

Spring/Summer 2020

Keystone Quarterly



**FELLOWSHIP QUARTET WINS
2019 PSGMA KEYSTONE AWARD!**

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello, Friends!

We are pleased to return to a new year of Southern Gospel music and the *2020 Spring Issue* of the Keystone Quarterly. I trust that you have had an enriching and safe winter. Depending on where you live, the weather sure has been less extreme than a year ago! I'm sure we'll see more of that next year, but at least we are hopefully at the tail end of this cold season, with nicer weather on the way...

It's always good to check the websites and Facebook pages of your favorite southern gospel groups and concerts. It's that time of year again!

This Spring issue is dedicated to our new 2019 Keystone Award Winners and the Hall of Fame Inductees. Many of you were able to attend the 2019 PSGMA Hall of Fame Induction Banquet and the PSGMA sure appreciates your continued support of this annual event. Congratulations to *Fellowship Quartet*, the 2019 PSGMA Keystone Award winners! Also, we welcomed *Jerry Jacobs, Romaine Mellott and Howard Crawford*, our new 2019 PSGMA Hall of Fame Inductees. The banquet attendees also enjoyed a superb concert by none other than *Three Bridges*. Be sure to check out the enclosed AD for the upcoming 2020 Hall of Fame Induction Banquet for the location and ticket information! We will be enjoying the music of the *Kingsmen* this year.

We want to thank you for your continued support of the PSGMA. If you are interested in becoming an annual or lifetime member, see details on the back cover of this issue.

We hope to see you soon!

Sincerely,

Dave Theis, Editor

PSGMA website: <http://www.psgma.com>

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Become A Member of the PSGMA... details on back cover!

Pennsylvania Southern Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame Banquet

Musical Guests: The Kingsmen Quartet

Saturday, October 24, 2020
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SHIELA HEIL

Northern Notes

Pennsylvania Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame Adds Three

The Pennsylvania Southern Gospel Music Association held their 2019 Hall of Fame Inductee Banquet on Oct. 26, 2019, in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

The PSGMA's 2019 Keystone Award was bestowed on The Fellowship Quartet, a ministry based in south-central Pennsylvania. PSGMA Vice President Randy Simpson, in presenting the award, said the quartet showed great growth in all aspects of their ministry spreading the Gospel through song.

During the ceremonies (which included energetic and uplifting music provided by Three Bridges), the PSGMA inducted three more individuals—two living and one deceased—into the Pennsylvania Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

The first inductee, **Jerry Jacobs**, was the member of The Jacobs Brothers who worked behind the scenes. In 1973 Jerry started The Jacobs Brothers' television

program. Also in the mid-1970s, he promoted Gospel concerts at the York Fairgrounds and helped start the All-Night Gospel Sing at Valley View Park in Hallam, Pennsylvania. In 1977, The Jacobs Brothers purchased an 87-acre farm in Dillsburg, Pennsylvania, where their all-night sings ministered to thousands of people for the last 43 years. Jerry was founder of several Christian TV stations and created the Keystone Inspirational Network, airing 24 hours a day and covering the entire North American continent.

down at age 80. Romaine has been blessed through her musical talents and she is passing those blessings to six of her children and grandchildren, who today are active in Gospel and Contemporary music groups that proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.



Howard Crawford



Romaine Mellott

Romaine Mellott was the second inductee announced. She was born with a song in her heart and played piano and organ for her home church for more than 70 years, as well as taught piano for more than 50 years. She enjoyed listening to Southern Gospel music and was instrumental in starting the Chapter VII Gospel Quartet, serving as piano accompanist until stepping

The third inductee is the late **Howard Crawford**. He was said to have one of the sweetest tenor voices ever heard, but more importantly, as friends testified, he walked in the spirit and was an example of humility before God and man. He sang as a member of Spiritual Witness with Barry Eshelman and Joe Chioda, as well as Harmony Hill, a barbershop quartet, and for 13 years with The Fellowship Quartet.

