

Voice Box

Ladies Association of British Barbershop Singers
www.labbs.org.uk

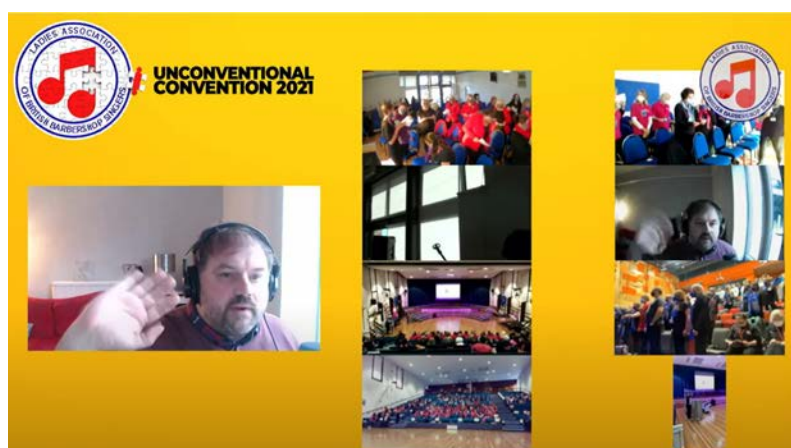


Winter 2021 £4

And the LABBS 2021 Champions are... **You!**

Unconventional Convention - All The Highlights From Page 10

Plus - Jen Mills & Katy Phillips Awards, Education 2022, Recruitment Resources, and more!



BREAKING NEWS!

LABBS has a new home at labbs.org.uk which includes a brand-new members area, accessible with a personal log in for all LABBS members.

If you are a LABBS member and have not received your personal login information, contact us at loginquiry@labbs.org.uk

Ladies Association of British Barbershop Singers

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Chair's Forward

Hello Everyone

I am so glad to report what a fantastic weekend we all had in October at our Unconventional Convention when, for the first time since Covid, our clubs and quartets were able to meet and sing together. I am so grateful to our hub organisers for taking the risk and putting on a marvellous programme for us to enjoy. We are so grateful and thankful to all the volunteers that helped over the weekend; without them it would not have been possible. I would like to say a special thanks to our Marketing and Communications Director, Rita Hulands, for her vision and tireless hard work to make it all happen. Every hub went above and beyond to entertain our members, and our Events Director, Julie Dugdale, in her first event, proved that this could all be organised remotely and to a high standard.

Thank you to everyone that helped and to all of you who took part. I was so thrilled to see so many smiling faces happy to be back at a wonderful LABBS event.

Congratulations to Lamorna Hooker, our Youth Coordinator, who was the recipient of the Katy Phillips Award and Bursary, and to SoundHouse who won the Jen Mills Award.

Since the last edition of VoiceBox, I have been able to visit some of our clubs. I really enjoy meeting and talking with the chorus members and

Sorry!

Sometimes we get things wrong, as we did in the Autumn edition. Our apologies to Meriel Lewis, for attributing her wonderful article about Harmony InSpires' Love to Sing course to Susan Taylor from (J)abbey Belles Chorus, and for not being able to include any of Meriel's photos.



am finding that wherever I go, every club treats its members like one big family, looking out for each other and supporting each other. It has been so heart-warming to hear the stories of kindness and consideration in each club.

I am very much looking forward to visiting all clubs so please message me if you would like me to visit, I would love to find out about what your club is doing - chair@labbs.org.uk.

Meanwhile, keep singing and if I don't see you before, please have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Natalie

Deadline For Next Issue

Friday 28th January 2022

Please send all submissions to voicebox@labbs.org.uk.

Maximum 350 words, plus up to 2 photos (original images from a phone or camera please, rather than images downloaded from social media or a website).

More details about what and how to submit can be found in the Voice Box Contributor's Guide.

2022 Deadlines: Friday 28th January, Friday 29th April, Friday 29th July, Friday 4th November.

Greetings from Cornwall!

I'm Mel, a bass-but-soon-to-be-baritone, one half of the social media team at GraceNotes Acapella in Saltash, and from the Spring edition, your new Voice Box Editor.

What a strange couple of years we've all had! We've been dealing with all sorts, from home working to home schooling, remembering to take masks and hand sanitiser everywhere we go, and we've had long periods when we've not been able to sing together or see each other unless it was on Zoom (but the less said about that, the better!).

Things are starting to move towards normality now though, and nowhere was this more apparent than at the Unconventional Convention Hubs which took place at the end of October. What joyous occasions they were! I've been shadowing Rita Hulands as this edition has been put together and it's been

wonderful to read your articles and see your photos of the day. So many of you attended, meeting up with old friends and making new ones, and enjoying the thing we love the most – harmony. Do check out our Unconventional Convention section from page 10 to find out more.

For me, the New Year will be a perfect time to take on the role of editor, and I'm really looking forward to hearing about all the amazing, fun, heart-warming, inspiring and quirky things you get up to, and hopefully seeing plenty of photos!

In the meantime, my best wishes to you all for a very merry Christmas and the happiest of New Years.

Mel Baber
Editor



Mel Baber, your new Voice Box Editor

Champs Corner

Getting together with Sound Central

Sound Central were extremely grateful to be offered a performance spot at the North West hub for the recent 'Unconventional Convention' weekend. Just being there at an 'in person' event was exciting enough but when we were also asked to be involved in sectionals and teaching the new LABBS tag written especially for the weekend, we basically jumped at the chance!

The whole day was really well organised thanks to the fantastic events team, and it was brilliantly run by Kate and Andy. When the room filled with song it was a real goosebump moment. Something we've craved for so long. Everyone was beaming!

In preparation for the event we'd had a fantastic coaching day with Emma McManus to help us blow away some of the cobwebs and really focus on performing again.

We were a little rusty but the pressure

of singing live was such a rush. We loved it and can't thank LABBS enough for getting us involved.

It was lovely to see familiar faces and meet new people. Teaching the new tag was fantastic, everyone was so good and it sounded amazing!!!

We can't wait for our next get together.

Take care, stay safe and have a wonderful festive season.

Sarah, Bev, Suze & Jen
Sound Central



Sound Central at the North West Hub



Coaching with the fabulous Emma McManus

Amersham Flying High on Retreat



Here we are, back in our happy place, singing, re-connecting and simply being us on Retreat at Horwood House. We even had a drone camera to perform to for our Unconventional Convention video! Those smiles say it all. We love our Chorus.



Huge congratulations to Crown Derby, the new BABS Senior Quartet Champions and the first Mixed Quartet to take the title



Crown Derby's shiny gold medal!

New Adventures

The summer months have been a little quieter for IN HOUSE quartet but not for Jo Braham. Over the summer, she relocated to the Peak District and opened up a café in Bakewell with her daughter Hannah. The Honey Bun café can be found off the bustling streets of the popular tourist village, just near the market. If you're in the area, make sure you pop in for a brew and a delicious cake!

Last weekend was the LABBS Unconventional Convention, and even though we didn't attend an event on the Saturday, on the Sunday we shared one of our favourite lockdown video



Hannah and Jo

recordings from the summer - Everybody Hurts by REM. The arrangement was by the magnificent Alison Crutchley and the video was filmed at Dovestone Reservoir on a lovely summer's day which ended in ice creams all round!

We're excited about what we have planned for the coming year and can't wait to start our contest songs. All will be revealed soon, but until then, make sure you pop over to our social media accounts @INHOUSEquartet where you can watch our videos and keep up with IN HOUSE news.

Julie Phillips
In House

Ruby Tuesday's big reveal!

After months of choosing, learning, honing and ultimately performing, we were beyond thrilled to unveil our bespoke arrangement for the Jen Mills Award last weekend! Winning the award at LABBS Big Weekend last year was such an honour, and the process, while long, was worth every second of joy that we got out of it.

