

AUTOHARP QUARTERLY

THE • MAGAZINE • DEDICATED • TO • THE • AUTOHARP • ENTHUSIAST

WINFIELD KS. *Sept. 19-22-1991*



IN THIS ISSUE
WHAT IT TAKES TO WIN AT WINFIELD
♦♦♦
IMPROVING THE AUTOHARP
♦♦♦
ELECTRONIC PICKUPS FOR THE AUTOHARP
♦♦♦
COMPREHENSIVE CLUBS LISTING

♦♦♦ ♦♦♦ ♦♦♦ ♦♦♦ **H A P P Y N E W Y E A R !** ♦♦♦ ♦♦♦ ♦♦♦ ♦♦♦

Co-editors:

Mary Lou Orthey
Ivan Stiles

Books Editor,

Recordings Editor:

Mary Ann Johnston

Clubs Editor,

Festivals Editor:

Ubi Adams

Interaction Editor:

Alan Mager

Children's Editor:

Fred Koch

Feature Writers:

James R. Adams, Esq.

Lindsay Haisley

Richard N. Norris, M.D.

Judie Pagter

Pamela Roberts

Contributors:

Bill Bryant

Kathy Ferguson

Dora Miller

Laura Newton

Alex Usher

Photo Credits:

Mark Fackeldey: 37

Rex Flottman

Photography: Cover, 4, 5

Kirsten Herr: 23

George Orthey, III: 7

Joe Riggs: 19

Brian R. Symonds: 8, 39

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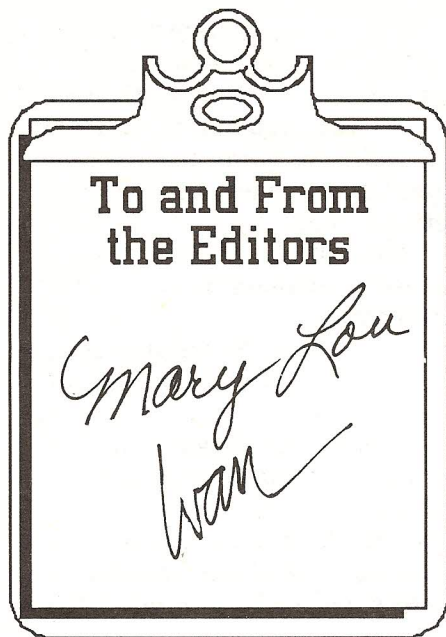
CONTENTS

To and From the Editors	1
What It Takes to Win at Winfield <i>by Fran Stallings</i>	3
<i>Dipper of Stars</i> by Howie Mitchell	6
Improving The Autoharp -- A Panel Discussion -- Part One <i>by Alan Mager</i>	8
Pro-Files	11
<i>David and Bathsheba</i> by Joe Carter	14
How to Play in an Irish Band -- Part Two <i>by Mike Herr</i>	15
AQ Postscripts	17
Cocoahouse <i>by Fred Koch</i>	18
Clubs	20
Recordings Update	22
Winter Festivals	22
Interaction <i>with Mike Herr</i>	23
Electronic Pickups for the Autoharp -- Part One <i>by Lindsay Haisley</i>	26
AQ Songbook: Pages 23, 24	29, 30
Bars . . . Where the Action Is -- Part Two <i>by Dr. George Orthey</i>	31
Sacred 'Harp <i>Uncloudy Day</i>	34
'Harpers-At-Large	36
The Market Place	40
Classifieds	IBC



On the Cover:

1991 International Autoharp Championship Winners:
3rd Place, Alan F. Mager; 1st Place, Ivan Stiles;
2nd Place, Les Gustafson-Zook.



To and From
the Editors

Mary Lou
Wan

DEAR READERS:

What a year 1991 has been! With happy repercussions of the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering still resounding throughout the autoharp community, we made our annual migration to the mecca of contests, Walnut Valley. There, under the late summer Kansas sky and to a standing ovation, Ivan won the 1991 International Autoharp Championship. To double and triple our pleasure, Les Gustafson-Zook, long-time friend and Interaction instructor (*AQ* July 1991) came in second, and our great Interaction editor, Alan Mager, who was there for the first time, won the third place slot! Staunch *AQ* friends, supporters, and contributors, Bob Lewis and Mike Herr (see Mike's articles on pages 13 and 23), rounded out the five finalists. *AQ* -- the magazine of champions!

We're now preparing for the 1992 season and, of course, we're planning the 1992 Gathering.

AQ is now in its fourth year. We continue to encompass the *complete* autoharp community, and thank our growing numbers of readers for appreciating this fact.

DEAR EDITORS:

The October *AQ* was full of great articles, and I loved the centerfold! I especially enjoyed reading about all those times and folks I know and hear about in 'Harpers-At-Large.

Jim Adam's article on copyrights finally answered all my questions -- clearly. We here in Charlotte had learned about ASCAP and BMI through our Latta festival, but now I understand from a performer's view, and what's expected from these organizations when a tape is made. Thanks to Jim.

Carole Outwater

I read with great interest Professor Marty Schuman's monograph on the various "tonics" and how these modes apply to the autoharp (Super-tonic, Ultratonic, etc. . . *AQ* Vol. 3, No. 4). The work was clear, concise, and most informative.

Alas, Professor Schuman seems to have missed several very important "tonic" modes. In order to complete the record, I would like to describe them herein:

Ginandtonic -- the scale in question is related to the fundamental tones (i.e. first, second, and third harmonics) made by the clinking of ice cubes against an eight-ounce glass of liquid. Unfortunately, as the level of liquid decreases, the intervals become less and less distinct. In most cases, nobody notices or cares.

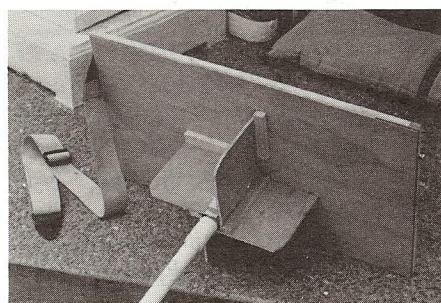
Catatonic -- confusion is evident in the literature regarding the origin of this scale. Some scholars relate catatonic intervals to the noises made by neighborhood felines, while others consider it of Zen origin; specifically, if an autoharp were played in the woods and nobody heard

it, etc. . . best played with cat-gut strings on the 'harp. Frequently this ancient autoharp style accompanies the catatonic vocal style, giving rise to the phrase, "Cat-gut your tongue?"

This, I feel, completes the list of popular "tonic" modes. I have seen references to the *Celerytonic* mode, so popular in the 20s and 30s, but have been unable to find more specific information. *AQ* would be an ideal forum for anybody with further information on this august topic.

*Professor R. Woodcock
Director of Psychomusicology
Philadelphia College
for the Musically Impaired*

I am sending you some pictures of a little device I whipped up from some junk I had lying around. I got the idea from seeing a picture of an old hurdy-gurdy man. One of our club members is an incurable lefty. She sings with her autoharp. Playing Maybelle style is awkward for a lefty, and she claims she can't project her voice when sitting and singing.

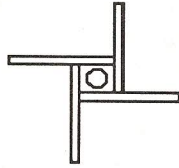


Tauna with her peg-leg stand.

