

# PRESERVATION

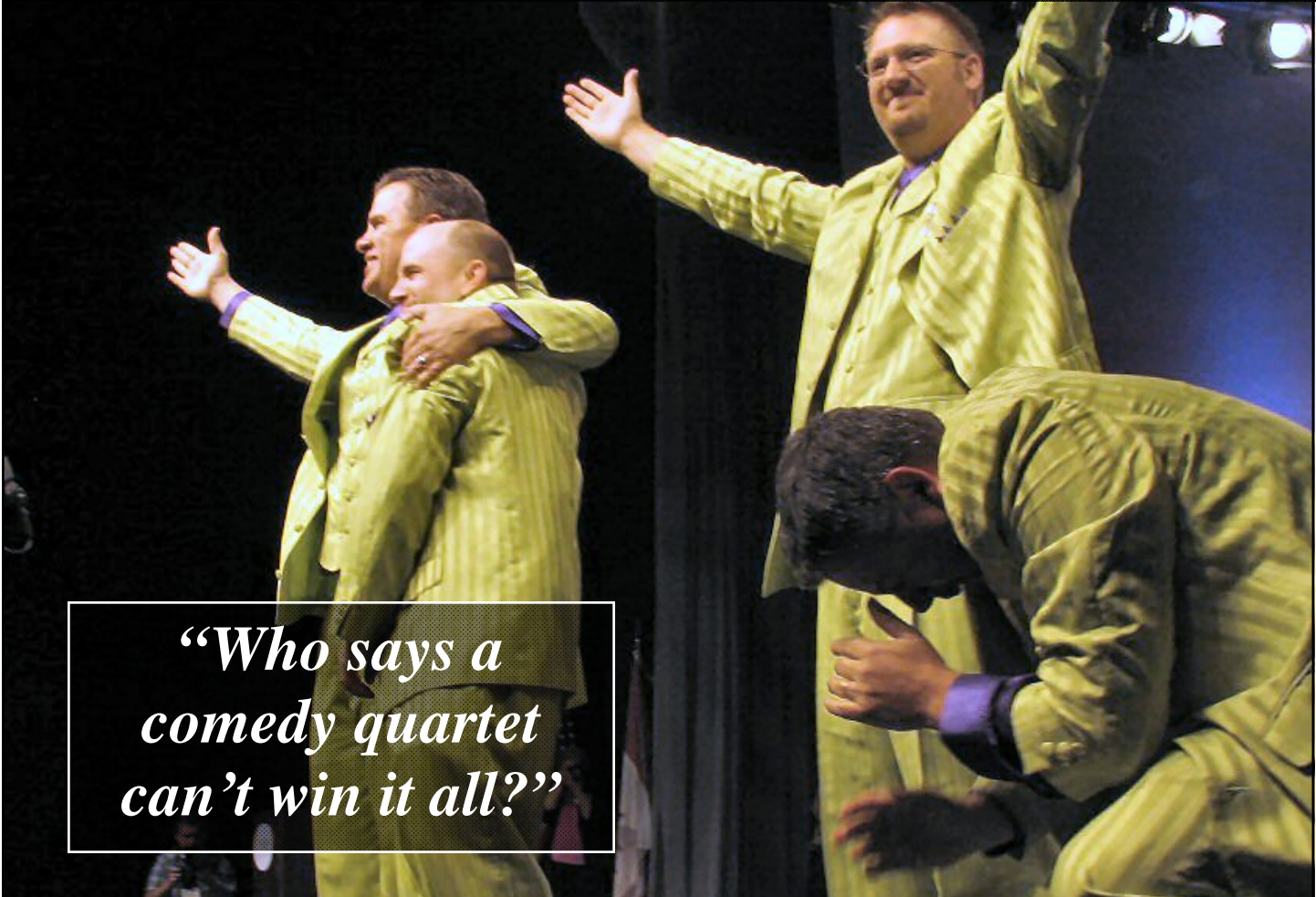
The Official Publication of the Barbershop Harmony Society's Historical Archives

Volume 1, No. 2

*Living in the Past*

Saturday July 17, 2010

## Storm Front Wins Gold



*“Who says a  
comedy quartet  
can’t win it all?”*

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# PRESERVATION

Published by the Society Archives Committee of the Barbershop Harmony Society for all those interested in preserving, promoting and educating others as to the rich history of the Barbershop music genre and the organization of men that love it.

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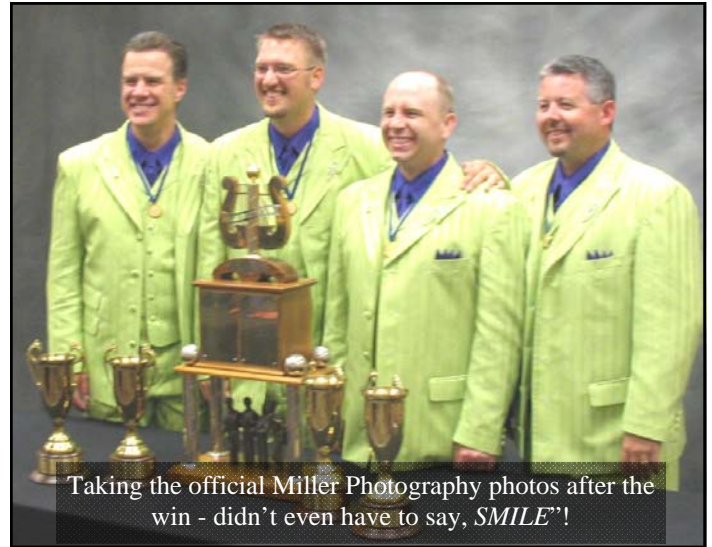
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## New Champs All Smiles



Taking the official Miller Photography photos after the win - didn't even have to say, *SMILE*!

