

[Page 91 - Kieran Ballah Remembers M.J](#)ISSUE : [Issue 48](#)

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pie in that show--big, big show. Big trum? pet players doing solos and things. Dance numbers and routines and everything. Big production numbers. Anyway, dress rehearsal was Sunday after? noon, and I got on the stage, and I was really petrified. And I forgot the words. And I had to forget the words to "Ave Ma? ria" ! I wasn't very old. I might have been only 10 or 11, I guess. And I got up there in full dress rehearsal, and the whole au? ditorium- -lights were out. And I always preferred the lights on. I'd say, "Dad, I'd like to have the lights on." He'd say, "No, the lights have got to be out in the audi? torium." I'd rather see the people than see the darkness. The lights bothered me. I had a problem, a bad time. And those shows were produced by people--Dad didn't have all the say. He had people like F. X. Ferguson and other men in the city--prominent citizens-- that put the money up for these shows. So they sat there--the money lenders--and if they didn't like the act, they darn well told him. They wouldn't bother with it. So, he had people to answer to. Well I was standing there and--I don't know what I did--I muffed up the number, anyway, in dress rehearsal. And all I heard was this voice coming from the dark, down there, "Well, he's not going on tomorrow. Scrub that number." And oh, I was heart? broken, of course. And my father just came out on the stage. He didn't accept that one bit, you know--he was going to scrub the Ballah out of the show! He said, "He'll be on. He'll be all right, don't you worry." "No," he said, "no"--I could--oh, I was tears coming down, hearing these people fighting, saying, "No, he's not going on." And Dad saying, "Yes, he is." Well, finally it got to be a real drawn-out argument. And Dad said, "Well, you've got a choice. You either let me produce that act and he goes on, or you can put the show on without me." The night before the show. Of course, they let him put me on, and I did fine, I guess. I didn't have any trouble opening night. But I sure had at dress rehearsal. But I caught old heck when I got home. Oh, it wasn't easy. He wasn't going home and Land's End Four Quartet: left to right. Ray Goodyear, bass: Gerv Geron. tenor: Glenn MacSween. lead:. Kieran Ballah. baritone--from poster for the Second Annual Barbershop Harmo? ny Spectacular. 1973. saying, "Don't worry about it, Kieran, everything's going to be fine." He told me what I did wrong and how bad I was and how stupid I was. And you can't do this and you can't do that. And you've got to be ready, and you shouldn't have, if you weren't ready, and you weren't ready, and--oh, boy! (And you're only little.) Oh, just, you know, brokenhearted. My mother's saying, "You're too hard on the poor little thing. Leave him alone," you know. No. I could hear him when I went to bed, him giving Mum old heck: "I'll handle him." He did. I got up there, and he perked me up, boy. I was going to get the life beat out of me if I didn't! You know, he had the fear of the Lord in me: "You'll perform, or else!" And I performed. That's the only time I had trouble with him on the stage. But he was a perfectionist, eh? Everything had to be just right. But he was that way with himself. You know, he was an immaculate man. And never walked--he ran everywhere. Same as I do. Our family all runs--they don't walk. He was like that, a very fast-moving person. Go, go, go. And get things done, and snap, you know. (You've got too much to do.) Yeah.



Too much KIERAN CONTINUES NEXT PAGE ADD