We chose to arrange a mash-up, wanting to add a twist to a well known but unexpected song - to get people thinking "Oooh I know this, what is it....?" then BAM!! And of course we wanted to add a swing element - so 'Don't Stop Movin' If It Ain't Got That Swing' was born! Heather Lane, our very own Gem, put together a wonderful arrangement that suits our voices and personalities so well, and it was an exhausting joy putting the video together to go with it.

You can watch it on the Ruby Tuesday YouTube channel if you haven't already seen it - we hope you enjoy watching it as much as we enjoyed making it. And of course, we

send huge congrats to SoundHouse for becoming the award winners for 2021 - we can't wait to hear the result!

Rachel Watson
Ruby Tuesday



Don't Stop Movin'

Recruitment Resources

Following a consultation

process earlier this year, I've been busy putting together a Recruitment Resources Pack to support clubs as they rebuild and recruit new members. This is in line with our strategic aims to grow our Association and to reach out to diverse groups.

Three choruses – Black Sheep Harmony, Capital Connection and GraceNotes – have kindly shared their recent experiences in the form of case studies. We've also produced guides to inclusive recruitment, and to different ways of recruiting, as well as a fact sheet on the benefits of singing to physical and mental well-being.

All of the materials will be shared with membership secretaries and will be accessible to everyone in the members' area on the new LABBS website.

If you'd like to contribute tips and success stories from your own recruitment experience, please contact me on membershp@labb.org.uk. We can all learn so much from each other.

Jill Cook
Membership Director



Do you
love to sing?

Want to develop your voice, with ongoing help and support?
Join a group of amazing women, make new friends and have fun?

Join us for our

Open Rehearsal

7.30pm, Monday 13th September

Burraton Community Centre, Saltash, PL12 4JB



LABBS Education Events 2022

2022 will see us return to in-person education events, and we will be kicking things off on Saturday 5th March with our Directors' Day. Dr Liz Garnett and the faculty will be inspiring Directors, Assistant Directors and aspiring Directors in a day packed with content including opportunities for hands-on skills coaching.

It is the turn of our Music Category to run the Education Day. This will be on Saturday 21st May and is aimed at Musical Directors, Assistant Directors and Section Leaders and will provide insights into the category and how to create more musicality within our performances.

Both these events will be held in the Coventry area, more details to follow.

Quartet Prelims is planned for the weekend of 25th - 26th June. The contest will be held on the Saturday, there will be a social education event in the evening for all, and coaching on the Sunday.

Coaching will follow the same format as previous years with quartet's paired according to their ranking. Each pair

of quartets will have coaching together from each category, Performance, Music and Singing.

The venue will be in the Midlands, details to follow.

Our judges will return to in-person training seminars in February and September. We have been meeting regularly on Zoom in addition to our online seminars, but it will be good to get back together.

Many of the online education sessions we ran over the last 18 months are still available in the members only section of the new LABBS website. Educational content from LABBS Big Weekend last year and this year's fantastic Unconventional Convention is available on the LABBS YouTube Channel. Having this online content is definitely one of the good things to come out of the last 18 months, but we can't wait to see and interact with you all in person.



Alison Thompson
Education Officer

Focus On...

...LABBS Secretary

Hello, my name is Hannah Barber and I have been the LABBS Secretary since March; what an exciting and busy role it is, and I am loving the challenge! From minutes and agendas to comms, it is a varied and interesting role and involves typing fast! It is definitely a learning curve, and it is very humbling to see how many people put such a lot of hard work and commitment into supporting and running LABBS. I am honoured to play just a small part in that.

Having spent the majority of my teens and twenties working in Musical Theatre, a career change led me to work in Munich, Germany where I randomly stumbled across Barbershop via the Harmunichs; I was instantly hooked and spent a happy 5 years with them before moving back to the UK. Not wanting to give up on this wonderful hobby I had discovered, I was lucky enough to then spend another 4 years with the wonderful White Rosettes, what an experience and complete privilege that was! Singing in a quartet was in

all honesty, something I never thought I would be able to do – but with much persuading from my husband (thanks Rob!) I decided to “have a go”. I have been singing Bass in SoundHouse for nearly five years now....it's been a relatively successful journey so far! More importantly it's given me three of my best friends and that is by far the best part. So, after nearly 14 years of singing barbershop, it felt like time to “give back” to a hobby that has given me so much over the years and when the role of Secretary came up it just felt like the perfect fit and the perfect time to volunteer. It's so rewarding and I would encourage anyone to get involved in supporting the association in whatever way they can.



Congratulations

to Rita Wood, LLO, Quartet Registrar, Contest and Admin Team member, and CAL member, on receiving her 35 year Long Service Award



The Gems welcome Natalie

The Gems are finally back

to rehearsing indoors again, although with our Health and Safety Covid regulations in place we are now just beginning to get used to singing in the cold. We can't wait to get back singing on the risers without our masks again which sadly still seems to be quite a way off.

Things seemed to really return back to normal for an evening when we recently received a visit from the lovely Natalie Feddon, our LABBS Chairperson. After a rather strenuous journey to The East Midlands, Natalie was glad she arrived safely to present our two long service award candidates with a framed certificate, their Long Service Pin and a lovely bouquet.

Delyth Knight received her 40 years and Maggie Hobday with an amazing 45 years. Both have some fascinating stories about LABBS to tell.

Natalie enjoyed a sing-a-long with us all, then we helped her to record her LABBS Journey Blog which was great fun.

The Gem's would like to convey our massive thanks to everyone who helped to make our Unconventional Convention another huge success. WHAT A TEAM.

Jenny Smedley
Gem Connection



Natalie presented Long Service Awards to Delyth Knight and Maggie Hobday

Jenny Wood, Bristol Fashion

Jenny sang in Germany before joining Bristol Fashion and was a founder member of BING.

Jenny has been an active member of BF for all of those 25 years and is a true Baritone.

We celebrated her award last month and Jenny was presented her 25 year pin by Chair, Fliss Procter.



Bristol Fashion Chair, Fliss, and Jenny



Jenny receiving her 25-year pin

Long Service Awards 2021

Roll of Honour



Debi Cox
Yvonne Davies
Nova Evans
Brenda Fairgrieve
Liz Garnett
Kate Goddard
Patsy Gregory
Gillian Page
Samantha Roberts
Pam Scarborough
Louise Snellgrove
Alison Thompson
Dawn Wallis
Heidi Walsh
Ann Ward
Jenny Wood



Sandy Bailey
June Bryant
Sally Cieslik
Joan Davies
Lorna Hill
Emma McManus
Rowena Phillips
Jean Povey
Olive Ryder
Debbie Teague
Louise Williams
Jo Wiseman



35

Seager Banks
 Jo Braham
 Sue Burgis
 Kathleen Good
 Sue Gordon
 Alison Jack
 Sue Mitchell
 Marion Morley
 Teresa Phillips
 Nicky Wilsher
 Rita Wood




40

Pam Ambrose
 Delyth Knight
 Janet Tordoff
 Eve Weall
 Barbara Westlake
 Lorraine Woodward




45

Evelyn Asher
 Bunny Bainbridge
 Di Crosfield
 Margaret Hobday
 Margaret Nicholls
 Rhiannon Owens-Hall
 Daphne Powell
 Brenda Roffe
 Lee Westlake



Unconventional Convention 2021 - what an amazing weekend!

The vision for the weekend came from our very own Marketing & Communications Director Rita Hulands and boy was it delivered! With assistance from Rita's incredible team, it gave those who could attend in-person events and those who couldn't, the opportunity to experience the day and come together virtually.'

