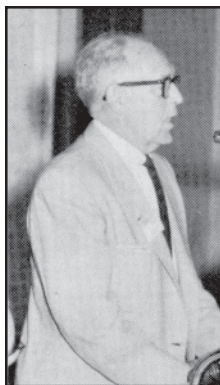


# Chapter 3

## November 1956 - October 1961



Bill Parry  
FWD President  
1956

**T**HE MONTEREY PARK CHAPTER in Southern California received its charter in late 1956. Crescenta Valley's "Verdugo Dons," 1952 District champions, were singing at a San Gabriel Chapter Afterglow and the door was open for air. A policeman drove by and stopped to see what was going on. He was so impressed with the singing that he persuaded the "Dons" to sing for the entire police force over the police radio in his car! In the November 1956 *Westunes Magazine*, District Secretary Jerry Graham reminded quartets that they

could enter the District Contest right up to the time for the afternoon eliminations.

The San Fernando Valley Chapter sent the following questionnaire to each of its members, and asked them to return it as soon as possible:

- Are you interested in singing in a quartet?  
(Yes, No)
- Kind of quartet?  
(Contest, Show, Chapter, Woodshed)
- How often could you practice?  
(Once a week, Twice a week)
- How often could you sing out?  
(Once a month, Twice a month)
- Can you read music?  
(Yes, No)
- Can you learn your part of an arrangement at home?  
(Yes, No)
- Can you "fake" your part?  
(Yes, No)

Most of their members responded and every man responding said he did want to sing in a quartet.

The Huntington Park Chapter had a float in the local parade and a booth in the exhibition tent, spreading the word about our hobby. Floyd Blackwell, Secretary of the Los Angeles

Chapter, proposed that a special pin be issued to long-time Society members (it took more than 20 years but eventually the Society would issue "Golden Oldies" badges). Peninsula Chapter's very funny "Hightones" quartet was quite active on stage and pratfalls were a part of their routine. After one show, tenor Ozzie Palos felt pain in his shoulder and went to a doctor who informed him he had a shoulder separation and asked how he had done it. Ozzie's reply: "Singing". Not long after this the "Hightones"

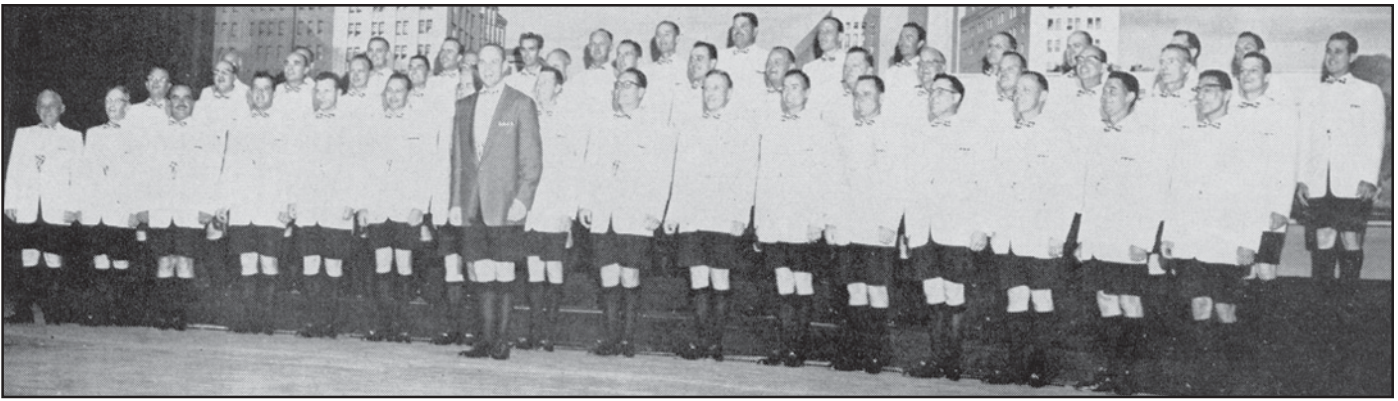


The "Hightones"  
Popular Show Quartet

appeared on the San Francisco PBS TV channel.