Congratulations to our new quartet champ, **Storm Front** of Denver, Colorado. They won the gold medals during the Society's 72nd Annual International Convention held in Philadelphia, PA July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010.

The quartet consists of **Jeff Selano**, tenor; **Jim Clark**, lead; **Darin Drown**, baritone and **Syd Libsack**, bass. They won judges by winning the audience with their creative presentation, perfectly timed comedy and their marvelous singing. They are the complete package.

Seasoned competitors, this was their ninth appearance on the International contest stage. Back in 2002 they first won the **Rocky Mountain District** championship. It was also that year they first qualified for Int'l and came in 19<sup>th</sup> at Portland.

The name "*Storm Front*" came from a wish list of choices following their very first rehearsal in March 2001. They picked it, in part, from the iconic **Billy Joel** album of the same name.



Continued next page



Jenny, Abby, Rhonda, & Mary get some lovin' - "*Hey honey, LOOK - we have a new addition to the family!*"



The current version of Storm Front took shape in 2007 with original tenor **David Ellis** (Mr. **Cindy Hansen**) being replaced by **Jeff Selano** of **Riptide** fame. Dave now sings with **Boiling Point**, who won the Rocky Mountain District championship in 2009. They were also competing in Philly and came in 28th.

Jeff lives in Dallas, Georgia and Syd lives in Jefferson, Georgia (Atlanta) so getting together with the other two in Denver was a challenge. That said the quartet was VERY busy this year consciously deciding to put in an extra effort over past years. From January up to Int'l they were lucky to have booked shows almost every other weekend, making each time together an extra long rehearsal session.



No one reaches this level without help. The two principal coaches for SF are **Chad Guyton** (Four Voices lead, 2002 champs) and **Rick**



**LaRosa** (Fred, lead, 1999 champs). Chad concentrated on their "singing" and Rick on "presentation" with both overlapping often. On several occasions they were able to have BOTH on hand for some of these weekend sessions on the road.

### Storm Front @ International

*No longer accustomed to third place*

2010	Philadelphia	FIRST
2009	Anaheim	3rd
2008	Nashville	6th
2007	Denver	3rd
2006	Indianapolis	10th
2005	Salt Lake City	10th
2004	Louisville	13th
2003	Montreal	17th
2002	Portland	19th

The material they perform is a true collaborative effort with everyone involved. Many of the songs used this year were determined as early as last fall and tweaked throughout the last 10 months. This allowed them to show up in Philly more prepared than any previous year.

One of the special highlights of this year's contest was how well connected the audience was to the quartet when on stage. The quartet style is to not just sing well but also be entertaining through comedy. We all know how much harder it is to be good AND funny.

The quartet performed several standard, well known Storm Front routines, seen on their many shows and contests through the years. But they also introduced many NEW bits this year.

They attempted several "inside" references. Many would be considered "courageous and challenging". A mere "mortal quartet" would probably have fallen flat but these guys pulled it off in grand fashion.

The audience reaction to SF was truly monstrous. They seemed to receive the most

enthusiastic responses of the week. You wouldn't have known that from the stage. Coming off following the "Jukebox Saturday Night / Car" set some members of the foursome admitted they had trouble hearing themselves sitting in that configuration. Initially they didn't feel good about that performance. As it turned out it was the highest scoring set of the entire contest by ANY quartet\*. They won by 57 points.

Score By Set	Storm Front	Old School	+ / -
Quarter Finals	2677	2726	- 49
Semi-Finals	2761	2729	+ 32
Finals	2782*	2708	+ 74



It was this set that sent Old School back to "SILVERtown" (originally scripted as Silverton,[Colorado]). The Awesome **Joe Connolly** will have to wait one more year to get his history making fourth gold medal. And he will.



While everything on stage was planned and well executed, their first set was a complicated coordination of removing about 17 layers of shirt and pants. NOT planned was the last pair of Jim's pants being ripped off earlier than rehearsed. This was the first time the sequence failed – "wardrobe malfunction?" "premature nakedness" – let's hear it for *live theatre!*

Also that week Darin directed the 129 man Sound of the Rockies chorus to an impressive 4<sup>th</sup> place finish in Philly. Syd and Jeff were unable to commit enough time to participate this year but were on stage in spirit.

An early highlight and special treat for the quartet in Philly was being able to see and hang with **The New Tradition**. TNT was in attendance celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Lead Jim Clark recalls seeing them on one of his first barbershop shows when he was only 11. Clearly this and future top quartets helped shape their "warped" sense of performance. That list includes **FRED** and hometown friends **Classic Collection**.

SF becomes only the second champion from the Rocky Mountain District and Denver.

The call out in Philly was a special moment. When heir-apparent **Old School** was announced as second, the guys huddled together backstage in a tight embrace hoping NOT to jinx the results by celebrating too early.