The organisation teams at each of our 6 hubs worked so hard in ensuring the day ran smoothly, and there was enough content on the day with singing, education, showcase time, socialising and even Afterglows!

Feedback from those who attended the hubs has just been so positive!! Here's what some of our delegates said:

'Brilliant. Wonderful to be back singing with others and to meet up with new and old friends. The Festival vibe was great'.

'It was a wonderful day and really well organised. Thank you to everyone for their hard work; it was fantastic to get together and sing'.

'Brilliant day - encouraging and inclusive - very well organised'.

'A great personal rekindling of LABBS energy. A super day from start to

finish. Excellent organisation and great hosting by GraceNotes. Much appreciated'.

'I loved having us get together, especially as we often feel on the fringe of organised LABBS activities being so far away, so it was really nice to see everyone'.



'Such an amazing day. Spinnaker had worked so hard to provide an excellent venue, fantastic food, great Barbershop resources and goody bags. I loved the afterglow decorations and atmosphere, a real surprise. It went by so fast but felt like a real mini convention with true LABBS spirit'.

'It was fabulous from beginning to end! Brilliantly organised and we were made to feel so welcome!'

'Closest we could get to a real

convention, absolutely loved the atmosphere, meeting people we would not have come across before, the content, the singing and the afterglow!'

'Sunday was about coming together. We had 5-minutes-on-the-stage showcases with contributions from many clubs and quartets, along with our Long Service Honour Roll, Absent Friends, and Jen Mills and Katy Phillips awards'.

Overall, it was a totally Unconventional Convention!

I really can't thank everyone enough for all the hard work that went into the weekend, and I'm sure I will catch up with you at Bournemouth next year, but until then I'm sending you a virtual high five - you were awesome!

As one successful convention comes to an end, now is a really good time to start thinking about the next one and perhaps getting your accommodation booked. Business Events Bournemouth has a LABBS Convention page where you'll find a list of hotels, all within easy reach of the convention centre. Click [here](#) to find out more.

Julie Dugdale
LABBS Events Director



Rita Hulands, M & C Team



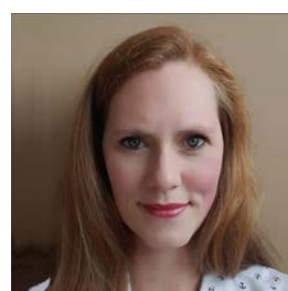
David Kitchenham, M & C Team



Leanne Blaney, M & C Team



Anne-Marie Borneuf, M & C Team



Catrina Webb, M & C Team

The long and winding road... to the East Hub!

The East Hub had a wonderful day at Linton Village College. Although arrivals were from 10.30, our keen attendees started arriving at 10 and had a good old catch up with each other. Some of our sat navs took us a long and winding road, making our joint MD for the day Sara Jackson dash in at the last minute and immediately get stuck in to leading the day with Alison Thompson.

Our warm up included Bim Bam Bidy with Alice Mills, rounds, and chord building, followed with some polecats and learning the new tag. This proved challenging but by the afternoon when we came back to it, most people had it.

In the afternoon, we were treated to a Showcase by Welwyn Harmony, Silver Lining, Splash!, Norwich Harmony with special guests, Singchronicity. And finally, entertainment from the wonderful Simpletones to round the day off. We were also so pleased that our LABBS Chair, Natalie Feddon, was able to join us for the day.

We had a wonderful time and can't wait to do it again!

Ruth Vellacott
Norwich Harmony



Sara Jackson



The Simpletones



Natalie enjoying the East Hub



Alison Thompson, Norwich Harmony MD



The East Hub

Thank you from the North East Hub

I think it's fair to summarise this year's unconventional convention in three words: SO MUCH FUN! There was such a buzz of excitement around the hall for the whole day, and we can honestly say that it was such an honour for us to act as the Yorkshire and Humberside Hub hosts. We absolutely loved singing a couple of our new songs, in a stack, to a live audience. Thanks to all the MDs who led us through the day, and to The Bakewell Tarts for delighting us with Mona the Vampire – a classic many of us were singing all day! After months of planning, it was great to see it all come together and be reminded why we all love this hobby so very much. Thank you to each of you for joining us.

Holly Parker
Vice Chair, The White Rosettes



The North East Hub

The Belles 'Do it for Yorkshire'

Once Convention 2021 was confirmed as cancelled, a few of the Belles decided to 'carry on regardless'. Then Unconventional Convention was announced and, as the Bradford Hub was so close to Harrogate, nine Belles signed up to join Sally McLean and the White Rosettes who were hosting. We nicknamed our group The Harrobelles (Belles in Harrogate).

The venue, Bradford Grammar School, was amazing, so grand and beautiful. The event was very well organised, with everyone socially distanced and wearing masks when not seated. Our AMD, April Stevens, joined Sally and the team in the warm-up, bringing a seasonal Halloween theme to the audience. We had warm-ups, tags, and sang polecats ready for a Showcase later in the day.

The Belles had a fantastic time. It felt like a mini Convention, and we were so happy to be with other choruses and singing in person. April directed the first polecat, Anthem, which was an emotional experience for the Belles. Later on, we sang in a scratch chorus 'Northern Quarter Chorus' and performed the polecats on stage.

I felt very honoured and proud to be representing The Belles at the North East Hub for Unconventional Convention. As AMD for the Belles of Three Spires, I volunteered to be part of the warm-up team and directed the polecat, Anthem. Yes, I was nervous, but everyone was so friendly and kind. My fellow Belles were full of support, and it felt amazing to stand on stage and direct so many talented singers, and what a beautiful sound there was! It was a day I will always treasure, and having some of my Belles family to support me was just the icing on the cake.

April
AMD, The Belles of Three Spires

The Belles in Bradford 'did it for Yorkshire'. We had a fabulous day, singing with some of the best choruses in the country. "I felt like we had won a gold medal walking off the stage", said one of the Belles.

It was a very special weekend, spent with special people, and making special memories; so thank you to Sally and the team for such a fabulous day that we will never forget.

Eileen Askew
PRO, The Belles of Three Spires



The Harrobelles



Precision distancing!

Singing at the North East Hub



Such a beautiful venue

North West Hub



Affinity Ladies



Cake was consumed!



Cheshire A Cappella ladies and Kate



Cheshire A Cappella



Excited and giddy!



Smiles!



Sound Central



Volunteer Organisers

The Oxford Hub with Harmony InSpires and friends

Harmony InSpires was thrilled to be the host for the 2021 Unconventional Convention Oxford Hub. We had a brilliant bunch of volunteers – planning the day, risk assessing for Covid-safety, incorporating the LABBS elements, getting to grips with the tech, and - one of the most important decisions - what to wear!



The sing along at the LABBS Hub

A very special mention goes to Hari, our magnificent musical director, for bringing together a perfect plan to include polecat and tag sessions plus showcasing the choruses who came along:
Avalon Quartet, Avon Harmony,



Capital Connection

Barberettes, Bristol Fashion, Capital Connection, Cleeve Harmony, GEM Connection, Junction 14, Ruby Tuesday, Signature, Winchester A Capella, and Club at Large.

Hari received many compliments about her energy, enthusiasm, passion and patience - "really in her element at HI!" and we were absolutely blown away by our LABBS guests, Alex de Bruin, Craig Kehoe, Debi Cox and Natasha Nickson.

It was a very enjoyable and educational experience for us all with many precious moments to cherish, sharing a wonderful day with so many amazing groups. We sang, we learned, we saw live performances, made new friends and were reunited with old friends, surrounded by the love of harmony singing and the joy of being back together in person. Thank you to all of those who shared the day with us, in person and online; we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did.

