



The Kentones

The Kentonian

THE BROMLEY BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB MAGAZINE



Acafellas

Didn't They Do Well!



Duncan Whinyates, Brian Fox, Jon Dawson and our own Ryan Jensen

Pictured after being awarded their Bronze Medals for third place in the BABS
2018 Quartet Competition at Harrogate.

44th BABS Convention

Travelling to the 44th BABS Convention in Harrogate was, for some, a challenge, as you will see from various articles within this issue.

The Quartet Semi-finals on the Friday saw both **Fifth Element** and **H Q** make the cut to appear in the Sunday Final, in which **Fifth Element** won the Bronze Medal. A great achievement, having only been singing together for ten months and living all over the country - a huge rehearsing challenge - and they are now eligible to travel to Salt Lake City for International next year. A great treat for Ryan to go to the States!

Everyone eventually gathered at the Old Swan Hotel for the scheduled rehearsal at 6.00p.m. on Friday evening. It was a very relaxed affair, led by our very own and super chilled-out MD, Ryan Jensen. Those who had booked moved on to Gianni's Brio Restaurant for the evening meal arranged by John Sollitt. Good food, slow service, but the place was packed so that was to be



The Kentones 2018

expected. The singing led by Frank Taylor was much appreciated, as an encore was requested.

A very early breakfast on Saturday was required, as we met at the Convention Centre at 8.00a.m. Being first on stage does have advantages. We changed into stage gear in an enormous room/ aircraft hangar, and were the only chorus there at that time. We were also allowed the use of our allocated warm-up room for a final rehearsal.

The performance went very well, and we probably sang our Competition package better than ever before. Unfortunately, the judges weren't that impressed, increasing our mark by only 0.1% over last year. But we all enjoyed ourselves, and that's what this hobby is all about.

Food again! John had also arranged a meal at the renowned Graveley's Fish and Chip restaurant. Super-sized portions, as Jack can vouch for, as he cancelled Pats' order and split his between them! The Jensen family attended in force - Julie and the girls, also Ryan's mother and aunt, here from the States as extra support.

The Shows on Saturday and Sunday were surprisingly good, and **Central Standard**, from Kansas City, were very different from the usual American choruses we have seen over previous years. All in all, a very successful and enjoyable Convention. Well done to all who attended, and especially **Fifth Element**. *Ed.*

I Dreamed A Dream

At 9.00 am on 25th May, a gleaming stretched limousine, complete with liveried chauffeur, left Orpington, bound for Harrogate, with fifteen assorted **Kentones** and lady Supporters. Hostess service was provided by the chauffeur's missus, who laid on a delicious breakfast of warm croissants, fresh coffee, bacon and eggs, greatly appreciated by all - even he who had brought with him an enormous haversack full of pork pies.

Travelling at a steady 100 mph with a police escort, no other traffic on the road and perfect weather conditions, the journey North was entirely trouble-free, allowing ample time for a leisurely lunch break at a magnificent hostelry deep in the countryside. There we were warmly welcomed by the landlord, who insisted on serving us a splendid three course lunch with wine - all on the house provided we performed his favourite song, which happened to be *Can't Buy Me Love*.

Suitably refreshed, we resumed our journey, pausing only to exchange pleasantries with a local yokel who, doubtless keen for us to sing more, tried to block our passage with his tractor, laden with massive bales of hay. He eventually retreated after being pelted with pork pies.

In no time at all we reached our destination. Word of our coming had clearly got around, as the streets were thronged with cheering crowds of fans, and we received a ticker-tape welcome as we proceeded along King's Road.

Bright and early next morning, after a good night's sleep at the Majestic, and a Champagne Breakfast served en suite by a bevy of glamorous waitresses, we made our way to the Convention Centre, where we had to struggle through the assembled crowds of admirers, all desperate for photos and autographs. Some were lucky enough to get pork pies as well.

The public being aware that the **Kentones** were to be on first (the slot reserved by the Convention Management for the most popular chorus) the Centre was filled to capacity, with standing room only and ticket touts doing a roaring trade.

When we finally appeared on stage, the auditorium erupted with wild cheers, wolf whistles, cries of "we love you", "marry me" and other blandishments too extreme to recount here. But that was as nothing compared with the reception our performance received - namely a fifteen-minute standing ovation led by the judges, most of them overcome with emotion.

It was hardly surprising then, that when the results were announced, the **Kentones** had won Gold, with a score of 99.9%. (it would have been 100% had someone not come onstage munching yet another pork pie.) We felt some sympathy (but not too much) for **Cottontown**, who had apparently been expected to win, but in fact only managed 19th place.

THEN I WOKE UP...!

Thanks for the ride, Bob!

David Tindall



PS Well, some of it's almost true! The homeward journey was rather less eventful and, having at last run out of pork pies, the gentleman in question had to resort to his other main interest by training his binoculars on selective forms of bird life...

