

CHAPTER HISTORY OF THRESHOLD SINGERS AT GROTON HILL

2026

Chapter Beginnings

The Threshold Singers at Groton Hill trace their beginnings to 2016, when Carol Emmanuel—already familiar with Threshold Choir through her experience singing with a California chapter—brought the vision to the Groton area. Inspired by the gentle service of bedside singing, she laid the foundation for what would become a small but devoted community of voices. Although Carol is no longer active with the chapter, her early leadership created the structure from which the group would grow.

Membership

In its early years, the chapter expanded primarily through local outreach, including a newspaper advertisement that drew in new singers. Over time, the group developed a flexible approach to welcoming members. As a small chapter, they often accepted new singers at various points throughout the year—especially those able to learn independently and integrate smoothly into the ensemble.

Two of the original members remain active today, carrying forward the chapter's earliest traditions. Among the current singers, one member has contributed original songs that the group continues to sing, adding a unique creative thread to their repertoire.

Current Membership and Practice

Today, the Threshold Singers at Groton Hill include 11 members, with 6 singers regularly participating in bedside sings or song baths. The chapter practices twice each month, balancing musical blend with the deep listening and presence that define Threshold Choir service. All members are hospice-trained volunteers, reflecting the chapter's commitment to compassionate, skillful care at the bedside.

Service Through Song

The heart of the chapter's work lies in singing for those at life's thresholds. Their monthly number of bedside sings varies widely—anywhere from 6 to 20, depending on hospice referrals and community needs. During the summer and early fall, the chapter also offers monthly song baths, creating restorative spaces for relaxation and healing.

Their clients come primarily through hospice organizations, and the singers bring their voices to individuals and families navigating the final stages of life. In addition, the chapter sings once a month at a local continuing care community during the warmer months, extending their reach to elders seeking comfort and connection.

Leadership Structure

The chapter operates with a simple, practical leadership model. A single leader/administrator coordinates logistics, completes required reports, and facilitates most rehearsals—though other

members occasionally lead practices as well. The chapter does not maintain formal committees, relying instead on shared responsibility and mutual support.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic marked a significant turning point in the chapter's history. With in-person singing suspended and the founding leader having stepped away shortly before the pandemic, the group experienced a near-complete reset. Most of the current singers joined after COVID, bringing fresh energy and helping rebuild the chapter from the ground up. Despite the disruption, the chapter emerged resilient—re-forming, re-training, and re-committing to the work of singing at bedsides.

Continuing the Legacy

Today, the Threshold Singers at Groton Hill stand as a testament to quiet perseverance and heartfelt service. Even though they are small in members, they have an impact: through gentle harmonies, steady presence, and a commitment to compassionate care, they continue to offer comfort to those at life's threshold and support to the families who accompany them.