

Spring 2021 £4

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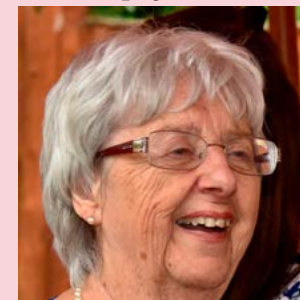


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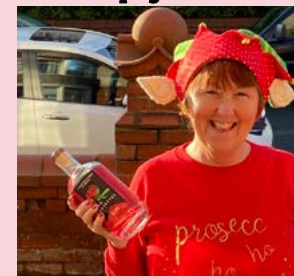


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Hello again, and welcome to our Spring edition of Voice Box!

Seeing snowdrops all around and daffodils pushing their way through, it strikes me that no matter how dark the winter months have been, we are now stepping into the light of spring and with that comes hope that 2021 will be a better year for all of us.

As ever, our LABBS teams have been busy bringing us an exciting and varied programme of online events and I hope that you have enjoyed what has been on offer. The new year got off to a flying start with a Performance Education Day, we had a karaoke LABBSi, and the new LABBS polecat 'You Gotta Be' was launched. One of the first lines is "Try and keep your head up to the sky".... like the flowers, let's all do that!

Board matters

As part of the LABBS Strategy review, we recognised the need for a LABBS youth member to be appointed to the Board to make sure that the voice of our future is heard, and so we were delighted to welcome Lamorna Hooker to our meeting in January.

As you will be aware, we have four Board positions to fill and are currently in the process of interviewing potential candidates for the roles of Vice Chair, Secretary, Events Director and a brand new position to lead on Diversity and Inclusion. Watch this space....

Discussions have been ongoing with Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS) in the USA and I am pleased to report that, following meetings with their CEO and Exec team, LABBS will become a recognised alliance partner of BHS. The major benefit for LABBS will be that our judges will continue to take advantage of the excellent BHS judging programme, which in turn will maintain the high standard of judging in our own LABBS contests.

Happy Birthday to us!

LABBS was founded in 1976 and we are excited to celebrate our 45th anniversary in 2021. It's lovely that 5 of our founder members will receive their 45-years membership pin this year and I send special thanks and congratulations to Bunny Bainbridge, Rhiannon Owens-Hall, Daphne Powell, Lee Westlake and Margaret de Wolf. In total, 60 of our members will receive a Long Service Award in 2021 which is quite amazing - there is something about this wonderful barbershop hobby of ours that keeps us coming back for more!

I send my very best wishes to you all for a healthy and bright future together, and here's to the next 45 years of LABBS harmony and friendship.

**In Harmony
Nancy**

The future's bright pink for Amersham A Cappella

This time last year we were buzzing about a whole Christmas stocking-full of sing-outs, so there was lots to shout about.

Then the world was slapped sideways, and we were reduced to sending dispatches from lockdown about the 1001 ways we'd found to make virtual rehearsals fun.

But we're determined that 2021 is going to be different. So instead of re-living our not-quite-as-festive-as-usual season for Voice Box, here's some of the stuff we're fired up about right now.

For starters, there's our awesome new website, designed to give everyone an insight into the crazy world of Amersham A Cappella. [Click here to take a look!](#)

We've also added three fresh faces to the AAC Committee: Sharon Saywell, who's taking over as Vice Chair from Ron Fatemi, our new Chair, Jane Price, our latest Membership Secretary and me, Hils Apicella, the new PRO.

**"We've already got some neat singers' masks
hand-crafted by Jane."**

We're celebrating some Chorus superstars too. Helen Lappert and Boo de Bruin are our Tapestry/Barbershopper of the Year champs - winning our Chorus' vote and heart-felt thanks for all they've done to keep us motivated. Extra applause goes to Boo, who is our new joint Assistant MD.

Joining them in our Hall of Fame are our Rosemary Hatchett award winners Amanda Dawson and Soozi Hyde, chosen by our Committee for going above and beyond, behind-the-scenes.



But what we're most pumped about is preparing for the day when we can stand on the risers knowing it's OK to sing together. We've already got some neat singers' masks hand-crafted by Jane Price, Rosy Dawson and the team. We're also focusing on all the fab, fun times we're going to have at our September Retreat and we're looking forward to partying our way through our 40th birthday year in 2022.

So, here's to a bigger, better, brighter 2021. Plus, to all the fantastic choruses and quartets out there we'd like to say, 'Keep singing, keep performing, and keep believing that your rosy tomorrow, starts today'.

Hils Apicella
PRO, Amersham A Cappella

Deadline for next issue Sunday 30th April 2021

Maximum 300 words plus two images if possible to voiceboxeditor@labbs.org.uk. Photographs taken on phones are usually fine, but please send direct from the photo gallery on the phone via email for maximum resolution.



LABBS Vision Statement

To be the UK's leading community for education, entertainment and promotion of barbershop singing, with international recognition and influence.

What a Time to Join a Choir!

Reflections of a Welwyn Harmony Newbie



A year ago, I embarked on Welwyn Harmony's introductory course. Battling a winter storm to drive the arduous mile to Welwyn Garden City, I found myself in a circle of women blowing raspberries fire-engine style and singing rounds I hadn't heard since Brownies. Hmm, would this be right for me? I stood with the Baris, accustomed as an alto to never getting the melody (okay, sometimes we do) and discovered my breathing would need some serious attention. That night I noted in my diary: "Tried Welwyn Harmony - good!" Lingering behind one evening for main chorus practice, I was blown away by their rendition of Skyfall, witnessing something seriously ambitious in quality, and wanting to be part of it.

The course finished just as the pandemic crept in. The welcome had been so warm and the singing so pleasant, I decided to jump in and commit. What a good decision, but then the work began. Learning 'Anthem' for our first lockdown recording took me forever. Before the deadline, I was warbling sweatily in my hot bedroom, balancing the phone on a pile of books on the headboard to get a white wall behind me. Recording myself so many times to get it right and undergoing the cringemaking experience

of listening back gave me a new respect for singers. However, many songs later, many hours hoovering under headphones, not to mention singing all night in my sleep, I'm so glad I replied to the membership secretary's email in the affirmative.

My husband is now used to my continual 'dee dings', 'doo doos' or a wandering note line that bears some resemblance to a song. Zoom rehearsals punctuate each quiet week. If I ever make it to a real-life Ladies' Barbershop Convention I'll know what to expect, after the online version: harmonious, sparkly - slightly crazy and fun. The Welwyn Harmony Christmas party was a highlight of the season, and I never thought I'd say that about dancing and doing karaoke on my own! Singing with Welwyn Harmony has been a bit of sunshine in an otherwise pretty bleak year so - thanks.

Helen Brooks
Welwyn Harmony

Birthday Surprise!

Our MD, Catrina, has been absolutely amazing during the last year. She has absolutely had us all 'in the palm of her hand' and apparently, in her every waking moment! She is unfailingly enthusiastic, cheerful and is always full of new ideas. She has kept us all going, and put so much time and effort in, making videos, preparing rehearsals, taking rehearsals and all the other extras she does. In advent she even surprised us with a video of the chorus every single day taken from previous Christmases.

With her birthday approaching, and following a big article in our local paper about Catrina, we wanted to surprise her with a party, but it had to be on Zoom, of course. Helen, our assistant MD, was in charge of organisation. She set up a special secret WhatsApp group so that we could all share our plans, and everyone rose to the challenge! We set about working out what we could do to make Catrina's birthday extra special, and thinking about what we could do to make it more exciting than just another Zoom meet up.

The result was a huge success. Catrina is a big fan of all things Disney, so we all dressed up as best we could, using what we had to hand.



“Star of the show was Bernice, in her Little Mermaid outfit.”

Star of the show was Bernice, in her Little Mermaid outfit which she made out of bubble wrap and two foil pie tins! Catrina's husband Rich kept his wife occupied until the appointed time, when she turned on her computer to find us all there and ready to party.

