

Sacred Harp Colorado

March 2008

Who We Are and What We Do

The Rocky Mountain Shape Note Singers exist to preserve and promote the music and the traditions of American shape note harmony along the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. 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 Norembega Harmony depending upon the spirit and the occasion. 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. 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.

Editorially Speaking

At the January singing in Boulder Sharon Kermiet brought us the thought that most of the modern world is in a cultural denial of death - Particularly of our own and of those close to us. Further it seems that mental health professionals feel that we would be a lot healthier if we would spend five minutes a day reflecting on death – In general and specifically. Sharon's comment was that a typical Sacred Harp singing should get your ticket punched for at least a week and most likely, much longer than that. With that thought in mind, do join us for the Third Annual Pikes Peak Sacred Harp Singing in Colorado Springs, the fourth Saturday in March (March 22) for an all day singing from both the Denson and Cooper books. With dinner on the grounds at noon it will be a great time to reflect on death and other more joyous things in with a really great support group. This month's History segment is actually more of a cultural exercise – Our culture (Denson and Cooper) and another (New Harp and the Southern Harmony). Let's hope that I can do it justice.

History, Traditions And Culture – Never Part Again

While browsing thru some on line recordings some time back, I came across a very pretty tune called Never Part Again. It was said to come from a seven shape tune book called the New Harp Of Columbia (NHOC) often used in Tennessee and Kentucky. Well, I don't have that book and besides we're about four shapes not seven and then on top of that the fasola.org site said if I wanted one, a single copy would go \$35.00 plus shipping. Retired guys don't just jump on deals like that and besides, we had a tune called Never Part (Denson #94 and Cooper #294 so what's to worry. Grab the book, sit at the keyboard and start picking it out...Ooops !! Wrong tune and wrong lyrics too. What to do ?? Fortunately, there is a resource out there named Gaylon Powell who can set me straight on most things shaped note – Sacred Harp or otherwise. Since I needed to talk to him

concerning this year's National Shape Note Gathering in Mountain Home, AR, I decided to slip in a question or two concerning the NHOC. Gaylon did have a copy of the NHOC and with his scanner built a file of NHOC#74 so I could see an image of the page for Never Part Again. Warned me, he did, that the publisher of the NHOC used a seven shape system different from the more common Aiken System employed by the Primitive Baptists and the Church Of Christ – Helpful, huh ?? With that image in hand, I explored the possibility of having Chris Kermiet translate it from seven shapes to four using the Finale software, but decided not to put him thru that when I learned he would have to hand key each note to produce the desired result. I've done this myself in the past using Noteworthy and wouldn't do it to another singer if I could help it. So time passes and one evening, with nothing to do, I stumbled into an on line index for William Walker's Southern Harmony published in 1835 and credited with driving a very angry B. F. White to issue our Sacred Harp in 1844. There, lo and behold, was a listing for Never Part Again (SH#198). Since the Southern Harmony predated the general usage of seven shape systems, it was logical that this book might contain a four shape version of the song. Tracing from the index back to the file for that page, I found that it was fundamentally the same tune and lyrics as the NHOC#74, but set in good old fasola four shape notation. Now I could use it, singing the shapes we use, without resorting to la la la ing the intervals or just blowing off the notes entirely. The only remaining issue was the matter of the Southern Harmony's lack of an alto part. Back to Gaylon again with a question as to which part the alto's should double. Once again he comes thru with the recommendation that the altos double the bass line to maintain a six part harmony – Treble high and low, Tenor high and low and finally, Bass high and low voices for six parts. Having said all of that, here is William Walker's three part, four shape Never Part Again for your enjoyment. The text of the lyrics suffered a bit in all the file transfer so the notation is followed by the lyrics as extracted from Lloyd's Primitive Hymns.

NEVER PART AGAIN. C. M.

Chorus

1. Je - ru - sa - lem, my happy home, Oh how I long for thee! We're marching thro' Emmanuel's ground; Oh, there we shall with Jesus dwell, And
 When will my sorrows have an end! Thy joys, when shall I see! We soon shall hear the welcome trumpet sound.

2. Jesus, my Lord, to glory's throne; How will I go and see! We're marching, &c.
 And all my brethren, here below, Will soon come after me.

3. Reach down, O Lord, thine arm of grace, And raise me to ascend; We're marching, &c.
 Where congregations ne'er break up, And Sabbaths never end.

