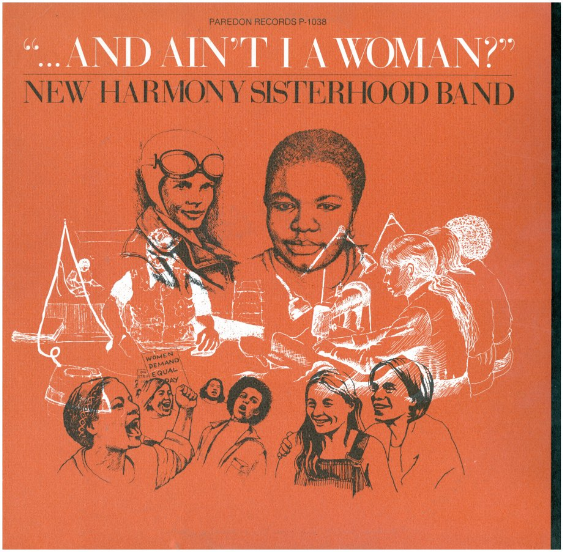
Back to April 2012 Show

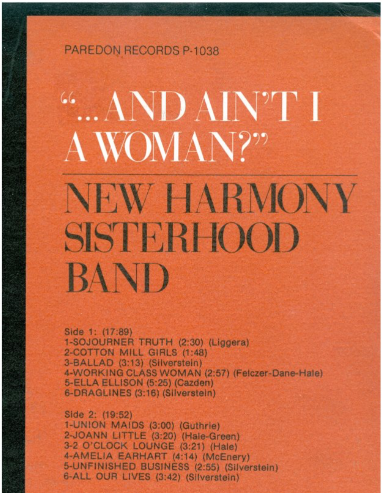
New Harmony Sisterhood Band
LP & Etc



PAREDON RECORDS P-1038

"... AND AIN'T I A WOMAN?"

NEW HARMONY SISTERHOOD BAND



PAREDON RECORDS P-1038

"... AND AIN'T I
A WOMAN?"

NEW HARMONY
SISTERHOOD
BAND

Side 1: (17:89)
1-SOJOURNER TRUTH (2:30) (Liggera)
2-COTTON MILL GIRLS (1:48)
3-BALLAD (3:13) (Silverstein)
4-WORKING CLASS WOMAN (2:57) (Felczer-Dane-Hale)
5-ELLA ELLISON (5:25) (Cazden)
6-DRAGLINES (3:16) (Silverstein)

Side 2: (19:52)
1-UNION MAIDS (3:00) (Guthrie)
2-JOANN LITTLE (3:20) (Hale-Green)
3-2 O'CLOCK LOUNGE (3:21) (Hale)
4-AMELIA EARHART (4:14) (McEnery)
5-UNFINISHED BUSINESS (2:55) (Silverstein)
6-ALL OUR LIVES (3:42) (Silverstein)

Production: New Harmony Sisterhood and Tim Patterson
Executive Studio Production, Engineering and Mixing: Peter Triolsi
Mixing Assistance: Katie Tolles, Pat Ouellette and Tim Patterson
Studio Help: Judy Gelfand and Dusty Miller
Recorded at Mixing Labs, Inc. Newton, Mass.
Cover Art: Rachel Burger with Peg Averill (l.center)
Back Cover Photo: Emily O'Brien

Kendall Hale **Deborah Silverstein**
Katie Tolles **Marcia Delhi** **Pat Ouellette**

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P-1038

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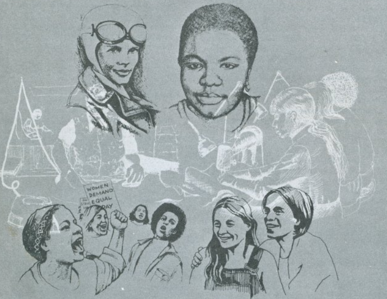
"...AND AIN'T I A WOMAN?"

NEW HARMONY SISTERHOOD BAND



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THE NEW HARMONY SISTERHOOD BAND

BEGINNINGS

The New Harmony Sisterhood Band had its beginnings in a feminist studies course on women and music at Goddard-Cambridge Graduate School for Social Change in 1973-74. Four of the original members of the group participated in this course: Lannie Liggera as teacher, Marcia as full-time student, and Katie and Deborah as auditors. Kendall was in another course at the same school. At first we had no idea of being a "band". We were attracted to the course and to playing and singing together because we had all been involved in music in one way or another before, and had experienced the conflicts of being in such a male-dominated culture. Together we hoped to find a way to express our own growing feminist consciousness and to portray to others the world as we saw it.

We began to search for songs that would counteract the negative stereotypes of women which had permeated our lives. Among the first songs we found were those of the folk duo Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard, as well as traditional folk songs like "Beware O Take Care" and "Cotton Mill Girls", that told of the "battle of the sexes" and of women as workers. We also sang original songs written by Lannie and later by Deborah and Kendall. Our own preferences and some good instincts led us to choose material from the folk idiom and to write songs in this kind of simple style. Not only was the folk genre easily accessible to others, it built on a tradition of protest music and of songs of oppressed people who had never had access to the prevalent mass media. To those protesting voices of the past, we hoped to add that of women in building a new "women's music."

At first, we played only for our friends, but their enthusiasm encouraged us to go further and, at some point, to see ourselves as a band. The New Harmony Sisterhood became our name — both as a tribute to the strong women of the 19th century utopian community of New Harmony, Indiana and as a musical complement to the concept of "new words":

> *Women are hearing each other and ourselves for the first time, and out of this supportive hearing emerges New Words.*
>
> *—Mary Daly*

This name doesn't always conjure up the right image; some people wonder if we're a gospel group! We began to play for women's movement events — marches, benefits, celebrations — and at colleges and coffeehouses. We also played for some non-feminist audiences where we were met with a range of reactions — bewilderment, anger, guilt, amazement, but on most occasions, excitement and appreciation from women who had never before seen women musicians as anything other than sexually defined beings.

CHANGES

Over the three years the group has been together, it has changed and developed. Pat, who had been a member of the original New Haven Women's Liberation Rock Band, joined the group in 1975 to add the much-needed bass. Lannie left due to conflict around the group's musical and political direction. We have also been affected by the growing "women's culture" around us. When we started playing, there was relatively little women's music. Now, there are many feminist and woman-identified records, concerts, festivals, even record companies. We have been nourished by this growth and have had much more material to choose from as a result. (Although they are not on this record since they have already been recorded, we sing Meg Christian's "Ode to a Gym Teacher", "The Bloods" by Deborah Lempke of the Berkeley Women's Music Collective, and Holly Near's "Old Time Woman", to name a few).