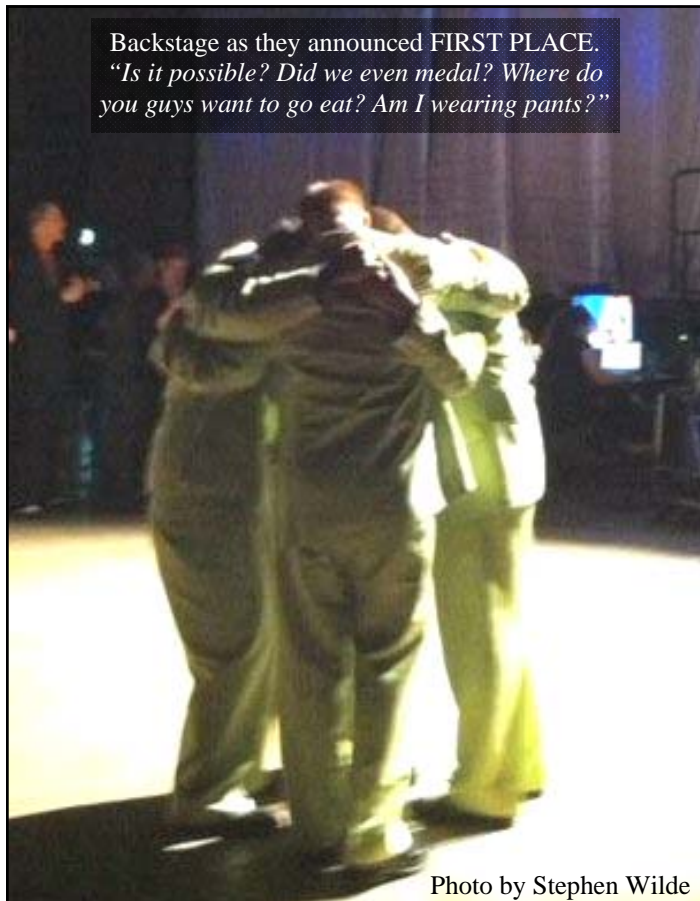


Photo by Stephen Wilde

One sad “behind the scenes” story was the health of Syd’s grandmother, **Eleanor**. At the age of 82 she was recently diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor. Syd’s father was therefore unable to make the trip to see his son win and stayed home with his mother, a very loyal supporter of Syd and his musical endeavors. They had the webcast up and running back home. The quartet only learned after they won that she passed away about 30 minutes before they took the stage for the finals.

Knowing the end was near she was able to tell her son that she would soon have “*a front row seat*”. She did indeed.

Storm Front will go on to represent the Society worldwide with shows already planned for Washington, Kansas, Florida, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Minnesota, Nevada, Arizona, Tennessee, Hawaii, Ohio, Missouri and Australia.

## Storm Front Songs in Philly



Where or When  
What a Wonderful World



Lida Rose / Will I Ever Tell You (Medley)  
Anything Goes / Wild Irish Rose (Medley)



I’ve Grown Accustomed to Her Face (Parody)  
Jukebox Saturday Night (Medley)

Continued next page



The incredible "Bluegrass Student Union CD / Car" set. Recreating the iconic recording - track by track matching key and interp to perfection.



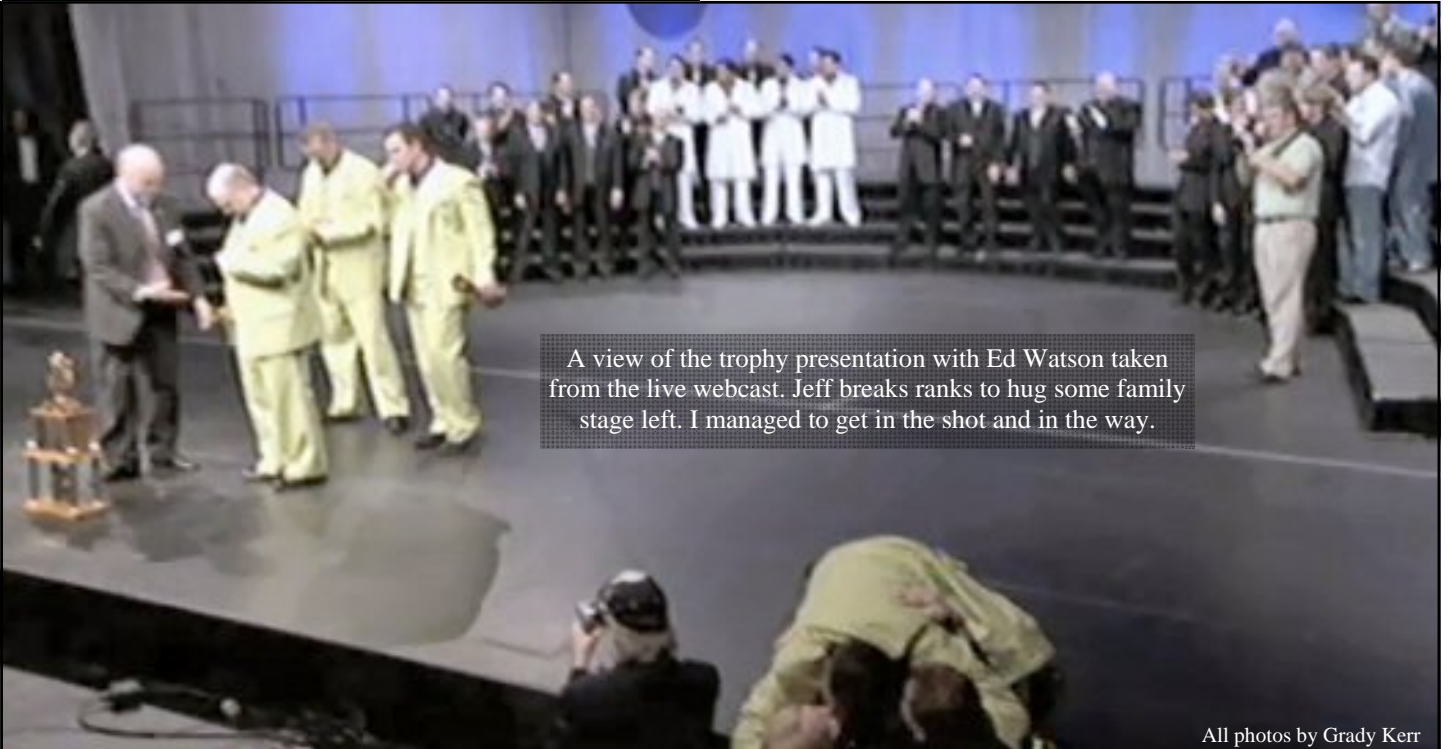
Hundreds of hours of rehearing = \$4000,  
Thousands of air miles = \$10,000,  
Trophies in hand = **Priceless**



