

NOTICE!!

THE JANUARY MEETING WILL BE HELD AT PRESIDENT JERRY LECROY'S HOUSE AT:

1311 Chesterfield Road

Directions:

South on the Parkway to Hobbs Road (opposite the Walmart).

Turn east on Hobbs, to Bailey Cove (second traffic light)

South on Bailey Cove past McGucken Park, and Chesterfield is the fourth left

West on Chesterfield, our house is about halfway up the hill, next house after Litchfield Circle



The Huntsville Traditional Music Association meets on the third Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is on:
Sunday, January 18th, 2:00 - 4:30 PM
Home of President Jerry LeCroy
1311 Chesterfield Road

Inside this Issue:

- Page 2:** HTMA President's Notes; January Coffeehouse To Be Members Performing
- Page 3:** HTMA Members Gather for Christmas Coffeehouse Jam; Alabama Folk School Offers Free Trial Classes
- Page 4:** Notes from the Berry Patch
- Page 5:** Mr. Bill's Gigs; Calendar of Events for December; HTMA Officers and Committees

For more information on all HTMA meetings, concerts, coffeehouses, and other events, visit our website at

www.huntsvillefolk.org



HTMA President's Notes

Dear Friends,

I'm writing this column on New Year's eve, sitting in a plane somewhere between Atlanta and Tucson. The start of a new year always provides folks with an incentive to set new goals, start new activities, and generally look for improvements. This year should be no exception.

One of the things I like about HTMA meetings and get-togethers is the wide range of music that gets performed. I've heard Scottish ballads, Irish jigs, and old-time music from Appalachia back-to-back at our meetings, and I think that's great. It's easy for us to get comfortable with one or two musical styles, and stick with those when looking for new tunes to learn. I was pushed out of a rut a little this fall when Lou Beasley scheduled a coffeehouse themed on the music of the Delmore Brothers. That event led me to learn a little about the Delmores, and to learn five or six of their songs. I might never have gone down that path if Lou had not suggested that we have a coffeehouse focused on their music.

It seems to me that we can all benefit from getting out of our musical comfort zone from time to time. There are lots of ways to do that - if you are used to playing solo, try getting together with friends to learn some multi-part arrangements. If you are a dulcimer player, maybe try tuning into a C-minor or other unusual-for-dulcimer key. If you're a bassist, comfortable with 4/4, 3/4, and 6/8 time, maybe you can try working on a jazz piece in 5/4 or 12/8 time. Singers might try an instrumental, and vice versa. Or go for what is for me the big challenge, and work up a song in a foreign language. That's always good for a stretching exercise. Polish up those new pieces and have fun sharing them with friends at the next HTMA meeting. It can be good for everyone. My challenge

for this year will be to get my mom, who is a new HTMA member, to let me accompany her on some songs she can sing at our next meeting.

What's coming up for HTMA in 2009? First, Lou Beasley has scheduled the January coffeehouse as another member performance opportunity, asking our members to each play their favorite songs. That's a tough assignment for me - my favorite song changes from day to day. We'll follow that up in February with a feature artist, and after that? Who would you like to see play at a coffeehouse? The performance committee could use your suggestions, for coffeehouses and for concert performers. These performances are for your benefit, but you have a much better chance of getting artists in that you like if you speak up. Or go whole hog and volunteer to work on the committee!

The association executive committee is always looking for volunteers and ideas. If you have time to do some work, please call and tell us what you'd like to do. Bill McCampbell could use help scheduling the retirement home gigs. Is there any equipment that you think the association needs to add to help improve our performances? How about coming up with a design for a new HTMA T-shirt? There are a lot of ways to contribute. Make getting active (or more active) in the association one of your new year's resolutions.

My best wishes to the whole HTMA family for the coming year!

Jerry LeCroy

January Coffeehouse To Be Members Performing

The January Coffeehouse will be a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the great talent of our own HTMA members. Come listen to members performing their favorites in a coffeehouse where the theme is *Members' Choice*. We are sure to hear some outstanding music, and to have a wonderful time together. We will be in the Trillium Room at Burritt on the Mountain, beginning at 7:00 PM.

Don't miss it!

HTMA Members Gather for Christmas Coffeehouse Jam

On December 23, HTMA members gathered in the Trillium Room at Burritt On The Mountain. We sat in the familiar circle, and every performer and listener joined in the age-old tradition of making a joyful noise. The Christmas tree was lit, the fire blazed in the fireplace, and Monte Sano rang with the joy and wonder of beautiful Christmas music.



Groups mixed and mingled, and we jammed. The songs were varied from modern to ancient, from upbeat to slow and reverent. The instruments were many, as always in HTMA gatherings: fiddle, guitar, autoharp, dulcimer, harmonica. And the members who played were inspired both by the season and the company.



