



## Region 31 Convention: 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> May 2010

### The Sage, Gateshead

Hello again to all Region 31 Choruses, Prospective Choruses, Quartets and CAL members,

#### Welcome to the 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010 Convention Bulletin!

*This bulletin is intended for **everyone**, not just those who are competing, so please ensure that this is circulated to your chorus and quartet members!*

The RMT and Convention Team are just back from a site visit and were reminded just how our **fantastic** our Convention venue is – we're so excited! Having absorbed all of the feedback from last year, we have been working hard to make it the best yet!

This bulletin is packed full of all sorts of information, some of which you will know from past Conventions, but please do read it carefully! If this is your first time at convention, check out our Convention Top Tips! <http://www.sweetadelines.org.uk/convention-toptips.htm>

#### **First things first – have you registered?**

This year, we'll be using every seat in the house as Region 31 is just growing so quickly, so please ensure that you submit your registration form to Debbie Watson ([debbie.watson7@ntlworld.com](mailto:debbie.watson7@ntlworld.com)) by **1st April** so that our team can allocate seating.

Just to highlight again, this year we are only selling 'All Events Tickets' to anyone who wishes to attend Convention. No single events tickets will be sold either by the Sage Gateshead or Region 31 this year. So, family, friends and guests who want to come along to support your quartet/chorus will need to purchase an All Events Ticket.

The registration form can be found at: [http://www.sweetadelines.org.uk/convention\\_2010.htm](http://www.sweetadelines.org.uk/convention_2010.htm)

All Events Tickets will be mailed out 2 weeks prior to convention, but there will a registration desk (situated at the Sage Gateshead near the Coats Desk on the Main Level, West Entrance) for any late queries. Opening times of the registration desk will be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> bulletin.

Convention programmes will be available for collection at the registration desk.

#### **Wearing your 'All Events Tickets' during the weekend**

Please carry your All Events Tickets with you at ALL times – you will need it in order to enter the auditorium. Competitors should carry your Ticket with you through the traffic pattern in your small bag. This year, All Events Tickets will be printed with each attendee's name.



#### **I'm sure it'll be on your packing list...**

Please ensure that you bring your Quartet of Nations Lanyards and plastic wallets with you for your All Events Tickets. Lanyards will be available for purchase, for £2 each, to replace those lost or forgotten. New choruses and members will receive a supply of Lanyards automatically when indicating 'First Timers' on the registration form – these will be sent to you along with your All Events Tickets.

## **INFORMATION SPECIFICALLY FOR COMPETITORS**

### **Registering to Compete**

There are only a few hours (!) left for choruses to register without incurring the late entry fee:

<b>Quartet Entry</b>	<b>8th March, 2010</b>
Quartet Late Entry (with additional fee)	23rd March, 2010
<b>Chorus Entry</b>	<b>9th March, 2010</b>
Chorus Late Entry (with additional fee)	24th March, 2010

Every week, until the final draw, we get a report from International detailing who has registered to compete at convention – it's been great to be getting an ever increasing list of competitors every week! This year we will be posting these onto the website so that you can all see, week by week, who has registered. For those of you who are registered please check the details and let International know if there are any inaccuracies in the information. Please keep in mind that it is possible a form may have come into the office during the time the lists were processed. They will be receiving an enormous amount of entry forms, and it may take three or four days to process competition entry forms.



### **Song Information**

Please can all competitors provide me with the names of the songs you intend to sing, their composers, arrangers and the order in which you are going to present them, i.e. up-tune then ballad or vice versa. This is information that is needed for our sound and video team to plan their work and must also be forwarded to International HQ post competition. Please can you send me this information by **5<sup>th</sup> April**.

### **Members in Good Standing**

Choruses are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring that all competing members are in good standing with up to date dues paid to both Region 31 and International HQ by **30th April**. If any competing member is subsequently found to not be in good standing, the Chorus will be disqualified.

### **Chorus Director and Quartet briefing – a little different this year**

We will not be having a formal briefing this year, however I will be sending out a briefing document a week prior to Convention.

