

# History of the Harmony Brigade



The genesis of Brigade began as the Confederate Harmony Brigade. The first meeting of the CHB was held in Fort Morgan, AL on September 19, 1958. It was started by four men who wanted to keep the leaders of the Sunshine/Dixie Districts together following the formation of the Sunshine District from a Dixie split. It was determined that the CHB would meet annually on the weekend following Labor Day. Members must be Society and Sunshine/Dixie members and members of local chapters or Frank Thorne. They must also be involved in administration at any level of the Society, and they must be willing and able to sing. Currently active membership is limited to 50.

The CHB rally format is similar to the other Harmony Brigades; however, the CHB is not an eXtreme Quartetting Harmony Brigade.

In January of 1993 the North Carolina Harmony Brigade held its first rally in Pinehurst, North Carolina. It was the vision of Charles Rose, a member of the CHB. Charles' idea for the NCHB was a weekend rally based on the CHB concept that would attract good quartet men from North Carolina interested in learning more difficult and interesting arrangements and provide two days of unlimited quartetting opportunities.

For the first few years, NCHB membership was limited to North Carolina chapter members. In 1996, the first of a few "outsiders" (brothers Alan & Neal Siegal, from New York) managed to garner invitations to the NCHB. Eventually other outsiders included Duane Henry and Terry Silke from Indiana. The secret was now out of the bag! These men quickly realized the value of such a quartet program and envisioned developing a Brigade in their home states. After a few years of "apprenticing" under the NCHB leadership the dream of the Indiana Harmony Brigade became a reality in October of 2003 in Indianapolis, Indiana, followed by the Atlantic Harmony Brigade in August of

2006 in Wilmington, Delaware.

With the advent of two additional Brigades, word suddenly began to spread. Men from 23 states, Canada, Germany, and Sweden have attended one or more of these three Brigades. This participation, along with the exposure received at the 2006 International Convention, where a chorus made up of the three Brigades performed as mic-testers for the chorus competition and performed on World Harmony Jamboree, plus articles in the *Harmonizer*, has led to a groundswell of interest in starting other eXtreme Harmony Brigades.

The Association of eXtreme Quartetting Harmony Brigades (AXQHB) was formed in January 2010 under the leadership of Charles Rose, founder of the Brigade movement. The purpose of the AXQHB is to encourage and support the formation and operation of eXtreme Quartetting Harmony Brigades; to provide guidance and services in issues common among Member Brigades; and to own the eXtreme Quartetting [QX] brand, to define its character, and to establish, maintain, and protect it's reputation.

From the beginning of the eXtreme Quartetting Harmony Brigade movement in 1993, there are now eight XQ Brigades:

- 1993 North Carolina Harmony Brigade
- 2003 Indiana Harmony Brigade
- 2006 Atlantic Harmony Brigade
- 2010 Great Lakes Harmony Brigade
- 2011 High Sierra Harmony Brigade
- 2012 New England Harmony Brigade
- 2013 Northern Pines Harmony Brigade
- 2013 Lone Star Harmony Brigade

The format of the Brigade rally has evolved over the years to what it is today with each Brigade contributing ideas that have improved and strengthened Brigade, yet holding true to the original concept.