Our 'Double Basses' Nat and Liz had made a 'Play Your Cards Right' set, which was a big success. Their



pièce de résistance, though, was the actual conveyor belt for a Generation Game style memory game. They made a video of their conveyor belt, with the items passing one at a time (including a live dog!) and we all had to remember as many as we could. Rich made a birthday cake and there was a Disney quiz.

I think it is safe to say that Catrina thoroughly enjoyed her party - there were tears!

Susan Taylor
PRO, Abbey Belles

Our 'Double Basses' Nat and Liz had made a 'Play Your Cards Right' set, which was a big success. Their

Bristol Fashion – Beyond Singing

When LIVE rehearsals stopped in March 2020 and moved to a Zoom platform, the PRO at Bristol Fashion, Janis Smith, quickly recognised that staying connected, not just as a Chorus but with the wider barbershop community, was going to become more important than ever. So she created a small team to help build connections through our Bristol Fashion brand, [our website](#) and social media.

Our private Facebook page, for members only, affectionately called 'GIN' (gossip, interest and news) was already a lively community; but we wanted our [public Facebook page](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) to reflect our exciting and fun personality as well as our new mantra – BEYOND SINGING.

The changes have been fun. Our aim is to fill the Instagram page with beautiful and engaging images. We feel the pictures, all carrying the new logo, are a celebration of the best of us. Twitter allows some instant sharing and it is exciting when new followers engage with our posts and we find ourselves talking to barbershoppers and non-barbershoppers from around the world.

Our new look public Facebook page feels both professional but also like a club that anyone can belong to. We are careful to not over-post but are happy to celebrate visitors and share gems from our weekly rehearsals. We share big news and the summer saw our black, white and red teaser campaign before we revealed our new brand at the LABBS Big Weekend. We recognise achievements, entertain with our antics and memes, and of course look back at past performances - after all singing is at the heart of all we do.

"GIN (gossip, interest and news)"



Finally in 2020, NOT-ivity was our improvised Christmas performance of that special tale. With over 1800 views in four weeks it featured not just chorus members but super guests Rob Mance, Sally McLean plus goat, Sarah Hooker, Ken Godsell and Doug as the little Donkey!

So what next? Social media trends are constantly changing and so we know that in 2021 with a little imagination – anything is possible.

Debbie Trotman
Bristol Fashion Performance Lead and Social Media Team

Beyond Singing - Poetry

At Bristol Fashion, we love our members and none more so than the wonderful Sara Taylor, our Treasurer and club poet. Each Christmas, without fail we can count on Sara to entertain us with well-penned prose.

This year she focused on the 'C' word. Enjoy...



The 'C' word

Oh please don't mention the C words, they're not what I want to hear.
No no not the rude ones I'm sorry, it's the ones we just heard of last year.
They're in all the papers, on radio, TV and magazines too.
There's no escape from them anywhere, they really can make you feel blue.
So instead of those unwelcome C words, I thought that just for a while.
We'd look at more cheerful versions, that change a frown to a smile.
Chocolate cookies and coffee, crumble with lashings of cream,
Crackers with cheese and some chutney, crumpets for tea, what a dream!
If you need to add some more flavour, try herbs - coriander or chives,
Or cinnamon, curry or cumin - they'll make you feel more alive.
Drink claret, or Chablis or cider, caviar with a glass of champagne.
Give me Cognac or just a good cocktail, I certainly wouldn't complain.
There're lots of these good kind of C words that make us feel better, that's fact.
A chair with a comfortable cushion, where you crochet or cuddle your cat.
And dream of a fortnight of sunshine in Corfu or Cyprus or Crete.
Or maybe go camping in Cornwall, or a caravan - that's hard to beat.

Think of colours that pick up your spirits, like crimson and cornflower blue.
Or flowers - cowslips and crocus, cosmos and cyclamen too.
Or why not try doing the conga, clog dance or cha cha cha.
I'd like to be doing the can can, but at my age, that's one step too far.
We know music is very uplifting and singing especially so.
'Can't stop the Feeling' and 'Chopsticks', and so many others we know.
Cos closer to home there are C words we cherish throughout all the year,
Craig and Caroline and Chorus - they always bring us good cheer.
One word that's not really a C word, though it could be, it's got the same sound.
Is kindness - so very important, and in BF, there's plenty around.
Good friends that care and give comfort, whenever we're feeling blue.
We may be a little bit crazy, but we care for each other - that's true.
So those other C words can be banished, I'd forget them if only I could.
I'd rather just smile and be cheerful, and think of the words that are good.

By Sara Taylor - Bristol Fashion Baritone

Cornish Holiday

*Glorious Cornwall,
you will never want
to go home!*



2 BEDROOM HOUSE

Meadow Rise,
St Columb Major



3 BEDROOM HOUSE

Hengar Manor, St Tudy
(Close to Port Isaac)



4 BEDROOM BEACH HOUSE

Bodannon, Porthtowan

At Cornish Holiday we offer wonderful, self-catering accommodation in Cornwall. Our properties are inspected every year and receive a star rating by Visit England, a wonderful way to reassure you and give peace of mind when booking your stay. Every year Cornish Holiday donates to Cancer Research UK and by staying with us helps fund vital research. There really is nowhere better to spend time and create memories which will last forever. Dogs welcome out of season at some properties.



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The Belles of Three Spires raise over £1000 for local charities

Despite the Covid-19 lockdown in 2020, The Belles of Three Spires succeeded in raising over £1000 for local charities. Since being away from our usual venue of Willenhall Social Club, we have learnt new skills online from some of our very talented members.

Amongst the many and varied groups, we are privileged to have Jayne Edmonds, a Chelsea Flower Show gold medal winner who has led a flower arranging group with great success.



We have also had watercolour classes from Holly Dawes, and cookery classes from Alison Davies. Examples of their talents, together with donated hampers, have helped to raise funds for the Willenhall Food Bank (via St John the Divine Church), Baby Godiva Coventry Baby Bank and Myton Hospice. We are pleased to be able to contribute to the local area in what has been a very difficult year.

"I am so proud of how all the ladies across our broad demographic have embraced technology."

Our MD, Lucy Guess, said "I am so proud of how all the ladies across our broad demographic have embraced technology to not only continue singing together, but to forge new friendships through our many new groups.



WhatsApp and Zoom have allowed us to stay in touch and learn loads of new skills!"

Liz Gascoigne (previous Chair) added: "We always like to support our local community and charities every year and of course, not only have we much missed singing together but also we're conscious that very worthy causes are suffering due to fewer fundraising events. It has really cheered our ladies to know that we can contribute".

I contacted local press with this news and was invited to a quiz on the BBCCW Vic Minett

radio show. The questions were not in my favour that day and I scored nil points, although I was able to promote the Belles and their fundraising activities. It was great fun!

Eileen Askew
PRO, The Belles of Three Spires



A Charitable Christmas Music Video from More Harmony



More Harmony Women's Barbershop Chorus was able to spread a little festive cheer, as 2020 drew to a close, by donating a cheque for a whopping £1000 to CLIC, its chosen charity for the last two years.

CLIC has a close, personal connection to the chorus, after a member's daughter was diagnosed with leukaemia and experienced first-hand the help and support the charity provides. More Harmony is a family and the chorus rallied round, determined to do all we could to raise money for this amazing cause.

"More Harmony is a family."

By the start of 2020, we had funds ready to donate and we knew we wanted to make a big song and dance

about handing over the cheque - well, this is barbershop we're talking about, after all! The idea of singing to the parents and children at the CLIC ward at Treliske Hospital was beginning to take form.... and then the pandemic hit.

