

BACK TO THE 90s

Production Notes

And

Script

A Harmony College Show

The following songs are included in the show. The C, Q, or O designation indicates suggestions for performance by chorus, quartet or octet.

Song	Society Stock #
<i>Ta-Ra-Ra Boom-De-Ay & A Hot Time In The Old Town - Medley(C)</i>	7716
<i>Sweet Rosie O'Grady(C)</i>	8114
<i>When You Were Sweet Sixteen(Q)</i>	8121
<i>She Is More To Be Pitied Than Censured(Q)</i>	8115
<i>Asleep In The Deep(C)</i>	8120
<i>Old-Tyme, Gay-Nineties, Parlour-Piano Medley(C,Q,O)</i>	7712
<i>There Is A Tavern In The Town(C)</i>	7717
<i>Amazing Grace(O)</i>	7713
<i>There's A Meetin' Here Tonight(C)</i>	7718
<i>New York Medley In Three Quarter Time(C,Q,O)</i>	7714
<i>On The Banks Of The Wabash(Q)</i>	8062
<i>Those Wedding Bells Shall Not Ring Out(C)</i>	7715
<i>Who Threw The Overalls In Mrs Murphy's Chowder?(C)</i>	8119
<i>Hello! My Baby(C)</i>	8046

A set of one each of all the printed arrangements for the show is available. The Society stock number is 6045.

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Cassette learning tapes for all the music in this show are available for purchase from the SPEBSQSA, Inc. order desk. The stock numbers are: tenor (4750), lead (4751), baritone

PRODUCTION NOTES

BACK TO THE 90s is a salute to the era which spawned barbershop harmony, the 1890s. But it is also a look at history and morals through a pair of first-person eyes.

The premise is a present-day, young man's encounter with the spirit of his great-great grandmother. Through her, he learns that the Gay 90s were not just a section in a history book but were a time of joy and sorrow, triumph and defeat and experiences not unlike those a person encounters today. These are revealed as we share the life of Rose McGuire during the ten-year period which closed out the nineteenth century. Fourteen intriguing songs, many of them American classics, spotlight the emotional high and low points of the heroine's story. (See list next page.)

Suggestions have been indicated in the script as to who should perform each song: chorus, quartet or double quartet. These are only suggestions. Flip these around to suit your own situation. Remember, however, that mixing chorus and quartet performances offers variety to your audience, gives a brief respite to the performers and provides opportunities to encourage quartet participation within the chapter. It also prevents the chorus from having to learn all fourteen songs for the show. Do not overlook the possibility of using solo voices with the chorus "looming" in the background.

As with any production, your chapter should use all the theatrical elements you have at your disposal to make **BACK TO THE 90s** the most exciting and interesting production possible for your audience. These elements include scenery, props, costuming, lighting, chorus stage presence, vignettes, pantomimes, or just about any other entertainment device you can imagine.

Following these general remarks, we have given you some more specific thoughts on the show and some production ideas. There are many more ideas that you can and should come up with on your own.

One good idea-producing process that can be used is brainstorming. Divide the chapter into groups. Assign each group an entire scene or section of the show. Let the group write down as many ideas as they can on how to stage their section. Tell them to come up with all the theatrical elements they can think of and not to throw out any idea because it seems impractical. The group which comes up with the longest list can be awarded a prize or some type of special recognition. Once the lists are complete, the show committee can extract the good ideas and use those which will work best with the total show in mind.

Remember, the audiences at your show *could* stay home and listen to barbershop records. They have come to witness a theatrical experience which includes both sound and sight; do not cheat them. Feature our unique product—barbershop harmony—and complement it with a solid visual performance.

(4752), bass (4753) and the set of all four voice parts (4754). These tapes are copyrighted by the Society and may not be reproduced.

CONCEPT

The character of Rose serves as narrator for the show. As scripted, her spirit has returned to visit her great-great-grandson. The woman the audience sees, however, is a vital and attractive young woman. The audience is actually overhearing her as she communicates to the boy. He does not physically see or hear her but because of their natural affinity he gains a new insight into her life and times.

