

**sweet  
adelines**  
new zealand

# the addaline

december 2025

ISSN 1176-872X



From Your Team Coordinator...	3
Upcoming SANZ Education Events	4
Where Do My Sweet Adelines International Membership Dues Go?	5
Where Does My SANZ Levy Go?	6
Photo Board Displays - Help Wanted	6
Sing With Us in Columbus!	7
A Season of Change: Christchurch City Chorus Enters a New Chapter	8 - 9

SAI Columbus 2025 Highlights	10 - 11
Sounds of Hawkes Bay Celebrate 20 Years	12
The Influence of Song	12
Docappella Weekend Workshop	13 - 14
Backbeat and Brilliance: A Tribute to Melody Lowe	15 - 17
Nelson Bays Harmony Chorus Celebrate Their Pearl Jubilee	18 - 19
Our Friend Sue Rigby	20 - 21
Chapter Contacts	22



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 organisation that spans the globe. [www.sweetadelines.com](http://www.sweetadelines.com)

## RMT



**JULIE EARL**  
Team Coordinator  
tc  
[@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:@sweetadelines.co.nz)



**SHELLEY BASCAND**  
Events Coordinator  
events  
[@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:@sweetadelines.co.nz)



**SHELLEY PHILLIPS**  
Marketing Coordinator  
marketing  
[@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:@sweetadelines.co.nz)



**NIKOLA WORRALL-BADER**  
Membership Coordinator  
membership  
[@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:@sweetadelines.co.nz)



**LEIGH AGNEW**  
Finance Coordinator  
finance  
[@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:@sweetadelines.co.nz)



**LEANNE WHEELER**  
Education Coordinator  
education  
[@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:@sweetadelines.co.nz)  
027 765 9866



**KATIE MATHISON**  
Communications Coordinator  
sweetadsnz@gmail.com



**CAROLYN CURRINGTON**  
Directors' Coordinator  
directorcoord  
[@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:@sweetadelines.co.nz)  
027 226 7978

### REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM

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

### REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Membership Records & Anniversary Maintenance - CHIKA DEANE

### REGIONAL EDUCATION TEAM

Arranger Education Specialist - ROWENA HARPER  
YWIH Coordinator - KIM MILLER

### REGIONAL FACULTY

KATE SINCLAIR, JO MAXWELL, SHELLEY BASCAND, CAROLYN CURRINGTON, ROWENA HARPER, SUZANNE BERRESFORD

### RESOURCE TEAM

**SHARON CONNOR**  
Website Coordinator  
[webadmin@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:webadmin@sweetadelines.co.nz)

**DAVID BROOKS**  
Region 35 Statistician  
[stats@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:stats@sweetadelines.co.nz)

**SANDY GUNN**  
Addaline Coordinator  
[addaline@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:addaline@sweetadelines.co.nz)

**CHRISTIE OBERHOLSTER**  
DCP Coordinator  
[dcp@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:dcp@sweetadelines.co.nz)

**RACHEL WATTS**  
Historian  
[historian@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:historian@sweetadelines.co.nz)

**BRIANNA PERRY**  
Addaline Design & Layout  
[addaline@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:addaline@sweetadelines.co.nz)

**RUTH CARSON**  
Quartet Coordinator  
[quartets@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:quartets@sweetadelines.co.nz)

**CLAIRE TAKÁCS**  
Convention Facilities Coordinator  
[claireandack@gmail.com](mailto:claireandack@gmail.com)

**FIONA BRODIE**  
Chapter at Large Coordinator  
[membership@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:membership@sweetadelines.co.nz)



# From Your Team Coordinator...

There's something truly special about being part of a Sweet Adelines chorus, the music, the laughter, the friendships, and that unbeatable feeling of belonging. Add in the buzz of performing and the thrill of competition, and it's no wonder we keep coming back for more!

Our focus is to help every member **Learn, Connect, Perform and Compete**. These four pillars guide every decision your Regional Management Team (RMT) makes, ensuring you have plenty of opportunities to grow, share your passion, and thrive.

The **Hooked on Harmony** tag competition was a great reminder of the joy we create together. Well done to our arrangers who also had the opportunity to shine. Congratulations to Dunedin Harmony Chorus, Nelson Bays Harmony Chorus, and Manawātū Overtones — our tag competition winners! Over 66,000 people tuned in on Facebook alone — spreading harmony (and awareness of who we are!) far and wide.

Opportunities to learn and connect have been a real highlight. Ryan Heller's coaching visit was hugely popular. Barbershop Theory was also a hit, thank you Leanne Wheeler (Education Coordinator), and over 50 members have tuned into our joint

online workshops with Region 34: everything from Chorus Management to Copyright to "Dollars and Decisions." Recordings are available on the SANZ website if you missed out.

Our **Directors, Music and Visual Leaders Weekend** was another standout. Sharon Cartwright inspired us with her keynote on "Leading with Influence," reminding us that culture grows not from rules, but from *ripples of tone, patience and energy*. Jan Carley, our other international speaker, focussed on the importance of a generative rather than fixed mindset, improving instead of proving. Huge thanks to our talented SANZ Faculty for delivering such a powerful and practical weekend of learning.

On behalf of the Regional Management Team, I want to acknowledge the passing of **Melody Lowe, Greater Auckland Chorus**. Melody served on the RMT and made a significant contribution, not only to her chorus but to the wider Sweet Adelines community. Her dedication, talent, and service will be deeply missed.

We want to acknowledge the fantastic performances at the **Sweet Adelines International** event of the year 2025 in Columbus, with many enjoying the live stream watching as quartets and choruses crossed the stage. Faultline



Chorus will represent New Zealand on the international stage (also in Columbus) in 2026 and I know they can't wait.

As 2025 draws to a close, we're already looking ahead to Harmony Manawātū leading the charge for another fantastic regional event in May 2026.

