

Chapter 5

November 1966 - October 1971



IN NOVEMBER 1966 the Riverside Chapter reported that their chorus had been invited to sing in a local production of the opera *Aida*. At their Ladies' Night, each chapter member was required to bring a picture of himself between ages 3 to 6. The South Bay Chapter scheduled a spook night for October 31 for the whole family, with a movie for the



*The "Thermalaires"
1966 Far Western District Champions*

kids. The Napa Valley Chapter was listed on the Napa Valley Arts Council Cultural Calendar. PalPac's quartet "Odds & Ends" sang on the Sun-Up program on TV. The Berkeley chorus and quartets were invited to sing on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier, U.S.S. Enterprise. At the October District House of Delegates meeting the South Bay Chapter was given the District 1st Place Achievement Award, with Riverside 2nd and Downey 3rd. A chapter in Victorville, California was chartered in November.

The Yuma, Arizona Chapter Chorus recorded some numbers at a local radio station to be used as publicity for their chapter show in December. It was reported that Hap Bailey had flown his plane to Ontario where he was to pick up fellow judges Emmett Bossing, Bert Staffen and Jack Hines. From there they would fly to San Diego to pick up Marv Yerkey and to Phoenix to get Lou Laurel and then to Houston, Texas to judge a Southwestern District Contest. Upon reaching Ontario, Hap's plane was grounded by fog and all had to go by commercial air to Houston. Chapter visitations, where one or more chapters would visit another chapter on its meeting night, were very common at this time. Just before Christmas the San Luis Obispo Chapter sang at the Chris Jespersen School for retarded children, and

presented them with boxes of instruments and a check.

The Salinas Chapter held a combined Christmas Party and Old-Timers' Night. Some Simi Valley barbershoppers took first place in the Simi Valley "Happy Days Parade." They all rode bicycles and their director, Creighton Hogan, sat backwards on a two-seater in front of the other bikes and directed the singing. El Cajon barbershoppers put on a benefit show for Cerebral Palsy, with quartet help from PalPac and San Diego chapters.

In January 1967 the Salt Lake City Chapter performed on the Salt Lake March of Dimes Telerama and then donated \$100 to the cause. The "Forerunners" from the Orange Chapter won the Southern Division Novice Quartet Contest and the "Hi-Fliers" from the Eden-Hayward Chapter won the Northern Division one. The Napa Valley Chapter sang for the hospitalized GI's at Travis Air Force Base. The Reno Chapter was bringing old copies of *The Harmonizer* (Society magazine) and *Westunes* (District magazine) to the local Holiday Inn for the guests to read. The Long Beach Chapter members were visiting local high



*"Four Bits of Harmony"
On USO Tour in Guantanamo, Cuba, February 1967*

schools and leaving them copies of the booklet "Male Call."

At the District Board Meeting in March 1967, the 1969 District Spring Convention was awarded to the San Diego Chapter to be a part of San Diego's 200th year celebration as a city. The

Board also voted to charge quartets a competition fee of \$20 for District Conventions which would include seats for themselves and their wives at all functions in an unreserved section at the back of the auditorium. In another action, the Board rejected an offer from the Society Office in Kenosha, Wisconsin to do the District's billing on an annual basis. A former requirement that to be a member of the Frank Thorne Chapter, you had to live at least 40 miles away from the nearest regular chapter, had been voted out by the Society Board. At this meeting the District Board asked the Society to reinstate it for at least 25 miles. In July the Society Board would vote to deny this request. The San Francisco Chapter received the Society's First Place Banner Chapter Award,



*The "Far Westerners"
1967 Far Western District Champions
International Representatives 1966, '67, '68, '69, '70, '71, '72, '73*

the first time any Far Western District chapter had received such an award.

