



The Kentonian

THE BROMLEY BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB MAGAZINE



The Kentones



Acafellas



Magpie Christmas

At the Glades

Christmas Singouts

Christmas is always a hectic time of year, but about 35 members of the **Kentones** managed to make time to perform at Bromley's Glades Shopping Centre on December 23.

They entertained shoppers and spread a little seasonal goodwill with a mixture of wintry songs and feel-good numbers like *Amarillo*.

Music director Ryan Jensen handed over the baton to Colin Couves to conduct the chorus in a barbershop version of *Silent Night, Holy Night*.

The performance was much enjoyed by passers-by, and even led to a couple of enquiries from possible future members.

It raised £492.17 for the **Kentones'** current charity, Bromley-based **Magpie Dance**, the UK's leading dance charity for people with learning disabilities.

Tracy Gayton

Ye Olde Whyte Lyon

Our annual singout at Ye Olde Whyte Lyon in Locksbottom was, once again, a great success. Several members met early for dinner before the main contingent of the **Kentones** arrived.

A mixture of barbershop songs and carols were performed for the customers, and a magnificent collection of £161 was raised for our charity **Magpie Dance**. *Ed*

The Chorus turned out in force for the annual Christmas charity singout in The Glades. It was good to see Tim Priddin in the front row again, looking fit and well. Must be all that sea air. The men sang a mixture of Christmas carols and chorus repertoire. They were very well received as usual. Well, they are rather good!

It was very busy in The Glades, but people still had time to stand and listen to the singing and give generously to the chorus's chosen charity, which this year is **Magpie Dance**.

Quoting from their website, "**Magpie Dance** is the UK's leading charity for people with learning difficulties, which they believe should not be a barrier to personal and artistic success. Through dance, the participants gain life, social and communication skills with added health and well-being benefits."

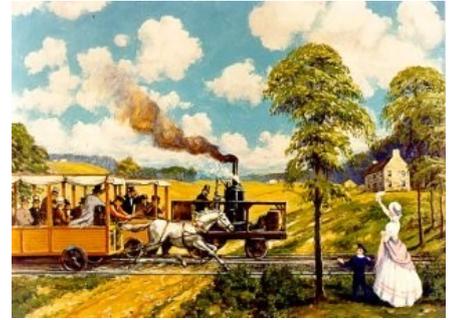
What a terrific vision and a great choice of charity for the **Kentones** to support.

Jean Garelick





Baltimore and Ohio Railroad



Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O), was the first steam-operated railway in the United States to be chartered as a common carrier of freight and passengers (1827). The B&O Railroad Company was established by Baltimore, Maryland, merchants to compete with New York merchants and their newly opened Erie Canal for trade to the West. A driving force in its early years was the Baltimore banker George Brown, who served as treasurer from 1827 until 1834 and had Ross Winans build the first real railroad car.

It was the first railroad in the U.S. to earn passenger revenues in December 1829, and publish a timetable on May 23, 1830. On Christmas Eve 1852, the **B&O** line was completed between Baltimore and the Ohio River near Moundsville, West Virginia.

In contrast, the line's finest moment came in September 1863 when the **B&O** played a leading role in the longest Civil War-era deployment by rail of soldiers from one theatre of operations to another. ... The reinforcements began their journey on cars powered by locomotives belonging to the **B&O**.



The appropriately named **Tom Thumb** was the first successful steam locomotive designed in the United States, created by Peter Cooper during the summer of 1830 (steam locomotives shipped from England began operating in America just a few months after the locomotive was tested). It is without question the most recognized locomotive ever built (in the U.S.) which, interestingly enough, because of only being an experiment, was built mostly with cobbled-together parts found here and there. While some of its legend has never been fully documented on paper, there is no question that it ushered in a new era for the railroad industry, where no longer would true horse-power pull trains, but instead the artificial variety, found within the mechanical “iron horse”. Unfortunately, the original **Tom Thumb** was not saved for posterity's sake (as seemingly few experimental designs of any kind are) but a replica built during the early 20th century is preserved, and operational, at the **Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum**.

Welcome to BABS

Welcome to four of our newer members pictured receiving their BABS member's certificates presented by our Membership Secretary Terry Cooke (Second from the right).
From left to right :- Martin Saunders, David Palmer, Martin Gayton and Kevin Grey



And also welcome to Tom Graves, here receiving his membership certificate from Terry.

