

Red Rose Rag

July 2004



30 Years

1974 - 2004

DEDICATION OF A RED ROSE MAN

Singing harmony is the most exhilarating hobby anyone can take up, just ask any of the Red Rose chorus. For some, their hobby has to be football or maybe cricket. Some men even like bowling but all these sports suffer from one thing - football is for winter and cricket or bowling is a summer pastime. Now, singing is all year round and there are no bruises or broken ankles. In all sports, those who are DEDICATED get the biggest thrills. Among the Red Rose Chorus we have a few really DEDICATED singers who have been in the game a long time. I suppose the one who comes to mind is Bernard Davis. He once told me that he had been singing harmony since he was 11 years old in the college choir but of course it wasn't barbershop style. Now that he's 70 he says he can look back on a lifetime of harmony but the Best is Barbershop.

When the Preston club was only one year old in 1975, Bernard joined the small group of only nine men under the leadership of Alf Mee where meetings were held at the Holy Family Social Club at Ingol, Preston. Music was scarce. No-one had heard about BABS until much later. The idea of teach tapes had not been invented so the chorus director Alf had to teach all four parts. Their very first song was, "Honey Little L'ize". Very few could even read music and those who could were asked to lead their section. Due to learning to play the piano and his previous experience at college, Bernard became the baritone's leader.

Within weeks of joining, he also became the treasurer although the job of looking after only 10 members subs was not difficult.

Quite soon, Radio Blackburn, as it was then called, heard about the singers from Preston and Bernard and a team were asked to go along and broadcast to all Lancashire about what they were doing. The club began to expand with more singers joining from outside Preston, due no doubt to the broadcast. The singers began to get bookings, although their small repertoire meant a limit of only two fifteen minute spots. About this time, Jack Morton joined and in no time he had a spot of his own telling stories and jokes. His favourite was reading the letters "from me Mam." The singers would be shaking behind him as his stories varied at each singout. You never knew what was coming next! That was his DEDICATION along with the singing.

Alf Mee was the organist and choir master at Holy Family Church as well as director of the barbershop chorus. Unbeknown to the singers, he worked on the musical responses at Mass in four part barbershop harmony IN LATIN! It took him many weeks of effort to get the chorus to 'Get It Right.'

Eventually the chorus assembled on the front benches of Holy Family Church to the delight of the Church choir who could have a rest! Everything went according to plan and at the end of Mass, the priest thanked Alf for his DEDICATION, which drew a round of applause from the congregation, something which was unheard of back in the 70's.

Many more stories could be told by the members of the Red Rose Chorus who are all DEDICATED.

Preston Barbershop Harmony Club/Singers - Facts

1. First meetings were held during October 1974 at the Holy Family Social Club - Ingol -
2. Driving force and founder - Mr Alf Mee
3. First Singout - 9th June 1975 - Whittingham Hospital
4. First public appearance of the "Red Rose Four" - 7th November 1975 at St. Theresa's, Fishwick.
5. The Chorus has only had 7 Music/Chorus/Directors (Conductors) in 30 years! Namely:

Alf Mee	1974 - 77
David Mahon	1977
Barry Nowell	1978 - 83
Mike Firth	1983 - 85
Richard Baker	1985 - 88
Simon Hilton	1988 - 2003
Jack Haslam	2004 -

6. Red Rose Chorus has qualified for 19 conventions (+ 3 as mike warmers), with the highest position of **5th** in 2001

This picture was taken in 1977



Brian Jones (Bass) - Dave Mahon (Lead) - John Smith (Tenor) - Bernard Davis (Baritone)

Reminiscence from Simon Hilton
Chorus Director 1988 - 2003

The only things that come to mind quickly are phopahs I have said during the between song chat. I remember during the very first sing out I did with the RRC in September 1988 in the newly opened Fishergate Centre I was trying to get the audience to remember the His Masters Voice logo and said something like "You remember the Dog with the Horn on!"

Then there was the other time when we were performing at a Baptist Church for the Congregation and I was introducing "Waiting for the Robert E Lee". I waxed lyrical about dancing girls and gambling tables with booze flowing freely! I guess that is like going on about the benefits of bacon sandwiches at a bahmitsvah!



Recognise anybody?
Taken from a press cutting
from 1974



Bernard Davis has been a member of the Preston Barbershop Harmony Singers since 1975. He is known as a fastidious note taker and as such, is the font of all knowledge (club wise!). He is the Club's Historian and thanks to him we have a truly wonderful and comprehensive record of our existence!

These points were discussed on the Thursday following 2004 Convention and would be useful as a reminder to chorus members:

Good Points: 1. Perfect pitch on both songs - 2. Good joined up singing - 3. Good dynamics - 4. Good beginning - visual - 5. Committed to the songs - 6. Unity of sound (in places) - 7. Well executed plan - 8. Transition to 'ZIP' was good - 9. Pushed through phrases - 10. Appropriate mood/feeling - 11. Good quiet singing - 12. Good faces - 13. Good preparation / warm up relaxed

Comments: 1. Vowels - 2. Syncro in both singing and moves - 3. Energy

Submitted by Ivan Walters

Club Appointments—2003/4

Chairman *	Dave Mann
Vice Chairman *	Syd Kay
Secretary *	Ted Stark
Treasurer *	Mike Ingham
Assistant Treasurer	Lew Stott
Public Relations Officer *	Alex Edwards
Sing-out Co-ordinator *	Teddy Ward
	(Assisted by Syd Kay and Nick Harrison)
Membership Secretary *	Peter Porter
H/Ex Reporter *	Position Vacant
Music Librarian	Bill Cavanagh
Uniform Co-ordinator	John Humphries
Uniform Storage	John Humphries
Convention Savings	Position Vacant
Welfare Officer	Alva Marsden
Chorus Manager	Paul Tatton
Assistant Chorus Manager	Alan Wright
Riser Transportation	Various excellent people
* =	Management Committee



From the Chair

AGM Thursday 9th September 2004

Nomination papers for committee positions are available from Mr E Stark. Nominations are required for all positions. Also on this evening the vote for Barbershopper of The Year will take place. If you haven't made your mind up start thinking!

Our new website address is now:

www.prestonbarbershop.co.uk

For those of us with a computer—have you visited the site yet? If so are there things you wish to see on the site? Or can you suggest any improvements that can be made to the site? If so, then email Ken Holt, whose email address you will find on the site.

As this is the last RRR before the AGM may I put on record the Club's thanks to Alan Penny for editing and producing the RRR.

Dave (The) Mann
Chairman
P.B.H.S.

Additions/amendments to BS CD's ETC Spreadsheet

CD2 Sound bites from Harrogate Convention 2004
Bill Cavanagh - Librarian



RED ROSE CHORUS 2004

DIARY OF EVENTS

Saturday 4th Sept - Singout - Kirby Lonsdale

Saturday 18th Sept - Singout - Piccadilly Hotel -
Manchester - EEIBA (Alan P)

Friday 8th Oct - Singout - Burnley Masonic

Friday 12th - Sunday 14th Nov - LABBS Convention
- Harrogate

Friday 27th - Monday 30th May 2005 - BABS
Convention - Brighton

Chorus rehearsals - 7.45pm - Thursdays @ Salwick
BNFL - Come and listen, all welcome - you may
even want to join us!