This thing works well for her. You can see it is made

from light 3/8 inch rough board, bordered by some small strips to keep the 'harp from sliding off. The strap is attached to the table and goes around the back. It is quite light and reasonably easy to manage. There are no nails in it. I used only glue.

The four little pieces of wood to hold the plastic conduit leg in place are stacked on the underneath side of the table like so:



Nothing is critical. The one I am making for myself will be a little different to meet my needs. I play sitting down. The way I sing, it wouldn't matter if I was standing on my head as far as "projection" goes. I want a stand to keep the 'harp just off my lap so the 'harp will project better.

This stand does improve the sound of the instrument. It sounds louder and better, I think.

Bill McCampbell

Thank you for yet another helpful suggestion for the left-handed 'harper, Bill. Maybe our left-handed sculptor/craftsman, Kevin Coughlin will try your idea. An interesting side-note: three extremely talented 'harpers are dyed-in-the-wool lefties, and have learned to play their instruments right-handed -- Laurie Sky, Judie Pagter, and Bryan Bowers!

-- Editors

During the week of the Great Beanfest and Outhouse Race here in Mountain View Arkansas, I was frantically trying to prepare my shop for 10,000 extra people in town. What should appear in my mail box but my back issues of AQ! Suddenly I found myself unpacking boxes and reading AQ; lining up extra help and dusting off a 'harp;

and while people were in my shop buying curtains and bedspreads, I was playing through a couple of tunes from AQ.

Enclosed find my subscription check. I don't want to go through that again!

Margie Earles Hopper

During our visit to Mountain View, it was a pleasant surprise to find Margie's store, "Margie's Bed and Bath Outlet." Margie won second place in the autoharp contest at Winfield in 1987. We carry her tape, "Blue Eyes and Sad Songs" in The Market Place.

--Editors

Please renew my subscription to your wonderful magazine. It is worth far more than the eighteen dollars you charge. I am most appreciative of all the help it gives me.

Carina LaMay

I heartily thank you for the generous efforts you made to exhibit our autoharp on the occasion of this year's festival [Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering], as well as for your letter and comments, suggestions, and advice to change and improve this 'harp. I received the parcel with the enclosed letter [instrument and comments] by the end of August.

My small factory has been producing different kinds of zithers like chordharps, Harpeleik zithers, and autoharps for more than sixty years. The development of the 'harps, as well as that of the other kinds, came to a standstill in the past forty years because of almost no connections with foreign countries.

Since the return [from the East German government] of our firm in June of 1991, my son and I endeavour to produce and sell these instruments. The comments and advice will certainly help us.

I got a letter from Mr. Mike Fenton, England, who also saw our autoharp at your festival.

As you recommended, my son and I are going to visit Mr. Tom Lochbrunner, Bern, Switzerland, soon.

We will try to make the necessary changes on the instrument.

Yours sincerely,
Roland Hopf

Limberjack Productions has been corresponding with the autoharp factory in Germany for some time. Last year we extended an invitation to that factory, (as well as to all 'harp builders), to participate in the 1991 Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering. Because of the distance, Mr. Hopf was unable to attend, but he sent an instrument from his factory. This 'harp was played and critiqued by the festival participants. The instrument and accompanying critique was then returned to Mr. Hopf. We thought those of you who had a chance to see, hear, and critique this autoharp would enjoy reading his reply.

Do you have two or three year-old Dr. Scholl's damper pads which aren't damping properly any more? It's time to replace those old foot pads with new ones. Two to three years of damping is just about their life expectancy.

If you have violin fine tuners on your autoharp and you want them to work with your fine tuner allen wrench, remove the screw and replace it with an Oscar Schmidt fine tuner screw. I cut the screw down to 1/4" length and polish up the tip for smooth operation. If your autoharp has 37 strings and only 36 Oscar Schmidt fine tuners, you can install a violin fine tuner on the 37th string and still use the allen wrench for tuning all of the strings.

Dr. George F. Orthey

▶ What It ▶ Takes To ▶ Win At ▶ Winfield

by Fran Stallings

Ivan Stiles took first place in the International Autoharp Championship September 19, 1991, at the Walnut Valley Festival in Winfield, Kansas. Les Gustafson-Zook came in second; Alan Mager took third. Although this was Alan's first time at Winfield and Les' fourth, Ivan had been competing -- and placing, but not winning -- for eleven years. What did he do differently this year? What did all three of them do to prepare for this prestigious autoharp competition?

First we should ask: Why compete?

Alan, a mild-mannered but formidable criminal investigator with the National Marine Fisheries Service, says that when he was a beginning "closet" player, he thought he was better than he really was -- until he heard a tape made at an Augusta Heritage workshop class: "I was awful!" Gradually, by listening to his practice tapes, he has learned to critique *while* he plays. "So today, I knew how well I was doing. The first two selections were as good as I can play." And that's its own reward, he says. "The goal really is to get up there and play the best you can play."

Les' experience includes competing at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering and the Avoca (Iowa) National Autoharp Championship (which he won in 1989), as well as three previous Winfield contests. He and his wife, Gwen, perform folk music at schools, coffee houses, restaurants, and folk-life festivals in Oregon. It is important to take on various playing situations to gain experience, he advises. But these easily-pleased audiences make it ". . . easy to be lazy," says Les. "I use competitions as an incentive to develop my skill." With a new

baby and a new household of young adults to look after (Les and Gwen are houseleaders for Mennonite youths performing social service), Les found it hard to prepare for Winfield this year. "But the Mountain Laurel preparation helped," he says. Placing in a contest provides a milestone of progress and the verification that ". . . you're good!"

In 1985, Ivan left his position as an associate creative director of a major advertising agency in Philadelphia to pursue a career in music. He won first place at the 1985 Great Lakes Regional and 1987 World (Roseville, California) Autoharp Championships. In eleven years of Winfield competitions, he has placed in the finals (top five) six times, coming in second once, and third twice. He figures he has driven a total of 27,500 miles traveling to Winfield to compete.

Why? "Competition makes you critique your repertoire," says Ivan. "It makes you give four songs the intense attention which you should be giving to all." This has a spillover effect on the others, he finds. Also, competition ". . . makes you evaluate what you do; uniqueness as well as skill. It's a process of self-critiquing. You can't please everyone," he says, "but if you're good at what you're doing, you're likely to please more."

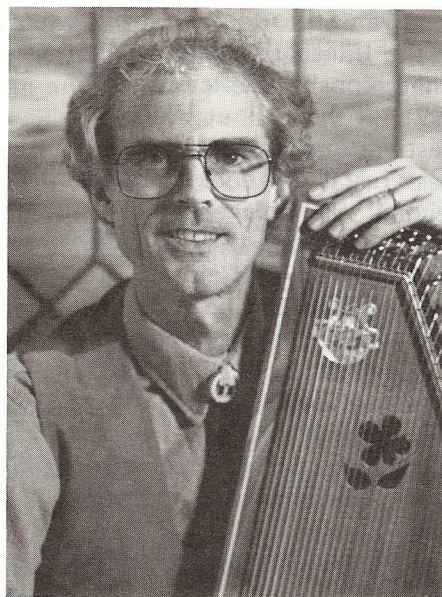
Now that he has achieved his goal, he is glad to share his winning secrets. "It's a mind game," he says, played not only with the judges but also with yourself. He developed a strategy to give the judges what he figured they were looking for. "But," he cautions, "you always have to remember that it's only a contest. Anybody could win at any time. I just did the right thing on the right day for the right people."