The Crescenta Valley Chorus was featured at the Glendale Music Festival. The Phoenix Chapter Chorus and the "Desert Knights" quartet were singing at The Retreat House, Casa De Paz y Bien, to help raise funds. In the middle of their performance, someone loosed a duck which proceeded to join in the singing although it only knew one word: "Quack". Two members of a Chicago Chapter visited the Marin Chapter on the same night, each coming with a different Marin Chapter member, and neither knowing that the other was within 2000 miles of him. Quite a reunion!

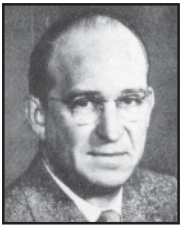
*Westunes* Editor George Dohn must have been psychic when he wrote that if Berkeley's "Californians" Chorus could



*The Berkeley "Californians" - 1957 International Chorus Champions - Dave Stevens, Musical Director*

beat Arcadia and Phoenix, they can beat anyone, for a few months later, they did.

Buck Hay, who sang lead with the "West Coasters" quartet when they made the finals in Minneapolis in 1956, quit his job in Los Angeles to accept a better one in Denver. Upon arriving in Denver with his family, Buck discovered that the company had moved to Georgia without notifying him. Imagine his dismay at arriving in this city late in the evening where he knew no one, after quitting his job in Los Angeles and selling his house. After parking his family in a hotel he attended a Denver Chapter meeting. When the Denver Chapter members learned of his predicament, they found him a nice home for his family and one member gave him a job very similar to the one for which he had come to Denver.



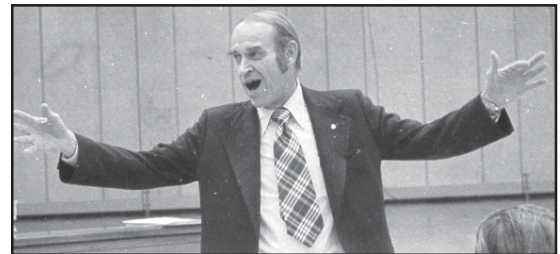
*Joe Trousdale  
FWD President  
1957*

The Far Western District ended 1956 with 6 more chapters than at the start of the year. The South Bay Chapter (nee Centinela Valley Chapter) was holding a woodshedding (harmonizing without written music) session at every chapter meeting. The Hollywood Chapter bulletin was called the *Hollywoodshedder*. The Long Beach Chapter was making sure that their visitors had an opportunity to sing in a quartet on their first night, and the next and the next and... In February 1957 the "Verdugo Dons" disbanded. In March 1957 the Coachella Valley Chapter received its charter. Also in March, the Society Headquarters were moved from Toledo, Ohio to Kenosha, Wisconsin.

The Santa Barbara and Fontana chapters were chartered in April bringing the number of District Chapters to 51. The Pomona Valley Chapter donated \$500 to the Pomona Valley Hearing Society. The San Fernando Chapter put on a benefit show for the Valley Handicapped Children which raised approximately \$1400 for them. "Fearless Frankie" Finnegan, editor of the San Fernando Valley Chapter bulletin, *Klinker Korner*, complained that the "Doc says the water on my brain has rusted my nerves of steel". The San Gabriel Chapter put on two very successful benefit shows for local charities. Bakersfield's "Cotton Pickin' Four" sang at so many dinners that the members, Tom Blankenship, Tom Maxwell, Eldon Jenkins and Jim Erwin, reported gaining an average of 14 pounds each.

Members of the Hollywood Chapter's "Film City Four" quartet were nursing sore shins. At the end of their singing on a show whose proceeds were going to a local park, they followed directions and exited through the break in the curtain. Unfortunately, someone had placed a bench directly behind this break without telling them. The Los Angeles Chapter had an award-winning booth at the California Hobby Show at which they took names and addresses of 54 men who visited the show and expressed an interest in barbershop singing. This information was sent to the chapters nearest their homes.