We all brought to the band experience in and commitment to other political movements. We have played for a variety of political events, including benefits for Wounded Knee, South African Liberation, and Puerto Rican women. Many of our songs already spoke to the experiences that these oppressed groups could identify with (such as "Sojourner Truth" and "Working Class Woman"), but we have also expanded our repertoire to include songs about the problems of other oppressed groups and the causes and potential solutions to these problems.

PROCESS

Our process as a collective has evolved over the three years in order to make it possible for a diverse group of women to work well together. This process has involved discussion, criticism, and change on personal, political, and musical issues. And believe us, it hasn't been easy! But we have come a long way — we've developed such things as monthly talk sessions and elaborate ways of making priorities for new material. We've also had to work on a collective approach to our audience, since we have no leader or emcee. Sometimes the group process has acted to suppress some of the creativity in each of us, but when we are working well together, it is very inspiring and brings out the best in us.

GOALS

One factor in our development as a group has been our choice to remain "non-professional." This is to say that we all make our living elsewhere, have usually had full-time jobs or been full-time students, and have continued our other political and personal activities. This is a positive political choice which leaves us freer to choose where and what to play. We also hope that it makes us and our music more accessible to our audiences. However, it has been a frustration at times and a limitation on our musical growth.

We have not seen ourselves primarily as entertainers. We see ourselves rather as bearers of "new words" and "new harmony." Through our songs we want to get beyond the stereotyped images of women and beyond the commercialized version of life that most of our culture now portrays. Our culture is largely controlled by those with the upper hand in our economic, social, and political system and it works to reinforce and preserve the values and position of the white, male, upper and middle classes. We see ourselves as contributing to the process of challenging and changing this entrenched system and its media by being active cultural workers.

We sing of the hard realities of most working women's lives. We sing about women who love other women and women who live their own chosen lifestyle. We sing about strong women who are models for us as activists, adventurers, and liberation fighters. We sing about the women who are the most oppressed and who rise up in spite of many obstacles. We sing of our own fears and fantasies. We hope that people who listen to this record will enjoy, learn from, and identify with these songs and will make more music that will contribute to creating a new culture for women and struggling people everywhere.

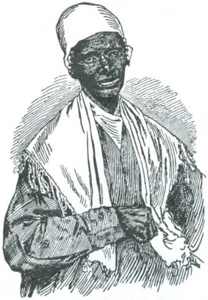
Emily O'Brien

SIDE 1 BAND 1

SOJOURNER TRUTH

Music and Adaptation of Lyrics by Lanayre Liggera.
Copyright ©1973 by Lanayre Liggera.

Sojourner Truth was an American abolitionist and suffragist who lived and worked in the nineteenth century. Born into slavery, she was freed by her second owner and went on to become one of the country's leaders in the fight for freedom for the oppressed.



SOJOURNER TRUTH

The "Ain't I a Woman" speech from which this lyric is adapted, was delivered by Sojourner Truth at a suffrage convention in Akron, Ohio in 1851. Its message remains meaningful to the present day and seemed particularly apropos for the title of this album.

Lanayre Liggera is a musician songwrighter from Arlington, Mass. who has been writing for many years. She was a motivating force and an original member of the New Harmony Sisterhood Band when she taught a course on Women and Music at Goddard-Cambridge School for Social Change in 1974. She has since become a member of a jug band and continues to play music in this area.

Pat: bass
Kendall: vocal, fiddle
Marcia: vocal, mandolin
Katie: vocal, guitar
Deborah: vocal, guitar

1.

```
  A                      C       A
A man in the back row stood up and he said
                                   G
"Women are the frail sex; we're always          A
                                       busy helping them
                        C          A
In and out of carriages up and over ditches

Now they want their suffrage, well   G           D  A
                                they're better home instead."
```

2.

```
 A                             C        A
Then Sojourner Truth rose up from her seat
                                      G          A
"The man in the back row says I can't get on a carriage.
                                   C           A
Well no man ever helped me to get onto no carriage.
                                        G
When I plowed and planted there was no                  D A
                                          man had me beat.
      C  D  A
And ain't I a woman?"
```

3.

Look at my arm, I can work as much as you,
And eat as much if I had food and bear the lash as well,
No man did better, I have born thirteen children,
And saw them sold to slavery and cried as mothers do,
And ain't I a woman?

4.

"No man came to help me, only Jesus heard me,
As I gathered into barns, no man eased my burden.
When I cried in grief no man brought me back my children,
Stand up again, mister, and take a look at me!
And ain't I a woman,
Ain't I a woman." (Chorus twice and tag)

SIDE 1 BAND 2

COTTON MILL GIRLS

Traditional song

Most traditional folk songs portray women only as pretty girls, mothers, and lovers. *Cotton Mill Girls* portrays an image of women seldom found in music — that of worker, and exploited worker at that. The cotton industry grew in the 1920s in the South, when poor farm folk were urged to come from the mountains to seek their fortunes in the mills. After putting up with "14¢ of measly pay" for too many years, the cotton mill girls joined others in "turning out" or striking in the late 1920s. This effort grew in the 30s and produced a number of songs in the same vein as this one (see *Working Women's Songs*, by Evelyn Alloy, New England Free Press, 1976).

Kendall: vocal, fiddle
Deborah: vocal, guitar
Katie: fiddle
Marcia: mandolin
Pat: bass

1.
A D
Worked in a cotton mill all my life,
A E
Ain't got nothing but a Barlow knife, it's
A D
Hard times, cotton mill girls,
A E A
Hard times everywhere.

CHORUS
A D
Hard times, cotton mill girls,
A E
Hard times, cotton mill girls,
A D
Hard times, cotton mill girls,
A E A
Hard times everywhere.