In a year when we weren't sure if or when we'd be able to perform together again, those plans were lost amongst Covid risk-assessments and Zoom rehearsals. Finally, as the festive season kicked in and restrictions in Cornwall were lifted enough for us to meet as a chorus once more, the decision was made to create a Christmas music video, in which we'd show off a novelty cheque and announce how much we'd raised.

A lot of fun was had, turning our usual rehearsal hall into a Covid secure recording studio

and film set, complete with green screen so that we really did look like we were all "Walking in a Winter Wonderland!" A huge thanks to Little Bird Creative for their amazing work on recording and editing the song and video. Thanks also to CLIC, which shared the video on its own social media channels and, more importantly, works so tirelessly to help families in need.

More Harmony are back on Zoom for now, but we can't wait to sing together again soon and to choose our next charity to support.

Emma Tofi
PRO, More Harmony

Top Ten Moments of 2020 with Cheshire Chord

A New Year for Cheshire Chord Company always starts with our annual AGM, and this year was no different.

This year, our Julia Bird award was presented to Rachel Sheldon for her amazing work, hosting rehearsals each week and solving everyone's technical issues! Similarly, the Musical Director's award was presented to Julie Phillips in recognition of the effort she has put into keeping our social media sites updated and video editing.



In what was initially thought to be a quiet year, when looking back through social media posts, it became apparent that this was not the case! Each year our PRO creates a video of Cheshire Chord's Top 10 Moments according to Facebook reaches. So, for all of you readers, here are our Top Ten Moments of 2020!

(Read this with the original Top of the Pops soundtrack in your head !)

We were pleased to share our top 10 moments of 2020 with LABBS. If you'd like to see all of our posts from last year and any future ones, make sure you follow us on [@CheshireChord](https://www.instagram.com/CheshireChord).

Julie Phillips
PRO, Cheshire Chord Company



10. **Sunny Selfies** – We may not have made it to SABS but at least we had some sun in the UK!
9. **Jo Braham's Surprise 50th Zoom Night!**
8. **Double Zoom Night** - A special rehearsal with the wonderful Zac Booles and Ignite Chorus.
7. **Our first Zoom night** - A first of many, way back in March 2020!
6. **Saturday Night Almost Live!** - What a great social night we had.
5. **Shine!** A night to share what our wonderful Learn to Sing ladies had achieved over the six-week course we ran in January 2020.
4. **World Singing Day** - We may not have been able to sing together last year but we were able to share some special videos of when we could.
3. **A Night with Spirit of Harmony** - An evening of Barbershop with this fabulous male chorus in York.
2. **Happy Christmas** - A song written by our amazingly talented Hannah Briggs.
1. **Our Lockdown Legacy** - LABBS was a little different this year but we loved watching everyone's online performances.

Christmas Poppins

Christmas singing was somewhat different this year but that didn't stop IN HOUSE quartet from enjoying themselves! Christmas Poppins made another appearance with a special LABBS version of 12 Days of Christmas. Along with a number of other LABBS members, we recorded ourselves singing and performing Russell Watson's 12 Days of Christmas including golden rings and moves! What's not to love?

"Not singing together is pretty tough"



Not singing together is pretty tough and we know it's hard for so many members up and down the country. What we have enjoyed as a quartet (and will certainly continue!) is making IN HOUSE videos! With Christmas just around the corner, we knew another video was called for! After much researching we decided on 'Let It Snow'. If you haven't seen our festive edition, make sure you pop over to our social media sites [@INHOUSEquartet](https://www.instagram.com/INHOUSEquartet) to view it!

What does 2021 hold for IN HOUSE? Hopefully some actual singing together. With our new-found love of the online software Jamulus, it has already become partially possible but the day we can perform together again on the stage will be a special one!

Julie Phillips
PRO, IN HOUSE

Gin Fairies Deliver the Spirit of Christmas



The Red Rosettes got into the spirit of Christmas, literally, when orders for their 40th Anniversary Gin began rolling in. The specially designed limited edition bottles were created by Brindle Distillery and they proved very popular in the run up to the Festive season. However, lockdown presented difficulties with deliveries.

The answer? The Red Rosettes' very own Gin Fairies, who took it upon themselves to ensure everyone who had purchased a bottle (or two) of the special concoction received it in time for Christmas. Dressed as Santa's little helpers, they travelled the length and breadth of Lancashire, bringing smiles to faces with their doorstep deliveries.

If you would like to order a bottle please contact www.brindledistillery.co.uk.

Once Christmas was over, our thoughts turned to the wonderful day when we will all sing together again. The committee explored the possibility of buying singing masks, with the aim of giving members more confidence to sing together when the pandemic

is over. The cost of buying masks for everyone was prohibitive, so the talented seamstresses in the chorus set about creating our own version at a fraction of the price. Yet another talent revealed during lockdown!

Our wonderful committee has kept us going throughout the pandemic and we have been very grateful for the ongoing friendship and support.

Finally, much loved Bass Barbara Jones, who has been with the Red Rosettes for 25 years, has decided to call it a day. We will miss her beaming smile, kindness, company, humour – and that beautiful Bass voice.

Ann Atkin
PRO, The Red Rosettes

Queen of LABBS Communications - Rita Hulands

LABBS Marketing and Communications director, Rita Hulands is the wonder woman behind all things LABBS marketing and more.

A seasoned singer with GEM Connection and quartet Ruby Tuesday, Rita is a medal-winning bass/tenor/bari, who has been forced to swap the ski slope for the Zoom room.

Q: What's your first singing memory?

Coming second in a Butlins Holiday Camp at the age of 8. I sang, 'The Hills Are Alive With the Sound of Music'. Obviously, the early signs of performance addiction that I suppressed for the next 30 years!

Q: Describe your barbershop 'journey'?

I joined a local chorus as a diversion as my job was taking over every waking moment - and loved it straight away, confidently holding the tenor line. After a few years, I branched out as a quartet and quintet, performing at weddings and for local WI groups and other associations, the highpoint being a local village pudding club - who knew such a thing existed?

I love the sound and the friendship at GEM Connection, which I joined eight years ago. I have travelled to Convention with GEM Connection most years winning a bronze and a silver at SABS, where our quartet, Ruby Tuesday, made its debut performance. Oh mustn't forget the icing on a strange year when Ruby Tuesday were awarded the Jen Mills Quartet Award which means we will be performing our newly commissioned arrangement on stage at LABBS21!



Q: You are supposedly retired. What do you do now to keep busy?

Before I retired, I was a Market & Communications manager for Hewlett Packard. I had a career in IT and Marketing for most of my working life, doing a three year stint as a science and maths teacher. Now, I work with my LABBS colleagues on the Board and the fabulous Marketing & Comms team to deliver all sorts of gorgeous things for LABBS members.

I also meet regularly with my Ruby Tuesday pals to ensure we are ready for singing soon. I am a bass in GEM Connection, an active singer and on the Music Team for The Collective Virtual Choir, and I'm on the interim Exec for LUX Acappella, a mixed chorus based in Leicester. I normally love to ski – but that's not happening right now!

Q: What do you love about GEMS and Ruby Tuesday?

That's easy - the friendship. My GEM pals have been there for me - my happy place - during stressful times. You can leave your troubles at the door and if you need it, someone is always on hand to dish out a hug - no questions asked - and the joy of singing, a salve for all woes. Ruby was born out of sociable singing in GEM and during lockdown we have supported each other more than I can put into words. We were lucky to have had our first retreat in Feb 2020 and this drew us together still more - I think the jacuzzi was a master stroke!



Q: What do you love about LABBS?

I love the camaraderie, particularly at Convention, but all through the year. I was lucky enough to spend time with previous LABBS Chairs as part of our 40th year celebration and of the many pearls of wisdom, the one that stuck with me was that LABBS is a leveller. When you talk at chorus or with other members, nobody wants to know what you do or where you live - they want to know what part you sing and which polecats you know!

Thanks Rita!

