Sure It's a competition! But let's do it in the grand style to which we have become accustomed." His last note to the chorus was "**Take No Prisoners**".

20 years ago this month (1992)

In the bulletin of June '92 **Gar Discher** berated the 50% of the chorus that didn't show up for a performance at the Vancouver Hotel. He stated that there were 1700 reasons (the fee we received) why you should have been there. We sang for 600 delegates from 16 countries to the Pacific Region Economic Conference, guests included the Lieutenant Governor. Break-out classes were established for members who had joined in the last two years. **Jim Gibson** announced that it was to continue for three weeks and was to cover all aspects of our hobby that you wanted to know but didn't know who to ask. One hot question he thought was needed to be answered was "Why do we have Baritones?"

When Insults Had Class

(Before English got boiled down to 4-letter words)
"Thank you for sending me a copy of your book; I'll waste no time reading it." - Moses Hadas

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Youth in Harmony

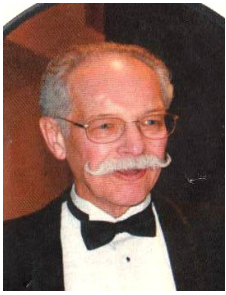
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Obituary

THOMAS, Robert (Bob) Norman

1937 – 2012



Born in Toronto January 23, 1937 Bob Thomas passed away in Puyallup, WA on April 17, 2012 after complications from a pacemaker replacement operation. He is survived by his wife Sharon; children Kim, Ken, Jen, Kathy and Jeff; 11 grandchildren and 4 great-grand children. He was 75. A

Celebration of Life for Bob was held April 21st at Puyallup Bethany Baptist Church and more than 60 barbershoppers sang the *Lord's Prayer* and the *Irish Blessing*, as well as the American and Canadian National Anthems.

Bob was a 27 year member of the Barbershop Harmony Society. He held many chapter officer positions and served the Society and the Evergreen District in many facets, most recently as a Contest Administrator and as a member of the Evergreen District Board of Directors. He worked on three International Contest Panels: Anaheim 1999, Montreal 2003 and Salt Lake City 2005.

A stalwart bass with the GoF for many years Bob Thomas competed in the **Border Boyz** (1995) **Delivery Boyz** (1996) and **CanAm Connection** (1997/98).



CanAm Connection

(left to right):
Terry Bucknell
George Wakeham
Bob Thomas
Dave Anderson

Thank you Bob

By Charlie Metzger

What can be said about a guy with a prominent and prized handle-bar moustache?

Well, for one thing, his fine waxed construction was not your droopy Fu Manchu or your everyday soup strainer. It was a statement of optimism. Its direction was decidedly upwards and included coiling curves and precision points! It required care and attention – regular waxing and unconscious twirling! It was a work of art that made statements both humorous and serious. It was both a general symbol and a personal adornment bringing both a question and a smile.

Bob valued that moustache! It reflected certain truths about him. He was an optimist always looking for another way to contribute. He was a participant looking to improve. He was generous with his time and his smile. He attracted attention and sent it out as a gift. He knew that things were always getting better and that he was doing his bit to make it so. His presence lifted those around him. He was a barbershopper's barbershopper and that meant that he understood about how love works in the world.

Bob spread around goodwill and good feelings to everyone he knew. He loved his songs and he loved to sing and perfect them. He sent them out for the happiness of any audience anywhere to love and entertain them. We all want to be like that. Thanks, Bob, for your life and your example

Obituary

AUSTIN, Gary

1952 – 2012



Gary was born in St. Catharines, Ontario March 7, 1952. He passed away April 7, 2012 of pancreatic cancer. He is survived by his wife Cheryl Rose, his mother, brother Murray (Rita) and sister Heather Stuckey (Blair); sons Bradley and Wayne Rose, and 4 grandchildren.

From Cheryl: Gary started with barbershop in St. Catharines with his dad in the **Dad Son Four**. After moving to Port Moody he became part of the Evergreen group and GOF. From the pictures it seemed he sang with Dick Clark a lot and was proud to be part of **Pacific Exchange**. When we moved to Summerland he started a quartet with his dad Gord Austin, Barry Fairbridge and Lloyd Raincock called the **Silver Reunion**. They did a few gigs around Penticton. He joined the Vernon chorus for a short time but it was too far to travel each week.

