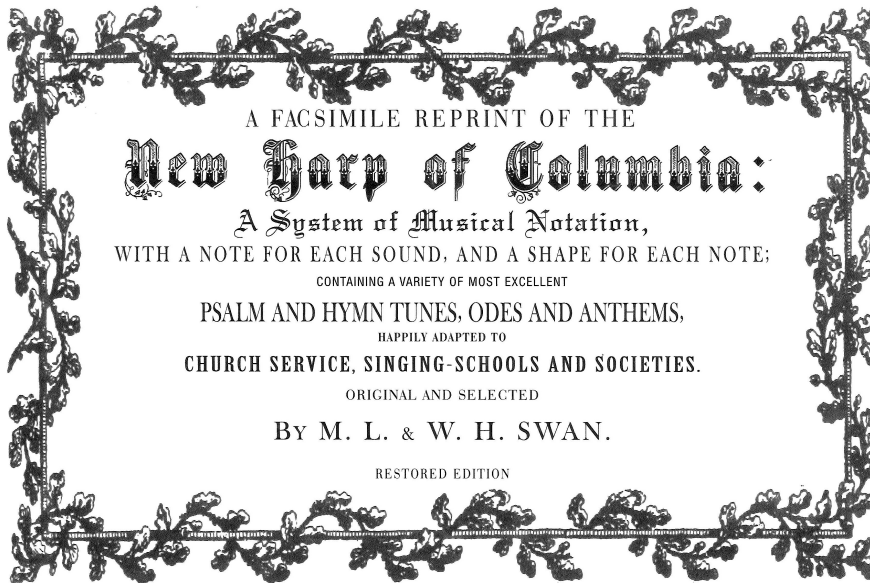


# OLD HARP

Number 41  
2014

*The New Harp of Columbia*  
*Annual Newsletter*

## Old Books, New Books, More Books!



by Ann Strange

One of my favorite things to say at an Old Harp singing is to point out that our singing manual, the *New Harp of Columbia*, is only sung from in East Tennessee. I think that makes it pretty special. It also means we're a small group of singers—not like Sacred Harp which is sung all over this country and moving into Europe pretty quickly. Our shapes, our name, and our tradition are all based on this book which was first published in 1848 as *The Harp of Columbia*, compiled by W. H. and M. L. Swan. Then in 1867, *The New Harp of Columbia* was first published with Marcus Lafayette (M. L.) Swan as

compiler. The seven shapes (do-re-mi-fa-sol-la-si-do) we sing are “Swan” shapes, named after the compiler of this book. We're proud of our unique shapes and book. The cover, with its ivy frame is also most attractive.

This way of singing is called “shape-note or shaped-note” singing because we sing the shapes (do-re-mi) before the words every time. In East Tennessee, we also call ourselves “Old Harp” singers because of the title of the book. When the “new” book came out in 1867, some folks still liked to sing the “old” songs and so we have the interesting and sometimes confusing name of “Old Harp” singers singing out of the “New Harp of Columbia” book. Other shaped-note traditions such as Christian Harmony and Sacred Harp are also longtime traditions in the South. We are brothers and sisters in this tradition and traveling to other singings is one of the joys of being a member of this close-knit community. You will also find the same or similar tunes and lyrics in various shaped-note books. Please see the list of web pages in this newsletter for information about other traditions and singing opportunities. And you will not regret attending Camp Do-Re-Mi, a singing school for seven shapes in August in North Carolina.

The reason this tradition never died is because the books never completely went out of print and teachers conducted Singing Schools to share the knowledge. Singers and singings have come and gone over time and surely things are different from the rural singing schools of the early 1900's, but nevertheless, it is a living tradition. In 1978, a “facsimile edition with an introduction by Dorothy D. Horn, Ron Petersen, and Candra Phillips” was published by The University of Tennessee (UT) Press. Before this, a small group in Knoxville had been using copies of songs to sing and books were mostly in Sevier County families where they had been passed down from generation to generation. (You may still see some “red books” in use.) And then when these books became scarce, Larry Olszewski was the primary force behind a re-printing which put the songs from the *Harp of Columbia* into the back of the book as an Appendix, again printed by UT Press. This “Restored Edition” was published in 2001.

Now those books are almost gone. After Larry died, a group of singers formed the “Friends of The New Harp of Columbia,” a small, non-profit Board of Directors who declare that “The primary purpose of the corporation is to promote shape note singing and the social and community traditions that have grown up around it, and singing in the tradition of

*The New Harp of Columbia* by M. L. and W.H. Swan.” Therefore, one of the primary responsibilities of this Board is to keep the book in print. And we are proud to announce that a new printing of 500 books (which will be the same as the 2001 edition) will be available early in 2014, again by UT Press.

Because of the donations of singers and the sales of books and CD’s, the Treasurer announced a saving account total of more than \$7,000 at the end of 2013. The Board voted to give a subsidy of \$3,000 to UT Press for the benefit of both groups and to reduce the cost of the book and, with the author (Bruce Wheeler) discount, we will be able to sell our hardback, attractive book for just \$20 instead of the previous \$26 with the hope of getting the books into more hands and spreading the tradition further.