Some of his signature songs were "He's All I Need," "Glory Road," and "I Know A Man Who Can." Howard loved Southern Gospel music and especially good harmony. His music will live in the hearts of those privileged to hear him sing. **sn**



Jerry Jacobs with his family.

Let's find out a little more about the 2019 Keystone Award winners...

The Fellowship Quartet

The Group



Ken Rhodes
(Founder)

As the founder of the Fellowship Quartet, Ken has always been singing as a part of God's call on his life. While in high school and college, he sang with *Chestnut Ridge Quartet* in Western PA. While in the Philadelphia area, he sang with the *Prospectors Quartet* for five years. Since 1988, he has sung with the *Fellowship Vocal Band*, which eventually became *The Fellowship Quartet*.

The Fellowship Quartet was originally based in Westmoreland County, but was moved to Bedford in 1999, when Ken and his wife Darla purchased *Friendship Village Campground and Retirement Community*. As a licensed and ordained minister, Ken loves to preach and teach the word of God.

Ken and his wife Darla are now retired and have moved from Friendship Village to the country life. They have three children and seventeen grandchildren.

Ken has retired from singing in the group and is currently battling ALS. Please check out the ALS website at <http://www.alsa.org/>.



John McPherson
(Tenor)

John McPherson is the group's tenor singer. He spends much of his time on the road during the day, making deliveries to supermarkets and singing on the weekends. In the past, he has served as a music minister and has been a part of other Southern Gospel singing groups. Among his interests are soccer, bass fishing, and gospel music! His favorite scripture verses are Ephesians 2:8-9. John and his wife, Joanne have been married since 1976 and reside in Orrstown, PA. They have a daughter, a son and five grandchildren.

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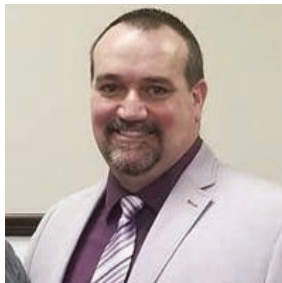
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Details on back cover!

2019 Keystone Award winners (cont.)



Brad Lowery
(Lead)

Since the age of 5, Brad has been fulfilling God's purpose in his life to sing. Brad's family first sang Southern Gospel music with another family and called themselves The Seekers. At the age of 16, Brad's family started singing as The Lowery Family, which sang for 30 years in western Maryland and surrounding areas. Brad joined the Fellowship Quartet in 2016, where he continues to use his singing ability to bring honor and glory to God.

Brad accepted Christ as his savior at a young age. He was raised in the church and has always been active in church ministries. He has served as Sunday School Teacher, Youth Leader, and board member. He is currently a member of the choir and the Praise and Worship Team. Outside the church, Brad has also served his community, coaching youth sports and as the treasurer for his town. He and his wife, Paula, live in Ellerslie, MD, where they raised two sons, Steven and Lucas. Brad is currently employed by Northrop Grumman as a Quality Engineer.



Mark Berkey
(Baritone)

Mark is from Windber, PA, where he and his wife Annette have raised 4 children and now have 7 grandchildren. He has been involved with music ministry for over 20 years and has sung with the Four For One Quartet, and the Good News Quartet. He has served in his home church, Windber Church of the Brethren since he was a teenager and continues to serve there as a Deacon and multiple other offices and positions. He has been in the elevator industry since 1993 and currently is co-owner/President of Right Elevator, LLC, which he operates with his sons.

Mark accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of his life at the age of 12 and has strived to serve him faithfully ever since. Being involved in music ministry is a blessing to him and he considers it a privilege to minister in this way while traveling with the quartet.