We've had some great comments by email and on social media:

You girls are amazing! Well done on creating such a marvellous event for everyone to enjoy
x

Natalie Feddon

What a weekend! A huge thank-you to [Ladies Association of British Barbershop Singers](#) for the idea of their "Unconventional Convention" and to the super stars of [Harmony InSpires](#) for organising

the one we attended. It was utterly GLORIOUS.
Avalon Quartet

On behalf of The Barberettes I would like to say a BIG thank you for all the hard work that Harmony InSpires did to make yesterday such a success. It was a great day, learning new tags, new warm ups but mostly being able to sing together as a one collective.

Linda Baugh



Oxford Hub



Harmony InSpires on stage at the LABBS Hub

Ruby Tuesday take to the LABBS stage – finally!

Ruby Tuesday had the immense pleasure of finally performing on a LABBS stage, after four years of working up to it, when we headed to the Oxford (Didcot) hub for last weekend's Unconventional Convention!

It was wonderful to be able to get together with so many of our barbershop family after such a long wait, and without the added pressure of a competition, the opportunity to just bask in the gorgeous sounds surrounding us was bliss. We had such a blast performing some of our favourite

repertoire songs, and such a generous welcome onto the stage, admirably compered by Hari Birtles (to whom we'd like to send a huge THANK YOU, along with her Harmony InSpires crew who made us all so welcome).



Ruby Tuesday

The whole weekend was a brilliantly managed, hugely welcome first step towards the convention we all know and love - so thank you LABBS, and we'll see you all next year!

Unconventional Convention '21 in Spinnakerland

Saturday 30th October in Portsmouth brought together LABBS members for a day of joyful music making in Spinnakerland.

The SE Hub was an industrious hive of activity from start to finish, expertly headed by our Vice Chair, Colleen Potter. Our UC'21 Team worked wonders prepping the welcome area, performance hall, refreshment areas filled with croissants and brioche with scrumptious homemade cakes in reserve for further break times, and raffle tables weighted with truly spectacular prizes raising funds for our charity Hants and IOW Air Ambulance. The weather wasn't kind, but Team Car Park braved the rain, greeting arrivals with a welcoming smile. Team Tech were sizzling and did an amazing job all day, videoing our showcases for the LABBS Live Stream.

join us, also members of Cascades, Thameside Harmony, The Pitchpipers, CAL and the lovely Jacqui Edwards LLO.

Our fab event MC, Mike Cook, got proceedings underway introducing our excellent Warm Up Teams from both Spinnaker and Amersham who whipped us into a frenzy of physical and vocal readiness.

special guests Chromatix Quartet (BABS Gold Medalists), and The Minims (Surrey Fringe 2019 Junior Quartet Champs), delighted us with their performances throughout the day, and Amersham's stunning showcases were inspirational and beautiful.

Post-convention our venue was transformed into a glittering Afterglow, with subdued lighting, sparkling table cloths, some alcoholics and a programme of spontaneous performances from small groups and scratch quartets.



Spinnaker members

Thank you to EVERYONE who made the event such a success. It was a perfect day spent with great friends doing what we all love, we are most definitely family! See you all in Bournemouth in 2022.

**Tracy Daniel
PRO, Spinnaker**

We were honoured to have LABBS Gold Medal Chorus, Amersham Acappella

Then it was all systems go for seven hours of wonderful singing, harmony, fun, laughter, friendship, and CAKE. Our

Alright on the Night for Amersham

To be honest, we had a little wobble about Unconventional Convention. Rocking it LIVE with other Choruses again was the stuff of dreams...but we knew that topping last year's mega-movie was going to be a really big ask!

Never ones to shirk a challenge, we threw everything at it. We filmed in rehearsals and on Retreat, even drafting in a drone to record our moves! There were some hilarious moments too ...like seeing our MD, Helen, nearly flattened when Flash (our camerawoman) was wheeled full pelt at her down the church aisle!

Even our Hub performance nearly turned from show-stopper to heart-stopper when we were asked to add a second set at the last minute, meaning we were debuting five new, un-audience-tested, lockdown songs!



Amersham A Cappella Showcase

Happily, everything was alright on the Hub night. Our fabulous hosts, Spinnaker Chorus, went all out to make it feel just like a real Convention and we had an Amersham-azing time.

We performed back up on the risers (whoop!). We watched the superb Spinnaker Chorus and their guest quartets, Chromatix and The Minims. We sang Polecats with new friends. Then did it all again (with alcohol) in the Afterglow.

We were beyond happy on Super-Sunday too. Our movie (plus the brilliant vids from our very own Venus Effect and Something For The Weekend quartets) looked fab on LABBS TV. All the hard work really was worth it.

So here's to Convention 2022. And absolutely nothing going wrong.

**Hils Apicella
PRO, Amersham A Cappella**



Amersham A Cappella members



Dancing!



Thameside Harmony members



Chromatix Quartet



Spinnaker Showcase



Amersham A Cappella



Cascade members



Helen Lappert, Amersham A Cappella MD & John Palmer, Spinnaker MD



Team Refreshments



CAKE!



SE Hub Mass Polecat Singing



Raffle prizes



Team Health & Safety



Mike Cook, MC



Welcome breakfast time



Pitchpipers members



Jill Cook, Spinnaker Chair, and Mike Cook, MC

Harmony, friendship, and cake!

What a wonderful day we had at the South West Unconventional Convention Hub, welcoming over 100 members for a day of harmony and friendship, and cake!

The morning began with some fun warmups before we moved on to our fabulous new tag, Sing for Joy, followed by Make Your Own Kind of Music, and You Gotta Be. We did of course have a mid-morning tea and cake break (because it wouldn't have been a proper [GraceNotes](#) event if baking wasn't involved!), which was a great opportunity to catch up with ladies from across the region. For some, this was the first time they'd attended a Barbershop event and chatting to them over a cuppa it was clear how much the Hub had made them feel part of something bigger.

Another common thread focused on the enjoyment of being able to meet again. We are often so much more to each other than just women we sing with, we are tight-knit groups of supportive friends who share a passion for Barbershop. After such a difficult 18 months which saw us isolated from each other, both within our clubs and quartets and the wider LABBS community, it was fantastic to reconnect with our Barbershop sisters once again. We reminisced about past conventions, got excited about Bournemouth 2022, and we made plenty of new memories to keep us going in the meantime.

After lunch we were treated to showcase performances from choruses and quartets, and welcomed Bob McLean from Saltash Foodbank to join us. In true Convention tradition, we wanted to support a charity and so invited ladies to make a donation of goods to the foodbank, much of which will be used



The Tea Ladies

to make Christmas hampers. We also donated £100 from our raffle towards their running costs.

It really was such an enjoyable day for all of us, and what a delight it was to once again be surrounded with beautiful harmonies sung by so many voices! We really did sing for joy, and harmony did ring again. And it was glorious!

So thank you to everyone who attended the South West Hub, who led a part or taught a warm-up, who sang with us or performed for us, and who donated to our appeal for Saltash Foodbank. We can't wait to see you all again – roll on Convention 2022!

Sandra Matanle
Chair, GraceNotes Acapella



Chordettes Acappella Chorus



The OAPs (On A Pitch)



The First Wives Club 80s tribute



River City Chorus



Lockdown Harmony



GraceNotes Acapella



South West Hub



The SongSmiths



Red Rock Harmony



Note-Ability



Thank you from Saltash Foodbank



Sianie, excited to finally win a raffle prize. Elspeth and Malcolm are impressed!



"This is Shellie, reporting to you LIVE from the South West Hub in Saltash" (or just having a catch up with Kitch!)



Ooo cake!!!

Virtual Hub marathon

Whilst lots of lucky LABBS members were able to meet in-person, some had to rely on our Virtual Hub, magnificently compered by our very own Dave “the Kitch” Kitchenham from his home in ... well, that would be telling!