*"OK guys, get closer in ... I don't think you're taking this thing seriously".*



It took a village



A view of the trophy presentation with Ed Watson taken from the live webcast. Jeff breaks ranks to hug some family stage left. I managed to get in the shot and in the way.

# If you can't wait for the convention DVD you can see and hear them on these four recordings

## Free as a Breeze (DVD)

(a live show, plus)

- Comes Love
- Poor Wayfarin' Stranger
- Don't Fence Me In
- Where or When
- Eleanor Rigby
- Scottish Spring
- Filbert the Frog
- 12 Days of Christmas
- Dreams of You
- Guitarzan
- Bugler's Holiday
- 2008 Contest samples



## Storm Warning (CD)

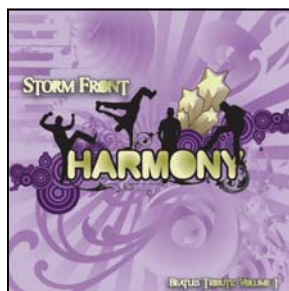
- Have You Met Miss Jones?
- Be My Life's Companion
- When She Loved Me
- On The Street Where You Live
- Swinging On A Star
- Filbert The Frog
- Bare Necessities
- Story Of The Rose
- Scottish Spring
- There's Gonna Be The Devil To Pay
- Dreams Of You
- The 12 1/2 Days Of Christmas
- Bugler's Holiday
- There's Something About That Name



## Harmony (CD)

all Beatles songs arranged by Jay Giallombardo

- Eleanor Rigby
- Here, There and Everywhere
- Lady Madonna
- Norwegian Wood
- Across The Universe
- Fool on the Hill
- We Can Work It Out
- Hey Jude
- Paperback Writer
- I'll Follow The Sun
- The Long and Winding Road



## Storm Watch (CD)

- Great Day
- Muskrat Ramble
- One Alone
- Poor Wayfarin' Stranger
- Rhythm Medley
- Sweet, Sweet Roses Of Morn
- Minnie The Moocher
- Bring Him Home
- Empty Chairs At Empty Tables
- Guitarzan



More info can be found at:  
[www.stormfrontquartet.com](http://www.stormfrontquartet.com)

# Philadelphia's Historical Archives Exhibit

*The Evans Quartet and The New Tradition Celebrated*



Well, the Philadelphia convention is now (shall I say it?... ) history and our presence was felt and well received.

We were honored to be able to design, research, produce and set up a large historical exhibit showcasing the accomplishments of our anniversary champs.

The exhibit included photos and text of **The New Tradition** ('85 champs) and **The Evans Quartet** ('60) champs. We saw many convention goers visiting the booths and educating themselves as to the history of these champs. Many shared their memories of the groups.

On Friday afternoon we had the pleasure of hosting a Meet and Greet session for both quartets.

Special guests of the Society were family members of the Evans. **Jared Covington** (bass **Jack Evans**' grandson) attended with his wife **Rose** and their 3 year old daughter **Taina**. Also on hand was lead **Pres Evans**' granddaughter **Heather McCloud-Huff** and daughter **Katie**. They were impressed by the attention and got to meet several men who shared the stage with their singing relatives.



Evans family members

Continued next page

A short video saluting the Evans Quartet played during the AIC Show. The complete version will appear on the Convention DVD.

My thanks to **Christopher Baker** (narration) and **Doyle Cline** (video editing) for their help with this video.



**The New Tradition drops by their booth and performs**

John Sherburn, Dan Jordan, John Miller & Bobby Gray Jr.

The New Tradition made a special appearance at the booth and performed for about 30 minutes. They put on quite a show and wowed the large crowd who gathered. Lots of photos were taken and many autographs given. Lies were swapped and they even let ME get in a shot with them.

