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APRIL 17, 2025

BARBERSHOP NEWS

FAREWELL TO A LEGEND: 1937-2025

BHS mourns passing of Jim Clancy



The Barbershop Harmony Society mourns the passing of Jim Clancy, age 87, the legendary Executive Musical Director and founding member of the Dallas-based [Vocal Majority chorus](#). He died on April 16 after a year-long courageous battle with cancer.

A driving force behind the creation of the Vocal Majority in 1971, Jim became its director in 1974 and led the chorus to unprecedented success on the world stage. Under his leadership, the Vocal Majority earned 11 Gold Medals in Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS) International Competitions — including an extraordinary run of 10 consecutive wins. This feat stands as a testament to Jim's visionary artistry and relentless pursuit of excellence. Today, the Vocal Majority holds 13 Gold Medals and is preparing to compete for its 14th this summer, now under the direction of Jim's son, Greg Clancy.

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HARMONIZER HIGHLIGHT

Be your best stage self with pro tips

What I learned from professional theatre

Moving from London's West End to barbershop



My time in professional theatre shaped my personal, professional, and barbershop journey. Here are key lessons I apply to my barbershop life today—not just musically, but in rehearsals and preparation as well.

Collaboration is key. Theater thrives on teamwork—actors, directors, designers, and crew all contribute to a shared vision. Success isn't about individual achievement but about harmonizing as a team, both literally and figuratively.

The power of adaptability. Live theater is unpredictable—script changes, technical issues, and on-the-spot adjustments taught me to be adaptable. Flexibility became one of my most valuable skills on and off the stage. In barbershop, expecting the unexpected and maintaining composure on stage is invaluable for concerts and competitions and gets us in the habit of maintaining calmness at all times.

Commitment and discipline. Rigorous rehearsals and long performance nights instilled discipline, consistency, and perseverance that transcends theater. Barbershop demands dedication amid busy lives with jobs and families, but the rewards of preparation and commitment make it all worthwhile.

Embracing vulnerability. The stage often requires a level of vulnerability that can feel intimidating, whether expressing deep emotions or stepping into a character's shoes. It's through this openness that we connect with others. Exploring the story and perspective behind a song enhances emotional connection and authenticity and provides an alternative perspective useful for performing and for life.

The magic of storytelling. Theater has a unique ability to transport audiences to different worlds, cause audiences to laugh, cry, and reflect, making the craft of storytelling deeply impactful. Storytelling isn't just lyrics—it's conveyed through voice, movement, dynamics, and interaction with fellow performers. In theater, you are rarely alone on stage; your fellow actors help shape and elevate the story. Similarly, in barbershop, working with your fellow singers allows the message of the song to become bigger than any one voice, creating a fuller, more engaging performance.

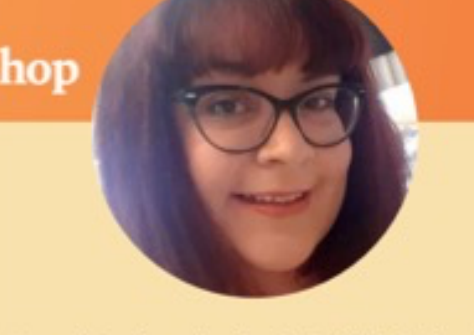
Failure is part of the journey. In theater, not every performance is perfect, and not every idea gets executed as planned. But this doesn't mean failure; it means growth. Mistakes on stage often became opportunities to learn, refine, and improve. In a competitive hobby, learning

from disappointments ensures continued engagement and enjoyment for all involved.

Using your authentic voice. In theater, you perform with your true voice rather than imitating others, unless doing a character voice. In barbershop, using your natural vocal tone helps to create authentic resonance which in turn will create the overtones and ring we all strive for. In turn, the true connection to your voice will also allow for emotional depth and a sincere performance.

Playing to the back of the theater. Theater demands projection, ensuring connection with every audience member. In barbershop, this means projecting not necessarily in volume, but in energy and emotion, engaging everyone in the room through the director and out to the audience.

