

HTMA President's Notes

May 2009

This was another pretty good month for the association. **Jim Parker** was the featured artist for the coffeehouse, following an impressive a'capella performance by the **Quinn Family Singers**. Jim offered the audience lots of pointers about what to do if they want to be successful songwriters. It's great for a performer like Jim, who has over a hundred songs recorded by a number of artists and plays frequently at Nashville's *Bluebird Café* to come and spend an evening with HTMA.

The Quinn's sang what they called traditional or old-time music. I think I have played versions of almost every song they did at one time or another, so their performance was really special for me. Their old-time form of singing and harmony was a treat for the audience.

There is a lot going on lately for HTMA executive committee members. I have started planning for our annual July traditional music concert at the Burritt Museum, Ken Hinkle and Linda Berry are working on the October concert with John McCutcheon, and Steve McGhee and I are preparing for the Roy Bookbinder house concert in September.

Lou Beasley has the coffeehouse schedule for this year pretty much booked, and is starting to look at 2010 bookings. I think Lou is looking for a theme for the September coffeehouse – please send him ideas if there is a theme you would like to participate in. And if there are artists you would like us to present next year, please let us know who they are and how to get in touch.

We have moved the HTMA website to a new, and I hope faster-loading host. That was a major deal for our service provider, Alan Cunningham, and your neophyte webmaster. I hope to do some site renovations, after I learn to use a more powerful HTML editing program than MS FrontPage. Or maybe we will have a really proficient web designer step up to the plate to polish our site design? I will be out of touch almost all of June, but hope to see everyone when I get back to Huntsville in July.

Jerry LeCroy



The Huntsville Traditional Music Association meets on the third Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is on:
Sunday, June 21st
2:00 - 4:30 PM

Huntsville Public Library Auditorium



The Quinn Family Singers at our May 2009 coffeehouse, Lucy (Pack), and Rachel, Charlotte, and Melinda Quinn

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www.HuntsvilleFolk.org

Calendar of Events for June

Saturday, June 13th, 1:00 - 4:00 PM

Traditional and Old-time Jam (Free admission for musicians, regular admission for non-musicians) at Constitution Hall Village

Sunday, June 21st, 2:00 - 4:30 PM

Regular HTMA member Meeting / Jam session at the Huntsville Public Library Auditorium

Thursday, June 25th, 7:00 PM

Coffeehouse, mystery artist.

At the Old Church at Burritt Museum on Monte Sano.

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

www.huntsvillefolk.org.

Mr. Bill's Gigs

June 2009 NURSING HOME GIGS

Nursing Home Gigs are on Saturdays at 3:00 PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

Saturday June 20 3:00 PM
HEARTHSTONE ASSISTED LIVING
8020 Benaroya Lane Huntsville 35802

Saturday June 27
NOTE: 3:15 PM
REGENCY
(NOTE: Formerly Park View Health Care)
2004 Max Luther Dr. Huntsville 35810

NOTE: WE WILL BE DOING A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE ON THURSDAY, JUNE 18, AT THE SENIOR CENTER GAZEBO. THE PROGRAM RUNS FROM 6:00 PM UNTIL 8:00 PM, WITH THE BLUE NOTES (A QUARTET OF SINGERS) PERFORMING FROM 6:00 - 6:30 AND HTMA PERFORMING FROM 6:30 (OR SHORTLY THEREAFTER, AS SOON AS SET UP IS COMPLETE) UNTIL 8:00 PM. THERE WILL BE MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM BILL SOON, BUT BE THINKING ABOUT THIS.

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

HTMA Executive Board

President: **Jerry LeCroy** 880-6234
jelecroy@knology.net

Vice President: **Jim England** 852-5740
jengland@knology.net

Sec/Treasurer: **Pat Long** 539-7211
plong@hiwaay.net

Publicity Chair: **Position Available!** (Great Pay and Benefits)

Public Service Chair / Pres. Emeritus:
Bill McCampbell: 882-2400
mccampbellwm@bellsouth.net

Performance Chair: **Lou Beasley** 859-5016
lrbeasley@mchsi.com

Newsletter Editor: **Position Available!** (Great Pay and Benefits)

Operations Co-Chairs:
George Williams 880-6234
george.p.williams@pobox.com
Steve McGehee 858-2032
catwithnotail69@aol.com

Report From The Retirement Home Circuit (Redstone Village)

Just thought you would like to know. We had a super-happy play time at Grandview at Redstone Village. There were: Jim England, Ken Hinkle, George Williams, Sylvia Williams, Jerry MGough, Danny Davis, Collier Rawls, Isaac White (with some help from Tony), and one old relic.

Sylvia was with us for the first time in several weeks. We hope she can stay healthy for a long, long time.

Bill McCampbell

Help Wanted Needed

Our terrific Publicity Chair Claire Mikkelsen is benched on the injured list, and may not be able to resume those duties for a while. Please contact Jerry LeCroy or Jim England if you might be able to help HTMA with getting our event notifications to the newspaper and radio stations, and help send out email announcements to our members and fans. Not a tough job, maybe, but those announcements are critically important to our audience and artists.