My thanks to **John Sherburn, Dan Jordan, Bobby Gray Jr. and John Miller** for their helping make this happen.



Continued next page

Also featured in the exhibit was the uniform worn by Pres Evans in the finals in 1960.



The Pres Evans Uniform  
from the Finals in 1960



**The Landino Trophy**

Shows quartet champs from 1939 to 1988

The original quartet trophy, retired in 1988, was also on hand and stood as an inspiring centerpiece.

The Harpo outfit was a mockup of the original as Bobby Gray was using the original on stage during the AIC Show. It was donated to the Archives following the convention.



**"Harpo's" outfit on display**

Its was only a mock up for the convention

Special recognition to the covert individual (s) who found it necessary to reverse the shoes back to the normal configuration. I kept having to swap them back to the "Harpo" position (as pictured here).

Also thanks to **Bob Davenport** and **Steve D'Ambrosio** for their help preparing the items to make the truck from Nashville to Philly. Everything arrived safely.

All in all, it was a successful convention for those interested in the history of the Society.

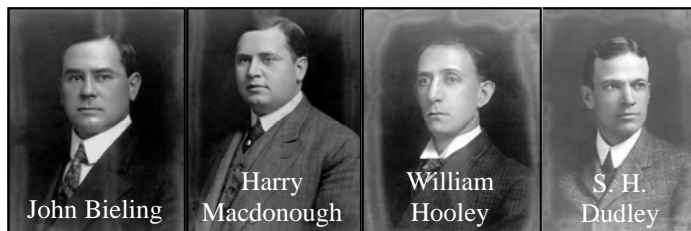
## What Are We Trying To Preserve?

# Close Harmony Pioneers

Male close-harmony quartets were singing well before the birth of the recording industry. Their great success as popular entertainment led to their early involvement in the new media – a quartet appears on an 1890 list of Edison phonograms.

Artist often sang in several quartets simultaneously, with different stage names for each career. Quartets often released songs for competing companies under aliases. Turnover in membership was common as quartets burst into life, merged, split, spun off new combinations, and faded from the scene.

### Top Quartets



The **Edison Male Quartet** began making cylinder recordings for Edison in 1894. Within five years they were also singing for Victor as the **Haydn Quartet**, and by 1909 were exclusive Victor artist.

Jan. 19, 1904 - **Dear Old Girl**

April 6, 1905 - **In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree**

May 10, 1906 - **In the Good Old Summer Time**

Nov. 5, 1908 - **My Wild Irish Rose**

Sept. 9, 1908 - **Take Me Out to the Ball Game**

The **Imperial Quartet** was from Chicago and included members Wallace Moody, C. R. Wood, Ben Tufts, Oliver Johnson.



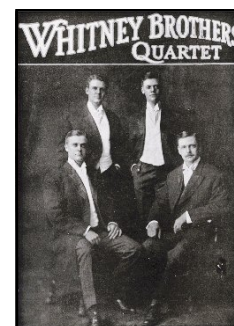
The **Stellar Quartet** - Charles Harrison, Reed Miller, Andrea Sarto, Frank Croxton - made "Sweet Adeline" popular in 1918

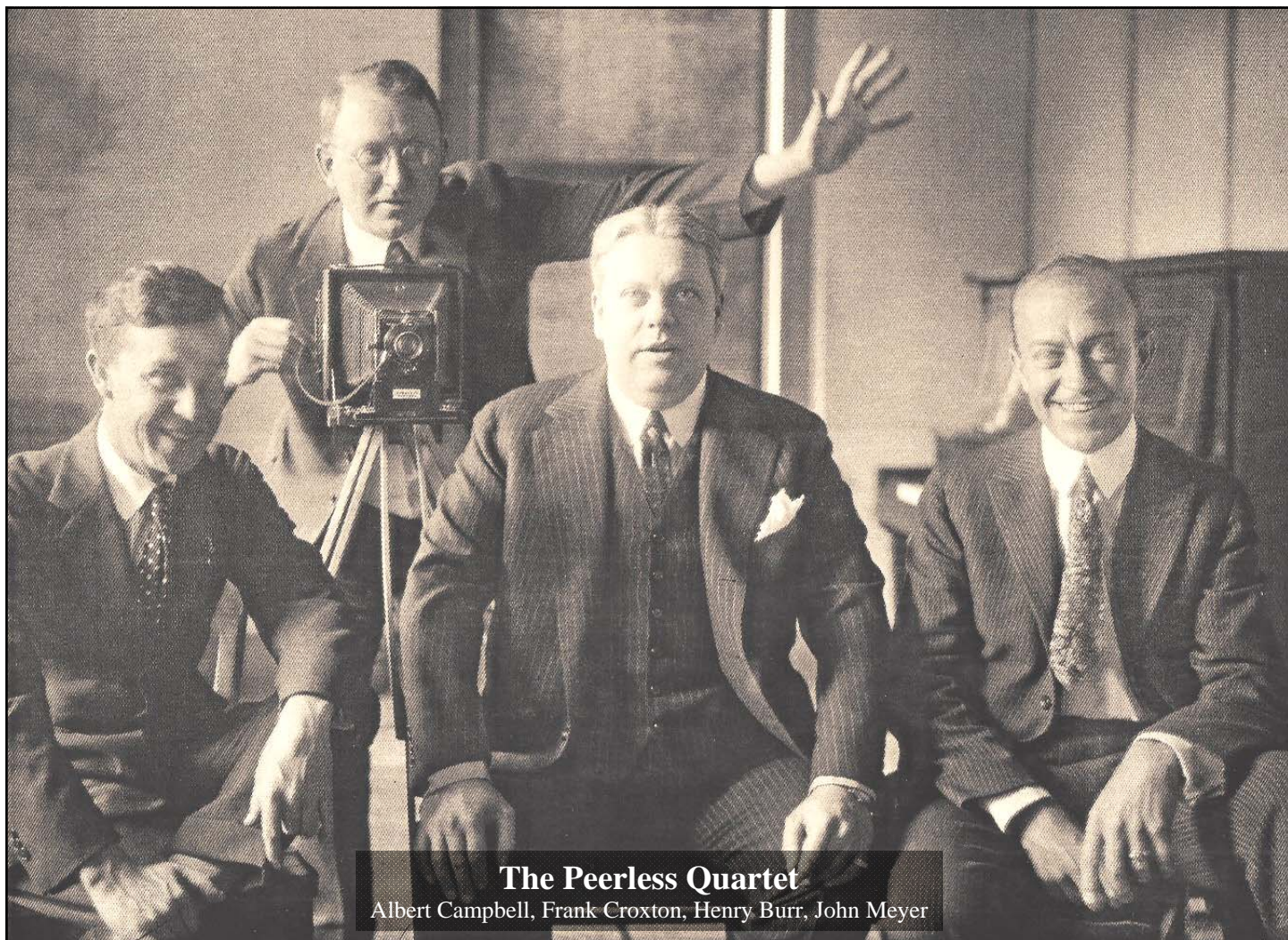
The "stellar" in **Columbia Stellar Quartette** referred to the quality of the voices in Columbia's premier quartet. The tenor "*possessed a voice of great range and beauty*"; the lead as a great oratorio soloist; the baritone a concert singer of "*rare excellence*"; and the bass was known for unusual clarity of his voice.

