

EVERGREEN DISTRICT

Pacific Northwest District (1947-1953) - Evergreen District (1953-current)

WHAT'S NEXT??? *In response to all of the things that can, and have gone haywire in the last few years (weather, pandemic, isolation, etc), I thought this tale from October 1950 is worth sharing with all of you that are now venturing out for rehearsals and preparing for shows. Many of the men in this short story became major leaders and shapers of our Evergreen District – evidently a little water didn't dampen their tenacity to grow our district. 2022, Ken Galloway, historian.*

"Robinson Carusoes" of the Pacific Northwest or THE "MAROON CORPS" STORMS THE PACIFIC and VICE VERSA

Harmonizer, March 1951

Barbershoppers in Brookings, Oregon will never forget October 1950. Neither will the hundred odd barbershoppers and wives from Portland, Klamath Falls and Eugene, Oregon who journeyed three to five hundred miles to help Brookings stage a Parade (like a quartet show) October 28th. Brookings is right on the Pacific and was the center of the worst coastal storm in years, with resultant flood and slide conditions never before equalled.

Half of the 60 voice Klamath Falls chorus, with the What Four, were towed by huge lumber trucks, ferried and waded into Brookings before the road was closed. The rest of the chorus with the House Brothers and the 4 Bills from Roseburg were either turned back home or were marooned in Crescent City, Calif. The Oswego Four and the aptly named Webfoot Four from Portland; the Lumber Lads, 4 Tune Four and the likewise aptly named Plungers, from Eugene, helped by State Police and various forms of transportation arrived in time for the show. Al Pearce, the M.C., was brought in by Coast Guard Emergency crews, wet and late, but willing.

Merle Brainard, the Brookings Banshee Baritone, reports that electric power failure caused no end of inconvenience. Stage lighting consisted of one 500 watt construction flood, powered by a small generator. No programs could be printed. Living quarters that didn't depend on electricity had to be rustled up for the visitors. Kerosene lanterns were at a premium and the Afterglow was strictly a "gaslight" affair without the bustles.

Sunday morning the deluge continued and all roads South were closed. Seventy-five barbershoppers, wives, and even a few babies started North hoping to find a way around the floods. Thirty miles north, the Rogue River was rampaging and the group was forced to stay at the town of Gold Beach. Led by Johnny Houston, Klamath Falls Chorus Director, the troupe promoted a Sunday evening show at the local movie house, the six quartets and chorus playing to a capacity audience.

Monday, the six feet of water on Highway 101 had gone down enough to allow the "road show" to feel its way carefully around slides and washouts sixty miles north to Bandon where the Coquille River was out of bounds. With undimmed enthusiasm Houston and the quartets set out to convert Bandon to Barbershopping, again staging a two hour show in the local movie house before a capacity crowd. Local enthusiasts afterward entertained the entire group at the Country Club.

Not to be outdone in spirit by the men of the traveling troupe, the wives of the Oswego Four cooked up a couple of a propos parodies for their husbands to sing in the impromptu performances. One, to the tune of "Stormy Weather" went like this-

*"Can't go on Everything we planned went wrong Stormy weather.
We can't pull our poor selves together, Keeps raining all the time ... "*

By Tuesday, the roads became passable and the Robinson Carusoe Road Show disbanded for the season.



WHAT FOUR QUARTET, KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON

L. to R.-Merton Ferebee, tenor; Benny Loftsgaard, lead; Olney Rudd, bass; Johnny Houston, bari. Houston and Loftsgaard are Directors of the Klamath Falls Chapter Chorus.



THE PLUNGERS, EUGENE, OREGON

L. to R. Frank Graham, lead; Bud Leabo, tenor, Director of the Eugene Chorus; Ted Wood, bari; Bob Hirt, bass.



WEBFOOT FOUR, PORTLAND, OREGON

L. to R. Bill Gable, tenor; Ron Hamilton, lead; Clint Pearson, bari; Milly Millington, bass.



LUMBERLADS, EUGENE, OREGON

L. to R.-Glen Rounds, tenor; Dick Busey, lead; Harry Huffman, bari; Ernest Cullen Murphy, bass, formerly Dist. Sec. and District Harmonizer Editor. MARCH, 1951