

sweet
adelines
new zealand

the addaline

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Celebrating our
2024 international
competitors.
We are so proud
of you all!

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Founded in 1945, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Sweet Adelines started as a small group of women who loved to sing. Since then, it has evolved into an organization that spans the globe. www.sweetadelines.com

RMT



JULIE EARL
Team Coordinator
tc
@sweetadelines.co.nz



SHELLEY BASCAND
Events Coordinator
events
@sweetadelines.co.nz



SHELLEY PHILLIPS
Marketing Coordinator
marketing
@sweetadelines.co.nz



NIKOLA WORRALL-BADER
Membership Coordinator
membership
@sweetadelines.co.nz



MARY CAVE-PALMER
Finance Coordinator
finance
@sweetadelines.co.nz
027 256 5069



LEANNE WHEELER
Education Coordinator
education
@sweetadelines.co.nz
027 765 9866



KATIE MATHISON
Communications Coordinator
communications
@sweetadelines.co.nz



CAROLYN CURRINGTON
Directors' Coordinator
directorcoord
@sweetadelines.co.nz
027 226 7978

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM

Rules & Bylaws - JULIE EARL
Leadership Development Specialist -
PATRICIA VEEN

REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Membership Liaison - LESLEY
STANDRING
Membership Records & Anniversary
Maintenance - CHIKA DEANE

REGIONAL EDUCATION TEAM

Arranger Education Specialist -
ROWENA HARPER
YWIH Coordinator - POSITION
VACANT

RESOURCE TEAM

SHARON CONNOR
Website Coordinator
webadmin@sweetadelines.co.nz

DAVID BROOKS
Region 35 Statistician
stats@sweetadelines.co.nz

SANDY GUNN
Addaline Coordinator
addaline@sweetadelines.co.nz

CHRISTIE OBERHOLSTER
DCP Coordinator
dcp@sweetadelines.co.nz

POSITION VACANT
Historian
historian@sweetadelines.co.nz

BRIANNA PERRY
Addaline Design & Layout
addaline@sweetadelines.co.nz

RUTH CARSON
Quartet Coordinator
quartets@sweetadelines.co.nz

CLAIRE TAKACS
Convention Facilities Coordinator
claireandacky@gmail.com

NIKOLA WORRALL-BADER
Chapter at Large Coordinator
membership@sweetadelines.co.nz

From Your Team Coordinator...

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

WOW! Sweet Adelines International Kansas City 2024 – what a competition! The best of barbershop and a cappella all in one place.

Aotearoa New Zealand was well represented by Greater Auckland Chorus competing in the Harmony Classic Division A, Christchurch City Chorus competing in the international competition and Fire & Ice quartet representing us in the quartet competition. No mean feat when Kansas City is 12,750km away. Congratulations to each and every one of you for your commitment to this journey.

Exciting results on the international stage...

Greater Auckland Chorus directed by Jocosa Bruce came away with a first place in Division A Harmony Classic with their hauntingly good retreat package. Scarily good... and it was their first time up in Harmony Classic. Congratulations to the whole team. I hear that huge trophy has its own crate! We are so, so proud of you all.

Christchurch City Chorus directed by Virginia Humphrey-Taylor earned a 5th placing with an incredible competition set and a performance package that had many of us in tears (of joy). A 100 on stage and many first timers - the whole Sweet Adelines community was impressed as are we. What a fantastic result.

Fire & Ice Quartet took to the stage and did us proud with a 21st place. We loved your set, your sound and the

way you engaged with the audience. You have inspired kiwi quartets to keep working at our craft, get on stage and share our love of singing.

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

While our choruses and quartets have been working hard for international competition, your Regional Management Team has also been working to pull together your ideas and feedback to inform our planning for the next three to four years. Look out for the final version of the strategic plan which will guide our future.

We have regional education opportunities planned for you which follow the successful quartet workshops, Anne Downton's regional workshop and Vickie Maybury's session on judging (early December). Coach in residence, Ryan Heller will be here for the month of July 2025. Look out for more information and book a time for your chorus or quartet. These opportunities are available once every year or so. We encourage you to support this initiative.

You will have noticed an increased presence on social media. We have a small but mighty team working hard to build a team feeling across our organisation/community and raise awareness of all the wonderful opportunities this organisation offers those who are yet to find us. There is more to come – watch this space.

Planning is well underway for the 2025 competition and 40th birthday celebrations. Ably led by Pam Brian (Convention Coordinator Christchurch City Chorus) the steering committee



is up and running. Jo Maxwell and team have special plans for our 40th celebrations. Christchurch is definitely not to be missed. So many talented people working on our behalf.

We look forward to seeing you all in person in Christchurch next May. Don't forget to download our new regional song and learning tracks from the Sweet Adelines NZ website **A Thousand Years** arranged by Rowena Harper. It will be great to sing this together in May.

Remember we are only an email away and love to hear from you. All ideas, feedback, positives and suggestions are welcome. This is your organisation and we are here to serve.

JULIE EARL
TEAM COORDINATOR
ON BEHALF OF THE REGIONAL
MANAGEMENT TEAM

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events!

May 2025

**HARMONY ŌTAUTAHĪ
FORTY AND FABULOUS**

1 - 4 May 2025
Ōtautahi, Christchurch

July 2025

**SANZ COACH IN RESIDENCE:
RYAN HELLER**

More details to come!

October 2025

**SAI INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION & COMPETITION**

20 - 25 October 2025
Columbus, Ohio, USA

The Perils and Benefits of Quartetting

What is it about forming a quartet that's engenders such secrecy? Is it the fear of auditioning for a part and being afraid of rejection? Do you feel you've stuck your head above the parapet and become vulnerable? Do you imagine yourself dissolving in a mess of nerves when facing an audience? Might you forget or stumble over your words?