"Choose for yourself this day whom you will serve" "but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord". Joshua 24:15



Nick Berkey
(Bass)

Nick resides in Hooversville, PA with his wife, Maggie (m. 2008), and three children, Josie (9), Mack (6), and Travis (3). He was honorably discharged from the United States Coast Guard in August 2011, and currently works at Eastern Elevator Service and Sales in Windber, PA. He enjoys spending time with his family, playing golf, and hunting. Nick has always had a desire to serve the Lord, and has been able to do so by teaching Sunday School, singing in the church choir, serving on boards and commissions, and filling the pulpit from time to time. While he has loved Southern Gospel music since his youth, this is his first opportunity to serve as a part of a music ministry. He looks forward to fulfilling God's call for him as the bass singer with the Fellowship Quartet.

"I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being." - Psalm 104:33

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." - Romans 10:13

In Memoriam

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR JOHN R. LYTHGOE

10/14/2019



A few songs were sung by “NEW JOURNEY” throughout the service.

TODAY WE BOTH MOURN AND CELEBRATE THE LIFE AND HOME GOING OF JOHN R. LYTHGOE. IN OUR GRIEF, WE’LL CONSIDER THE MANY ROLES THAT HE PLAYED IN OUR LIVES... BUT IN OUR CELEBRATION, WE’LL RECOGNIZE THE HUGE FOOTPRINT THAT HE LEFT IN HIS SERVICE FOR JESUS CHRIST. IT’S THE CULMINATION OF THAT SERVICE, AND THE REWARD HE MUST CERTAINLY BE ENJOYING AT THIS MOMENT IN THE PRESENCE OF THE SAVIOR HE SANG ABOUT, THAT SHOULD BRING US THE MOST COMFORT.

JOHN LYTHGOE SANG... ABOUT JESUS... ABOUT HEAVEN. JOHN LYTHGOE SANG A LOT... IN A LOT OF PLACES OVER THE YEARS. I CAN ONLY IMAGINE THOUGH, THAT THO’ HE LOVED TRAVELING AND SHARING WITH SO MANY, JOHN LOVED COMING HOME TO SWEET LAVERNE THE MOST.

YOU KNOW, IN ALL THE SONGS JOHN SANG, ISN’T IT COMFORTING TO KNOW THAT IN CHRIST, THE PROMISE HE SANG ABOUT HE’S EXPERIENCING RIGHT NOW...”HOME”.

I’VE HEARD IT SAID THAT “HOME” IS THE PLACE WHERE YOU’RE TREATED THE BEST AND COMPLAIN THE MOST”. NO COMPLAINING THERE, HOWEVER...

TODAY, JOHN LYTHGOE IS “HOME”.

AND THO’ WE MAY ALL BELIEVE IN HEAVEN, WE, LIKE THE DISCIPLES MAY BE UNSURE HOW TO GET THERE. PERHAPS LIKE THOMAS, WE MAY BE CONFUSED ABOUT THE WAY. JESUS...AND JOHN... WANT US TO GET IT STRAIGHT. JESUS SURE SHOOTS DOWN ANY ILLUSIONS OF GAINING HEAVEN BY JUST BEING A GOOD PERSON, GIVING TO THE CHURCH OR THE POOR, BEING BAPTIZED OR BELONGING TO THIS CHURCH, OR ANY CHURCH DENOMINATION.

WHEN JESUS SAID, “EXCEPT THROUGH ME”, HE ENDED IT WITH A PERIOD. NO TAG LINE...

WHEN THE THIEF ON THE CROSS NEXT TO HIM ACKNOWLEDGED HIM AS LORD, JESUS DIDN’T TELL HIM OF A DEED HE MUST PERFORM, A CHANGE HE NEEDS TO MAKE, OR A TIME FRAME IN ORDER TO TAKE UP RESIDENCE. JESUS SAID “TODAY...ONLY THROUGH ME”.