Performing is a generous artform. Great performances come from generosity—offering music, energy, and passion to create a shared experience to the audience. Barbershop isn't just about hitting notes; it's about performing with passion, not just for points. 🎭



Hannah Barber trained at the Guildford School of Acting, gaining a BA in musical theatre. She then went on to work in both musicals and straight theatre in London, Paris, and Vienna as well as on National Tours. Hannah retired from acting and immediately found barbershop. Since then, she has won both UK and European gold medals in chorus and quartet. She is now assistant musical director of LA BHS Chorus and enjoys coaching other groups around the UK.

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Audiences don't care if you're a pro or a beginner; they just know if you're good and entertaining. [Hannah Barber shares tips](#) from her professional theatre career that boost your focus, collaborative skills, and stage performance, in the March/April *Harmonizer*, in mailboxes now and [always online](#).

[READ MORE](#)

UN-RETIREMENT FOR THE UN-CONVENTION

Champs deliver — two decades later!



A landmark quartet, 2001 champs [Michigan Jake](#) changed so much about the way we sing barbershop today. Their mastery of rhythm, innovative charts, and [oh-so-clean sound](#) set a new standard which influenced everyone who followed.

Good news: you can hear them LIVE! Head to Nashville, May 23–26 for the [UN-Convention](#) and discover how rhythm was born! **This show will not be livestreamed** — be there or be square 4/4.

[GET TIX](#)

SONG OF THE WEEK

May Each Day

arr. Gene Cokeroff

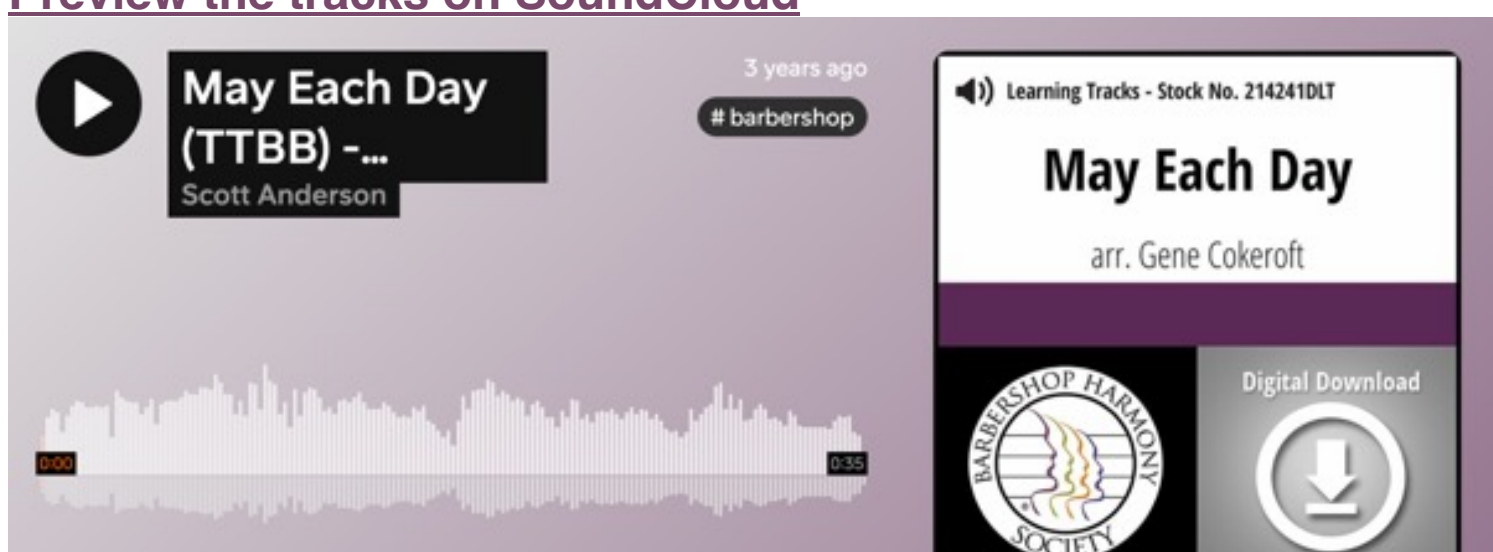
Barbershop can be a respite from care and a balm for the troubled soul, and this song spreads that soothing joy with your audiences: "May each day in the month be a good day / May you make friends with each one you meet." Timely for The Suntones in the 1970s, and timely for us today, this gentle benediction makes a lovely show closer.

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