All those feelings are a normal part of auditioning and performing. Getting four voices that blend well together can be quite a mission – even if they are voices that are individually great. Sometimes voices just lock into one another like magic, other times it can be hard work. We shouldn't be put off by a quartet audition which doesn't work out.

Recently, a couple of “old hands” at Wellington City Chorus hosted an afternoon for “quartet wannabees”. Participants were asked to learn a song for the event, and we had a great response, with one foursome already rehearsing together. Everybody had a go at singing their part with different voices. There is interest in having more mixing/matching sessions and we'll continue in the New Year.

It was an enlightening experience – we all learned a lot – for instance about how different voices can change the overall sound of a quartet, how one person's voice can enhance the sound of another voice, and what fun it is to actually have a go! It was also interesting to experience the reality

of everyone's role within the quartet, such as how you might have to take breaths differently from how you would on the risers.

We touched only lightly on some of those things and plan to have further sessions. Our aim is to encourage anybody who would like to have a go at quartetting, whether your desire is to enter national contests and aim for the stars or form a local quartet that likes to sing and practice together. Whatever the outcome, your chorus will benefit from it because the learning that takes place in a quartet can only benefit the larger group.

Some choruses are really good at encouraging, forming and maintaining quartets, and this is often reflected in those choruses' performances. If you don't already provide a pathway for your members to join a quartet, please consider doing so – your whole chorus would grow from the experience.

**TRISH VEEN
WELLINGTON CITY CHORUS**

Region 35 Arranging Workshops

Rowena Harper and Carole Prietto teamed up to offer a series of arranging workshops over Zoom, hosted by Region 35 and attended by arrangers from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the US, and the United Kingdom. The first class, on June 9, covered formatting the manuscript. A clear, readable manuscript is important because it communicates the arranger's ideas to singers, directors, and coaches. Carole took a poorly formatted manuscript, gave tips on how to improve it, and shared a “cheat sheet” which summarized the basics of doing a proper manuscript.

The next class, on August 18, was The Arranging Process. Using the traditional song 'Our Homeland Aotearoa' Carole outlined a process for what to do when you find a song you wish to arrange, beginning with picking a song, then finding sheet

music, how to select the right key, beginning to arrange. She also discussed basic harmonization of the 11 chords as well as chord substitution – what to do when a melody note falls outside of the basic harmony in a given passage. The class also talked about voicing and voice leading. Voicing refers to how chords stack up vertically to get the strongest sound. Voice leading refers to the movement of each part line. The harmony parts should have lines that move in logical ways so that they are as singable as possible.

In late August, arrangers who use Finale received a sudden announcement that Finale was no longer being developed. Carole taught a class for arrangers needing to transition from Finale to another program. She demonstrated how to convert Finale files to MusicXML, a file format that lets notation programs share information with each other.

Carole and Rowena demonstrated the notation program Dorico and answered questions about it.

On September 18 Rowena taught the final class, Making Better Choices. The class addressed how to make chord choices that were both strong barbershop and fit the song's original harmonies. The class also addressed creative choices – when and how to apply embellishments such as echoes, swipes, and key changes, to make a more interesting and exciting arrangement. This class had arrangers at a variety of levels, from beginners to ACP scholarship recipients, and there was much good discussion about both the arranging process and the creativity of bringing an arrangement to life.

Thank you, Region 35, for your support of arranger education!

**ROWENA HARPER
WAIKATO RIVERTONES CHORUS**



Photo by Claire Gardiner

In Loving Memory of Dale Syverson

Master Director Dale Syverson was the musical director of the fantastic Rich-Tone Chorus, renowned for their beautiful singing and spectacular dancing prowess. She was a judge in two categories, Expression and Sound. A fabulous coach, a baritone extraordinaire, Queen of Harmony, in The Tiffanys and Rumors quartet (who were brought to NZ to teach by Christchurch City chorus in the year 2000) and she was always laughing and teaching at the highest level. She was humble and enjoyed cheese and biscuits as an appetiser or after chorus rehearsals.

As the daughter of a barbershopper, Dale was part of the Sweet Adelines organization since she was a child and is a five time international gold medal winning chorus director and

two time international gold medal winning quartet singer.

"dale was the ultimate barbershop teacher."

She studied and researched her passions 'the singer's voice' and 'ensemble excellence' continuously. Dale was revered amongst barbershop circles.

She wrote many excellent papers about how to achieve the ultimate beautiful sound and how to deliver each vocal detail with excellence. She learnt about singing techniques used throughout the ages, and then taught everyone she encountered what she had learnt, so that they too could improve and have a deep

understanding of everything to do with their vocal production.

Dale, Darlene Rogers and Peggy Gram formed the superb team that produced the Sing Baby Sing series as well as a website of information to improve everything to do with singing. The barbershop ensemble techniques that Dale and her team put together are second to none and are mostly available on the Sweet Adelines International website. From Spike to Velvet, Trap Shooting, Accessorizing Your De Lorean - embellishment use and enhancement, vocal production etc - everything you need to sing at A level is covered. They wrote it down and then taught it.

At education symposiums anywhere in the world, Dale captivated her audience with her knowledge of barbershop techniques and her teaching ability. She was funny, focused, and always had something of high quality to teach - we all wanted to be pupils in her classroom.

Her famous 'How to direct a Ballad,' when she used the ballad, 'A Nightingale sang in Berkley Square,' made us all cry; the beauty in her choreographed conducting was mesmerising.