YOU MAY KNOW WHO JESUS IS, YOU MAY KNOW WHAT HE’S DONE...BUT RECOGNIZING THE GRACE THAT GOD THE FATHER EXTENDED TO US THROUGH HIS SON’S DEATH AND RESURRECTION, MAKING HIM SAVIOR AND LORD...THAT GETS YOU “HOME”. THAT IS WHAT JOHN LYTHGOE BELIEVED, AND SANG ABOUT, THAT IS WHY I HAVE HOPE IN SEEING HIM, MY PARENTS, AND ALL WHO RECOGNIZED THE WAY “HOME” THROUGH CHRIST AGAIN.

Obit: LYTHGOE - John R., 82, of Ebensburg, formerly of Mundy’s Corner, passed away October 10, 2019 at UMPC Altoona Hospital. He was born November 22, 1936 in Johnstown, PA. John was retired from US Steel and from Agway, where he was well known as a petroleum sales rep.

John was a long-time member of the gospel group, “The Masters”. He was the original President of the Pennsylvania Southern Gospel Music Association until his homegoing, founding member of the annual Duman Lake Gospel Sing, as well as many other Gospel Music offerings throughout the area.

He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and running dogs. He was a founding member of the Jackson Twp. Rod & Gun Club and a former Deputy Warden for the Pennsylvania Fish Commission.

John was also a member of Pike Grace Brethren Church, Mundy’s Corner, PA. John was also an active volunteer, and enjoyed participation in many church, community, and school activities...and he was also a USAF Korean War veteran.

EPILOGUE: THE WORLD, THAT CAN BE UGLY AT TIMES, WAS A BRIGHTER PLACE WITH JOHN LYTHGOE IN IT, AND ALL OF US WERE TOUCHED BY GOD’S LOVE, BY OUR ASSOCIATION WITH HIM. NOW THE TASK ISN’T ONLY LIFE WITHOUT JOHN, BUT CARRYING ON THE LEGACY HE LEAVES HERE: THAT BOLDNESS IN SPREADING THE GOSPEL TO OTHERS, THAT JOY OF LIFE, THOSE DUMB JOKES... THAT WILL BE HIS GIFT TO ALL WHO CARRY ON FROM NOW ON WITHOUT HIM.

Looking Back to the Beginning

by Duane Nicholson



Welcome to year 2020 PSGMA, members and friends! The PSGMA has survived since our first board meeting that yours truly, as secretary, produced the first minutes on January 23, 2001 at the Lighthouse Restaurant in Chambersburg, PA. The first board members were John Lythgoe, Leroy Kipe, Ken Rhodes, Luke Hess and Duane Nicholson. Since that time, the board was increased to nine members.

The association was formed to promote and encouraged the many gospel music groups that labor in our state from week to week. Our now deceased PSGMA President, John Lythgoe, who himself headed up a singing group, had this desire to help provide a resource and encouragement and perhaps persuade more musicians to join with the PSGMA in keeping Southern Gospel music alive and well in Pennsylvania.

The nineteen years of our existence has been received by some with enthusiasm, while others have seen no value whatsoever in our endeavors. We appreciate those who have come alongside of our endeavors lately, like the Open Door Church in Chambersburg, PA, who have opened their doors for our monthly board meetings and our annual Gospel Music promotion banquet and Hall Of Fame inductions. Rev Bill Dykes, who is on staff there, is a former Gospel Music singer, and supported a great Gospel Music event featuring singers from Ohio and surrounding areas from his former church in Cincinnati, Ohio.

I am aware that most who receive this quarterly magazine are either members of our organization as fans or members of Pennsylvania Gospel Groups. Having said that, I encourage ALL who read this article to help our endeavors by encouraging participation from their own members or friends.

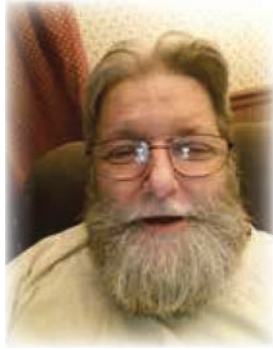
I have tried to keep a positive theme to this article, but I close with one concern that I have. I have heard that there has been criticism among some that the board members who have groups of their own are just promoting themselves because most articles are about their groups. The simple fact is that you see groups mentioned because they participate. Be assured that any group who participates or sends an article about their group will be featured. We have not used the PSGMA as competition in promotions, except our annual Hall of Fame event. We invite promoters to advertise their events in this magazine. **WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU IN YOUR ENDEAVORS.**

May you all have a prosperous year of sharing the greatest message in all - the world through Gospel Music. We hope you will help us promote you by membership; info about requesting membership is on every edition's back page.

