

Gray Matters

Official Publication Of The Association Of International Seniors Quartet Champions

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“Those Born With Talent Are Obligated To Put It To Service.”

About Lou Perry

This was Lou Perry's motto and he lived well the essence of this statement. Many quartet people can attest to this fact. His life was a vast proof of the validity of this theme. Chorus directors, coaches, judges, arrangers and many others have benefited from his noble gifts so freely given. Ask the Four Statesmen to tell you about “Once In Love With Amy” or get the Boston Common to relate how they acquired “That Old Quartet Of Mine”.

Lou had four special loves in his life: (1) His wife **Ruth** and sons **John** and **Mark**. (2) **Tennis**. As a young man Lou was a ball boy and that started his life-long passion for tennis which he even played in his late 80s and into the age of 90. (3) **Jazz**. In the depression years he played trumpet in New York City bands, arranged and composed. For years the Artie Shaw Band used a Lou Perry tune as its theme song. (4) **Barbershop Harmony**, with its songs, quartets, choruses, music schools, contest and conventions became a “family” for Lou, a gigantic one, of international proportions.

I met Lou about 1961 when I was teaching an Arrangers School in the NorthEastern District. He was very modest and quiet, not pushy nor showy. But as the weekend developed Lou proved to be a valuable mediator as we debated the choice of songs and stylistic preservation. It was the beginning of a life long association with Lou. He was steady and sensible, firmly rooted in musical and human values. I have been in dozens of meetings with Lou where he was always - even in the heat of emotionally charged issues - a gentleman, a conciliator and a specialist in stylistic aesthetics. I know of no other Barbershopper who was so universally loved and respected as Lou Perry.

As the years progressed, after the 1980 championship of the Boston Common, some of the younger “crop” of Society arrangers, came to view Lou's arrangements as a bit simplistic, lacking power and pizz-zazz. A Perry arrangement only had one tag instead of the two and a half tags which have become prevalent and a Perry arrangement avoided a lot of showy, high voicings which the new kids on the block favor as if it were a newly discovered device.

Lou's 334 song arrangements are there today as a monument, a New England monument, to his musical maturity, stylistic purity and wonderful creativity. Who knows when a person's influence will end? In Lou's case it will go on and on. Not just in his music, but in his kindness, his deeds, his pure, sweet, honest emotionalism. We can just thank the Good Lord that we have known a gentleman like **Lou Perry who put a life of talent to service**. We are the grateful benefactors of that service. Thank you, Lou. We love you.

Val Hicks, Irvins, Utah, March 31, 2001

Regards from Kenosha!

I've moved into my pad in Kenosha and I'm learning lots about this great Society of ours. What a wonderful group of professionals at Harmony Hall and throughout the Society! There's lot of pride in what we're doing, and I really want to see that pride come through in the AISQC. We members here in Kenosha will work on that from this end and I ask each of you to do the same in your respective Districts. "We are Class" and can never forget that. That brings me to the main point I want to share with each of you - i.e. PRIDE IN PERFORMANCE (PIP).

I reviewed our Jacksonville mid-winter convention show. I encourage each of you to do the same. There were definitely some good spots - more of them in the chorus performance, however, than in the quartets'. A great deal of thanks goes to Scott Werner for his superb direction and to the chorus members who worked so hard to do their best. The chorus really showed their PIP.

If we want an audience at our mid-winter convention show we must develop more Pride In Performance. I didn't see much PIP with the quartets' performance on the Jacksonville show - excuse me if I'm speaking too bluntly. But review the video and you'll see what I'm talking about. Gentlemen, we can't have that happen again, ok? Let's make a promise to ourselves and to each other that we will be 110% prepared, able, and ready to entertain our audience at mid-winter with quality quartet singing. In our next Gray Matters I'll go into detail on just how we're going to ensure that the performing quartets have the PIP at a level high enough to make the stage in Riverside.