Convention Percentage Results over the Last Few Years

The Chorus scored 65% in 2017 (When all marks thereafter were lower)

Our best ever result was 67.1% with Peter Kennedy in 2016

We scored 65.3% in both 2014 & 2015 under Mike Corr and Colin Couves respectively
2013 and earlier were 64% or less

Supplied by - **John Vaughan**

A Tenor's Tale

Hi everybody-hope you had a good weekend at Convention. I thought we sang well - pity it didn't reflect in our marks, but well done to Ryan anyway. His quartet did very well, even if our placing was disappointing.

Gill and I had a good time - good company and plenty of laughs as always, and the weather was great too, for once. We went by train to Knaresborough. What a lovely place - I'd highly recommend it. And at DFS I bought a new chair for our dining room - a bit bigger than we wanted but, hey, FREE DELIVERY - can't refuse a deal!

I joined the Club in 2008, and my first Convention was at Cheltenham, I think. We had some good times there, too. As a newcomer, I found everybody so helpful. Sadly, some have now passed away, but the Club has been great for me (even though I can't make every Thursday) and for everyone in it, thanks to the guys who started it.



I'm in the Tenor Section - this is what we look like sober. The long and the short of it is that we're the only ones holding the chorus together - regardless of what David Tindall and John Rayfield say!

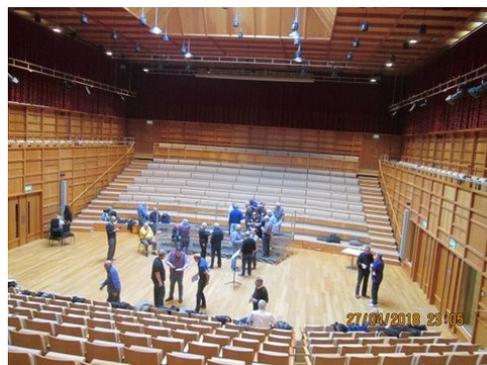


To the newbies - I hope you enjoy it, get through your audition and be part of something special.

Yours tenorly. *Al Lynch*

Canterbury Tales

I collected my neighbour Terry Cooke, the **Kentones'** sole West Brom. supporter, at the ungodly hour of 7.45am, to make our way through the Kentish mist to Canterbury. On arrival at the city we were surprised to find it boasted several universities, which initially confused us, but we eventually located the rather beautiful University of Kent. We found our warm, compact, comfortable rooms, mine with a fine view of a small bluebell wood, which allowed my spirits to soar, then taking in the wonderful, distant view of Canterbury Cathedral we made our way swiftly across the campus to our newly built, superb, and spacious rehearsal room.



Here began the first part of the NINE HOUR marathon that awaited us during our two days on site. We were SO fortunate to have not one, not two, but three amazing instructors in Ryan, PK, and the inspirational John Palmer. I won't bang on about the content of these sessions, you needed to be there, suffice to say that, with regard to our two Convention songs, most of the concentration was on interpretation and "telling the story" and at the conclusion we all felt that we had moved up a few notches.

So, we spent a very enjoyable and productive weekend with very few down moments, one being the Saturday lunch at the Gulbenkian Cafe, where the staff appeared clueless with, among other irritations, Kevin Phillips waiting 45 minutes for a jacket potato. The words *p*** up and brewery* sprang to mind, although by Sunday lunch they had got their act together. Whilst on the subject of food, the dinner was excellent, I might even say "awesome".

I missed part of Sunday's proceedings as, alongside Tim Sowter, Denis Delaroute, and Frank Taylor I accompanied Ryan to another room for our PVI coaching, which I enjoyed, having overcome my initial disappointment when I had misheard it as an IPA session. It was very helpful and instructive, but I took away one special image which was of our esteemed Life President and ex-bank manager Frank Taylor singing *Can't Buy Me Love* whilst holding his nose and blowing bubbles into a bottle through a straw. I wonder what some of his respectable former customers would have made of that.

On Saturday we had a fun social evening, where some of us trotted out our party pieces, including Tim P. and Les reprising **The Ever Ready Brothers** to great applause, but I understand that Don and the estate of Phil are already in touch with their lawyers. [pic]



The highlight, for many, was the now customary **Cordon Bleu** take on *If I Were Not Upon The Stage*, with seven of us in various guises. Perhaps the highlight of this opus was Brian Scothern in a tutu and matching large pink bra as "A Dancer", followed by John "Showstopper" Rayfield as an excitable birdwatcher sighting the Crested Grebe and, when training his binoculars on Brian, Two little Tits- again, you had to be there.

All in all it was a great experience, even for the three of us Crystal Palace season ticket holders, for whom this season has been one of frustration and disappointment. We missed one of the best home games of the season when THEY WON 5-0!!!! Still, we were satisfied to have had our own winning weekend.

For me, an unexpected highlight occurred towards the end, when John Palmer directed us with incredible passion and Ryan gave us a wonderful bass solo on *This Is The Moment*, which we sang from the heart and with great conviction. I was standing next to Kevin Phillips and at the conclusion we could hardly speak: a real goose bump moment.