(CONTINUED OVER PAGE)



Here are some of her gems from all over the world. You will find many other wonderful tidbits of information to inspire you with your learning on her memorial site that the Rich-Tone Chorus are building:

- Breathe and sing above the hands.
- To add ping to our sound we need to add more three dimensional space rather than more back space.
- Sing into the space of your neighbours.
- Singing is all about making choices.
- Sing vowel to vowel - called Tunnel of Vowel.
- Pitch is not sound - it's just pitch!
- Ringing sound = unbounded freedom, with use of fully activated imagination. It's visceral, glows and sparkles.
- Sound either rings or it sucks swamp water!
- Every sound you make, pitch you sing, deserves its own space.
- Breathe into your space before you sing, no over singing. Ever. Causes blend to go away.
- Aim for horizontal energy rather than vertical energy - i.e. smooth travelling vocal line.
- Top load your air don't frontload.
- The stationary parts, AREN'T.
- Parts must be singing in motion.
- You're at the most powerful, every time you take a breath.
- GOAL: Fluid delivery of artistic sound.
- One size does NOT fit all.
- Excellence = a whole bunch of 'moments in time'.
- Every breath should refresh the overtone stack.
- A skilled musician brings everything she IS to everything she DOES. She doesn't wait to be told...
- Gravity always has a 'grab' on it.
- We 'spit' on notes that should be too high for our part!
- Pitches go DOWN. Sound ONLY goes UP.
- Sing with CERTAINTY. BLOSSOM the sound. Sound is constantly in motion.
- Artistic awareness = consonants are as important to the sound as resonance. (Example: mother saying a child's name - we all knew when we were in trouble.)
- Breaths are punctuations in the story line, not a place to serve singer's needs.
- The listeners feel when they hear SOUND, not chords.
- All embellishments should have all four parts engaged.
- What causes 'sausages'?...



Weakness in sound, release of energy, breathing in the wrong place.

- Intentional imbalance.....use it, show it off.
- Add height in the sound before you add volume.
- Alive delivery of song brings an elevated degree of musicality.
- Tenors, slide directly up to that note. This isn't the time to be Moses wandering in the desert...
- Breathe to create art, not because you need it.
- The goal is to sing so we can draw pictures in Dale's imagination!

Dale you were loved by all, and your legacy will live on forever.

VIRGINIA HUMPHREY-TAYLOR
CHRISTCHURCH CITY CHORUS

SouthCity Soundz Wins at SAPACS

For several years now, SouthCity Soundz has competed in a non-barbershop competition held in August, by South Auckland Performing Arts Competitions Society which this year celebrated 60 years of existence.

We use it as a membership drive and run a '6 weeks to SAPACS' programme and anyone who joins us competes with us. This year we won the Papakura Theatre Company Diamond Jubilee Trophy for Light Entertainment for the second year running and also the A Cappella Award. We were also acknowledged in Pitch



Pipe. Our two quartets competed as well and QTonix were placed first and Tukutahi third.

Now we are running a 'Weeks to Christmas' programme which has attracted a couple of the SAPACS singers back and three new ones. These women will sing with us at our Friends and Family Christmas Concert and our Christmas singouts.

FLEUR DE FARIAS
SOUTHCITY SOUNDZ CHORUS



Christchurch City were so proud to represent New Zealand at Sweet Adelines International in Kansas City this year.

The chorus of 100 performers, with 49 first timers with Christchurch, were immersed in a week of high level barbershop indulgence. From barbecue meals, cocktails, mocktails together, to using several rehearsal rooms, having queens sing for us, performing in the fantastic Worldwide Show on the Monday with choruses and quartets from Sweden, Australia, New Zealand and No Borders

Chorus; followed by enjoying Greater Auckland's terrific Harmony Classic performance Tuesday, to watching Fire & Ice sing their hearts out on Wednesday.

"we were totally saturated with beautiful singing. we were on cloud nine!"

We had so much fun and laughter together! We played many team building games, had exceptional



coaches come play with us - several from pre-covid times; while we stayed focused on the 'business trip' as we named it. We enjoyed yoga and tai chi, high energy dancing warm ups, fantastic singing together, and witnessed exceptional commitment to the barbershop art form from all the choruses and quartets we were able to watch this year.

It was a dream come true after a very long journey since our last performance on the Sweet Adelines International stage.

Christchurch City loved their times on stage and put out all they had. They climbed their mountain and made it to the top with joy and aroha.

**VIRGINIA HUMPHREY-TAYLOR
CHRISTCHURCH CITY CHORUS**





Fire & Ice felt hugely honoured to represent Region 35 on the international stage for the first time together since 2018.

Being a long-distance quartet with lots of crazy schedules, we weren't able to have as many rehearsals as we would've liked leading up to it, but the one coaching weekend we did have with Jeff Hunkin managed to keep us going. We almost didn't make it however, with some flight delays from Wellington - Auckland. We'd like to make a shout out to Jane (tenor) who managed to hold a whole international flight by shedding tears at the door of the plane, and literally stalling with the crew, while Jane Esera and Henri were sprinting (Samoan speed) from the domestic terminal to international!

A long sweaty 10 hour flight got us to LA, then to Denver, and then finally to Kansas where we checked in after midnight in style with some Uber Eats style pizza!

We had an awesome contest week, and were stoked to be able to cheer on our friends and new Harmony Classic Champions - Greater Auckland Chorus, and equally proud to cheer on our lead Cat and

Christchurch City Chorus who went on to do everyone proud coming away with 5th in the world.

Our contest day went as planned with no major hiccups, and as usual, the performance flew by.

"we were grateful for the cheers in the crowd, the "tutira mai nga iwi" chants, and the awesome smiling faces that greeted us when we came off stage."

We felt good about our performance and did everything we probably could at that point, and it was awesome to hear the audience react throughout our performance.

Coming 21st in the world is a huge buzz for us, but more than that, the chance to sing together again to represent our region on the world stage will be another awesome memory to add to the bank. A big thank you again to everyone who helped us get there through our fundraisers, kind messages, and support along the way.