Using free software and a wealth of experience, Dave opened the virtual day with memories from LABBS Big Weekend before beginning nearly 10 hours of visits to the six in-person Hubs interspersed with short videos including fascinating interviews with some of our 45-year award winners.

And whilst technology & signal strength occasionally impacted quality, as a compère, Dave never missed a beat. **GOOD JOB DAVE!**



Natalie welcomes us all to Unconventional Convention



All smiles at the Oxford Hub



Heidi Walsh, directing You Gotta Be at the South West Hub



Tech genius, David



The Minims Quartet



Announcement time at the North East & Oxford Hubs



SoundHouse win The Jen Mills Award



The Jen Mills Award winners, SoundHouse

What an honour and total surprise to be this year's winners of the Jen Mills Award! We cannot wait to commission these arrangements and of course perform them next year! It will be great to be up on stage together again and we may or may not have a little surprise up our sleeves for our performance – if you want to know what, you'll have to be there! What a complete thrill and such a lovely way to keep Jen in our hearts. Thank you LABBS!

Katy Phillips Young Barbershopper of the Year Award

This year's award went to LABBS Youth Director, Lamorna Hooker. We caught up with Lamorna to find out about her Barbershop journey so far.

Tell us a little about yourself. Which part do you sing, and with which chorus?

My name is Lamorna and I sing tenor (although have dabbled in baritone and was a one time lead!), with Bristol Fashion and the LABBS Youth Chorus.

What first brought you to Barbershop?

I've been singing Barbershop for nearly 4 years (where did that time go!) and got involved after watching my mum in Amersham A Cappella for many years! I always wanted to join in, but it was never convenient and then when I went to uni there was no barbershop chorus nearby, so as soon as I graduated, I started driving from Cardiff to Bristol and joined Avon Harmony. I then found out about the LABBS Youth Chorus so went along and never looked back!

Can you tell us about your journey with the Youth Chorus?

I have been involved with the Youth Chorus for about three and a half years now and became the LABBS Youth Coordinator after being with the Youth Chorus for 16 months! I got involved after the previous Youth Coordinator, Boo, attended my first ever Barbershop performance (with her old chorus) and sang polecats in my ear at the afterglow! My mum told me she was

the Youth Coordinator so I sent her an email asking if I could join, and I was hooked! The Youth Chorus was so lovely and friendly and welcoming, and I immediately felt like part of the gang, and couldn't wait for the next rehearsal! We worked really hard and made a really great sound, which made me really excited.

As Youth Director, what does your role entail?

I now run both the Full Youth Chorus and the Competition Chorus for over 18s. I work with the Musical Directors, Ros and Bethany, to choose music that is appropriate for the choruses, buy the music and make sure we have copyright, book rehearsal venues and liaise with choruses to borrow their risers, recruit new members, and send out information to current and prospective members in an email.

If you could offer one piece of advice or insight to another young Barbershopper, what would it be?

Get involved! Try everything! Don't be afraid to make mistakes. Wait, is that three things?

How did you feel when you found out you'd won the Katy Phillips award?

I was absolutely SHOCKED to receive the Katy Phillips award! When Alys (LABBS Finance Director) asked me to join the call to be there, I presumed that as the Youth Director to present the award with Teresa and the rest of the Phillips family, but it was actually so they could give ME the award!

Madness! It is such an incredible honour to win the award for Young Barbershopper of the Year in Katy Phillips' name and I am so proud to be a recipient with such incredible people having won the award before!

Have you thought about what you might do with the bursary?

I'm hoping to save the bursary to pay for LABBS Harmony College in 2023! I attended LABBS Harmony College in 2019 and absolutely loved it so I'd love to be able to attend the next one!

Thanks Lamorna, and congratulations on being the 2021 Katy Phillips Young Barbershopper of the Year!



The Katy Phillips Young Barbershopper of the Year Award recipient, Lamorna Hooker

Super Sunday - uniting LABBS in virtual harmony

After an amazing day of in-person hub activity, Sunday could have been an anti-climax, but the excitement to see and learn about clubs and quartets as they strutted their stuff on the [virtual stage](#), was equal to LABBS Big Weekend 2020. We were treated to five 50-minute segments, spread through the day, which were packed with more than 50 clubs and quartets.

We also:

- shared happy memories of our dearly loved [Absent Friends](#)
- celebrated our [Long Service Award recipients](#)
- laughed along with a selection of our [45-year award recipients](#)
- congratulated the recipients of the [Katy Phillips Young Barbershopper of the Year Award](#), and the [Jen Mills Award](#).
- watched 2020 Jen Mills Award winners, Ruby Tuesday, unveil their custom arrangement of Don't Stop Movin', in an atmospheric and very sparkly performance.

We completed the day with a Zoom discussion on the subject of [Safe Rehearsals](#) with contributions from our own LABBS E & J experts, and [wrapped up](#) the event with a gathering of the people involved in making the magic happen, sharing our high spots from the weekend and looking forward to Bournemouth in October 2022

It may have started from an idea - LiveAid à la LABBS - but nothing would have been possible without the help of the following people:

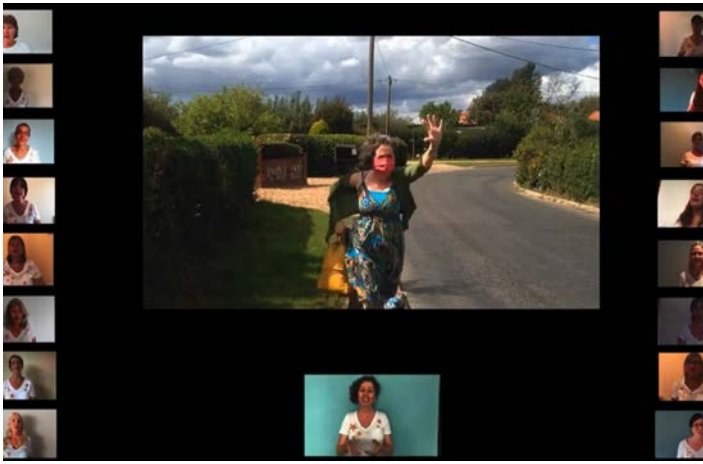
- The Hub teams, ably guided through the tech jungle by Dave Kitchenham
- The clubs and quartets who provided their amazing five-ish minutes on the stage
- The 45-year award recipients, and the Board members who interviewed them
- Jill King and Sue Ranson, for compèring the Long Service and Absent Friends segments
- Alys Galloway, for the subterfuge involved in getting our awards to be as close to live as we could make them
- The E & J people who made the Safe Rehearsal discussion such a success, and Mike Savarin for stepping in to zoominate the session
- And last but not least, the fabulously flexible support of M & C team members, Dave Kitchenham, Leanne Blaney, Trot Webb, and Anne-Marie Borneuf, who all contributed more than I could ever list.

All of the material shared on Sunday can be viewed on [LABBSTV](#). Just click on the links above or go to YouTube and search for singLABBS.

Rita Hulands, Marketing & Comms Director



Crystal Chords



Norwich Harmony



Venus Effect



Fortuity



LABBS Youth Chorus



Amersham A Cappella

New Director for LABBS Youth Chorus

The LABBS Youth Chorus is coming back, and we are so excited to get stuck in!

Like many choruses, the Youth Choruses were on Zoom over lockdown but due to our being nation-wide, we haven't been able to meet back in person like other choruses as we were worried about bringing people and germs from across the country together.

Now, we are very excited to announce our 2022 calendar of rehearsals for the Full Youth Chorus:

12th February
2nd April
11th June
24th September

Even more exciting news is that we also have a new director, the fantastic and talented Bethany Southworth! Bethany has been singing with the LABBS Youth

Chorus for 2 years and previously directed the Hull University Barbershop Singers. Bethany said "I'm really excited to be the new full chorus director! I can't wait to work alongside Lamorna and Ros and have so much fun with the youth chorus."

