

Responsibilities of Membership

- Attends rehearsal regularly
- Contacts Membership Manager if unable to attend rehearsal
- Is open to constructive feedback from section leader, MD or your nominee on personal aspects of singing
- On request, presents riser recordings to section leader for analysis
- Endeavours to apply advice to singing
- Maintains a regular schedule of home practice (and recording) of current pieces and seeks further help if needed
- Responds fully to the Presentation Coach to improve personal movements
- Contributes to discussion on ways in which overall singing presentation and administrative operation may be enhanced
- Maintains a positive and enthusiastic attitude to singing preparation

Financial Commitment of Membership

Barbershop singing is a relatively inexpensive financial commitment compared with many other hobbies and sports.

At the time of printing this handbook, overall ongoing membership costs amount to only about \$4.00 per week (payable in quarterly instalments of \$50.00).

This helps to defray many ongoing Chorus expenses which includes sheet music, training tracks, copyright fees, rehearsal hall hire, external coaching, costumes, public liability insurance as well as registration with National and State bodies (Penrith Harmony is a member of Barbershop Harmony Australia which also has its own Eastern Region of which we are also members).

In addition, members are expected to contribute \$1.00 per week to cover supper costs.

NEW MEMBERS HANDBOOK

Qualifying for Membership

The barbershop style of harmony singing is produced by four voices singing a cappella. It is important that prospective members feel comfortable in this style of singing.

The basic member qualifying criteria is to be able to:

- *Hold pitch in a song, and*
- *Hold your part against other parts.*

To this extent a qualifying period of 5 weeks has been set aside to allow prospective members the opportunity to hear and participate in the barbershop style of singing with a personal audition in a quartet in the presence of the Musical Director at the end of that period.

This handbook contains the procedures which will be followed over the 5-week period before audition, as well as a list of the responsibilities and financial commitment of membership.

Penrith Harmony Chorus

Week 1

- The Music Director (MD) will do a preliminary assessment of your singing ability by having you sing something simple like *Happy Birthday* or *Advance Australia Fair*.
- If you pass the preliminary assessment, the Membership Manager (MM) will provide you with the sheet music and a learning disc for 2 easy Barbershop Harmony songs. These are the songs that you will need to learn for your audition in week 5.
- The MM will appoint a mentor who will have the responsibility of teaching you your part for the 2 songs. The MM and your mentor will make arrangements when to meet (before rehearsal, over supper, after rehearsal, other time).
- Note that you will also need to do your own practice at home. If you cannot read music or you do not have a piano keyboard or similar instrument to play the music on, don't worry. Listening to the learning disc several times and then singing along with it will help you sufficiently in learning the tune, and then you can just use the sheet music to learn the lyrics. (Learning discs may not have the words being sung. Often it is the notes only that are being played).

Week 2

- The MM checks with you and your mentor that all is proceeding to plan.
- The MM advises you that he will link you up with a quartet in Week 3 to begin getting used to singing four-part harmony.

Week 3

- The MM selects 3 members to sing the remaining parts (forming a "scratch" quartet) and asks them to join with you and your mentor over supper or at a time to be arranged.
- The 2 songs are sung several times with the mentor singing with you. The songs are then sung with you singing your part alone, the objective being to have you feel comfortable in the quartet.
- The "scratch" quartet is asked to meet the following week for further practice.

Week 4

- The quartet meets and practices with the MM and mentor present.
- You are advised that the audition will take place during supper the following week and that you'll have the opportunity to sing through the songs a couple of times prior to that occurring.

Week 5

- The quartet meets at supper and sings through the songs a couple of times.
- The MM then invites the MD to assess your suitability for membership based on the following criteria:

Full Qualification (sings in pitch and can hold a part)

Partial Qualification (meets standard but needs further practise)

Not Suitable (does not meet the standards for barbershop singing)

If you don't fully qualify on the first attempt, don't worry. The MD will discuss with you what you need to work on and set some further training so that you can have another go.

Do not hesitate to ask your mentor any questions to help you learn and enjoy more about Barbershop Harmony singing.

Remember this is a hobby for all of us. RELAX and ENJOY!