The first Society Convention to be held in the Far Western District was held in Los Angeles in June 1957 with Reedie Wright as General Chairman. Reedie was greatly assisted by Marv Brower, Bill Parry and MANY others. It was called "BOHIFS" for "Bit Of Heaven In Fifty-Seven". The "Lads of Enchantment" from Albuquerque in the South West District won the quartet contest but in second place were the "West Coasters" from the San Gabriel and Pasadena chapters, with Barrie Best, Jim Powell, Jim Potter and Bill Cockrell. This was the first time



*Dave Stevens  
Director of the Berkeley "Californians"  
First Far Western District Chorus Champions*

a FWD quartet had placed higher than 4th. The Chorus Contest was won by the FWD's "Californians Chorus" from Berkeley, directed by Dave Stevens. This was the first time a FWD Chorus had even placed in the top 5. Jack Evans of the Salt Lake City Chapter was quoted as saying: "No competitor in the International Contest can ever lose, for by watching and listening they can get an education that will help put them up to the top in the future." Jack must have known what he was saying since his "Evans Quartet" would be champs in 1960.

The Fullerton and Modesto chapters were chartered in July 1957. The San Jose Chapter sent representatives to Fresno

who sang on a local TV station and then spent the rest of the day promoting a new chapter in that city. The first regional chorus contests were held in Northern and Southern California in July. People attending the Orange County Fair were entertained by the Downey, Whittier, Arcadia and San Diego chapter choruses as well as the “Sharpshooters” and “Four Bits of Harmony” quartets. *Westunes* Editor George Dohn mentioned that barbershoppers usually didn’t like to “solo” and gave as evidence



*Jim Arnold  
FWD President 1958*

the number of well known barbershoppers in the District that had recently been married.

Jim Arnold, baritone with the “Crown City Four”, was appointed to the Society’s Quartet Encouragement and Development Committee, and the lead with that quartet, Jim Powell, was editing a quartet column in *Westunes*. New Pasadena Chapter member, Val Hicks, was conducting a barbershop craft session at each chapter meeting. Val, a Society contest judge, had recently moved from Salt Lake City and was also directing the Huntington Park Chapter Chorus. The Crescenta Valley Chapter was sponsoring a Girl Scout Troop. The Salinas Chapter made a healthy

donation to the Boys’ Camp Fund of the local Optimist Club. FWD Historian, Howard Cooper, requested that each chapter send him a history and picture of the chapter.

As of the end of August 1957, the largest chapter in the Far Western District was San Gabriel with 97 members, followed by Santa Barbara with 76, San Diego and Berkeley with 71, Sacramento with 66, Pasadena with 61, Phoenix with 52 and Long Beach with 50. By comparison, in early 1997, San Gabriel Valley had 20 members, Santa Barbara had 76, San Diego 131, East Bay (a merger of Berkeley and Eden-Hayward) 42, Sacramento 79, Pasadena 11, Phoenix 224 and Long Beach 39. In the FWD Achievement Awards for the first two quarters of 1957, the San Gabriel Chapter led, followed by Salt Lake City, Berkeley, Whittier, Pomona, Pasadena, Salinas, Phoenix, Crescenta Valley, Peninsula, Arcadia, Ventura, Stockton and San Diego, in that order.

The District Chorus Contest consisted of just two choruses. Eden-Hayward, winners of the north preliminary contest and San Diego, winners of the south. Eden nosed out San Diego in the final contest. The Mount Diablo Chapter held a joint picnic with the Contra Costa Sweet Adelines at the home of Al and Sarah Flower in Walnut Creek. In November, the Pomona Valley Chapter scheduled a get together of music students from Claremont Men’s’ College, Pomona College, Chaffey Junior College, Citrus College, Mt. Sac College and Whittier College for a show and a demonstration of barbershopping, on the Pomona College Campus. The Society Board announced that it wasn’t necessary to put periods between the letters SPEBSQSA.