On behalf of your Regional Management Team, thank you for everything you bring to our Sweet Adelines community. Wishing you all a joyful festive season and an inspiring start to 2026!

Ngā mihi nui,

**JULIE EARL**  
**TEAM COORDINATOR**



## watch competition performances



Are you new to barbershop and want to find out what all the excitement is about? Or are you a faithful barbershop fan and want to experience your favourite chorus or quartet's performance over and over again? **Visit the Sweet Adelines International YouTube channel** and listen to ringing chords until your heart's content!



Scan the QR code or watch online via this link: <https://www.youtube.com/user/SweetAdelineIntl>

# SANZ Upcoming Education Events

Get these 2026 events in your diary now and stay tuned for more. Any questions, email Leanne: [education@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:education@sweetadelines.co.nz)

FEB MAR

**27-1**

**SINGIN' & RINGIN' QUARTET WORKSHOP**  
Nelson

Trafalgar Street Hall  
67 Trafalgar Street  
The Wood, Nelson

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to learn from Glenda Lloyd – Bass, Skylark (2025 9th place international quartet), and Master Director, Brindabella Chorus.

Grab your quartet mates and start planning.  
**More details coming soon!**

MAR

**6-8**

**SINGIN' & RINGIN' QUARTET WORKSHOP**  
Auckland

Epsom Bowling Club  
77 The Drive  
Epsom, Auckland

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to learn from Glenda Lloyd – Bass, Skylark (2025 9th place international quartet), and Master Director, Brindabella Chorus.

Grab your quartet mates and start planning.  
**More details coming soon!**

MAY

**14-17**

**HARMONY MANAWATŪ REGION 35 CONVENTION**  
Palmerston North

*Keep an eye out for*

**Beginner and Intermediate Music Theory Zoom sessions** with SANZ Faculty Suzanne Berresford and Rowena Harper. Dates tbc

**SINGIN' & RINGIN'**  
QUARTET WORKSHOPS  
WITH GLENDA LLOYD

**sweet adelines**  
new zealand

NELSON: 27 FEBRUARY - 1 MARCH 2026  
AUCKLAND: 6-8 MARCH 2026



**PALMY**

SWEET ADELINES NZ 2026

**15-17 May 2026**

**Harmony Manawatu**



# Where Do My Sweet Adelines International Membership Dues Go?

When you pay your Sweet Adelines International membership dues, you are investing in more than just the administration of our organisation. You are supporting a global network dedicated to helping you and your chorus grow, perform and thrive. Here's how your dues contribute:

## EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

- Access to online learning modules to extend your knowledge about singing e.g. the Director Certification programme (DCP)
- Grants to the regional education programme
- Coaching programmes, workshops, and webinars (live and online)
- Resources on vocal production, music theory, and visual presentation
- International faculty supporting regional and chorus-level coaching

## GLOBAL SUPPORT AND EVENTS

- Governance structure supporting 20,000 members worldwide
- Organisation of international contests, conventions, and events
- Year-round support from the international head office team
- Member portals, digital platforms, and online resources

## CHORUS RESOURCES

- Marketing and recruitment materials e.g. Mission Retention initiative
- Access to music libraries, mass songs, learning tracks, and coaching guides
- Templates, graphics, and campaign support
- Ongoing development of digital tools and educational content

## LEADERSHIP & INCLUSION

- Training and development for leaders at all levels
- Support for Regional Management Teams and committees
- Delivery of leadership programmes and events
- Investment in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (many resources online)

## PERFORMANCE & RECOGNITION

- International judging programme
- Support for regional and international competitions
- Opportunities for performance and global exposure
- Funding for new 'Thrive' initiatives

## CONNECTION & COMMUNITY

- Online forums, Zoom sessions, and best-practice sharing
- Access to a global network of singers, leaders, and educators
- Member-focused communications such as The Pitch Pipe
- Networking with members around the world

Every dollar of your membership supports everyone's journey, on the risers, in leadership, and beyond. By being a member, you help sustain a global legacy of harmony, learning, and empowerment through music.



## upcoming international events



# Where Does My SANZ Levy Go? Understanding the Value of Your Membership

Sweet Adelines Aotearoa New Zealand (SANZ, Region 35) is a not-for-profit organisation run by passionate volunteers. Your membership levy is used responsibly to create a vibrant, supportive community for all members, and to help us achieve our shared musical and organisational goals. Here's what your levy supports:

## LEADERSHIP AND OPERATIONS

- Strategic planning and management of the region
- Day-to-day support for projects, activities, and member needs

## EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

- Subsidised regional workshops and coaching
- Free access to regional mass songs
- Faculty support for chorus coaching and chorus management
- Director Certification Program (DCP) administration and support
- Education Scholarships

## EVENTS AND COMPETITIONS

- Annual Convention and competition
- Grants for winning choruses and quartets travelling internationally

- Scholarships for young upper-voice singers

## CHORUS SUPPORT

- Help for chorus revitalisation and growth
- Guidance on chorus administration and operations
- Grants for coaching and marketing

## GOVERNANCE AND RECOGNITION

- Support for compliance, bylaws, and legislative changes
- Management of the Prue Blythe Memorial Trust
- Administration of membership awards and recognition

## COMMUNITY AND GROWTH

- Opportunities to build friendships and connections

- Personal and leadership development pathways
- Open-door access to the Regional Management Team
- Supportive space for learning, innovation, and new ideas
- Regional social media promotion for choruses and quartets

## IN SUMMARY

Your membership levy supports more than just events; they sustain a community. They unlock access to world-class education, coaching, leadership support, and vibrant regional events. They help choruses thrive and members grow, on stage and beyond. Thank you for being part of Sweet Adelines Aotearoa New Zealand. Every contribution helps keep the harmony alive.

