

**EDUCATION COORDINATOR'S REPORT
FOR RAMM MEETING
DATE: 14 May 2026**



During the past year, RMT have continued to provide a variety of education and have endeavored to promote and develop more educational opportunities which meet our members' needs by tailoring education to cover every aspect of the barbershop craft and allowing many opportunities for members to connect and learn together.

In person education

Our 2025 regional convention held in Christchurch, also our 40th anniversary celebration at the start of May, was well attended and the education classes on Sunday morning were ably run by the judges who jointly coached the most improved quartet and the small chorus division winner. Feedback received from these classes was positive and we are continuing with the same theme at our 2026 regional convention.

The convention also included a Friday morning 'Music in the Morning' session featuring Alex Charlton and Shelley Bascand which included vocal warmups, physical warmups followed by a presentation from their visit to the Directors and Visual Leaders Seminar in Tulsa in 2024.

In July 2025, we had Ryan Heller travel through the country as our 'Coach in Residence' and his coaching tour culminated with a regional workshop weekend in Wellington. He was very well received and some very positive comments were relayed back to RMT from those who received coaching from Ryan.

In October 2025, our Faculty ran a Directors, Music and Visual Leaders workshop in Hamilton. All six Faculty members were in attendance and took a range of classes using a well known mass song. We were also fortunate to have two keynote speakers zoom in, Sharon Cartwright for the opening keynote (Leading with Influence) and Jan Carley (Secrets to Success).

I was fortunate to be able to travel to Whangarei along with Julie (TC) for a chorus visit and we also managed to meet with some members of Bella A Capella. Earlier this year Julie and I travelled to Auckland to visit Greater Auckland chorus. These chorus visits are very worthwhile, enabling face to face time to share successes and challenges and

were well received by the choruses. RMT will endeavour to continue these on a biannual basis. We also worked with Whangarei Harmony Chorus and Bella A Cappella chorus on their journey through the revitalisation and eventual decision to withdraw from Sweet Adelines International which was a sad time for everyone involved.

In late February/early March this year, we secured a visit from Glenda Lloyd of Region 34, whose quartet Skylark gained 9th place at International in 2025. Glenda ran two quartet workshops, one in Nelson and one in Auckland, which were very successful and, despite having to cancel the final day in Auckland due to Glenda contracting Covid, have inspired many existing and novice quartet members.

Online education

We were able to attend an online Management Team 101 workshop which was run in conjunction with Region 34.

We were also able to join a series of zoom workshops run by Region 34 throughout the year, based on chorus leadership. These valuable resources are on our website for everyone to access.

Earlier in 2026, a beginner theory zoom session was run by one of our Faculty members, Suzanne Berresford, which was extremely popular and there will be follow-up sessions to this later in the year and into 2027.

Suzanne also ran an introduction to DCP zoom workshop in conjunction with Christien Oberholster (DCP Coordinator), and has now started a facebook group for those who are enrolled or thinking of enrolling in the DCP program.

Following these zoom sessions, in late March, Shelley Bascand ran a Visual Communications/Make up zoom workshop for newer members in preparation for our regional in May.

Looking ahead to 2026-2027

Music in the Morning session will be ably led by Kate Sinclair and Jo Maxwell.

In August this year, we have Bec Hewitt from Region 34 who will be visiting and coaching several choruses in our region.

Our 'Coach in Residence' for 2027 is being finalised at present and we hope to be able to make an announcement very soon.

Plans are underway for a regional workshop in late November run by our wonderful Faculty and more details will be announced shortly.

Sunday 12 July, there will be a zoom session for clarity on DEI being run by Tae Graham (GAC). This will be a one hour zoom for all choruses and will be followed up with a second session approx. 2-3 weeks later.

We have increased the funding for our Education Scholarship to \$5,000 to assist recipients to travel to international education events and have changed the dates for applications to align with event timelines.

We are working with our Youth Coordinator, Kim Miller, to increase engagement with the youth (upper voices) through our scholarships and discounted registration available through SANZ for educational events. Kim is also developing a Boot Camp for youth which we hope to run within the next year.

My thanks to the wider regional education team for your support, advice and educational delivery – regional faculty (Carolyn Currington, Suzanne Berresford, Kate Sinclair, Rowena Harper, Shelley Bascand & Jo Maxwell), visual communication specialist (Shelley B), arranger coordinator (Rowena), and our Youth Coordinator (Kim Miller).

Leanne Wheeler
Regional Education Coordinator
May 2026