In closing, I want to invite any and all AISQC members to visit Harmony Hall. It's cold up here and I need your warmth to make it through the winter (even though it is Spring). Hope to see many of you in Nashville!

Dick Bek, President



AISQC Officers 2001

President

Dick Bek (800) 876-SING
dbek@SPEBSQSA.org

Vice President

Pete Tyree (719) 632-6862
PerryTyree@aol.com

Secretary

Bob Griffith (612) 831-5473

Treasurer

Dick Merritt (425) 746-5416
merrittrj@Juno.com

Board Members 2001-2002

Dick Whitehouse (703) 780-3634
foursong@aol.com

Doug Watson (630) 466-7886
doug.watson@syngenta.com

Board Members 2001

Barney Alleman (515) 964-4085
bjoalman@dmreg.infi.net

Grif Griffith (713) 869-8939
mgriff0528@aol.com

Immediate Past President

Burt Staffen (425)-883-3311
besps@aol.com

Director of Music

Scott Werner (703) 670-2668
Lovebbshp@aol.com

Sergeant At Arms

Ray Henders (847) 526-5632
rayhensr@aol.com

Show Chairman

Val Hicks (630) 782-1302
vhmusic@infowest.com

Assistant Show Chairman

Pete Tyree (719) 632-6862
perrytyree@aol.com

Gray Matters Editor

Dan Tangarone (425) 333-4900
djtangarone@home.com

Endowment Fund Committee

Frank Lanza (401) 737-0252
seanote4@aol.com

AISQC Ring Committee

Bob Summers (941) 489-1762
bob@summersofficeservice.com

PHYSICS EXAM (true story)

The following concerns a question in a physics degree exam at the University of Copenhagen:

"Describe how to determine the height of a skyscraper with a barometer." One student replied:

"You tie a long piece of string to the neck of the barometer, then lower the barometer from the roof of the skyscraper to the ground. The length of the string plus the length of the barometer will equal the height of the building."

This highly original answer so incensed the examiner that the student was failed. The student appealed on the grounds that his answer was indisputably correct, and the university appointed an independent arbiter to decide the case. The arbiter judged that the answer was indeed correct, but did not display any noticeable knowledge of physics. To resolve the problem it was decided to call the student in and allow him six minutes in which to provide a verbal answer which showed at least a minimal familiarity the basic principles of physics.

For five minutes the student sat in silence, forehead creased in thought. The arbiter reminded him that time was running out, to which the student replied that he had several extremely relevant answers, but couldn't make up his mind which to use.

On being advised to hurry up the student replied as follows:

"Firstly, you could take the barometer up to the roof of the skyscraper, drop it over the edge, and measure the time it takes to reach the ground. The height of the building can then be worked out from the formula $H = 0.5g \times t^2$. But bad luck on the barometer."

"Or if the sun is shining you could measure the height of the barometer, then set it on end and measure the length of its shadow. Then you measure the length of the skyscraper's shadow, and thereafter it is a simple matter of proportional arithmetic to work out the height of the skyscraper."

"But if you wanted to be highly scientific about it, you could tie a short piece of string to the barometer and swing it like a pendulum, first at ground level and then on the roof of the skyscraper. The height is worked out by the difference in the gravitational restoring force $T = 2\pi \sqrt{l/g}$."

"Or if the skyscraper has an outside emergency staircase, it would be easier to walk up it and mark off the height of the skyscraper in barometer lengths, then add them up."

"If you merely wanted to be boring and orthodox about it, of course, you could use the barometer to measure the air pressure on the roof of the skyscraper and on the ground, and convert the difference in millibars into feet to give the height of the building."

"But since we are constantly being exhorted to exercise independence of mind and apply scientific methods, undoubtedly the best way would be to knock on the janitor's door and say to him 'If you would like a nice new barometer, I will give you this one if you tell me the height of this skyscraper'."

The student was Niels Bohr, the only person from Denmark to win the Nobel prize for Physics. This story can be found in "The Teaching of Elementary Science and Mathematics" by Alexander Calandra

Editors Note:...Just might mean that there is more than one "correct" way to interpret and present a song via the barbershop style.