2.
In 1915 we heard it said,
"Move to cotton country and get ahead," it's
Hard times, cotton mill girls,
Hard times everywhere.
CHORUS

3.
Us cotton mill girls work hard all day
For fourteen cents of measly pay, it's
Hard times, cotton mill girs,
Hard times everywhere.
CHORUS

4.
Oh, when I die, don't bury me at all,
Just hang me up on the spinning room wall,
Pickle my bones in alcohol, it's
Hard times everywhere.
CHORUS

SIDE 1 BAND 3

BALLAD

Words and Music by Deborah Silverstein Copyright © 1974 by Deborah Silverstein

When I was much younger, I had a best friend and I dreamed of settling down and living with her all my life. But we were both women and we assumed that when we "grew up", this friendship would be put aside — that love and marriage would take its place. Years later the support of the women's movement and the gay rights movement has enabled me to acknowledge this relationship for what it really was and is.

Deborah: vocal, guitar
Marcia: mandolin, recorder
Kendall: fiddle
Pat: bass
Katie: guitar

1.
A G D A
What's going on, it lasts so long,
A G F#m G
Year after year and the feeling's still strong.
A G A G
We became friends when we were so young,
A F#m G A G A
Seems we'll be friends our whole lives long.

2.
I was so shy, you seemed so brave,
Free to explore life, you showed me the way.
I counted on you, you seldom betrayed,
We grew in our friendship, our sorrows and play.

3.
Boys were mysterious creatures to please,
Mostly wrapped in fears and confusion for me—
The romance and myth and fantasy—
But I did not fear friendship and ours grew with ease.

4.
Then you met a man, our world shifted around,
History bound our priorities now.
My loss and my sorrow I could not define,
Seemed it was time to leave childhood behind.

5.
The anger and pain, it drove me away,
I could not comprehend what I could not name,
You followed your man, how could I complain,
What right did I have to demand the same?

6.
Slowly we've come to realize
The love that's threaded between our lives,
That loving's as real with women as men,
Soothed by time and changes, our friendship will mend.

7.
What's going on, it lasts so long,
Year after year and the feeling's still strong,
We became friends when we were so young,
Seems we'll be friends our whole lives long.

Two of the women in the band, Deborah and Marcia, along with Joyce Cheney from Vermont, put together a comprehensive collection of traditional and contemporary songs called *All Our Lives* which was published in the Spring of 1976 by Diana Press (4400 Market, Oakland, Calif. 94608).

SIDE 1 BAND 4

WORKING CLASS WOMAN

Words by Barbara Dane, adapted from original lyrics by Jane Felczer and Peter Boyd. Copyright © 1973 by Paredon Records. Music by Kendall Hale.

It is hard for all working people to survive, but it is far more difficult for working women. The government and corrupt trade unions perpetuate a system that traps women not only in the home doing unpaid labor, but also at jobs working in the most subordinate, boring, and low-paying positions. Because women are crowded into a restricted number of occupations, competition is higher and wages lower than in men's jobs. Women workers now earn only 56 percent of what men earn and the gap is widening. One result of this situation is that even though women work, they remain partially dependent on their husbands in order to survive.

Jane Felczer wrote the original words for this song, based on the struggles she was experiencing in her own life. Later Barbara Dane changed the words to ex-

2.
And in time there were babies, had to make us a home,
Joe was working two jobs I was always alone
And I needed some time and just a little control
Just to keep my right mind, just to try to stay whole.

CHORUS:
C D
I wanted a partner to be his friend not just his wife,
C D A
I work hard for my children, but they're my love, not my life.
D A G D
I've always been told it was our lot to endure
A
But I know it's not right
G D
I deserve something more.

3.
Got a job in a factory, and it's rough in this world
My kids are in high school, and the boss calls me girl.
But the woman beside me, as we sweat out the line
Say's, "Tomorrow is payday, and the next day is mine!"

4.
It's a race for the strong, 'cause it'll grind up the meek
When your money runs short, at the end of the week.
And your car needs a tire, and your kids need some shoes.
For a working class woman, that's an old kind of blues.

CHORUS 2

Oh this system buys hands but you must not use your head
It will shake you and break you till all your senses are dead
I've always been told it was our lot to endure
But I know it's not right we deserve something more.

press the perspective of a woman who is beginning to view her problems within a developing class consciousness. Still later, Kendall re-wrote the music in a style suitable for our band. We wanted to play this song because it is one of the few songs that expresses our and other women's anger at the treatment we've received at work — on the job and in the home.

Kendall: vocal
Katie: vocal, fiddle
Marcia: mandolin
Deborah: guitar
Pat: bass

1.
D A G D
Joe workingman's wife, that's how I was defined,
A D A
as if that was my life, my hope and my mind.
D A G D
But I worked in a bake shop, did the housework at night.
A G D
There was no time to stop for a young bird in flight.

5.
Oh I know there are answers, got to get to the source
I think me and this system better get a divorce
I can't make enough money
I can't find enough time, but I'm a working class woman
And the future is mine.

6.
Oh there's more where I come from
We've got anger to burn, but we're talking and moving gonna study and learn
Build a unity train on a straight arrow line
If today is the bosses', I know tomorrow is mine.

CHORUS 3

I wanted a partner to be his friend not just his wife
I work hard for my children, but they're my love, not my life
And I know it takes loving and I know it takes time, but I'm a working class woman and the future is mine.

SIDE 1 BAND 5

ELLA ELLISON

Words and Music by Joanna Cazden. Copyright © 1976 by Joanna Cazden.

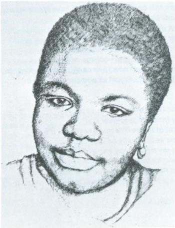
Ella Ellison is a young, black woman, mother of four, who is presently serving a "natural life" sentence in Framingham (Mass.) Women's Prison. She was convicted in November 1974 of murder due to her alleged participation in a robbery in which a Boston policeman was killed. Ella Ellison, like many others, is a victim of a "justice" system which allows the state to plea bargain, offering reduced sentences to people who give testimony to implicate others. Even though the two men of whom this song tells have now recanted their testimony which incriminated Ms. Ellison, the judge has not permitted a retrial. The next step for Ella Ellison (as this booklet goes to press) is an appeal to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. For more information contact:

The Ella Ellison Support Committee
1151 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, Ma. 02138
(617) 491-1575

Joanna Cazden, creator of this song, is a Boston-based singer-songwriter who can be heard on two of her own albums, "The Greatest Illusion of All" and "Hatching".