Duane Nicholson
Secretary, PSGMA

ON THE NARROW ROAD

with Uncle Brian Rosenbaum



When I was a lot younger (and, oh, so immature), I would see the gospel groups up on stage and the more well-known they were, the more I was sure that they absolutely had their act together. I didn't doubt their faith, that they were strong in the Lord, never to waiver and never having a problem in the world.

How naive I was. The reality is, the more we struggle in life, i.e., financial hardships, physical hardships, spiritual hardships, etc., the more we see the power of God and the more our faith can grow. Scripture tells us where we are weak is actually where He is strong.

Brothers and sisters, whether you're someone going to a concert to enjoy it, or going to a concert to sing it, we all face struggles, trials temptations and fears... to say nothing of doubt!

Please be encouraged, beloved, because it's through these struggles that God is able to demonstrate His glory the best. So, whatever trial you're facing today, whatever heartache you're having to deal with, whatever doubt, whatever fear: I know that this has come so that God might be shown strong

in your life. What's that you say? You'd like a Bible verse to back that up? How about my favorite Bible verse, II Chronicles 16:9a, "for the eyes of the Lord roam to and fro throughout the whole Earth, looking for those whose heart is perfect towards Him on whose behalf He can show Himself strong."

It is through these hardships God gives us the courage and fortitude to sing and speak of him with a depth and with a certainty that hasn't come to us lightly. Knowing that we have been bought with a price, sure of our destination and destiny more than ever before; we are able to press on towards the mark of the High Calling.

Keep pressing on, beloved and know that the future rests in the nail-scarred hands of the one that loves you and is as sure as the scars in those hands!

Step up to talk to the people around you at work about this wonderful life in Jesus Christ; take your talents and sign up for special music at church; or, if you're already traveling and singing, singing it all the more with gusto, raising High the name of our great God and King.

Let your peace and your joy and your love flow richly to whoever your neighbor might be for His honor, for His glory, to His praise!

So, with this in mind, keep pressing on towards the mark of God's High Calling!

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Historian's Corner

By LJ Petersen, PSGMA Historian



Happy New Year, and I pray that all who read the *Keystone Quarterly* had a wonderfully Blessed Christmas and enjoying the New Year 2020!

This year my singing group, Chapter VII Gospel Quartet, in some regards, is going back to basics. What I mean by that is that we are looking at revisiting traditional hymns, learning them, incorporating them in our concert play lists and possibly record an 'all hymns' CD.

Church Hymnal (aka Red Back Hymnal)

In researching hymns for this year's concert schedule and possible CD, I pulled out my "Church Hymnal" or "Red Back Hymnal" as it is also known, that I purchased from the Kingdom Heirs product table at a February 2015 Kingdom Heirs and Jim Brady Trio concert at the Lancaster Mennonite High School in Lancaster, PA. This hymnal is the hymn book in many of our churches here in the United States. The Red Back Hymnal,



