

Thespian Hall Concert to Premier New Gospel Album by Barton and Para

Cathy Barton and Dave Para announce the release of their 12th album, “Sabbath Home,” a collection of some of their favorite gospel songs. A special, one-time concert featuring this music will be presented Oct. 13, 7:30 p.m. at Thespian Hall in the couple’s hometown of Boonville, Mo. The concert will also feature all the guest musicians who appear on the album.

The duo has been singing gospel songs in workshops, concerts and churches for many years. Drawn to the power of emotion in the poetry and the definitive melodies and harmonies, Cathy and Dave have included them in their repertoire since they began singing together traditional and contemporary folk music some 30 years ago. Traditional camp meeting songs were a part of their first album, “Movin’ on Down the River,” in 1979, and have become a trademark of their repertoire, especially when sung a cappella. After recording a number of themed albums –Christmas music, Missouri Civil War music, river songs, and the Lewis and Clark Expedition – some fans inquired about a gospel theme. One of those was Cathy’s father, Claude Barton, who turned 90 this year.

Dave and Cathy always have enjoyed working in the studio with fine musicians whose added creativity make a recording more organic. For the upcoming October concert, they’re fortunate for all of the guest musicians being able to participate, not only for many of the songs on the recording, but also performances of their own choice.

David Wilson contributes to the album his fiddle, cello and mandolin playing. Dave has been a mainstay of the acoustic music scene in Springfield, Mo., since playing with the Undergrass Boys, Radio Flyer and the Gallier Brothers. His technique, clear tone and intuitive playing are widely prized in recording sessions, including three of Cathy and Dave’s earlier albums. Recording engineer Pete Szkolka, who added some keyboard work to the project, is well known to Columbia music fans for his blues, jazz and rock playing with bands like Chump Change, the Kansas City Street Band and Del Alma. Pete contacted his colleague Kevin Hennessy to bring his bass expertise to the album. A member of a renowned Columbia musical family, Kevin spent years in California as a top-flight session player. Dave and Cathy asked old friends Bob and Melissa Atchison, now of Manhattan, Kan., to help them with the classic quartet, “On the Jericho Road,” and they look forward to some of their old-time music at the October concert. The four sometimes play under the band name Squirrel Heads and Gravy. Knox McCrory is also a long-time friend from Columbia, whose harmonica has been featured on Dave and Cathy’s albums and in local concerts. He and singer Tempe McGlaughlin are favorite guests at the duo’s annual Christmas folk concert in Tempe’s hometown of Arrow Rock. And while a Sabbath home is frequently a Sunday morning gospel sing at a festival, when Dave and Cathy are home it is First Christian Church, where they have sung with the Chancel Choir since 1988. Director Janice Bradshaw, is one of Boonville’s best musicians and widely respected state and nationwide for her many years of school choir conducting. Members of the choir helped on a couple of choruses on the album and also performed the Sacred Harp song, “Africa.”

Dave and Cathy look forward to this singular opportunity to assemble for the first time these musicians from different places for a one-time concert. Like the recording session, it will be interesting to see what they all come up with.

For concert information, call Dave or Cathy at 660-882-7821, or the Friends of Historic Boonville, 660-882-7977. On the web: www.bartonpara.com