Our Day Will Come

Affinity you're ten years old. 10 years, wow, that has flown!
We've sang, we've partied, we've won awards,
Our best moment? I'm sure it's different for us all....
Making it to choirs of the world?
Now that made us feel ten feet tall!

What's always in our hearts, our minds, our thoughts,
Manchester Forever, where we took part.
The community, the remembrance, it made us go cold,
Those people who have gone, they'll never grow old.

So, we're TEN! Let the celebrations begin.
Let's organise fetes and competitions.... let's win!
Everything's in place, our team have been busy,
What's first on the list, drinking lots of fizzy?

STOP!

We can't carry on, the world is in crisis,
Covid is here and it's not the nicest.
We cancelled our fun days, even our rehearsals have stopped,
This is not what we asked for, our celebrations have flopped!

When we thought all was lost and could see no hope,
Zoom arrived, no time to mope.
To see your faces, to laugh and chat,
It was nearly back to normal,

The singing.... well, we'll forget about that!
Our birthday month was here. We would not let it pass.
We'll celebrate virtually. Boom, we're cooking on gas!
We dropped off party bags to one and all,
Everything was sorted, we set out our stall!
Lady Gaga was host and we played TENable,
... Of course!

Ten-year awards and gifts of thanks,
Our founder, Director and Chair in high ranks.
We had Bingo and poems and much, much more,
We had laughter, tears and our faith restored.

Our time will come when we'll be together,
Be patient my friends, Covid's not here forever!
Stay Strong, Be kind, Our harmonies will ring,
Our day will come... when we can SING!

Debbie Cullen
PRO, Affinity Show Choir



Not All Zoom and Gloom

I remember sitting down this time last year filled with optimism about the New Year and decade ahead. Now, we are all sick to the teeth of hearing how Covid-19 pulled the rug out from under us, but while it certainly stopped us singing in person and enjoying a lot of what life brings, it also brought some great opportunities.

In November, we were lucky enough to have a shared rehearsal with Ignite UK, and because of Zoom we could actually have some space to chat about barbershop and beyond in breakout rooms. When we held our open 'Polecat and Christmas Jumper' night, barbershoppers from around the country and even America were able to attend because turning on the computer doesn't involve an epic commute.

The virtual Christmas party meant that we could enjoy a glass (or two) of our favourite tipple and not worry about the driving, and one of our wonderful members who lives in France was even able to attend the Christmas party for the first time in years because it was virtual!

Now we're keeping this spirit going, so next month we're really looking forward to a joint Red Rosettes and White Rosettes rehearsal (The Pink Rosettes) that doesn't involve scoffing down food whilst driving down after work! Yes, of course we would rather be together in person, but there are also some joys that have come out of rehearsing remotely, and for now we'll be grateful for those.

Holly Parker
PRO, The White Rosettes

Drinking, Things and Celtic Knots!

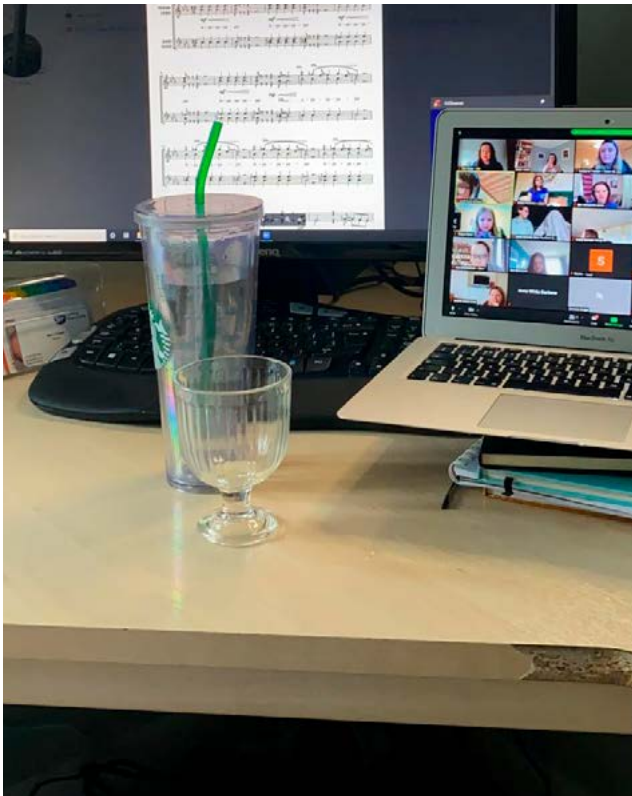
From Bagpipes & Barrowman, Bridges & Brooches, Haggis & Heather, Mac & Monster Nessie, Proverbs, Photos & Paintings, Spurtles & Skye, Shortbread & Sword Dance, to Toasting with the Quaich.....

SLANGEVAR!

Wendy B
Bari, Chorus Icen



Club Updates



LABBS Youth Chorus enjoyed their first rehearsal of 'Into the Unknown,' arranged for them by James Whittick, with over 60 attendees.

If you know a young lady, aged 7-18 or 18-29, who would like to join the Youth Chorus, contact youth@labbs.org.uk.



Gem's Ode to Covid-19

March 2020 Covid came to a head, "Off into
Lockdown" is what Boris said.
It won't be for long, is what we all thought, but now
it's December and we're all distraught.

Can't meet for a drink or we'll be in trouble. Stay
indoors and stay in your bubble.
Everywhere shut, we have to queue to shop. Oh, when
will this crazy time come to a stop?

Fighting for loo rolls, pasta and flour. What took
fifteen minutes now takes us an hour.
We discovered Zoom, it enabled us to meet, learning
this technology was a difficult feat.

Thank you to Karen for taking on this task, and also
to George for providing our mask.
Little by little our confidence grew, thanks to the
Exec and Music team too.

We log on to Zoom each Thursday night, to clap NHS
and Frontline at eight seems just right.
Then back into rehearsal it's so hard to do, sing to
ourselves, Do we really have to?

The school has burnt down, No, this can't be right.
What will we all do on a Thursday night?
We'll have to look for a brand-new place, so Lisa and
Michelle jumped on to the case.

We didn't expect to be away for so long, or how
desperate we are just to burst out in song.
Then just as we made our plans to get back, we were
sent into lockdown and put right off our track.

Musical Memories and Name That Tune gave us fun.
Our social evenings have now begun.
Relieving the pressure from Rachael and Heather,
just another way forward to keep us together.



Keep wearing your mask and keep up your
protection, and we'll still be here to receive the
injection.
We've struggled through some hard and very sad
times too. But the GEMS have been there to support
us all through.

Together we'll beat this awful infection and emerge
much stronger 'cos we're

GEM CONNECTION

We had to produce an arrangement that would be both exciting to sing and accessible to all our members. It needed to sound good and be achievable for groups of all sizes as well as a massed sing. Our main challenge was the limited harmonies, as the chords follow the same basic pattern through the verses and choruses. We needed to build in interest and develop the song, without making it tricky for the singers to remember where they were, or which notes to sing at any given time!

A new polecat for 2021 – Debi Cox tells us about how ‘You Gotta Be’.

Very well! One of us did a very basic version with the melody and chords to work from, we each thought up ideas at home and then came together over several sessions in late autumn to produce a cohesive arrangement. We kept each other in check from getting too complicated and bouncing our ideas off each other meant we came up with something even better as a final arrangement.

Yes! Since the usual regional education days around the country are still impossible, there will be various dates in April to sign up for online sessions based on the polecat, so keep an eye on the LABBS website and social media.

We love it. We hope everyone does too, and we cannot wait for the opportunity to sing it all together! It's great that LABBS pays for copies for all members, and singers who are not LABBS members can buy female and male voiced copies from sheetmusicplus.com, so we hope other groups will pick it up too.