Figure 1: Church Hymnal, Tennessee Music and Printing Company, a Division of Pathway Press, Cleveland, Tennessee

has its own history. "Whether it is the wonderful memories that are attached to the precious hymns contained inside or it is the shaped notes that comprise each song, this timeless classic continues to be sung across our nation year after year." The Church Hymnal (which is commonly called the "red-back" hymnal because of its red cloth hard cover) is often featured in gospel music conventions and local church 'red back hymnal singings' on a regular basis". Pathway Press is the exclusive publisher of the red back hymnal. The hymnal contains 410 pages of 400 shaped note hymns. Millions of these red back hymnals have been sold to lovers of gospel music throughout the world. With

the growth of the Church of God and the success of Tennessee Music Printing Company during the 1940s, some ministers and laity requested the publication of a hymnal for the denomination. After some time and discussion, a hymnal committee was formed and included Otis McCoy as editor, and V.B. (Vep) Ellis and Zeno C. Tharp as assistant compilers. Ellis was a prominent minister, musician and songwriter within the Church of God, and Tharp was a well-known minister and elected official within the Church of God. The Church Hymnal was finally made available to the public in November, 1951. The initial printing consisted of 25,000 copies and the initial cost per copy was \$1.50. The Hymnal was printed in shape notes only and bound with a maroon or green board cover. The maroon cover was the most popular choice and was the inspiration for the name "Red Back." As a result of the committee's choice of songs as well as the need for this type of hymnal, the Church Hymnal was well received from its initial publication. Within the first three months of publication, over 14,000 copies were sold. A second printing of 27,500 was made available in May, 1952. Since its initial publication, over 6 million copies have been sold. Most likely, the Church Hymnal is one of the best single repositories of gospel hymns. It is printed in the seven shape-note format, and today remains one of the few hymnal using this unique style of notation. On November 5th, 2015, the Museum Center at Five Points unveiled a new permanent exhibition called "The Red Back:" America's Best-Loved Hymnal. The exhibit explores the local history of the Red Back from its development and first printing in Cleveland, TN, to widespread adoption and continuing influence on Christian music. Visitors to the exhibition will learn about key people in the history of the Red Back, the unique shape note system it uses, and the industrial mechanics of its publication and production.



Figure 2: Interactive Touchscreen. Courtesy of Redbackhymnal.com

Historian's Corner (cont'd)

The exhibit is packed with content for those of all ages who want to learn. An interactive touchscreen, shown above, offers commentary by local gospel musicians on the history of the Red Back. Visitors can hear from singing school veteran Charles Towler, former Homeland Harmony Quartet member Jack Clark and several others. An integrated listening station allows those unfamiliar with the Red Back's music to listen to some of its most famous songs. A hands-on shape note activity introduces visitors to the basics of shape note music, and a fully functioning linotype machine and proofing press help visitors to learn how much time and effort went in to publishing a Red Back Hymnal back in 1951. The Museum's address is 200 Inman Street East, Cleveland, TN, 37311. The Museum is open Tuesday-Saturday, and closed Sundays, Mondays and most major holidays. Contact museumcenter.org. One last comment on the Red Back Hymnal and Pathway Press is that they offer many products for purchase, to include the Red Back Hymnal, Large Print spiral bound texts for musicians, along with a CD with 19 selected songs from the Red Back Hymnal

Shape-Notes:

As a former wood-wind player (first clarinet, and later saxophone), I had never been taught, let alone heard of, shape-notes. This is understandable, as the shape-note only applies to vocally presented notes and not instrumentally presented notes.

Shape notes are a musical notation designed to facilitate congregational and community singing. The notation, introduced in late 18th century England, became a popular teaching device in American singing schools. Shapes were added to the noteheads in written music to help singers find pitches within major and minor scales, without the use of more complex information found in key signatures on the staff.

Shape notes of various kinds have been used for over two centuries in a variety of music traditions, mostly sacred music, but also secular, originating in New England; it was practiced primarily in the Southern United States for many years, and now is experiencing a renaissance in other locations as well. Shape notes have also been called 'character notes' and 'patent notes' respectively, and 'buckwheat notes' and 'dunce notes'. However, the syllables of shape-note systems greatly antedate the shapes. The practice of singing music to syllables designating pitch goes back to about AD 1000 with the work of Guido of Arezzo. Other early work in this area includes the cipher notation of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (18th century), and the tonic sol-fa of John Curwen (19th century).