Modesto boasted of having five chapter quartets, with

two of them consisting of singers under 18 years of age. The Society declared the Far Western District eligible to send three quartets to the Society Summer Contest (one quartet for each 646.6 members). In addition to their chorus and quartets, the San Gabriel Chapter boasted its own “Haywire Orchestra”, which became known for playing “barbershop dixieland” and appeared on shows from San Diego to Salt Lake City. The Santa Barbara Chapter had its chorus of 42 men on TV on Valentines Day, 1958. In March the Berkeley Chapter put on a “Parade of Quartets”



*San Gabriel Chapter’s “Haywire Orchestra”  
A Popular “Barbershop Dixieland” Group*

with no MC. Each quartet simply introduced the next quartet. The Society was so impressed with the activities of FWD Secretary Jerry Graham that it decided to allow 2 FWD members on the Society Board of Directors, if Jerry was one of them.

There were several very funny quartets in the District at the time including Phoenix’ “Desert Knights”, Pasadena’s “Crown



*The “Desert Knights”  
1957 Far Western District Champions  
1958 International Representatives*

City Four” and Peninsula’s “Hightones” and all these quartets were singing every weekend. The Salt Lake City Chapter put on a benefit show for the Utah Society for Crippled Children and Adults. At a district Presidents’ meeting it was decided to establish a school, possibly at the Society Headquarters in Kenosha, where

barbershoppers would be taught the fundamentals of chorus directing, arranging, quartet coaching, judging, showmanship and various other subjects “so vital to our continued existence”. At the same meeting, the Society’s Field Man, Floyd Connett said too many chapters were prone to let the chorus director run the



*The “Bay Town Four”  
1958 Far Western District Champions  
International Representatives 1960, 1961, 1963, 1964*

meeting. He strongly advised against this, pointing out that it tended to lessen the effectiveness of the elected officials in trying to plan a diversified meeting with ample time for quartet singing, coaching and encouragement.

In April 1958 the Fresno Chapter received its charter. The Whittier Chapter Chorus directed by Les Woodson, and Val Hicks representing the Society, put on a demonstration of barbershopping at the Music Educators’ National Convention (MENC) in Los Angeles. At the District House of Delegates meeting in Sacramento in April, it was announced that the Honor Chapters for the year 1957 were #1 Salt Lake City, #2 San Gabriel and #3 Whittier. At the same meeting a proposal that the District assist their champion chorus financially in its trip to the Society Contest was voted down. Possibly for this reason, the Far Western District was the only one that did not send a chorus to the Society Contest that summer. The first “Area Counselor of the Year” award went to Jud Baldwin.

The San Mateo Chapter received its charter in June 1958. At the Society Summer Contest in Columbus, Ohio, the Far Western District had two quartets in the top five for the first time. The “West Coasters” from San Gabriel and the “Evans Quartet” from Salt Lake City placed 4th and 5th, respectively. Pres Evans, lead with the “Evans Quartet,” learned just before the contest that he had a broken back but he sang anyway and then flew home for an operation to fuse some of his vertebrae, which laid him up for several months. The first Chorus Directors’ Workshop was held at the Society headquarters in Kenosha, Wisconsin in August. The San Francisco Chapter’s “Frisco Four” quartet was selected to appear in a road company version of The Music Man, which would tour the Western States and then settle in Chicago.

The San Diego Chapter members conducted a raffle of tools belonging to deceased member Kent Manchester, raising

money for his widow, and then painted the house of deceased member Bud Boyle, who had sung lead with the “San Diego Serenaders” quartet. The “Serenaders” were District champs in 1950 and became the first Far Western District medalist quartet, placing 4th in Kansas City in 1952. Phoenix’ Lloyd Steinkamp wrote: “People who search for the fountain of youth should travel in fours...harmonize...and they’ll be young forever.” In September 1958 the Fontana and Paradise Valley chapters merged to become the Inland Empire Chapter, meeting in San Bernardino. At the October District Board meeting in Santa Monica, after much discussion the Board finally voted to establish an “International Chorus Travel Fund”.