LOVE HENRI, CAT, JANE & JANE, FIRE & ICE





Magical World of Music, Camaraderie and Very Significant Bling

At 6:30pm on October the 29th, a third of the 31-strong Greater Auckland Chorus Harmony Classic competitors were about to walk across the international stage for the first time! As we listened to the chant of “kiwi, kiwi,” from New Zealanders in the audience, waiting to go on and give it our melodious all, I marvelled at our journey that had begun well over a year ago with countless hours of story planning, music wrangling, and rehearsals to perfect every harmony, choreography, chord and line.

Arriving days before at the Kansas City Convention Centre felt like stepping into a huge magical world of music, camaraderie and very significant bling. Oh, the tiaras!

And then we were into a focused frisson of zen-like anticipation. There were nerves as we prepared, doing final warm-ups and ensuring our costumes, props and makeup were perfect. But the overriding sense of connection with each other and our collective wairua enveloped us in the knowledge that we’d got this, this was why we were here, and lordy, we were going to enjoy it! And then, there we were, stepping onto the stage in front of bright lights, the audience’s expectant faces, and the judges’ keen ears. It was a performance we will cherish forever, inspire us for years to come and remind us of what we can achieve when we work together towards a common goal.

Beyond the contest, there were numerous opportunities for learning

and growth. Attending workshops and seeing and listening to so many talented people, each bringing their unique style and sound to the stage, was awe-inspiring. The sense of community was palpable, with everyone sharing a common love for barbershop. Meeting other participants, forging new friendships, and singing impromptu tags with people you hadn’t until that moment known, highlighted the shared passion for music and created instant connections. Knowing when you rock up to any Sweet Adelines event that you are in a room full of insta-friends is heartwarming and incredibly empowering. It was even cooler to share our passion with members of the Kansas City community who had no clue who we were and what we were up to until they asked why we were in town.

Being a first-time international Sweet Adelines competitor has been a transformative experience in which we both entertained and strengthened our bond as a group. What an unforgettable, joyful, powerful and humbling experience!

KIM WARD
GREATER AUCKLAND CHORUS

Two Stories, One Harmony

Christchurch City Chorus recently celebrated a 5th place finish at the Sweet Adelines International Competition in Kansas City. Among their talented members are two women whose journeys to the international stage were both unique and complementary. Heather, a mother of two young children, and Mel, whose children have grown and left home are both new members of the chorus, the front row, and the international competition scene. Despite their different life stages, they each found a powerful sense of community, joy, and fulfilment in singing with this remarkable group of women.

HEATHER'S STORY: BALANCING FAMILY AND PASSION

For Heather, a mother of two young children, preparing for an international competition wasn't just about rehearsals and learning songs - it was a family affair. Her children and husband were a constant part of the

journey, waving goodbye from the window when she left for practice, singing along to learning tracks in the car, and even creating their own 'sheet music' at home.

‘Leaving my kids for 12 days wasn’t easy, but it wasn’t just those days — it was the whole lead-up to the trip,’ Heather says. ‘My husband was incredible, and nana moved in to help while I was away, but my family had been supporting me for months - particularly in attending the monthly full weekend rehearsals.’

"when i finally stepped on stage in kansas city, i knew they were happily cuddled up at home, cheering me on through the webcast."



Heather and Mel love chorus life and both look forward to the group's next adventure

Heather admits there were moments of guilt, but the experience of being overseas without the daily demands of motherhood felt like a refreshing break.

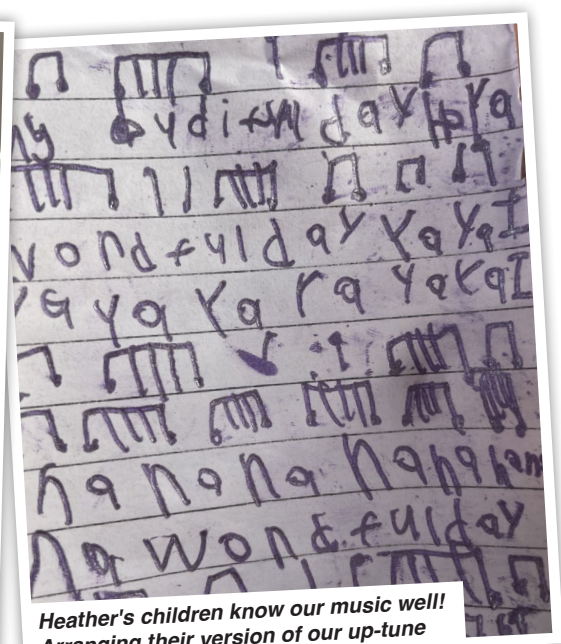
'Being responsible for only myself, singing all day, dining out with friends, meeting new people - it was a dream. Even the long flights felt luxurious. Any mum will understand how rare and precious those moments of solitude can be!'

The highlight for Heather wasn't just making it to the finals; it was coming home, scooping her kids into her arms, placing the medal around her daughter's neck, and seeing the joy on her children's faces.

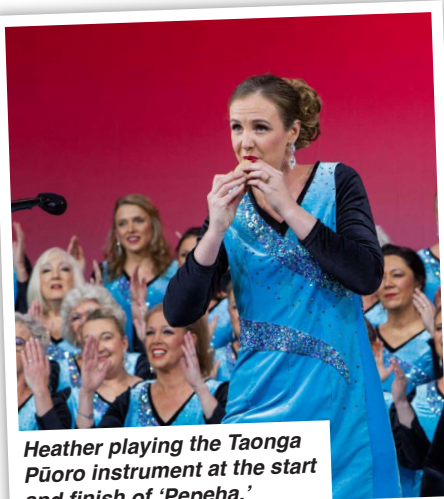
'Earning 5th place was amazing, but nothing topped that reunion. By sharing their mum with the chorus, my kids earned that medal as much as I did.'