I mentioned earlier one of the few down moments, but another was when I lost my room key. I duly reported it to the lady in Reception, who, with a look of pity in her eyes, announced that had I been a student it would have cost me £25 and, although she didn't use these words, the implication was "but as you are a silly old git - on your way." I felt uniquely foolish at mislaying the key, until Tim P. told me that he had been handed some keys by a lady at one Reception desk to pass over to another Reception by our rooms - which he duly lost; then, Brian Scothern was in a state of anxiety when he couldn't find his car keys, which were finally located at the bottom of one of his trouser pockets.

We shouldn't be allowed out really.

Brian Showell

Celebrating Three of our Heroes

Club night on 29th March was an occasion for meeting new folk and celebrating long standing friends. It was the night of the Mini Show, when families and friends of the men who had attended the *Come and Sing* course came to see what they had been getting up to, and to hear the results of their labours. The atmosphere was festive, and thus formed an ideal setting for the Club to applaud three of its heroes as they received their long service awards from Chairman John Sollitt. John O'Connor was celebrating 30 years of BABS membership, while Brian Scothern and David Tindall were celebrating 25 years apiece.

John O'Connor's attendance over these many years is all the more remarkable as he has one of the longest journeys to get to Club (including



Acafellas for a while), travelling in from Gravesend as he does. This in itself speaks volumes for his love of Barbershop, and his commitment to the Club and its members. John is a capable and knowledgeable musician, and the Baritones especially benefitted from his expertise over many years when he served as Baritone Part Leader. As a very raw, newly appointed Baritone, I had particular reason to be grateful for his encouragement and guidance so freely given. John's understanding of music theory, coupled with his keen ear, gives him the accuracy for which he is famous among the Baritones and which has been such an asset to the Club in general.

Brian Scothern has earned much respect over his 25 years for the immense service he has contributed to the Club, and for the selfless and unassuming manner in which he has fulfilled his various roles. He was Club Secretary for 10 years, 2005-15! I leaned on him considerably when I was



Chairman, and was often reliant on his wisdom and insight. To this day he takes responsibility for the risers, organising our hard working Riser Team as they do the erecting and dismantling each week and transport the equipment to other venues when necessary. Brian was elected Barbershopper of the Year in 2011 and received Stage Presence awards in 1994 and 2005. He is a member of **Acafellas**. Perhaps his most enduring role, however, was as the Deep Sea Diver for the song '*Asleep in the Deep*' around 1997, but still spoken of today!

David Tindall's contributions to the Club are legendary and need no recounting, but I am going to anyway.



I know we love to moan and complain about David inflicting PT on us every week (to which criticism, incidentally, he always gives the attention it deserves, and promptly lets it roll off his back) but, I ask you, which of us would be without it? Is it not largely due to David's tireless efforts that we are the fit and able body of men we are today? When we are performing, then David is our man out front, introducing our songs with wit and interest, putting our audiences at ease and very quickly establishing that relaxed atmosphere in which Barbershop thrives. David is heavily involved in the production of our superb magazine, **The Kentonian**, serving as proof reader and sub-editor. During my time as Editor I was enormously grateful for his cool judgement and wise understanding, in addition to his unparalleled mastery of the English language. David is a member of **Acafellas** and, before that, was a member of **Cordon Bleu**, being both their and **The Kentones'** Booking Secretary and MC. He received the Stage Presence award in 1996 and was elected Barbershopper of the year in 1999.

These men are the stuff the Club is made of. We pay tribute to their loyalty, thank them sincerely for their service and warmly congratulate them on reaching these noteworthy milestones.

David Southgate

Confessions of a Newby

I have never really sung since primary school, at least not in front of anyone - upsetting nearby children and the dog, or being arrested for causing a public nuisance was always an issue. So why would I put myself in the position of registering for a six week '*Come and Sing*' course? A four-part harmony course at that!

Well, it was free (have you seen the cost of singing lessons?). But despite wanting to do the course, I put off and put off sending the email to register. My wife got so fed up with me prevaricating about whether I should go or not, that she sent the email in my name.

These thoughts ran through my mind when driving to the practice hall. I still was not really sure whether I should bless my wife or curse her for giving me that push. It was with a sense of foreboding and a touch of nervousness that I walked through the door, not sure what to expect.

Straightaway, I was greeted by Colin Couves, who made me feel really welcome, and reassured me that I would enjoy the course. When I chatted with fellow students, they said that they were also nervous about singing in front of people and many, like me, hadn't sung before and wondered what they were doing there. But in my own case, for some reason which I cannot explain, this fear of singing melted away 20 minutes into our first session with Peter Kennedy. As Peter guided us through breathing and relaxing techniques and into simple singing exercises I felt at ease.

Then we tried singing the *Grand Old Duke of York*... Not so easy when you are not allowed to sing the word 'up' and then the word 'down' and then both 'up' and 'down'. There would always be someone who forgot. Just when it looked as if we were succeeding, yours truly mucked up and managed to sing both 'up' and 'down'. It was a good ice-breaker but also conveyed to me how important it is for a chorus to sing as one, and how difficult that might be.