In November 1958, the Music Man show, featuring movie actor Forrest Tucker in the title role, Joan Weldon as Marion, and the “Frisco Four” quartet, came to San Francisco. Berkeley Chapter’s Dan Knapp arranged for a large block of tickets for NorCal barbershoppers at a matinee performance at which the quartet sang some extra songs during the intermission and directed the barbershoppers in the audience in some songs. Later that evening (after the San Francisco Chapter’s annual show), there was a reception for the cast of The Music Man in the War Memorial Building. It was planned to present Music Man writer-composer Meredith Willson with a certificate of thanks for all he had done for the barbershopping hobby. Unfortunately, at the last minute he was called away because of a death in the family so the show’s musical director, Michel Perriere, accepted it for him. There was lots of quartet singing at this monster of an afterglow, titled the “Spirit of 76” (trombones) and the Music Man cast loved it.

In December 1958, 21 members of the Long Beach Chapter took a boat and joined the Naples Pageant of Floats and Chorus Singers, and filled the boat channels with barbershop harmony. Because it was high tide, they had to duck down when



*The “Saints”  
1959 Far Western District Champions  
International Representatives 1960 & 1961*

going under bridges where the acoustics were especially good. The “Desert Knights” quartet, FWD champs in 1957, sang for a 114-year old lady, in their local County Hospital. She hadn’t spoken a word in 5 months but when they finished, she whispered “thank you”. Palm Springs received its charter in December.

On January 27, 1959, four Downey Chapter quartets entertained the patients at Rancho Los Amigos Hospital. In February 1959, the Eden Chapter put on a benefit show for the March of Dimes in the Oakland Auditorium with TV star Art Baker as MC. The Stockton Chapter purchased a Braille typewriter and presented it to the local Visually Handicapped Children group. They also paid the expenses for three diabetic children to attend



*George Dohn  
FWD President 1959  
Int'l Board Member 1961*

a two-week Diabetic Camp at Whittaker, California. The San Gabriel Chapter put on a show and raised \$1200 for the underprivileged children of their city. The Avocado Empire Chapter moved to Vista, California and changed its name to Palomar-Pacific.

The Fullerton Chapter was encouraging quartet formation by picking four likely quartet candidates at a meeting and then having them coached by the top talent in the chapter, while the rest of the chapter looked on and listened. The Santa Barbara

Chapter raised \$1500 for a local Boys' Club which would be used to form a boys' chorus. Two Salt Lake City quartets, the "Evans Quartet" and the "Tonichords" appeared on the Tacoma, Washington Chapter show. The San Jose Chapter was experimenting with just two meetings per month.

At this time a chapter needed 10 members to receive a license to operate as a chapter and 25 members to receive a charter. Licensed chapters could only be so designated for one year and could not register quartets with the Society or compete in Society contests. If a chartered chapter fell below 25 members, it was placed on "inactive status" and, while its quartets would remain registered, it was banned from contests.

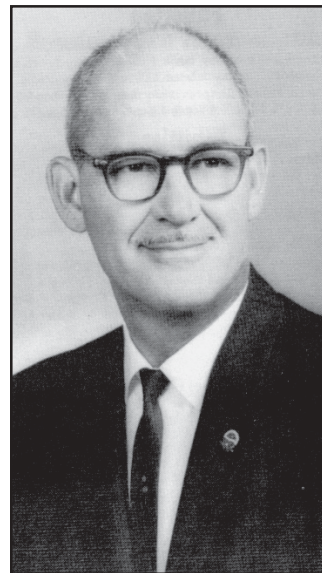
When the South Bay Chapter of Manhattan Beach found its chapter meeting night coinciding with St. Patrick's Day, it became "Wear Green Night" and all attendees were expected to comply with the title. At the 10th anniversary party of the Downey Chapter, gay nineties costumes were the rule. The Salinas Chapter's annual "Parade of Quartets" was a financial success and a goodly portion of the proceeds went to the Crippled Children's Society. At the April District Board meeting, the Board voted to turn over the total amount of the District Chorus Fund (\$1002.32) plus \$50 donated by the Downey Chapter, to the Eden Chapter Chorus to help them get to the Society Summer Contest in Chicago. The Board then voted to give the Eden Chapter an additional \$500 from the General Fund.

