

# Barbershopping in the Carolinas 1948-2010

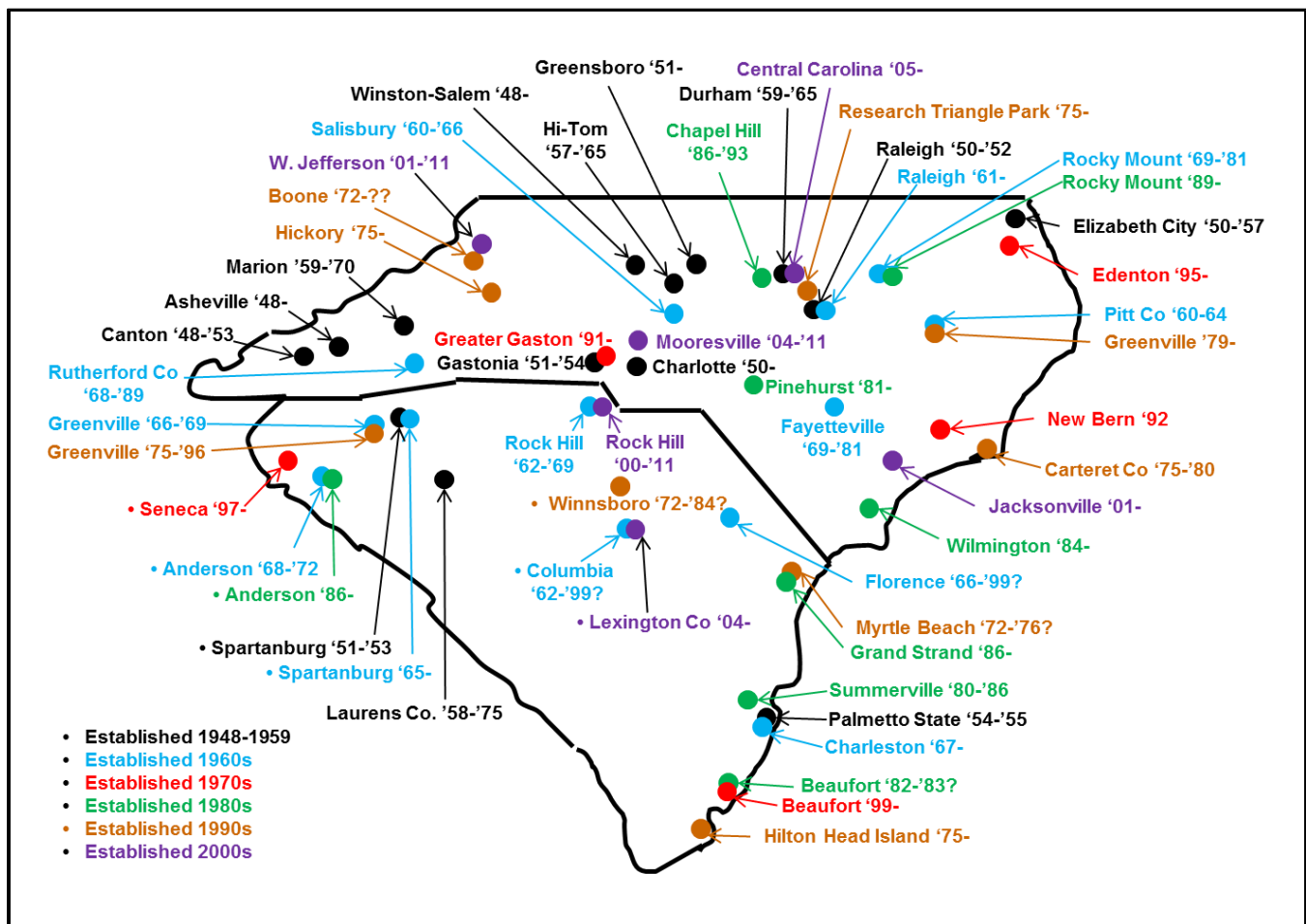
## Introduction

*Close Harmony* singing in quartets is a unique American music tradition. Val Hicks' 50-Year History of the Society of the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing, Inc. (S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A.)<sup>1</sup>, *Heritage of Harmony*, begins with this quote from Sigmund Spaeth<sup>2</sup>:

*The male quartet is still the surest source of entertainment on the vaudeville stage or in the theatres and motion picture houses. But it is inevitably the amateur who gets the most fun of close harmony.*



There is no doubt that men were singing *close harmony* in barbershop quartets in the States of North Carolina and South Carolina before 1948. It is the case, however, that the first "Carolinas" chapter of the S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. was chartered in 1948, and that will be the starting point for this history of *Barbershopping in the Carolinas, 1948-2010*. The ending point for this history is July 2010 with the formation of the Carolinas District. During those 63 years 55 chapters were formed, chartered, reformed, had annual shows, and competed in contests. Those chapters are identified in the map below. Many of them did not survive—27 chapters existed in July 2010.



North and South Carolina Chapters 1948-2010

<sup>1</sup> Now called the Barbershop Harmony Society

<sup>2</sup> Author of *Barbershop Ballads and How to Sing Them*, published in 1925.