I went home feeling very elated, looking forward to the next session.

The following week when I entered the practice hall I was again met with smiles and handshakes, but this time also with several appreciative comments: "You've returned, then?"

I noticed this was said to many other students, too. Maybe it was the **Kentones'** motto like "Strength and Honour" in the film *Gladiator* or the SAS motto "Who Dares Wins".

From the second week and through the rest of the course, Ryan Jensen put us through our paces. An American who has been singing barbershop since his teens, Ryan is a perfectionist who is able to balance and strive for the flawless with a sense of humour. His love of singing shines through.

He seemed to be able to get everyone to perform to a higher level, often changing something with the introduction of a simple exercise. Sometimes this involved doing something strange - the moment when we were told to twirl our index finger upwards as the notes resonated up through our head comes to mind. It probably looked funny to anyone watching, but it worked.

We were told not to compete vocally with each other, and that less is often more. It dawned on me that singing in a chorus is about doing your part and singing together. There can be no egos in a chorus. I guess there is a clue in the name, four-part harmony.

Over the remaining weeks, with each session we seemed to produce a better sound until eventually the course finished.

There have been so many positives in doing the course. Strangely, I leave each week feeling completely relaxed - something I didn't expect. Although I am still nervous about singing on my own, I have more confidence.

The **Kentones'** members have been exceptional, very welcoming, kind and positive. So when we were asked whether we wanted to audition for the group itself, for me, the answer could only be "Yes."

Martin Gayton



My Nan And I

I lived with my Nan until 1954 when I was 10.

My Aunt Kath recently died; some of you may recall singing *Kathleen* to her at my daughter's wedding reception at Ripley Arts Centre a few years ago.

A number of photographs have turned up which, together with my collection, have prompted me to write the following, which I thought may be of some interest.

Nan was born in 1894 and her first husband was CSM Harry Thomson, Rifle Brigade, MM, Croix de Guerre (Belgium). He died of wounds in March 1918 aged 30. It is thought that he was a regular soldier. They had a son John (my uncle) who Harry never saw; Uncle John also had a son John (yeah, I know!), my cousin, two years younger than me. After Harry came Jack Reeves, my grandfather: they had two children, Elizabeth my mum, and Thomas. Well, Jack was a no-good drunkard, so he soon got the boot! That's all I have learned about him but I suspect there was a lot more to the story. After Jack came Bob Rawlings, a Royal Navy stoker. Some of his ships were HMS *Lowestoft*, HMS *Pathfinder*, both light cruisers, and HMS *Dryad*, torpedo gunboat. He adopted my Mum and Uncle Tom,



Granddad Bob Rawlings on HMS *Dryad* tough chap 2nd from right)



My Very Young Nan

so he was the only grandfather I knew. He lost two brothers, both stokers, at the battle of Jutland, Elsey John in HMS *Queen Mary* and Percy in HMS *Indefatigable*. Both ships were blown up during the battle, with over 2000 sailors killed. Time passed and, due to circumstances, there I was with my Nan and Granddad, Uncle Tom and Aunt Maureen in a terraced house in Greenwich, quite near the river. Most weeks with Nan and Granddad we would go to the pictures at the Granada or Odeon. A 'must have choc-ice' for about 3d, and my faves were Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis films. On the way home, if time, they would pop in to the *Old Friends* for a drink, and I would have to stand outside with a glass of not very fizzy lemonade. A photograph shows me in the hop fields aged about 9, with Nan and

Aunt Maureen; probably Aunt Kath took the picture. Grubby knees, and with my own section tied up on the hop bin to see how many I HADN'T picked. This was a rare occasion, as I was usually out exploring woods, climbing trees and with my homemade bow and arrows in the meadows, and just mucking about until I got hungry and went for something to eat back in the hop field with Nan. I really loved those weeks hop picking: each year we went to the same place, Rhoden Farm near Paddock Wood, for about 6 weeks, and I met the same mates. Accommodation was on a field called the Common; on three sides was a row of corrugated iron huts, with toilets at the open end (less said the better) and cold water stand pipes for everyone. It was so very, very basic.