The idea behind shape notes is that the parts of a

vocal work can be learned more quickly and easily if the music is printed in shapes that match up with the solfège syllables with which the notes of the musical scale are sung. A skilled singer, experienced in a shape note tradition, has developed a fluent triple mental association, which links a note of the scale, a shape, and a syllable. This association can be used to help in reading the music. When a song is first sung by a shape note group, they normally sing the syllables (reading them from the shapes) to solidify their command over the notes. Next, they sing the same notes to the words of the music.

The syllables and notes of a shape note system are relative, rather than absolute; they depend on the key of the piece. The first note of a major key always has the triangular Fa note, followed (ascending) by Sol, La, etc. The first note of a minor key is always La, followed by Mi, Fa, etc.

The first three notes of any major scale – fa, sol, la – are each a tone apart. The fourth to sixth notes are also a tone apart and are also fa, sol, la. The seventh and eighth notes, being separated by a semitone, are indicated mi-fa. This means that just four shape notes can adequately reflect the "feeling" of the whole scale.

Four-shape vs. Seven-shape systems



Figure 3: Four Shape Note System

The system illustrated above is a four-shape system; six of the notes of the scale are grouped in pairs assigned to one syllable/shape combination. The ascending scale using the fa, so, la, fa, so, la, mi, fa syllables represent a variation of the hexachord system introduced by the 11th century monk Guido of Arezzo, who originally introduced a six-note scale using the syllables ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la.

The four-syllable variation of Guido's original system was prominent in 17th century England, and entered the US in the 18th century. Shortly afterward, shapes were invented to represent the syllables. The four-shape tradition that currently has the greatest number of participants is Sacred Harp singing. But there are many other traditions that are still active or even enjoying a resurgence of interest. Among the four-shape systems, the Southern Harmony has remained in continuous use at one singing in Benton, Kentucky, and is now experiencing a small amount of regrowth. The current reawakening of interest in shape note singing has also created new singings using other recently moribund 19th-century four-shape songbooks, such as The

Historian's Corner (cont'd)

Missouri Harmony, as well as new books by modern composers, such as the Northern Harmony.

The other important systems are seven-shape systems, which give a different shape and syllable to every note of the scale. Such systems use as their syllables the note names “do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti, do” (familiar to most people, due to the song “Do Re Mi” from *The Sound of Music*). A few books (e.g., “*The Good Old Songs*” by C. H. Cayce) present the older seven-note syllabification of “do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti, do”. In the seven-shape system, invented by Jesse B. Aikin, the notes of a C major scale would be notated and sung as follows:



Figure 4: Seven Shape Note System

Although seven-shape books may not be as popular as in the past, there are still a great number of churches in the American South, in particular Southern Baptists, Primitive Baptists, almost all of the non-instrumental Churches of Christ, some Free Methodists, United Pentecostals, and United Baptists in the Appalachian regions of West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky, that regularly use seven-shape songbooks in Sunday worship. These songbooks may contain a variety of songs from 18th-century classics to 20th-century gospel music. Thus, today denominational songbooks printed in seven shapes probably constitute the largest branch of the shape-note tradition.

In addition, nondenominational community singings are also intermittently held, which feature early-to mid-20th century seven-shape gospel music, such as Stamps-Baxter hymnals or Heavenly Highway. In these traditions, the custom of “singing the notes” (syllables) is generally preserved only during the learning process at singing schools and singing may be to an instrumental accompaniment, typically a piano. The seven-shape system is also still used at regular public singings of 19th-century songbooks of a similar type to the Sacred Harp, such as *The Christian Harmony* and the *New Harp of Columbia*. Such singings are common in Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama, and generally preserve the singing school custom of “singing the notes”.

The seven-shape (Aikin) system is commonly used by the Mennonites and Brethren. Numerous songbooks are printed in shaped notes for this market. They include *Christian Hymnal*, the *Christian Hymnary*, *Hymns of the Church*, *Zion's Praises*, *Pilgrim's Praises*, the *Church Hymnal*, *Silver Gems in Song* and *Harmonia Sacra*. Some African-American churches also use the seven-

shape note system.