Copies for all members link: [click here](#)

Sheetmusicplus link: [click here](#)

You Gotta Be
DRAFT

Music/Words: Des'ree & Ashley Ingram
Arranged by: LABBS Music Category

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled "Tenor Lead" and features red notes and lyrics. The bottom staff is labeled "Bari Bass" and features blue notes and lyrics. Both parts are in common time (C) and include vocalizations like "doo", "ba", "wah", and "doo doo".

Musical Staff	Notes / Lyrics
Tenor Lead	Doo doo doo doo doo ba doo doo wah doo doo
Bari Bass	Doo doo doo doo doo doot ba doo doo wah doo doo

Advertise in Voice Box

Voice Box is sent to every LABBS member, so it's an ideal way to let your fellow members know what you are up to, to sell items or to advertise your goods and services. Advertisements do not have to be barbershop-related – we are happy to share hobby or work messages.

There are discounts for all LABBS members, and you can make savings by booking more than one ad at a time.

Adverts in Voice Box are charged at the following rates. A discount will be available for an ad run – details to be agreed on application.

	LABBS*	NON-MEMBERS
FULL-PAGE	£65	£85
HALF-PAGE	£35	£65
QUARTER PAGE	£25	£35

* LABBS rates are applicable to all LABBS members and clubs/quartets

Send your advertisement to voicebox@labbs.org.uk

Junction 14 celebrating and staying strong



Linda Ball, Sarah Manchester, Serena Teer & Debbie Teague

There has been quite a shake up this year at Junction 14 with some very longstanding and valued members of exec standing down namely our Treasurer, Grace Morrison, of approximately 20 years and our Secretary, Terri Portas, of about eight. They will both be sorely missed and have left big shoes to fill.

During our AGM, Sue Bass, our Vice Chair, had the lovely job of announcing Junction 14's Barbershopper of the year. This was a close run thing as there were 8 ladies nominated this year. However our wonderful webmistress Serena Teer was our well-deserved winner.

Next Clare Pritchard, our Membership Secretary, presented Debbie Teague, with her 30 year LABBS award and we welcomed Sarah Manchester into the LABBS family.

"We have laughed, sung, chatted"

Then finally Anne Mcgrath, representing J14 music team, presented the Most Improved Barbershopper award to the lovely Linda Ball.

This AGM was one of the most positive we have ever held due, in no small part, to our Chair Judi Stuart, our amazing MD Hannah Washington and the support of our members. We have weathered a terrible year but we have laughed, sung, chatted and shared both happy and poignant times. We have done our best to make sure that no one was left isolated and alone. A very special thank you to our welfare lady, Jill Ward, who arranged flowers and got in touch with people who we felt really needed some extra J14 love.

2021 may not be beginning in the way we would hope but the terrible pandemic has made Junction 14 bond even closer and when we can meet, sing and hug, we will never take those things for granted again. So stay strong, get those arms jabbed as soon as possible and we'll all be back together before you know it.

Amanda Martin
PRO, Junction 14

Glowing in the Gloaming

We do winter exceedingly well up here in the North East of Scotland. Albacappella's autumn and winter season has been full of fun and warmth, despite the inevitable sadness of being apart. Not only have we kept chorus membership steady, but have added a couple of new faces to the virtual stack and new songs to our repertoire. And although not exactly new, the faces of the boys from Granite City Chorus (GCC) have joined us every few weeks to boost the banter and to join in singing new tags and songs.

In November, our talented queen of performance (and new Chorus Secretary) Lorna McLachlan kept us in harmony by writing, producing and directing an original murder mystery with a decidedly shady cast of characters from Albacappella and GCC.

"I had been chatting about an old murder mystery we had done years ago, and I suddenly realised it would be perfect on Zoom" Lorna explains. "We could have done it the usual way but... Then it came to me - a french farce!". The plot was ingenious. Let's just say there were several 'victims' murdered during the evening, including a well-loved bohemian, and a very long journey proclaimed in our local dialect Doric!

We relish our annual festive sing-out season. performing in some of Aberdeenshire's lovely old castles and especially love singing to older folk in local care homes. As we couldn't this year, and to keep in touch, we produced a Christmas video with two of our favourite carols and sent it out to families, loved ones and our regular venues with our warmest wishes. The video was



Liz McRobbie, Lorna McLachlan, Liz getting her wig on!

greatly appreciated.

And as we look forward to spring we have a new Chair, Liz McRobbie who together with Lorna has stepped up to succeed Linden Tapper and outgoing secretary Hanneke Klep. We owe a debt of thanks to Linden and Hanneke who have worked incredibly hard for two years, including the difficult past 12 months. Their legacy is the strength and determination we now feel to learn new music and sing our way through whatever this year brings.

Judith Robson
PRO, Albacappella



Albacappella – guilty as charged!

During the Albacappella murder mystery evening, Colin Reid (aka Marria Archi) was found guilty of the horrible murder of a well known and loved Scottish anthem. See the damage to the right.

Although it is no excuse, Colin started barbershopping in 2004, joining GCC and directing them for thirteen years until 2019. He is currently lead section leader in the international mixed chorus Endeavour and also sings bass with the mixed quartet Post IT Notes, winning silver in the UK mixed quartet championships in 2016 and 2018. He was also part of the world bronze medal winning mixed chorus EQ Rendezvous in 2018. Colin sings in the mixed quartet Double Malt and has competed at various events over the years in men's quartets, featuring as lead or tenor.

Colin knows many of our local LABBS singers and was at Llandudno in 2013 when LABBS hosted the mixed quartet competition that year.



500 MILES (to the end of this song...)

Word & Music : The Proclaimers

Murdered by : Marria Archi (aka Colin Reid of Granite City Chorus)

Aye Aye chiefs !

1. Fan ah wake up , well ah ken am gonna be am gonna be the loon fit waks up next to you
Fan ah ging oot, aye ah ken am gonna be, am gonna be the loon fa gings alang wi' you
If ah get pisht , aye ah ken am gonna be, am gonna be the loon fit gets pisht next to you
An if ah haver , aye ah ken am gonna be, am gonna be the loon that haverin' to you

2. Fan am workin' aye ah ken am gonna be, am gonna be the loon fas workin' hard for you
An fan ih siller, comes in for the work I do , I'll pass almost ev'ry penny on t' you
Fan ah come haim, aye ah ken am gonna be, am gonna be the loon fa comes back haim t' you
An if ah grow auld, aye ah ken am gonna be, am gonna be the loon fas growin' auld wi' you

3. Fan am lonely, well ah ken am gonna be, am gonna be the loon fas lonely without you
Fan am dreamin, well ah ken am gonna dream, am gonna dream aboot the times fan am wi' you
Fan ah ging oot ah ken am gonna be, am gonna be the loon fa gings alang wi' you
An fan ah come haim, well ah ken am gonna be , am gonna be the loon fa comes back haim t'you. But

Chorus. I wid wak five hunder mile an I wid wak five hunder mair
Just to be the loon fit waks a thoosan mile to fah doon at yer door

Da da da (da da da)
Da da da (da da da)
Da Da Da Dun Diddle Un Diddle Un Diddle Uh Da Da
Da da da (da da da)
Da da da (da da da)
Da Da Da Dun Diddle Un Diddle Un Diddle Uh Da Da

That's a' for noo, it's lousin' time

The Belles of Three Spires - Our Pandemic NHS stars



Gill Wilcox, Linda Nicholson and Lucy Guess

We are extremely proud of our Belles who are working in or with the NHS to help combat the Covid-19 pandemic, especially during the vaccination programme.

Our MD, Lucy Guess' role is Deputy Information Manager. She has been working with local GPs to organise vaccines for the over-80s, and supporting mobilisation of the local hub at Stoneleigh, Warwickshire. Lucy says (modestly): "I am so proud that over the last few weeks, I've been privileged to play a small part in the Covid-19 vaccine roll out. The NHS is an incredible, unique, world class organisation. You will all need the NHS one day. Please handle it with care and behave like your life depends upon it. Because one day, it just might."