What Does It Feel Like?

Alan has just started competing. His first contest was at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering this past July; Winfield was his second. Although he does a lot of teaching, which includes playing for his students, he seldom performs publicly. That's why he's glad he volunteered to play for the sound check before the Winfield contest began: this allowed him to sit on the stage and "... see what it's going to feel like and look like when you get up there." He recommends this, if you're not used to being on stage.

Alan feels that a little nervousness is healthy because "... it forces you to focus." He warns that during a contest, "... you start thinking of things you never questioned before. But you have to squelch that. You must 'concentrate' but not think."

Ivan, who has many years of experience entertaining audiences, warns that competition is something different. "You're not being judged on performance," he points out, but only on playing. He advises, "Close your eyes and play for the judges." This both aids your concentration and protects you from distractions such as flash cameras.



Ivan Stiles, First Place

How Do You Decide What To Play And How To Arrange It?

In selecting music for competition, all three winners stress that you must pick pieces you really like -- because you'll be playing them *a lot*, and yet they must still be fresh for the contest. Alan looked for pieces which demonstrate dynamic tricks such as volume changes, speed changes, and the "stop" technique -- "... which doesn't work on every tune," he cautions. "There are a lot of tunes I like but I can't do a thing with them: they come out 'straight!'"

Les used to use only fast fiddle tunes which "... knock people over," but this year he wanted to vary them. "There's an unwritten rule," he says: "Don't Bore The Judges." He sought music from different genres, avoided those with repetitious melody lines, and even transposed pieces to avoid playing two in a row in the same key. In choosing a hymn this year, he found it a challenge to take something

simple and make it memorable. But he cautions that a hymn selected for competition should be familiar enough so that the judges won't be distracted by struggling to recall the words.

Les thinks the judges are looking for clean, melodic playing. He has begun playing without picks (as he did for his first three pieces this year) because he feels fingernails give "... more emotive range." He can dig in or play softly. "I try to put all the emotion into the *sound* rather than gestures."

Ivan not only looks for variety in his overall selections, he plans contrast between the pairs in each round: for instance, "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" with "The Washington Post March." In a strategy to make his pieces stand out from other competitors', he chose very chromatic pieces with accidental notes and diminished seventh chords. He changed key (from G to C) in the march only because Sousa wrote it that way. "Key changes within a song don't cut it" in competition, he says, because the judges know how easy it is to transpose on the autoharp. He does however recommend arrangements which vary the time signature (from 3/4 to 4/4, for instance), introduce syncopation, employ rubato, and show lots of expression and dynamics. "You don't have to play it fast," he says, "you have to play it well."

Novel playing techniques must be used with care. "If you do something different," Ivan advises, "do it twice so the judges won't think it's a mistake." He summarizes, "The arrangement must capture the judges' attention, keep them interested until the climax, and at that point, *end* the song."

A good length is 3 to 4 minutes, Les says, although some winning pieces have been

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*Les Gustafson-Zook,
Second Place*

longer. "If I can't get what I want out in three verses, the fourth probably won't make any difference." Ivan agrees. "If you can't show what you can do in three times through, you're probably not going to accomplish it."

Ivan says he used to play his best pieces in the first round to help ensure getting into the finals, but this year he played the easier pieces first and saved the strongest for the second round. Of course, he cautions, that strategy can backfire and you may not make the finals.

Diatonic Or Chromatic?

Serious competitors own several 'harps and have experimented with different tunings and novel chords. Alan says that earlier this year he was playing a two-key super-tonic Orthey Dulci-Harp with "weird chords," 19 chord bars and 2 lock bars. It was fun, he says, but he gradually went back to his old Oscar Schmidt chromatic because "... all the notes are there." So he converted the Dulci-Harp to chro-

matic tuning, with some special chord bars.

All of Les' 'harps have the same chord bar arrangement because "... playing and fingering has to be intuitive," especially for fast fiddle tunes. At Winfield he played a 15-bar Oscar Schmidt Autoharp which he has customized.

Strategist Ivan had noticed a trend: five years ago diatonic 'harps were winning, but recently the judges seemed to favor chromatic playing. Diatonics are wonderful for performing, Ivan says, but in a contest "... if you're going to play a diatonic 'harp, you'd better play *cleanly*." At Winfield in 1989 and 1990, Ivan played a chromatic in the first round and a diatonic in the finals, "... to show equal skill on both." This year he switched to all chromatic, and won.

How Do You Prepare For A Contest?

All three winners agree: "Play a *lot*."

When Les is polishing a piece he may play it for an hour, improvising until "... the nice bits come out." He often uses a tape recorder to help him remember these bits. He does not work from a formal arrangement, but works toward the goal of getting "... the nice stuff" to come back reliably. "I practice until my fingers don't worry about it anymore," he says.

Les and Alan will be back next year to try for first place. As for Ivan, "I'm out of this. That was the goal. If anyone can use the same strategy, more power to them!" The biggest secret of his "mind game," however, is to remember that it's only a contest. "A fun thing to do, but winning or losing will not make or break you." ■



Alan Mager, Third Place

What They Won

Ivan Stiles received a G/D/A diatonic Mary Lou Signature Orthey Dulci-Harp, a check for \$150, a Walnut Valley Festival Limited Edition Belt Buckle (#10 of this year's design), and a trophy.

Les Gustafson-Zook chose an Oscar Schmidt Limited Edition Walnut Valley 20th Anniversary Autoharp and accepted a check for \$100 with his trophy.

Alan Mager also received an Oscar Schmidt Limited Edition Walnut Valley 20th Anniversary Autoharp with a check for \$50 and a trophy.

What They Played

First Round

Ivan: "Take Me Out To The Ball Game" and "The Third Man Theme"

Les: "Morgan Megan" and "Oh! Suzannah"

Alan: "Polka Tsia-tsia-lya-lya" (Russian) and "The Hundred Pipers"

Second Round

Ivan: "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" and "The Washington Post March"

Les: "Abide With Me" and "O'Carolan's Draught"

Alan: "The Foggy Dew" and "Carrie's Gone To Kansas City"

Winner's Round

Ivan: "Lord, I Want To Go To Heaven" and "Ragtime Annie"

Les: "Sailor's Hornpipe"

Alan: "When You Wish Upon A Star"



Dipper of Stars

Howard Mitchell

G D7 G	C G G D7	G G C G	D7 / /

G D7 G	C G G D7	G G C G	D7 C D7

G D7 G	C G G D7	G G C G	D7 / / / C

G D7 G D7	C / / D7	D7 G D7 / /	G

G D7 G	C G C	G G C	G /

G D7 G	C G C	G G C	D7 C D7

Note: This song should be played with feeling. The tempo should be a quick six or a slow three. You may play incidentals of your own choosing during the holds between melody notes. Be sure, when doing this, to allow the melody to dominate.

