

THE EXCITING EIGHTIES

1980-1983

WITH ALL the changes we had undergone, it was time to "play catch-up" with procedures and paperwork. The International Board and its many assistants worked overtime at mind-boggling pace to update the manuals, rules and guidelines for chapters, areas and individual members. All this resulted in a deluge of printed matter to be read and assimilated by everyone concerned with Harmony, Inc. business. Every new program instigated brought with it a new set of problems that had to be solved.

Growth, however welcome, compounded the problem of keeping up with paperwork. The increased number of entries in the History Book and Bulletin Contests, for instance, required new and more efficient methods of judging, of which all had to be informed. Areas, too, were feeling growing pains and were asking for guidelines in their own conduct of business and competitions. All of this pointed up a need for more people to handle the detail work. It also became apparent that those serving at the International level needed a solid background in both barbershopping and in business and/or organizational work. Much time at Board Meetings had been spent, over the years, explaining elementary procedures to new Board Members. With so many pressing problems to be solved, the Board could no longer afford to spend its time teaching and training inexperienced people. A study called "Hours Spent at the Board Table" resulted in a list of recommendations and guidelines that would enable the Board to cope with its enormous agenda in the time allotted.

— 1980 —

The decade began with the VILLAGE VOCAL CHORDS once more hostessing convention, this time at the Chicago Marriott-O'Hare. On the surface everything seemed to run smoothly, but a behind-the-scenes drama was being played out with near-disastrous results. It began when the printed directions for erecting the new "do-it-yourself" shell for quartette competition were lost or misplaced. Half-a-dozen VVCs, assisted by VALLEY BELLES director Dan Ryan, spent the night trying to put the shell together sans directions. By the time it was discovered that the glue wouldn't hold, it was too late to run out and buy staples to hold the shell together. The crew was hard at it again first thing in the morning, but the shell was still being painted while the quartettes were having their on-stage rehearsals!

That was only the beginning. The bigger catastrophe was the discovery that the specially-built stage had several different levels, risking the

life and limb of all who trod upon it! This seemingly insurmountable problem was solved by topping the entire stage with a portable dance floor. Harmony hostess chapters are nothing if not innovative.

Despite such crises, the competitions went off smoothly and were splendid. **KEEPSAKE** from Gardner, Massachusetts, won our hearts along with the crowns and capes. **HARMONY FIRST**, the exciting chorus from Springfield, Illinois, proved they had chosen the right name when they became our new champions.

The Parade of Champions was instituted, with proceeds from admissions going into a travel fund for championship quartettes. Funds would be distributed to those chapters which otherwise would be financially unable to present past or present Harmony Queens to their public.

Another 1980 "first" was the awarding of star guard pins to championship chorus members. The VVCs, as outgoing champions, were proud to be the first to wear this new symbol of achievement.

— 1981 —

It is interesting to note that most dues increases in our organization have been recommended by the chapter delegates and confirmed by membership polls. This interest by the membership in the welfare of their International organization is unique to Harmony, Inc. It demonstrates the "hands on" attitude that Harmony members have always shown, giving the organization a vitality of purpose that is enviable. It also dispels any fear that the growing autonomy of the Areas might reduce interest in the organization overall. It seems to offer conclusive proof that the



1980-81 Harmony Queens, **KEEPSAKE**, Gardner, Massachusetts, (left to right): Judy Landry, tenor; Lorraine Pavlosky, lead; Nancy Chiasson, bass; Helen Moon, bari.



1980 International Chorus Champions — *HARMONY FIRST* (Springfield, Illinois), Phil Maxwell, Director.

original ideals and purposes of Harmony, Inc. were sound and workable.

The delegates at the 1981 convention again showed their concern by recommending a dues increase. They felt that all officials who were required to attend the Annual Meetings should receive some financial assistance, hence more funds were needed.

Convention in Boston, hosted by the CAPE CHORDAIRES, brought forth dazzling Harmony Queens in CRYSTAL COLLECTION, hailing from the small farm community of

Plymouth, Wisconsin. And once more, the VILLAGE VOCAL CHORDS proved invincible in the chorus contest. The new Chris Scott Award, presented to the highest-scoring Canadian quartette, went to A CAPITAL SOUND of Ottawa. The trophy was given to Harmony, Inc. by Stephen Scott in memory of his wife, who had sung with the CHORDMATES quartette.