We are so proud to be developing the talent within the Youth Chorus and to be bringing a brand new talented director to LABBS!

As Bethany is taking over the Full Youth Chorus, our wonderful director, Ros Kipps, will be moving to direct the Competition (18+) Chorus. Having had one rehearsal with Ros already, we cannot WAIT to work with her further. Watch this space!

We will be announcing the Competition Chorus dates as soon as we have sorted some music so keep your eyes peeled.

Please keep an eye on our Facebook page for updated information and to sign up to our mailing list! See you all soon!

Lamorna Hooker, Youth Director



Bethany Southworth,
LABBS Youth Chorus Director

Club Updates

Zip and polish with Sally

Harmony InSpires are back singing every week in our wonderful new venue at Marcham AND using our risers. We had the amazing Sally McLean for a coaching weekend in October, reminding us about SOPS and adding some polish to the repertoire songs we learned over lockdown – AND removing a whole repeat of one song to give it more zip!

Meriel Lewis
PRO, Harmony InSpires



Our new venue



Back on the risers with Sally

Abbey Belles Chorus – ABC to XYZ!

We are the Abbey Belles Chorus, and our logo is ABC...

So here's an ABC all of our own, encompassing some of the experiences of the last eighteen months, and some of what's helped us through. We have never been stronger or more committed as the chorus, and these are some of the things that make us what we are.

Abi Bear, our own mascot and badly behaved teddy.

BBQ, Sueperb's amazing contribution to our year, and much appreciated when we were allowed to have it this year!

Covid. Enough said. Made us cheesed off. But we did enjoy **Coaching** with **Chris** which gave us **Confidence!**

Dark. Rehearsing outside and not being able to see our **Director** was a whole new level of Covid challenge (see 'F').

Enjoying time together, and never more so when we've had to be apart.

Flashing gloves, a genius innovation meaning we COULD see our director in the dark, or her hands, at least!

Generation game on one of our Zoom entertainment nights, with an actual conveyor belt of prizes.

Hybrid rehearsals with the Zoomers trapped in Trot's laptop. I bet she wishes

she could mute the live Belles too! **Isolation**. This has been hard to bear, but we've all been in it together, and there for each other.

Jabbey Belles. 100% double jabbed and recorded on the Jabometer.

Keeping the show on the road.

Lockdown Lowdown, our weekly newsletter of all things Abbey Belles,



plus a few jokes to keep us going.

Masks, lovely **Matching** singing **Masks** sourced for us by **Marvellous** Tracy.

New songs. **New members**. **New** experiences. **New** skills.

Outdoor rehearsals in Nat's field on beautiful summer evenings. **Occasional** rain.

Pies and puddings on the Whatsapp

group. **Pregnancy** leading to...

Quinn, Jamie's baby, born 11th September 2021. Congratulations to Jamie and Alec.

Risers. We're all liking not having to put them up!

Socially distanced rehearsals. Another new thing to get used to, but so much better than Zoom so who cares?

Trot. MD extraordinaire and technical wizard. She has been **Truly** inspirational.

Umbrellas. See 'O'.

Video performances in Virtual harmony. Who knew we could do this?

WhatsApp. The Jabbey Belles group has seen everything from skinny dipping (see 'X') to wedding outfits, rude veg to virtual hugs.

X-rated Suzy on the beach.

You Gotta Be. We've really enjoyed learning this.

Zoom. What else!

Susan Taylor

PRO, Abbey Belles Chorus



Abi Bear



Illuminated gloves



Suzy and surfboard

The Healing Benefits of Singing

Lesley Carson and Affinity Show Chorus

have been working really hard for four years supporting Beechwood Cancer Care Choir. The choir was formed after Lesley was asked to run a six-week patient support singing group for the Beechwood Cancer Care centre charity in Stockport, which offers counselling and support, free of charge for patients suffering from life threatening illness and their families.

The Beechwood folks are a happy and amazing group, often in treatment or remission and are not singers. Although this makes it a challenging task, they love the singing and as we know singing can be very beneficial.

Singing in the barbershop style requires strong support singers to buddy up, build confidence and help keep things harmonious while the singers develop skills. They have found that in doing so, the supporting crew tend to develop also - it's a win, win situation.

Beechwood Choir are asking for help from LABBS members in and around Stockport, to support its singers to help it succeed and provide a forum for barbershop in a community setting. They need singers who can learn and hold parts well to support the singers. Beechwood will

take part in things such as festivals and fundraising events, but the choir's focus is the experience and bonding.

Lesley is asking for any help or suggestions from her LABBS sisters in keeping the Beechwood choir alive and motivated. If you are interested in supporting them, please call Lesley on **07947 315669** for further information. Beechwood Choir meets Tuesdays 7pm at Bridgehall Community Centre in Stockport.

Natasha Nickson
Diversity and Inclusion Director



Unwrapping the New Normal

The last few months have been a little bit like playing a game of pass the parcel; each week revealing a new level of normality!

Writing this, in the week following the regional LABBS events, it's clear to see that we're getting ever nearer to singing together again. Fingers crossed that this time next year we'll be writing about an amazing weekend we've just had in Bournemouth!

Over the last couple of months, we have started to sing indoors again, and with the nights growing darker and colder this has been a welcome relief! This week was a special one as we no longer wore masks. How lovely it was to see everyone's smiling faces again - certainly brought a buzz to the room!

The committee have also had their first face to face meeting since February 2020 and yes there were biscuits! Probably the longest meeting we've had in a while, but it was so nice to meet and chat around a table without the need to mute and unmute!

Last weekend was the annual LABBS weekend, a little different to the usual but what a weekend! Sunday was a day

of sharing the hard work choruses have been focusing on over the last couple of months. Our video, Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow can be viewed on our social media platforms. Make sure you check out those from other choruses too, there are some fantastic ones out there!

A special thank you to everyone that helped in any way for this weekend.

These events take a lot of planning and organising and all of us at CCC would like to thank our amazing organisation for making it all possible.

Julie Phillips
PRO, Cheshire Chord Company



Cheshire Chord Company, back indoors

I know what you did last summer – Bristol

Fashion's Big Day Out

What a summer! Our video journey was like a reminder of all the things that make Bristol Fashion such a wonderful community to be part of.

When the call came to create a video - I jumped at the chance. We would be singing Jess Glynn's 'Hold My Hand' arranged by our MD, Craig; teach tracks from Hannah Briggs and recorded as an ensemble by Ian 'Maz' Maslen.

I had two ideas: Film ourselves carrying out hobbies whilst wearing our performance dresses OR an almost EUROVISION type visit to some of the attractions of Bristol – because quite frankly we live in a beautiful city.

The result was a combination of both. Not everyone could make the filming days – we have membership all over Britain – so everyone was invited to let their imagination run wild. The response was overwhelming – rollerskating, surfing, and our brilliant carriage riding Boudicca are just a few examples of the films that landed in my in-box. As well of course as the Banksy reveal – who knew?

Meanwhile the Bristol tour was planned. A first outing to the museum was something of a tester session. Selfie stick purchased, dinosaurs, bi-planes and tapestries became our first features along with a bucket load of laughter.

Next, I had contacted the marketing team at Brunel's SS Great Britain ship and asked for permission to film. They really could not have been more accommodating and a perfectly formed mini-chorus had free reign with plenty of Instagrammable opportunities to use as 'teasers' on our social media platforms.



On the deck

Two weeks later a second group met at our most famous landmark – the Bristol Suspension Bridge. It was wonderful - The sun shone as we roamed the Georgian streets of Clifton Village in full red dress glory!