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★ A Dipper of Stars -- That's Howie Mitchell

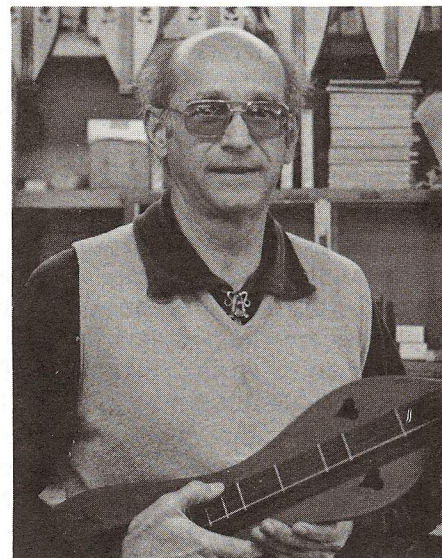
by Mary Lou Orthey

"I have just heard Mike Fenton play an incredibly beautiful song called 'Dipper of Stars!'" Carole Outwater said, as she and I enjoyed one of our late night telephone marathons. She was surprised when I told her I knew "Dipper." George and I have played it as a duet on Appalachian dulcimers for at least twenty-five years.

After that conversation, I re-acquainted myself with this old friend from a new perspective -- on the autoharp. I was glad Carole reminded me -- it *is* a beautiful tune. On our next visit to Lexington, Virginia, I asked Howie Mitchell for his permission to publish his song, "Dipper of Stars," in *AQ*.

Howie has been a friend for nearly a life-time. He is probably the most innately talented person we have ever known. When George began to build instruments, we were fortunate enough to meet him, glean from his knowledge, and enjoy his personality first-hand.

Through the years with our natural family "time blips" of moving, children, etc., we have reasonably kept in touch. Howie's "blips" have gone way beyond our "natural" ones. Each time we would catch up with each other, we would be amazed to learn the changing scope of his interests. When we first knew him, he was a well-known folk musician with several records to his credit (Folk Legacy Records); the leading pioneer in modern dulcimer development (e.g. he was the first to put a 6 1/2 fret, or H fret, on a dulcimer); an author, whose books are still used today ("How to Make and Play the Mountain Dulcimer"), and later, ("How to Make and Play the Hammered Dulcimer After a Fashion"); a physics teacher at the Hawthorne School in Washington, D.C. Since that time, Howie has moved on to other fields. His interests have encompassed work in computers, binary mosaics, metaphysical training, and Neuro-Linguistic



Programming, to mention a few.

Although Howie approaches each new endeavor with great enthusiasm and singular intensity, each previous experience is there, an integral part of his newest encounter. His remarkable diversity of interests makes him an extraordinary potpourri of abilities; a sparkling grab bag of proven skills, and a mixture of talents yet untapped. Howie Mitchell is truly a "Dipper of Stars." ■



Improving the Autoharp

Transcribed and Edited
by Alan Mager

A Panel Discussion
at the Mountain Laurel
Autoharp Gathering

Part One



Bob Taylor, Clapping Trees Instruments; George Orthey, Orthey Instruments; Mike Seeger, Moderator; Mark Fackeldey, Autoharpist; Mike McClellan, Luthier and Autoharpist; Jim Thomas and David Rice, Goose Acres.

On July 6, 1991, a panel discussion concerning the improvement of the autoharp was held at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering in Newport, Pennsylvania. What follows are excerpts from this discussion.

Mike Seeger: There is a great deal of room left for experiment and development of the autoharp -- to give it a better tone, and to make it more convenient to play.

We felt that players as well as luthiers should be represented on this panel, because the players are the people who are trying to drive the manufacture of the autoharp away from something that just barely holds together to something that sounds really good. Our basic problem is one in having an autoharp that can stand the pressure but still produce the tone. I think most of you, as makers, will agree. I like the tone of many of the autoharps now, but I'm kind of a dreamer. And I like to think that we can go on even further -- not only in tone, but in ways of playing.

Comment: Art Gluck -- I spoke with Mike McClellan yesterday, and he had some suggestions about improving the autoharp.

Mike McClellan: Maybe I should give a little history on how I came to the autoharp. When I was a kid, I was down in Virginia, and we had a teacher that played one in class, and on the radio on Saturday. So, I was around autoharps since I was knee-high to a grape, but I didn't own one 'til I went back to Hawaii in '69 and had to teach a class in it. In the interim, I'd learned how to tune 'em -- I'd learned how to play melody on 'em, and I knew two gentlemen that made experiments on 'em. One was Dave Linley who's famous now for backing up Jackson Brown and doing all sorts of electric stuff. He took a standard 'harp and had a Mexican instrument maker make a bigger body on the back of it, so it had more air inside. That thing sounded wonderful. It gave me an idea that if you got around to owning one, you could do things to it. Then in '63 or '64, I met a guy named Pete Colby. He had a 'harp he made himself with a carved maple back, and that thing was *loud*. To me it had a harsh sound, because I'm from Hawaii and I like a warm sound. It was, in fact, in Hawaii where I had to teach a class, that I broke down and

bought an old autoharp. I took a piece of plywood I found that washed up on the shore -- this piece of plywood smelled of diesel oil and salt water. I screwed it to the back with maple supports so that it was a resonator. I got that idea from an article Mike Seeger wrote in *Sing Out!* some time before. **Mike Seeger:** I'd tried that in the early '60s, I think. **Mike McClellan:** So I didn't forget it and in '69 or '70, it made that junk old autoharp with strings that were older than I was sound better than the new ones in the store. Of course, some of them broke when I tuned it. I just had old, used guitar strings, 'cause I wasn't going to put *new* guitar strings on it. That resonator made it sound better than the new ones with new strings.

I kept inheriting parts. I put a 21-chord plastic growth on it, and when the body changed 'cause I went to the mainland with it, it cracked. Finally, it broke so bad I could look inside and see how the old black ones were made, and they were made rather poorly. I figured that as an amateur carpenter, I could make one better. Luckily, I found other carpenters with better shops that wanted to get

involved in that sort of thing.

What I use now, is piano pin-block maple which does not move. It costs as much as a cheap 'harp just to buy a chunk of that wood. I've got two soundboards, guitar-quality spruce top and the back is unbraced -- it's sort of like a speaker cone. And I've got a resonator on the back to protect it from breaking. Now this, to me, sounds better. It may not be what I'm looking for, but it's a start. People have told me to turn down the pickup on my autoharp, and I didn't have one. Actually it sounds better to the listener than it does to me, because the resonator directs the sound outward. Once I made a top out of the leftover maple laminate, and it sounded cold and hard. It sounded like it could penetrate a dance band, but it didn't sound warm, which is the sound I like to hear with bluegrass or Hawaiian music. I've been working by myself in California. Nobody cares about autoharp experiments there. We ought to exchange ideas.

Mike Seeger: That's the purpose of this workshop. Perhaps a few ideas from Goose Acres would be good.

David Rice: Well, I think what Mike said at the start is really true. The two variables of structural strength, on one side, and acoustic purity on the other side . . . really, they don't exactly meet. What you do to make it stronger, makes it deader; and what you do to make it sound more alive -- more responsive -- makes it weaker. So you have to strike some sort of a compromise between structural strength -- that ability for the top to stand the compression of 37 strings pulling on it, which amounts to a tremendous amount of force -- and making the top free enough to have some sort of quality of

sound. Those are the variables that we've all struggled with, and what we've come up with to try to reach a compromise between those two is a method of trying to get the top to be as free as possible. We've abandoned the bracing style that you find in the Oscars -- the time-honored cross-wise bracing that seems to be traditional. Piano sound boards are braced that way. It's a traditional bracing scheme for a coniferous wood -- most of the tops of our 'harps are spruce. We've sort of gotten away from that pattern. We've managed to get to a top that is more vibratory and free. Can you add to that, Jim?