Kendall: vocal, fiddle
Deborah: vocal, guitar
Katie: vocal, guitar
Marcia: vocal, mandolin
Pat: bass

1.
Am G
It began when two young robbers
Am E7
Got a bargain for their plea:
Am G
If they would only name an accomplice,
Am F E7
They'd get away with "second degree".
Am G
And the vengeance for a dead policeman
Am E7
On someone was bound to fall,
Am G
But even their tortured description
Am F E7
Doesn't fit this prisoner at all.



Rachel Burger

CHORUS
F Am
"I cannot live without my children," she cried.
F C E7
"It breaks my heart to see them through the bars."
Am Em7 Am Am7 Bm7
The system is cracking, cracking, in desperation hacking,
Fmaj7 E7 Am
And the poor, and the black, and the women wear the scars.

2.
Ella Ellison sat in the courtroom
Her innocence always maintained
While the prosecutor called her a cop-killer
And monkey, and many other names
Her accusers bought years of freedom
With evidence so full of holes
And Ellison found guilty of murder
sentenced for life, with no parole

3.
Now the two young desperados
may have had their reasons for the plan
And the cop who died at that jewelry store
may have been a brave and loyal man
But if for mercy you would argue
If with compassion you would care
Then how about some consideration
for a woman who wasn't even there?

CHORUS

4.
Now this country's s'posed to have ideals for export
And liberty enough to spare
But when I heard about Ella Ellison
For the first time I got really scared
I confess I believed in the protection
of my light hair, my college degree
But now you know I just can't shake the feeling
That they could just as well come after me

5.
And I dream that I deserve it
my innocence forever lost
That of all the little mistakes in my life
This would finally be the cost.
Oh my sisters may know of this disease
Always afraid, always feeling in the wrong
But I'm waking up to see now that the victims
Are just the ones who keep their silence too long!

CHORUS

SIDE 1 BAND 6

DRAGLINES

Words and Music by Deborah Silverstein. Copyright © 1977 by Deborah Silverstein.

I was born and raised in the Alleghenies — part of the Appalachian Mountains in Western Pennsylvania. The beauty of these mountains will be with me all my life. When I was young, I learned about strip mining in school — but it was something foreign and remote since all the coal in my area was deep mined. Now technology provides the means and our (capitalist) economy demands that the coal be mined as quickly and cheaply as possible — regardless of the consequences. In strip mining, the giant cranes, or draglines, simply slice away the mountains and scoop out the coal. Tension has developed between the folks who have coal and choose to have their land mined and the other inhabitants of their communities who struggle to defend the land against destruction. Since jobs are scarce, the people who live on this land often have no choice but to sell their mineral rights — even if it means total destruction of their property.

Deborah: vocal
Kendall: vocal
Katie: vocal
Marcia: fiddle

CHORUS
G C G C
Draglines at my heart, they're tearing us apart
G C D
And the mountainside where we were born,
C D G C
Must I weep and mourn, for the land,
G C
It took ten million years to form,
G C D
Now all my eyes can see are just the bleeding scars
C D G F G
Across the mountainside — across the mountainside.

1.
G C D C D G
Coalport, P-a., just a little town, tucked too far away
C D
For anyone to know.
G C D
But the folks born and raised for six generations
C G F G
Working day by day, trying to keep themselves a home.

CHORUS

2.
Our neighbors down the road,
They farmed 12 acres — worked a heavy load,
Poor as dirt, though they tried,
Till the coal company came through, said "We'll mine your land,
Take the burden off of you, and we'll see that you get by."

CHORUS

3.
First they tore down their home
Where their grandma and all the kids were born,
They just brushed it all aside,
Then came the big machines, ripped up the trees and
Muddied all the streams while the family stood and cried.

FINAL CHORUS:

Draglines at my heart, they're tearing us apart
And the mountainside where we were born,
Oh, take warning that the storm clouds will come
And block out the sun
That's shining on the folks who seek their fortunes off the
Families who have died,
Trying to survive
Across the mountainside.

SIDE 2 BAND 1

UNION MAID

Words by Woodie Guthrie. Copyright © 1947 Storm King Music, Inc.

Woodie Guthrie "borrowed" the traditional tune "Redwing" and in 1947 wrote these words to pay tribute to a woman who was active in the Tenant Farmers' Union in Oklahoma City. Then, as now, unions were the only stable form of organization which working people had to defend themselves against inflation, cutbacks, and rising prices.

The union movement has been in a lull since the 1940s largely due to the McCarthy red-baiting campaign. But it is experiencing a resurgence as times get tougher for working people, and women are playing a leading role in this resurgence. Not only are women now leaders in organized labor struggles such as the Farah Pants strike, but they are also pushing the male-dominated unions to organize service, clerical, and domestic workers, most of whom are women.

We have added two surprises onto our version of this song — one final verse (words by Fanchon Lewis and Rebecca Mills from "Virgo Rising") in answer to the now obviously sexist third verse, and a special "Bolshevik" ending.

Marcia: vocal, mandolin
Katie: fiddle, vocal
Deborah: guitar, vocal
Kendall: fiddle, vocal
Pat: bass

2.
This union maid was wise
To the tricks of company spies,
She wouldn't be fooled
By company stools, she'd
Always organize the guys.
She'd always get her way
When she asked for higher pay,
She'd show her card to the National Guard,
And this is what she'd say.

CHORUS

3.
Now you gals who want to be free,
Just take a tip from me,
Find you a man who's a union man,
And join the Ladies Auxiliary,
Married life ain't hard
When you've got a union card,
Oh a union man leads a happy life
When he's got a union wife.

CHORUS

4.
We modern union maids
Are also not afraid
To walk the line, leave jobs behind,
And we're not just the Ladies Aid!
We fight for equal pay,
And we will have our say,
We're workers, too, the same as you,
And fight the union way.

CHORUS

1.
A
There once was a union maid,
D A
Who never was afraid,
E
Of the goons and the ginks and the
A
Company finks and the
B7 E
Deputy sheriffs who made the raids, she
A
Went to the union hall,
D A
When a meeting it was called,
E A
And when those company boys came round,
B7 E A
She always stood her ground.

CHORUS
D A
Oh, you can't scare me, I'm sticking to the union,
E A
I'm sticking to the union, I'm sticking to the union,
D A
Oh, you can't scare me, I'm sticking to the union,
E A
I'm sticking to the union, till the day I die.