Sing-Out Number One

Well, having finally got through my audition, and after spending a couple of months learning and practising Christmas carols, I was NEARLY ready for my first **Kentones** 'gig' at our Glades carol concert.



I say nearly ready as some of us newbies were still waiting to receive our **Kentones** clothing. Step up Mr John Sollitt, who managed to kit us out with days to spare. Well done and thank you, John.

When I tried on my new clobber, my daughter was not taken with the red waistcoat, joking that I looked as if I had forgotten my snooker cue! But personally I liked it, and thought we looked great as a group, especially when we were wearing the matching Santa hats.

At rehearsals, someone told me that the Glades concert was a good one to start with as it was quite relaxed - and as the audience was just passing through, maybe not as attentive as at most concerts!

On the day, this seemed to be the case. Many shoppers stopped for a song or two, some joining in with a few verses and then moving on with their bags of Christmas shopping.

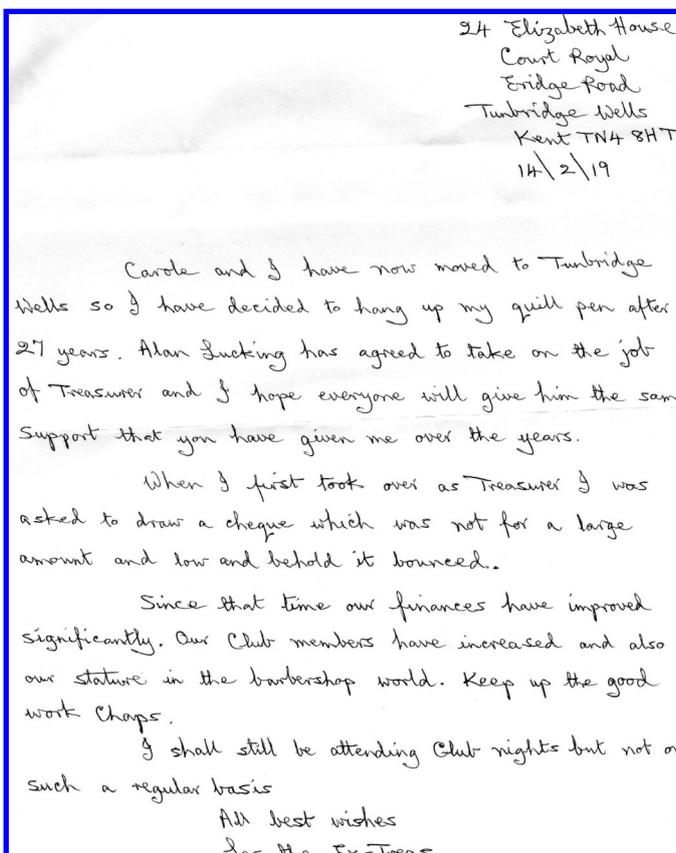
As expected, the atmosphere was very jolly and Christmassy - all helped by Ryan's repartee with the audience and with the chorus. This culminated in some funny moments during the clapping section of *Amarillo* with Ryan feigning mock (I think) annoyance with the audience clapping at the wrong point.

I really enjoyed my first concert: it all went by so quickly. I especially liked singing *Holy Night*, as well as the fun of *Jingle Bells*, although I'm still not 100 per cent sure of the **Kentones** version.

But whatever happened to the *Coventry Carol*? I hadn't heard this before rehearsals. I wasn't initially taken with it, and I think it is a bit of a "Marmite" song - some people love it and some hate it. But it grew on me and it became a personal favourite, so I was disappointed that we didn't sing it this year.

The day ended with a couple of beers in a local pub, which was a great way to finish my first concert.

Martin Gayton



A heartfelt thank-you to Les for 27 years as Club Treasurer. Presented by Denis.

Hidden Impact



Of all last year's centennial celebrations of the First World War armistice, none were more original or ambitious than **Maggie Dance's** exhibition and show at Langley Park School in December.

Research on recently released hospital records reveals the extent to which people with learning difficulties were affected by the war. When it started, some lived at home with parents/carers, but many thousands were confined to "lunatic" asylums and were known as "imbeciles", "idiots", "mentally deficient" and so on. The huge casualties early in the war led to the requisitioning of asylums for use as Military Hospitals, displacing the former residents, some of whom were retained for menial tasks in, say, garden or laundry; others were sent to overcrowded workhouses. When conscription was introduced in 1916, all were examined and those who passed a rudimentary health check were classified as "Useful Imbeciles" and given war work, e.g. a transfer to the army's Labour Corps, and digging trenches. They were usually unarmed, and when they lost their lives they were often not recorded on War Memorials after the war.

