

## A fabulous weekend had by all at Harmony College North 2007

By Ken Fisher, Dean Harmony College North, 2007

Most people would have called the weather on Friday afternoon, June 8, 2007, a summer storm. Barbershoppers, of course, knew that the lightning and thunder was a celestial fanfare for the start of the 22nd annual *Harmony College North*.

Held this year on the campus of Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, we all wondered how things would go. After all, this was the first time ever away from home in Guelph. The venue exceeded our most delirious wishes.



The campus is compact and lovely. The classrooms were air-conditioned, bright and spacious with first rate audiovisual facilities. Quartets had enough space to even rehearse walk ons.

Then there was the food: plentiful, fast and oh so good! Waistlines took a bit of a hit that weekend I am afraid.

If you missed the Saturday Night Show in the Maureen Forrester Recital Hall, then I have to say that you left a treat on your plate. This is a wonderful space in which to sing barbershop. The appearance is elegant. With all the natural wood on the walls the sound was a bit of barbershop heaven.

Classes on the weekend included: Singing, Coaching, Sight Reading, Directing, Planning for Success, and digital music notation (Finale).

Thanks to the many Ontario District teachers who participated in the planning and offering of these classes. We have so much talent in the District!

In addition, HCN and the Ontario District had the honor of introducing **James Estes** to his first ever district school as a *Barbershop Harmony Society* staffer. Guys we're are in great shape with young men like James on staff. He is a superb

teacher and communicator AND he sings at the International quartet level. Welcome James!

Along with classes, HCN offered top quality coaching to any quartet that wanted to step up to the plate and improve. This year we had both BHS and *Sweet Adelines International* quartets in the school.

For the first time in a very many years, your obedient servant had the opportunity to hear the quartets at both the start and finish of the day. My goodness the coaches worked miracles! There was an obvious improvement in every single quartet. Just imagine what could happen if every quartet in the district took advantage of learning opportunities like this. A day of excellent, skilled coaching from several different people has a focus and a growth opportunity that cannot be achieved any other way.

As has been the tradition for the last several years, HCN ended with *The Saturday Night Show*. All the coached quartets performed. *Mirage* did a dandy show package. I still get nervous when they start the "chicken plucker" song. What a fine bunch of talented gentlemen these guys are! Year after year they enrich all of us in the district by both performing and by teaching.

**Chuck Alexander**, the show producer, organized a treat for all in the audience when he invited the *Guelph Overtones (Harmony Inc.)* to be special guest artists. These ladies have a comedy package that is based on an exercise session in a Ladies Retirement Home. The characters and the little vignettes have you rolling in the aisles. In addition, guess what? — They sing great!

When I left the after, afterglow in the wee hours of the morning (numbers are removed to protect the innocent), the singing was still going strong. Do you suppose that is why so few people showed up for breakfast at 8 a.m.? **Barry Greig** and I were there to greet you. (Oh Ya?)

Big thank you to everyone who participated in HCN '07. Programs like this can stay alive in the district because of your involvement. It was a great weekend of learning, sharing and fun.

**Keep the Whole World Singing.  
It Is Great To Be A Barbershopper! ♣**



Photo—Barry Towner  
The new  
Society headquarters  
in Nashville.  
As of August 22, 2007,  
the exterior of the building  
looked like this.

Under the sign between the  
windows are four barberpoles  
labeled appropriately  
T, L, BA, and BS. ♣