So, I won't deny that the editing took hours – but every moment just reiterated what a brilliant, beautiful, and slightly barmy bunch we are and that is a personality to be proud of.

Debbie Trotman
Performance Lead and PR Team Member, Bristol Fashion



Barbershop at the barbershop

Chorus Icenis Puppet Quartet!

You may have seen Marvellous

Mandy's Facebook Post about our recent fun performance session. Here's the lowdown about the Puppet Quartet...."no strings attached"!

Chorus Icenis has had quite a churn in membership during Covid. Happily, we have recruited some great Newbies recently but this means that we now have a significant proportion of our members who have never performed at Convention.

It's always a better learning experience if you discover something for yourself, rather than being told, so I got the chorus to volunteer elements of live performances that were important to them as audience members. Guess what?...the chorus identified pretty much all the elements that are listed on the Performance Category Scoring Summary. Next I enlisted the help of the Puppet Quartet. Lisa, Wendy, Irene and Mandy are longstanding members of Chorus Icenis and all have quart experience, so I knew they would be my "puppets" and be prepared to give good examples of things that distract



Chorus Icenis's Puppet Quartet

an audience during a performance. I had made a list of distractions linked to facial expression, posture, gesture, eye focus, rhythm, visual/vocal match. The Puppet Quartet then sang Moon River in six different ways and the chorus/audience gave them feedback after each rendition. We then discussed these elements in relation to emotional interpretation of the song.

Next the chorus was divided into two and each half sang to the other...offering praise/constructive criticism. The Newbies rose to the occasion and old hands enjoyed focussing on some "back to basics" performance strategies...given that there haven't been any sing-out opportunities for so long.

However, it's easier knowing how we want to communicate, than knowing how we actually perform...so filming the chorus will be the next stage. As for The Puppet Quartet?...Who knows what's next!

Anna Conochie
Chorus Icenis, Performance Category Judge

A busy return for the Red Rosettes

The Red Rosettes are thoroughly enjoying our return to something like normality. Despite the need for continued vigilance and those awful Covid tests, we finally held our first sing-out at The Leyland Football Club Awards Ceremony in September. It was wonderful to sing in front of a very appreciative audience again and they seemed to enjoy it, so a great night was had by all.

We are only too aware of how fortunate we are to be singing together again. In that spirit, we donated a bottle of our 40th anniversary Red Rosettes Gin to a raffle held by our Chair, Sandra Hale, at the Lancaster Loyne Rotary club. The £278 raised went to UNICEF Afghan Refugee Camps.

We had a fabulous Retreat weekend in Harrogate during Unconventional Convention weekend. We worked hard and played hard. The Committee and Music team arranged a great programme of events. A wonderful surprise was a coaching session by Sally McLean on Friday afternoon followed by fish and chips for 33 Rosettes in a local restaurant.

We were delighted to hear that Our MD, Emma Mc Manus, and our Baritone, Laura Phillips, who make up SoundHouse with Sally McLean and Hannah Barber, were the winners of the Jen Mills Award at Unconventional Convention. We can't wait for the stunning arrangement and performance this will make possible.

Emma and her mum, Teresa Phillips, were also very proud to once again present the Katy Phillips Young Barbershopper of the Year Award and Bursary during the weekend.

From Friday until Sunday we sang, we performed Mika's Grace Kelly on Tik Tok, we learned a sea shanty and sent

it to one of our absent members, Pam Ambrose. We built towers with marshmallows and pasta, played beer pong (with no beer), performed role play and tableaux, wrapped up mummies, jumped through hula hoops, and generally had a wonderful time culminating in the inevitable Afterglow when our members showed off their many skills and talents.

Ann Atkin
Red Rosettes



The Red Rosettes at the Cenotaph in Harrogate. The people queuing outside Betty's Tea Rooms were very appreciative!

Oh, how we sang!

Liverpool Ladies

Barbershop Singers was formed in 1976 by Rhiannon Owens-Hall. During the twelve years Rhi was MD our chorus and quartets were amongst the best in the country and won most of the glittering prizes. At an early BABS/LABBS convention we brought the house down with Swing Low Sweet Chariot. Contest rules were more restrictive then. Ladies were not allowed to wear trousers on stage so we performed Mr. Broadway in long skirts. We lost points for showing too much leg!



Liverpool Ladies
Barbershop Singers, 1983

We appeared on several television shows, and once filmed in the Mersey Tunnel when it was so cold we wore tracksuit bottoms under our costumes. We had forty sing-outs during 1984, the year of the Liverpool International Garden Festival. In 1985 we performed with Ken Dodd in Liverpool - and in variety at the London Palladium. Not everyone appreciated us. On a Manchester train station a cleaner threatened to call the police if we didn't stop singing.

Flying to the Dutch Convention this

stern voice comes over the loudspeaker, "Upon landing would the party from Liverpool remain seated. Other passengers may depart quietly". "What have we done now! Nothin', just say nothin'". The captain comes out, smiling broadly, arms outstretched, "Will you sing for us ladies, please!" Wow!

For The Rhine Singers entertainment we performed Strike Up the Band. During this the first and second lines changed places. Now hiding behind the skirts of the new front line, the band changed costume and popped up in white miniskirts, capes, hats and musical instruments and marched proudly across the stage!

During Liverpool's European Capital of Culture year, 2008, MD Lesley Culley took us to Norway. Georg, Mayor of Ski, welcomed us as children of British servicemen who had helped the Norwegians in their resistance against the Nazis in WW2. We sang to him "That's What Friends Are For". Georg stood proudly, tears streaming down his face. We all ended up crying. He gave everyone a little blue badge, shaped like the Legs of Man (Viking).

Ted Ward took us to Convention in 2015 and 2016. He directed us during our 40th anniversary celebrations in 2016. Choirs were springing up everywhere. Good for them! But we had difficulty finding new members. Then miraculously Luke Freney appeared. A gold medal barbershop quartet singer, who also sang with Hallmark of Harmony. Luke took us to 2018 and 2019 Conventions. He had a two-year plan for us, which sounded so good! Then Covid-19 struck!

We kept going on Zoom and WhatsApp but we were down to 18 members. No

balance of sound. Unsustainable. Sadly, we decided we could no longer carry on.

The Liverpool Archive Office at Central Library, William Brown Street, holds the history of our chorus in photo albums and newsletters. Ref: 780 BAR/1 albums and 780 BAR/2 newsletters.

So to all our LABBS friends, goodbye and we wish you well with this little verse:-

*So take my hand my friend
I want to say
I'm glad we laughed
I'm glad we loved
I'm glad we sang
(Oh, how we sang!)
Together today!*

**Thelma Grant
Mersey Harmony
Liverpool Ladies Barbershop Singers**



Mersey Harmony, 2019

The Belles are back in town!

The Belles were very

excited to perform at their first sing-out in almost two years, and that it was at The Generate Festival as part of Coventry City of Culture 2021, made it even more special.

We had the additional benefit of new Belles T shirts which added to the sense of occasion and delighted in singing to an audience once again. Bellatonix, our recently formed small group also performed at another sing-out, this time for local retired

residents and they raised funds for Macmillan Cancer Support. We Belles are very much looking forward to our forthcoming Christmas sing-outs and shows.

**Eileen Askew
PRO, The Belles of Three Spires**



Bellatonix

Seaside trips and sing-outs!

The weather may be getting chillier, but that hasn't dented the mood at More Harmony Women's Barbershop Chorus! On September 24th, we held our first sing-out in what felt like forever, when we performed at Camelford Bandstand, raising money for Samaritans of Cornwall. After what has been a difficult 18 months for so many of us, we felt that our local Samaritans branch was an ideal charity to support, particularly as the link between singing and positive mental health benefits has never been clearer! We were thrilled to be back in front of an audience again and incredibly proud to raise £156.59 for a charity close to our hearts.