# Photo Board Displays – Help Wanted

I have decided that next year at Palmerston North, will be the final year that I will be collating the display of photo boards at a New Zealand Sweet Adelines Convention. My partner Gerry and I have done this task for 20 years. Unfortunately age and its accompanying problems have caught up with us. We've thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and I have been fortunate to meet many Sweet Adelines throughout New Zealand because of it.

We would love/invite someone to take the job over. I'm happy to hand

over the following, to anyone who is interested—information, contacts and the big folio bag that transports the boards around the country.

My email is [lesleys@xtra.co.nz](mailto:lesleys@xtra.co.nz) and mobile is 021 174 9770. Please contact me if you are even slightly interested, it's great fun and a really neat way to support the membership division of the RMT.

Thank you,

**LESLEY STANDRING**  
**SOUNDS OF HAWKES BAY CHORUS**





# Sing With Us in Columbus!

Faultline Chorus are welcoming expressions of interest from Sweet Adelines NZ singers to be part of our competition chorus in Columbus, Ohio 2026.

- Join our friendly, fun & welcoming singer-driven chorus, for the opportunity to travel and perform on the Sweet Adelines International stage in 2026.
- Learn two contest songs you'll love to sing, as well as a selection of fun travelling repertoire songs.
- Be a part of coaching, education and performances with the chorus.

## KEY DATES

- 20-22 February
- 1-3 May
- 15-16 May (Evaluation at Harmony Manawatū)
- 12-14 June
- 21-23 August
- 2-4 October
- In Columbus, arrive Friday 23 October, compete Thursday 29 October. The Sweet Adeline International Convention dates are 26-31 October 2026.

## MORE INFORMATION

View our full info pack with criteria and more details on the key dates here:  
[bit.ly/singwithusincolumbus](https://bit.ly/singwithusincolumbus)

## INTERESTED?

We'd love to hear from you! Send your expression of interest to Carolyn Currington:  
[faultlinechorus@gmail.com](mailto:faultlinechorus@gmail.com)

**JO MAXWELL**  
**FAULTLINE CHORUS**





Nicky, Andrea, Heather, Hazel, Virginia



# A Season of Change: Christchurch City Chorus Enters a New Chapter

After more than forty years of extraordinary leadership under Master Director Virginia Humphrey-Taylor, Christchurch City Chorus (CCC) stands at a poignant and exciting moment in its history. The process of finding a new director has begun—and while it's the close of one remarkable era, it's also the beginning of another.

Virginia's influence reaches far beyond musical direction. Her legacy is woven through the friendships, laughter, and the confident sound that defines CCC today. As the chorus begins its search for its next leader, members have been reflecting on the many ways Virginia has shaped their musical and personal journeys.

## FINDING HARMONY — AND HOME

Long-time member Hazel remembers arriving in New Zealand in 2003 and spotting a small advert for the chorus in the Buy, Sell & Exchange.

*"I thought there might be a dozen people there," she laughs, "but they were queuing outside and around the corner—84 people auditioned that night! Virginia took one listen and said, 'You're definitely a Bass!' I was overjoyed. No more screeching at the high notes!"*

Hazel joined in 2004, and within two weeks Virginia had connected her with a quartet. By 2006 she was invited to become an assistant director. *"I had absolutely no clue what I was saying yes to," she admits, "but I'll always be grateful to Virginia for believing in me."*

That belief extended beyond Hazel, to her family. *"In late 2004, the chorus opened Christmas rehearsals to anyone who wanted to sing. My three daughters came along—Laura, Jen and Cat—and they loved it. Virginia said she'd love them to join the chorus, and she fought hard to make it possible. I gave Cat six months at the most—she's just received her 20-year pin!"*

For Hazel, the impact of Virginia's mentorship has been both musical and deeply personal. *"We've all learned so much from Virginia over the last 20 years—she will certainly not be forgotten."*

## THE TEACHER, THE VISIONARY

For Heather, it was Virginia's energy and generosity that made the biggest impression.

*"When I first joined the chorus, I was immediately struck by the warm energy of Virginia," she says. "She*

*draws people in and makes them feel included and comfortable, while at the same time instilling a love of learning and embracing challenges that makes members excited to turn up to every rehearsal."*

Heather describes Virginia's teaching as a hidden gem in the city. "

*the high-quality vocal coaching she gives every week, feels like the best-kept secret in christchurch.*

*Her passion is contagious—only those who've met her know the thrill of how she helps singers transform music from black dots into musical art."*

But perhaps most inspiring, Heather says, is Virginia's ability to empower others. *"She's always looking for ways to support and encourage people to see possibilities within themselves that they only ever dreamed of. The number of lives Virginia has touched is immeasurable."*

(CONTINUED OVER PAGE)



The impact she's had on me personally and musically has been truly life-changing. It may be the end of an era, but Virg has built such a legacy that our chorus will soar to even greater heights because of all she's given us."

### THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Andrea, who has been a Sweet Adeline for 25 years, echoes the same admiration. As a former team coordinator, she saw first-hand the care and dedication Virginia poured into the chorus.

*"I came to understand the incredible impact Virginia has on our chorus life," Andrea says. "Her vision shaped who we are—always striving for excellence, but with heart."*

When lockdowns halted rehearsals and international competition plans, Virginia refused to let distance dull the music. *"She organised online*

*coaching sessions with Britt-Helene Bonnedahl from Rönninge Show Chorus and local vocal director Richard Marrett," Andrea recalls. "Even though we were sitting alone at home, she made sure there were words of wisdom, laughter, and connection every week."*

It's this combination of discipline and compassion that elevated CCC to international recognition. *"She has always expected the highest standard from those who sing in her chorus," Andrea says. "Because of that, CCC has been incredibly successful."*

### MAGIC IN THE MAKING

Nicky— another long-standing member and choreographer, sums up the sentiment felt throughout the chorus: *"I will forever treasure the many wonderful memories of working alongside Virginia to create magic. I'm so grateful for her belief in me."*



For Nicky, one moment stands out above all: *"The first time CCC made it into the finals at International is firmly etched into my memory bank. Thank you, Virg, from the bottom of my heart for this exciting, wonderful journey."*

### A CHORUS FOR THE FUTURE

Now, as the baton begins to pass, Christchurch City Chorus steps forward with gratitude and anticipation. The search for a new director is underway—someone ready to build on Virginia's immense legacy and guide the chorus into its next era of growth, creativity and harmony. This season of change isn't one of farewell, but of renewal. The spirit that Virginia nurtured—inclusive, high-calibre, and full of joy, continues to resonate through every rehearsal, every performance, and every connection made through song.

