

TEAM COORDINATOR'S REPORT

REGIONAL ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING

21 May 2022

The logo for Sweet Adelines New Zealand is located in the top right corner. It features a maroon square with the words "sweet", "adelines", and "new zealand" in white, lowercase, sans-serif font. The square is layered over a background of overlapping blue and yellow geometric shapes.

**sweet
adelines**
new zealand

May 2021 saw us enjoy the freedom of performing on stage for our peers in the wonderful Isaac Theatre Royal in Christchurch. What a surreal time that was as we watched other Sweet Adeline regions around the world battle with the impact of Covid-19 on their ability to get together.

We were so very lucky to take that moment in time and make the most of it! Choruses and quartets shared their musical gifts with a very enthusiastic audience, and a true feeling of camaraderie was evident. Performing in a new category enabled some choruses and quartets to venture into the field of a performance package, stretching comfort zones by a country mile. Lynne Smith would be very proud! Education classes were held and very well attended. Some truly brilliant memories were formed for us to savour as the year then turned a little wobbly for our art form.

In July, ROXY hosted their very successful quartet class in Auckland, then shortly after that in-person education events scheduled were postponed or cancelled as Covid restrictions were once again imposed. Lockdowns in the wider Auckland area and Northland and alert level changes for the rest of the country meant rehearsing became impossible or very spasmodic for all our choruses.

It is only now as we head toward the middle of 2022 that rehearsing is picking up momentum across the country. We hope that weekly rehearsing in car parks or other large outdoor areas is a thing of the past! Masks may be with us a while longer, but the upside of that is they do make you use good diaphragmatic breathing when singing. To assist chapters acquire that little bit of inspiration from outside their own chorus, the Regional Management Team is offering \$200 per chorus this year toward costs of using an educator from our own Region or beyond. This can be used for in-person or virtual teaching and can be added to an IFV opportunity.

Our membership numbers for the Region have remained the same for the year, which is very encouraging. Chapters can now start to plan membership drives and book singing engagements to entice new members to their ranks. One thing these trying times has proven is that our choruses provide a much-needed sense of community for our members. As you enter the rehearsal venue once again and are greeted by all those smiling faces and hugs (if wanted), to hear the background chatter and laughter warms the heart and lifts the spirit. Then to hear that beautiful sound of harmony sends a sigh of relief through the nervous system!

2022 has seen us present a first, a virtual contest, Harmony Aotearoa - The At Home Edition. To be able to provide this event for the Region has meant a lot of work for a very small team this year. There's nothing like doing something you've never done before and working with everyone involved remotely! Jo Maxwell deserves a huge thank-you as she has put together most of the logistics to bring this event to life. Leigh Agnew has very ably taken on the role of Competition Coordinator and enabled our groups to confidently send in their entries, which she then forwarded to the Official Panel.

The Regional Management team has been able to support those few tenacious groups who have entered our 2022 virtual contest event; \$100 per group was provided to assist with costs. Choruses and quartets who were able to put forward a recording are to be congratulated. With only a few short months lead-up, it would have required full commitment from all involved. I am looking forward to seeing the results later today!

After two postponements, our 2019 champion chorus, the Waikato Rivertones Chorus, decided not to take part in the International contest finally being held this year in Phoenix, Arizona. As second-place-getters in 2019, the Greater Auckland Chorus was offered the spot and are now on the road to taking that journey in September. The Regional Management Team was happy to support their efforts with payment as per our Policy, of \$3000, acknowledging that they are representing Region 35. We wish Greater Auckland Chorus all the very best as they work toward strutting their stuff on stage in 4 months' time!

It is wonderful to see education events planned once again, so check your diaries and make arrangements to attend either Friday 28 - Sunday 30 October at Cashmere High School in Christchurch or Friday 4 - Sunday 6 November in Auckland at a venue to be confirmed. Details will be announced in the coming weeks, so keep an eye on email inboxes. It will be fantastic to see these events take flight and for us to be able to gather in bigger groups once again and share our music!

I thank the members of the RMT who have helped keep this Region ticking over during the past 12 months. Julie Mansell who stood down last year, Jenny Edwards and Kerry Stewart who are leaving the team now. Mary Cave-Palmer, our new Finance Coordinator, has been on a very steep learning curve and is to be congratulated on settling in so quickly. Leanne Wheeler and Jenny Meadows join as the Education and Communications Coordinators, respectively, and I am sure they too will settle in very soon. Those members who continue to serve on the team, I thank you for your dedication these past 12 months: Jo Maxwell, Miriam Spragg, Carolyn Currington, and Ann-marie Francis.

I also acknowledge our Resource Team members who work in areas from administration to visual communications: Robyn Abernethy, Shelley Bascand, Ruth Carson, Sharon Connor, Patti Cooke, Chika Deane, Fy Dunford, Sandy Gunn, Rowena Harper, Carol Jager, Nicola Kirkup, Cecelia Lockley, Nicky McCaughan, Sarah Rae, Lesley Standing, Katrina Te Punga, and Trish Veen, for their ongoing support to the Region.

Our Regional Faculty are poised to hit the ground running as singing resumes around the country. Suzanne Berresford, Jocosa Bruce, Carolyn Currington, Toni Griffin, Virginia Humphrey-Taylor, Melody Lowe, and Kristina Roper are only an email or phone call away to assist your chorus or quartet.

I am sure we will face a few challenges as we settle back into the rhythm of singing with Covid still in our communities, but we can navigate our way with positivity. Be kind and patient with each other as people come out of their isolation cocoons or self-hibernation. People will find their own way in their own time, and as we support each other we will grow stronger as a quartet, a chorus, and as a Region.

In harmony, Leigh.