



Quartet Series, Part 2

by Brian Philbin

Naming the Quartet

Shortly after you have found four guys to sing with that all want to accomplish the same things and enjoy the same type of performing music, you are still likely to have your first disagreement early on. This is because you all must make an agreement on a singular issue, the ramifications of which will remain with the quartet every day of its existence and possibly thereafter. This item could cause the early demise of many a would-be quartet. It's something that everyone has. It's something that, once given, everyone takes with them everywhere they go. It is: *a name*.

Some people say that any name will do and that your performances will build your reputation and your name. Others say that your name should reflect the personality of the group—which would require you to have an awareness of that personality early on.

Regardless of the differing opinions on the subject, the task itself can be handled in a very simple manner. First and foremost, line up your references: a dictionary and a thesaurus. These are the tools of novelists and songwriters alike. No reason you can't use them as well. Try flipping through the dictionary. Take a look at the first page you land on and look at the different words. If one interests you, read the definition. If you like the definition, but not the word, then use the thesaurus to find a different one. Pretty simple sounding, but it might give you a starting point.

Decide on your likes and dislikes as far as what you want the name to portray. If you have a specific idea then you will want to look for words that reflect that idea. If you are looking for something more vague sounding that doesn't label your quartet personality too quickly, then find words that don't necessarily give an immediate impression.

You might want to augment your basic tools with a rhyming dictionary. Other possibilities are: movie listings, sheet music or song listings, TV Guide and the yellow pages. You can use these for inspiration or you may want to use actual titles therein. Be aware that local businesses will already be using the fictitious name listed, so if you're planning on getting a Tax ID number, it may pose a problem if you use a name that is already listed in the yellow pages as a business. I suggest movie listings and the TV Guide because there have been many uses of these in the past. **The Most Happy Fellows, Gentleman's Agreement, Metropolis, Swingtime, Route 66** are all names from movies or TV).

Names can be used for comedic effect, achieved with puns of other more famous names (i.e., **Chord Flakes, Variety Pak, The American Express Chords...**). They can also reflect a certain air of the personality of the quartet (**Panache, The Ritz, Ambiance**, etc.). But overall, the quartet will eventually become the personification of the name that is chosen, as the performances of four people will continue to be associated with that name. The decision of the choice of name is only as important as you make it. It is certainly one of the most difficult beginning tasks to undertake as a quartet. Take your time in choosing a name that's right for you. Hopefully, it will be one that everyone in the quartet will be happy with.