MUSIC

All fourteen songs in the production were composed before 1900, giving the show authenticity. Most of the songs will be recognizable to a majority of your audience. This helps build subconscious participation and makes the show more "comfortable" for them.

It is suggested in the script that the chorus underscore Rose's dialogue with the show music. This means that they hum or sing on a neutral syllable such as "ooh" or "loo" audibly, but not overpoweringly, as she tells her story. Either the song which has just been completed or the song which will follow her remarks is the best choice for this underscoring.

To make this concept work most effectively, pitches must be taken under applause so the music can begin without dead spots being created between applause and underscoring. As the background music begins, Rose begins hers monologue.

STAGING AND SETS

The show can actually be performed as simply or as elaborately as you wish. In essence, the script merely provides the basis for a concert with a character serving as a narrator. The amount and quality of production value you add will determine how closely you stick to the concert format or move toward a full-blown production.

Regardless of the complexity of the main set, there will need to be a somewhat isolated and small area available for the first and last scenes between Rose and Tom. This area can simply be a downstage right or left area with a few boxes and an old trunk to represent a corner of a home basement.

The main set could be as simple as risers positioned center stage with a curtain or non-explicit background behind them. The complexity (and, hopefully, audience entertainment level) can rise by using various backdrops to depict various locations and set pieces in front of the drop to add dimension and interest. To add further interest, the chorus can be staged without risers. Rather than spreading the performers out across a flat stage, however, you should create levels through the use of ledges, hillsides, benches, etc., (outdoor scenes) or furniture, platforms, etc., (interior scenes). These levels can also change through the course

of the show. Set changes can be made behind closed curtains during quartet songs or even during blackouts.

ACTING AND CHARACTERIZATIONS

The main role is that of Rose, the great-great-grandmother whose spirit has returned to help her descendant understand and appreciate life as it was a hundred years ago. The actress playing Rose should be in her late teens or early twenties and be able to project a bright, vibrant attitude and appearance. She should come across to the audience as a young woman they would meet in the 1990s, but her story, dress and language tell us that she is indeed from the 1890s.

Theoretically, she is communicating to Tom throughout the show. Of course, she is actually speaking to the audience and setting up the songs which will be sung. The warmth and conversational tone she would use with her great-great-grandson should be very effective with the audience as well. It is also important that the actress move about the stage and make dramatic use of the space in which she has to work. This will help the conversational aspect and also add some visual variety. Make sure the actress understands the dual function of maternally communicating with the boy and providing entertaining continuity for the audience.

The character of Tom should be played by a teenage boy, or someone who can physically and emotionally convey this. His scenes at the beginning and end of the show are extremely important to set up a convincing premise and bring it to a logical and emotional conclusion. He must be very "1990s" in attitude but display a inner emotion which will allow him to bond with Rose.

Tom's character role is designed to stay on stage and read his great-great-grandmother's letters. He will give Rose another focus of attention to use to punctuate certain points. However, Tom should not draw attention from Rose or the chorus. The lighting on his area should be very low or even completely off, unless this puts him in total darkness.

The chorus' role in this production is to develop Rose's story through the musical selections they sing. In this sense, it has some similarities with the classic Greek choruses of ancient theater. It represents Rose's era—the 1890s—and the members should be empathetic to her in the way they present the songs and even through their reactions while she is delivering her monologues. They should not overreact and upstage her, however. If they do not become involved with her through their facial reactions and attention they will be a distraction to the emotions she is creating.

ADDITIONAL STAGING VARIETY

Through your creative show production team or perhaps through the brain storming techniques already described, you will probably come up with ways to stage the various songs in the show which can add variety and entertainment to the production. To help you

get started in this direction the following are ideas for some of the songs. Several of these were used when **BACK TO THE 90s** was first produced at the 1990 Harmony College.

Ta-Ra-Ra Boom-De-Ay & A Hot Time In The Old Town - Medley: This is the opening chorus number. Try a singing entrance from both sides of the stage. The performers should be enthusiastic and "loose" to pull this off correctly.

Asleep In The Deep: Use a bass soloist to step out and sing a portion of the song while the rest of the chorus sings parts on neutral syllables.