SIDE 2 BAND 2

BALLAD OF JOAN LITTLE

Words by Kendall Hale. Music by Kendall Hale and David Green. Copyright © 1975 by Hale and Green.

Within the last couple of years, nationwide attention has been focused on the trials of three women who did something unusual — they protested abuse by men who held sexual power over them. Inez Garcia's case involved the killing of the accomplice in her own rape. Yvonne Wanrow, a native American woman shot a man who was sexually molesting her child. Joan Little, a black woman from North Carolina, was charged with murder in the slaying of her jailer. The chances for a young black woman to get a fair trial in a town where the jailer's family owned most of the property would have been pretty slim had not people all over the country been outraged and prompted to organize and raise defense money. We were inspired by the courage Joan Little showed by standing up and fighting back against a racist, sexist society. We also realize that Joan Little's situation was certainly not an exception to the rule. She is one of thousands of black people whom we must support and defend as they fight racism every day of their lives — in jail, on the job, and in neighborhoods and schools.

Kendall: vocal
Katie: vocal, guitar
Pat: bass
Deborah: vocal, guitar
Marcia: fiddle

1.
D A
One night in a prison cell
G A7
A black woman used an ice pick to kill
D Am C
A jailer who tried to rape her
D
Tried to rape her.

Joan Little met her fate
She was charged by the racist state
With murder, the first degree murder of Clarence Alligood.

CHORUS 1
D A
No one has the right
C D
To rape and terrorize
A G D A7
Black women, any women, black women. (repeat)

2.
The prosecutor tried hard to put white male
prison guards
Above the law, outside the law
Above the law.
A former member of the Klan, he works with
Police and businessman
maintaining order, and power
The ruler's law

CHORUS 2

Joan, by defending her dignity
Helps us put an end to white and
male supremacy. (repeat)

3.
They hid from the grand jury
That she fought violently before she
struck him down, struck him down
Struck him down.
Not just courtroom legality, it was the
Power of the people that freed
Joan Little, Joan Little
Joan Little.

CHORUS 1

Marcia Deihl

We'd like to thank—
Our faithful soundwomen over the years: Judy Gelfand, Laura Armstrong, Nancy Scovern, Irene Handschuh, and Tia Cross
Tim Patterson for production assistance and shuttle diplomacy on the record
Judy Gelfand and Dusty Miller for studio assistance and support
Our friends, roommates, families, lovers, and the Boston Women's Movement for making this all possible.

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SIDE 2 BAND 3

TWO O'CLOCK LOUNGE

Words and Music by Kendall Hale. Copyright © 1977 Kendall Hale.

3.
Lights out it was creepy inside
There was nobody within sight
It made me want to run away
I was scared and very uptight

The combat zone got its name in the 1950s when Boston was a major naval port and shore patrolmen (military police) walked the streets, busting the heads of sailors. Located in downtown Boston, the "zone" is now two or three blocks of glittering lights and pictures of naked "go-go" girls and strippers. Rather than cleaning up "sin and violence", our forefathers decided to accomodate and contain it, so they designed the city accordingly. This model was later adopted by other cities in the United States. The Two O'Clock Lounge is one of the "classiest" strip pits and this song is about an experience I had when I tried to get a job there.

In a recent book about the Combat Zone, *A Kind of Life* by Rosewell Angier, one of the women dancers had this to say about her job:

> "It can really get you down. Men just think of you as an object, and you really have to realize that most of the men in places like this, that's all they're interested in, is an object. Not a human being. And it bothers you a lot. Because I feel like I've got so much more to offer."

Kendall: vocal, tambourine
Deborah: vocal, claves
Marcia: vocal, mandolin
Pat: bass
Katie: guitar

CHORUS

D C
Can you dance baby, baby, sweet baby

D
Can you dance?

1. D C
Went on down to the Two O'Clock Lounge

D C D
I just walked off the street

C
All day long been lookin for work

Bb A D
I was tired and beat.

2.
I knew it was a decadent scene
But my bank account was low
It took an hour to walk through the door
But I had to give it a go.

CHORUS

4.
Les came out from behind the bar
He said who are you honey?
If you can shake and dance
We'll have you makin big money.

5.
Do you have bottoms and tops
With a see through negligee
Dressed in a sexy costume like that
You'll be mighty fine prey.

CHORUS

6.
Turn you in to a real show girl
We'll teach you how to socialize
Take those lonely men by the hand
Give them a good time.

7.
Shave the hair on your arms and legs
You have to look pretty and soft
At least you won't have to lose weight
Before all your clothes come off.

CHORUS

8.
Sent me running all over town
Just to get the seductive look
Said charge it to our account
The Two O'Clock needs a good hook.

9.
Came back from wild goosechasing
Just in time to hear them say
We want you thirteen hours straight
For the first seven days.

CHORUS

10.
Downtown in the combat zone
They pay to watch you shimmy and shake
While Les counts the money behind the bar
Just another boss on the take.

11.
After puttin you skin on show
Feel like you've lost your will
But the mind in this body someday will be a dagger
And this ugly game will kill

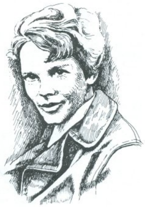
CHORUS

SIDE 2 BAND 4

AMELIA EARHART'S LAST FLIGHT

Words and Music by Dave McEnery. Copyright © Stasny Music Corp.

As women in search of inspiring role models, we have re-claimed this song from its hillbilly barroom context. We sing it to commemorate a woman who showed both spunk and committment to the feminist cause. When asked why she attempted the flight of 1937, she said, 1) "Because I want to," and 2) because "women should do for themselves what men have already done... thereby establishing themselves as persons, and perhaps encouraging other women toward greater independence of thought and action." Recently numerous books and articles have begun to explore the woman behind the sensational story. We enjoy the tongue-in-cheek lightness of the song but are proud of the woman it portrays.



Rachel Burger

Katie: vocal, guitar
Marcia: mandolin, vocal

Deborah: guitar, vocal
Kendall: fiddle, vocal
Pat: bass

1.
G C
There's a ship out on the ocean, just a speck against the sky,
D G
Amelia Earhart flying that sad day,
C
With her partner, Captain Noonan, on the second of July
D G
Her plane fell in the ocean far away.

CHORUS
D G
There's a beautiful, beautiful field,
D
Far away in a land that is fair,
G C
Happy landings to you, Amelia Earhart,
D G
Farewell, first lady of the air.