Prior to the April 1967 District Board Meeting, NorCal Vice President Lynn Brittan had told his NorCal chapters that if any of them had a 40% increase in membership, he would roll a peanut across the floor with his nose. At the April meeting, it was determined that there were three chapters that achieved this increase. While, some thought he should do it three times, Lynn settled for just one rolling across the Board meeting room. The new Carson City Chapter was receiving its charter in April. For Bob Morrison of the Peninsula Chapter, the District Spring Convention in Stockton was his first and he reported that the only thing more exciting than the convention was having Hap Bailey fly him there and, while at 30,000 feet, suddenly decide that 3,000 feet would be better. Some Judges for the contest were stranded in San Francisco when bad weather there kept them from flying their own plane to Stockton so Jerry Orloff had to drive them there in his car. The Carson City, Nevada Chapter was chartered in April.

The California State Assembly was debating whether to

change the California State Song from "*I Love You California*" to "*California Here I Come*." To help in the decision, Sacramento

Chapter founder Joe Trousedale's quartet "Fort Sutter Four" sang both songs for them. Possibly as a result, the State Song of California remained "*I Love You California*." As part of the Redwood City, California, Centennial Celebration the Peninsula Chapter Chorus sang at 4 different banquets in one evening. The South Bay Chapter bulletin, Bob Northup

editor and the Phoenix Saguaro Chapter bulletin, Bruce Gray editor, were selected to represent the District in the Society Bulletin of the Year contest.

The San Luis Obispo Chapter Chorus provided the entertainment at a banquet to raise money for the Chris Jespersen School for the retarded children. The Cache Valley Chapter held a contest to see who could sustain a note the longest. Each year, the Pasadena Chapter was staging a benefit show for the Rebounders, an organization of the physically handicapped people which existed to help handicapped people less fortunate than themselves. The show was the main source of revenue for the organization and all proceeds went to it. The Riverside Chapter had its own radio show on both AM and FM, featuring top quartets and choruses. The "Far Westerners" quartet were on the Truth or Consequences program on TV. They were supposedly chosen randomly from the audience and a music teacher was asked to teach them a song. To the frustration of the teacher, they acted as if they could hardly sing with bass Bill Merry singing in a monotone and bari Earl Moon singing a half tone flat. During a short commercial they changed into their quartet costumes back stage and following the commercial, they came out and totally surprised the teacher by singing at their medalist best.

In July 1967, ten years after the first International Convention held in the Far Western District, which had been held in Los Angeles and labeled "BOHIFS" for "Bit of Heaven in '57," the second International Contest in the District was also in Los Angeles. This one was titled "MOHISS" for "More of Heaven in '67." At the Association of International Champions (AIC) Show, Jack Evans of the "Evans Quartet" was quoted as saying: "We're not trying to out-sing each other, just outlive each other." Also in July the Conejo Valley Chapter received its charter. Peninsula Chapter's Jerry Orloff was International winner of a trip to the Institute of Logopedics in Wichita where he was met by the Wichita Barbershop Chorus and was given a key to the city by the Mayor of Wichita.

District Secretary Lou Velzy wrote: "If you receive a



*Sam Aramian
Far Western District President 1968-69
International Board Member 1970-71
FWD Hall of Fame 1972
International President 1977*

request for a sing-out from an organization located within the territory of another chapter, especially within the home town of that chapter, *please* contact the other chapter and get their approval for you to enter their territory and make the appearance.” Ed Boynton pointed out that since February, the Post Office will not deliver bulletins that have no zip code. The PalPac Chapter entered a small float jammed with barbershoppers in the Oceanside 4th of July Parade.

In September 1967, many SoCal choruses and quartets participated in the 4th annual “Notes at Knott’s,” an all-day song-fest at Knott’s Berry Farm and Ghost Town in Buena Park. The “Tiki Tones” quartet from the Aloha Chapter visited the Tripler Army Hospital and sang for the Vietnam Casualty Ward. Lloyd Davis of the PalPac Chapter opined that: “A pitch pipe is a gadget you sound after a song to see how far you’ve dropped.” The Crescenta Valley Chapter held its 4th annual Veterans’ Night, in which members of their chapter and surrounding chapters showed up in their old military uniforms. Awards were given for, among other things, the raunchiest uniform, won by Bufo Strange. Wars represented were the French & Indian, World Wars I & II, Range Wars, the Korean Conflict, and a few the world hadn’t heard of.