Of a hybrid nature, in terms of reviving Ananias Davisson's *Kentucky Harmony*, but taking the further step of incorporating songs from 70 other early tunebooks, along with new compositions, is the *Shenandoah Harmony* (2013). Thomas B. Malone has specialized in the revival of works by Jeremiah Ingalls, and has published a four-shape edition of Ingalls's 1805 edition of *The Christian Harmony*. Malone organizes an annual mid-July singing in Newbury, Vermont, where Ingalls was a tavern-keeper and musician between 1789 and 1810.

Of a final note, yes, pun intended, *God's Word*, or *The Holy Bible*, has much to be said about singing. In Psalm 100: 1 and 2, we find: “1 Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. 2 Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing.” We are to sing joyfully unto the Lord, but also skillfully. There are many more verses that address the importance of skill. But when you start to really study scripture relating to music ministry, in particular, musicians and singers, one of the first things you notice is that almost every time scripture speaks specifically about a singer or musician, it goes out of the way to point out that singer or musician's high level of skill. Often when a musician is summoned, it is made very clear in the request that the musician be highly skilled:

I Samuel 16:17 “And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me.”

Psalms 33:3 “Sing unto Him a new song; play skillfully with a loud noise.”

I Chronicles 15:22 “And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song: he instructed about the song, because he was skillful.”

I Chronicles 25:7 “So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the songs of the LORD, even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight.”

Keep looking up, and keep singing for the Lord!

References:

- The Holy Bible, King James Version (KJV)
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shape_note
- www.redbackhymnal.com
- <http://themusicministrycoach.com/talentskill-vs-anointing-does-god-really-care-if-it-sounds-good-or-not/>



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JOE TOMLINSON



Joe has been writing, recording, traveling and singing from New York to Florida for more than 15 years and has written and recorded more than 50 gospel songs. Joe received the PSGMA Keystone Award in 2006 and is a lifetime member of the Pennsylvania Southern Gospel Music Association.

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Friendship Village Campground's 2020 Gospel Music Schedule

Saturday Nights at 7pm in the Barn

May 23: GloryWay Quartet - Mansfield, OH

Bluegrass Weekend

May 28: Revised Edition - Bedford, PA
 May 29: Hickory Bottom Band - Bedford, PA
 May 30: Remington Ryde - Harrisburg, PA

Aug. 10:
 Aug. 11:
 Aug. 12:
 Aug. 13:
 Aug. 14:

Christian Camp Meeting

@ the Lake Pavilion
 Blessed Assurance
 Randy Simpson Ministries
 Servants Heart
 Mercy's Reign
 Victory Express

June 06: True Heart - Milton, PA

June 13: The Hagans Family - Kinzers, PA

June 20: Curtis Hylar & Jubilation - Greenville, NC

June 27: The Sound - Detroit, MI

July 04: Johnny Minick & The Stewart Brothers - Nashville, TN

July 11: The Lordsmen - Elkview, WV

July 18: New Journey - Mt Pleasant, PA

July 25: The Anchormen - Asheboro, NC

Aug. 01: Calvary's Mercy - Manassas, VA

Aug. 08: The Needhams - Nashville, TN

Aug. 15:

Gospel Celebration

4pm - 10pm @ the Lake Pavilion

Dixie Melody Boys
 Three Bridges
 PromisedLand
 The Fellowship Quartet

Aug 22:

The Itzels - Westminster, MD

Aug. 29:

Sonrise - Fredricksburg, VA - Bluegrass

Sept. 5:

Shaffer Band - Belington, WV

Fall Bluegrass Festival

@ the Lake Pavilion

South Penn Crossing
 Bustin Bluegrass
 Sonrise

Sept. 25
 Sept. 26

Everyone is Welcome! A Love Offering will be Taken.

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