This background was the basis of **Maggie's Show**, which started with a scene of happier days before hostilities commenced, and then launched into a series of scenes showing the tragic history of the war, including related emotional issues - the effects of soldiers' shellshock, the side effects on the women working in ammunition factories, and of love, and loss, and remembrance. The show was emotional and breathtaking, keeping the huge audience on the edges of their seats and fluctuating between smiles and tears throughout.

Huge credit goes to the researchers, choreographers, musicians and writers who took over a year creating this show and, especially, to the exuberant and energetic **Maggie** dancers, who performed brilliantly, receiving a long and well-deserved standing ovation at the end of this memorable evening.

John Boothby



Photographer - Pari Naderi

Pot Luck

We started the month of December with an event that, hopefully, will become an annual occasion. Hosted and organised in Pratt's Bottom Village Hall by Julie and Ryan, Pot Luck was without doubt very successful. Those attending provided a starter, main course or a sweet. The fare provided was a sight to behold. It was a great event which allowed us more time to socialise than is usually available on a Club night, and of course to sing a few songs.



ACAFELLAS Christmas Engagements

Sunday Dec 9 was an annual engagement for **Acafellas**, singing with, and for, the small congregation at Chelsfield Methodist Church. The church is the venue for **Acafellas** rehearsals held on alternate Tuesdays. The service was lead by the Rev. Terry Wright.

The venue for the **Dartford Council Carol Service** was a purpose built stage at the side of the park, and a Council initiative for a FREE concert at Christmas. Despite a temperature of only 3 degrees, about 400 people turned up to sit in the open air, fortified by a cup of hot chocolate provided by the Council. Those still alive at the end, including our members, were given a Cadbury's chocolate pack. Well done, Carole Moore, for joining the crowd!

The start was delayed for a few minutes because of traffic congestion, but Colin Couves and fifteen **Acafellas** got it underway, accompanied by nine members of the **Dartford Community Band**. There was a printed programme with all the words for an hour long programme of carols interspersed with **Acafellas** solos, and readings by some Councillors. Apparently this is the seventh year the Council have organised the event, and the turnout suggests that, contrary to expectations, the public enjoy it despite the cold. It was a long way to travel, but our funds will benefit by £200.

John Vaughan

The Scout Hall in Longfield Hill might well seem like the back of beyond to some of the **Acafellas**, but they are a determined and resourceful lot, and all those signed up to sing for the **WI** on Thursday 13th December, whether by map, memory, GPS or sheer good luck, did actually find it and duly arrived. Well done to them all!

The welcome was warm-hearted and congenial, with an immediate cup of tea to offset the effects of the cold weather. The **WI** ladies finished off their festive meal and then we were into our performance, ably directed by Frank Taylor (what would we do without that man?) and our songs equally ably introduced by David Tindall (how does it roll off his tongue so smoothly?). The singing was fine, despite having had little chance to warm up. The all female audience was receptive and appreciative, and afforded us plenty of applause. One of them wrote afterwards:

“Thank you so much for bringing the **Acafellas** to our W.I. Many people told me that they enjoyed it greatly. Certainly different from our usual meetings!” So there you go – **Acafellas** make a difference. Maybe we should add that to our publicity material?

David Southgate



Kevin's Story

As a new member, I would like to take a moment to tell you a bit about myself and my **Kentones** story so far.

My name is Kevin Gray, born 12th February 1977, in a little village called Fenstanton just outside Cambridge. Growing up I was considered more of a practical person rather than intellectual, having had a great passion for sport of all sorts, playing rugby and football for several local teams and representing Cambridgeshire at Cross-country and Athletics (I know this is probably hard to believe, looking at me now.) I have also had a passion for singing for many years turning into a bit of a "Karaoke star" and having once been approached by the London Welsh male voice choir. I'm also a keen quizzier, attending my local quiz on a weekly basis. I enjoy caravanning through the summer months. I have moved around the U.K over the years, finally settling down in Biggin Hill some 7 years ago with my partner Jane.