The question of age eligibility was, once again, put to the membership for a vote, and the age restriction was once more confirmed. All of our 1,867 members were 18 years

of age or older and some began to despair that this would never change.

The CAPE CHORDAIRES, after their first experience as hostesses, had solved a problem many hostess chapters must have faced. They generously donated a trunk for transporting Harmony, Inc. properties to conventions.

— 1982 —

Tragedy struck THE HARMONETTES — and all of Harmony, Inc. — with the death of Bob Turcotte. The loss of this talented and well-loved director was felt deeply by all. THE HARMONETTES demonstrated their love for Bob by presenting the Robert Turcotte Memorial Award to Harmony, Inc. They demonstrated their gallantry of spirit and determination to go on by assuming the responsibility of having the award engraved each year. This award, presented to the director of the winning chorus, is not a traveling award but one that can be kept and prized by each winning director.

First to claim the Turcotte award was Phil Maxwell, director of HARMONY FIRST, winners for the second



1981-82 Harmony Queens, *CRYSTAL COLLECTION*, Plymouth, Wisconsin, (left to right): Jan Weinbauer, bari; Freddie Noordyk, lead; Janet Klug, bass; Sandy Rabe, tenor.

time. And for the fifth time, the crowns went home with the VILLAGE VOCAL CHORDS, this time on the pretty heads of CHICAGO CHORD COMPANY. And speaking of multiple wins, it was Betty Gunterman's third sparkling rhinestone crown.

Convention was hostessed by THE OVER TONES in the beautiful Constellation Hotel. Its corridor was lined with mirrors, so we could see ourselves coming and going. In the reflections, quartettes looked like choruses and our organization seemed to have grown overnight to many times its size!

A memorable event at this con-

vention was the fire drill in the middle of the night. We knew our organization was potent, but this time we overloaded the circuits! (The hotel threatened to confiscate all the irons, hair dryers, curling irons and coffee pots.)



1982-83 Harmony Queens, CHICAGO CHORD COMPANY, Metro Chicago, Illinois, (standing left to right): Mary Marek, tenor; Beth Ramsson, bass; Kris Jensen, bari; (seated): Betty Gunterman, lead.



1981 International Chorus Champions — VILLAGE VOCAL CHORDS (Metro Chicago, Illinois), Jay Giallombardo, Director.



1982 International Chorus Champions — HARMONY FIRST (Springfield, Illinois), Phil Maxwell, Director.

One of the problems that had been discussed endlessly at Board Meetings was what to do about the International Chorus. Easily handled in the early stages, it was becoming more cumbersome each year. Its size far exceeded that of our largest competing choruses, thus creating a problem of providing enough risers and a stage large enough to accommodate it. Still, it was one of the highlights of every convention, delighting the participants and audience alike. Half-hearted efforts to suggest its retirement had met vigorous opposition by the membership. Everyone agreed something had to be done, but no one could come up with a feasible solution.

Another question had come up that begged for a solution concerning the Chris Scott Award. There was a growing feeling that any award that could be won by only one country was inappropriate in an International organization, and might have a divisive effect. Those of us who had known Chris Scott, and knew of her wholehearted love for Harmony, Inc., felt she would not want this to happen. The problem was resolved by suggesting to Steve Scott that the award become one of outstanding service by a Harmony, Inc. quartette. With his approval, this change would take ef-

1983-84 Harmony Queens, JOY, North Attleboro, Cape Cod, and Gardner, Massachusetts; Providence, Rhode Island, (left to right): Jean Patterson, lead; Elaine Peters, tenor; Debi Stoll, bass; Barbara-Ann MacIntosh, bari.



fect in 1984. Since a service award for quartettes had been under discussion for some time, it was an ideal solution of two problems.