Old-Tyme, Gay-Nineties, Parlour-Piano Medley: Have quartets, octets and soloists step out from the chorus and sing sections of the medley for variety.

Amazing Grace: Have the chorus wear choir robes and set the risers to simulate a choir loft.

There's A Meetin' Here Tonight: Perform this one very freely and enthusiastically. Present a lot of "Hallelujah brother" gestures and feeling.

New York Medley In Three Quarter Time: Here's a great opportunity to have one or two fellows do a waltz clog to one of the peppier songs in the medley. One of the other songs could be selected for a traditional waltz by one or more couples in period costumes. Rose could team with a partner and be one of the dancers.

Those Wedding Bells Shall Not Ring Out: Try a pantomime of the lyrics being sung. For characters you will need a bride (use Rose), a groom, a preacher and the husband. At Harmony College, the pantomime was active only during the verse portions. The actors froze in position during the chorus of the song. A light shift from the vignette back and forth to the singers helped this effect.

Who Threw The Overalls In Mrs. Murphy's Chowder?: This song cries out for a comedic presentation. Have some performers dress up as the characters in the song (perhaps even use a man to play Mrs. Murphy) and act out the song in broad slapstick.

Hot Time In The Old Town (reprise): Bring the cast and the feature quartets out for a fast curtain call while this is being sung. They do not need to be reintroduced. Utilize both right and left wings and send the performers or quartets out at a brisk pace.

GUEST QUARTETS

The script is designed as a two act production which should last just about two hours (inclusive of a fifteen-minute intermission). The two feature-quartet spots and Rose's monologue, which precede each, can be removed and **BACK TO THE 90s** will work well as a one-act show lasting about fifty-five minutes.

The show was scripted as a two-act vehicle instead of a one-act presentation to preserve a continuity of entertainment for the audience. If the audience must put the theme to rest at the intermission and adjust for a different style of entertainment following intermission, an opportunity has been created for their attention to wander.

The script, as it is presented here, is written so that the two guest quartets appear as an integral part of the story, yet they are permitted to perform their normal package with little or no alteration.

Be aware, however, that remarks from the quartet such as, "We'd like to thank the Mid-Valley Chapter for having us on the show," or "It's great to be in Florida. . ." can damage the believability of the show. Send the guest quartets a script well in advance with their section highlighted. Ask them to read the entire script. Also send them these paragraphs you have just read that explain the importance of their cooperation.

COSTUMES

Tom's costuming is quite simple. He should be casually dressed in contemporary clothing typical of a teenage boy. He should avoid, however, printed shirts or extremely bright or contrasting colors or patterns which could become a distraction to the performance. This is a good rule-of-thumb for any costuming used on stage.

Rose must be dressed in 1880s-period clothing to help define her character and personality. Her hair style and makeup should match this era as well. She may wear one costume throughout the entire show or she may make numerous costume changes to add variety and help set the mood for various songs. If only one costume is worn, the best choice would probably be a soft, feminine Victorian dress. A dress which highlights the character's youth, innocence and charm will go a long way in aiding her characterization.

If more than one costume is chosen, try to fit the costumes to the moods of the songs; however, make sure all the costumes represent the period of the 1880s. For example, she might be dressed in the Victorian dress described in the preceding paragraph, through the *Old-Tyme*, *Gay-Nineties*, *Parlour-Piano Medley*, then change to a music-hall performer's costume for the rest of the act. She could open the second act dressed very conservatively for the hymn and spiritual and then change to a ball gown or even back to her original dress for the remainder of the show.

To help portray its role, the chorus could be dressed in an array of 1880s period costumes. This could include vests, arm bands, spats, period suits, straw hats, derbies, and character costumes depicting a shopkeeper, policeman, etc. Again, the costumes should be coordinated so they blend together and there are no distractions. Do not leave costuming to the last week. Instruct the performers in what is needed for the show and have them bring their costumes to a rehearsal several weeks before the show. Be honest (but gentle) with the fellows. If there are costumes that are ineffective or distracting, tell them. Also,

make a list of anyone who does not have a costume, or a complete costume. Ask if other men have spare costume parts to share with those who are in need.