Ver.

nev - er part a - gain! What, never part a - gain! No, never part a - gain, No, never part a - gain! Oh, there we shall with Jesus dwell, And nev - er part a - gain.

1. Jerusalem, my happy home,
Oh, how I long for thee;
When will my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys when shall I see?

Chorus:

We are marching through Emmanuel's ground.
We soon shall hear the welcome trumpet sound.
Oh there we shall with Jesus dwell,
And never part again.
What never part again, No, never part again.
No never part again. No never part again.
Oh, there we shall with Jesus dwell,
And never part again.

2. Jesus, my Lord to glory's gone,
Him will I go to see;
And all my brethren here below
Will soon come after me.

3. Reach down, oh Lord, thine arm of grace;
And cause me to ascend
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And sabbaths never end

As always, Lloyd's provides additional verses (7 actually) for reasons addressed in my earlier meanderings on words only hymnals. So take a stab at singing it. It really is quite pretty and is much in keeping with the earlier comment on thinking on death. To view it in its seven shape form, see the attachment at the end of this issue.

Amazing by Robert Vaughn

[Amazing Grace](#), according to Jonathan Aitken, is "the most sung, most recorded and most loved hymn in the world." This hymn, titled 'Faith's Review and Expectation', was prepared by [John Newton](#) for a New Year's sermon on January 1, 1773. Newton was preaching at a church in Olney, England. His friend [William Cowper](#) had moved to Olney in 1767, and together they conceived an idea to collaborate on a hymn book. According to Steve Turner, "the day Newton presented the hymn for the first time was also the day Cowper attended the church for the last time."

William Cowper was struggling with depression. Perhaps John Newton hoped these lines of grace and assurance would help his friend. Rather, Cowper sank into a suicidal melancholy which lasted several months. He recovered to a large degree. But afterward, he no longer attended the church at Olney. He never wrote another hymn. He did not lose his faith in God, but evidently lost all in himself.

For many months after Jan. 1, 1773, Newton didn't write hymns either. But he would later crank up his production and finish [Olney Hymns](#) on his own. *Olney Hymns* was a success, going through over 40 editions and half a million copies. Despite the popularity of *Olney Hymns*, No. 41, 'Faith's Review and Expectation', passed on relatively unnoticed in its homeland. It was reprinted in the *Select Collection of Hymns* by the Countess of Huntingdon in 1780. It appeared in not one single hymnal published by the Church of England before 1900. In fact, in 1892 hymnologist John Julian wrote, "In Great Britain it is unknown to modern collections, but in America its use is extensive. It is far from being a good example of Newton's work." It first appeared in America in 1789 in a hymnal of the Dutch Reformed Church.

It was connected with various tunes until William Walker paired it with the tune New Britain in his 1835 [Southern Harmony](#). There are various debates and theories about the origins of this tune. Regardless of the mysteries surrounding its origin, or what possessed [William Walker](#) to wed the hymn and tune, most would agree with Jonathan Aitken that "it was a marriage made in heaven."

Perhaps Newton hoped the hymn would comfort and reassure his friend William Cowper. He could not know that what passed unsuccessfully in 1773 would touch the hearts of countless millions in ages to come.

* Much of the historical information is based on facts presented in [John Newton: From Disgrace to Amazing Grace](#), by Jonathan Aitken. It's a very good read. I highly recommend it.

** Also referenced: *Amazing Grace: The Story of America's Most Beloved Song*, New York, NY: Ecco, 2002. *A Dictionary of Hymnology: Origin and history of Christian hymns and hymnwriters of all ages and nations*, John Julian, 1892. According to [The Cowper and Newton \[Museum\] Bulletin, Vol 2 No 1](#), 67 of the Olney hymns were written by Cowper, and 281 written by Newton -- the disparity reflecting Cowper's abstinence from hymn writing after 1773.

Editor's Note: This article first appeared on Robert's blog Ministry And Music – Seeking The Old Paths 15 January 2008. I have edited out the lyrics and one footnote for the sake of brevity.

Looking Ahead

Fourth All-Day Singing and Dinner on the Grounds (Denson Book) 1 March 2008 in Tucson, AZ. The Arizona SH singers have expanded this event to include a Saturday evening social and a Sunday (2 March) morning singing. More details are forthcoming. Your contacts for this event are: Maggie Leonard (520)323-5049 and Paige Winslett (520)743-1268 or tucsonfasola@earthlink.net. Susie and I attended this singing last March and found it to be one worthy of your support.

