

SACRED HARP COLORADO

February 2009

Who We Are and What We Do

We are the Rocky Mountain Shape Note Singers and we exist to preserve and promote the music and the traditions of American shape note harmony along the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. And to have fun singing together!

We welcome any and all to join us at our monthly singings held in the cities along the Front Range. Loaner books are available for use or purchase. Our monthly singings are usually held to the schedule supplied at the end of this newsletter, but holidays or special circumstance may dictate that we move a singing date.

We sing principally from the 1991 Denson revision of the Sacred Harp (Red Book), but use some songs from the Cooper Book (Blue Book). From time to time we will sing from other traditional books such as the Missouri Harmony and Norumbega Harmony. If you are new to us, please contact one of our members listed below for current location, day/date and time of a singing in your area.

4th Annual Pikes Peak Sacred Harp Singing

Please mark your calendars and reserve Saturday March 21 to sing with us at the **4th Annual Pikes Peak Sacred Harp Singing** in Colorado Springs. There is no conflict with Easter this year and absolutely no better way to celebrate the birthday of Benito Juarez. See the attached flyer for additional information and directions.

Arkansas Valley Sacred Harp – Pete Mathewson

After a protracted period of stumbling around, it looks like we may have a start on a Sacred Harp group here in the Arkansas Valley. At present, the singers are meeting at our home in La Junta on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:30 – 8:30PM. Guests are always welcome and if you have family or friends living between Fowler and Lamar on US50, please mention us to them and remind them that no experience is necessary.

Editorially Speaking

Each month I'll ask a question of general interest (or so it seems to me). Send me an answer and I'll put together those answers for the next newsletter. This month's question is: ***What do you (or would you) say when a friend asks you why you sing Sacred Harp?***

When I first hear this music it was the absolutely incredible harmonies that drew me in. Such power and energy in the 4-part harmonies!! Such spirit expressed by all who sing it!!! And it never stops. To this day the harmonies give me goose bumps the minute a singing session starts up. And needless to say, the community and fellowship of all those who sing also truly inspires me.

--Ginnie Ely

Here's a brief response to your question of why we sing Sacred Harp. It has repeatedly come to mind since I read the newsletter. It made me think of my favored philosopher(s), The Eagles, in their song, "New York Minute" in the part about being "too much in this world." The rush of life seems to pull me down that way sometimes, and I can always

count on singing or listening to a CD of Sacred Harp to lift me far above the cares of the world and send my spirit soaring. Can't think of a better reason!

--Chloe (from Texas)

A number of years ago, I wrote a whole essay that's an answer to this question.
http://independentstitch.typepad.com/the_independent_stitch/on-moving-into-the-hollow.html

Here's another, far less adequate, way of saying something similar:

1. I love to sing.
2. I love that it's singing FOR the singing, not a performance or a practice.
3. I love the harmonies.
4. I love the small interactions that build over time into community.
5. Shape note singing is a "home base" for me.

--Deb Robson

Not sure how to answer this month's question, maybe a multi-part answer. I love the harmony, and there are times when it gives me goose bumps. There are times when it's even magical because our voices are blending so well (as at the art gallery in Denver). I love singing loudly, it's really fun. My mother was a music teacher who was very critical of people's performance, and I love singing with people who are more interested in enjoying the singing experience than in trying to attain perfection, which pretty much ruins the fun of it. And I enjoy music that praises God, it bestows meaning on the experience that it wouldn't otherwise have.

--Alyce Barry

I have sometimes been asked why Sacred Harp by people who find the religious sentiments somehow uncomfortable or unfamiliar. I'm mindful of the diversity I found in the first group I sang with in Cambridge, Massachusetts: we had avowed atheists from local colleges, a few Jews including a couple of relatively observant (albeit Reform) ones, a large handful of "high church" Episcopalians and Lutherans, and also plenty of Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Unitarians. I loved the fact that we all came together and could sing wholeheartedly without needing to parse the lyrics or otherwise sort out the doctrines.