However, it's imperative that I receive from choruses **2 copies of your List of Competitor forms** (preferably printed typed copies) which must be signed by your Chorus President and Director. A copy of the List of Competitors form will be included in the next bulletin. Please can your Chorus contact hand these into me, by the stage in Hall 1, on **Friday between 12:00 – 12:30**.

If you know you will be unable to get to venue on time it is imperative that you send them to me beforehand, by scanning and emailing, as the Panel Chair requires the information about size of chorus.

### Walk Ons

Each competing quartet will be allowed 3 minutes on stage - the walk ons will be from 10.30 – 12:00 on Friday and quartets will walk on in order of appearance. A full schedule will be in the next bulletin.

Due to the tight scheduling, **we will not be conducting chorus walk-ons this year** – this will hopefully make for a more leisurely start to your Saturday morning. However, we realise that many choruses who are competing this year have not stood on this stage before. **If you didn't compete at the Sage last year**, Directors will have an opportunity to stand on the stage between 12:00 – 12:30 on Friday. There will also be a member of the team available to take you round the traffic pattern if you wish.

### Competing Quartets

All competing quartets will be invited to come on stage at the end of the quartet contest before the results are announced. This allows the audience to congratulate you once again on your wonderful performances, but it is also a fantastic opportunity for all the quartets to form a giant chorus and sing to the audience while we await the results! We will be singing Mike Taylor's arrangement of 'Fame' under the direction of...Mike Taylor! Being a regional song, I'm sure many of you know this already, but music and learning tracks will be available on the regional website shortly – please look out for them.



We also need to carry out a sound and lighting check for the chorus competition once the quartet contest is over on Friday night. This year, we are asking all competing quartets to please stay on stage after the results have been announced on Friday evening to form a scratch chorus for the sound and light check. To get the right balance, some tenors and baritones may have to step out and watch! This will take approximately 20 minutes.

### Rehearsal Rooms

The Barbour Room will be available for rehearsal hire on Saturday morning/early afternoon – more details and confirmation about 'how to book' to follow in the next bulletin.

### Traffic Patterns

What was particularly exciting about the Sage Gateshead, apart from the fantastic stage of course was the simplicity of the Traffic Pattern! This year both quartets and choruses will be using the Northern Rock Foundation Hall as their warm up room. A map of the route will be included in the 2nd mailshot, so everyone will have a clear idea of where they are going. Couriers will of course be there to guide you through the pattern, but it really is very straightforward and stress free!

### Couriers

This year, we have a team of professional couriers who are helping us out. They are experienced barbershop couriers and will be stationed throughout the traffic pattern (wearing a brightly coloured t-shirt so you can easily identify them!). Each chorus and quartet will move through the Traffic Pattern from one courier to the next, rather than being allocated their own courier. The couriers will be in touch with each other via their headset intercom, so it should run very smoothly.

### Please don't bring the kitchen sink!

Please can competitors make sure that bags are no bigger than A5 in size - couriers will have the right to refuse to take responsibility for anything larger. Please be strict with your chorus members about this. As per last year, before choruses enter the warm up room competitors will be able to drop their bags into a 'bin' and the venue staff will wheel these round to the exit door of the stage for pick up immediately after the performance. Quartets will hand their bags to a member of the Sage Gateshead staff who will take them to the stage exit for collection.

### Hall 1 and its wonderful stage!



Last year, the chair of the judging panel determined that no microphones were needed for either the chorus or quartet competitions. This will be determined by this year's judging panel during their stage inspection on the Friday morning.

The stage will be set up the same as last year – the riser configuration will be 13 sets of 4 step risers in the 'Alternate' configuration which is curved and has no inverted centre. The stage is on the same level as backstage so there is no need for ramps or stairs for you to negotiate getting on or off stage. The MC podium will be on the left of the stage (as you look at it from the audience). Choruses and Quartets will enter from the right of the stage (again, as you look at it from the audience).