Hoboken All Day Singing (Cooper Book) 15 March 2008 in Hoboken, GA. This singing features an evening singing from Lloyd's Primitive Hymns - a words only hymnal dating to 1841. Now that you have met David Lee, give me a reason for not going.

Pikes Peak Sacred Harp Singing (Denson and Cooper Books) 22 March 2008 in Colorado Springs, CO. Saturday evening will be hosted at the Mathewson's with seven shape singing from the Harp of Ages – Join us, please !!

Southwest Texas Convention (Cooper Book) 29 and 30 March 2008 in McMahan, TX. Bethel Church is a perfectly wonderful place to sing and hopefully this year, we will be able to attend the Harp of Ages singing on Saturday evening.

Camp Fasola (Denson Book) 27 June thru 4 July 2008 at Camp Lee in Anniston, AL. An old fashioned week long singing school in two parts. See the January 2008 on line issue for details.

2008 National Shape Note Gathering (various books) 10 – 12 July 2008 at the Ozark Folk Center, Mountain Home, AR. Look for more information concerning instructors and shape note books to be used in the coming months.

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 Sings weekly each Monday except the first Monday from 6:40 – 8:40PM at St. Andrew's Church, 2015 Glenarm Street or St. Mark's Orthodox, 1409 S. Vine when St. Andrew's is not available. This group also sings monthly on the fourth Sunday, from 1:00 to 3:00 PM in one of these two locations. Bring a dollar as a contribution to the book fund. For the location of any specific singing, 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 - Sings 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 71mgbgt41@gmail.com.

FORT COLLINS - The singing is normally the first Monday of each month 7-8:30 pm at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 2000 Stover Street. Contact Hill Grimmett for specifics at 970-231-1197 or e-mail him at hill@sacredharpcolorado.org

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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Never Part Again NHOC#74 - As set in that book's particular seven shape notation

74

NEVER PART AGAIN. C. M. & CHORUS

1. Je - ru - sa - lem! my hap - py home! Name ev - er dear to me!
When shall my la - hors have an end. In joy - and peace, and thee?
then we shall with Je - sus dwell. And nev - er part a - gain. We're marching through Im-man-nel's ground; We soon shall hear the welcome trumpet's sound. Oh,

2. Oh, when, thou ci - ty of my God, Shall I thy courts ascend,
When shall we see a sign of heav - en's peace? And Sad - hearts have no end!
then we shall with Je - sus dwell. And nev - er part a - gain. We're marching through Im-man-nel's ground; We soon shall hear the welcome trumpet's sound. Oh,

then we shall with Je - sus dwell. And nev - er part a - gain. What! nev - er part a - gain? No, nev - er part a - gain. No, nev - er part a - gain. No, nev - er part a - gain. Oh,

D.C.

D.C.

D.C.

Come Join Us At The Foot Of Pikes Peak For An All Day

Sacred Harp Singing

Saturday March 22nd 2008

9:00AM to 3:00PM

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

1128 E. Boulder Street, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903

The Pikes Peak Sacred Harp Singing is an opportunity for you to sing at the foot of the mountain that inspired Kathrine Lee Bates to pen the lyrics to one of our most beloved patriotic hymns – America The Beautiful. On Saturday the 22nd of March 2008, we will again sing from both the Denson and Cooper books. Come share a great day of shape note singing and our fine Front Range hospitality including dinner on the grounds at noon.

Sacred Harp is four part a cappella harmony using a four shape notation. Since we sing for ourselves rather than an audience, new singers are always welcome and encouraged to participate. Interested listeners are equally welcome. Books are available for loan or purchase. Admission is free with donations accepted. Come and bring a friend.

Directions from Interstate 25 North or South: Take Exit 143 Unitah Street. Go East seven blocks to Wasatch, South eight blocks to Boulder then East eight blocks to Hancock. The church is on your left as you come to Hancock Street. Park in the parking lot to the West of the church or on streets adjacent to the church.

For lodging information, please contact: Joyce Wood at 719/332-1162 or joycewood@q.com.

Other Activities: Saturday evening social at the home of Pete and Susie Mathewson to clean up the leftovers - Conversation, food and song beginning at 5:00PM. Sunday services at Pikes Peak Primitive Baptist Church 12th and Pikes Peak on the West side. Seven shape singing at 10:30AM, preaching at 11:00.

For additional information please contact: Pete Mathewson at 719/469-5241 or 71mgbgt41@gmail.com

Come Sound His Praise Abroad And Hymns Of Glory Sing