And please keep Claire in your thoughts and prayers.



NOTES FROM THE BERRY PATCH:

Do you ever wonder why you do things? Like occupying so much of your time with music? I have that problem, but not wondering about music. I ponder, why so much time trying to write?

I know full well that billions and billions of words have already been written in every combination the human mind can conceive. Literally tons of words on paper that gather dust in attics, closets, cabinets, garages, barns, and woodsheds. Why, I ask, add to the clutter?

I have no desire to be a “published” writer. (That is a common statement of position by those, like me, that know they have no chance of achieving that status.) In a very limited way, I publish things, such as this, for my friends at HTMA, some of who tickle my ego by saying they read my ramblings. Thanks. That makes me feel good.

But these Newsletter articles are just a small part of my writing efforts. I have several thousand of pages of my writings. Poems, short stories, long stories, historical notes, lesson plans for my classes; you name it, I’ve got it. Why? What will ever become of all these words? Am I nuts? Maybe so.

As one ages, one asks more frequently, “Why?”

More and more, I have a recurring answer. More frequently now, I think of the grandchild of a grandchild; a little boy or girl that I will never see, never get to hold on my knee and tell a story.

More and more, I dream of that unknown little one finding a dusty manuscript of my words and reading some of my poems or stories. I dream that, in this manner, I may be able to reach back and touch that little boy or girl. Who knows, that child may sit on my knee, rest a head on my shoulder, and take a nap. What a wonderful way to reach from the great beyond and touch. Who knows about such things?

Joe M. Berry

Editor’s note – Joe has been under the weather lately, with some minor surgery last week. Please keep him in your prayers.



Songwriter **Jim Parker** in his usual fine form at the May 2009 HTMA Coffeehouse

July Burritt Festival Call for Volunteers

Each July HTMA hosts a member-performance music fest playing from the Gazebo at Burritt Museum. These concerts are always fun, and usually well attended. Music starts at 1:30 and runs to 5:00. If you would like to play, please contact Jerry LeCroy or Lou Beasley. If you have a preferred starting time and duration, please let us know. Slots are filled first-come-first-served, and usually fill up pretty quickly, so call or (better) email soon if you would like to play this gig. We could also use volunteers to bring refreshments for the players.

Vice-President's notes,

Hooked on Music

During my several years driving an eighteen-wheeler up and down the highways of the United States, my harmonica and autoharp were companions that helped relieve the monotony. When I retired from the truck, I began to meet with the Huntsville Traditional Music Association folks to enjoy some of the picking and singing. I kept hearing about some folks playing at various retirement homes around the area. Bill McCampbell and others would occasionally suggest I come and help play for the residents.

One Saturday a few years back I picked up my old black Oscar Schmidt autoharp, put a couple of harmonicas in my pocket, and joined the folks performing that day. I sat in the back and mostly listened as others took the lead. I had heard Collier Rawls (he's Meisterklasse) play, and that day he took off on a song that got the folks rocking. I pushed my harmonicas deeper in my pocket, thinking, *man, I can't do that*. Sue Charles sang and played her beautiful-sounding Orthey harp and I was thinking, *man, I'm way out of my league*. I strummed quietly in the background, hoping I was in tune and on time.

I tagged along with this group of real musicians for several weeks, always sitting in the back strumming quietly. I have many friends who are real musicians, but I've never fancied myself a musician. I played and sang for grandchildren or did comic songs to get a laugh. Jack Ellis, Sue, and others would encourage me to do a song for the folks, giving me a smile and a "come on, you can do it" look.

One Saturday we were a small group and I nervously took a turn and sang an old Carter Family song. I was hooked. On the front row, strapped into a wheelchair was a patient, probably Alzheimer's, who



James Smith's granddaughter Mia found the May HTMA meeting proceedings less than totally absorbing.

appeared to be oblivious to the goings on around him. As we played and I sang, I noticed one finger tapping the wheelchair arm in time to the music. I almost choked but kept going. I thought, "It's not about me or how well I sing or play, it's the residents." And that day, at least one old man heard and felt the song.

Recently the group finished our set at a home in Madison. We were saying our goodbyes and a small, sweet voice said, "Y'all don't go! Do some more songs."

I said, "We would, but you all will be late for supper."

Another voice came back with, "Oh they'll wait on us, sing some more."

"Okay, what do you want us to sing?"

That little voice again said, "Do something sweet!"

Ken Hinkle said, "I can do that." So off we went for a few more minutes.

We finished a set at Whitesburg Gardens and I was visiting some of the folks who had been listening. I was chatting with a little, bright-eyed woman who was shuffling by pushing her walker. I asked if she heard my last song. She said with a twinkle, "Oh son, I hope so. I do hope so."

As I've said, I'm hooked. Playing and singing at the retirement homes is the most fun you can have without being arrested. Check Mr. Bill's schedules or call him if you would like to volunteer to bring some of this same kind of fun to the folks.

Jim England