2.
Well she radioed position and she said that all was well,
Although the fuel within her tanks was low,
But they'd stop on Howland Island to refuel her monoplane,
And on their trip around the world they'd go.

CHORUS

3.
Well, half an hour later, the S.O.S. was heard,
The signal weak, but still her voice was brave,
Over shark infested waters, her plane went down that night,
In the blue Pacific, to a watery grave.

CHORUS

4.
Now you've heard my story of that awful tragedy,
We pray that she may fly home safe again.
In years to come, though others blaze a trail across the sea,
We'll ne'er forget Amelia and her plane.

CHORUS

———

SIDE 2 BAND 5

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Words and Music by Deborah Silverstein. Copyright © 1974 by I. M. Reluctant.

The message of "Unfinished Business" is about as straightforward as it can be. The fact that the song exists, that I was able to write it, is due in large part to the continuous efforts of those who have fought for the rights and liberation of gay people. This process, however, has only begun. The fear of "coming out" to our families, friends, employers, co-workers, even our sisters and brothers in other political struggles is all too often a potent and oppressive force. We look forward to the day when freedom of sexual preference is accepted as a basic human right.

Deborah: vocal, guitar, tambourine
Pat: bass
Kendall: fiddle
Marcia: mandolin
Katie: guitar

CHORUS
E
I've got some unfinished business, well I just want to say.
B7
Some unfinished business to take care of today.
E
Well, I know what's on my mind and I
A
Think that it's time to tend the
D E
Unfinished business that we left behind.

1.
E
Well they say that it's unnatural,
They try to make you scared to be a
B7
Homosexual with feelings to share
E A
With a good friend who it's plain to see is
D E
Of the same sex that you happen to be.

2.
Oh, it's so easy to run, it's so easy to hide,
It's so easy to find the ways to not find the time
To dig my head out of the sand and look for the words
To answer the ones who say "You're out of your mind!"
CHORUS

3.
I've got a feeling in my fingers like the
One in my heart, I want to
Reach out and hold you but I can't seem to start,
'Cause my fears of sexuality just
Get in the way, I'm
Paying for my fears and the
Price I gotta pay is some
CHORUS

Women on Paredon Records

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P-1028 GIVE YOUR HANDS TO STRUGGLE: The Evolution of a Freedom Singer. Bernice Reagon, a founder of the Freedom Singers of SNCC (StudentNonviolent Coordinating Committee), sings all four voices of this "female vocal quartet," and has composed nearly all of the songs. Included are "Joann Little," "Had, Took and Misled" (taken from a speech of Malcolm X), "There's a New World Coming" (written on the day of the Vietnamese victory) and others which will become people's classics for future struggles. Her first record after a break of several years.
1-12" LP $5.00

P-1032 ALGO SE QUEMA ALLA AFUERA (Something Is Burning Out There.) Estrella Artau sings of Puerto Rico, but also of other oppressed peoples in the Caribbean and Latin America. Her texts are taken from the Cuban poet Nicolas Guillen, Dominican poet Pedro Mir, Argentine poet Atahualpa Yupanqui, and Puerto Rican poet Noel Hernandez, but most of them are her own. Includes songs dedicated to martyred Chilean poet Victor Jara, Puerto Rican political prisoner Lolita Lebron, and a recently martyred Dominican woman, Mama Tingo. Booklet includes complete Spanish texts of songs with English translations.
1-12" LP $5.00

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Emily O'Brien

SIDE 2 BAND 6

ALL OUR LIVES

Words and Music by Deborah Silverstein. Copyright © 1974 by Deborah Silverstein.

"All Our Lives" was the first song I wrote as part of the band. It came in response to a conversation I had with a man after one of our early concerts. He told me he supported the womens' movement and he liked our music, but he was critical of the fact that we chose not to include any traditional love songs in our repertoire. He argued that we were representing a limited range of ideas and emotions and that consequently we were doing propaganda, not art. What he failed to realize is that all culture expresses certain points of view and their accompanying values. When cultural expressions reflect the standard norms of the society, they are comfortably accepted as art. When culture puts forth ideas that contradict our social norms, we have been taught to think that this is propaganda rather than art expressing a new point of view.

Deborah: vocal, guitar
Katie: vocal, guitar
Pat: bass
Marcia: mandolin
Kendall: fiddle

1.
A D A D
The men listen and then say, "I'm sympathetic, babe,
A E
I know what you women have been through

All your lives,
A D A
But I'm not the one to blame, I didn't write the rules
D
To this lousy game,
A E A
But you sing nothing for us men already on your side."

CHORUS

A D
Well, you want to see some sweetness, not just
A
Streams of angry words,
A D E
You really dig the music but the message is too tough,
A D A
It seems like we've forgotten about happiness and love,
E
You think we've said what we have to say, but
A
Enough's enough.

2.
Well, I understand their point, they don't think we should exploit
The first chance we've ever had to fight back
All our lives,
We're told to soften our approach, let some tender feelings show,
And give our sympathizers equal time.

CHORUS

3.
Well I've only this to say, I look forward to the day
When women won't have to fight for an equal chance
All their lives,
And the purpose of our songs is to move this fight along,
Until there's room for more than just a struggle to survive.

FINAL CHORUS:

Well you want to see some sweetness, not just
Streams of angry words,
You really dig the music but the message is too tough,
It's not that we've forgotten about happiness and love
But until the times have changed, it's not enough.

About the Members of the Band

Marcia Delhl

My first career goal occurred to me in high school — I wanted to be an English teacher. My second career goal occurred to me in college — I wanted to be a beautiful velvet-clad, competent but charming harpsichord player. My third career goal occurred two years later — I wanted to be a revolutionary. The clashing of these last two wishes created a thunder which gave me a couple of years of conflict and pain. But it also led to a solid and positive result: the formation of one of the many groups today which is combining art and radical politics.

It seems that the newsmedia today is delighting in digging up old activists from the late '60's and saying, "See folks, they are renouncing their immature ways for the past for est, yoga, business, etc.", and they would love to think that this is the case with everyone. But unfortunately for them, there are many movements which have matured and strengthened and grown enormously because people who came of age politically in the late 60's have sought to integrate their political ideas and their lives in practical and enduring ways. *People* magazine can just come right over and interview me and I'll tell them that, no, we're not dead, and that more and more people are standing up for their rights of self-definition, and that the coalition of people who no longer accept that *they* are at fault in a dehumanizing system is growing daily. (Of course, they'll just stick my story on the page after an endearing profile of a businessman who just invented a better nuclear-powered mousetrap.)