Heather is home again with a special reunion



**Heather's children know our music well!
Arranging their version of our up-tune**



Heather playing the Taonga Pūoro instrument at the start and finish of 'Pepeha.'

MEL'S STORY: EMBRACING A NEW CHAPTER

Mel found herself at a different stage of life. With her children grown and an empty nest at home, she was ready to embrace new opportunities and discover new passions. Feeling a shift in her parenting responsibilities Mel realised it was time to focus on her own interests and adventures.

'There can be a sense of emptiness when your kids leave home,' Mel shares. 'It's a big adjustment, but it also opens up a world of new possibilities. Joining Christchurch City Chorus has been one of the most enriching decisions I've made.'

'Joining the chorus was a happy accident,' Mel explains. 'I had planned to take a photography night class, but when it was rescheduled, I started searching online for things to do in Christchurch on a Wednesday night. From the very first rehearsal, I knew I had found something special. The energy, passion, and dedication of the group were incredible. Watching them perform their upbeat song 'Happy' was all it took - I was hooked!'

"Singing, dancing, and smiling with this group of women? yes, please!"

Mel's journey to the international stage was filled with emotion. After the nerves and adrenaline rush of the semifinal performance, she felt both eagerness to get back on stage and the exhaustion of long days and disrupted sleep. But the excitement of making the top 10 took hold - 'We did! I want to do that again!'

'The emotions came in waves - excitement, exhaustion, and pride. I wasn't the only one with a few tears; many of us felt the same. It's a testament to how much we put into this.'

For Mel, the magic of singing with the chorus lies in the connection and shared energy.

'There was a moment during a rehearsal in Kansas City when I completely lost myself in the music,' Mel says. 'Standing in the front row, I was so immersed in the beautiful sound coming from the risers that I forgot the choreography. The sound, the energy, the beauty literally stopped me in my tracks. Our director paused the rehearsal - not to give feedback, but to say how beautiful it was and that we'd given her goosebumps. It's moments like those that remind me why I do this.'

As new members and first-timers to the international stage, both Heather and Mel didn't know what to expect, but they leave with a renewed commitment to continue singing, dancing, and growing with the chorus.

'Performing our finals package was a highlight,' they both agree, 'but the real reward has been the journey-learning, connecting, and being part of something bigger than ourselves. This experience has been life-changing, and we're already looking forward to what's next.'

MELANIE WAREING
CHRISTCHURCH CITY CHORUS



Heather and Mel joined their director Virginia Humphrey Taylor and Liz Pitcorn for speaking and instrument parts in the emcee segment of the finals package



In February this year the seed of an idea was planted by Emma Worthington, a chorus member, who had recently been to a successful fundraising event hosted by a pair of dynamic, comedic women. The evening focused on fun, bingo and raising money. Emma felt it could be the winning formula for raising enough money to go towards new risers for the chorus. The chorus instantly bought into Emma's concept of a large-scale fundraiser with the Christchurch-based comedy duo, Ethel & Bethel™ Bingo Babes.

With the chorus sold on the idea, there was enough buy-in to start scoping out sponsors, sourcing auction items, tapping supporters for raffle donations, selling tables and individual tickets ready for the scheduled event on 31 August 2024. Once the event was live, tickets

started selling quickly and after just 2 weeks the event was sold out with a waiting list in full swing! However, we found a way to increase the number of attendees, and by the middle of July the event was sold out to 330 people.

Now there's no denying, an event of this scale takes a lot of organising; the venue, the budget, social media, catering, sponsors, auctions, raffles, chocolate wheels, bingo dibbers, table cloths, lighting and don't forget the bar!! But with a sterling team to rely on, the mental and physical load could be spread! Big shout out to Jo Maxwell, Julie Parker, Pene Leadbeater, Janet Sleith, Megan Lane, MJ Cheape, Mia Irving and Toni Dines for all the team efforts involved.

The sponsorship we received from local businesses and chorus connections was absolutely astounding; from pure hard cash to a harbour cruise for 16 people, even Faultline Chorus themselves were auctioned, the generosity was so much more than anticipated and blew us away on the night!

And what can we say about Ethel & Bethel themselves? What absolute winners! From the pre-event organising with Emma, to when they first arrived on the big night, pulling up to the venue in their car with a honk

of the horn, they were in character and had the crew laughing from the get-go. They knew what they needed (a cup of tea), they knew how the event should flow and as soon as the evening started they were in full control of the crowd (their biggest event to date) and commanded the room with amazing and hilarious talent. The audience experienced a night of entertainment, bingo, and an awful lot of laughter! If you're looking to do something similar, Ethel and Bethel are your ladies and they travel!

Totalling up the event, we raised more than enough for the risers we'd been looking at! So overall a huge success from vision to delivery, not to mention a legendary event management plan in the bank ready for the next time. Right Emma?!

Well done Emma, well done team, well done Faultline!

Kāhore taku toa i te toa takitahi he toa takitini

We cannot succeed without the support of those around us.

- Māori proverb

**TONI DINES
FAULTLINE CHORUS**



Sweet Adelines INTERNATIONAL



The Greater Auckland Chorus Journey to Kansas City: A Harmonious Rollercoaster

The Greater Auckland Chorus Journey to Kansas City: A Harmonious Rollercoaster
Ah, what a year it's been! From Auckland to Kansas City, the Greater Auckland Chorus has been on a whirlwind journey that began back in May 2023. That's when we clinched the top spot in the small chorus division at the regional competition. With our soaring

score qualifying us first among the top five globally, the invitation to the prestigious Harmony Classic Division A was in hand. Cue the excitement - and the planning!