We returned to the lower mainland so he could help my son with his carpet laying business and he rejoined GOF in early 2010. He always had a love for the camaraderie and showmanship of barbershop. We moved back to Grand Forks in August 2011 so Gary could get back to his old job of yogurt making. He was ill for a very short time starting in the middle of December.

Memories of Gary

By Rob Hood

I first met Gary Austin when he transferred from the St. Catharines chorus to the GOF in 1979. We immediately became friends. **Wally Coe**, also a recent transplant

from Scarborough, asked if I would like to sing tenor with him, Gary and **Charlie**, and so was born the **North Pacific Union**. Not surprisingly, with those voices, we won the 1980 Division first time out and came third in District (I was just along for the ride).

When the NPU disbanded Gary and I still got the families together for camping, dinners, shows, parties and to lift the odd glass. We sang together again in '82 with **Dick Clark** and Charlie in **Pacific Exchange** placing several times in the district top five, doing many chapter shows and appearing at Expo '86. In '89 we formed **Finishing Touch**, with Dick and **Gareth Evans**, gaining a respectable district third.



Pacific Exchange
(left to right):
Dick Clark
Gary Austin
Charlie Metzger
Rob Hood

When his folks, Gord and Melva, moved out west, Gary sang with his dad again until Gord's passing a few years ago. Gary and his dad were very close; both were (I guess you'd say) opinionated. There was nothing more fun than to bring up politics, baseball or old/current barbershop, then step back and listen to the debate.

Gary and I last chatted in March shortly after his last chemo treatment. As always we had a few laughs, talked of barbershop and how he just wanted to sing again. Gary had a beautiful, natural and untrained bass voice. He had a power and control that could challenge and make you sing better alongside him. He also could belt out some of the old standards like *My Way* or *Edelweiss* that entertained both barbershoppers and his Legion friends alike. It is an honour to be considered his friend and a privilege to have sung with him.

A Silent Tear - Gaynor Llewellyn

*Just close your eyes and you will see
All the memories that you have of me
Just sit and relax and you will find
I'm really still there inside your mind
Don't cry for me now I'm gone
For I am in the land of song
There is no pain, there is no fear
So dry away that silent tear
Don't think of me in the dark and cold
For here I am, no longer old
I'm in that place that's filled with love
Known to you all, as "UP ABOVE".*

Executive Board Meeting



By **Harry Gray**

The Chapter Board met on Monday evening May 14th at Rich Clark's townhouse clubhouse. Meeting day was moved from before practice Tuesday to provide more time for discussion and allow **Dave Whittier** to attend.

Some old business was dealt with. The GoF application for a gaming grant was turned down because of the \$50K legacy money we have. **George Gregory** spoke with an accountant about the possibility of separating the fund from the chapter's books but found it is not feasible. A possible 50/50 show for the Chilliwack chapter in September is not possible due to organizational difficulties.

Secretary **Al Alain** had asked that the status of members on "leave of absence" be discussed. The failure of quite a few members to post their attendance at practice on groupanizer is hindering the Director, Music Team and Secretary in preparing for rehearsal. This is particularly so for those who have extended absences. No conclusions on action yet other than to urge members to go on line and update their attendance.

VP chapter Development **Carl Gung** has revised the promotional pamphlet and more copies are being printed. He is working on an Orientation Manual for new members. Treasurer **Rich Clark** will have the 2011 financial statements ready for the AGM on June 12th. Discussion of allocation of funds will be discussed in the future with uniform, travel and risers as possibilities.

Ongoing discussions include public rehearsals, adopting a community, trailer insurance, a charity to support, and spats for the chorus shoes. President **Harry Gray** reported that the Chandos Pattison Auditorium (where we hosted 2001 District in Surrey) has become available again for advance bookings. He and **Moe Jones** have met with them and the Sheraton Guildford Hotel and the Board moved that Moe, as the Convention Chair, go ahead with preparing a bid to host the **District Convention on October 3-5, 2014**. This has to be approved by the District Board. Next meeting June 11th.