↓

↑

Pat Ouellette

When I was growing up in a small town in Northern Maine, I spent a great deal of my time drooling over the guitars in the Sears and Roebuck catalogue and listening to the Country and Western songs of Kitty Wells. It wasn't until I was twenty years old that my guitar dream was realized and by that time I had managed to wipe out completely the music of my childhood.

Just a few years later, I found myself totally involved in the Feminist Movement and playing rhythm guitar in the New Haven Women's Liberation Rock Band. The role of bass player soon fell onto my head when one of the band members decided to leave. I spent the next two years learning what it's like to be a woman musician in a male environment (the rock music scene).

When I came to Boston in 1973, I was not prepared to resume my bass-player personality but I quickly gave in to the enticement of making music with other women and the New Harmony Sisterhood Band took me in.

It seems that I have now come full circle to a place where I am rediscovering the music I grew up with and playing that music with other women who are committed to providing a new and supportive culture for all of us who have grown up believing that "the creative arts are not for ladies."

Deborah Silverstein

I was born and raised a Jew and a female in a small town in the mountains of western Pennsylvania. This provided me with an innate though subtle understanding of prejudice and oppression. My infatuation with music, particularly singing, arose out of the fact that I was very shy and found that I could fill in the gaps in conversation with a barely audible song or two. I spent my last two years in college in Ann Arbor, Mi. — from 1968-1970 — and became logically politicized (as opposed to or in addition to my own internal-illogical political consciousness which I've possessed since I was a child.) So when I moved to Boston 4 years ago, with a song in my heart and radical thoughts in my head, I helped form New Harmony and we've been together ever since.

↓

Katie Tolles

My family has always done a lot of singing of hymns, folk songs, and rounds. I was also lucky to have a crazy high school choral director who had us singing everything from Carmina Burana to English madrigals. Singing with my family and friends has always been one of the happiest parts of my life.

→

However, after a year at Oberlin music conservatory, I got out of performing music; what I was doing seemed unrelated to the rest of my life and to the world around me. The band brought together my social and political concerns with music and helped me to believe in my ability to learn and develop as a musician. In the context of a supportive group of women, I learned to play guitar and dug up the remnants of childhood viola lessons which I applied to the fiddle.

Most of the time I've been in the band I've also worked at Vocations for Social Change doing work counseling and putting together the *People's Yellow Pages*, but recently I left to put more time into music.

↑

Kendall Hale

Politics and music have always been my two loves, and my parents were responsible for my initial attraction. Living with people who were active in the civil rights and early anti-war movement greatly influenced and encouraged my political thinking and development. At the same time my parents made sure that I took up a musical instrument, so at age eleven I first began taking classical violin, and later played in the school orchestra. It wasn't until years later, after rejecting most of my classical background, that I taught myself to play by ear.

The major turning point in my life took place in Madison, Wisconsin where I went to school and became an activist in the student and women's movement. Music didn't really come to the forefront again until I moved to Boston and began playing with New Harmony.

The last few years I've worked mostly in factories and in the local, growing trade union movement. Singing and playing music is a supportive and integral part of this effort.

Booklet writing and layout by New Harmony

Typesetting by Zafra Graphics

LITHO IN U.S.A.
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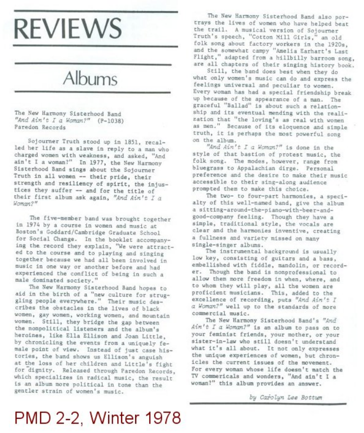


REVIEWS

Albums

The New Harmony Sisterhood Band
"And Ain't I a Woman?" (P-1038)
Paredon Records

Sojourner Truth stood up in 1851, recalled her life as a slave in reply to a man who charged women with weakness, and asked, "And ain't I a woman?" In 1977, the New Harmony Sisterhood Band sings about the Sojourner Truth in all women -- their pride, their strength and resiliency of spirit, the injustices they suffer -- and for the title of their first album ask again, *"And Ain't I a Woman?"*

The five-member band was brought together in 1974 by a course in women and music at Boston's Goddard/Cambridge Graduate School for Social Change. In the booklet accompanying the record they explain, "We were attracted to the course and to playing and singing together because we had all been involved in music in one way or another before and had experienced the conflict of being in such a male dominated society."

The New Harmony Sisterhood Band hopes to aid in the birth of a "new culture for struggling people everywhere." Their music describes the obstacles in the lives of black women, gay women, working women, and mountain women. Still, they bridge the gap between the nonpolitical listeners and the album's heroines, like Ella Ellison and Joan Little, by chronicling the events from a uniquely female point of view. Instead of just case histories, the band shows us Ellison's anguish at the loss of her children and Little's fight for dignity. Released through Paredon Records, which specializes in radical music, the result is an album more political in tone than the gentler strain of women's music.

The New Harmony Sisterhood Band also portrays the lives of women who have helped beat the trail. A musical version of Sojourner Truth's speech, "Cotton Mill Girls," an old folk song about factory workers in the 1920s, and the somewhat campy "Amelia Earhart's Last Flight," adapted from a hillbilly barroom song, are all chapters of their singing history book.

Still, the band does best when they do what only women's music can do and express the feelings universal and peculiar to women. Every woman has had a special friendship break up because of the appearance of a man. The graceful "Ballad" is about such a relationship and its eventual mending with the realization that "the loving's as real with women as men." Because of its eloquence and simple truth, it is perhaps the most powerful song on the album.

"And Ain't I a Woman?" is done in the style of that bastion of protest music, the folk song. The modes, however, range from bluegrass to Appalachian dirge. Personal preference and the desire to make their music accessible to their sing-along audience prompted them to make this choice.

The two- to four-part harmonies, a specialty of this well-named band, give the album a sitting-around-the-piano-with-beer-and-good-company feeling. Though they have a simple, traditional style, the vocals are clear and the harmonies inventive, creating a fullness and variety missed on many single-singer albums.

