

SACRED HARP COLORADO

June 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.

Editor needed

We need someone to edit and produce this monthly newsletter on an on-going basis. It could be something you do alone, or find a couple of singing friends to join in. Contact Hill Grimmett, hill@sacredharpcolorado.org. Hill will cover through May, Pete Mathewson in June and after that we really do need someone to step up.

This month's question

Each month I'll ask a question of general interest (or so it seems to me). Send me an answer and we'll use them for the next newsletter.

What away singing would you most like to attend and why ??

Pitch in and *help us keep this newsletter going*. Send your comments to Hill at Hill@sacredharpcolorado.org NO LATER THAN June 1.

Special All-Day Singing: Saturday June 6, 2009

Aspen Park Community Center, 9:30 am – 3:30 am. Dinner on the grounds! Bring a dish to share.

Directions: Go south on US 285 about 12 miles from C-470 to mile marker 238. Park in the RTD Park-n-Ride and walk up the stairs at the back to the green one-room schoolhouse.

Google or MapQuest maps: 26225 Sutton Road, Aspen Park, CO

More info: Karl Dise, 303-670-8945

Last month's question:

Who in the Sacred Harp singing community has been a big influence on your life?

The person who has influenced me the most and instilled in me my love for Sacred Harp singing is Dr. Warren Steel. He is the one who brought Xeroxed copied of tunes from the book to my back porch back in the 60's and who encouraged me to attend my first National Convention. He also encouraged me to write the Guide to Leading, and inspired me to learn more about the music so I could teach. Thank you Warren!

- Ginnie Ely

The persons who have influenced me the most and instilled in me my love for Sacred Harp singing are first and foremost the front bench tenors I have met over the years. Most importantly Shane Wootten, Rodney Ivey, and John Etheridge whom I had the pleasure to sit behind at the 150th East Texas Convention in Henderson 2005 and other singings across the South. These folks took the music to a whole new level for me. Followed then by David Ivey who, at Camp Fasola, gave me an insight into keying the music. Finally, the singers at Colorado Springs who stuck with us thru thick and thin to grow our group from six stalwarts to the 16 or so singers we have today. Their improvement over time has driven mine.

- Pete Mathewson

That is easy to answer. Hugh McGraw. We met him at our first convention experience - the National in Birmingham in 1986. He checked the registrations and barely knew about our Colorado group but he sought us out and made us welcome. He encouraged us to lead but we had no experience in that activity and politely declined. But the next year he did some arm twisting so we got our first experience leading 200+ veteran singers. We asked about him how much it would cost for him to do a singing school in Denver. No charge if we would pay transportation and hospitality. So he came the next February did a two day school and put on the pressure for us to mount a convention. This guy is very persuasive so we gave it a try and held our first convention in 1990 at the YMCA in Estes Park. This saved us the hassle of meals. He came to that convention with Richard DeLong and persuaded Ruth Brown to bring her bus tour of Southern singers to Colorado and so it was a great success. This was late September and it snowed Friday night much to the delight of our Southern guests. They were out taking pictures at midnight! Several years later we went to the Holly Springs convention and somehow our motel room was paid for by an anonymous source. Suffice it to say that he did more for the spread of Sacred Harp throughout the country than any one else.

- John Schaffer

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 71mgbgt41@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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