May 29, 1911 - **I Want a Girl**

April 1918 - **Sweet Adeline**

The **Whitney Brothers Quartet**, composed indeed of four brothers, began singing for Victor and Edison in 1908. They were also a popular quartet of the Chautauqua circuits.





### The Peerless Quartet

Albert Campbell, Frank Croxton, Henry Burr, John Meyer



FINAL PHASE—This grouping shows the American Quartet in its final phase (1920-1925), when it was the same as the Peerless, except that Billy Murray was substituted for Henry Burr to sing with Campbell, Croxton, and Meyer.

The **Columbia Male Quartette** formed during the 1890s to make cylinder recordings for Columbia. By 1906 they had become the **Peerless Quartet**, and recorded for a number of companies, but were still released under the Columbia Quartette name by Columbia until 1912.

**Peerless** was perhaps the most famous and long-lived of all the early male quartet quartets. It survived personnel changes and remained active until 1928. They sang for many record companies, and at times were released under a dozen or more aliases – one for each label.

Dec. 10, 1915 - **Is There Still Room for Me 'neath the Old Apple Tree**

June 15, 1923 - **When You and I Were Young, Maggie**

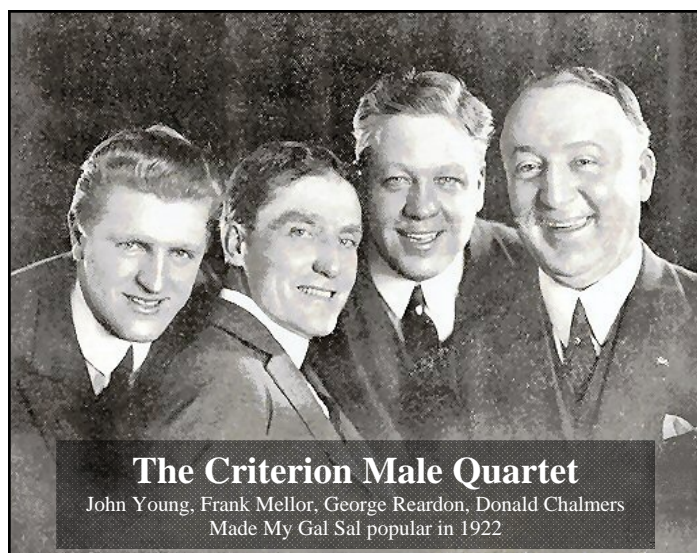
July 3, 1925 - **I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen**



The **Shannon Quartet** formed as the **Shannon Four** in 1917. The loss of their original tenor in 1923 triggered a steady stream of replacements, the quartet eventually became known as The **Revelers**. They sang under a variety of names, but kept the Shannon name for old-fashioned quartet work.