"Westward Ho" was the theme of the 1983 convention again hosted by the VILLAGE VOCAL CHORDS. There was no end to the joy in the four chapters (and two states) they represented, when JOY tearfully accepted the beautiful symbols of Harmony Queens. There were tears of joy in the eyes of many members, too, when the crown was placed on the head of Barbara-Ann MacIntosh, who had gallantly fought and won her personal battle with critical illness not too long

before. After two terms as our International President and many years since as our Competition and Judging Chairman, it seemed eminently suitable that Barbara-Ann should now wear a crown literally, as well as figuratively.

It is one of life's little mysteries how a small group of women can spend a year or more planning a convention, run their legs off to carry it out, and then pull themselves together into a superb musical machine and win the blue ribbons. It has happened more than once in Harmony, Inc., and the VVCs made it happen again in 1983. Hard work and fierce determination



1983 International Chorus Champions — VILLAGE VOCAL CHORDS (Metro Chicago, Illinois), Jay Giallombardo, Director.

seem to make up for any lack of numbers, when our small chapters undertake a big project.

When the VVCs accepted the trophy, it was accompanied by the handsome trophy case presented to Harmony, Inc. by outgoing champions HARMONY FIRST.

We were awed by the realization that our 25th Anniversary was just a year away and thrilled to be returning to Providence, our birthplace, to celebrate. Many plans were under way to make it a real celebration. It had already been decided to mark the occasion with the publication of this commemorative booklet. No one could have foreseen the time it would take to research and produce a publication worthy of this memorable occasion.

Each year our support of the Autism Societies had grown. It was common practice for chapters to contribute a percentage of their show profits, and members had individually been very generous. We were proud of our affiliation with this wonderful cause, but our pride knew no bounds when we learned that our SCOTIANAIRES Chapter from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia had raised the awesome sum of \$3,113 with their Sing-a-Thon. It was decided that the position of Autism Liaison should become a permanent chair to encourage even greater support.

Perhaps the most notable event of 1983 was the lifting of the age restriction for membership in Har-

mony, Inc. After twelve years, it was finally decided to leave this question to chapter option. Whether or not the imposition of this ruling had an adverse effect on our growth will never be known, but it gave new heart to many chapters to know they could once more enjoy the benefits of youthful voices. In any case, it

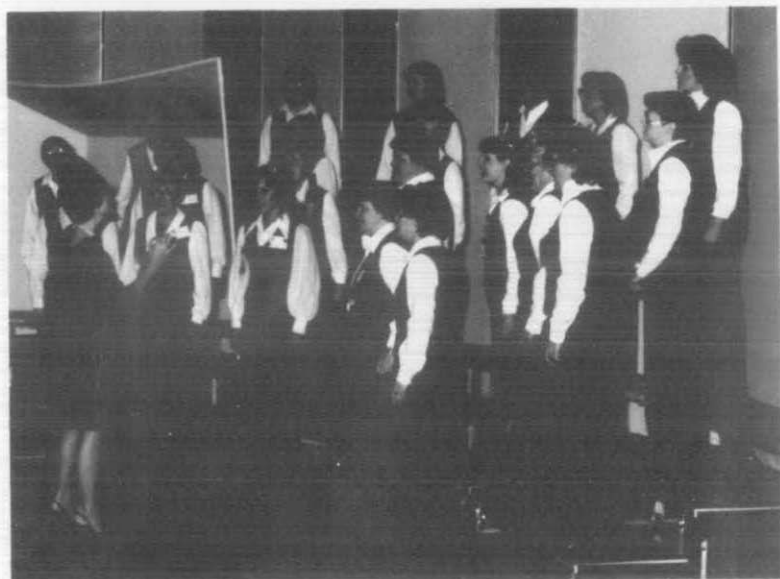
was the only membership restriction Harmony, Inc. had ever known and too much time had been spent discussing its pros and cons. There is no doubt that youthful barber-shoppers many times become lifetime barbershoppers, as has been proven in all three International organizations.



Elizabeth Bevaart, 1982-1984 International President.



Honored guests from L.A.B.B.S. at the 1984 International President's Reception were (left to right) Sandra Landey, Sheila Rice, Liz Bevaart (International President), Margaret Kay and Marilyn Penketh.



The Village Vocal Chords, under the direction of Jeanne O'Connor, sang "We're Harmony, We're Strong!" during the Annual Membership Meeting on November 9, 1984.