### **Treasurer’s Report**

2013 proved to be on par with the previous three years for income as the Friends of *The New Harp of Columbia* continued at \$1,413 of income, only about \$70 below the average of the previous three years. However, expenses were another story. For the year we spent \$3,632 of which \$3,000 was for reprinting our song book. Even with this large expenditure, Friends is still on a sound financial footing with \$4,195 in funds remaining.

As always, we are most appreciative of your continued support. We hope you believe that we are making wise use of your donations and continue to support us. Please make contributions via Pay Pal at [oldharp.org](http://oldharp.org) or send checks to Old Harp, 307 Lake Forest Drive, Knoxville, TN 37920.

*Joe Sarten, Treasurer*

### **From the Board President**

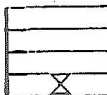

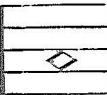
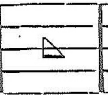
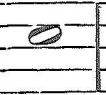

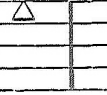

In my first term as President of Friends of *The New Harp of Columbia*, I have had the opportunity to work with our very caring Board members on possibly our most important task so far--deciding how to proceed with procuring new books. The Board looked at several imaginable options: staying with UT Press, finding another publisher who would provide a more durable binding, and re-typesetting the book to correct mistakes and improve print quality.

Going to a new publisher would require us to have ordered 1,000 books and that would be prohibitively expensive at this time. We are hoping that when we have to get more books in about 7 years, there will be a computer program that will typeset our 7 shapes much more effectively than what is currently available.

Scot Danforth at UT Press was very helpful and encouraging, guiding us to determine the most effective way to proceed and help us bring the per-book price down where we can now charge \$20 instead of \$26 so that we can hopefully get more books out into the world! The new cover will be exactly the same as the old one; if a slightly lighter paper is available, it will be used to create more contrast between paper color and printing. And we have inserted a colored page with the added verses in the back of the book, to make them easier to find. These minor changes do not create an extra expense.

We owe deep appreciation to Bruce Wheeler, Claudia Dean and Joe Sarten for taking the lead in bringing the reprint into fruition, and to Ann Strange for poking us in the ribs every so often to keep us moving.

*Chaz Barber, President*

	Numbers of the Scale. <b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
								
Names of Syllables.	Do.	Ra.	Mi.	Fa.	Sol.	La.	Si.	Do.
Pronounced.	Do.	Ray.	Mee.	Faw.	Sole.	Law.	See.	

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Founder: Larry Olszewski; Publisher: Friends of The New Harp of Columbia; Editor: Ann Strange. Thanks to contributors and all the singing coordinators.

Board Members of the Friends of The New Harp of Columbia: President Chaz Barber, Vice President David Sarten, Treasurer Joe Sarten, Secretary Ann Strange, Claudia Dean, and Robin Goddard.

## OLD HARP ANNUAL SINGINGS IN 2014

Date	Day	Time	Potluck?	The Singing
Jan. 26	Sunday	2:00	No	Wilderness Wildlife Week, LeConte Center Exhibit Hall. Contact: David Sarten or Veta King.
March 2	Sunday	10:00	Yes	Epworth Annual Singing during the Jubilee Festival, Laurel Theatre, Knoxville. Contact: Tina Becker or Claudia Dean.
April 6	Sunday (1st)	2:00	No	Oldhams Creek Missionary Baptist Church, 3629 Boogertown Road, Sevier County. Contact: Veta King or Hal Wilson.
April 13	Sunday	2:00	No	Tuckaleechee United Methodist Church, Townsend. Contact: Tom Taylor.
April 20	Sunday	5:30	Yes	Easter Singing at Bill Gooch and Meg Mabbs home, 4401 Alta Visa Way, Knoxville.
May 3	Saturday	TBD	No	Townsend Spring Festival, Visitors Center, Townsend. Contact Robin Goddard.
May 4	Sunday (1st)	2:00	No	Middle Creek United Methodist Church, Sevierville. Contact: David Sarten
May 18	Sunday (3rd)	2:30	No	Old College Singing at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Athens, TN. Contact: Cora Sweatt.
May 31	Saturday	10:00	Yes	Franklin singing at New Bethel Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Greeneville, TN. Contact: Jeff Farr.
June 22	Sunday (4th)	12:00	Yes	Beech Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Sevier County, Contact: Sharee Green
July 13	Sunday	2:30	No	Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse. Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Contact Robin Goddard.
Aug. 7-10				Camp Do-Re-Mi, Wildacres Resort, Little Switzerland, NC. www.campdoremi.com
Aug. 17	Sunday(3rd)	2:30	No	Cades Cove Primitive Baptist Church, Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Contact Robin Goddard or Tom Taylor.
Sept. 7	Sunday	2:00	No	Wears Valley United Methodist Church, Sevier County. Contact Bruce Wheeler.
Sept. 14	Sunday	5:30	Yes	(To be confirmed) Music of Appalachia class from the University of Tennessee and regular Second Sunday singing. Laurel Theatre, Knoxville, TN. Contact: Claudia Dean.
Sept. 28	Sunday (4th)	10:00	Yes	Headrick Chapel, Wears Valley, Sevier County. Contact David Sarten or Bruce Wheeler.
Oct. 5	Sunday (1st)	2:00	No	Valley View Baptist Church, Wears Valley, Sevier County. Contact: Bruce Wheeler
Oct. 19	Sunday (3 <sup>rd</sup> )	2:00	No	Dollywood Singing, Pigeon Forge, Contact: David Sarten.
Oct. 26	Sunday (4th)	2:00	No	Maryville College, Center for Campus Ministry, reception afterwards. Contact: Tom or Nan Taylor and Nancy Olsen.
Nov. 1	Saturday	10:00	Yes	Sycamore Shoals State Park, Elizabethton, TN, The Old Fields singers host a two-book singing. Contact: Don Wiley.
Nov. 26	Wednesday	6:30	Yes	Larry Olszewski Memorial Singing during the traditional Thanksgiving Eve potluck and Old Harp singing. Laurel Theatre, Knoxville, TN. Contact: Tina Becker.
Dec. 13	Saturday (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	9:30	No	Sugarlands Visitors Center, National Park, Contact Paul Clabo.