*The “Salt Flats”
USO Pacific Tour 1967
International Representatives 1968*

In what was probably a first, the Tucson Chapter held its election of officers for the next year on a bus while traveling to Phoenix. At the October District House of Delegates meeting it was announced that the District Achievement Awards went to the Riverside Chapter (1st), the South Bay Chapter (2nd) and the Reseda Chapter (3rd). The Downey Chapter float took 3rd place in the City of Downey Christmas Parade. The “Salt Flats” quartet were joined by their Salt Lake City Chorus on the Aloha Chapter Holiday Show, and then went on to spend Christmas 1967 on a U.S.O. tour of the Philippines, Okinawa and Japan, covering 23,000 miles in 21 days and doing 121 shows at 14 hospitals and many clubs, theaters and other rooms. The Far Western District’s Wesley Meier was elected Society President for 1968. At the January 1968 District Board meeting, the Westside Chapter was given approval to change its name to the Culver City Chapter.

In March 1968, a Logopedics benefit show was held in San Francisco, featuring Fred Waring and his singers and orchestra, plus the “Western Continentals” quartet from Phoenix, the “Plus Four” from the Monterey Peninsula Chapter and A 76-man chorus of NorCal barbershoppers. The show was a big success despite a newspaper strike which limited the pre-show publicity. Also in March, the Salt Lake City Chapter again



*The “Gaslight Harmony Four”
1968 Far Western District Champions
International Representatives 1969*

appeared on the March of Dimes Telerama. Talented singer and dancer, Lynn Obermiller was named Modesto’s Miss Barbershop Harmony. In April, the Downey, Riverside and Arcadia chapter choruses together with the “Gas Light Harmony 4” and “Far Westerners” quartets put on a show with the Cerritos College Orchestra at the college. The Murray, Utah Chapter held a “Colorful Vest” night. Ten past chapter presidents attended the Fresno Chapter Installation Dinner. The “Deck-O-Chords” quartet from Las Vegas joined other entertainers from the area on a 4-day tour of six U. S. Air Force bases in North and South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, California and Nevada.

In April 1968, the San Gabriel Chapter sponsored a second annual “Young Men in Harmony” show featuring local high school quartets, a combined chorus and top quartets from neighboring communities. The “Fort Sutter Four” from Sacramento, with Joe Trousdale on lead, sang for Ronald Reagan



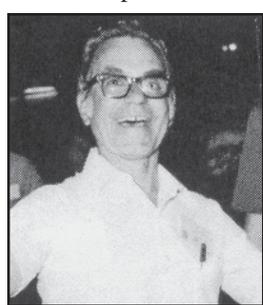
The “Fort Sutter Four” with (then) Calif. Gov. Ronald Reagan

the existing stock of records at “any acceptable price.” The board also voted to do away with the position of District Field Vice President. Another decision was to establish 4 divisions within the District, consisting of Utah, Arizona, Northern California and Southern California. Each division was divided into a number of areas each containing from 2 to 6 chapters. Another decision at this historic meeting was to establish the District Hall of Fame and the District President’s Award.

Phoenix’ “Western Continentals” quartet took first place in the Society Summer Contest in July 1968. (Two years earlier, this quartet was looking for a tenor and they tried the other Arizona chapters but finally found Al Mau singing lead in their own chapter!) The “Golden Staters” were 3rd. The “Salt Flats” didn’t make the cut but were a smash hit at the Chorditorium. Bob Roberts, Editor of *Westunes*, the District magazine, complained that space was set aside at Society functions for outside camera crews, TV and other, but the same was not true for barbershop district magazine editors and their crews.