"If you don't try to make a better instrument, forget it. You're programming to sell people a piece of junk."

-- George Orthey



Jim Thomas: We went through several ramifications on the bracing pattern. We're not done -- we've got a long way to go yet -- but we're making a lot of progress. We seem to be having very good luck structurally, as far as the instruments' not coming undone. We've finally learned how to acclimate autoharps to live in the real world, and that's something that's not so easy. To get a lot of life and sustain out of the sound -- that's the goal we're after. We're about half way there . . . maybe a quarter of the way there, and we're still working at it.

This 'harp's front and back are mahogany. We decided to go to mahogany to get the combination of a little more struc-

tural strength and maybe a little more sound. The sonority of the mahogany is one of a richer mellower sound as compared to the somewhat brighter, trebly sound that you get from other woods, especially spruce. Mahogany in a guitar and in a 'harp gives a rounder, "tubby" kind of sound. We feel that we should make 'harps that have different types of tone colors. I think George ought to say some things about the lines he's been working along. He's going down some very clearly defined lines in the way of improvements in the sound and the structure.

George Orthey: It's true that different woods produce different voices. I find the most profound variance occurs in the hardwood top, spruce back versus the spruce top, hardwood back instrument. The former has a bright melody line, the latter has a full, rich sound.

I think a significant factor in autoharp progress is that, for whatever reason, 'harp makers are hermits. They hide in the woodwork. When I began fooling with the 'harp, I was sure that I was the only person in the world that did this. We go to about fifteen festivals a year, so I think I speak from experience in this matter. We visit 'harp makers -- luthiers who live half an hour away from big festivals, -- and we never see them there. We are very pleased to see this panel meeting to talk about the autoharp.

If we want to make the autoharp progress, we need to be in a friendly competition with ourselves and every other maker. If you don't try to make a better instrument, forget it. You're doing people a disservice. You're programming to sell them a piece of junk if you don't plan to make something better constantly. That's got to be the

underlying drive.

A key difference between us makers and you players, is that you want a full hundred-piece orchestra or at least a Steinway grand autoharp. And we makers say, "You know, there's just these hands and those tools. If you want a Steinway grand, you buy it and put it in your living room -- don't expect me to make you one to carry around."

Mike McClellan: Let me defend that. In '82, I thought I had the ultimate autoharp. I took a picture of it -- it was really lovely looking. I figured I had a good product. I was also performing -- I was running around the country. In the fall of '82, I did a wedding using that autoharp. An hour after that, as I was driving across the Bay Bridge to Oakland, I heard a crack, and my wonderful autoharp had come apart. My top of the line! The one that I was figuring was what you players really wanted. So I felt I couldn't really go out to shows with a piece of junk. At that point, I was losing so much money that I ended up with a day job, and that's another reason I haven't been going to shows.

Comment: Alex Usher -- In Missouri at one time, we had the world's best zither maker. His name was Franz Schwarzer. I wrote an article for Autoharp Quarterly about him. When he died and his plant went defunct, all of his plans and archives went to the Missouri State Museum in Jefferson City. I assume that a lot of you perambulate around the countryside. You might want to stop by there and check out just how he built those things. I have one them that's 100 years old now. It has the most beautiful sound, and it's absolutely stable -- it holds pitch, it's not warped in any which-way. I think that he must have had some very



**"I heard a crack,
and my wonderful
autoharp had come
apart -- my top
of the line!"**

-- Mike McClellan



good, sound structural ideas.

Mike Seeger: That's an excellent idea. We have a person here who made autoharps with Oscar Schmidt for a long while -- Bob Taylor.

Bob Taylor: In 1977, newly married, I went to Oscar Schmidt as a woodworker and I loved the place. I loved everything about it. I loved the smell of the lacquer and the woods, and it was wonderful. And a year later, they went into bankruptcy, and that wasn't so wonderful. I had a chance to become a fireman, and I figured, well, I'll be a fireman and that'll pay the bills, and I can build 'harps on the side without any financial pressures. We were at the point of starting a custom shop for Oscar Schmidt when the company was sold. It was bought by a large conglomerate which moved the operations overseas. We moved into our basement and started a company called Clapping Trees Instruments. About a year later, we decided that we were going to have a family, and so I call myself in temporary retirement until my kids are in school.

The way a large factory works is there's sort of a least common denominator attitude. You build each piece so that it can go into any 'harp and you overbuild everything slightly so nothing breaks, and you don't get a lot of returns. There's sort of a bell curve shape, if you want to talk

about numbers and quality. Most of the autoharps or any other instrument will fall into this general part, and there will be a few that are real cream puffs and there'll be a few disasters. What you do with the bell curve and how you take care of your disasters, and even what you do with your cream puffs, is important. Some factories might save all the really good ones and give them to people like Mike Seeger, for instance.

But as a small maker, you can be a lot more selective. You can take woods that go with other woods. You can go up to the edge structurally a little more. I would say that most traditional autoharps could have their frames reduced by about 20 percent, and 80 percent of them would not crack or fall apart. The other 20 percent probably would, because of wood selection, or because of relatively poor joints, compared to what you can do by hand with a lot of care. My love is making custom instruments. I don't have any standard models. I like to talk to the person. I like to build very slowly. I've never completed an instrument in less than a year. There was a time at Oscar Schmidt where we were developing the Centurion and the Festival series. We had a lot of beautiful exotic woods that we experimented with. We also experimented with bracing. But the bottom line always was: If too many instruments came back, stiffen everything up -- tighten everything up -- make it so it does not fall apart. I'm not really condemning this process; it's necessary because of economic realities. ■

The conclusion of "Improving the Autoharp" will appear in the April '92 issue of AQ.

PRO-FILES

If you are a professional auto-harper and wish to be featured, please send your picture, biography, and schedule to:

Mary Ann Johnston
RD3, Box 190-A
New Cumberland, WV 26047

EVO BLUESTEIN

With Jemmy Bluestein
4414 East Alamos
Fresno, CA 93726
209 297-8966
Pro-File: AQ October 88
Performance Schedule:

January 11

Fresno Art Museum
Bonner Auditorium
Fresno, CA

February 21/22
Autoharp Class
Extended Education
Fresno Pacific College
Fresno, CA

March 16

Cal State University -- Fresno
Wahlberg Auditorium
Fresno, CA

BRYAN BOWERS

c/o Scott O'Malley & Asso.
PO Box 9188
Colorado Springs, CO 80932
719 635-7776

Pro-File: AQ January 89
Performance Schedule:

January 5

Club De Wash
Madison, WI

January 10

Friendship Hall
Mount Prospect, IL
January 11

Hogeye Folk Arts
Evanston, IL

January 12

The Ark

Ann Arbor, MI

January 18

Canal Street Tavern
Dayton, OH

January 19

Michaelangelo's
Aurora, IL

January 29

Ernie's Italian Kitchen
Frederick, MD

January 30

Focal Point Coffeehouse
Ellicott City, MD

February 1
Prism Coffeehouse
Charlottesville, VA

February 7

Wolftrap
Vienna, VA

February 26

The Flicks
Boise, ID

February 29

Cameron United
Methodist Church
Denver, CO

March 5

University of Montana
Missoula, MT

March 6

Dalhousie Community Center
Calgary, Canada

March 8

Windsor Park Hall
Calgary, Canada

MARCIA BOWERS

10 South Broad Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
717 697-2748

Pro-File: AQ January 89

Performance Schedule:

January 13 through 24

Arendtsville Elementary School
(Residency*)

Arendtsville, PA

February 7

J. R. Grasse Elementary
School

Sellersville, PA

February/March

Mount Union School District
(10-day Residency*)

February/March/April

Chester County

Teen Mom's Program

(10-day Residency*)

Coatesville, PA

February 21

Highland Elementary School
Lewistown, PA

*Residency Programs contain one
open-to-the-public performance each.