Groaners:

Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?

George Carlin-isms

Why is it that when you are driving and looking for an address, you turn down the volume on the radio?

Barbershoppers of the Month

April – Ed Arnold



Ed works throughout the year for the good of the chorus scouting out potential paid (or free) performances. For example, the 50/50 Show April 22 at Queens Ave United Church where Ed also stepped in at the last minute to Emcee the Show

May – David Jones



Working in the background to help raise funds for the GoF, this is the second year that David Jones has organised the “Gourmet Meat & Poultry Sale”. This year the sale brought in a profit of almost \$750 for the GoF.

Happenings & Reminders

Coquitlam Madison Care Centre residents and staff were entertained by a chorus of 36 on Tuesday March 27th for a half hour prior to the regular GoF rehearsal.

Queens Ave United Church 50/50 Show in New Westminster on Sunday April 22nd had 31 in the chorus with **Ed Arnold** as emcee and **Antique Gold** and **Motones** entertaining. Virginia Barteluk, their coordinator wrote: “Your concert was wonderful and enjoyed by so many. We’ll send you a cheque for \$670 which I think is great! We had 32 walk-ins plus your 10 pickups for a total of 83 persons. We brought in \$1336; minus \$95 in expenses and the net became \$1341. Divide that by 2 and we each received \$670.00. Congratulations! It was a great show.”

Gourmet Meat & Poultry Fundraising Sale

By David Jones

We made a special effort this year to get our supplies ready for the BBQ on the Victoria Day weekend but the response was poor, even though we needed to boost our Chapter Funds.

We had hoped to make a profit of one thousand dollars but instead the total amounted to \$747.87. The key salesmen this year were the same as last year, namely **Carl Gung**, **Jim Bates** and me. Had Lawrence Spencer been here we would have exceeded our target for sure. My expectation that every member would contribute just one order would have made the treasurer happy.

My thanks to all who contributed and helped with the organization of the event – **Ray & Dorothy Fallan** for

being the distribution centre again; the three or four men who helped sort the orders and for those of you who faithfully picked up your orders on time.

Spring Cabaret, Silent Auction & Lottery

Saturday June 23rd at the Columbia Theatre in New Westminster. Tickets are \$60 through **Don Giles**. Lottery tickets are \$100 through **Jim Gibson** (\$10,000 in prizes). Get selling to friends, relatives, colleagues, clients. Don’t forget that **Gord Ross** & Jim Gibson are looking for donated items for the Silent Auction.

Comment #95 by Bill Gibbons

“Stage presence: If it weren’t for the last minute, nothing would get done.”

Deadline for the next issue is July 17, 2012

CALENDAR

2012

June 12 GoF Annual General Meeting
June 23 **GoF Cabaret** New Westminster
July 1-8 International, Portland, OR
July 20-22 HCNW, Tacoma, WA
July 29 Anacortes Salmon BBQ
Aug 31-Sept 3 Harmony Hollow
Sept 7-9 **Retreat**
Sept 15 **Anthem** – BC Lions
Sept 28-30 **District Convention** Spokane, WA
Oct 8 Thanksgiving
Oct 16 GoF Election of Officers
Oct 28 **50/50 Show** St Catherine’s N Vcr
Oct 30-Nov 3 SAI International, Denver CO
Dec 15 **Christmas Show** MJ Fox Theatre

2013

Jan 8-13 Midwinter International, Orlando
Jan 18-19 QCED Show, Seaside OR
Feb 11 BC Family Day
Feb 14 **Valentines Day**
March 29 Easter
April 12-13 **Division I Convention** Nanaimo
April 26-28 Division IV/Prelims, Eugene, OR
Jun 30-Jul 7 International, Toronto, ON
July 19-21 HCNW, Tacoma, WA
Oct 14 Thanksgiving
Oct 18-20 **District Convention** Boise, ID

Dilbert’s Rules of Order

#61: An expert is someone who knows more and more about less and less until in the end he knows absolutely everything about nothing.