

YEAR OF MANY CHANGES

1976



1976 International Chorus Champions — *VILLAGE VOCAL CHORDS* (Metro Chicago, Illinois), Jeanne O'Connor, Director.

ALTHOUGH our membership reached 1,500, including 113 Associates, and attendance at convention exceeded 1,000 for the first time, only nine quartettes were registered to compete in Springfield, Massachusetts, where we convened as guests of THE HEPTONES Chapter. Rules were hastily adjusted to permit all contestants to compete in both sessions, bringing forth the exciting REFLECTIONS of Plymouth, Wisconsin as our new Harmony Queens.

The VILLAGE VOCAL CHORDS, under the new direction of Jeanne O'Connor, broke into blue ribbons for the first time, but certainly not the last. The new MacIntosh Award for the small chorus was presented to the DO-RE-MI'S of Libertyville, Illinois by the entire MacIntosh family.

Extensive changes were made that year in the duties of the Board Members. While the Area Representatives did not yet serve as members of the International Board of Directors, the Area Representatives met

annually to be informed of the Board's decisions. This year, with all seven Areas represented, new kits containing all the forms and materials they needed to conduct their Area business were provided to them.

A lengthy discussion took place in the Delegates' Meeting about qualifications for the International Chorus. It was unanimously agreed that this popular chorus should continue, for the time being, without change.

A committee was formed to initiate a training program for Harmony members as "associate judges." Such associate judges, once trained, were to serve at HTPs and double as coaches, when needed.

Jacque Jensen, Area IV Representative, conducted a mini-HTP for the BRANDON BARBERSHOP BELLES of Brandon, Manitoba, assisted by Mary Marek. Favorable comments from the chapters served, and the heartfelt appreciation of the Board were to pave the way for further educational efforts. Future

Area Training Teams were modeled after this program.

A new Harmony map was to be made that was to be "virtually indestructable, washable and ironable." A handbook containing condensed information and procedures to be followed by Board Members was being compiled, to be given to all incoming Board Members. It became necessary to find ways of coping with the ever-mounting paperwork that threatened to deluge our administrators.

Plans were already under way for Directors/Arrangers seminars to be held in 1978 and 1979, as Harmony remained ever mindful of the need to educate its members.

On a trial basis, competition performances were to be taped. The tapes would be given to contestants for educational purposes. The term "A & R Session" was adopted to replace "Critique," to conform with the policies of our mentors in S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A, Inc.