Contact Marcia Bowers for details.

ROZ BROWN

1549 S. Holland Court
Lakewood, CO 80226
303 969-9645

Pro-File: AQ October 89

Performance Schedule:

Buckhorn Exchange Restaurant
100 Osage Street

Denver, CO

Every Friday and

Saturday night

WANDA DEGEN

P.O. Box 6187
East Lansing, MI 48826
517 337-2264

Pro-File: AQ July 90

Performance Schedule:

January 11

Children's Concert

Jocundry's Books

East Lansing, MI

January 22

MSU Union Lounge

East Lansing, MI

January 25

Children's Concert

Jocundry's Books

East Lansing, MI

February 8

Children's Concert

Jocundry's Books

East Lansing, MI

February 28

Lady of the Lake and Second

Opinion Combined Concert

Ten Pound Fiddle Coffeehouse

MSU, East Lansing, MI

March 7

Children's Songs Workshop

Child Development

Conference

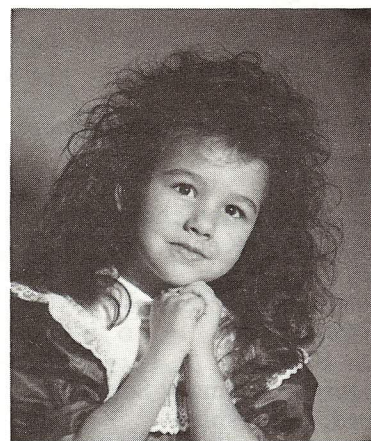
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High Park Cottage,
Persnore Road
Whittington,
Worcester, WR5 2RT
England
0905 354822

Pro-File: AQ October 88

Performance Schedule:

January 8

Larkfield Infants School
Innsworth, Gloucester

January 27/28

Ronkswood Junior School
Worcester

February 3

Warndon Infants School
Worcester

February 4/5

Great Malvern Primary School
Malvern

February 10

Lickey End First School
Bromsgrove

Telford, Shropshire

February 11

Finlay Infants School
Gloucester

February 14

Stockingford Middle School
Nuneaton, Warwickshire

February 19

St. Patrick's Primary School
Solihull

February 20/21

Long Lane Primary School
Warrington, Cheshire

February 26

Emscote First School
Warwick

February 27

Sparrowdale School
Grendon, Warwickshire

February 28

Polesworth First School
Dordon, Warwickshire

March 3/4

South Borough Primary School
Maidstone, Kent

March 5

St. James Infants School
East Malling, Kent

March 6

Coxheath Infants School
Maidstone, Kent

March 10

St. George's Primary School
Telford, Shropshire

March 11

Grendon CE First School
Atherstone, Warwickshire

March 12

Nethersole's CE First School
Polesworth, Warwickshire

March 13

Tibberton CE First School
Droitwich, Worcestershire

March 17

Hope-Under-Dinsmore
CE Primary School
Leominster, Herefordshire

March 18

Cleeve View Infants School
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

March 19

Welsh House Farm
Primary School
Quinton, Birmingham

March 20

Bredon Hancocks Endowed
First School

Bredon, Worcestershire

March 24

Abbey Hill School
Stock-On-Tees, Cleveland

March 25

St. Peter's RC Primary School
Middlesbrough, Cleveland

March 26

Cromwell Road
Primary School

Middlesbrough

March 27

Eldon Grove Primary School
Hartlepool, Cleveland

March 31

Abinger Common First School
Dorking, Surrey

April 1

Burpham First School
Guildford, Surrey

April 3

Woodlands Primary School
Tonbridge, Kent

April 4

Hodnet Primary School
Market Drayton, Shropshire

PAUL and WIN GRACE

Route 1, Box 182

11990 Barnes Chapel
Columbia, MO 65201

314 443-2819

Pro-File: AQ October 88

Performance Schedule:

February 8

Forest Park Nature Center
Peoria, IL

February 9

Children's Concert
Libertyville High School

Libertyville, IL

February 10

Portage Park Moose Lodge
Chicago, IL

February 11

House Concert
Rockford, IL

February 15

Hemen Park Community Center
University City, MO

February 29

Iron Horse Music Emporium
El Dorado, KS

March 3

Coffeyville Community College
Coffeyville, KS

LITTLE ROY LEWIS

The Lewis Family

Route 1, Box 75

Lincolnton, GA 30817

404 359-3767

Pro-File: AQ January 90

Performance Schedule:

January 3/4

Convention Center
Jekyll Island, GA

January 11

Spirit of the Suwannee
Live Oak, FL

January 17

School Auditorium
Roxboro, NC

January 18

Franklin County High School
Rocky Mount, VA

January 19

East Duplin Sr. Citizen's Bldg.
Beaulaville, NC

January 24

Elementary School
Troy, NC

January 25

Holiday Inn French Quarters
Perrysburg, OH

January 31

Union Hall
Brevard, NC

February 1

Clem's Shoals Creek Bldg.
Lavonia, GA

February 2

Music City Sheraton
Nashville, TN

February 9-13

Bahamas Cruise
aboard the S.S. Emerald Isle

February 14/15

Ives Optomist Club Grounds
Miami, FL

February 16

Dixieland Park
Waldo, FL

February 21

Ozark Folk Center
Mountain View, AR

February 22

Hella Temple
Garland, TX

February 29

Knights of Columbus Facility
Davison, MI

HARVEY REID

Woodpecker Records
PO Box 1134
Portsmouth, NH 03802
Pro-File: AQ

January 89
**Performance
Schedule:**

January 5
Codfish
Portsmouth, NH
January 10
McCabe's
Long Beach
Long Beach, CA
January 11
The Fret House
Covina, CA
January 25
San Diego Folk
Heritage
Del Mar, CA
March 21
First Encounter
Coffeehouse
North Eastham, MA

**JANET SCHREINER**

is a graduate of the University of Connecticut with a major in theatre and music. Janet has acted, directed, and taught in Missouri, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. She has worked with the Philadelphia Company, the Surfflight Summer Theatre, the Darlington Arts Center, and has traveled with the Children's Repertory Company. Working with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, she has trained doctors and nurses in interviewing tech-

niques by simulating a variety of illnesses.

This mother of three girls was seeking an outlet for her performance skills when she became known as "Jelly-bean." Dressed in red overalls, she brought music and merriment to her daughters' birthday parties.

With her twin auto-harps, "Max" and "Maxine" and her puppets, Janet's creative use of puppets, dramatics, and music brings joy to hundreds of young people each year. In addition to her concert appearances at schools, camps, and festivals, she presents workshops in theatre and music for both the young and the young at heart. With a career spanning 28 years to her credit, she is now on the faculty of five preschools where she is in charge of the music and dramatic programs.

