



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

.....Karen Turner

My name is Karen Turner, and I have been a member of Silver Strings for 8 years. I have served as our Webmaster since 2004, I was Vice President of Business from 2007-08, and a regular player at all the playdates since 2006. I play the hammered dulcimer, harmonica, tambourine, piano, and am now learning the banjo.

I was born in Detroit into a music filled house. My Dad was a manager of the Jackson Country Club, my Mother was a professional organ and piano player, teacher, and also composed pop music in the 1950's. Three of her original songs got recorded by the Teddy Phillips Orchestra and one even made it to the top charts! On Nov. 5, 2010 Silver Strings honored my Mother by playing "That's My Prayer", a song she had written by playing it for her at Trellis Gardens in Jackson where she now lives.

At the age of 11 I was given my first instrument, a harmonica, by my parents when they noticed I had been writing down my own simple music tunes on paper like my Mother did. (That harmonica was a blessing in disguise and kept our school music teacher from forcing me to sing, which I didn't like at all, and gave me a chance to learn new tunes and ultimately find Silver Strings!) A year later I started lessons on the organ and clarinet from George King who was a really good teacher.

I was quite athletic when I was growing up, and even continued it in my early adult life. I participated in recreational and college varsity sports way before women's teams were officially recognized (basketball, field hockey, swimming, diving, volleyball, and track and field). I was finally awarded my college varsity letter 30 years later from Eastern Michigan University. In the 70's and 80's I regularly competed in long distance running and marathons and even did a couple triathlons. While at Eastern and the University of Michigan I earned degrees in physical education, psychology, and kinesiology and taught physical education and computer science at all levels in Northville from 1968-85. I also coached Girls' Varsity Swimming & Diving and Track & Field at Northville. I left teaching, then worked as a computer teacher and programmer at Electronic Data Systems, and then worked for a motorcycle company as a computer programmer and website designer.

I finally am retired but stay active in many, many music groups. If I'm not practicing or performing, I'm probably on my computer supporting my 5 websites (Silver Strings, Uncle Carl's, Thornapple Valley, Penton Motorcycles, and The Wheelmen - an antique bicycle club). Or I may be in Jackson, enjoying my 80 acres making trails, riding off road motorcycles, or target shooting with my great friend Bill of 23 years. He's the guy who does the video taping of our Silver Strings performances on YouTube. I also like to dress in period clothing and ride antique bikes in parades with The Wheelmen. I have 2 favorite antique bikes - an 1889 Columbia Highwheel and an 1898 Lovell Diamond Safety, and 2 very special family heirlooms that belonged to my Hungarian Grandfather from the early 1900's. My Grandfather worked in a steel mill, and made extra money playing at Hungarian Dances on the cymbolum (the great grandfather of the American hammered dulcimer), his fiddle and a squeezebox accordion. I was very fortunate to inherit his fiddle and accordion, and think of him always when I am playing for contra dances. I enjoy planting and harvesting a backyard vegetable garden each year, and relaxing with Iver Johnson, my 17 year old tuxedo black and white cat who I named after a firearms and bicycle company from the 1900's. I stay happy and busy doing what I love- music and computers. If you need any help in locating other folk groups or JAMS- I'm the lady to ask.

Thanks for letting me share with you.