And plan we did. To conquer the international stage, we plotted a roadmap covering the timeframe for outlining the theme, member qualification dates on songs,

mandatory rehearsal dates, and everything else needed to get buy-in from all our talented singers. And with that, we were revving the chorus engine. Next, we had to settle on the specifics of our concept and song lineup. But this wasn't just a 'pick your favorite tunes' situation; we wanted a theme that would wow audiences, and to use the approach of selecting songs to fit the story, rather than build the story around the songs. With that in mind, Jocosa Bruce, Kristina Roper and Anna Graham gathered for some serious brainstorming. Out of this think tank emerged a cohesive, theatrical 15-minute 'Haunted House' entertainment package - something bold, fun, and uniquely us. With two songs specially arranged by our in-house musical wizard, Kristina Roper, we were well on our way.

After months of hard work and effort from our incredible director, Jocosa Bruce, as well as from every single member in multiple aspects of preparation and planning,

(CONTINUED OVER PAGE)



Hotel room celebrations after our win

May 2024 found us taking our concept for a test drive on stage at the regional competition in Dunedin, where we showcased a shortened version of our package. It was an invaluable experience, complete with audience appreciation and judges' feedback to fuel our Kansas City dreams.

Then, we stepped things up with coaching sessions from two phenomenal external coaches. They worked with us on theatrics, staging, and storytelling, transforming us from harmonious singers into full-on entertainers. And let's just say, 'selling it' on stage quickly became our new forte. The final prep included performing for friends and family, giving us a chance to nail our mic technique, run a full-dress rehearsal, and soak up the energy from our biggest fans.

"by the time we boarded our flights to kansas city, we were pumped and primed for an unforgettable performance."

Our time on stage was where it all came together - our peak moment. Every note, every move, every ounce of energy went into those 15 minutes. When we finally stepped off stage, the nail-biting began as we waited

for the results. And then, in a surreal moment, they announced that we had won. Was it really us? We were in complete shock, feeling disbelief - after all, we'd never placed first in an international competition before! But once it sunk in, joy and pride took over as we accepted our gold medals and lifted the trophy, overwhelmed by the journey and the honor of bringing home the win.

So, here's to the power of planning, passion, and a little extra pizzazz. Greater Auckland Chorus, we did it! Here's to the journey, the music, and every glorious high note along the way.

**SUZANNE BERRESFORD
GREATER AUCKLAND CHORUS**



More photos over the page!





We enjoyed many meals out together

More GAC adventures together in Kansas City!



Breakfast together on contest day



Coronet Club fancy dress



GAC with Sandy and Tim Marron and some Lions Gate Chorus members



GAC members at Kansas City Market





An Educational Journey: A Barbershop Lover's Dream!

In July of this year, I had the privilege of travelling to the USA to attend two incredible events: the Directors and Visual Leaders Seminar in Tulsa and the Barbershop Harmony Society's Harmony University in Denver. Both experiences were game-changers for my musical journey, offering inspiration, new techniques, and a deeper understanding of barbershop and singing, not to mention directing!

After a few travel hiccups following the global IT crash, I made it to Tulsa and met up with the rest of the SANZ contingent for the DVLS. Surrounded by passionate directors and visual leaders from all reaches of the organisation, I learnt about methods to enhance our chorus's stage presence and storytelling through song, tuning vs. intonation, and tips for creating choreo plans while keeping the voice in mind. We explored techniques to elevate performance energy, helping our singers connect with the music in a more authentic way. And we had some fun with Ben Bram (co-creator of Pentatonix) adding some pop embellishments to the weekend's song. Imagine the horror of the lead section when they were told they didn't have to hold the note all the way to the end of the phrase!!



Next it was on to Denver for Harmony University - an immersive week filled with classes, coaching, and networking. It was truly a barbershop lover's dream! From vocal pedagogy to arranging and directing, the learning opportunities were endless. The expert faculty were incredibly approachable, sharing invaluable insights and knowledge. Some highlights were learning about vocal science and what's physically happening in the voice, and having some personalised coaching and development on my directing skills. I'm told a handshake from the mighty Dr. Don Campbell is hard to come by! Actually, now that I reflect on it, the entire trip was a highlight!



I came home with fresh ideas, a renewed sense of purpose and self-belief, and countless resources to share with my chorus and the region.

My thanks to the region for selecting me as the 2023 Education Scholarship recipient, and I especially thank my wonderful chorus, Nelson Bays Harmony, without whose daily support and encouragement this trip would not have been possible! I encourage anyone who has the chance to attend either of these events - it will be transformative not only for you as an individual but for your entire chorus community!

ALEX CHARLTON
NELSON BAYS HARMONY CHORUS

New Musical Director

The Sounds of Hawkes Bay Chorus takes great pleasure in introducing our new musical director, Rachel Cadwallader. She is married and has an eight year old son, and her family live in Taradale, Napier. Rachel grew up surrounded by music, especially singing. Her parents often sang around the house, and her father sang in local operas. He currently still sings in two local choirs. They attended church as a family and enjoyed much singing in that genre, hence Rachel's background is mainly choral music.

As Rachel grew up she learned to play the piano and the clarinet, and at high school she took voice lessons for three years. She sang in school choirs, and played in school orchestras and bands.

In 2018 Rachel joined the Sounds of Hawkes Bay Chorus and she fell in love with barbershop singing. Apart from the singing, Rachel enjoyed the

friendliness of the chorus members and the musical education she received every week.

"she was really impressed that sweet adelines provided so much education along with the chance to travel and to perform at region 35 national conventions."

At the end of 2022 our chorus director resigned and so in 2023 our members had to step up in order to help keep our chorus running. Our member numbers were low, but the levels of enthusiasm and commitment were high. Rachel really stepped up; she often took physical warm-ups, she took vocal warm-ups, she took over the chorus website, in fact she did



whatever needed doing. We noticed that she had a natural ability when teaching tags during vocal warm-ups so she was encouraged to think about possibly taking on the role of musical director. As with everything Rachel attempts, she took the idea on and has never looked back. At the chorus AGM this year, she was officially declared our Hawkes Bay Chorus Musical Director.