Gill Wilcox had experience in NHSBT (Blood and Transplant) before retirement and has been accepted onto the NHS Responder Programme. She is now helping at her local vaccination hub.

"Linda Nicholson has been hard at work injecting the vaccines."

Linda Nicholson has been hard at work injecting the vaccines. Our new Chair, Sue Seddon, said in her weekly chat following our zoom rehearsal: "it was fantastic to hear so many stories this week of everyone getting their vaccinations and gives us hope that we'll be able to sing

together soon. It was also lovely to see Linda who has been very much part of the vaccination process and I'd like to say thank you to her and all of her colleagues throughout the country who are helping with this mammoth and hugely important task."

Eileen Askew
PRO, The Belles of Three Spires

Music, Food and Love with The Chordettes



The Chordettes' nominated charity for 2020 was our local foodbank, HITS (Homeless in Teignbridge Support). We got off to a good start in January and February 2020 with our monthly food collections... and then we all know what happened in March. We decided that more than ever the HITS charity needed our support and so we have been regularly donating funds in lieu of food collections, and will continue to support this much needed organisation in these difficult times.

We have many members working on the frontline during this pandemic, including doctors, nurses and teachers. We would like to share just a few stories with you to highlight the love and dedication of some of our wonderful "Singing Sisters".

Alison (Bari) has come out of retirement, having previously been a Community Nurse, to become a vaccinator at our local vaccination hub. She is understandably exhausted and we forgive her if she misses the odd Zoom rehearsal on a Wednesday night.

Sue (Tenor) is a Teaching Assistant at a large local primary school and is responsible for looking after children with

Special Educational Needs in school, as well as supporting online lessons and remote learning. She is a dynamo of energy and despite the challenging circumstances is always ready with a smile and something fun for the children, (and us!) to do.

Priscilla (Lead) is a nurse on the Covid-19 frontline. Having worked on the respiratory ward of our regional hospital for 32 years she has nursed Covid patients throughout this pandemic and we are incredibly proud to call her one of our own. Priscilla is just about to transfer to a new role as Sister with the Outreach team – no night shifts which hopefully means we will be seeing much more of her from now on.

These are just a few examples of the work many of our members are doing.

We would like to send our love to all our sister choruses and their members who are working so hard during these difficult times. Better times are ahead, and we look forward to being able to sing together again before too long.

Amy Hedger
PRO, The Chordettes



Donations for HITS and our frontline workers Sue, Alison & Priscilla

The Great Spinnaker Sewing Bee

Prior to lockdown number three we, like many other English choruses, had successfully managed a few face-to-face rehearsals by following Covid-secure procedures to ensure the safety of our Spinnakerettes.

One of the requirements was to wear masks and, as we all know singing with such an encumbrance is not a particularly enjoyable experience. However, our fabulous Bass, Wendy Ranft, the ever resourceful crafting whizz, sourced a pattern for specific, structured singing masks allowing more freedom of airflow and facial movement. Armed with fabric, thread, metal nose strips, plastic cable ties, adjustable elastic ear straps and full instructions made into packs, she distributed supplies to a small group of sewing volunteers from Chorus. Wendy and team, Jo, Jill, Kathryn, Elspeth and Kate proceeded to make 60 Spinnaker pink masks for members to purchase, contributing to Chorus fundraising. There was much excitement at the next rehearsal when we all appeared in our new facial attire.

In addition to the masks, Wendy made each Spinnakerette a beautiful pink rose brooch to wear with our navy blue walk out jackets, as a Christmas gift. What a thoughtful little gem she is!

"Singing masks allowing more freedom of airflow"

News of our little sewing bee soon reached our good friends at Solent City Chorus who asked if we would



kindly make 25 masks in a suitably masculine shade for the guys. Wendy's team didn't disappoint and within a flurry of stitches Solent City all now have their rather fetching navy blue singing masks too.

Here's a photo of the dashing Mike Cook from SCC wearing his mask in all its glory and let's hope it won't be too long before in person rehearsals can resume.

Tracy Daniel
PRO, Spinnaker Chorus



New Year, New Look for Fascinating Rhythm



Home About Us Join Us Hire Us News Shop Contact Us



Fascinating Rhythm has relaunched its [website](#) with fresh new look for 2021.

Over the past year, we've had the opportunity to focus on what makes our chorus so special and we want to share the best of Fascinating Rhythm and our love of singing.

The first thing you'll notice, front and centre of the website, is our updated logo - still hot pink but now embellished with a treble clef and musical stave. You can listen to snippets from our repertoire and enjoy 'Hallelujah' our lockdown video in support of our charity of the year, the Jessie May Trust.

For new members and anyone interested in joining Fascinating Rhythm, the About Us section introduces our Chorus Director, Jo Thorn, and our committed Music

Team. We are also delighted to showcase Junior FR - our energetic and talented chorus for girls aged 7 to 16 years, who recorded their own 'Covid choir' video during lockdown last year.

The website also features an exciting News section and a photo gallery of the chorus and our quartets and small groups 'in action' at rehearsals and sing-outs. We also have a section about LABBS and Convention.

There's even an online shop where you can order copies of our CDs: "Warm Up with Fascinating Rhythm" (ideal for listening along to in the car!) and "Listen to the Music", a compilation of our favourite songs.

Check out our new look at fascinating-rhythm.com and follow us on social media to find out more about what we've been getting up to!

[Facebook: FascinatingRhythm](#)

[Twitter: @FascinatingR](#)

[Instagram: @fascinatingrhythmchorus](#)

Kate Turton

PRO, Fascinating Rhythm

Who Are Ewe?



Since March 2020, Zoom has become our greatest weapon against Covid! The pandemic has been especially challenging for Black Sheep Harmony as the initial lockdown coincided with our new MD, Pete "Nooj" Nugent's debut. He has yet to lead a physical rehearsal.

He's done an amazing job, keeping us together and learning so thank you Pete. Our rehearsals are important to our members, and we've continued them throughout. Although unable to sing together as before, we can still warm up and sing along to our repertoire whilst muted (and we always sing beautifully!)

But at present, the social aspect of our meetings takes priority. We include items such as Desert Island Discs, quizzes, show and tell, and our latest, "Who are Ewe?" (we love a Sheep pun!) - we share something that nobody else knows! These items and the ability to chat together have been crucial, helping us feel connected and supported during this difficult year.

We've even been able to continue recruitment, a real achievement in such challenging times. We are especially proud of Zoom Into Christmas, our five week online course for women of all singing abilities in Nov and Dec 2020 which had three main aims: Teach two Christmas songs in four-part harmony to both the chorus and the course delegates and produce a Christmas Choir video.

Help attendees improve or even find their singing voice with a range of vocal techniques which they could take away,

Spread the joy of singing and encourage people to take it up.

The final week was a celebration of achievement with certificates being awarded. We had 80 registrants and many of the local ladies enjoyed it enough to return! We are

delighted to have welcomed seven auditionees directly as a result of the course, to add to the other four who have joined us during lockdown.

To see our Christmas Choir singing Little Saint Nick, click on this link

<https://www.blacksheepharmony.com/HaveAListen>

Sue Davis
Assistant MD, Black Sheep Harmony

Steel City Voices - Live!



Locked down but not out, here at SCV we decided to get creative and host a live and interactive showcase.

From poetry readings to dog tricks and of course lots of singing, we live-streamed the talents of some of our members with a little help from their house mates!

It was a brilliant event, performed on Zoom and watched on YouTube by people all over the world, even as far flung as Australia.

If you didn't get the chance to see it live, you can check it out on our [Steel City Voices YouTube channel](#). We hope you enjoy watching it as much as we enjoyed putting it all together.

Beth Marsden
Events Coordinator, Steel City Voices

LABBS Long Service Award



Fascinating Rhythm's founding member, Ali Jack, has been a member of LABBS for 35 years!