I remember one day walking to town with Nan along cinder paths, past



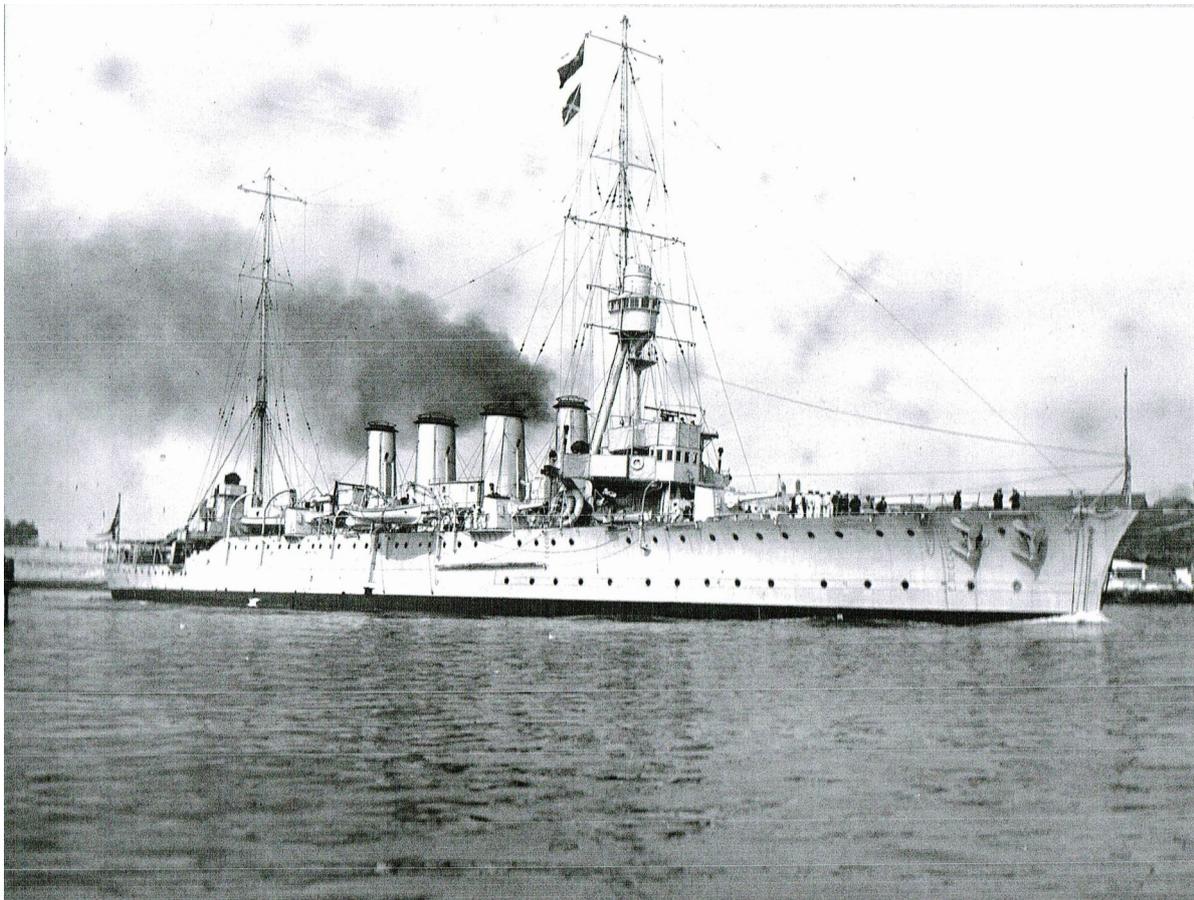
Me and Nan, Aunt Maureen Picking Hops

fenced off orchards, over stiles and through fields. She said 'those apples look nice, John.' Well, that was all I needed, and being a skinny kid I could squeeze through the fencing and would be through in a flash, scrump what we wanted and out again, proud as can be. The walk to town would take us to a high embankment which carried the London to Dover railway. We had to climb wooden steps to the top, and timbers crossed the rails, so we had to make sure that no trains were in sight before walking across. The biggest treat for me was to see the *Golden Arrow* steaming along this very fast stretch of rail: what a sight that was, never to be forgotten. One day with Cousin John, we were mucking about along a farm track, and a horse which must have escaped began galloping towards us. There was nowhere to run, so we had to jump into a drainage ditch at the side. Luckily, Wellington boots were the norm in the hop fields. A lucky escape for two nippers!



The Golden Arrow

Can you imagine these days two very young kids roaming about wherever they wanted? Back in my street in Greenwich, I could show off a bit, something like 'Oi Nobby, I saw the *Golden Arrow*,' ave an oppinapple'. I'll



H M S Lowestoft

never forget those times; occasionally I get 'the call' to go back, but the Common is now an orchard with an ugly big barn at one end. Oh well, so be it.

Looking at the pictures of my Nan, and reflecting on those times, I think she must have had a hard life - as many people did of course through two World Wars. My Nan died a year after the photo.

John Everson

Acafellas

Chelsfield Methodist Church - Songs of Praise

Sunday 18 March found **Acafellas** joining the congregation for their annual *Songs of Praise* Service led by Rev. David Gillman.

There was an uncertain start to the day due to the weekend snow and ice, but church members battled the freezing conditions to attend. In addition, several wives also attended, swelling their numbers.

It takes a certain skill set to incorporate barbershop songs into a religious service, but David seamlessly wove them into a meaningful and enjoyable combination. Six popular hymns interspersed with six barbershop arrangements were presented, finishing with my favourite, *Java Jive* (I don't think so) before retiring to the adjacent hall for tea or a cup of Java.