LIGHTING

Lighting will differ with every stage and with the equipment that is available. To give you just one idea, here is a description of the lighting that was used for the 1990 Harmony College production of **BACK TO THE 90s**.

Lekos (ellipsoidal reflector spotlights) were used to light the downstage area from the apron to just upstage of the curtain line. There were also two rows of strip lights. The downstage row consisted of two six-foot units. The upstage row consisted of three six-foot units. Each unit could be circuited to provide for three separate banks of lights, i.e., red, green, blue. These strips were used to light the center and upstage areas. There was one bank of red lights to two banks of white lights per strip. The red was used as a highlight and to add some tint on the uptunes. Fresnels could be used to light the center and upstage areas if strips were not available. The gels recommended for the lekos are: No Color Pink, (Roscolene No. 825, or Roxcolus No. 33) and a No Color Straw, (Roscolene No. 804, or Roscolus No. 6).

A separate pool of light, which can be independently controlled, can be used for the opening and closing scenes which occur downstage right or left. This can be accomplished with a minimum number of lekos and Fresnels with the gelling described above.

To help dramatize Rose's first appearance in the opening, she can be lit using an overhead leko with a narrow focusing snout attached. This should create a small, isolated pool of light which can be illuminated gradually if the light is on an independent dimmer.

One or two follow-spot lights can be used nicely for quartets appearing for single numbers or for the feature quartets as well. Using a follow spot on Rose, even with the stage lighting up, will help focus attention on her, as well.

SOUND

As with the lighting, the sound reinforcement will differ with stages and available equipment. Generally, several omni-directional microphones, properly hung over the main stage areas and angled toward the chorus, and several more at the front edge of the stage should do a pretty fair job.

Microphones used at the front of the stage would ideally be PCC or PZM microphones but if these are not available, use a microphone in a foam "mouse" or put the microphones in stands which are set on the floor and angled just over the edge of the stage. This will eliminate obvious microphone stands on stage where they can destroy the scenic illusion. Even the quartets should be able to work around a floor mike.

Ideally, Rose can use a wireless, lavalier microphone. This will allow her freedom to move about the stage and be amplified equally no matter where she is or in which way she turns. Tom can also use a wireless lavalier but, since his movement is confined, it is not as essential.

Have someone knowledgeable in sound reproduction set the microphones, adjust them during the technical rehearsal and ride gain on the microphones during the show.

The quartet singing off-stage during the first scene should be electronically equalized or otherwise filtered so the sound more closely resembles an old wax-cylinder recording.

CONCLUSION

Please consider all the preceding information as suggestions. Your personnel, theater and audiences will dictate how you present the show. If you make changes, make them with intelligence.

We have purposely left out cues for lighting, sound, spot lights and pin-rail movement (hanging backdrops, etc.) since these will vary with each production. Using cues, however, is an excellent way to smoothly call a show. *The Show Production Handbook* explains how to use cues.

Announcements before or after the show or during the intermission should be eliminated. Let your show program be your message board. If you have a door prize (a good way to help build a mailing list) state in the program that the winner will be notified later.

There is one last, but very important point about staging a show or any performance. Timing and pacing are critical. There can be no dead spots or the production will slow and become dull. Each song must begin immediately after the monologue which sets it up or on the downward ebb of the applause, if there is no monologue. Pitches must be blown unobtrusively and tune-ups should be hummed quietly under the talk or applause. You may even find that tune-ups are unnecessary if all the singers concentrate on the pitch being blown. In any case, the director should give the down-beat as soon as the set-up is finished or the applause has almost died. Nor should the movement of scenery hold up a show, either.

BACK TO THE 90s can be a very touching and entertaining show for audience and performers as well. Attention to all of the preceding elements should help assure a successful production of which you can be proud. Enjoy your performance!

THOSE WEDDING BELLS SHALL NOT RING OUT

(SPEBSQSA Stock #7715)

(Parts or all of this song can be acted out in serious, melodrama fashion with Rose taking the female lead.)