From an initial meeting of half a dozen singers in the back room of a pub in Yate, 25 years ago, our chorus has grown with Ali as a central member. She's always there on the risers to blow pitch and is a fabulous section leader for our tenors.

We'd like to thank LABBS for recognising Ali's commitment to singing, barbershop and LABBS over the years, and for sending her award through the post. Although we couldn't celebrate in person, we raised our glasses to toast Ali's amazing achievement via our virtual AGM and awards ceremony.

Congratulations Ali - we can't wait to get back on the risers with you!

Kate Turton
PRO, Fascinating Rhythm



Barbershop... in Harmony

Barbershop in Harmony has been part of the British barbershop scene since 2007, having been formed when representatives from LABBS, BABS and SAI Region 31 Quartet of Nations, began a journey to support and grow barbershop in the UK. This has taken many forms and had many members over the years, but at the heart of the group has been the clear view that 'what is good for one barbershop group in the UK, is good for all'.

I have been involved in BinH since 2011 when I became the Vice-Chairman of LABBS and when I stepped down from my role as LABBS Chairman in 2015 I took up the role of BinH coordinator taking over from my predecessors, Teresa Phillips, Jacqui Edwards and Jeannette Yuile.



Alison Liddell, Outgoing BinH Coordinator

The growth of BinH over its life has been something to watch and celebrate. From tentative beginnings, the group found its feet and produced a CD of champions from the three associations before going on to hold a huge barbershop spectacular at the London Palladium in September 2009. There a plethora of gold medal champions were introduced on stage by none other than Christopher Biggins.



Double Trouble (first mixed quartet competition winners in 2012 - photo credit Eric Ideler)

Across Europe as barbershop has grown, the increase in mixed quartet and choruses has also been evident and to a certain extent, our barbershop friends in Europe have been at the forefront of the growth in this particular area of our hobby as many newer barbershop organisations were founded as mixed organisations from the beginning. Over time this has led to the establishment of competitions for mixed singing.

The UK Mixed Quartet Competition was originally started by LABBS which hosted the first three years of a competition in 2012, 2013 and 2014. The growth of mixed voice competitions outside UK then created opportunities for the UK to nominate representatives to these and so the UK competition began to be hosted

by Barbershop in Harmony, representing all UK organisations from 2015 onwards. Since the creation of the UK Mixed Quartet competition, we have sent quartets from the UK to represent us at the biannual World Mixed competition hosted by BinG! (Barbershop in Germany!) as well as to the European Barbershop Convention (EBC). The first EBC which featured a mixed quartet competition as part of the schedule was in 2017 when it was hosted by LABBS.

**BARBERSHOP
IN HARMONY**

Mixed Quartet Champions

2012– Double Trouble

2013 – Patchwork

2015 – Hannah and the Hurricanes

2016 – Myxd Up!

2017 – Hannah and the Hurricanes

2018 – Scramble

2019 – Scandal

BARBERSHOP IN HARMONY

For now, like most barbershop the actual real life of getting together is paused but the Barbershop in Harmony team are continuing to meet (as evidenced by the recent Zoom screenshot) and are looking at exploring opportunities for the future to keep working together and growing barbershop in the UK together.

The Barbershop in Harmony coordinator is a crucial role in facilitating discussion and bringing the three groups together. Having held the position for the last six years I have taken the decision to step down and will be handing over to Nancy Philbin who has been appointed by the current BinH team as my successor. From a personal perspective, the last eight years of my involvement have flown by, and it's been a privilege to be able to support the three teams who lead UK barbershop to come together. As with anything, there is always a right time to step away and I feel that this

is it. I am confident that Nancy will bring energy and new perspective to the activities of the BinH team as they move forward and I thank them all for the help and support that they and the teams from LABBS, BABS and R31 before them, have shown me as I've been in the role.

Alison Liddell
Barbershop in Harmony Coordinator



Alison Liddell (Outgoing BinH Coordinator), Hilary Pinnock (SAI R31 Team Coordinator), Alan Hughes (BABS Chairman), Natalie Feddon (incoming LABBS Chair), Nancy Philbin (Outgoing LABBS Chair and incoming BinH Coordinator), Shanna Wells (BABS Director of Marketing and Events), Laurence Hasson (BABS Vice Chairman) & Valerie Taylor (SAI R31 Education Team)



Nancy Philbin, Incoming BinH Coordinator

Forty Year Farewell to Gill!

Most choruses around the country have strong bonds of friendship and as a result, it's always a sad time when someone leaves us but this month one of our longest serving members has taken the decision to step off the risers after 40 years.

Gill Buchanan sings baritone in Crystal Chords and joined the chorus in 1981 when founder member Adrienne was childminding Gill's son and asked the inevitable question 'Do you like singing?'

As Gill says, 'the rest is history and from the word go the friendliness of the group and the barbershop harmonies had me hooked'.

In the early days the furthest Crystal Chords travelled was the south coast of England but in latter years Gill has fond memories of 'Crystals abroad' in Coleraine, Killarney, Prague, Calpe and Bratislava where "singing and sightseeing went hand in hand".

Perhaps some of the travel was less glamorous than others and Gill recalls the chorus staying everywhere from University halls to holiday camps, including on one occasion five people having to share a room in the 'bowels' of the hotel that shall not be named for legal reasons! Irrespective of location Gill recalls them all to be "great fun and where we stayed it was invariably a case of having an after show sing then donning our Damart nighties and partying".

Whether weekly rehearsals, trips away or life milestones and celebrations, chorus has played a big part for Gill and we have certainly been enriched by her membership and friendship. Gill's parting wisdom to anyone who may be thinking of joining a chorus is "be prepared to work hard and give as near one hundred percent attendance as possible. Your MD deserves that level of commitment, you'll soon get hooked when you experience the thrill of ringing those chords and there'll always be a new goal to strive for".

From all of us at Crystal Chords we wish Gill all the very best and look forward to getting together socially, even if not on the risers any longer. Forty years of barbershop is certainly a cracking achievement!

Alison Liddell
Crystal Chords PRO Team



Marion Morley - 35 Years in LABBS



Congratulations to Amersham A Cappella's lovely Marion Morley for achieving her 35-year pin. Here's what she had to say about her amazing Barbershop career.

"Oh Yea, Oh Yea, listen to the lady barbershop singers in Times Square" sang out the Town Crier (yes I am that old!). Well, I thought, I did enjoy that American quartet I heard a few years back, so I went in and listened, and arranged to visit them at their next rehearsal, and my life changed completely! What on earth would I be doing now? The chorus was The Aultones, now long gone unfortunately. A contingent of us travelled up to Leicester for the inaugural meeting of Coast to Coast in 1987, and under the direction of the one and only Cath Morton, we had a blast. I have wonderful memories of a trip to The Buckeye Convention in America, singing in St Nicholas Church in Prague, trips to the Irish, Dutch and German Conventions, sitting round the pool in a hotel in Cyprus, crying with laughter, listening to Pauline Corrieri's next snippet for the "Cyprus Diary". I am delighted to still be a member, currently the Chair of this wonderful club.

I also sang with Capital Connection for a while, and more happy memories, this time singing in the World Harmony Jamboree. I am now a member of the wonderful Amersham A Cappella, such a thrill to be on the risers with all those fabulous, talented ladies, singing for the inspirational Helen. I never dreamed I would get a gold medal, especially as (shush, don't tell anyone), I failed the audition for the school choir.

A stint on the Executive Committee, made me realise exactly how much work goes on behind the scenes to make LABBS what it is, so thanks to all who work so hard for us. But mainly, thanks to all the fabulous members of LABBS for all the warmth, fun and friendship over the years.

I've had a lovely time, thanks for having me!

Marion Morley
Amersham A Cappella

"Thanks to all the fabulous members of LABBS for all the warmth, fun and friendship."