Janet is now joined in concert by Debbie Stahl who does back-up vocals and guitar accompaniment.

Janet can be contacted at:
1510 Remington Road
Wynnewood, PA 19096
215 649-0732

**Performance
Schedule:**

January 27
Germantown
Friends School
Philadelphia, PA
February 3
Richard Allen
Head Start
Philadelphia, PA
March 8
Overbrook
Presbyterian Church
Philadelphia, PA
March 13
Rosemont School
of the Holy Child
Rosemont, PA

March 20
First Presbyterian
Church
West Chester, PA
March 28
Levittown Library
Levittown, PA
March 28
Bensalem Library
Bensalem, PA

BILL SKY FAMILY

PO Box 3496
Batesville, AR 72503
501 264-9382 (Ans.
Service)

Pro-File: AQ April 90
Performance

Schedule:

January 3
Caravan Oasis
Yuma, AZ
January 4
Shangri-La
Yuma, AZ
January 5
Araby Acres
Yuma, AZ
January 10
Roger's Resort
Yuma, AZ
January 11
Gila Mountain Resort
Yuma, AZ
January 12
Suni-Sands
Yuma, AZ
January 12
Fortuna De Oro
Yuma, AZ
January 13
Bonita Mesa
Yuma, AZ
January 18
Holiday Palms Resort
Quartzsite, AZ
January 19
Yuma Lakes
Yuma, AZ
January 20
Yuma-Mesa
Yuma, AZ
January 23
Sun Vista Resort
Yuma, AZ
January 24
Atlasta Park
Yuma, AZ
January 24
Villa Alameda
Yuma, AZ
January 25
Sheltering Palms
Yuma, AZ
January 25

Arizona West Resort
Yuma, AZ
January 26
Desert Paradise
Yuma, AZ
January 26
Cactus Gardens
Yuma, AZ
February 2
Acacia Park
Donna, TX
February 7
Paradise Park
Pharr, TX
February 8
Orange Grove
Edinburg, TX
February 9
Alamo Palms
Alamo, TX
February 10
Texas Trails
Pharr, TX
February 11
The Lamplighter
Mission, TX
February 12
Lazy Palm Ranch
Edinburg, TX
February 15
Canyon Lake
Mission, TX
February 16
Tropic Star
Pharr, TX
February 17
Palm Shadows
Donna, TX
February 18
Mission Bell Resort
Mission, TX
February 19
Bit-O-Heaven
Donna, TX
February 20
Country Boy Park
Harlingen, TX
February 20
Winter Ranch
Alamo, TX
February 21
Isla Blanca
South Padre Island, TX
February 22
Lake Texano
Hildago, TX
February 23
Ken-La Mobile Village
La Feria, TX
February 23
Trophy Gardens
Alamo, TX

Continued on page 39


DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

We thank Joe Carter, son of A.P. and Sarah, for giving us permission to publish another of his original songs.
 In the true tradition of his parents, Joe has written many memorable tunes -- this one, a beautiful waltz.

The musical score is organized into eight systems. Each system contains a musical staff for the vocal line and a guitar tablature staff. The guitar tablature includes chord diagrams with fret numbers and symbols for strings to be muted or played. The chord progressions are as follows:

- System 1: C / / Em / / Am / / C
- System 2: C / / Em / / Dm G7
- System 3: Dm / / F / / G7 F G7 / /
- System 4: Dm / Bb7 Dm G7 Dm G7 C
- System 5: C / / Em / / Am / / C
- System 6: C G7 C G7 C G7 F
- System 7: F / G7 F Dm F / C D7 C Am C /
- System 8: *rit.* G7 / / F G7 / / C / / /

HOW TO PLAY IN AN IRISH BAND

Part Two
by Mike Herr

How (Not) to Play in an Irish Sessun

Informal music, late-night jamming, campground pick-in', you name it, presents some of the best music you'll ever hear. These are the golden hours, the prime-time of the music sub-culture. There are all types of these jams, each with their universal, common points of etiquette, but also with their subtle nuances and differences that are peculiar to each type of music. An Irish sessun, (pronounced "session"), is no different, as some of the unwritten rules are the same as other jams, and some peculiarities strike you as being unique. Following are some tips and observations from my experience.

Pignose Amp

These little babies are worth their weight in bacon in allowing you, the brave autoharper, to play and be heard among the fiddles/banjoes/flutes/guitars/bodhrans. Of course, this assumes you can electrify, (have a pick-up added or built-in), and have an outlet or remember the batteries. Check with your music store, various music equipment catalogs, friends, or used equipment publications for more information. I

should add that you don't really need one of these if you are just playing rhythm and chording along, but they come in handy if you are melody picking.

Bodhran Players

If you don't play the bodhran, (translated "deafening" from the Gaelic and pronounced bo-ran), allow them into the group. If you do play one, remember the value in silence. Like anything, percussion can add to the whole when presented tastefully and with restraint. Myron Bretholz, teacher of the bodhran at the Augusta Heritage Arts Workshops each summer, advises the "less is more" approach and also warns against using too much syncopation, as the melody players may be distracted and confused.

To Play or Not to Play

If you don't know the tune, you have several options, all of which have their pros and cons. You can sit back, listen respectfully and basically *back off*. This is akin to a commercial break in TV watching and the possibilities are endless: you could talk loudly to your neighbor who is

either trying to play along or trying to tape the tune for future reference; you could chew gum loudly and regain your rightful seat as the center of attention; you could attempt to play along loudly in the center of the group, thereby assuring invitations to future sessuns. Like I said, there are pluses and minuses to each of the above, and your personality will settle on the correct level of "obnoxiousity" for you.

Out of Tune?

Simple -- if a string's out of tune, don't play it! Ha! I know, I know, that's impossible. Whether to try to keep an autoharp in tune during a jam depends on several things, like: how out of tune is it?; what's the temperature?; with whom are you playing?; etc. Recently Les, Bill, Tom, Ray, and I were playing in forty degree weather at 3 AM and I doubt the five of us had ever played 'harps as out-of-tune as ours were -- but it was the right place at the right time, and the music police didn't get us, so there . . .

What Tune Comes Next?

One of the more effective methods of insuring popular-

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Twenty-four tunes arranged for the autoharp by Ivan Stiles. Includes instructions on how to read the tablature. Tunes includes Rickett's Hornpipe, Soldier's Joy, Haste To The Wedding, The Honeymoon, Come Under My Pladdie, and nineteen others.

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Ivan Stiles
Route 29-RD2
Phoenixville, PA 19460

ity is to play every tune you know as fast as possible, one right after the other, so no one else can get a tune in edge-wise. Not only will you impress your friends and camp-mates, but you'll successfully move the jam to another campfire, another stone wall, Another Planet! There are legends among the Irish players I know of certain individuals who are particularly adept at such activities. As usual, taking turns is the happiest format of decision-making.

Beware of cliques -- that is, watch out for the three flute players who just came from their own sessun and have fifteen tunes they know in common. (Please feel free to substitute fiddle, banjo, whom-ever for "flute" players.)

What About the Pace?