Like last year, there will be a set of overhead microphones for the quartet and chorus contests in order to pick up the sound for recordings only. So, there will be absolutely nothing between quartets or choruses and the edge of the stage, and no wires or boom microphones to trip over or clip – I'm sure those who competed last year will agree that the stage has such a warm, 'at home' feel to it.

### INFORMATION FOR EVERYONE

All contests will be held in Hall 1 at the Sage Gateshead.

The Quartet contest will start at 15:00 on Friday and the Chorus contest is currently scheduled to start at 12:00 on Saturday.

*\*Please note that due to the fact that many choruses have registered already (wow, this is going to be a fabulous contest!), we may have to bring the Chorus contest start time forward to 11:00. This will be communicated in the next bulletin\**

Can I please remind you all that the only beverage allowed in the Sage Gateshead at any time is **bottled water**. Venue staff will not let you in the Hall if you are carrying or drinking anything else, such as tea or coffee, soup or soft drinks. If spilled, these can damage the air conditioning system which is located underneath the seats.

We noted last year that there were lots of queues in the café/bar areas – inevitable when everyone is wanting lunch at the same time. We are therefore working with the venue staff to ensure that as many food outlets are open as possible. This year, there will be a map in the programme of all the food and drink outlets that will be open during the weekend.

### **They were the photographers for the X-Factor...**

The RMT are delighted to announce that Event Photos will be our new official photographers for our Convention. Event Photos have had experience of sequin-filled conventions, having been official photographers at both LABBS and BABS conventions. They are very excited to be joining us at the Sage Gateshead and look forward to meeting you all! We will have the same set up as last year, located on Level 2. There will be a quartet photo booth as well as display boards and computer screens to view the photos almost as soon as they are taken. On-site printing and lots more will be available - more information will follow in the next bulletin but in the meantime, check out Event Photos' website at [www.event-photos.co.uk](http://www.event-photos.co.uk).

### **We are excited to welcome back Cam3Media**

For their first convention with us last year, we were delighted that Cam3Media did such a great job with so much enthusiasm – they'd never been to a barbershop event before, so it truly was an eye-opener! Taking feedback on board and now being familiar with the event, the team at Cam3Media are raring to go and looking forward to providing you with even better video and audio recordings! More information about our audio/video offerings this year will follow in the next bulletin.

### **Mass Sing**

In May, we all enjoyed the impromptu sing while waiting for the chorus results to be announced but many were disappointed that we didn't have time for the Mass Sing. This year the RMT has decided that instead of holding the Mass Sing outdoors after the contest is over, we will have the Mass Sing indoors while waiting for chorus results. The Mass Sing will be directed by David Sangster, Master Director of our 2009 Champions Forth Valley Chorus. So brush up on all the Regional Songs listed on [www.sweetadelines.org.uk/regionalongs.htm](http://www.sweetadelines.org.uk/regionalongs.htm) and you'll be sure to have fun!



The Mass Sing will also replace the Family Chorus performance, which will not take place this year.

Can I also remind you that Jenny Lawson, Master Director of Surrey Harmony Chorus, has kindly written and donated a new song for the region for us to sing to our regional champions. Music and learning tracks are available on the regional songs part of our website. Be sure to learn this great song so we can join together in celebrating the success of our chorus champions on Saturday!

### **Show of Champions**

The Show of Champions will start at 20:30 this year, to give everyone a little more time to eat and change after the chorus contest. The show is scheduled to end at 22.15, leaving plenty of time for a fabulous afterglow! It will feature our 2010 gold medal small chorus, gold medal mid-size chorus and overall chorus champions, as well as our 2010 gold medal quartet and 2009 Chorus Champions Forth Valley Chorus! We will be also be dazzled by the IVY League youth chorus as well as our special guests from Sweden, Ringmasters! All in all, it will be a wonderful show! We are also very excited that Kathy Carmody, Master Director of Velvet Hills Chorus and International Master Faculty member (and our Panel Secretary for the weekend), will be our Emcee for the evening.