Chelsfield Methodist Church is where **Acafellas** rehearse on alternate Tuesday mornings at 10am. *Songs of Praise* seems to have become an annual event for us too, as we have participated for the last three years. **Ed**



Melodies in May

Acafellas were featured as special guests in the **Velvet Harmony** Concert *Melodies in May* held at St. Mark's Church, Westmoreland Road, Bromley.

A variety of acts appeared, ranging from piano solo/duets, violin solo, Sadie singing *As If We Never Said Goodbye*, with **Velvet Harmony** and **Acafellas** providing the barbershop fix.

It was a very enjoyable evening, with Pimm's and soft drinks available in the interval and a raffle for several valuable prizes, most of which seemed to find their way to **Acafellas** and WAGs. **Ed**



Higher Education

Who would have thought that a mixed bunch of blokes would be reading "Studies of Advanced Barbershopping" at the University of Kent with a senior lecturer in the art of singing (intended). Sounds impressive doesn't it? One does have to make it sound good.

An early morning start for everyone, the riser transportation team commencing their efforts on the Friday evening. Full marks to Denis for flying in from sunny Spain at lunchtime to do this. It's fascinating to see the size of equipment he can get in his car: thank heavens, or better still (pause for effect) thank Denis.

I arrived about 8.30 on Saturday morning and had to get Security to open up the hall for us. What a place! The fun starts here. I decided we would bring one of the trolleys from St Paul's to make it easier to move the risers. Good move - it was easy enough to take apart in the dark at our hall. Re-assembling it in Canterbury in daylight proved far more of a challenge, five of us scratching our heads trying to work it out. "Heaven sent" Denis, the master mechanic, worked it out (without a pencil) for those of you who remember such phrases. Boy, what an impressive place, just erecting the risers gave you a feel of the acoustics; shame we had to dampen them down but it would have given a false sense of how we actually sound; what sounds pretty good in a place like that, is very different from St Paul's or Harrogate, where when you open your mouth on stage, you can be lost for the first few bars.

Sophie Meikle, the Music Administrator, was on hand to help us start the day: she was most helpful on the phone when I needed advice and information. She stayed to listen to some of our warm-up and to hear what we sounded like - very different from the classical choirs performing there, no doubt. She herself was singing in a concert that day.

Once we got underway with the warm-up, I noticed John Palmer, our "lecturer" for the weekend, taking a considerable interest in Ryan's warm-up technique. Each MD has his own individual ideas, no doubt accumulated from others' experiences. At this point I'm not going into chapter and verse of the two days training. Sorry for those of you who weren't able to be there, but suffice to say some of the things we have done many times over the years, but there are always little nuggets to be gained from these intensive sessions. My own was voice production, applicable to the Baris, and the rest of the herd I suppose. Ryan has demonstrated voice placement and explained it many times, but somehow I had this "light bulb" moment. The trick now is to remember to put it into practice every time we sing, and that **DOESN'T ONLY APPLY TO ME**, does it chaps?

As usual, the training can get pretty intensive, and we were beginning to produce a decent sound.

The choice of evening meal was a surprise; I never expected to be having fillet of sea bass for dinner. Being "de poisson", strange how I am always drawn to the fish on a menu. It was washed down with a reasonably priced glass (or two) of wine.

Fuelled up, the evening's entertainment beckoned. At this point I have to declare an interest, should there be recriminations and photographic plus cinematic evidence.

It had been suggested that we do a show and several performers offered to take part. Our Jack of all trades chairman Mr John Sollitt took on the role of MC, no not

Mike Corr, the geezer who announces and links it all together. I can only report on the parts I witnessed. Mr Chairman "strung" things together with a variety of "jokes", some of which were amusing, some which would have seen a big hook appearing from stage left to drag him off. Past chairman David Southgate related the plight of an MD: it might have been adapted from a choral scenario but it generally rang true for Barbershop as well. Tim P and Les the Treas. entertained with their Ever-ready Bros sketch: mmm, what a floppy guitar Les. What a wig does for a chap.

Multi-instrumentalist Roy of the pipes had us all going with his ukulele, and even had to give in to thunderous applause to give us an encore. Now Brian Showell appeared in a bathrobe holding a phone, an early example of same complete with a curly whirly chord. The sketch involved trying to dictate a telegram (some may be



far too young to remember such things) to be delivered to a young lady asking her to remove an item of clothing before his arrival: I dare not reveal more for fear of retribution.

A troupe of us departed to change for the final performance of the evening. Unrest in the audience was reported, but Frank would have none of it, we had to be fully committed before unleashing ourselves on an unsuspecting band of brothers. First up was the inimitable JV reclining on a table squeezing his box in and out to accompany our magnificent singing. Next from the rear appeared Farmer John Weeks resplendent in a bushwhacker's hat and sporting a wickedly sharp looking tool, pre-industrial revolution of course, followed by a fish dressed serenely in a pink tutu as what can only be described as a graceful cygnet worthy of any ballet. John Rayfield portrayed a twitcher disguised in a long mac, no not an Apple one, a waterproof, and hung around his neck, a pair of binoculars to espy some double-entendre bird life.....