*"Change," as one member reflected, "is just the next movement in our harmony."*

**MEL WAREING**  
CHRISTCHURCH CITY CHORUS





# SAI Columbus 2025 Highlights



## Quartet Finals RESULTS

- 1<sup>st</sup> Dynasty
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sirens
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Duly Noted
- 4<sup>th</sup> Lucille
- 5<sup>th</sup> VOCE
- 6<sup>th</sup> Serenade
- 7<sup>th</sup> All Fired Up!
- 8<sup>th</sup> Presto!
- 9<sup>th</sup> Skylark
- 10<sup>th</sup> Gusto!



2026 queens of harmony - dynasty



## Chorus Finals RESULTS

- 1<sup>st</sup> Toast of Tampa\*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Scottsdale
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Rich-Tone
- 4<sup>th</sup> Harbor City Music Company
- 5<sup>th</sup> Pearls of the Sound
- 6<sup>th</sup> Forth Valley
- 7<sup>th</sup> Vocal Standard
- 8<sup>th</sup> Diablo Vista
- 9<sup>th</sup> OK City
- 10<sup>th</sup> Buffalo Gateway



international champion chorus - toast of tampa







# SAI Columbus 2025 Highlights



harmony classic div a winners - milltown sound



harmony classic div aa winners - gateway chorus



lifetime achievement award - lori lyford



ann gooch award - viveka boettge



music educator award - audrianna aargon





# Sounds of Hawkes Bay Chorus Celebrate Their 20th Birthday

It's been 20 years since the two choruses, The Art Deco City Chorus (Napier based) and the Twin City Sounds Chorus (Hastings based), amalgamated, so we decided to celebrate and have a party!

During those twenty years, we have seen many people come and go and we have had many great times and some not so great times: we've braved covid and those restrictions and masks! We've laughed and we've cried, but we're still here. In fact, we're very healthy and currently growing our membership. There has been a loyal and dedicated core of members who has seen the chorus through

thick and thin, and now we can see the fruits of their efforts. We have a talented and enthusiastic director, Rachel Cadwallader, who is leading a chorus of 20 happy and hard working members.

*we sing with enjoyment  
and we fundraise hard,  
and we're so looking  
forward to region 35's  
convention in 2026.*

So, turning 20, we decided to have a party. Our team leader, Sandra

Marsh and her husband, just moved into a new house and it definitely is a house built for a party. Sandra made a lovely birthday cake and she and her husband Kevin were wonderful hosts as we enjoyed a pot luck dinner and party. We ate, we drank, and oh how we sang the night away. The longest serving member of our chorus, Lesley, and our newest member, Mary Horner, cut the cake together. There were some very sincere speeches, some lovely sentiments shared, then off we went, singing again. Because let's face it, that's what we love to do!

**LESLEY STANDRING**  
**SOUNDS OF HAWKES BAY CHORUS**

## The Influence of Song



One of our members (Chris Constable) regularly entertains groups of people at retirement villages

and rest homes by playing piano and singing. It's a labour of love really because the financial remuneration is generally low, the travel can be costly, and the need to maintain and add to existing repertoire is ever-present.

Recently, while singing to residents in the alzheimer's wing of a retirement village, one of the residents—a lovely Māori gentleman—approached Chris to thank her for her performance. He wrapped his arms around her neck and kissed her ear! Always eager to make people happy, Chris decided then to play some songs he would probably be familiar with—Hine e Hine, Pokarekare Ana and Māori Battalion. Clearly delighted,

he happily sang along with her—he knew all the words.

When Chris had finished playing, he kissed her again. The simple act of sharing music opened a doorway to treasured memories, bridging the gap between present and past for this man.

This moment was a reminder of the profound, often mysterious ways that music can reach us more than words. The music became a gentle vessel of connection—carrying memories, warmth, and joy. Well done Chris!

**TRISH VEEN**  
**WELLINGTON CITY CHORUS**





# “What do you get when you put a group of doctors together to sing barbershop?” Docappella of course!

On August 23rd and 24th this year, 34 New Zealand Women in Medicine (NZWIM) got together in Hamilton for a weekend workshop in the art of singing barbershop / a cappella, finishing with a joint concert with Waikato Rivertones Chorus and the Harmony Waikato groups, Manu Mātātahi and Mighty River Harmony Chorus. What an exhilarating weekend it was! You might ask, so how, did this all come about?

It all started a year ago when I was down in Nelson, coaching Nelson Bays Harmony Chorus. I was having a chat with a fellow doctor colleague,

Katie Ben (anaesthetist and baritone) who happened to mention that there is a NZ doctors' orchestra. Well, my ears immediately pricked up, having played flute for a number of different orchestras in my past, including the National Youth Orchestra of Wales. I was excited by the prospect of getting my flute out again and indulging in this passion. Back to chorus rehearsal the following Monday night and I happened to mention it in our 'good news' slot. This is when Claire Warren (bass, Waikato Rivertones Chorus, primary care clinician) took me aside and said, “Why don't we do a NZ Women in Medicine barbershop workshop?” Well, that got the cogs turning!