--Hill Grimmer

Camp Fasola

Registration is now open for Camp Fasola 2009 at <http://fasola.org/camp>

Session 1: Adult Emphasis
Sunday, June 14th/5pm – Thursday, June 18th/8:30am
Camp McDowell (<http://campmcdowell.com>) – Between Jasper and Double Springs, Alabama off Ala 195

Session 2: Youth (Age 10 and up) Emphasis
Monday, June 29th/4pm – Friday, July 3rd/9am
Camp Lee (<http://camplee.org>) – Anniston, Alabama

The Sacred Harp Musical Heritage Association will hold Camp Fasola in 2009 for the seventh consecutive year. Camp Fasola provides an immersive experience for learning and singing Sacred Harp music as well as fellowship with other singers. Registration is available on a first come / first served basis.

The camp is open to youth and adults with instruction provided for both beginning and experienced singers. Multiple tracks of classes suited to different experience levels will be taught. Traditional summer camp activities will be provided that will be focused to building and extending friendships of singers.

For additional information, see <http://fasola.org/camp> , email camp@fasola.org or telephone Jeannette DePoy at 404.237.1246 or David Ivey at 256.881.5291.

So here is March's question: Tell us about a time at a sing or a convention that you found particularly moving or memorable.

Pitch in and *help us keep this newsletter going*. Send your comments to Hill at Hill@sacredharpcolorado.org NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 20.

TUCSON ANNUAL SACRED HARP SINGING CONVENTION

Feb. 28 - March 1, 2009

Tucson, Arizona

A traditional and powerful singing of American shape-note hymns, fusing tunes and anthems in unaccompanied four-part harmony from *The Sacred Harp*.

Saturday, February 28, 2009 - 9:30 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Sunday, March 1, 2009 - 9:30 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

SONORA COHOUSING COMMON HOUSE, 501 E. Roger Road, west of N 1st Ave, Tucson AZ 85705 Registration begins at 9 A.M. Potluck Supper provided by local singers. Social on Saturday Evening.

Where We Sing and How to Find Us

BOULDER Regular singings are 2nd Friday of each month 7-9 pm, at the home of Peter and Mary Lou Van Laanen. Contact Mary Lou for details at 303-447-9379 or e-mail her at vmarylou@indra.com

DENVER Singings weekly each Monday *except the first Monday* from 6:40 – 8:40 pm at St. Mark's Orthodox, 1409 South Vine. This group also sings monthly on the fourth Sunday, from 1:00 to 3:00 PM in the same location. Please bring a dollar donation to the book fund. For location confirmation or other info, please contact Pat Dolan at 303-778-6297 or e-mail him at ruralplain@aol.com or Sharon Kermiet at skermiet@goodwilldenver.org .

COLORADO SPRINGS Singings regularly on the 2nd Sunday from 1:30 to 3:30 pm at the Pikes Peak Primitive Baptist Church 12th and Pikes Peak on the Westside. Please bring a dollar donation to the book fund. Pete Mathewson is the contact at 719-469-5241 or e-mail him at 71mqbqt41@gmail.com .

FORT COLLINS The singing is the first Monday of each month 7-8:30 pm at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 2000 Stover Street. Exceptions are Labor Day (September) and sometimes July – see the web site for info. Or contact Hill Grimmert for specifics at 970-231-1197 or e-mail him at hill@sacredharpcolorado.org .

ARKANSAS VALLEY Singing on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:30 – 8:30 pm at the home of Pete and Susie Mathewson in La Junta. Contact them at 719/383-9056 or e-mail them at busterbrown417@gmail.com for information and directions.

Sacred Harp On The Web

Our local websites are Sacred Harp Colorado at www.sacredharpcolorado.org and the Rocky Mountain Shapenote Singers at <http://lamar.colostate.edu/~dakspk> . The national web site is www.fasola.org .

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