FATHERLY ADVICE STORMS IN TO KANSAS

This past weekend, 4/7/01, FATHERLY ADVICE, 1996, literally blew into Colby, Kansas for their annual show. Winds were so bad our plane was unable to land in Denver. After circling for an hour, we were forced to Cheyenne, Wyoming for fuel. That caused the flight to be two hours late, which was all right because Dick's flight from Kenosha was also late. Dick had the rental car ready and we proceeded to Limon, Colorado, the home of the Fireside Restaurant and the world's best Chicken Fried Steaks. We pulled into Colby about 10:30 PM where we met Dick's sister, Jan and her husband Fred from Pueblo, Co, our biggest fans.

The Saturday matinee and evening shows were an unqualified success. Both were near sellouts and the printed program so full of adds that any show chairman would be envious. The show featured, beside the Tumbleweed chorus, two chapter quartets, a mixed quartet, Fatherly Advice and the Harmony Halls. The Halls are a remarkable family group which include the quartet, four young ladies ranging in age from 10 to 18, three younger sisters, Mom and Dad and another on the way! On the afterglow, the entire family sang.

Between shows, Burt, who has never been known to miss a coaching opportunity, worked with the young ladies to great effect. The Mom said, "They are really better. Almost at a new plateau. What did you tell them?"

Burt acknowledged Dick's help and Bill told Burt, "Be careful what you tell these girls, because they will most certainly do it." And they did!

Fatherly Advice never sang better. It was our second trip to Colby and very gratifying to be asked back. We received a standing ovation at the evening show and the afterglow.

The mainstay of the Colby Chapter is Don Kready who sang in the mixed quartet and one chapter quartet. This is a chapter whose every rehearsal involves 3500 combined miles of travel for it's members. Now that's dedication.

The trip home was almost uneventful. We arrived at the Denver airport about 3 hours before our flight times so we decided to check in baggage and then all meet at Frontier for a song or two. Dick got in a long line at United and Bill, Burt and Dan headed for Frontier at Concourse A. We piled onto the crowded train. At concourse A we grabbed our bags and fought to get off before the doors closed. There we were, off the train and about 10 steps away when Bill went white! He turned around and started back for the train when we saw a gal on the train smiling and holding up his carry-on as the train took off! Sooo, for the next half hour, Bill and Burt were hopping on trains while Dan watched the pile of luggage. Finally Bill learned the bag had been turned into Lost and Found. We were gathering up the luggage and just starting to head for Frontier when the train doors opened and out stepped Dick! We had a bit of explaining to do and lots of laughs.

The quartet sang for a cheerful waitress in one of the cafes next to Frontier, which lead to a request from a man from England and his business companion from San Francisco for another song and an CD autograph opportunity.

At the gate, Dick ran into a former co-worker from his DEA days. She was delighted to see him and reminisce for a while. We had a chance to sing three or four more songs at the gate which everyone enjoyed.

We all agreed that it was great to be together again and looked forward to our next gig... Burt's 52 high school reunion!

OverTime Update

Since Mid-Winter, *The Three Of Us* of us vacationed in Florida. Our youngest member, Gary, hasn't retired yet, so he went back to work while we remained in Florida's rain. Since then we've been learning music.

Our calendar is starting to fill. We sang on the Canby, Oregon Chapter the weekend after we returned from Florida. That may be the most enthusiastic afternoon audience we've ever experienced. We went to Eugene to sing at a 60th Wedding Anniversary party. By wonderful coincidence, we are learning "Louise" to do the demo tape for SPEBSQSA when it is published, so we sang it for them. The bride in the couple we sang for is named Louise, and her husband has sung the song to her many times over the years. He was clearly enjoying our version, smiling and nodding his head all through the performance in recognition and agreement. It was a special moment.