Daph Powell - A Reflection on 45 Years



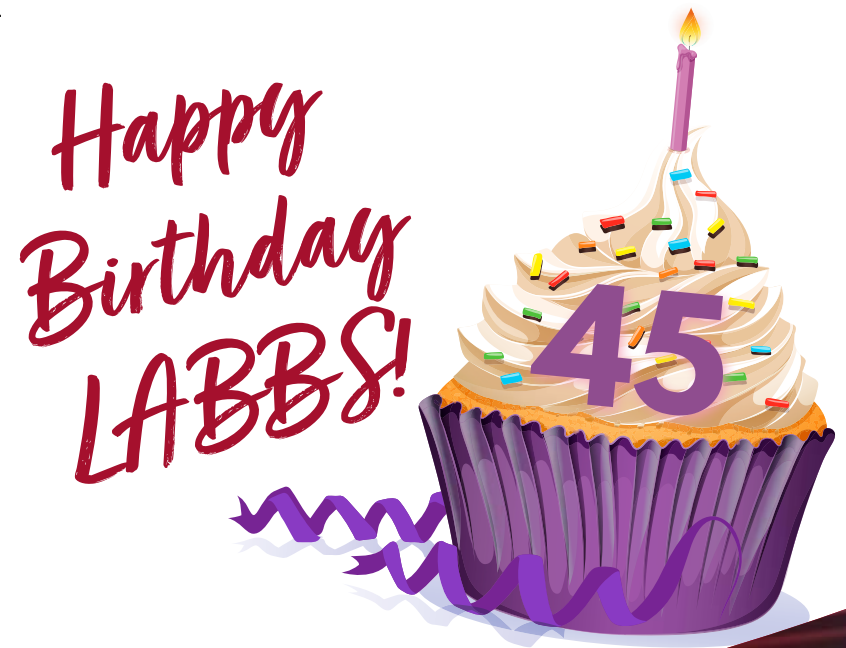
Our founder member, Daph Powell, reflects on 45 years with LABBS.

"It doesn't seem 45 years since a small group of ladies sat around a table and decided to form a Ladies Association! I was one of those ladies and am honoured to have been, with my Chorus, The Reading Barberettes, involved from the beginning.

"I became Chairman of the Association, organiser of Harmony College for a number of years, a Harmony Accuracy (Singing) judge and, my favourite task, MC for the quartet competitions.

"It has been good to see the Association grow and although I no longer sing with the chorus, I am a life member and follow their activities with interest. I wish the Association many more years of singing in harmony and for the stewards to "close the doors" for many years to come!"

Daph Powell



Keep Learning!

As we start another year, I was hoping we would be planning education events and competitions in person again, but alas, it is not to be.

However, I am pleased to say that we have a packed schedule of exciting and interactive events for you all this year. As I write, I am reflecting on a wonderful LABBS-filled January weekend, with our first online education event completed in some style. The oversubscribed Performance Zoom room included Performance category judges and trainees covering creative leadership, an actor's perspective, subliminal aspects of performance, singing and mental health and much more. A wonderful start to the year and you can enjoy the sessions on the members' education page.

Although we have had to make the difficult and sad decision to cancel the Prelims contest, we all agree that it is the right thing to do in these uncertain times, to allow you all the time and space to reconnect with your quartets and not feel under pressure to compete. We hope to replace this with an online event, more details will follow but start thinking about what your quartet could submit!



Looking forward to April, we are planning seven online events over the three weekends after Easter. These will work on the new Polecat – 'You Gotta Be' arranged by our very own Music category with tracks by Helen Warner, lead of Avalon, and will be led by our own LABBS educators and MDs and music teams from some top LABBS choruses.

Your LABBS Education and Judging Committee continue to meet and plan and train throughout these times and we are all ready and willing to piggyback your zoom rehearsals with some education, new activities or just a fresh face to add some variety. Many choruses are already inviting us in and making the most of this time when there are no geographical limitations. Contact details for all judges are on the category pages on the website.

Keep well, keep singing, keep learning...

Alison Zdzykowski
LABBS Education Director

You Gotta Be LABBS

SAVE THE DATES!

Saturday 10th April	11:00 - 13:30
Sunday 11th April	11:00 - 13:30
Saturday 17th April	11:00 - 13:30
Sunday 18th April	11:00 - 13:30
Saturday 24th April	11:00 - 13:30
Saturday 24th April	15:00 - 17:30
Sunday 25th April	11:00 - 13:30

REGISTRATION will open on Eventbrite
in early MARCH



Education
days

Olive (Ollie) Burrows-Patrick 1946 - 2020

The members of Arun A Cappella were very sorry to hear of the passing of Olive Burrows-Patrick, known to us as Ollie, in November 2020. Ollie was a keen barbershopper for many years before ill health meant she could no longer continue.

Over the years she was a member of The Aultones, Thameside Chorus, The Arun Sounds and others. She also competed in several successful quartets. During her time with The Arun Sounds, Ollie was a valued member of the Bass section and a dedicated committee member. She was a great performer and loved to share in Conventions and other barbershop events, singing whenever the opportunity arose.

Joyce Stroud
Arun A Cappella



Congratulations Jeanette!



Congratulations to Jeannette Vaile of Wessex Harmony on her 35-year long service award! Back in 1985, she and a friend were thinking of taking up a new interest and both saw an advert in the local newspaper for singers.

Jeannette cut out the advert to show her friend at their next meeting, only to find that the friend had brought along her copy of the advert too. Soon afterwards, they both ventured along to join the Wessex Corn Dollies (as the chorus was then named) and although the friend was later unable to continue, Jeannette stayed on, singing in the Lead section.

She has taken part in many conventions and other performances over the years and during her long membership of the chorus, has seen seven MDs at the helm and worn numerous different chorus costumes. A memorable outfit was a dress which featured fabric roses along the hem. Jeannette's favourite songs come from musicals and she particularly enjoys ballads. She is looking forward to the time when we can all meet to sing together again.

Janet Mann
Secretary, Wessex Harmony

Behind the Voice – Uncovering the Mystery Behind Teach Tracks

My phone pings with a new email: "New inquiry for HBTEACHTRACKS". Even after five years, I still get excited to find out what my next recording might be!

I'm Hannah Briggs and I am the face behind HBTEACHTRACKS, my small learning track recording business. I am a music tutor (currently on ZOOM like everybody else) but recording teach tracks is my other job, and I love it.

Finding out before anyone else what a chorus might be singing at the next LABBS competition, being the first person outside of the group to see a brand new arrangement, re-recording classic repertoire songs that need a freshen up, seeing a song that I helped them to learn be sung on the international stage - these are all things that I enjoy every day.

Hannah sings with Cheshire Chord Company and The Bakewell Tarts quartet. She also directs Steel City Voices and sings with mixed quartet The Sharrow Vale Blues.

It may seem like teach-trackers have lots of fancy gear, but my "recording studio" is a laptop and a microphone on the table in our spare room. I use GarageBand to record my voice and I splashed out on editing software Melodyne when I got busier. I try to keep my voice sounding natural and have to be wary of over-editing and sounding like Cher! This takes a bit more time but it's worth it, especially when you lovely lot tell me how much you enjoy singing along with me.

Many people ask which part I record first. It's either the bass (good for early mornings) or a 'draft' lead line, so that I can record everything else around it then go back

and re-record the lead. Once it's all recorded it goes into Melodyne where I tune and sync each part, then I adjust the volume throughout the song to make it sound like a real quartet. I then silence each part in turn for the 'missing' tracks and turn three parts down for the 'predominant' tracks. That's it!

HBTEACHTRACKS is five years old now and it brings me such joy to speak to and sing for you all. I'd love for you to get in touch so I can bring your music to life!

Hannah Briggs

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📘: [hbteachtracks](https://www.facebook.com/hbteachtracks)

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Teach tracks are also available from:

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Helen Warner

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