Jan. 12, 1923 - **Kentucky Babe**

Jan. 21, 1926 - **Let Me Call You Sweetheart**

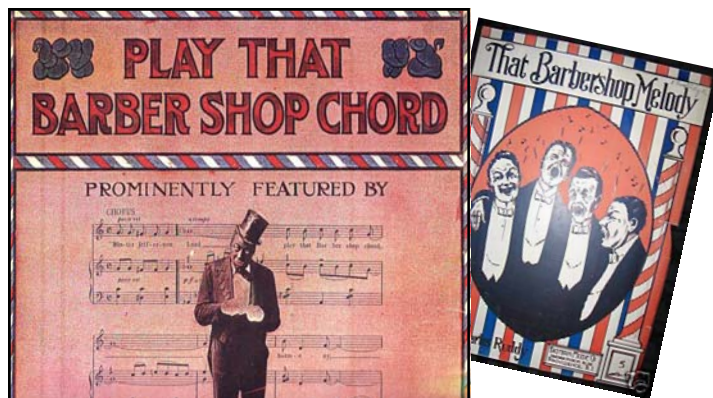


The **American Quartet** was revived in 1909 as a star vehicle for **Billy Murray**, who was under contract to both Victor (for disc) and Edison (for cylinders). The quartet sang as the **American** for Victor and Columbia and as the **Premier** for Edison until 1920, when Murray signed as exclusive contract with Victor from then on, another quartet recorded for Edison under the Premier name.

Sept. 8, 1910 - **Play That Barber Shop Chord**

Oct. 10, 1911 - **Casey Jones**

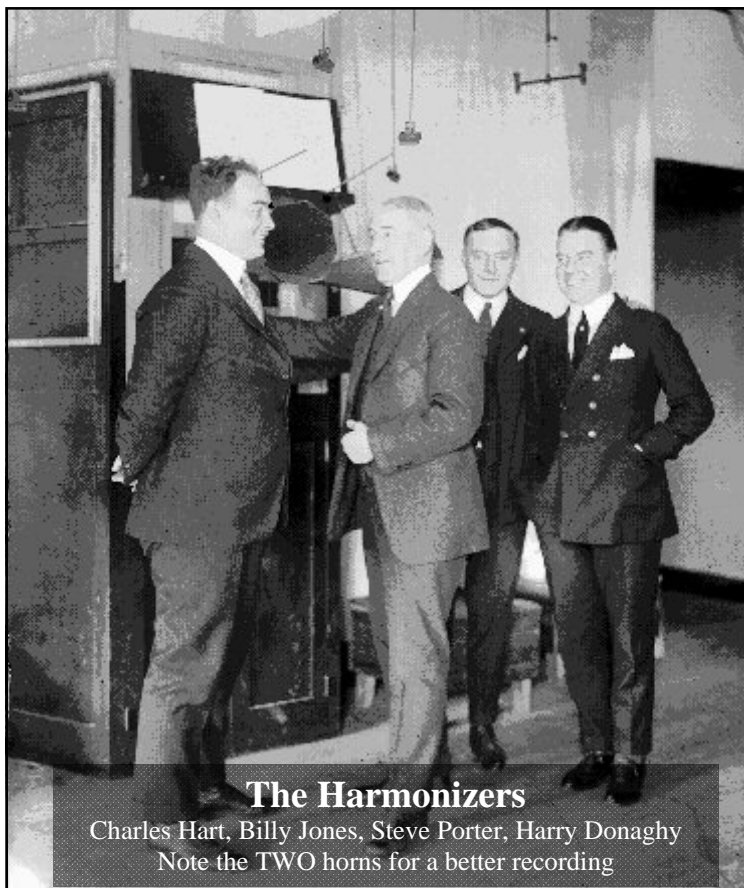
Oct. 2, 1911 - **Oh, You Beautiful Doll**



To make these early disc recordings, a quartet was ushered into a bare room which served as the recording studio. A horn protruded through one wall, attached to the actual recording equipment on the other side.

Standing about 12 inches away from the horn, the quartet started singing. They stood as still as possible, because the horn picked up every deep breath, cough, and foot shuffle. They leaned back on the very high or very loud notes, so that they wouldn't "blast" the grooves with the power of the sound. There was no audience to play off of, and the horn absorbed so much sound they had trouble hearing themselves sing. On accompanied songs they were drowned out by the orchestra, playing in tiers behind them.

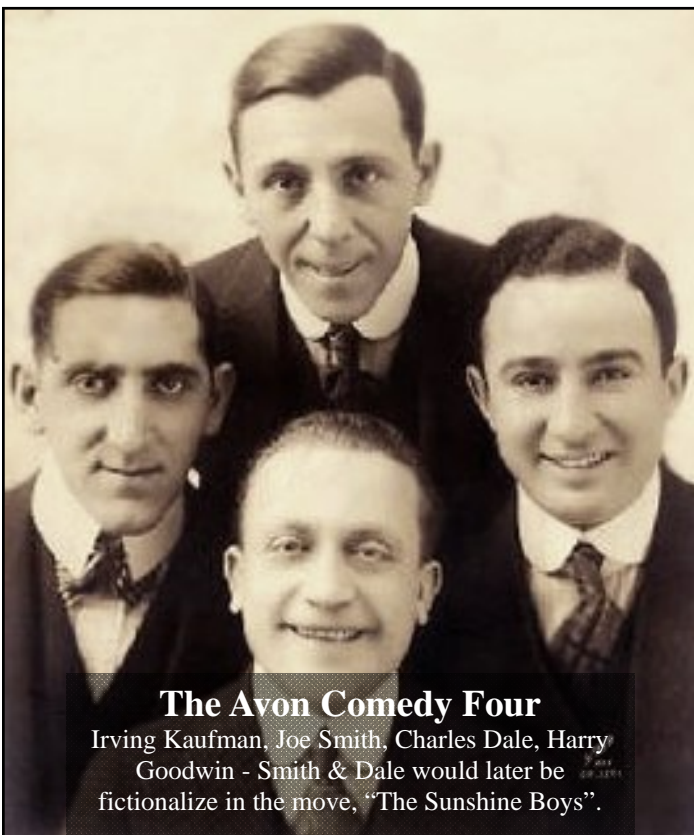
After several practice recordings, they made three "perfect" masters. Each recording was examined under a microscope to check for