Rose: The plays would actually be separated into two acts. An olio - a musical variety show - would be presented between the acts. We always had a quartet presenting the popular songs. If we were to present an olio today, we could offer no better representative of close harmony than (name of quartet).

Second feature quartet

Rose: Our theater and music troupe would travel from city to city entertaining for a week or two at each stop. I'll never forget the story I heard at one of the boarding houses we stayed in. The place was run by a spirited Irish widow by the name of Molly Murphy. In fact, I remember that it was a young gentleman by the name of Thomas who told me this story.

WHO THREW THE OVERALLS IN MRS. MURPHY'S CHOWDER?

(SPEBSQSA Stock #8119)

Rose: As I said, I can still remember the name of the man who told me that story - Thomas McGuire - for he was to become my husband of sixty-one years. It was from your great-great-grandfather Thomas that you got your name, Tom. He and I were married after he returned from the Spanish American War in 1898. (*Change of attitude.*) My story of the 1890s is all but finished. It was as an exciting a time for me as these times are for you. It was those 90s which ushered in the electronic age of the 20th Century. We knew it was coming, and our first clue was the popularity of the telephone.

HELLO! MY BABY

(SPEBSQSA Stock #8046)

Rose: (*She approaches Tom and the light comes up on this area.*) I must leave you, Tom but I hope you'll never forget that today's history was once a living breathing moment . . . and I hope you will always remember me and my music. (*She has almost touched him with her hand, but instead smiles and disappears into darkness as the light fades on her.*)

Tom: (*Slowly he sets the letters aside, gives a puzzled look then a slight smile. He then rises and on his exit calls:*) Hey Dad, can I go with you tonight to your barbershop rehearsal?

Reprise: HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN, TONIGHT

(SPEBSQSA Stock #7716)

(from measure 37)

The End

BACK TO THE 90s

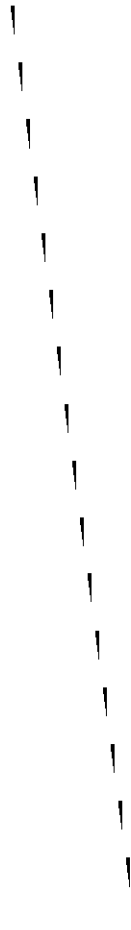
Script

by

Gary M. Stamm

dedicated to my father, Melvin H. Stamm

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BACK TO THE 90s

(Scene opens on Tom walking up to pile of boxes and old trunk. These are pre-set, down right or left, in front of the main curtain. Tom is 16 years old and dressed in modern, casual clothing.)

Tom: *(Muttering to himself but overheard by audience)* **What a rotten way to spend an afternoon - cleaning the basement.** *(He moves a box or two as he mutters unintelligibly. He then tries to lift the trunk but it is too heavy.)* **Gee, what's in here?** *(He opens the lid and begins examining contents.)* **Just a bunch of junk!** *(He pulls out an old cylinder player)* **Wonder what this is?** *(He cranks it up and it begins "playing." Actually, a quartet on a mike backstage begins singing, "When You Were Sweet Sixteen." The music is filtered or equalized to sound like an old recording. Tom acts a bit surprised.)* **I recognize that. It's one of the songs Dad sings with his group.** *(A bit more rummaging.)* **Here's a picture of some old lady. Wonder who she is?** *(He looks on the back and reads.)* **Rosalyn Ann McGuire . . .** *(He remembers.)* **Hey, I remember grandpa talking about his Grandmother Rose, I wonder if this is her. Boy, she sure looks old fashioned and proper.** *(Realizing)* **Heck, I guess she was old fashioned; she lived when the only thing you had to do was think about manners and being respectable.** *(He holds the picture up at arm's length, clears his throat*

and addresses the photograph very properly and formally.) How do you do, madam? It is an honor to make your acquaintance. (He laughs and tosses the picture aside. He then finds an old bundle of letters.) Wow, here's some letters. They look real old. (He begins to read the letters quietly, seemingly unaware of what occurs next. Upstage from Tom an overhead pin spot illuminates a young woman. She is clothed in a dress from the turn of the century, and she is fresh, vital and attractive.)