One of the big items being discussed throughout the Society at this time was the Expansion Fund. Each chapter was asked to come up with a sum of money to be used to expand the services from the Society Headquarters. Part of the money would go to purchase the new facilities in Kenosha and expand them, but much of it would be used to increase the number of "field men", expand the publications including music, show scripts and various manuals, produce quartet and chorus champion

recordings, and put on various training schools. In April, the Society decreed that each chapter should have a minimum of two Vice- Presidents. One would be in charge of membership and the other would be responsible for programs at the meetings. The Indian Wells Chapter was handling the program problem by assigning each section of the chorus the responsibility for the program, on a rotating basis.

In July 1959, *Westunes* Editor George Dohn gave up the job in order to become District President. The new *Westunes* Editor was Stan Manning of Altadena, California. The West Valleyaires Chapter (formerly Canoga Park Chapter) received its charter in July, as did the San Fernando Valley Chapter. District expenditures, at this time, were running around \$10,000/year. The Downey Chapter attended a Dodgers baseball game, sang for the fans and got their picture in Life Magazine. The PalPac Chapter entered a float in the Days of San Luis Rey Parade (a street parade...not a "parade of quartets") and used amplifiers to sing for the crowd. It was their first parade and they won second place.

At the October District meeting it was decided that Area Counselors and Past District Presidents would be voting members of the House of Delegates. Also at that meeting it was announced that Stan Manning had to resign as Editor of *Westunes*, the District magazine, upon advice from his doctor. Phoenix' John Hagopian would assume the job. The "Jerry Graham Award Trophy" was established, to be given each year on the basis of activity in the fields of extension, membership and member-retention. The Phoenix Chapter had 11 registered quartets at this time, and 103 members. In 1951 the Far Western District had 36 chapters and 1134 members, but by 1959 there were 57 chapters and 2200



*Wesley Meier  
FWD President 1960-63  
Int'l Board 1962-65  
International President 1968  
FWD Hall of Fame 1971*

members. The following chapters were in danger of losing their charters by having less than 25 members: Glendale-Burbank, Indian Wells Valley, Los Angeles, Mt. Diablo, Monterey Park, Newport Harbor, Placer County, Honolulu, Kailua and Ogden. The Los Angeles Chapter was suspended in January 1960.

The FWD received an award from the Society Headquarters for Achievement in Membership during 1959, placing well ahead of the 2nd place North-eastern District. The San Jose Chapter received an engraved gavel from the Society for an increase in membership of 103% over the previous year.

Because of this and some other accomplishments, San Jose President Chuck DeFreitas was awarded 2 registrations to the Society Summer Convention. The San Gabriel Chapter was holding a drawing for a prize at the start of each meeting, which was very successful at getting mem-



The "Evans Quartet"  
1960 International Champions  
International Representatives 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960

bers to the meeting on time. The Fullerton and San Diego chapters had started Woodshedder's Guilds which met prior to the regular meetings. The Vallejo Chapter received its charter in early 1960.

The first official "Barbershop Harmony Week" was established in 1960. Jack Hines, of South Pasadena's "Music Men" Chapter, was working on getting a chapter started in New Zealand, and Sacramento's George Doan and Monterey's Bill Monroe were working on spreading barbershop singing to several other countries. The Antioch and Westside (of Los Angeles) chapters received their charters in March 1960. In the first three months of 1960, the Pomona Valley Chapter raised \$200 each for the Pomona Hearing Society, the Casa Colina Salvage and the First Christian Church, this with a total membership of just 34. The San Gabriel Chapter raised \$900 for the Arroyo High School A Cappella Choir. The South Bay Chapter received an award for "Outstanding Community Service" from the Manhattan Beach Coordinating Council.

Dave Stevens, Chairman of the District's Song of the Year Committee announced that for this year, the song selected was "When You And I Were Young, Maggie", and he recommended that all choruses learn this song. *Westunes* Editor John Hagopian pointed out that war was against everything that barbershopping is for, and that is HARMONY. At the House of Delegates meeting in April, the Phoenix Chapter received the first place Achievement Award, followed by Salt Lake City and San Gabriel. Phoenix also won the first annual Jerry Graham award for membership and member-retention. In this competition, San Jose was second and Downey third.