My journey with the **Kentones** started, like so many with enrolling on the *Learn to Sing* course so that I could improve my singing ability. I was greeted and made welcome by Colin Couves and others. To be honest, I wasn't sure about the genre at first, but soon found my feet in the bass section and started to enjoy it, always staying on after the lesson so that I could learn and understand more about how barbershop harmony works. After the six week course and my range test, MD Ryan Jensen suggested I join the Lead section with Simon Bird as my mentor, but never feeling totally comfortable I went back to Bass. After weeks of practice and a one- to -one with Ryan, I plucked up the courage to do my audition which, to my surprise, I passed at the first time of asking. Thanks to Jack, Tim and Adrian for singing with me. My first singout was for the **D.C.F.**, which I enjoyed very much, and have done several since. I'm looking forward to my first Convention in May, and singing/socialising with the **Kentones** for many years to come. I consider it a privilege and a pleasure to sing with such kind people who I now regard as friends.

Charity Concert - St John's

A big thank you to the **Kentones** for singing at the annual charity concert at St John's Church.

For many years this has been billed as the **Children in Need Concert**. However, for 2018 it was decided to change this, and to support local charities nominated by members of the **Sing Out Loud** community choir. The reasons for the change were:

It is possible to make a bigger impact by giving more to smaller charities rather than adding to a very big pot such as **Children in Need**.

It can be more meaningful to help local charities which people have particular reasons to support.

Changing the date to December meant the opportunity to perform Christmas songs.

So the charities chosen were **St Christopher's Hospice**, which I know is close to the hearts of many in the **Kentones**, and **Jus B**, a local charity in Bromley which works with teenagers.

The overall amount raised was around £1,600, which was a fantastic sum. So thank you to everyone.

In terms of our performance, it went down very well, with very positive comments. The repertoire was spot on - lively and entertaining with audience participation, and just the right length. Well done and thank you to Ryan.

I hope that the **Kentones** will be available to sing at St John's in 2019.

So Long but not Goodbye

As you know, I have decided to take a break from the **Kentones**, for the foreseeable future. However, I thought it was only right to say a bit more about why, and also to say a massive thank you to everyone in the Club. I have made so many special friendships, and will treasure many happy memories from my time with the **Kentones**.



It was around 3.00 in the morning, on the day of Convention, when I had a bit of time to think about this, while driving up the A1 M to Harrogate, drinking strong coffee. Because of family circumstances, I could not leave until Friday evening. On the Saturday of Convention, I was driving on to Leeds to pick up my son before driving over to Anglesey for our annual family holiday.

I realised that for me, this was not sustainable, and that I want to be able to spend more time with my family. It also meant that I have not been able to enjoy the social side of Convention, which for many is the highlight. It has worked out well in the years when Convention has been at Llandudno, but otherwise it just doesn't.

Also, I have rediscovered running, and want to spend more time training, and I can't do that as well as committing to the **Kentones**.

I have so many positive memories of the **Kentones**, it is not possible to mention them all. However, these are some of my highlights:

Singing in quartet with Jack, Charley and John Measure has to be up there at the top. What an amazing experience that was. Standing at Jack's shoulder always inspired such confidence that I am sure I sang at my best while I was with the quartet.

The trips to Holland were brilliant, and I will never forget my 50th birthday. Such a special occasion.

Top Choir of Kent was a real high, and we should be very proud of our success there.

I have learned so much which has helped my singing over the years, having had the opportunity for excellent coaching both from within the **Kentones** and from others.

And then there are the friendships I have made, and hope to be able to continue.

My experience has been overwhelmingly positive. However, the only thing I would say is that at times I have felt frustrated at the amount of time it has been necessary to spend on the risers correcting notes, only for the same mistakes to be made the next week. I really believe that, if the chorus is to progress, it needs all members to spend time outside of rehearsals, listening to the teach tracks and practising what has been learned. That way, rehearsal evenings and coaching sessions can be spent on craft rather than not note bashing, however vital that is.

A special thank you to Ryan, who is an outstanding singer and coach: the chorus is very lucky to have him.

While taking a break from singing with the **Kentones**, I hope to keep in touch, and come along occasionally to see everyone and hear how it is going. I wish the chorus every success in the future.

Tim Sowter

Retiring Chairman's Corner

As I have said on many occasions – doesn't time fly? Especially if you have been having fun!

