

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NORTHLAND BARBERSHOP CHORUS PRESENTS 54th ANNUAL SHOW:

“Tony and the Time Machine”

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“A Barbershop Odyssey!”

The **NORTHLAND BARBERSHOP CHORUS** of the Sault, Ontario Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society is proud to announce its **54th Annual Show** will be presented **Sat. April 7th, 2018** starting at 7:30 p.m. at the Sault Community Theatre Centre. Show info can be found here: <http://www.northlandchorus.com/annual-show.html>

Tony and the Time Machine – A Barbershop Odyssey

The Sault Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society was founded in 1961. Many men who enjoy singing and who might consider joining the chorus have at times been reluctant to attend a rehearsal because they have been influenced by many cultural stereotypes regarding just what exactly “barbershop” music is and is not. Or, they are uncertain if they have the skills needed to join a group like The Northland Chorus. We thought it would be fun to do a show wherein a prospective member is taken on a trip through history using a barber chair as a Time Machine to learn about barbershop singing – from its roots in barbershops in the late 1800’s to what it is today.

The Barbershop Harmony Society was started in 1938 in Tulsa Oklahoma by two gentlemen, Rupert Hall and O.C. Cash, who invited 14 friends to a “Songfest” in the Rooftop Garden of the Tulsa Club in April 1938. By the 3rd week, the number of singers up on the roof numbered 150! Today more than 80,000 men and women sing in organized barbershop chapters. An organized Society was founded in 1938 for one reason: to preserve the turn-of-the-century songs its founders sang in their youth. This is exactly what Barbershop Chapters do today – only the songs of our youth can be anywhere from the 40’s, 50’s and 60’s right through the 80’s and 90’s. No song is off limits if it lends itself to a cappella harmony.

Along the way we will confront many of the common stereotypes: “You have to know how to read music or be a solo-quality singer”, “All you sing are boring ballads”, “Barbershop music is from a bygone era, with songs mainly from 100 years ago”, “You wear dated straw hats and striped shirts with arm bands and look like Jimmy Fallon’s “Ragtime Gals”, “Barbershop is a hobby mostly for old guys” etc. All not true!

Barbershop is not an era, rather it is a style of singing any kind of music from pretty much any era – so long as it’s got the potential for four-part harmony. Music on this show will range from a 1910 Barbershop standard, through music from performers as diverse as the Mills Brothers, Bing Crosby, The Everly Brothers, The Cascades, Johnny Cash, John Denver, Leonard Cohen and Bugs Bunny! From its origins in the late 1800’s on street corners and barbershops, through the formation of the Barbershop Harmony Society in 1938, to the present day, our show explains why this unique style of music remains popular with men of all ages: mainly because it’s fun to sing!

The 40+ man chorus will present songs in traditional 4-part a cappella harmony within the context of an original play written by chorus director Bob Shami. The prospective member is dentist: Dr. Phil N. Yankem (**KEN JONES**). His guide through time and the barbershop universe is a barber: Tony Tenorre (**DR. TOM LEHMAN**) Tony’s barber chair doubles as his time travel vehicle, but be careful and “Don’t touch-a the red button!” Other characters include **MATTHEW DOHERTY** (Newsboy), **MARIE BUJOLD-VALLÉE** (Dental Assistant Ginger Vitas) and **JESSE LETHBRIDGE** (Bill Singer). **LEE ANN PEARSON** handles stage direction.

FEATURED MUSICAL PERFORMERS

- **NORTHLAND BARBERSHOP CHORUS:** Now in their 57th year. Bob Shami – Music Director
<http://www.northlandchorus.com>
- **HEADLINE QUARTET – ‘ROUND MIDNIGHT:** World Class Barbershop Quartet from New York City. An award-winning "a cappella" quartet of music educators. They sing primarily in the barbershop style and demonstrate how close harmony can be applied to different musical genres such as R&B, pop, jazz, and rock. They finished 10th in the world at last summer’s International Barbershop Quartet Competition held in Las Vegas, NV. <http://www.roundmidnightquartet.com/>

All Tickets: General Admission – **\$28.00* CDN Funds**, available at:

- Theatre Centre Box Office* (Station Mall) Hess Jewellers (Churchill Plaza)
- Any member of the Northland Chorus Soo Theatre/STARS (534 Ashmun St. Soo, Mich.)
- Tickets may also be available at the door. Doors open at 6:45 p.m. Curtain is 7:30 p.m.

* A \$4.00/ticket service charge is added by the Mall Box Office to all tickets they sell. Box Office price is \$28.00 + \$4.00 = \$32.00

A major portion of the show proceeds go, as always, to the Speech-Language Pathology Unit at Sault Area Hospital in support of local speech therapy programs. As of this show, more than **\$95,000** will have been donated by the Northland Chorus to this cause since 1995. Several thousand more has been donated to the Speech Dept at War Memorial Hospital in Soo, MI. Their support of local Speech Therapy Services is in keeping with their motto:

“We Sing ... That They Shall Speak.”

The Northland Chorus has set a lifetime goal to contribute \$100,000 to Sault Area Hospital not later than their 2019 show. Revenue derived from the annual show is their only source for donations to the Hospital.

More information about the long history of support of the local Speech Therapy services in both Sault's by the Northland Chorus can be viewed on their website here:

<http://www.northlandchorus.com/about/our-service-project-we-sing-that-the-shall-speak.html>

Northland Chorus - General Information

Barbershop singing had its beginnings in American barbershops of the 1890's through 1920's. Barbershops served as “tonsorial parlours”: places where men gathered to share news, camaraderie and a song or two.



Above, at left, the logo of the Barbershop Harmony Society, an umbrella international organization which serves 30,000+ members in 800+ chapters across North America. It granted the Sault Chapter its charter in 1961.

At right, the logo of the Sault Ste Marie Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. It represents an iconic barbershop singer whose International Bridge/handlebar moustache is symbolic of our membership coming from both sides of the border. The red, white and blue colours represent the colours of the flags of both nations. The four bars in the hat represent the 4-part harmony that is the hallmark of the barbershop style, and recall the stripes of a traditional barber pole. The “oh” vowel being sung is the first sound in each country’s national anthem.

Northland Chorus – Sault Ste Marie’s 2010 Medal of Merit Winner



The City of Sault Ste Marie awarded the Northland Barbershop Chorus the 2010 Medal of Merit, the city’s most prestigious honour, in recognition of community service given over 5 decades.

The award is given to nominees for “outstanding achievement in a chosen area which has resulted in making a valuable contribution to the community”. The award was officially presented to all then-currently active chorus members by Mayor Debbie Amoroso at a civic ceremony and dinner held May 7, 2011.



Northland Barbershop Chorus 54th Annual Show, April 7th, 2018

“Tony and the Time Machine”

Bob Shami: Music Director and Publicity Chair

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