



Far Western District

Convention Honoree

Dr. Val Hicks – 2002 FWD Spring Convention Honoree



Val Hicks began Barbershop singing in 1949, but couldn't afford to pay his dues until 1952 when he was a high school senior, which then continued into his first year at the University of Utah.

He received his early barbershop training in Salt Lake City with the Beehive Statesmen chorus. In 1953, he became an "Arrangement" Judge Candidate and judged his first International Contest in Los Angeles in 1957 at the young age of 24.

In 1961, he became a Category Specialist in Arrangement, putting him in charge of the Certified Arrangement Judges in the society. During the same year, he began teaching at HEP schools with Bob Johnson and Dave Stevens.

Val has arranged nearly 800 songs during the last half century and has composed approximately 90 original songs. He recently put all his songs on five CD's (for historical purposes).

During Val's younger years, he arranged music for and coached great entertainers such as the Osmond Brothers on the Andy Williams Show (NBC) and the Danny Kaye Show (CBS) and assisted singing groups on the Lawrence Welk Show.

Val has taught barbershop singing in the USA, Canada, New Zealand and England (7 trips) and has recently returned from China where he had several informal discussions on the musical traits of our style. His songs and arrangements are now sung in Canada, England, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia.

Val says, "Barbershop can be loud, out of tune (with certain voices grating and dominating), with corny lyrics, trite melodies and silly interpretations, or it can be beautifully crafted, wonderfully in tune and performed with exciting vocal artistry worthy of any audience in the world. It's your choice."

Thank you, Val Hicks, for the many years of giving your time, talent and efforts to make barbershop more harmonious in all ways.