

Exciting annual high school quartet competition

By Christopher Brand, President Capital City Chorus

On May 7, 2007, the Capital City Chorus hosted the region's first High School Barbershop Quartet Competition since the early '60s. Thanks to the many dedicated young singers, both male and female, it was a resounding success. Quartets from three different school boards participated.

The purpose of the competition was to expose young people to the rich traditions and harmonies of a cappella music and to promote a lifetime of singing.

Given their very busy schedules and other music performances in which they were involved, we applauded the effort that each of the quartets made in learning two songs over a period of two months. The competition audience was made up

of competing quartets, friends, teachers, family members and members of a number of Eastern Division choruses.

The winning quartet was *Gibbe and the Supertronics* from Ottawa's Canterbury High School.

In second place *The Beets* from Bell High School in Nepean.

Canterbury also fielded the third place quartet *Torian and the Stripes*.

The top three quartets were awarded medals and prize money totaling \$1,200. The winning quartet has the honor of being the first to have its name engraved on the Wellington Street Trophy. Its school's music department received a \$500 bursary.

In the same evening, a novice quartet competition featuring quartets from the Brockville, Cornwall, Nepean and Ottawa chapters was held. When the results were tabulated, *Gibbe and the Supertronics* ranked second overall out of a total of 17 quartets, *The Beets* were fourth and *Torian and the Stripes* ranked sixth. An auspicious rebirth.

In the weeks prior to the competition, two quartets from the Capital City Chorus, *Play It Again!* and *Common Interest* conducted classroom workshops at several of the high schools and worked with many of the young hopefuls. Time was spent together singing the competition songs, identifying barbershop chord structures and ringing vowel sounds to create those wonderful overtones. It was a rewarding experience for everyone involved.

The initiative will continue. In addition to an annual quartet competition, the Capital City Chorus is dedicated to supporting high school music programs, which are often the first to be downsized or cut altogether. The chorus will perform at benefit concerts to raise funds for them.

The Capital City Chorus also offers a program called *Young Men in Harmony*, which puts on music clinics for the benefit of young men who otherwise may not have had any musical influence in their lives.

On stage at the National Arts Centre June 2, 2007, the high school quartets will unite as a chorus or very large quartet (VLQ) to sing "Hello Mary Lou." They will take part in a massed chorus finale singing "Sound Celebration."



Submitted photo

Gibbe and the Supertronics

L-R: Lead **Adrian Zeyl**,
Baritone **Zander Galbreath**,
Bass **Estan Beedell**,
Tenor **Gibbe Russell**.



Novice contest to encourage quartets

By Denis Laflamme,
Ontario District VP Marketing and P.R.

A novice contest hosted by the Ottawa Chapter had participants from Cornwall, Kingston, Nepean, Brockville and Ottawa sharing the stage. *The Young and the Wreckless* from Ottawa took first place receiving the Art Trott Trophy.

This amicable contest was created to encourage quartets, who wonder if they should compete in a fall convention, and allow them to test the waters. A few years ago, CCC created the *3 New Guys* quartet composed of one seasoned Barbershopper and three new members to expose more members to the contest cycle. They hope to help choruses strengthen by having more independent singers compete as quartets.

This event was a good excuse for the *Capital City Chorus* to take a break from its eight month intensive preparation for their 50th anniversary show on June 2, 2007 at the National Arts Centre produced by **Tom Burns** and designed by **David McEachern**.

