

[Originally written February 24, 2005. Expanded version written April 2, 2007.]

A Ballade pour M'Lad

By Douglas S. Ellis

Here's an example of Doug E's 'wrot-ten' verse
At forcing rhymes there's no one worse.
Now for my tale of one from our Forest 'Glen'
This Lad has stood tall amongst we mortal Men.

I sat at my computer keyboard today,
And took a few moments out for play.
A name popped into my (weak) mind,
With a brilliance that almost made me blind.

So follow this bouncing Ball of rhyme,
As I share memories of a friend of mine.
About the time I was nine,
I first met this man so fine.

Summer fun at his cottage, 'round the bend,
While Accordettes fussed o're their sunburnt Men.
We with his kids, played all the day long,
While the air filled with harmonies in barbershop song.

Afterglows meant many a long night,
While this Lad watched for the dawn's early light.
Then would his 'Hawks' strike up their band,
My friend called them the best in the land.

Others days were heaven sent,
As the Men used their trades or talent lent
To restore the Manor for harmony's sake.
Ron did more than his share, when not at the lake.

A true chorus man, with them he stood proud.
For favourite quartets he cheered lustily aloud.
His judging career gave him international fame.
Even his protégés, brought honour to his name.

What a legacy his judging gifts did spark,
He really hit that one out of the park.
For both protégés, his Canadian men,
Category Specialists is what became of them.

In Yankee land he was a Senior International Judge eh!
Now he's Senor Judge Emeritus in a meadow of hay.
In Ontari-ari-ari-o north of the great lakes
He's a Barbershopper of Renown for goodness sakes!

In fact the wise District of 'O'
(Home of this writer too you know).
Once named him the best of the bunch
BOTY but there was no lemon pie for lunch.

Perhaps his favourite trophies you know
Are the ones that go with being a London 'JOE'.
All the hardware is proudly displayed on the shelf
But the memories are best for this old elf.

Yes many honours have come to a man named Ron,
For quality service, by this native son.
But there's no doubt his greatest thrill will be,
To be introduced as your friend, you'll see.

You surely would all agree with me
The blessings of a loving family
For Ron it started and ended with bride Ann
Who gave him beautiful Bonnie and handsome son Ken.

As a card player he's reported without peers
As a fisherman he's sported off legions of piers
Many joyous hours he's spent at hobbies these
With buddies Grip & Spence & you & me zzzzz

He might have sold you plumbing supplies
Or told you jokes that rolled your eyes
For many years he welcomed one and all
To Harmony Ranch spring, summer or fall.

Remember sir, Bonnie's goldfish in my tank,
As for you, my old pal, our God I thank.
That's all I've wrote says a Canadian 'men',
'Til Doug-E again takes up his trusty pen.



Photo — Waldo Redekop

Ron Ball (R) with the "other protégé"
mentioned in the poem, **Fred Beattie**,
at our 2007 spring convention.