The exact timings will follow, but the order of the show will be as follows (note there is no interval):

Small Chorus Gold medallists (2 songs)  
Mid-size Chorus Gold medallists (2 songs)  
Quartet Gold medallists (3 songs)  
Forth Valley Chorus (2009 Champions) (3 songs)  
IVY League Chorus (2 songs)  
Chorus Gold medallists (3 songs)  
Ringmasters



### **Sunday Education**

Valerie Taylor, our Education Coordinator, is planning a fantastic morning of Education with our judging panel! There will be classes featuring Joan Boutilier, our Sound judge, International Queen of Harmony with the 4 Bettys quartet and the Master Director of the Choral-Aires chorus, and Nancy Field, our Expression judge, Master Director and International Faculty member. The schedule and more information will follow in the next bulletin.

### **Calling all young singers – you're in for a treat!**

Ellie Mills, our Young Women in Harmony Coordinator has some exciting plans for our young women (age 26 and under) at convention. So as to not give the game away, there will be a separate mailshot with song information going out to chorus contacts shortly. The chorus of young singers will be coached on Sunday morning by Sue Beck, our Showmanship judge, and then will perform to us all to close convention on Sunday after the Education sessions - it's certainly not to be missed!

### **Venue and Travel Information**



I'm sure you have already been finding out what's in and around the Sage Gateshead and in the 3rd bulletin, I will be including a lot of detailed information about the venue and the surrounding area. In the meantime, here are a few pieces of useful information!

The Sage Gateshead is approximately a 10-15 minute walk from most of the hotels being used by choruses this year and I know some of you have arranged to have coaches or buses in Newcastle to ferry you around. If you would like to arrange to have a coach/bus with you for the duration, then there are several contacts we have been given on recommendation:

Garfield Executive Travel - 0191 250 2066  
Parkers Execulink - 0191 214 4412  
1car1 - 0191 224 1900  
Astro Hire - 0191 262 3440

The 'Quaylink' buses which run around the city centre and down to the quayside are great (I've tried and tested them!) - they run every 10 minutes and take only about 10 minutes to get to the Sage Gateshead. There are stops for these buses throughout the city centre, and one right outside the venue! More information is available at [www.stagecoachbus.com/newcastle/Quaylink.html](http://www.stagecoachbus.com/newcastle/Quaylink.html)

There is also a stack of information at these websites so check them both out!:

[www.NewcastleGateshead.com](http://www.NewcastleGateshead.com)

[www.visitnewcastlegateshead.com](http://www.visitnewcastlegateshead.com)

Please also remember that the Newcastle Gateshead Convention Bureau have set up a website offering those attending Convention discounted rail travel on East Coast Lines (formerly GNER and National Express) for the duration of Convention. The discount is 20% on standard fares and bookings. We do hope this is of use to you and your family/friends coming to the Sage Gateshead this year. Please go to this website for more information: <http://www.eastcoast.co.uk/sweetadelines>

### **Over the coming month...**

So, to summarise, here is your to-do list!

- Register! Any questions/queries should be directed to Debbie Watson and registrations need to be submitted by **1st April**.
- Can competitors please let me know your choice of songs by **5th April**.
- Please let me know if your chorus is interested in rehearsal room hire at the Sage Gateshead as soon as possible.

### **What's next?**

I will be sending out the final bulletin at the beginning of April, and that will of course contain lots more of the detail about the weekend, including a full schedule of events, the Friday quartet walk-on schedule, Traffic Pattern maps, the Traffic Patterns themselves and lots more!

I can assure you that the RMT and Convention team are working very hard in order to make the 2010 Convention a truly harmonious experience!

If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me either via email, [duguidemma@gmail.com](mailto:duguidemma@gmail.com) or my mobile +44 (0) 7815 114 476. And finally, I wish you all the very best with your preparations for May - enjoy ringing those chords!

In harmony,



**Emma A. Duguid**

Region 31 Competition Coordinator 2010

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[http://www.sweetadelines.org.uk/convention\\_2010.htm](http://www.sweetadelines.org.uk/convention_2010.htm)

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