I enlisted the help of Kerry Macaskill-Smith (baritone, Waikato Rivertones Chorus and fellow GP colleague) and Claire Warren, to set up a task force. We then co-opted Kristina Roper (tenor, Greater Auckland Chorus, previous gold medal quartet tenor in Molto, GP and works in oncology) who then co-opted Kate Gregory-Wong (bass, Greater Auckland Chorus, rheumatologist) and Cheryl Archer (baritone, Faultline Chorus, GP). Between the six of us, we put

our heads together on how best to proceed.

During the 2024 Christmas break, we sent out an expression of interest via NZWIM Facebook page and within 24 hours we got over 60 responses! This showed clear interest and enthusiasm for the project. So now, there was no turning back. We were committed to doing this!

So, the organising committee got to work, (using the obligatory baritone spread sheet, LOL) divvying up jobs, creating questionnaires, looking at dates, travel and accommodation options, assigning potential voice parts and music selection etc. We ended up signing up 40 participants. We sent them out regular e-mails/Facebook posts on the new 'Docappella' group page to keep them all in the loop.

We decided on two songs for the weekend, 'Can't Help Falling in Love' arranged by Australian psychiatrist and tenor in Mixed Signals quartet-Emily Moriarty and 'That'll be the Day that I Die' arranged by Carole Prietto.

(CONTINUED OVER PAGE)





We sent out the score with breathing marked and learning tracks well in advance and asked everyone to learn this before the weekend.

The Docappella weekend was finally here. We had the programme set out for the weekend. On the Saturday, Kerry put together a meet and greet exercise, doing a bingo card where we all had to find members of the group who fit the descriptions on the card. This broke the ice. Kerry then took us for physical warm ups, I did a quick intro to barbershop and took a vocal development session to get us all singing with some degree of unity. We went off to sectionals, taken by myself, Cheryl, Kate and Kristina. We came back and put it together. Everyone came really well prepared so things came together really quickly. I did a quick voice placement so everyone had their place on the risers and then taught a simple but effective visual plan.

Of course, we had to create parody lyrics for 'That'll be the Day that I Die,' being a bunch of medics! Kristina came up with these and we had fun putting together a visual plan. This had a hypochondriacal patient presenting with multiple symptoms concerned they were going to die. During the song, instead of the original lyrics 'That some-day, well I'll be through,' the chorus chanted "THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH YOU", however, the patient did end up dying at the end!! Rowena Harper volunteered to be the patient and did an impressive dying swan act whilst Katie Ben tried to resuscitate her!

Waikato Rivertones Chorus had a fundraiser, doing the catering for the weekend which was appreciated by all. After singing all day, we took an



hour to unwind with a quiz put together by Kerry. We then made our way over to MADE, a local eatery for dinner, refreshments and socialising.

On Sunday morning, we got ready for the afternoon performance, doing a dress rehearsal and POD'S (performance on demand) with walk-ons and walk-offs. We had invited a couple of other local groups to join in a celebration of barbershop / a cappella music which gave Docappella a forum to perform. This was the icing on the cake.

*the members revelled  
in showcasing what  
they had achieved over  
the weekend and enjoyed  
watching the other  
groups perform. what a  
great collaboration of  
harmony singing.*

There was an unanimous and overwhelming buzz from the weekend and support for ongoing events of this nature. Since the weekend, we have heard of at least a handful, if not more, Docappella members joining their local choruses.

So, what now? We have proven that getting a group of professional upper voices together for a fun weekend of learning, singing and performing is possible — and created an opportunity for hard working professionals to come together for some time out of their busy schedules, to do something different for themselves.

We challenge you to consider extending this to your own professional bodies and spreading the word of barbershop harmony, which let's face it, is much needed in this world.

**KATE SINCLAIR  
WAIKATO RIVERTONES CHORUS**







# Backbeat and Brilliance: A Tribute to Melody Lowe

When Melody Lowe first spotted a newspaper ad looking for ‘low-voiced women,’ she probably didn’t picture the decades of music, leadership, and friendship that would follow. But in many ways, her life had already been preparing her for barbershop—gathering people together, performing with gusto, and giving every ounce of herself to the music.

Melody was born in Auckland on 25 April 1950 to Constance and Reginald Hooper. After twelve years of waiting for a child, Melody liked to tease that she arrived thanks to the “China egg theory”—once her parents had a baby to care for, suddenly

the biological ones arrived. Melody was the eldest, quickly followed by brothers Mostyn and Haydon.

*Melody's 'golden child' status was confirmed early. She got the biggest bedroom, the first turn in the bath, and the prime seat on dad's bicycle, while her brothers were politely asked to hop off and push up the hills.*

Music, dance, and theatre quickly became part of her identity. She and Mostyn won medals in ballroom and Latin American dance. She shone in school musical theatre, including a memorable turn in HMS Pinafore. At age eleven, her artistic talent earned her a prize and a feature in the Auckland Star for a detailed sketch of her teacher. When invited to celebrate her win, she ordered spaghetti on toast with an egg on top; gourmet tastes still in progress.

Her mother’s passing during Melody’s teen years meant growing up sooner than most, taking on household responsibilities and caring for her brothers. It built resilience and a deep instinct to look after others; qualities that later made her such a powerful educator and leader.

Melody studied English and Music at the University of Auckland, graduating in 1972 before completing teacher training. She joined the Progressive Youth Movement, beginning a lifelong pattern: if something mattered, Melody showed up—with her voice, with passion, and with purpose.

(CONTINUED OVER PAGE)

She wasn’t spoiled—she simply exuded main-character energy right from the start.

Her creativity exploded at home. She would write, direct, and of course star in elaborate backyard productions, with her brothers cast in reluctantly supportive roles. Admission fees were charged, costumes were hand-sewn by their mother, and neighbourhood entertainment was assured.







