

Spirited Harmonies of The Gospel Jubilators May 11th

The Charlotte Folk Society will present **The Gospel Jubilators** in concert at 7:30 PM on Friday, May 11, in the Bryant Recital Hall of the Sloan-Morgan Building on the Central CPCC Campus at 1220 Elizabeth Avenue in Charlotte.

CFS Gatherings are family-friendly and free, although donations are greatly appreciated. Enjoy a short refreshment break after the concert and stay on for a jam session or song circle.

Free parking is available in the Central Piedmont Community College Staff Deck off Fourth Street, between Independence Boulevard and Kings Drive.

The Gospel Jubilators' performances at MerleFest 2007 marked the fourth year they've wowed audiences at the venerable "roots and branches" music festival. Last September, they traveled to Omagh, Northern Ireland, to sing jubilee-style gospel for the second time at the annual Appalachian and Bluegrass Music Festival at the Ulster-American Folk Park. Whether performing in Ireland, at MerleFest, the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, or close to their Durham

homes, the **Jubilators** captivate listeners with their a cappella four-part close harmonies. At first awed and silent, audiences inevitably rise up and join **The Jubilators** in clapping and singing during their spirit-filled renditions.



The Gospel Jubilators

Jubilee singing dates to the origin of gospel and the formation of gospel quartets at Southeast-

ern black colleges in the late 1800s. It peaked in popularity in the 1930s and '40s. By the 1970s, gospel music increasingly reflected the influence of secular music - jazz, blues, and soul. In 1972, William "Pete" Conner, who had anchored the bass line for the nationally acclaimed **Swan Silvertones** for the previous fourteen years, organized the **Gospel Jubilators** as a direct response to the commercialization of quartet gospel. Feeling that quartet singers were increasingly more interested in "ripping and running" than in conveying a spiritual message and that the trend toward instrumental accompaniment was both

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May 11th: Chester Lorenz Appreciation Evening

Chester Lorenz and his wife, Dot, are charter members of the Charlotte Folk (Music) Society. When they helped to form CFMS in 1982, they brought a wealth of musical accomplishments to the organization. Chester is a musician, published songwriter, collector and preserver of traditional songs. He just celebrated his 89th birthday last Sunday and has been less active in recent years. It is fitting in our 25th anniversary year to reacquaint members with Chester's contributions. Our May 11th Gathering will be "Chester Lorenz Appreciation Evening" and all present will have an opportunity to sign a "thank you" card for Chester and to write messages to him.

Chester was born in 1918 and grew up on a farm near Ellsworth, Kansas. When he was ten, he and his older brother saved enough of the money they had earned from trapping skunks and selling their hides to buy a Bradley Kincaid guitar and mouth harp. They were given a button accordion for Christmas that same year. Chester says of his older brother, Selva, "He taught me to play the guitar and stayed on me until I learned for he wanted me to accompany him when he played the accordion." Before long, neighbors were inviting the brothers to play for dances.

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(*Gospel Jubilators, continued from page 1.*)

decreasing emphasis on harmony and increasingly hiding the words of the songs, Conner gathered a group of singers whose focus would be unaccompanied jubilee harmony.

Jubilee style is a little spiritual, a little gospel, and a little barber-shop harmony, pulled together with a tight vocal blend and a hand-clapping rhythm. There's no electric howling, warbling, or thumping - just human voices locked together in harmony. **The Gospel Jubilators** have dedicated themselves to keeping alive that old style of singing, harmonizing on traditional spirituals and gospel pieces popularized by early groups such as the **Golden Gate Quartet**. Though only one of the original **Jubilators** still sings with the ensemble, all of the current singers remain true to the vision of the group's founders to preserve gospel music's rich heritage and to deliver the message in vibrant vocal harmony.

The current members of the group include: Rudolph (Mack) Floyd, first tenor and the group's only original member; James Shipman, bass and the group's senior statesman at 85 years young; Robert Sherrill, baritone; Talbert Myers, second tenor; Daniel Massenburg, lead and first tenor; and Harry Leak, lead and second tenor. Harry Leak frequently tells audiences, "The only instruments we have are the ones God gave us." But what glorious instruments they are!

Visit www.folksociety.org to sample gospel singing, **Jubilator** style. To learn more about **The Gospel Jubilators**, visit www.mountainx.com/ae/2004/0428merlefest.php

"The Art of Craft" May 12th At Historic Rosedale Plantation

Historic Rosedale Plantation, 3427 North Tryon Street, will host their second annual 1830s arts fair on Saturday, May 12, from 10 AM to 4 PM. "The Art of Craft" will include the best of North Carolina pottery, sweetgrass baskets, jewelry, fiber art, hot blown glass, demonstrations, a silent auction, music, and a storyteller. Crafts, pony rides, and other activities will delight children. Food will be available to purchase.

Whether contemporary or traditional, the pottery will come from some of the finest artisans in the state: Beckett Pottery, Bulldog Pottery, Leftwich Folk and Art Pottery, Whynot Pottery, New Salem Pottery, Johnston and Gentithes Art Pottery, Hat Thompson, Matt Jones, Crystal King, Donna Craven, Daniel Johnston, and Phil Morgan. The fair will also feature work by sweetgrass basket weaver Kisha Rawlinson, printmaker Jay Pfeil, JLK Jewelry, and King Street Heat Hot Blown Glass.

General admission tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children and students ages five to eighteen. Children four years and younger are free. Family passes are available for \$25. A preview breakfast for patrons with early access to the show will take place from 9 AM to 10 AM; tickets are \$75 per person. Gates open for general admission at 10 AM and the fair continues until 4 PM, rain or shine. To buy tickets and for details, visit www.historicrosedale.org or call 704-335-0384.



Claymatters Spring Pottery Sale May 12th

On Saturday, May 12, 2007, Carolina Claymatters Pottery Guild will host their annual Spring Barn Sale. More than 45 skilled clay artists will present their work, ranging from functional to whimsical items for the home and garden. All colors, shapes, sizes, and styles will be on hand. Pots for any and every occasion. Items for the more serious collector will be on display and for sale, as well.

The sale will be held in the historic McAlpine Barn at McAlpine Business Park, 8300 Monroe Road, in Charlotte. The event is free and open to the public from 10 AM to 4 PM.

Carolina Claymatters is a non-profit organization of regional clay artists which provides a forum for the exchange of creative ideas and information between artisans, as well as the local community. Visit www.carolinaclaymatters.org.

Member Ads

Fiddle Lessons: Bluegrass & Old Time; \$35/hour or \$20/half-hour. **Contact Mike Hartgrove at 704-322-1404 or cemhgrove@yahoo.com.**

Painting, Wallpaper, and Interior Renovation by Salem Enterprises, Inc. Call Lee Howard for a free estimate; 704-763-0809 or 704-573-0864.

Wanted: old steel anvil for blacksmithing. Call Marilyn Price at 803-548-5671; email marijim-price@comporium.net.