

IC&C 2011

Faculty Bios

Carolyn Sexton

MEET CAROLYN SEXTON...

Carolyn is no newcomer to the a cappella music scene. For all of her adult life, she has been a proud member of Sweet Adelines International, a world-wide organization of women who teach & train the art of singing 4-part a cappella harmony – barbershop style. Within this renowned organization, she became an International Championship Quartet Member, an International Medalist Chorus Director, a Judge in the Expression Category and served on their International Music Education Faculty. She has coached successful choruses & quartets all over the United States & Canada in all phases of their musical performances as well as competitive preparation.

In 2005, she helped to start a mixed a cappella ensemble, A Cappella Showcase Chorus, in Frederick, MD. They performed at SingStrong in 2006 & were recognized as CASA's first mixed a cappella group in their CASA CHORUS project.

Carolyn has judged performances at Mid-Atlantic Harmony Sweepstakes in 2001, 2002, 2005, 2007 and 2010.

Most recently, Carolyn has expanded her a cappella singing horizons to include a mixed high school group, VoCaLoCo, who came in 2nd at SingStrong's High School Competition last year. This year she organized a boy's high school quartet called, 4 Great Guys, who delivered Singing Valentines and donated proceeds to their Smithsburg, MD High School. She has been the school's Musical Director for several musicals including The Wizard of Oz, Godspell and The Wedding Singer. This season she is also working with another young male quartet from Linganore High School in the Frederick, MD area as they prepare for musical production of The Music Man.

When you meet her, you will see that her friendly smile and positive attitude will instantly charm you into wanting to become a better singer. Her style of teaching is easy to understand and her enthusiasm will quickly convince you that you are capable of mastering any subject she is teaching.

Her philosophy is "let's make beautiful music together that everyone will want to remember."

Barry Towner

Barry sings bari in Pot Luck, a seniors quartet, and also sings bari in No Choice, a quartet consisting of himself and his three sons-in-law (obviously NOT seniors). He joined the society in 1975, with the Scarborough Dukes of Harmony, and experienced the joy of winning chorus gold medals in 1977 and 1980 with the Dukes. He is presently a member of the Toronto Northern Lights and Hamilton Harbourtown Sound choruses.

Barry has competed in quartets almost every year since joining the Society and has had the privilege of winning District Novice Quartet, District Quartet, and District Seniors Quartet championships, as well as competing at both the International Quartet and International Seniors Quartet contests on many occasions, including two bronze medals in the International Seniors Quartet contest. His experience also includes directing two choruses and he has had the joy of directing the Scarborough Dukes of Harmony at International in 1998.

Barry is a certified Presentation Judge and member of the Presentation Category Board of Review, and has had the privilege of judging at International on five occasions including this July. This will be Barry's first Harmony Inc International. He is also a certified director, and a certified CDWI and Outstanding in Front trainer. He is passionate about coaching quartets and choruses, and has worked with choruses and quartets in the U.S., Canada, the U.K., and Germany. He has been on the faculty of Harmony University for six years, coaching quartets in the Quartet College and has been on the BinG! (Barbershop in Germany) Harmony College faculty for six years as well. He is a past Society Board Member and the Ontario District EVP and VP for Contest & Judging. In 2012 he will become Ontario District President. He and his wife Sharon (a Sweet Adeline) have three married daughters (all Sweet Adelines – with one also having competed in Harmony Inc, and whose husbands are in No Choice) and six grandchildren, one of whom is an eleven year old member of the Barrie County Chordsmen. He and Sharon are the coordinators behind the Cross Canada Chorus that has been the largest chorus in the youth chorus festival at the BHS MidWinter Convention the last two years and also founders of the Ontario Youth A cappella (O YA) Chorus who will be competing in Tucson Arizona in January 2012 at the BHS MidWinter Convention in the youth chorus festival. He and Sharon reside in Zephyr, Ontario.

Wendy McCooole

Wendy McCooole directs Sounds of the Seacoast, the 2010 2nd place International Medalist Chorus and she is a Certified Singing Judge with Harmony, Inc. Wendy has won three International Quartet Championships singing with Exhilaration, Harmony, Inc.'s 2005 International Quartet Champions, Limited Edition in 1995 and Heart's Delight in 1989 (with her sister Debbie). The sisters also founded New England Voices in Harmony, a women's barbershop chorus based out of Nashua, NH.

Sandi Wright

Sandi Wright has taken her "road show" from nearly every state in America to Canada and Europe! Contemporary, honest and down-to-earth, she brings her lifelong love of barbershop harmony to members of all barbershop organizations (Harmony Incorporated, Sweet Adelines International, and the Barbershop Harmony Society) as well as pageant participants, youth harmony festivals, show choirs and acappella jazz choirs.

She has a rare gift and ability to communicate with every level of musician -- the brand new singer, as well as the most seasoned teacher. Her presentations are interesting, different and full of audio-visuals, audience participation and singing! Sandi especially loves working with young women, "When young people hear their first overtone and get excited at locking a chord, I relive that same thrill with them." Sandi was active in beginning the Young Women In Harmony program, and organized the Sweet Teens, a group of singers from the gang-infested areas of urban northside St. Louis, which was sponsored by Sweet Adelines International and Girls Incorporated.