Northern California chapters put on a 1960 Easter Parade of Harmony at the Oakland Auditorium, featuring several quartets from the area plus choruses from the Eden Chapter and the Oakland Sweet Adelines and Emceed by the always humorous Dave Stevens. In May the Pasadena Chorus and quartets entertained attendees at the Avalon-Catalina Island Buccaneer

Day Celebration. Pasadena's "Crown City Four" made a recording entitled "Sing a Song of Sickness" featuring songs such as "Leave the Slums Alone", "The Richer They Are the Slower I Cure Them" and "Fifty Million Commies Can't Be Wrong". The San Gabriel Chapter's famous "Haywire Orchestra" donated \$100 to the Society's Expansion Fund in memory of the orchestra's first president, Marv Marvel.

The first FWD Chorus Directors' Seminar was held in Santa Barbara in June 1960. Past Arcadia Chapter President Chris Valencia was sent to Australia on business for nearly four months, and wrote: "I hope to train three kangaroos so I can form a quartet, otherwise I'll go crazy not being able to sing." The Far Western District was the only Society district to pay transportation for its quartets to the Society Contest, furnishing airline tickets and \$60/day per quartet. The Glendale, Arizona "Thunderbird" Chapter received its charter in June. Lloyd Davis, editor of the PalPac bulletin, proposed that the folks at the Society headquarters in Kenosha look into the possibility of a U.S. Postal Stamp commemorating the 25th anniversary of SPEBSQSA. They did this but were told that it would not fit the Post Office's rules for commemorative stamps.

At the 1960 Society Summer Convention in Dallas, Texas, the Far Western District came away with three of the five medals in the quartet contest, with Salt Lake's "Evans Quartet" placing 1st, Berkeley's "Bay Town Four" 4th and South Bay's "Saints" 5th. Berkeley's "Californians" took second in the chorus contest. At the Society Board meeting at Dallas, the Board voted to increase the Society dues by 225% with the Far Western District representatives voting against it. Their concern was that it would necessitate raising chapter dues to around \$25. Harry Hall, lead with the "Bartlesville Barflies", winners of the first Society



The "Mystics"  
International Representatives 1960 & 1962

Quartet Contest in 1939, attended the Dallas convention but passed away shortly after returning home.

The Yuma, Arizona "Territorial Prisonaires" Chapter received its charter in Sep-

tember, 1960. Two Phoenix quartets, the "Humdingaires" and the "Desert Knights" gave a total of 29 performances in three months. Fourteen Downey Chapter members donated blood at the local blood bank. When they were finished and standing outside the building singing, a nurse came and asked them to come inside and sing for them. This they did but in a few minutes the same nurse came and apologetically asked them to stop, since the singing was keeping the nurses checking blood pressure from hearing the pulse beats. The Crescenta Valley Chapter held a benefit show for the Sun Air Foundation for asthmatic children.

The Eden-Hayward Chapter was holding a quartet contest at every chapter meeting. San Bernardino's Inland Empire Chapter appointed a Quartet Promotion Chairman to work with new quartets at every Chapter meeting. Santa Barbara's Program

Chairman was picking members for several quartets at each meeting and giving them 20 minutes to develop a song to sing for the chapter. Most chapters were holding picnics this summer. The Aloha Chapter Chorus and quartets sang at the Kaneohe Mental Hospital. The Salt Lake City Chapter donated \$400 to the local YMCA. *Westunes* Editor John Hagopian wrote: "If you ever see an Editor who pleases everybody, he will be neither sitting nor standing, and there will be a lot of flowers around him." Marin Chapter's "Roostaires" quartet sang for some friends at a restaurant in the town of Occidental. They concluded their numbers with "I'd Love to Live in Loveland." Later a couple seated at a nearby table declared: "We were having marital troubles, but after that wonderful group of singers, our hearts mellowed and we've made up!"