Rachel realises that she has much to learn, but she is looking forward to the challenge. She attended the Region 35 Directors' Workshop in Wellington at the end of 2023 and has started studying the DCP. She has really appreciated the support from other directors in New Zealand, especially from Carolyn Currington. Carolyn visited us in September to coach our chorus, and the advice and guidance she gave Rachel was incredibly valuable. The chorus will be evaluating at our 2025 Convention in Christchurch, the first time Rachel will be facing a panel of judges. We are taking lots of opportunities to perform around Hawkes Bay, so she is having plenty of directing practice. Our chorus is extremely supportive of Rachel and we work hard to do whatever she asks of us. This caring feeling is reciprocated. I'd like to finish this piece with a direct quote from Rachel: 'I'm lucky to be able to direct a chorus that has such a lovely group of women'.

LESLEY STANDRING
SOUNDS OF HAWKES BAY CHORUS



FINANCE REPORT

For the latest financial reports,
please visit the SANZ website:
<https://www.sweetadelines.co.nz/rmtdocuments>



Nelson Barbie's Exciting Adventure to SAI Headquarters

It was a cold and dark 14-hour plane ride in my protective plastic sleeping bag all the way to Tulsa, OK. But I knew that good things come to those who wait. And boy was it worth it! I saw a sliver of light and knew that the day had finally come; the day that I would visit my friends at the SAI Headquarters!

I was nervous, but so excited as I slipped into my black leather uber. It was a share ride, a water bottle with a chilly disposition and a pair of sunglasses who seemed a bit shady, were my ride mates... I was glad to wave them goodbye. I burst through the front doors and my friends were waiting for me! Some young, some older, but every one of them winners in my eyes.



Down the hallway, I made some new friends! Lady A Cappella were most gracious and welcoming, some might say Queens.



My tummy started rumbling soon and after the long flight, I decided I needed some coffee and toast. Although in the end decided against the toast due to health and safety concerns...



The next stop of my visit was the IBOD Board room. I was honoured when they invited me to speak and take a seat at the table. I was in with a grin, the state of the organisation is in good hands!

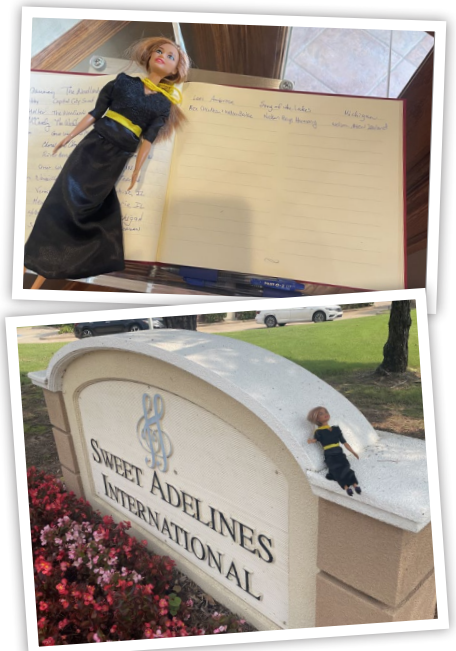


But then something sparkly caught my eye... could it be? The Holy Grail? The shining light of a crown?! It was! Although this one seemed to have lost its owner. I wondered if it would fit in the suitcase home with me... I was firmly told 'No,' by my tour guide.



Dreaming of the day that I, Nelson Barbie, would get a Barbie sized crown of my own, it was time to sign the guest book and be on my way. As I waved goodbye to my friends, I slipped out into the Tulsa heat for the obligatory photo at the SAI sign. Then it was back into the uber, into my sleeping bag and back home to NZ; hoping and wishing for the day that I might get the chance to join my friends in their glass homes at SAI Headquarters.

NELSON BAYS HARMONY CHORUS



Brenna with the chorus



Brenna with Kristina

Spooky Jazzy Vibe

It wasn't our original intention to have custom songs in our Haunted House themed Harmony Classic package, but a change of plans resulted in a very cool connection between the Greater Auckland Chorus and US artist Brenna.

Initially, we planned to use existing arrangements, but it turned out the 'scene setting' song we considered was only available in a medley which didn't fit our narrative. Using some reverse engineering, I searched the ArrangeMe database for 'haunted house' and eventually discovered 'This House is Haunted' by Brenna. Its spooky jazzy vibe was perfect, so I had a go arranging it in barbershop-flavoured a cappella. The arrangement worked, the scene was set and we successfully performed it as part of our abridged package at regional contest.

While scrolling Facebook post-contest, I saw a post where Brenna expressed her surprise and gratitude at being a top 10 artist on Spotify for a

few fans. I commented, saying that I was one of those - her song was my #3 song after listening to it a LOT while arranging by ear - explaining the full back story and that we would be performing it in KC later in the year.

About six weeks later, Brenna replied: 'OH MY GOSH WHAT HOW DID I MISS THIS COMMENT!!!!!! Do you have any recordings of this?!?! I NEED AN UPDATE!!!' We connected via messenger, and I sent her some clips and swore her to secrecy until after our international performance. The chorus was thrilled to hear that the original artist knew of and was excited about our endeavours.

As we were getting ready to depart NZ for Kansas City, I received another message from Brenna: 'Hi Kristina! I hope preparation for Kansas City is going well! Question... is the event open to the public?? If I could swing it, it would be so cool to come see you perform my song.... If I can though don't tell the chorus!'

Given she lived between Texas and NYC, I wasn't hopeful, but fortuitously she had been nominated for a Josie award in Nashville and was prepared to go on a side quest to meet us.