The past three years have gone by in a blink of the eye, and having served the period of time allowed as Chairman, I am now stepping down to make way for your new Chairman, Denis Delaroute, a former BBHC Chairman.

There have been many changes and events during that time, some good and some not so good, but they are to be expected, I guess, as we have to move on and take on new challenges and obstacles.



I repeat some of my comments made at the recent AGM, in that the Club is the President, the committee, the music team, the riser team, the **Kentonian** team, all others who do jobs and, following their successful auditions as a result of the *Come and Sing* course held earlier in the year, the new members !

I thank your hard-working committee. Much work goes on behind the scenes on a daily basis to maintain the Club's administration. Volunteers are always welcome! I am sure I have said that many times.

We also have our **Supporters' Club**, which continues to raise funds for us, and we have the tea station team every week.

My congratulations to winners of awards this past year: Adrian Emes, most improved singer, Steve Cooper, for stage presence and our barbershopper of the year, Colin Barnes.

Our MD, Ryan Jensen, continues to bring his vast knowledge of our craft to us every week. I am sure we are reaping the benefit of that, though may not realise it to be evident.....yet!

Ryan's quartet, **Fifth Element**, achieved the Bronze medal at Convention – very well done!

RECRUITMENT. It is the duty of every single member to do whatever he can to encourage newcomers.

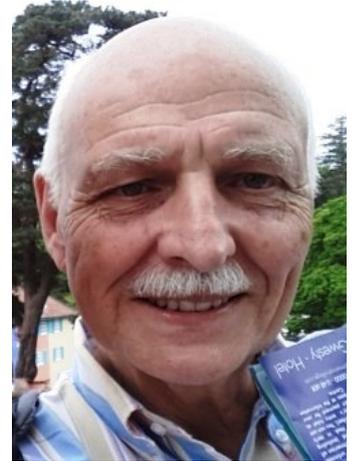
Over the past three years, I have, adopted a hands-on approach to Club affairs and also, and importantly, tried to bring humour where possible to proceedings.

I thank you all for making me proud to have been your Chairman.

'evenin' all. **John Sollitt** - Deputy Chairman

Chairman's Chat

Following meetings of the management and music teams, it has been decided that we will try to finish rehearsals at about 10pm, so that the riser team can vacate the hall by the allotted time of 10.30, and those of a mind to can raise their ethanol levels at a local hostelry. To maximise the time spent rehearsing, we will therefore hit the risers, singing, at 7.30 sharp and have a reduced tea break of 15 minutes at about 9pm. I will endeavour to keep notices to a minimum, and to that end will cut out the platitudinous weekly thank-yous and birthday greetings. (We really do appreciate all the work you do for the Club and who, at our age, needs reminding of the swift passage of time!). I will attempt to email notices to fill in any information gaps.



I have previously outlined the fact that we are very mindful of the need to recruit more members, and that most of our membership gains have come from *Learn to Sing* courses (now re branded *Come and Sing*). We typically gain as members about 10% of the people initially expressing an interest in attending the course. There was some discussion on how frequently we could do this, but with some 250,000 people living in the Bromley area, it was thought that an annual course should be possible, and that the best time would be after Convention in June/ July.

We have also discussed the need to increase the number of times we sing in front of an audience, so that Convention is not such a unique experience. Whilst we felt that organising a big show every year was problematic, we felt we could put on a smaller, less expensive show, in smaller venues on alternate years, and the best time for this would be November or December. There are some very preliminary feelers being put out for this. We also agreed that we could hold simpler to organise open rehearsals, perhaps two or three times a year, when we would move to the church and invite an audience. This would be a free event, but with a bucket collection to raise some funds. If we did this in May we could showcase our Convention package.

However the overarching requirement for all possible events is that we connect with people who would be interested in coming to hear or sing with us. How do we do that, particularly for younger men? A big part of the answer I am getting from other clubs, such as Barbershop and Rotary, and associations like *Making Music*, is social media. For a genetic Neanderthal like me, who shuns Facebook, Twitter and the like, this is terra nova. It is, however, territory we need to explore in addition to the more traditional ways of getting our message out.

None of this will happen if members do not step up to the line to organise it. I personally feel that getting a small team together to look at all the channels of how we can connect to audiences and singers is the most urgent. It affects everything we do. We also need one or two teams to organise shows and "open rehearsals"; they could be combined, but either way would need to work with the communications team to connect with their target audience.