*The "Merry Chords," Downey Chapter  
Popular Show Quartet*

The PalPac Chapter entered a float in Oceanside's "Days of San Luis Rey" Parade, advertising their annual show to be held in November. On the float was the "Grunionaires" quartet with Rusty Pipes singing bass. In late 1960 the Far Western District was the second largest district in the Society with more than 2600 members. The Eden-Hayward Chapter put on two shows raising a total of \$1300 for the Oakland Civic Center Hospital and the San Leandro Boys' Club. In December, the Mojave Desert Chapter of Barstow, California, made up hundreds of Christmas stockings filled with things kids like, and passed them out at the Inspection Station to kids coming into California in cars from the east. Their quartets and chorus were there also to sing barbershop arrangements of carols to visitors entering the state during the Christmas Season. Each car received a greeting package containing "Why It's Great to Be a Barbershopper", "What is the SPEBSQSA?", a copy of the December *Westunes Magazine* and a greeting card from the Mojave Chapter.

The "Merry Chords" did 51 performances between October 7 and December 23, 1960. The Las Vegas Chapter received its charter in December 1960. The Downey Chapter donated Christmas baskets to needy families in their city. In January 1961, a Leadership Conference (a predecessor to C.O.T.S. — Chapter Officer Training Seminar) was held in San Gabriel,

with about 75 barbershoppers from quite a number of SoCal chapters in attendance. The South Bay Chapter was selling license plate holders with "SPEBSQSA" and "Keep America Singing" at \$2.50 for a pair. District Historian Howard Cooper advised us that the September 1939 Readers Digest had an article describing



*The "Manhattans," South Bay Chapter  
Popular Show Quartet*

the formation of SPEBSQSA.

The "Devilaires" quartet from Glendale, Arizona, received considerable publicity for singing a song while aboard the Thor Missile at the Arizona State Fair. Santa Barbara's "Four Fifths of Harmony" quartet rode around on its bicycle built for four. District Chorus Contest records were selling for \$3.98 each. The Far Western District won the Society's International Achievement Award for the second year in a row. On January 28, a pickup quartet from San Jose (Shipp, Hildebrandt, Bray & Gonzalez) participated in a choral workshop for 4th, 5th and 6th grade children from four schools in Los Altos. Up to this time, admission to quartet eliminations had been free. The District Board, voted to begin charging 50 cents for admission to these sessions at District and Regional contests, starting at the Regional contests in Fresno in May. The "Saints" quartet appeared on the Truth or Consequences TV Program on February 15, 1961. The



*The "Feenstra Brothers," Downey Chapter  
Popular Show Quartet*

Napa Valley Chapter was chartered that month.

The Bakersfield Chapter hosted a fraternal get-together of nine chapters. Their hall was jammed with many standing, for an evening of fun and good singing. Some District members were suggesting that the Society's motto should be changed to "Keep America Singing the Old Songs" (KASTOS). The San Gabriel Chapter put on a show for 1300 inmates at the California Institution for Men at Chino, with their chorus, their "Haywire Orchestra," and several of their chapter quartets plus the "Sidewinders" from Inland Empire and "Aristochords" from Pomona Valley. San Gabriel also put on a benefit show for under privileged youth, this time with help from the "Chordsmen" from Whittier, the "Manhatters" from Manhattan Beach and the



The "Forte Niners"  
1961 Far Western District Champions  
International Representatives 1962 & 1963

"Feenstra Brothers" from Downey. At the Regional contests in Fresno it was announced that the 1960 District Achievement Awards went to 1st Phoenix-Saguaro, 2nd San Gabriel and 3rd South Bay. The Jerry Graham Award went to South Bay, with San Gabriel and Whittier placing 2nd and 3rd.

At the Summer Convention in Philadelphia, the Far Western District again took more than its share of the top-five medals as again, the "Baytown Four" from Berkeley placed 4th and the "Saints" from South Bay placed 5th. Pasadena's "Gala Lads" just missed a medal, placing 6th. The Society's Contest and Judging Chairman asked the FWD to experiment with having all judges except the Stage Presence judge face away from the stage, and having the quartets announced by number and not by quartet name. The idea was to eliminate any bias on the part of the judges. This was tried at the District contest in San Diego in October 1961 but was never used again. The Westminster and Eureka chapters were chartered in October.



BAKERSFIELD CHAPTER PRESENTS

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