Not only was it our first chorus sing-out since before the pandemic began, but it was the first ever More Harmony sing-out for three of our newest members, Alison, Helen and Jamie (singing tenor, bari and lead respectively). All three did amazingly

well and as a chorus, we're pleased as punch to have still been picking up new members over the last year and a half!



More Harmony at Camelford Bandstand

As if that wasn't enough excitement, we took a chorus trip to the beach on September 26th, where we spent an

evening shooting our music video for the LABBS Unconventional Convention. There was a lot of laughter as we made sandcastles, paddled and even found time to do a bit of singing...

As the world continues to open up again and choruses have more freedom, we're looking towards 2022 with excitement. Our Music Team recently met to plan next year's repertoire and to discuss our goals for the coming twelve months. We can't wait to be singing in front of many more audiences and dazzling people with brand new songs! Our small chorus has done the unthinkable over the last crazy year and a half - we've gained new members and gone from strength to strength. We know how lucky we are and we can't wait to see where we go next!

Emma Tofi
PRO, More Harmony

Farewell to Wessex Harmony

It is with great regret

that we share the news that Wessex Harmony has decided to disband; this is particularly poignant as this is our 40th anniversary year.

Starting as Wessex Corn Dollies back in 1981, then renamed in 2007, the chorus has taken part in many Conventions, shows and local appearances, earning a reputation for good quality entertainment. For their first experience of competing at Convention, all the members squeezed into a minibus for the journey to Loughborough University and later reported that their faces ached from smiling for the entire weekend. From that initial foray into competition, the chorus went on to take part in many others, including the Bournemouth, New Milton and Portsmouth Music Festivals. Wessex Harmony has also performed in Germany, Holland and Spain. There is photographic evidence which demonstrates just how much the line-up and stage costumes have changed during the past forty years!

For the past three years, we have been privileged to have Pauline House as our MD and we are very grateful for

all she has done for the chorus and its members. Over the years, there have been many changes in membership and leadership, but throughout that time, the element of fun and friendship - which has long characterised our club - has remained strong. We are planning to have a meal together to share our memories, to celebrate them and to wish everyone well as they go on to other musical adventures.

Janet Mann
Secretary, Wessex Harmony



Wessex Harmony, 1981



Wessex Harmony, 2019

Brenda Roberts

Brenda was Welsh, and very proud of it, especially when Bristol Fashion competed at the Llangollen International Eisteddfod. From the coach she was able to show us the first house she had lived in after she was married. Oh – Brenda and coach travel! Brenda's contribution to the journey was her version of Bingo, with prizes for all. And if it included dropping some of the numbers before she'd called them, scrabbling about on the floor of a moving coach to find them was left to more mobile members, as well as a bizarre array of bingo calls (one little duck and a fat lady? 28, of course), it didn't matter, because by the time she'd really got into her stride you couldn't see your bingo card for laughing.

Brenda had a beautiful lead voice and a smiley face to match and was always ready for a cup of tea. She made amazing contributions to the social life of the chorus with her professional baking and her beautiful needlework which always formed a star attraction at Christmas craft sales.

She was a Life Member of Bristol Fashion and a founding member of 9 to 5. Although she struggled with illness for many years she was always determined to do as much as she could. As one of our members said: "She will always be part of our singing history, the fun and companionship we all shared."

Bristol Fashion Chorus and 9 to 5



Brenda Roberts,
Bristol Fashion Chorus
and 9 to 5

Heather James

Heather, a treasured member of Harmony InSpires for many years, died at her home in Sydney, surrounded by her family. She was a wonderful member of our chorus since she joined us in 2014. As well as singing Lead, she also served as Trustee and a member of the performance team. She had incredible acting talent and performed with every part of her, from her hair

right down to her toes! Her smile was infectious and she was a joy to sing with. We missed her when she returned to Australia in early 2020 and we will miss her even more now.

If anyone would like to make a donation in Heather's memory you can do so here -

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/heather-james-fund>



Heather James,
Harmony InSpires

Yvonne Harrison

Yvonne was a shining light at the heart of Bristol Fashion Chorus who died on 3rd October 2021. She bore a long illness with enormous bravery, grit and determination, and above all, humour. By volunteering for pioneering new treatments, she kept cancer firmly in its place for years beyond her initial prognosis.

Yvonne's unswerving faith in God was central to everything she did, and she lived every moment of her life to its maximum capacity. She was much loved by us all as a very musical riser buddy, a friend and counsellor; she had a wonderful ability to know when someone needed a chat, a hug or some simple wise advice.

We have many wonderful memories of Yvonne. A particularly special one must be of the day a large group of chorus members helped to move her and her

husband Mike into their new home. At this time Yvonne was not allowed to be less than one metre away from anyone (even before anyone had heard of Covid 19!) and she gallantly directed all proceedings whilst wielding a yardstick topped off with a yellow rubber glove! The BF workforce were sustained with the treat of a fish and chip lunch and of course plenty of singing.

We also enjoyed barbecues and picnics in her wonderful garden which were such happy times full of laughter, conversation and music. Yvonne, we miss you so much and chorus won't be the same without you, but rest assured that your legacy lives on, and we hope you can hear us in Heaven. Rest in peace beautiful lady.

Bristol Fashion Chorus



Yvonne Harrison,
Bristol Fashion Chorus



Rhapsody Chorus is looking for a Musical Director

Could you be just what we are looking for? We need a new Musical Director with drive, and ambition.

Rhapsody chorus is a 4-part harmony Acapella ladies singing group based in Peterborough.

Many of the members have been singing together and competing in national and local competitions for more than 12 years. The chorus is a member of the Ladies Association of British Barbershop Singers.

Ideally we would like to employ a new Musical Director with proven experience in the Barbershop genre, but other musical genres will be considered. This new leader will be inspiring and motivating with a keen ear for vocal uniformity and artistry. Remuneration and expenses reimbursement will be negotiated.

If you have the passion, vision and personality to lead this established chorus please email our Chair, Jill Foskett, chair@rhapsodychorus.org.uk. She will then contact you with further information.

Rhapsody Chorus currently has 29 members and meets weekly at Dogsthorpe Methodist Church, Birchtree Avenue, Peterborough PE1 4HP every Tuesday evening at 7.30pm. More information about us can be found on our website:

<https://www.rhapsodychorus.org.uk>

MUSICAL DIRECTOR FOR SINGCHRONICITY



Singchronicity is seeking a new Musical Director to take our friendly Chorus forward when we resume singing together again in the near future. We sadly lost our valued MD, shortly before the first lock down in 2020, and we are now looking to rejuvenate our Chorus and attract new members.

We want an enthusiastic and committed person with a background in 4-part harmony and barbershop to take us forward in a way that builds on our strengths. Someone who shares our vision and can offer skills to further develop our singing and performance in a dynamic and motivational manner.

We rehearse every Tuesday evening at Orton Wistow Community Centre, PE2 6XN.

For further details please contact deanafoot36@yahoo.com

Singchronicityuk.com

Ladies Association of British Barbershop Singers

LABBS EVENTS Reception Manager

The LABBS Events Director is looking to appoint a new Events Reception Manager

We need an enthusiastic and committed person with strong organisational skills, excellent interpersonal skills and someone comfortable working in a digital environment .

As Reception Manager you would:

- attend Events Team meetings, taking minutes on behalf of the team
- lead a team of volunteers, organising rotas for the event, covering Reception area
- arrange for event specific activities to be completed, such as the processing of day tickets at Convention.

The position is voluntary. Expenses incurred will be reimbursed in line with the LABBS Expenses Policy.

For a more detailed job description and to apply please contact Julie Dugdale events@labbs.org.uk

Closing date for applications is 31st December 2021



... leading the way in harmony