So, gaze at your navel, take up the Lotus position, meditate, look into your soul; but can you, will you help your Club run these events? Your Club Needs You!

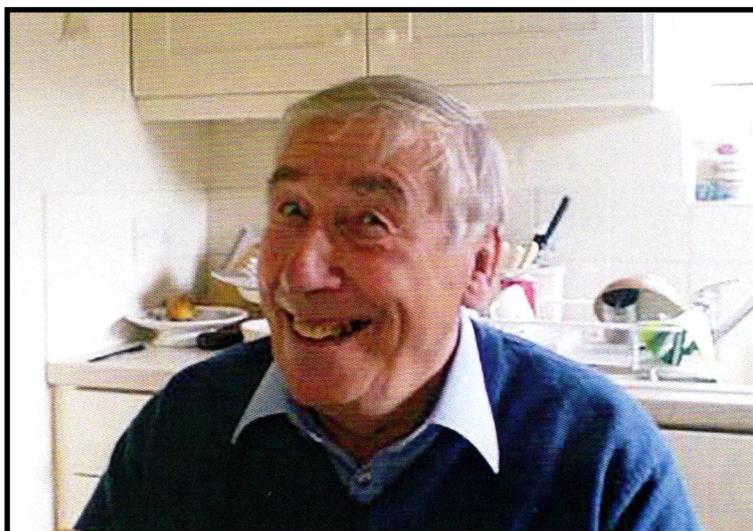
Denis

GOODBYE CHARLEY

Kentones come and **Kentones** go (almost two hundred of them since BBHC began in 1975), but some remain forever in the mind's eye for various reasons - superior voice quality, length of membership, exceptional Club service, distinctive personality et al.

Charley Gates ticked *all* the boxes:- a fine baritone, forty years ' distinguished membership, during which he filled, at one time or another, every Committee post but one and, above all, an inimitable personality.

His rich sense of humour enabled him to observe, with razor-sharp accuracy, the funnier side of life. As a raconteur he had no equal, as amply demonstrated by hilarious accounts of certain situations encountered both during his years in the building industry as well as in his long and distinguished singing career. I was privy to many of these anecdotes whilst driving with him to **Cordon Bleu** gigs, never entirely sure where we would end up, both being somewhat indifferent navigators. (We once managed to get lost between Bromley and Orpington, due to roadworks, but agreed to blame confusing diversion signs.)



He and I, being children of the '30s, shared very similar tastes in the popular entertainment of the Golden Age - Sinatra, Dean Martin, Ella, the MGM musicals, comedians such as Max Miller, and much else besides. His daughter Kathryn was actually named after Kathryn Grayson, so highly admired was she by Charley. But he also carried a torch for Doris Day, so it's perhaps surprising that his other daughter is Pauline...!

I was very privileged to have known Charley as a good friend, and was particularly touched that he wanted to maintain regular contact throughout his illness, his phone calls always starting with an enquiry after MY health... His remarkable courage - and Rose's - were utterly inspiring..

What a character, what a legend (or, as he would have said, a leg-end.)

To misquote Irving Berlin, "The song is ended, but the *memory* lingers on."

David Tindall

From Our President

I have many memories of Charley from years of friendship forged through our barbershop hobby. Here's one which I always recall whenever the Convention takes place in Harrogate.

I can't remember the actual year (no surprise there) but our competition slot must have been morning or lunchtime-ish, so the afternoon was free. We were all deciding what to do in the afternoon and Charley happened to mention that he was going to the pub. I pointed out that he could get a drink at the Centre, but he told us that at the pub, which was just opposite the Centre, they had a TV and he would be watching Crystal Palace in the final play-off match for promotion to the First Division/Premiership. Charley asked if we wanted to join him, but Pam and I had arranged to go to **Betty's** for afternoon tea. In the event we were able to get to the pub just as the second half was starting, and found Charley sitting with Ian Quinn, enjoying repartee with the rest of the crowd who were supporting the other side (again I can't remember which). With the score at 0-0 it was getting tense when, surprise, surprise, the Palace managed to score a goal with about 10 minutes to play. They were able to hang on until the final whistle and a remarkable win was achieved, as they were the underdogs and given little chance of winning. It was perhaps fortunate that the atmosphere in the pub was good-humoured and we managed to get out alive.