Rose: *(To boy's back, she first gives a little laugh and shake of her head then speaks to him.) My dear Tommy, how mistaken you are. It's obvious you got that adventuresome, stubborn streak from me - your great-great-grandmother Rose McGuire. (She steps up just behind Tom.) We're a lot alike, sweet boy. It's just that I was born exactly 100 years before you. The times we lived in were different - but maybe not as different as you think. Even though you can't see or hear me, let me and my letters which you seem to be so engrossed with, take you on a little trip. (Quartet fades out on her last lines.)*

(Curtain flies on chorus standing on multi-leveled platforms or risers. A backdrop of a turn of the century cityscape could be used behind them. As curtain rises rapidly the

singing begins immediately and Rose exit to wings. As an option, the chorus can enter stage singing. Tom stays on stage and reads the letters, but his area goes dim so as not to upstage the other action.)

TA-RA-RA BOOM-DE-AY & A HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN - MEDLEY

(SPEBSQSA Stock #7716)

(On applause Rose comes back on stage behind Tom and speaks to him, although he is seemingly unaware. From this point, on the chorus can hum or loo under most of Rose's monologues as underscoring. The music can be a reprise of the previous song or a preamble of the forthcoming song. The music should hardly ever stop. Also, the men in the chorus should reflect the moods of Rose and her story. At times, a member of the chorus may even pantomime action with Rose during a song or monologue. Also, Rose could change costumes a number of times to reflect her monologue. See the production notes for more details.)

Rose: **The year was 1890, Tom, the start of a new decade, the last decade before the 20th Century. People were excited. It was to be a hot time in the old world, and they could sense it. And me? I was young, a bit foolish, and in love with a wonderful lad named William. We lived in the same New York City neighborhood, and I often overheard him talking to his friends about me.**

SWEET ROSIE O'GRADY

(SPEBSQSA Stock #8114)

Rose: 1890 was more than the year of my first big love, of course.
Wyoming entered the United States as a women's suffrage state.
We also heard tell of a new invention that showed moving pictures.
But all these momentous happenings meant nothing to a lovesick
girl of sixteen.

WHEN YOU WERE SWEET SIXTEEN

(SPEBSQSA Stock #8121)

Rose: My happiness and youthful innocence were soon to be crushed. I
had gone to work as a secretary in a bank. This was a very
respectable job for a young lady. My boss, a married man, asked
me to join him for lunch one day. I was, what was called then, a
progressive thinker and found no harm in an innocent luncheon.
However, news spread like wildfire of my "shameless deed," and I
was released from my position. It didn't stop there,
either, . . . William heard the story . . . He was shamed and refused
to talk to me.

SHE IS MORE TO BE PITIED THAN CENSURED

(SPEBSQSA Stock #8115)

(No music under the next monologue for stark contrast)

Rose: The next thing I knew William announced his engagement to someone else. I don't believe he ever stopped loving me but the times dictated that he must distance himself quickly from a fallen woman. And the sadness of the story didn't end there, Tom. William wed his new love and they sailed on a honeymoon cruise up the coast . . . I read the account of the fateful voyage in the evening news.

ASLEEP IN THE DEEP

(SPEBSQSA Stock #8120)

Rose: I felt my life was over. Nothing seemed to matter any longer. I spent a lot of quiet moments by myself. Oh, my family tried to help me through these times but I had trouble talking with them. It seemed our only pleasant and comforting times together were around the parlor piano with some of the soothing, popular songs of the day.

OLD-TYME, GAY-NINETIES, PARLOUR-PIANO MEDLEY

(SPEBSQSA Stock #7712)

Rose: My sorrow and shame had to be put behind me. There was an exciting world for me to conquer. The newspapers were full of new ideas and events. In 1892 the first North American automobile was produced, pineapple was put in cans, Gentleman Jim Corbett defeated John L. Sullivan, and Ellis Island first opened her doors to receive millions of new Americans. And, my life took a turn. I had always been told that I had a wonderful singing voice so I struck out on a new career as an entertainer. My reputation couldn't be hurt anymore, so I took a singing job in a respectable tavern.