We'll be participating in the upcoming Division 4 contest in Bend, Ore. warming the mikes, and singing on the Saturday night show. April 7th we appear in the afternoon at the dedication of the expansion of the Portland Office of Home Senior Care (Bud & Suzanne's Business), and in the evening on the West Hills Sweet Adelines Show. Then on April 30th we will be singing as part of the dedication of the newly rebuilt Civic Stadium (renamed PGE Park) -- home of the Portland Beavers, PCL AAA baseball team.

Bud Roberts, Bass, OverTime



Jurassic Larks Update! Wow!

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|---------|---|
| 1/22/00 | Cattlemen's Association Annual Mtg, Albion, Iowa |
| 2/14 | Singing Valentines with Des Moines Chorus |
| 2/19-20 | Beatrice, Nebraska show |
| 2/26 | Ames, Iowa Show |
| 3/4 | Wayne, Michigan Show |
| 3/11 | Open House, Franklin Library, Des Moines |
| 3/24-25 | Fort Dodge, Iowa Show |
| 3/30 | Retirement Party, Ames, Iowa |
| 4/1 | MaComb, Illinois Show |
| 4/7-8 | Sarasota, Florida Show |
| 4/15 | Sweet Adelines Regional Convention, Omaha |
| 4/28-29 | Florissant Valley Shows, Florissant, Missouri |
| 6/2-3 | Music Man Celebration, Mason City, Iowa |
| 6/9-10 | Indianapolis Show |
| 6/17 | Pride of Iowa Chorus Picnic, Des Moines, Iowa |
| 6/19 | Sioux City, Iowa, Local Bank Party |
| 7/5-9 | KC International Convention Chorditorium |
| 7/16 | "Music in the Park", Indianola, Iowa |
| 8/2 | Iowa First Lady's 50th Birthday Party, Des Moines |
| 8/11 | Pride of Iowa Chorus at Corydon, Iowa |
| 8/12 | Sentimental Journey Community event, Perry, Iowa |
| 8/13 | Iowa State Fair, Des Moines |
| 8/26 | Greenfield, Iowa Community Event |
| 9/16 | Des Moines Tech High 50th Reunion |
| 9/29 | Birthday Party, Des Moines |
| 9/30 | Des Moines Sweet Adelines Show |
| 10/7 | Sioux Falls, SD Sweet Adeline Show |
| 10/9 | Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities, Des Moines |
| 10/14 | CSD Convention All Champs Show |
| 10/15 | Northcrest Residential Facility Open House, Ames |
| 10/20 | Veterinarian Medicine Alumni Party, Ames, Iowa |
| 10/21 | Worthington, MN Sweet Adelines show |
| 11/3 | Hospice of Iowa Board Holiday Party, Des Moines |
| 11/16 | New Hope Church Holiday Party, Des Moines, Iowa |
| | <i>December We Rested!!!</i> |
| 1/6/01 | Chapter Installation, Des Moines |
| 1/25-28 | Mid Winter, Jacksonville |
| 2/2-3 | Bradenton, Florida Show |
| 2/10 | Des Moines Chorus Reunion |
| 2/14 | Singing Valentines |
| 3/10 | Harmony Explosion event, Olathe, KS |
| 3/31 | Hays, KS Show with Tri-County Reclamation Proj |
| | <i>And coming up</i> |
| 4/21 | CSD, St Joe, Missouri Past Champs Show |
| 5/5 | Longmont, Colorado Show |
| 5/19 | Elgin, Illinois Show |
| 6/30 | High School Reunion, Slater Iowa |
| 10/13 | CSD Convention, Topeka, KS |
| 11/5 | Business Women's Convention, Des Moines, Iowa |

In England, the Speaker of the House is not allowed to speak.

It's impossible to sneeze with your eyes open.

On a Canadian two dollar bill, the flag flying over the Parliament building is an American flag.

All 50 states are listed across the top of the Lincoln Memorial on the back of the \$5 bill.

Winston Churchill was born in a ladies' room during a dance.