Individuals and groups played and sang many songs: the old English *A Soalin'*; *In the Bleak MidWinter*; *Away In A Manger*; *Beautiful Star Of Bethlehem*; *Il Est Né Le Divine Enfant*; *The Cherry Tree Carol*; *Silent Night*; *Hot Buttered Rum*. From well-known to fairly obscure, from serious to humorous; they were all inspiring.



It was a beautiful holiday evening, full of joy and bonhomie and the kind of fellowship that happens when the good musicians of HTMA join together to make music.

Alabama Folk School Offers Free Trial Classes

On February 3-6, *The Alabama Folk School* at Camp McDowell will host a grand opening session which will feature nationally and locally recognized folk artists sharing the traditions of their crafts, with no charge (you must pre-register). Music classes in fiddle, banjo, guitar, and bass instruction, and a slow jam and singing workshop, will be a part of the schedule, along with classes in folk crafts. Musician/teachers include renowned musicians Herb Trotman & Kathy Hinkle (of the Herb Trotman Band), and Joyce & Jim Cauthen (of Red Mountain and Flying Jenny).

For more information or to register:

Call Danielle Dunbar, at 205-563-9990

Or check out the web site

<http://www.campmcdowell.com/FolkSchool/index.htm>

Register soon, space is limited.

(Editor's Note: Thanks to Jim Holland for sending this notice to the newsletter.)



Notes From The Berry Patch

Happy 2009! May the year treat you kindly. More and more, as the years race past, I want to slow my pace (without stopping my clock). More and more, I want to capture the emotions of ageing on paper, like the following:

QUIETUDE

*Sandburg-like,
I seek the hush of life.
A place to myself,
Where even loved-ones gently enter.*

*I have scaled the hill,
And down the backside.
Scratched and clawed for the top,
Believing the view better there,
Little realizing my need was vision, not view.
Thanks to God for the hill,
Praises be to God now for the still.*

*Grant my spirit calm.
I have sprinted, then walked.
Now, let me crawl,
At least for awhile.
Thanks to God for the race,
Praises be to God for the balm,
The solitude of calm.*

*Now the mind to idle,
Run in low gear.
No conquests
Nor throwing of the gauntlet.
I am grateful God for the challenges,
Of which I have had my fill.
Grant me the shush of life
As I descend life's hill.*

*It is time for life's lull.
A time to sit facing the East,
Catching each new day
From a chair of rest.
Awaiting God's call to the West.*

*I seek, nay need, the whist of life's creeping.
Listen, old ears.
Listen to that whist.
It surrounds you,
Holds you,
Carries you.
As long as one hears
That un-hearable whist
The East does not meet the West.
Is not life's quiet life's best?*

*Grant me a small corner
For this last of life
(For which, was said, the first was made.)
Allay my fears
As darkness nears.*

*Hear my silent, whistful, prayer:
"Spare me, please God,
The long prayers of too many preachers,
The shallow talk of too many politicians.
Grant me, please God,
The love of little children
And the company of simple people.
Most and best of all, if God you be,
Tranquilize my spirit with the balm of calm.
Shush my worries for family and friends.
Compose my thoughts. Soothe my
Parts and still my soul. Calm the large ocean
That surrounds me, reconcile me
With all, and let me face to the East,
Quietly so, until I Westward journey.
If God you be,
Hear me."*

Joe M. Berry

Note from the Editor

Our newsletter is an important part of our organization, and I invite every member to contribute ideas and/or articles any time you want to do so. You can reach me at sylvia.s.williams@pobox.com or 256-728-2359 or 1334 Columbus City Road, Scottsboro, AL 35769. I hope to hear from you soon.

Mr. Bill's Gigs

January 2009 Nursing Home Gigs

Nursing Home Gigs are on Saturdays at 3:00 PM unless otherwise noted.

January 17 3:00 PM

MORNINGSIDE OF MADISON

49 Hughes Road MADISON 35758

January 24

NOTE: 3:15 PM

REGENCY

(NOTE: Formerly Park View Health Care)

2004 Max Luther Dr. Huntsville 35810

January 31

3:00 PM

WHITESBURG MANOR

(NOTE: Formerly Whitesburg Gardens)

105 Teakwood Dr. Huntsville 35801

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Bill McCampbell at 882-2400 or mccampbellwm@bellsouth.net

Calendar of Events for January

January 10 - Jam Session from 1 - 4:00 PM at Early Works Museum, downtown Huntsville

January 17 - 7:30 PM - The Flying Monkey

January 18 - HTMA Meeting, President Jerry LeCroy's Home, 1311 Chesterfield Road, 2:00 PM

January 22 - January Coffeehouse - Trillium Room at Burritt on the Mountain, 7:00 PM

Editor's Note: If you know of an event that HTMA members would enjoy, please let me know, and I'll include it in the Calendar. See *Note From The Editor* for contact information. Thanks.

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