I would have liked to be able to say that the **Kentones** won a gold medal that year, but that would be a fairy story too far.

Diana (Di) Rayfield 15th February 1935 - 19th December 2018

It was with great sadness that we heard the news that John Rayfield's wife Diana, known to us as Di, died on 19th December 2018. It was an indication of how much she was loved and respected, and what a source of inspiration she was to her family and friends, by the numbers who crowded into Kemnal Green Cemetery for the Service of Thanksgiving on Tuesday 15th January, led by Celebrant Julie Powell.

We heard of her life as a devoted wife, mother and grandmother, her skill with a needle, her love of and involvement with Barbershop singing, as well as her skills on the bowling green and the long and happy years she shared with her beloved John. The service of personal memories and tributes was interspersed with poetry and music, ending with that poignant song by Barbra Streisand.

*Mem'ries light the corners of my mind
Misty water-colored mem'ries of the way we were*

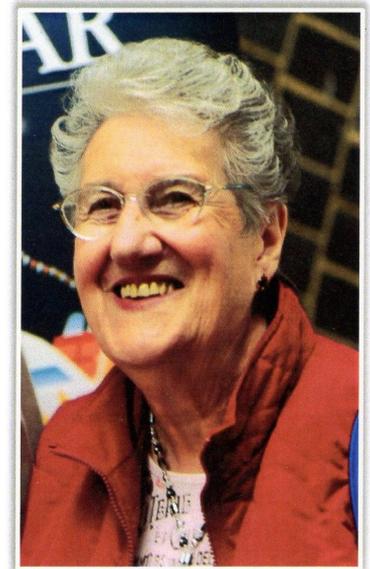
*Scattered pictures of the smiles we left behind
Smiles we gave to one another for the way we were*

*Can it be that it was all so simple then
Or has time rewritten every line
If we had the chance to do it all again, tell me, would we, could we*

*Mem'ries may be beautiful and yet
What's too painful to remember
We simply choose to forget*

*So it's the laughter we will remember
Whenever we remember the way we were.*

Songwriters: Andrew Lloyd Webber /
Trevor Nunn / T.S. Eliot / Zdenek



As members of the **Kentones** and the **Supporters' Club** we will continue to support John during this sad time.

Avril Sydee

The Kentones

Honorary Life President – Frank Taylor

Club Night - Thursday 7.30 pm at St. Paul's Church Hall, Crofton Road, Orpington, Kent, BR6 8JE

Main Committee:

Chairman - Denis Delaroute
 Deputy Chairman - John Sollitt
 Secretary - Colin Barnes
 Treasurer - Alan Lucking
 Membership Sec. - Terry Cooke
 Public Relations Officer -
 Performance Sec. - Carlo Azzopardi
 Co-opted Member -
 Almoner - Colin Couves

Music Committee:

-
 Music Director - Ryan Jensen
 Asst. Music Director - Vacant
 Acafellas Music Director - Colin Couves
 Music Team Secretary - Colin Barnes
 Music Team Support - Simon Bird
 Part Leaders Lead - Jack Willoughby
 Asst. Lead - Simon Bird
 Bass - Frank Taylor
 Tenor - Vacant
 Bari- - Colin Couves

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All Club material intended for publication: Proof reading - David Tindall - Graphic information - Al Horton

Kentones Diary Dates

Date	Time	Function	Venue
30 Mar 2019	5.45pm	Croydon Arts Festival	Royal Russell School, Coombe Lane CR9 5BX
27-28 April 2019	T B A	Convention Rehearsal	Eltham Collage, Mottingham Lane, London SE9 4RW
24-27 May 2019		2019 BABS Convention	International Ctr, Exeter Rd, Bournemouth BH2 5BH

Acafellas

Chorus Director – Colin Couves

Meetings:- alternate Tuesdays, 10.00am to 12.00 noon at Chelsfield Methodist Church, BR6 6HD

Acafellas Diary Dates

Date	Time	Function	Venue
Tues. 14 May 2019	2.0pm	Residents Entertainment	Thos..Philipot Almshouses Passey Pl, London SE9 5DJ

INTERESTED IN **MEMBERSHIP** OF THE **KENTONES** OR SUPPORTERS?

NEED ENTERTAINMENT FOR AN EVENT OR FUNCTION?

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT www.thekentones.co.uk