THERE IS A TAVERN IN THE TOWN

(SPEBSQSA Stock#7717)

Rose: As I sat and listened to other performers, I often wondered if our popular music would transcend its time and place and be sung in the future. My question is now answered by (name of quartet).

First feature quartet

- Intermission -

Rose: Tom, I don't want you to think your dear old great-great-grandmother had become an honest-to-goodness fallen woman. In fact, although I was a tavern singer at night, I volunteered at a mission during the day. I often sat in the little chapel there and found a moment of peace and solitude.

AMAZING GRACE

(SPEBSQSA Stock #7713)

THERE'S A MEETIN' HERE TONIGHT

(SPEBSQSA Stock #7718)

Rose: I was still a young woman, and my search for romance was not over. The panic of 1893 which brought on four years of depression and bitter labor strikes was a hard fact of life. But on my days off I would put aside these black thoughts and dance to the sprightly waltzes that were all the rage. It was happy, carefree music like this which gave the decade its name: The Gay Nineties.

NEW YORK MEDLEY IN THREE QUARTER TIME

(SPEBSQSA Stock #7714)

Rose: I was in love with New York City: its excitement and fascination. But while life seemed to revolve around this mecca for millions of us, there was life elsewhere. Gold was discovered in the Klondike in 1896. That same year the first modern Olympics were held in Athens, Greece and Queen Victoria celebrated seventy-five years of rule in Britain. Athens, London and the Klondike were exciting places but sometimes the most cherished spot is just outside your door. I'll never forget a close harmony quartet on our bill relating the love of their home.

ON THE BANKS OF THE WABASH

(SPEBSQSA Stock #8062)

Rose: My singing career blossomed into a modest acting career, Tom. I should explain that popular theater at the turn of the century revolved around the melodramas. Now today you think of melodramas with villains tying young ladies to railroad tracks and buzz saws. You also think of these plays as silly, laughable presentations. Well, I must tell you the moral tales of those melodramas were intended to be serious and were taken so by the audience. My favorite play was, "Those Wedding Bells Shall Not Ring Out!" . . . I had my first starring role.

THOSE WEDDING BELLS SHALL NOT RING OUT

(SPEBSQSA Stock #7715)

(Parts or all of this song can be acted out in serious, melodrama fashion with Rose taking the female lead.)

Rose: The plays would actually be separated into two acts. An olio - a musical variety show - would be presented between the acts. We always had a quartet presenting the popular songs. If we were to present an olio today, we could offer no better representative of close harmony than (name of quartet).

Second feature quartet

Rose: Our theater and music troupe would travel from city to city entertaining for a week or two at each stop. I'll never forget the story I heard at one of the boarding houses we stayed in. The place was run by a spirited Irish widow by the name of Molly Murphy. In fact, I remember that it was a young gentleman by the name of Thomas who told me this story.

WHO THREW THE OVERALLS IN MRS. MURPHY'S CHOWDER?

(SPEBSQSA Stock #8119)

Pose: As I said, I can still remember the name of the man who told me that story - Thomas McGuire - for he was to become my husband of sixty-one years. It was from your great-great-grandfather Thomas that you got your name, Tom. He and I were married after he returned from the Spanish American War in 1898. *(Change of attitude.)* My story of the 1890s is all but finished. It was as an exciting a time for me as these times are for you. It was those 90s which ushered in the electronic age of the 20th Century. We knew it was coming, and our first clue was the popularity of the telephone.

HELLO! MY BABY

(SPEBSQSA Stock #8046)

Rose: *(She approaches Tom and the light comes up on this area.)* I must leave you, Tom but I hope you'll never forget that today's history was once a living breathing moment . . . and I hope you will always remember me and my music. *(She has almost touched him with her hand, but instead smiles and disappears into darkness as the light fades on her.)*

Tom: *(Slowly he sets the letters aside, gives a puzzled look then a slight smile. He then rises and on his exit calls:)* Hey Dad, can I go with you tonight to your barbershop rehearsal?

Reprise: HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN, TONIGHT

(SPEBSQSA Stock #7716)

(from measure 37)

The End