Sandi is a member of the American Choral Directors Association, the Missouri Choral Directors Association, Sweet Adelines International, and Harmony Incorporated. She is an associate member of the Barbershop Harmony Society. She is the director (at the master level) of the award-winning St. Louis Harmony Chorus, and has earned two international quartet gold medals and six regional quartet championships. She sings with Harmony Incorporated's current international silver medalist quartet, Blaze.

Sandi is the only person certified as a competition judge in the Showmanship Category and the Presentation Category, which qualifies her to judge any barbershop contest (male or female). She is a certified international faculty member of Sweet Adelines International and is a busy and sought-after coach.

When not performing, directing, judging, teaching or coaching, Sandi is the director of development and public relations for Almost Home, an educational transitional housing program for homeless teenage mothers and their children. She is married to an accomplished singer, coach, chorus director and world-famous arranger, David Wright. The Wrights have three grown children (Gene is a presentation judge, too) and four grandchildren. They live in a 1904 World's Fair home in the Central West End, an historic neighborhood in St. Louis, Missouri.

Marianne Cooke

I have been a member of Harmony, Inc. for over 20 years and sing with Sound Celebration Chorus in Wisconsin. I've been chorus president several times and served for many years on the Board. I am also bass section leader and Assistant Director. Other leadership positions include 7 years as Area 4 Contest and Judging chairman and 6 years on the International Board of Directors and Executive Committee. I have served as the Administrative/Leadership track leader for the Harmony, Inc. education program and presented numerous classes at Area Education Days, HITS, AC&C, and ICC in leadership and chapter administration. In my working life I was a Prison Warden and Administrator for the Wisconsin Department of Corrections for 31 years. I developed the Department's Leadership Development program and was a trainer for the US Department of Justice.

Jan DelVecchio

Jan DelVecchio was a charter member of the former Seaforth Harmony Hi-Lites chapter from 1985 to 2006. During that time Jan was chapter President, Vice-President and Secretary and she chaired a variety of committees. Jan served Area 5 as ACJC from 1991 to 2006 and during that time she also chaired Area 5 ACC four times. Before being elected to the International Board of Directors, Jan chaired ICC 1995 in London, Ontario and was Assistant Convention Coordinator in 2003 and 2004. Since election to the Board in 2005, Jan has been Music & Programs Director, Vice-President Finance and International President and is currently Vice-President Membership and Immediate Past President.

Anita Prather Harvell

Anita Prather Harvell has been the Social Networking Coordinator for Harmony, Inc. since 2009 and enjoys the opportunity to talk to Harmony members and fans both online and in person. She is also a self-proclaimed computer geek, both by trade and for fun. She indulges her artistic passion as a marching band and color guard instructor, instrumental musician, and also participates in musical theater. Quite by accident, Anita discovered the joys of a cappella barbershop harmony while in a bar, of all places and is celebrating her 5th anniversary as a proud member of the 2010 International champion Northern Blend

Chorus.

Anita considers the most rewarding part of her job is communicating with Harmony members year-round and hopes to create a way for everyone to easily communicate and share information with each other and to promote Harmony worldwide.

Jim Emery

Specializing in all things vocal, Jim Emery brings over 30 years of barbershop experience to his quartet and chorus coaching in the Barbershop Harmony Society, Sweet Adelines, and Harmony Inc. As a past Singing Category Specialist of the BHS's contest & judging program, Jim brings a wealth of insights based on years of judging, coaching, and performing.

Ellen Belyea

Joined HI as a charter member of the Citadel Chimes, Halifax, NS in 1986

Served on various chapter board positions

Served on the International Board of Directors – Area 1 Representative 1994 – 2000

Past Director of the Keltic Chords, New Glasgow, NS and Sea Belles, Saint John, NB

Harmony Queen 1993 – Spectrum, Lead

Competed in several quartets. – Euphoria – 4th place

Encore – 10th place medalists

Served on the International Board of Directors – Area 1 Director 2009 - Present

Jim Kahlke

After chasing rainbows all over the world, Jim finally settled down in Seattle and has been in barbershopping for over 30 years. He has competed at the International level many times, winning a silver medal, and competing with three different International choruses in three different districts. He won a gold medal while singing with his mates in the Blenders Chorus, Gold Coast, Australia. He has sung in numerous quartets as lead, bari, and is currently sings bass in Zing! quartet. He has over 15 years as a director of men's, women's, and mixed-voice choruses. Jim has been a certified judge in the Music category since its inception. He has served on judging panels at International contests, and is presently serving as the Music Category Specialist for the BHS.

A product of the barbershop training system, Jim attended a bunch of Harmony Colleges and was soon on faculties at the District and International level. He has taught at District HEP/HC schools, Harmony Ranch, been on the faculty at Harmony College/University numerous times, coached at some Top Gun schools and HI summer camps, and serves on the Society music publishing sub-committee. He has coached quartets and choruses, men and women, at all levels of competition, including International champions and medalists. His passion is making music with well-locked chords.

In his spare time, Jim was the founding master director of a medalist Sweet Adeline chorus, founded and directed a couple of mixed-harmony groups, and has arranged dozens of barbershop songs for both men and women, some of which have been published by the BHS. His wife, Vickie, was costume director for a Sweet Adeline International medalist chorus.

Their dog, Abby, is the only non-barbershopper in the family.