



For Immediate Release

Two Barbershop Chorus Alums Reunite at The Terraces at Seacrest Village

Former Singers Share a Passion for Four-Part Harmony and Friendly Competition

LITTLE EGG HARBOR, N.J. (April 11, 2023) — Bill Winterberg has met many new people during the four years he has lived [The Terraces at Seacrest Village](#) in Little Egg Harbor. Last November, however, there was one introduction at the assisted living community that proved to be quite a surprise.

“Wendy Becker, our director of community relations, brought this gentleman over to me and said that he was also a former barbershop chorus singer,” Bill recalls. “I looked at him for a few seconds and, suddenly, it clicked!”

The new resident was Richard Bethel, and he and Bill had a shared history as barbershop chorus singers in New Jersey – and their groups long enjoyed a friendly competition. Although the two men had lost touch over 40 years ago, Bill said, “We immediately got involved in a conversation that flowed from exactly where we left off. It was wonderful sharing the warm memories we had of those days.”

Falling for Four-Part Harmony

Barbershop harmony is a style of vocal music characterized by four-part harmony without instrumental accompaniment. Barbershop music is generally performed by a group of four singers, or quartet, or by a barbershop chorus. Bill’s father was a member of the Paterson Chapter of the SPEBSQSA (Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America). Now this Society is called the BHS (Barbershop Harmony Society). His father would constantly ask him to attend one of the practices.

“I would always say no,” said Bill, affectionately nicknamed “Paterson” after the city where he grew up. “Then one day, in 1945, I agreed to go. When the doors opened and I heard those harmonious voices, it was all over. I committed there and then to becoming a part of that Chapter.” A dedicated barbershop chorus singer for 76 years, he went on to serve as the group’s president, musical director and show chairman, and later was a member and musical director of the Atlantic City Chapter.

Bill’s motto has always been, “Sing and be happy!” He enjoyed the comradery and sang in numerous quartets and choruses over the years, performing in venues ranging from Manhattan’s Carnegie Hall to The Great Auditorium in Ocean Grove, N.J. One highlight

was competing as a member of the Dapper Dans of Harmony from Livingston, N.J. The group won the District Chorus Championships in 1975 and 1977, and went on to win medals for 3rd and 5th place at the international level. Bill was also proud to be honored by his peers as “Barbershopper of the Year” in 1992.

Comradery and Friendly Competition

Comradery was also a big draw for Dick Bethel, who fell in love with singing when he was 7 or 8 years old. “I was always surrounded by music,” he said. “I heard Kate Smith sing “God Bless America” on the radio, and also loved the singing of Nelson Eddie. My mother was a pianist who could play by ear, and we would sing as she accompanied us as well.”

A native of Philadelphia, then Florida and back to Little Egg Harbor, Dick sang tenor with the barbershop chorus group called the Exclusives, which had approximately 50 to 60 members. “I was a member for 14 years and that is how I met Bill,” Dick said. “Our choruses would compete against each other along with other groups.”

Dick remembers looking forward to weekly rehearsals and getting together afterwards at a local bistro to have a beer and some food. “Bill and I are both widowers now, but we used to go out to dinner together with our wives.”

While he enjoyed performing at the large competition venues, Dick said his favorite performances were singing for patients and staff at local hospitals, especially during the holidays. “They really loved it, and we loved to see them enjoying our singing,” he said.

At this point Bill and Dick simply enjoy their fond memories of their competition days, but have no plans of returning to the big or small stage to sing.

The Terraces at Seacrest Village is a charming senior living community offering residents a fulfilling lifestyle. With three care options – assisted living, memory care and respite care – residents enjoy a worry-free lifestyle with beautifully appointed apartments, gourmet dining, and an engaging mix of programming and activities. And they have access to the services they need, when they need them – including onsite rehab care at [Seacrest Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center](#). To schedule a visit and tour, call 609-857-4141 or visit seacrestterraces.com for more information.

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[About The Terraces at Seacrest Village](#)

281 Mathistown Road, Little Egg Harbor, NJ 08087

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Media Contact:

Sandy Crisafulli / David Wilderotter
Caryl Communications
201-796-7788

sandy@caryl.com / david@caryl.com