### Shaped-Note Singing Web Sites of Interest

**www.oldharp.org** • [www.christianharmony.org](http://www.christianharmony.org) and [www.thechristianharmony.com](http://www.thechristianharmony.com) (NC, Ala, GA, seven shapes) • [www.campdoremi.com](http://www.campdoremi.com) • [www.oldfieldssingers.com](http://www.oldfieldssingers.com) (Upper East Tennessee, seven shapes) • [www.fasola.org](http://www.fasola.org) (Sacred Harp/four shapes) • [www.sacredharpnashville.org](http://www.sacredharpnashville.org) (Nashville Sacred Harp singers).

## OLD HARP MONTHLY SINGINGS IN 2013

**ATHENS, TN—Old College Singers**—at St. Paul's Episcopal Church (Call Cora Sweatt to confirm)

**Third Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.**

Jan. 21, Feb. 18, Mar. 18, Apr. 15, Jun. 17, Jul. 15, Aug. 19, Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 16.

**BLOUNT COUNTY—AT**—at Asbury Place, Maryville (call Kathleen Mavournin to confirm)

**Fourth Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.**

Jan. 23, Feb. 27, Mar. 27, Apr. 24, May 22, Jun. 26, Jul. 24, Aug. 28, Sept. 25, Oct. 23.

**GREENE COUNTY—Franklin Singers** at Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Greeneville (Call Jeff Farr to confirm)

**Last Sunday of the month at 3:00 p.m.**

Feb. 23, Mar. 30, Apr. 27, May 25, Jun. 29, Jul. 27, Aug. 31, Oct. 26, Nov. 30.

**KNOX COUNTY—Epworth Singers** at the Laurel Theatre, Knoxville (Call Claudia Dean to confirm)

**Second Sundays at 6:30 p.m.**

Jan. 12, Feb. 9, May 11, Jun. 8, Aug. 10, Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9.

**SEVIER COUNTY**—at Middle Creek United Methodist Church, Pigeon Forge (Call David Sarten to confirm)

**Third Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.**

Jan. 21, Feb. 18, Mar. 18, Apr. 15, May 20, Jun. 17, Jul. 15, Aug. 19, Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18.

To be added to the Old Harp listserve, send an email request to [chris.stoddart@gmail.com](mailto:chris.stoddart@gmail.com)

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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Don Wiley: (423) 341-8893; [drw509@embarqmail.com](mailto:drw509@embarqmail.com)

Hal Wilson: (865) 436-2590

### Directions to the Blount County Singing Asbury Place, 2648 Sevierville Road, Maryville

**[from Knoxville]** Take Pellissippi Parkway (or Alcoa Hiway to Pellissippi Parkway) east toward Alcoa/Maryville. Go all the way to the end at Exit 14. Turn right off the exit ramp onto TN 33. Go 2.0 miles and turn left onto Brown School Road just before the Family Dollar store. Go 1.2 miles; turn right at the stop sign, still on Brown School Road. After 0.3 miles more, turn left onto Sevierville Road (US 411). Go 0.5 mile and turn right on Aldersgate at the entrance to Asbury Place. **\*\* [from south Knoxville or Sevierville]** Take US 441 to Seymour and turn west onto US 411. Go 12.5 miles to Maryville and turn left at the entrance to Asbury Place. **\*\* [from Athens and points south]** Take US 411 north into Maryville. Follow the US 129 bypass. Turn right on US 321, Lamar Alexander Parkway. Pass all entrances to Maryville College, then turn left onto Washington Street. Turn right after one block onto High Street, which will merge into Sevierville Road (US 411 again) in a block or two. Go 2.5 miles and turn right on Aldersgate Rd at the entrance to Asbury Place. **\*\***

**\*\*Follow Aldersgate Rd. to top of hill and turn left into the parking lot for Assisted Living. Park near the main door. Inside the building, turn right and go ¼ of the way around the rotunda to the chapel.**