Whittier’s “Chordsmen” quartet made an 18-day U.S.O. tour of Pacific military bases and hospitals in Japan, Okinawa and the Philippines. The San Jose Chapter Ladies Night featured a night at a nearby horse race track in July. Quartets entertained the audience between races and one race was dedicated to the barbershoppers. During the year of 1968, a series of meetings entitled “Harvest of Harmony” were held throughout the District with presentations on what barbershopping was all about. At an opening of a marine entertainment and oceanography complex in Redwood City, a pickup quartet from the Peninsula Chapter sang a song written by the baritone, Bob Allen, titled “Marine World on Redwood Shores.” The Society HEP (Harmony Education Program) was held at Redlands in August ‘68.

September 7, 1968 was declared Barbershop Day at the State Fair in Sacramento and quartets and choruses were invited to sing. More than 300 male and 400 female barbershoppers attended and chords rang from 3 in the afternoon until 8:30 in the evening. While donating blood at the local Red Cross headquarters, a San Jose quartet entertained the others in the room with their singing. The Stockton Chapter built 2 floats and entered them in 4 parades, taking 1st place in one and 2nd in another.



Emmett Bossing
President’s Award 1969
Hall of Fame 1970

The 1968 District Harmony Education Program (HEP) was held at the University of Redlands. That December, the Lompoc Chapter received its charter.

In January 1969 the District Contest and Judging Committee put on a Quartet Workshop and Education Program (QWEP) and also an Arrangers School in Anaheim. Ed Boynton of the Pomona Valley Chapter, expressed the opinion: “There are three men in each chapter

who make or mar it. The Director, the President and the Bulletin Editor, and which is the greater is sometimes hard to tell.” The San Francisco Chapter put the following want ad in a San Francisco paper: “MEN—would you like to sing BARBER SHOP style? Come and try or listen. Every Monday night at 8 at Lowell

High School, room 71. All welcome.” The Santa Barbara Chorus had three sing-outs in one week! Seven San Francisco Bay Area chapters got together and formed ABAC (Association of Bay Area Chapters). The first meeting was held in Berkeley in January for the purpose of developing inter-chapter cooperation and communication and to avoid schedule conflicts.

At the January District Board meeting the Board voted to limit the number of choruses to compete at the District Chorus Contest as follows: Utah 2, Arizona 2, NorCal 4 and SoCal 6. The Board also voted to establish perpetual trophies to be presented to the winners of each Division Chorus Contest, each year, and also to the winner of the District Bulletin Editor of the Year contest. Another Board decision was to establish the position of District Executive Vice President to take effect in 1970. In the event that the District presidency was vacated, the Executive Vice President would take over. Another January occurrence was the Downey Chapter’s “Upside Downeys” quartet’s 17-day U.S.O. tour of the Far East. They performed at numerous military



The “Upside Downeys”
On Pacific Tour with the USO in January 1969

hospitals and camps in Japan, the Philippines and Hawaii. It was reported that radio station KIDD on the Monterey Peninsula was playing barbershop music for a half-hour every Sunday night.

At the District Spring Convention in San Diego in March 1969, the very first inductee to the District Hall of Fame was Reddie Wright. The Vacaville and Oxnard chapters received their charters in March. The Ventura County Chapter changed its name to the Ventura Chapter. The Berkeley Chapter held a “wake” to honor the leaving of their esteemed Director Dave Stevens who was taking a job with the Society Headquarters. District Bulletin Editor of the Year for 1965 was announced as Carey Buhler of the Reseda Chapter, followed by the South Bay and Whittier bulletin editors, Bob Northup and Ken Shields.

In May the Arcadia Chapter’s “Golden Staters” quartet appeared on national TV on Vin Sculley’s NBC program “It Takes Two.” They learned that Vin had been a barbershopper when he was in college. Later in May, the PalPac held its second annual Comedy Quartet Contest with their own “Odds & Ends” the winners. A Japanese-American Boy Scout Troop in Berkeley was

planning a trip to Japan and wanted to take something strictly American with them. They decided on barbershop harmony and called on the Berkeley Chapter to help them learn some barbershop arrangements. That summer, barbershop campouts were held at Bear Lake, Utah and Lake Tahoe, California/Nevada.