She married Don in 1974 and moved to Wairoa the next year. There she taught English and Drama, performed in the Little Theatre, helped form a folk quartet, joined the choral society, and even coached basketball. Jocosa arrived in 1977, and Melody threw herself wholeheartedly into motherhood.

Back in Auckland, she taught at Rosehill College for 16 years, opening her home (sometimes too widely!) to people needing a place to land. Theatre remained a constant; starring roles, stage management, anything involving a stage and a cast. Her CV from that time reads like a highlight reel of community performance.

As if teaching and performing weren't enough, Melody also found time for a whole new challenge.

In 1995, she made a bold career shift into real estate. She was told to save three months' salary to survive the usual slow start; but that wasn't Melody's style. In her first year she earned double her teaching income. She quickly rose through the ranks, becoming number 10 nationwide, and for three years the number 1 salesperson at Ellerslie. Awards were nice, but she most loved helping people find homes, working as tirelessly for clients as she did for her singers. She would literally chase a signature to the airport to get a deal across the line.

*real estate offered  
her independence,  
challenge, community,  
and yet another stage  
on which she shone.*

A year in the United States with Jocosa in 1989 had already shown she could succeed at just about anything—from summer camp programme director to wildly effective waitress—but it was real estate that set her up for everything she would later give to barbershop.



Despite barbershop being born in the USA, it wasn't until she returned home that she discovered the art form that would become her greatest passion.

In 1990, that fateful advertisement appeared. Low-voiced women wanted? Melody didn't need a second invitation.

She joined South City Harmony and was soon bass section leader, then assistant director, then director, because Melody did not tread water. She surfed the wave. After moving further north, she joined Greater Auckland Chorus but continued directing South City Harmony until 2003, when she fully took up the baton at GAC.

It was the start of something extraordinary.

Melody's musical leadership was bold, joyful, and fuelled by limitless drive. Under her direction, GAC won Region 35 championships in 2004, 2009, and 2014, earning multiple trips to the international stage: Phoenix, Detroit, Calgary, Seattle, Hawaii, Las Vegas.

Multiple high-scoring performances above 600 saw her honoured as a master director—a milestone she was extremely proud of. Her favourite number? The stunning 643 GAC achieved in 2009.

(CONTINUED OVER PAGE)





Sweet Adelines also recognised her with a merit pin, the SAI Ann Gooch Award, and the Service to Young Women in Harmony Award.

Those who sang under her will smile at the thought: backbeat was her obsession. Not everyone feels rhythm the way Melody did, and she simply could not understand a world where people didn't move. So, she made it her mission to help.

She joined Skyline Chorus in Denver under Vickie Maybury, who deliberately placed Melody in a 'pocket of death'; a section lacking energy. When chorus members complained this enthusiastic New Zealander kept bumping into them, Vickie simply replied, "Good! Move with her!" Melody competed with Skyline twice as an OOTER at Sweet Adelines International.

Expression was Melody's superpower. She once performed Thriller in a duct-tape Michael Jackson costume, complete with choreography. She gave everything, and somehow always had more to give.

Melody cared deeply about youth involvement. In 1993 she coached a school quartet to the inaugural Young Women in Harmony contest, winning first place. That passion later found a long-term home at Macleans College, where she directed Macappella for more than 15 years. They earned national gold in 2018 and placed 4th in 2024; a testament to the foundation she built.

Many of those singers stayed in barbershop because of the passion Melody had inspired them with.



Melody and Jocosa were a fearless mother-daughter musical duo. They co-directed GAC for a time, challenging each other and occasionally arguing loudly enough for new members to wonder — until someone leaned over and whispered, "Don't worry, they are mother and daughter."

Outside of singing, Pauanui was her sanctuary—quiz nights, karaoke, gardening, body-surfing, and the companionship of black rescue cats. Her granddaughter Isobel—her joy—remembers that she always played, always showed up, and always made memories worth holding onto.

Even when her health began to fail, Melody refused to miss out. When she collapsed on the risers at a retreat and was sent to Auckland's Urgent Care, she slipped out before being seen, needing to run an open home; and made it back just in time to hear her name called. Melody moved



at the tempo of her own life, and she wasn't slowing down for anything.

Melody lived like a song that demanded full volume: energetic, generous, and full of heart. She was a teacher, a trailblazer, a leader, and a performer who brought rhythm and joy into every room she entered.

New Zealand barbershop is forever better because she was part of it. Her influence lives in the voices she trained, the performances she shaped, and the courage she sparked in others.

Her backbeat keeps going—in every chorus she touched, every singer she inspired, and every ringing chord that lifts the roof just a little higher.

Thank you, Melody. For everything.

**KRISTINA ROPER, STEPHANIE MCQUEEN AND NATALIE ROFFEY  
GREATER AUCKLAND CHORUS**







# Nelson Bays Harmony Chorus Celebrate their Pearl Jubilee

When we stepped onto the stage of the Nelson Centre of Musical Arts this September to celebrate our 30th Anniversary, it wasn't just another performance—it was the culmination of three decades of shared music, laughter, challenges, and triumphs. The auditorium was filled to the brim with friends, whānau and lovers of song, ready to celebrate our chorus's pearl jubilee in a concert titled *This is Us*.

Back in September 1995, a mere 20 singers gathered to celebrate the granting of the Sweet Adelines International charter for what was then the Nelson City Chorus. Our name was changed to Nelson Bays Harmony Chorus early on

to reflect our wider geographical spread, and today our chorus has grown to 50 members strong. From those early days to today's polished performances, the spirit of camaraderie and friendship, and commitment to the craft of barbershop has remained the chorus's beating heart.

Original member & past director, Janet Rowland recalls those early years fondly, with well-earned pride. 'We've grown not only in numbers, but in musical skill,' she reflects. 'From D+/C- beginnings to consistent B/B+ performances, we've worked hard to become the chorus we are today.' *This is Us* showcased that journey beautifully. Four sets framed



the evening: two featuring regular repertoire. The third set was filled with nostalgic gems from the chorus's history, and our fourth set included one of our beloved mini-musicals, built around the song *True Colours*.