Then appeared Life President Frank Taylor, bedecked in Hi Viz with matching Fireman's helmet. All this just for Pole Dancing? Sir Jack was next in line, the long arm of the law bringing some decorum to the proceedings, a quick blast on the whistle - has somebody been sent off? Probably all of us at this rate. Belay there me hearties, I spy a magnificent Black Beard virtually covering Dave the Chat, all except for a long pointy thing - I hope it's not sharp. Damn it, it must be, he's wearing an eye patch.

Who is this, to complete the outstanding array of talent? Well it's none other than Brian "the Swooping Thespian" Showell, armed and dangerous, here was me thinking Al Capone had "retired" early in the last century. All assembled, they performed the unlikely task of reprising each of their cameos but at the same time: car crash it may have been, but an entertaining one.

The highlight of all this was to witness our esteemed MD so overcome with emotion he virtually collapsed on the table in front of him. Oh, how proud we were to reduce him to this state.

The evening had an unexpected end for a couple of us on climbing the wooden hill to Bedfordshire (I lapse into the language of my childhood, nothing to do with the partaking of a little red wine) I came upon some young ladies sitting on the stairs and was pleasantly surprised to be asked by one of them if I would like a piece of birthday cake: how could you refuse a charming sixteen year old birthday girl? The cholesterol levels shot through the roof, powered by a disgraceful amount of cream, not just on the inside but plastered all over the outside as well.



A new day, and reality dawns, and after a decent breakfast, back to the purpose of our time here. Warm-up exercises again. Over the course of the day John Palmer had us to himself, as some guys needing PVI sessions were led off to different rooms to undergo them. When Ryan and Peter came back, John exemplified what the barbershop family is all about. He saw that a couple of our chaps needed guidance on some points so, without any hullabaloo, he took them away for some personal attention.

The day wore on, and some of us were relieved to be able to make use of the tiered seating. John instigated some serious part work. Former chairman David found it incredibly hard to unleash his nasty side and, although achieving it to some extent, was not comfortable with it. This produced a strain in his voice and also mine, which unfortunately lasted to the end of the afternoon

To end on a better note, Ryan's reaction to our final performances gave us the impression that he was happy: leaping ten feet in the air and shaking the apples off the tree said it all, the emotion quite evident.

All that was left was to take down the risers and return them to their normal resting place in St Paul's, which when accomplished could be rewarded with a nice cup or glass of something or other.

Good weekend, mission accomplished, maybe. Harrogate will tell, but what the heck, I enjoyed it, some bits maybe too much if you get a chance to see the X rated video.

de Poisson



Yes folks, you've got to believe it! You've got to believe it because we found it! There really is a Pub with no Beer! It all came about on our delightful, if eventful, journey to Convention.

Those of us who normally reckon to go to Convention on the Club coach were left upset and floundering when it was announced that there would be no such coach this year. What could we do? How would we get there? Help! Help! And sure enough, help arrived in the form of big-hearted Bob Gilbert. Bob was obviously wired into the feeling of despair many of us were experiencing and, proactive as he is, quickly came up with the suggestion that we hire a minibus and he would drive us to Harrogate.

And so it came about that a dozen or so of us set off on the Friday morning of the Convention weekend. It was a little reminiscent of the coach journeys many of us have made to Den Bosch, with Bob and Vicky looking after us. They are so good at it. These journeys are all the better for their company and overseeing. After a couple of hours we made a quick toilet/coffee stop and, a couple of hours later, began to think about lunch. Well, most of us did, but it has to be said that John Rayfield was completely noncommittal as he kept assuring us he had stocked himself up with pork pies and was quite self-sufficient. It became a standing joke. All efforts to get him to share them around proved fruitless, so for the rest of us a stop for lunch it had to be. Now this is where the fun started. Bob, true to his big heart, determined to give us all a treat. He thought he



What, no beer?

would turn off the A1 and find us a nice quiet country pub, so we could relax and have a civilised lunch. Not knowing the area, he took pot luck and turned off at a suitable looking junction, but 'suitable' it soon turned out not to be. It narrowed to a single track road, bumpy and not in the best of condition. And it went on and on and on, through fields, and woodland, and fields, and more fields. We passed a sign assuring us that there was indeed a pub to be found - somewhere, but we began to despair of ever finding it. And then, out of nowhere, as if conjured up by a master magician, we happened upon a village. And yes, it had a pub! Hooray! Well done Bob. Our spirits were high, but then began a niggling uncertainty. The door was closed. There were no lights on inside. Hope started to fade, and then was dashed. We couldn't believe it after all we had been through to get there. Bob hunted and searched, and then did it all again. Round this side, round that, looking in this window, looking in that, knocking on this door, knocking on that. But all to no avail. The place was lifeless. Surely there was only one explanation for a pub being closed on a Bank Holiday Friday lunchtime - they had no beer! They must have run out of beer! We had stumbled across the proverbial 'Pub With No Beer'. Ah, life can be cruel at times. *David Southgate*

Chairman's Corner

Well, doesn't time fly? Just a short time ago, I was wishing you a Happy New Year and now, with June arriving, we are back from another annual trip to the British Association of Barbershop Singers' Convention, this year held in Harrogate.