The morning of the visit, I sent the chorus the video of her original song to maximise the chances of them recognising her. Everything went to plan, and when Brenna arrived, the chorus was ecstatic! She spent the rest of the rehearsal with us, saying the experience was extra special as she used to sing in her collegiate a cappella choir. She then joined some of us for lunch. It turned out her song was only on ArrangeMe due to a collaborator, and the first she knew of it was when I contacted her! It was truly meant to be.

For more about Brenna, see <https://www.brennamusicofficial.com/>

**KRISTINA ROPER
GREATER AUCKLAND CHORUS**

NZ CHAPTER CONTACTS

BELLA A CAPPELLA CHORUS

Director: Patti Cooke
TC: Gaye Dawn, g.dawn@slingshot.co.nz
Meets: Thursdays 6.30pm
Kerikeri Masonic Lodge, Masonic Lane
2 Cobham Road, Kerikeri 0293
Ph 09 405 8773 / 021 0233 8126
bellaacappellanz.com

CHRISTCHURCH CITY CHORUS

Director: Virginia Humphrey-Taylor
TC: Andrea Ward
rac.rah@xtra.co.nz
Meets: Wednesdays 7pm
Te Raekura Redcliffs School
113 Beachville Rd, Redcliffs, Christchurch
Ph 027 281 0401
ccchorus.co.nz

DUNEDIN HARMONY CHORUS

Director: Robyn Abernethy
TC: Anna McIntyre
Anna.dunedinharmony@gmail.com
Meets: Tuesdays 7.30pm
Andersons Bay Bowling Club
Bayfield Road, Dunedin
Ph 03 489 5186
dunedin.harmonysite.com

FAULTLINE CHORUS

Director: Carolyn Currington
TC: Leigh Whitelaw
thegirls09@xtra.co.nz
Meets: Wednesdays 7.30pm
Salvation Army Crossroads
Cnr High / Cuba Sts,
Petone, Wellington
Ph 021 552 583
faultline.org.nz

FOVEAUX HARMONY CHORUS

Director: Sarah Rae
TC: Karen Owen
kaviksmum@gmail.com
Meets: Thursdays 7pm
U.F.S Hall, 76 Tay St, Invercargill
Ph 021 120 9090
foveauxharmony.co.nz

GREATER AUCKLAND CHORUS

Director: Jocosa Bruce
TC: Jennifer Caldwell,
jcaldwell@xtra.co.nz
Meets: Tuesdays 7pm
St Barnabas Anglican Church
283 Mount Eden Road, Mt Eden, Auckland
Ph 021 624 162
greateracklandchorus.com

MANAWATŪ OVERTONES CHORUS

Co-Directors: Sylvia Fountain & Liz Watts
TC: Stephanie Greaney
skgreaney@outlook.com
Meets: Tuesdays 7pm
Palmerston North Community Leisure
Centre, 569 Ferguson St,
Palmerston North
Ph 021 616 246
facebook.com/ManawatuOvertones

NELSON BAYS HARMONY CHORUS

Co-Directors: Eileen Smith & Alex Charlton
TC: Trish Armstrong
tiarmstrong@xtra.co.nz
Meets: Thursdays 7pm
Club Waimea, Lower Queen St
Richmond. Ph 027 654 6923
nelsonharmony.org.nz

SOUNDS OF HAWKES BAY CHORUS

Director: Rachel Cadwallader
TC: Gillian Randell
gillian_randell@hotmail.com
Meets: Thursdays 7.15pm
Clive School, 57 School Rd, Clive
Ph 021 0819 2149
soundsofhawkesbaychorus.co.nz

SOUTHCITY SOUNDZ CHORUS

Director: Cheryl Weijermars
TC: Fleur de Farias
defarias@xtra.co.nz
Meets: Mondays 7pm
Papatoetoe Cosmopolitan Club Inc.
53 Rangitoto Rd, Papatoetoe
Ph 027 228 6053
facebook.com/SouthCity-Soundz

TARANAKI HARMONY CHORUS

Director: Gill Holmes
TC: Carol Chapman
caroljchapman@hotmail.com
Meets: Wednesdays 7pm
The Mamaku Centre,
6 Mamaku St, Inglewood 4330
Ph 021 0267 2311
taranakiharmony.co.nz

WAIKATO RIVERTONES CHORUS

Director: Kate Sinclair
TC: Pam Roa
enquiries@waikatorivertones.com
Meets: Mondays 7pm
Marian School Hall, Clyde St, Hamilton
Ph 027 500 5564
waikatorivertones.com

WELLINGTON CITY CHORUS

Co-Directors: David Brooks & Jo Hodgson
TC: Carolyn Spackman
spacks@xtra.co.nz
Meets: Mondays 7pm
Wellington Bridge Club,
17 Tinakori Rd, Wellington
Ph 027 283 7414
wellingtoncitychorus.org

WHANGAREI HARMONY CHORUS

Director: Kim Cairns
TC: Mary Hamilton
duncan.mary@xtra.co.nz
Meets: Mondays 6.30pm
Brass Band Hall, Dyer St, Whangārei
Ph 027 408 7917 / 09 437 7456
whangareiharmony.org.nz

*Please email
addaline@sweetadelines.co.nz
to update any chorus
contact info on this page.*

REGION 35 SWEET ADELINES NEW ZEALAND

Mission:

Elevating women singers in New Zealand through education, performance, and competition in barbershop harmony and a cappella music.

Vision:

A diverse community of women enriching lives through song.

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WE ARE SWEET ADELINES

Founded in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1945, Sweet Adelines started as a small group of women who loved to sing. Since then, it has evolved into an organization that spans the globe connecting thousands of singers around the world in song. We're dedicated to preserving the unique sound of a cappella barbershop harmony, sharing our passion for music and empowering our community in every area of their lives.



Merry
Christmas
and happy
New Year to all