The "Pacifcaires"
1969 Far Western District Champions
International Representatives
1969, '70, '71, '72, '73, '74

An outdoor picnic and quartet contest was held by ABAC (The Bay Area Association of Chapters). Winners of the contest were the "Blenders" from San Jose.

In August 1969, the Reseda

"Valleyaires" Chorus and the "Pacifcaires" quartet performed before 7,000 people at the Hollywood Bowl. In September, ABAC sponsored a barbershoppers' San Francisco Bay Cruise. In October, the Merced and Dublin chapters were chartered. In September, Jim Asolas, original tenor with the "Far Westerners" was killed in a car accident on the way home from a performance by the quartet he was in then, "The Jay Walkers" on the Downey Chapter show. At the October District Board meeting the Board voted to recommend that chapters be encouraged to increase their membership. Toward that end, the District would subsidize chapters holding membership promotional sessions (such as "Auditions for Admission") up to \$50.

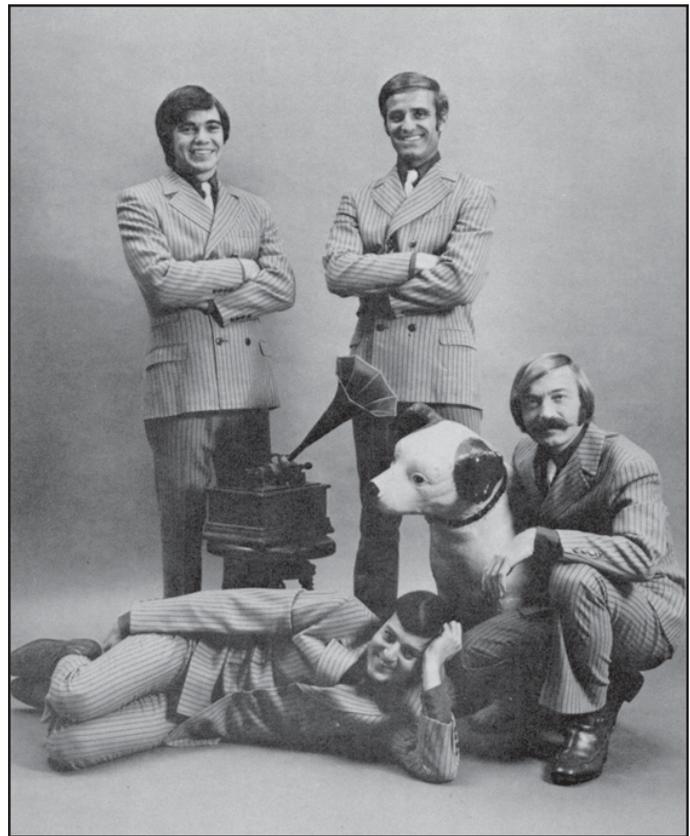
The Far Western District received the 1969 First Place International Achievement Award from Society headquarters. The Peninsula Chapter received the first place International Achievement Award for Plateau 2 and the Reseda Chapter received first place for Plateau 5. At this time, the District was regularly "adopting" young men at the Society of Logopedics, meaning that it would pay all or part of their expenses. Logopedics, an official SPEBSQSA service project since 1964, was an institution in Wichita, Kansas which dealt with speech and hearing rehabilitation for children.

The Whittier, Reseda, West Covina, Pomona and Riverside choruses all met in Riverside for a "chorus marathon." Each of the five choruses sang at least 10 songs, all in the one evening. The San Luis Obispo Chapter was charging members 25 cents for appearing at a chapter meeting without a name badge. In February 1970, the Bishop Chapter disbanded, and the China Lake Chapter invited its members to join them. The San Jose Chapter had 11 registered quartets. At the March Board meeting in Sacramento the Board voted to allot \$1,000 to start a program of chorus director development. The Stockton and Sacramento chapters had a competition based on their scores at the NorCal Chorus Contest, with the loser preparing a meal for the winner. Whittier's "Beaver Inn Four" won the PalPac Comedy Quartet Contest.