We were greeted with lots of rain which thankfully did not remain for the weekend.

Many of us made various plan to get there, by car, train or coach. Some 14 members and partners elected to join Bob Gilbert in the minibus he hired. Their journey was lengthy, and they did not arrive in Harrogate until 5 45 pm, with a planned rehearsal at a local Hotel at 6 pm! All credit to them, as after booking in to their accommodation, they made it to the hotel in fairly good time. Well done!



As you are well aware, our new MD, Ryan Jensen, took over the reins in the New Year and proceeded to prepare us for Convention. His style is now very familiar to us, but so very different from Peter's. We "get him", and continue to make progress under his guidance and extensive knowledge of Barbershop. So we were ready for another challenge, and it would appear that we sang very well in the Competition, bearing in mind that we were the first chorus on stage. Unfortunately, our friends the judges only increased our percentage score by a small amount. This is, of course, frustrating after working so hard. We will start again !

Ryan is part of a quartet, **Fifth Element**, who qualified for the semi-final of the quartet contest, and were in the six selected for the final, achieving bronze medal place. Awesome !

Prior to Convention, at the end of April, we spent a weekend at the University of Kent in Canterbury .

Our coaching team was assisted by John Palmer. We had a good weekend, and held a small social gathering on the Saturday evening, with various contributions from some of the guys including a great finale of *If I Were Not Upon The Stage*, complete with costumes and props.

Ryan was able to carry out more PVI (personal voice improvement) tests, so most are now completed.

WEBSITE. This has continued to receive improvement, due again to the efforts of Alan Lucking and Simon Bird.

The website address is : www.thekentones.co.uk Please direct any questions to Alan.

RECRUITMENT. An important objective of this is to get publicity. We will also be developing social media options and will form a team to oversee that aspect.

However, it is **YOUR** responsibility to do what you can too...

COME AND SING COURSE. Since the six-week course started in February, we have about ten attendees still with us and keen to join. They are now in the process of preparing for their auditions, and hopefully their acceptance into Membership. We wish them well.

STRAWBERRY TEA AFTERNOON. This will be on Sunday 8th July at the home of Denis and Pat Delaroute. Please try to attend if possible. Contact Brenda Newman for tickets and information. 01689 859359

GENERAL. I have to repeat that there will be other projects this year, and more volunteers are urgently needed to ensure their progress. I have already made the point that we cannot, and should not, rely on the same people helping out, when others do not "step up " and just assume that it will all happen anyway. In which category do you find yourself??

John Sollitt - Chairman

Tea Club

Those **Kentones** who partake of tea and coffee on a Thursday evening probably wonder what happens to the money collected by the 'tea ladies'.

This money does not go into the Supporters' Club accounts but into the **Kentones'** account, once the cost of supplies has been deducted. I am pleased to report that in the past 12 months a sum of £193 has been raised to swell the **Kentones'** account!

So , all you **Kentones**, keep drinking (and paying!) PLEASE.

Sue Couves (Tea Club Administrator)

Supporters' Club

The **Kentones** Supporters' Club recently held its 22nd Annual General Meeting. We've had a 'quiet' year with the main event being a Strawberry Tea. Unfortunately, Geoff wasn't well enough to organise a quiz. Hopefully, all being well, this has been pencilled in for later in the year. It was decided to give the **Kentones** a cheque for £750, which we hope the chorus will use wisely! **Jean**



Thanks to all Supporters for their annual subscription payments . **Brenda**



**Hosted By :-
Denis & Pat Delaroute**

Sunday July 8th 3-5 pm
2 Warren Drive
Chelsfield
Orpington BR6 6EX

£8.00 - £7.00 Supporters

Tickets from :- BRENDA NEWMAN
01689 859359



Obituary

Chris Garrard 1951-2018

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of our great friend and colleague Chris Garrard, who had been suffering with a rare condition - PSP



(Progressive Supranuclear Palsy). Chris retired from the Metropolitan Police after 32 years service and joined the **Kentones** in 2003, becoming a Committee member in his first year with the Club. Having served as Club Secretary (2003/04) and as Singout Secretary (2009/11). He was awarded Most Improved Singer in 2005, Barbershopper of the Year in 2010 and Stage Presence in 2013. Quite a record. He also sang with two small choruses from within the **Kentones**, **Cordon Bleu** and - later - **Acafellas**, entertaining a wide variety of audiences and helping to raise money for various charities. Volunteer driver for a school for disabled children, cricketer, soccer referee, volunteer steward at Lord's – the list goes on. Nothing was ever too much trouble for Chris, who will be sorely missed by everyone who knew him – as will his wicked sense of humour. Our thoughts and love are with his wife, Margaret, and his family. **Chris Sydee**