Among the most poignant moments came when 'The Stayers'—members with 20 to 30 years of service, took the stage to perform *Mood Indigo*. In another touching tribute, four of our current members shared the spotlight, each taking the reins to direct a song. This included co-director Alex Charlton, co-director Eileen Smith, former director and tenor section leader Kathy Jamieson and bass section leader Ruth Townsend.

(CONTINUED OVER PAGE)



On the beach in 2016



Janet Rowland was scheduled to lead her favourite song *Stadium Medley*, but illness kept her from the stage. Instead, she watched from the front row as the chorus, undirected, delivered it exactly as she had envisioned. "There were tears in my eyes, it was perfect."

*but this anniversary  
wasn't only about  
honouring our past.  
it was also a celebration  
of our recent success  
and how the chorus is  
building and thriving.*

One of our newest members Chelsey Templeton, who joined in February this year, describes her first year as transformational. "I knew I was signing up to sing, but I didn't expect to find a whole community that feels like home."

Preparing for the This Is Us showcase, learning 18 repertoire songs, and stepping onto the NCMA stage for the first time, brought its share of nerves, but also immense pride for Chelsey. "The encouragement, the jokes, the last-minute reminders... I never felt alone. During our pre-show check-in, I realised I was part of something much bigger than myself."

That sense of belonging and family, is what continues to define our chorus.

More than harmonies and ringing chords, it is a place where we fit in with like-minded people, where we empower each other, support one another and grow together.

With our sights set on 600+ contest points, continued musical improvement, and building our membership numbers, our chorus enters its fourth decade with the same energy that sparked its beginning: a love of singing, a passion for the barbershop craft, and a commitment to our united singing whānau that resonates far beyond the risers.

**CHERIE LIDDELL, JANET ROWLAND  
AND CHELSEY TEMPLETON  
NELSON BAYS HARMONY CHORUS**



West Coast 1999. Harmonise the Coast bus tour



2016, Family and Friends Night



Melrose House, Nelson 2016



2014, Chorus on stage



# Our Friend Sue Rigby

On 25 August this year a dear friend and huge contributor to Faultline Chorus, Sue Rigby, passed away unexpectedly. The following is a summary of Sue's time with the chorus and the incredible input she made. The influence she had on the culture of our singing and performing is still tangible today.

Sue joined Faultline in 1993 and had been a member for just short of 30 years when she retired from the chorus in late 2020. What a full life she had as a Sweet Adeline.

It was in 1993 while visiting the public toilets in Shannon (a small town between Wellington and Palmerston North), on one of the many road trips she took with husband Jeff, where Sue first heard barbershop. She was entertained for a short time that day by a quartet known as Curate's Egg, one member of that quartet being Faultline's first director, Prue Blythe. Sue was so entranced by the sound, she chatted with the group and not long after her return to Wellington, she began attending rehearsals and joined Faultline Chorus.

Two short years after joining the chorus, Sue was on the management team as the membership coordinator for a few years, she then took on the role of showbiz coordinator for three

years in tandem with Prue Mahoney. Sue also served time in the finance and secretary roles for Faultline Chorus.

In between her commitments to the management team, Sue found time to serve on the Region 35 Management Team in the role of chapter coordinator and was also a part of the Wellington Convention Steering Committee a couple of times. As part of her RMT role, Sue travelled to a Sweet Adelines International Education Symposium in South Carolina.

To add more challenges to her Sweet Adeline journey, in 2002 Sue took to the contest stage for the first time in a quartet, Heretofore, with Linda Lewis, Judy Wilton and Jude Cheyne.

In 2005 Sue became a dual member of Greater Auckland Chorus as an OOTER (out of town member) when they were to compete on the international stage in New Orleans. Hurricane Katrina landed that year in Louisiana and contest was moved to Detroit!

Then in 2010 Faultline competed in Seattle in the Harmony Classic competition. Just prior to competition day, Sue tripped and turned her ankle whilst shopping. Sue did not let the pain and swelling deter her—I'm told



that evening at rehearsal involved Sue sitting, iced foot up still issuing choreo reminders, loudly from her chair!

After competition, Sue, twisted ankle and all, headed to Las Vegas with other chorus folk. Sue loved the fountains of the Bellagio Hotel and one night, those looking after her, were sent to ferry nice cool drinks to Sue as she sat watching the fountain. Crossing the six lane highway was no deterrent for those erstwhile Faultliners—a tray of drinks being the efficient method of getting several drinks delivered at once and navigating all of that traffic a little easier!

From 2011 to 2018 Sue reluctantly took on the role of baritone section leader. She felt her lack of music reading skills made her less than deserving. But Sue had an innate ability to hear the baritone line, she had a gorgeous baritone voice and made it sound so easy. She was also a very patient teacher who coaxed the best out of her section with skills she wasn't aware she had. At any appropriate opportunity Sue would remind the chorus, (after a coach had once used the reference)—baritones are 'god's gift' to our music—that phrase lives on in Faultline as it does in many choruses I'm sure.

All of these things she did while being one part of the two-person choreography team for Faultline.

(CONTINUED OVER PAGE)







Sue and Prue worked tirelessly over more than 20 years as the choreographers for Faultline. They even travelled to other choruses to coach. Many of us were in awe of Sue and her ability to glide across the stage moving with ease and elegance.

*she was a natural mover and we later learned she'd had years of dance training as a young person.*

Sue and Prue would spend hours on phone calls or meeting in each other's living rooms to design choreo. Whilst Prue concentrated on the big picture, Sue loved to work on the fine details. Once the emotion and meaning of the song had been decided it was about connecting the movement to the expression—not just movement for movement's sake—it's not just about the hands ladies!