**The Harmonizers**  
 Charles Hart, Billy Jones, Steve Porter, Harry Donaghy  
 Note the TWO horns for a better recording

broken or irregular grooves, which rendered the master worthless; only a smooth, unbroken groove would produce a good record.

Even the best masters were good for only a limited number of reproductions; it was not uncommon for a studio quartet to spend an entire day singing a handful of popular songs over and over, making master after master until mid-1902 when a system was developed to reproduce multiple masters from a single recording.



**The Avon Comedy Four**  
 Irving Kaufman, Joe Smith, Charles Dale, Harry Goodwin - Smith & Dale would later be fictionalize in the movie, "The Sunshine Boys".



Compiled with the invaluable help of Early Quartet Specialist  
**Robert Johnson**

Name shown in the captions do not necessarily reflect the member's position in the photos

## *The First King of Pop Music*

# Henry Burr

January 15, 1882 - April 6, 1941

By Art Makosinski (used with permission)



Burr was the pseudonym of **Harry McClaskey**, a world famous pop singer and recording artist of the 1902-1929 period. Credited with making over 5000 phonograph recordings for almost every record company and performing in many concerts

throughout North America, this Canadian-American remains one of the most famous, and yet, one of the most forgotten recording artists of all time.

Born in Saint Stephen, New Brunswick, Canada, he ventured into New York City in 1901. By the fall of 1902 he became one of the recording artists for **Columbia Graphophone**, **Edison Records**, and later **Victor Records**.

In 1905 he had a hit song with *In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree*. Burr was accepted into the **Columbia Quartet** which later became the **Peerless Quartet**. He became its manager in 1912. For the next 10-15 years, the Quartet and its later offshoot, the **Sterling Trio**, became one of the most popular recording groups in America, recording thousands of popular songs. Some estimates of the number of records issued with Burr and his ensembles (Peerless Quartet and Sterling Trio) on the label, as over 10,000.

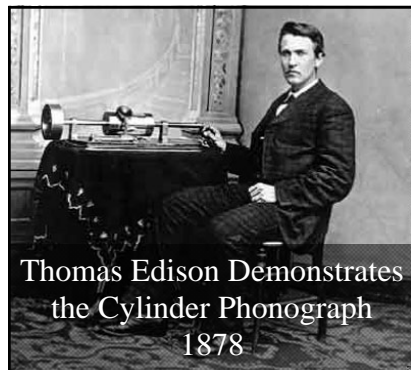
Between 1916 and 1928, in addition to recording, Burr managed and toured the US and Canada with the Peerless Quartet, **Billy Murray**, and three other Victor artists. The group was called the **Eight Famous (Popular) Victor Artists** and were a great success wherever they appeared.

The onset of radio, moving pictures, and jazz, outdated the sentimental style of music that Burr was familiar with and he disbanded the quartet in October of 1928. After making several solo recordings on smaller labels, freelancing, and working for a short while at CBS, in 1934, Burr became a popular regular performer on Chicago's **WLS** radio programs.

He died of complication associated with throat cancer and heart failure at the age of 59. Burr lies buried in an unmarked grave in an upstate New York cemetery in Kenisco.

For more info see: <http://henryburr.com/>





Thomas Edison Demonstrates  
the Cylinder Phonograph  
1878



## 133 Years Ago Edison Demonstrates His Cylinder Phonograph

Edison took his new invention to the offices of Scientific American in New York City and showed it to staff there. As the December 22, 1877, issue reported, "*Mr. Thomas A. Edison recently came into this office, placed a little machine on our desk, turned a crank, and the machine inquired as to our health, asked how we liked the phonograph, informed us that it was very well, and bid us a cordial good night.*"

Interest was great, and the invention was reported in several New York newspapers, and later in other American newspapers and magazines.

## New CD Soon To Be Released



The Barbershop Harmony Society's Historical Archives Committee is producing a NEW CD.

## CLOSE HARMONY PIONEERS

will include two dozen of the songs mentioned in this article and songs most barbershop singers know and love.



*Sweet Adeline, My Wild Irish Rose, I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen, Dear Old Girl, I Want a Girl and Play That Barber Shop Chord*



These songs were recorded by the original artists who made them famous.

Quartets like the Peerless, Haydn, American, Harmonizers, Shannon Four, Columbia Stellar, and Criterion Quartet

This unique collection will soon be available for only **\$20.00**

Exclusively through the  
**Harmony Marketplace**  
Catalogue # 203968



# Congratulations

## Jeff, Jim, Darin and Syd!!

*We were honored to see you achieve  
the top prize in Philly.*

*You earned it!*

*Now what?*

*It's scary to think what you'll do next.*

*We can't wait.*

*(Who we kiddin' ? - I'm just sucking up for FREE CDs)*