The "Chordsmen"
A Quartet with Dignity (?)
Twice on Pacific Tour with the USO

In June 1970 the Ukiah Chapter hosted a barbershop campout at Lake Mendocino which drew participants from the Vacaville, Sacramento, Santa Rosa, Napa, Marin and Peninsula chapters. In July 1970 the Victorville Chapter sponsored their annual Hi-Desert Campout which drew more than 300 barbershoppers. The Modesto Chapter entered a float in their Fourth of



The "Crown City Good Time Music Company"
1970 Far Western District Champions
International Representatives 1970, '71, '72, '74

July Parade featuring a real barber shaving a chapter member, a P.A. system playing some top barbershop quartets, and a group on the float mouth-ing the words, and they took first place honors in the parade. In September 1970 the "Chordsmen" quartet from the Fullerton and Long Beach chapters made their second U.S.O. sponsored tour of the Pacific area including Japan, the Philippines, Guam and Korea. The Berkeley Chapter sponsored a golf and octet contest which drew participants from chapters throughout Northern California. The first annual FWD golf tournament was held in San Diego in October as part of the District Convention.



Lynn Brittan
 Far Western District President 1970-71
 International Board Member 1972-75
 FWD Hall of Fame 1979

The District was supporting five boys at the Institute of Logopedics at a cost of \$16,606 a year. A chorus of 115 barbershoppers from the Provo, Salt Lake and Murray, Utah chapters

performed with the Utah Symphony Orchestra at the Mormon Tabernacle. In January 1971, the first all barbershop NorCal Logopedics Spectacular was held in San Francisco with a chorus of 440 men from seventeen NorCal chapters and directed by Dave Stevens. The quartets were the "Western Continentals," the "Pacificaes," the "Cavaliers" and the "Nubbins" and they sang to a sold-out house. The Peninsula Chapter chorus director, Sam Gonzalez, had offered to donate \$100 to the chapter if they reached a membership of 100. They reached this number in early 1971 with much help from the "Auditions for Admission" program which they developed, and Sam made good on his promise.

In February 1971, the PalPac Chapter hosted a chorus marathon featuring choruses from PalPac, Riverside, Downey and San Diego. Each chorus member paid one dollar for the evening of fun and the money went to the District Travel Fund.

At the March 1971 District Board meeting in Anaheim, the Murray, Utah Chapter was allowed to change it's name to the Bountiful Chapter. It was also decided to add to the selection committee for the District Hall of Fame the past winners of this award. Another decision was to allow Hawaii to enter one quartet and chorus in the District contest without competing at a preliminary level. At the House of Delegates meeting which followed, an added stipulation was made that a chorus competing at District that had not competed in a preliminary contest would be assessed \$1 per man. Dave Bishop of Oxnard won the 1970 District Bulletin Editor of the Year award. In May 1971, the Marin Chapter hosted the District Chorus Directors' School. The

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The "Villains"
A Popular Show Quartet

Scottsdale Chapter annual show included a tag quartet with 12 chorus members on the song "Bright Was the Night." The audience loved it and wanted more.

Also in May, the winner of the PalPac Comedy Quartet Contest was "The Major Social Problems" quartet from Whittier. Chuck DeFreitas, Mayor of Los Gatos and a San Jose Chapter member, arranged for San Jose quartets to sing weekly on radio station KTAO-FM in Los Gatos. The programs included repartee between the Mayor and the quartet members. Thirty members of the Vacaville Chapter Chorus sang at a chapel service at Travis Air Force Base. In the summer of 1971, the Victorville Chapter hosted a barbershoppers' campout at the Hacienda Guest Ranch in Apple Valley.

At the Society Summer Contest in New Orleans, 3 of the 5 medalist quartets were from the Far Western District, and the San Diego Chorus took 2nd. The annual summer barbershoppers' campout at Bear Lake in Utah drew over 525 people from as far away as Pocatello, Idaho. The Victorville campout drew over 400. Chapters were being encouraged by the District officers to make use of the "Auditions for Admission" program. In August, another District Directors' School was held in Fresno.