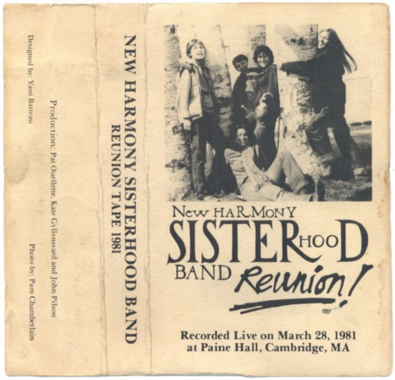
The instrumental background is usually low key, consisting of guitars and a bass, embellished with fiddle, mandolin, or recorder. Though the band is nonprofessional to allow them more freedom in when, where, and to whom they will play, all the women are proficient musicians. This, added to the excellence of recording, puts *"And Ain't I a Woman?"* well up to the standards of more commercial music.

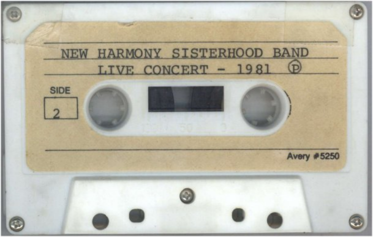
The New Harmony Sisterhood Band's *"And Ain't I a Woman?"* is an album to pass on to your feminist friends, your mother, or your sister-in-law who still doesn't understand what it's all about. It not only expresses the unique experiences of women, but chronicles the current issues of the movement. For every woman whose life doesn't match the TV commericals and wonders, "And ain't I a woman?" this album provides an answer.

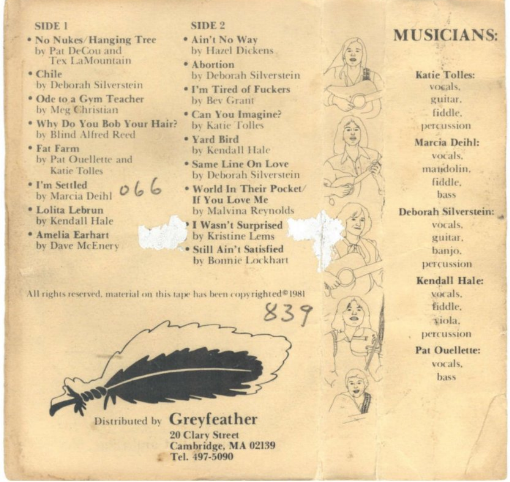
by Carolyn Lee Bottum

PMD 2-2, Winter 1978

1981 Tape


NEW HARMONY SISTERHOOD BAND
REUNION TAPE 1981
Production: Pat Ouellette, Kate Gyllensvard and John Pilson
Designed by: Yani Batteau
Photo by: Pam Chamberlain
New HARMONY
SISTERHOOD
BAND
Reunion!
Recorded Live on March 28, 1981
at Paine Hall, Cambridge, MA





SIDE 1

- **No Nukes/Hanging Tree** by Pat DeCou and Tex LaMountain
- **Chile** by Deborah Silverstein
- **Ode to a Gym Teacher** by Meg Christian
- **Why Do You Bob Your Hair?** by Blind Alfred Reed
- **Fat Farm** by Pat Ouellette and Katie Tolles
- **I'm Settled** by Marcia Deihl
- **Lolita Lebrun** by Kendall Hale
- **Amelia Earhart** by Dave McEnery

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SIDE 2

- **Ain't No Way** by Hazel Dickens
- **Abortion** by Deborah Silverstein
- **I'm Tired of Fuckers** by Bev Grant
- **Can You Imagine?** by Katie Tolles
- **Yard Bird** by Kendall Hale
- **Same Line On Love** by Deborah Silverstein
- **World In Their Pocket/ If You Love Me** by Malvina Reynolds
- **I Wasn't Surprised** by Kristine Lems
- **Still Ain't Satisfied** by Bonnie Lockhart

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MUSICIANS:

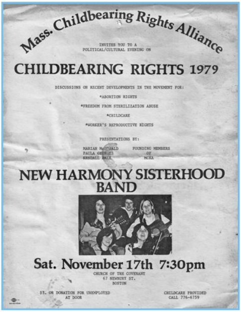
Katie Tolles:
vocals,
guitar,
fiddle,
percussion

Marcia Deihl:
vocals,
mandolin,
fiddle,
bass

Deborah Silverstein:
vocals,
guitar,
banjo,
percussion

Kendall Hale:
vocals,
fiddle,
viola,
percussion

Pat Ouellette:
vocals,
bass



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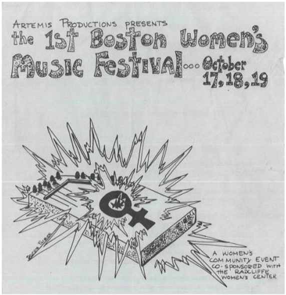

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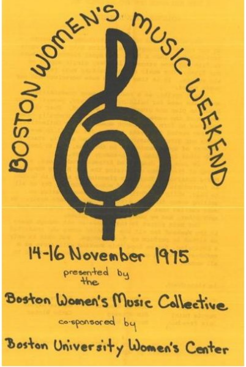

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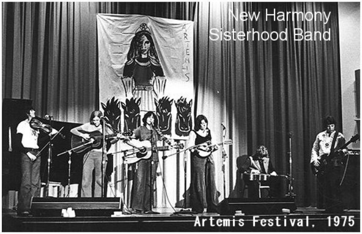

New Harmony
Sisterhood Band

Artemis Festival, 1975

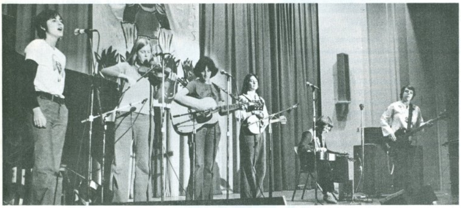

Photo by Marti Scheel, Milwaukee, WI

New Harmony Sisterhood Band: (left to right) Kendall Hale, Katie Tolles, Deborah Silverstein, Marcia Deihl, Lannie Liggera, and Pat Oullette, with the Artemis banner behind them.

New Harmony
Sisterhood Band

(l-r top) Marcia Deihl, Pat Ouellette, Katie Tolles (l-r bottom) Deborah Silverstein, Kendall Hale