The duo would teach choreo plans to many of us not-so gifted women, with reference to their visual aid of stick figures marked out on sheets of paper, and would often pass comments such as "Well the stick figures can do it, why can't you?!"

Sue had another quartet combo or two in her early Sweet Adeline life, but it was in 2010 that The Usual Suspects formed, Sue, Prue, Jo Maxwell and me making up the four.

In our 11 years of quartet life together, we spent countless hours rehearsing, not so many hours on costume choosing, and so many, many hours of just talking, and laughing. We used to rehearse with Sue's clean sweep,

you know the carpet sweeper broom type household tool? We would stand it in place of a central microphone and as you can imagine it became a source of mirth. One coaching session with Toni Griffin, she complained of sore sides as we just kept her in fits as we laughed at ourselves so much all through rehearsing.

Sue was a huge follower of all things royal family. She could tell us who all the royals were and plenty of detail about their lineage and family scandals! We once gathered in a hotel room during a convention weekend in Wellington to watch the wedding of Kate and William, having a midnight high tea to celebrate. During a music team planning weekend we had to STOP all chorus planning whilst we tuned in to watch the announcement of a royal birth and the name of the new royal addition, much to Sue's (and Jo's) delight.

One memory of Sue, was in the early 2000s, when we were staying in accommodation in central Auckland—several members including Sue became stuck in the hotel lift, still in full red velvet competition costume and makeup. There were some very stressed women stepping out about 45 minutes later, false eyelashes falling off, mascara running, sweating and breathless. So very relieved and happy to fall into the arms of the firemen who had rescued them. Actually, very startled firemen!

Sue retired from the chorus in the latter part of 2020 and settled into new weekly routines. Book club, walking, over 60s, knitting group and more; a lot of Faultliners shared those times with her. Sue loved to read, especially

about the royals, and to watch interesting programmes on TV not just 'any old rubbish' and of course she loved to watch the golf, cricket and the rugby! She and Jeff had managed to fit in the odd voyage on beautiful cruise liners and Sue had plans to do another.

After losing Jeff in 2023, Sue had moved into an apartment in a retirement village in Upper Hutt and had really begun to get into her own rhythm. She was enjoying her life and thoroughly enjoyed travelling to Sydney to stay with her daughter and son-in-law, Joanne and Peter, and the apple of her eye, grandson Samuel. Sue's son David lives on the Kapiti Coast and the two often shared time together.

Sue's Faultline friends, current and retired, have so many memories of chats, afternoon teas, road trips, hotel rooms, cafés, meals, music team planning weekends, singing and so much laughter.

I will close with Sue's own words taken from an Addaline article she wrote in 2004 describing how she felt about her singing world...

*What else can I say except that I wish I had known about Sweet Adelines much earlier than the trip to the Shannon toilets. I love everything about it, but mostly the fantastic friends I've made, the music and the laughter—oh yes, definitely, the laughter!*

That was our friend Sue.

**LEIGH WHITELAW  
FAULTLINE CHORUS**





# NZ CHAPTER CONTACTS

## CHRISTCHURCH CITY CHORUS

Director: Virginia Humphrey-Taylor  
TC: Sarah Lowery  
sarah@loweryfamily.nz  
Meets: Wednesdays 7pm  
Te Raekura Redcliffs School  
113 Beachville Rd, Redcliffs, Christchurch  
Ph 021 229 9964  
ccchorus.co.nz

## DUNEDIN HARMONY CHORUS

Director: Robyn Abernethy  
TC: Anna McIntyre  
Anna.dunedinharmony@gmail.com  
Meets: Tuesdays 7pm  
Dunedin Church of Christ,  
3 Prince Albert Rd, Dunedin  
Ph 027 549 8156  
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: Matilda Phillips  
matildamaephillips@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: Kim Ward  
k.ward@auckland.ac.nz  
Meets: Tuesdays 7pm  
Epsom Bowling Club,  
77 The Avenue, Epsom,  
Auckland 1023  
Ph 021 0242 9189  
greateraucklandchorus.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: Sandra Marsh  
Marshfam0@gmail.com  
Meets: Thursdays 7.15pm  
Clive School, 57 School Rd, Clive  
Ph 021 233 4476  
soundsofhawkesbaychorus.co.nz

## SOUTHCITY SOUNDZ CHORUS

Director: Cheryl Weijermars  
TC: Fleur de Farias  
defarias@xtra.co.nz  
Meets: Mondays 7pm  
Reremoana School, Scotsmoor Drive,  
Wattle Downs, Auckland  
Ph 027 228 6053  
facebook.com/SouthCity-Soundz

## TARANAKI HARMONY CHORUS

Director: Gill Holmes  
TC: Sara Knowles  
sara.knowles75@gmail.com  
Meets: Wednesdays 7pm  
The Mamaku Centre,  
6 Mamaku St, Inglewood 4330  
Ph 021 173 2699  
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 0274 858 675  
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

*Please email [addaline@sweetadelines.co.nz](mailto:addaline@sweetadelines.co.nz) to update any chorus contact info on this page.*

## REGION 35 SWEET ADELINES NEW ZEALAND

### *Mission:*

*To create an environment where musical education, performance and competition thrive in a welcoming and vibrant community.*

### *Vision:*

*A thriving, leading, women's a cappella and barbershop singing organisation in Aotearoa New Zealand, inspiring and enriching lives through the power of song.*

[www.sweetadelines.co.nz](http://www.sweetadelines.co.nz)

[www.facebook.com/SweetAdelinesNZ](https://www.facebook.com/SweetAdelinesNZ)

[www.sweetadelines.com](https://www.sweetadelines.com) | Twitter: @sweetadsnz

Instagram: @sweetadsnz | #sweetadsnz | #sweetadelinesnz

## 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.*





# Happy Holidays

Wishing you  
all a wonderful  
Christmas & happy  
New Year