A good rule of thumb is that whoever starts the tune

sets the pace. You know you're being put down if you start a tune and the rest of the crowd joins in at twenty clicks per minute faster on the metronome. (You also know you're playing with the wrong crowd.) At this point, it's best not to do something you'll regret later, like dumping the rest of your beer in the fiddler's instrument case, but rather struggle along and resolve to practice more next week.

Scottish Pipers

Leave 'em at home.

Fun

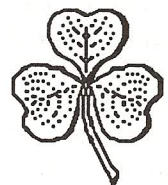
Ah, my favorite topic. Remember, jam sessuns are not competition, and are not to be taken too seriously. Irish sessuns are fun if you are willing to learn new tunes and teach tunes to others. It is truly amazing to hear the lists of tunes that people know and to see how few of them are known in common. Sometimes one knows a group of tunes that you only play when you go to Baltimore, or to Seattle, or to Winfield, or wherever.

Irish sessuns are also fun if you are willing to start a tune slowly, allow everyone to catch on and gradually speed up. This technique relates to my bottom-line message which is, the more respect which is exhibited, the *more fun* music is . . . take it from there. ■

Mike plays with the Irish band, "Lost in the Woods." Their tape of the same name is available in The Market Place (see page 40).

Mike was one of the five finalists at the 1991 International Autoharp

Championship at the Walnut Valley Festival, Winfield, Kansas.



The

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AQ POSTSCRIPTS

PS.

"Rebekah-Down Home Family Band," an album recorded by **Rebekah Stober** in 1989 when she was 6 years old, has been added to the Library of Congress permanent collection as a significant recording of American Folk Music. It showcases eleven songs, ten of which are accompanied by autoharp played by Rebekah's grandmother, **Carol Stober**.

PS.

The **Bill Sky Family** has taped two television shows for Iowa Public Television in Des Moines. The shows are called "Old-Time Country Music." **Bryan Bowers** also has taped for this series.

PS.

An issue of *Country Music*, a magazine published in Switzerland, was given to us in exchange for the latest *AQ*. *Country Music* gives a fine review to **Bill Clifton's** latest album (guitar), and also to **Carlene Carter's** album, "I Fell In Love." Carlene is the daughter of **June Carter Cash**, and plays the autoharp. If you speak German and want to know what's going on in Europe, country music-wise, subscribe to *Country Music* by calling Zurich, 01 342 4849.

PS.

Thanks go to **Joe Riggs** for donating a mint copy of the **Kilby Snow** solo album, "Country Songs and Tunes on Autoharp" to the North Carolina Room of the Public Library of Charlotte on behalf of *AQ*. Kilby, who spent much of his childhood in North Carolina, won the state autoharp championship at the age of five. **Lew Herman**, librarian

and noted music historian of Charlotte, thanks Joe and *AQ* for this important out-of-print album.

PS.

Laurie Sky was awarded the National Traditional Music Performer Award for the autoharp category in Denison, Iowa. -- And speaking of winners, congratulations to all the 1991 autoharp competition winners: **Carole Outwater**, Ole-Time Fiddlers' and Bluegrass Festival, Union Grove, North Carolina; **John Hollandsworth**, Bluegrass and Old-Time Fiddlers' Convention, Mount Airy, North Carolina; **John Hollandsworth**, Old Time Fiddlers' Convention, Galax, Virginia; **Alex Usher**, Southern Regional Championship, Mountain View, Arkansas; **John Hollandsworth**, Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering, Newport, Pennsylvania; **Kathy Wintermeyer**, Old Time Country Music Contest, Avoca, Iowa; **Larry Peterson**, Old-Time Music Championship, Denison, Iowa; and **Ivan Stiles**, Walnut Valley Festival, Winfield, Kansas.

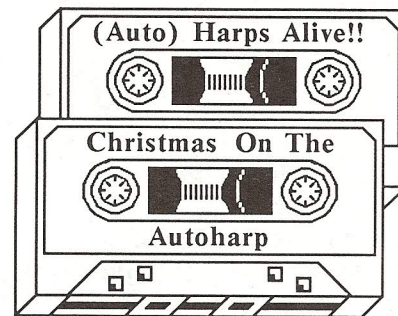
PS.

Walnut Valley has made the following changes in competition rules: 1) "To allow accurate judging of each contest, we feel it should be limited to forty contestants," and 2) "The five-year rule is reinstated for past winners to re-enter the contests."

PS.

Although *AQ* was the first publication to extensively research and report "The True History of the Autoharp," (April, 1991), we've found several books containing fragmented pieces of this information. Two such contemporary books are *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, and *The Norton/Grove Concise Encyclopædia of Music*. ■

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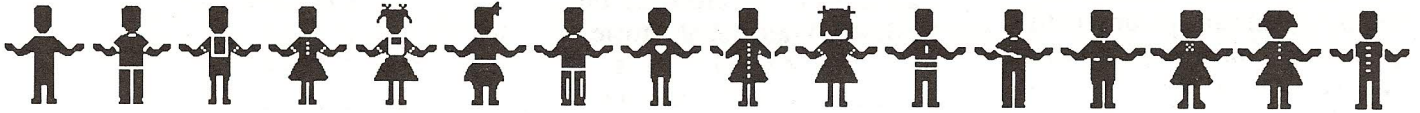
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COCOAHOUSE

by Fred Koch



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Rumor has it that John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt was a distant relative of another very famous Schmidt -- Oscar! But before you go believing this story, you must realize that this "Schmidt trivia" came to me from the same autoharp-loving first grader who shared this joke with me: "What would Ella Jenkin's name be if she married Darth Vader?" (Ella Vader)

"Kathaleena, Mackaleena" is another of those wonderful name-game songs which invites you and your friends to be creative and write some new verses. Once you sing it a

couple of times, I am sure that the ideas will start to come. I am also very interested in seeing any of those new verses that you have written, so drop me a line here at AQ. As I travel around the country, I hear many variations to this song. When I was in Denver, Colorado, my friend Bonnie Phipps sang the song as "Madalina Catalina." (Bonnie also happens to be one of my most favorite autoharp players in the world -- so ask around and see if anyone has any of her recordings. They are wonderful!) And a friend of mine in Florida has another tongue-twisting version of his own

with a different set of silly names.

Again, both songs are arranged in the "accompaniment style," indicating only the location of the "strong beat." Strum the autoharp each time you see a chord symbol (C) or slash mark (/). The slash mark means to strum the previous chord again. Pay particular attention to the exact word or syllable the chord symbol or slash appears above. Remember that the "strum" is a single stroke across the strings using long motions (covering many strings) and/or short motions (covering fewer strings).

John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt

Traditional

John Ja - cob Jin - gle - heim - er Schmidt, that's my name, too. When -
 ev - er we go out, the peo - ple al - ways shout, "There goes
 John Ja - cob Jin - gle - heim - er Schmidt!" da da da da da da da da

One way to sing this song is to start very loudly, repeating the song over and over again, getting softer each time, and ending by whispering the song the last time through.

KATHALEENA, MACKALEENA

Traditional -- Adapted by Fred Koch

Chorus: Kath - a - leen - a, Mack - a - leen - a, Hoop - er - stein - er, Wat - er bind - er,

Hok - ey, Pok - ey, Mok - ey was her name! Verse: She

had two hairs on the top of her head,

One was green, the ot - her one was red!

Now make up your own verses -- a few I know are:

She had two teeth in the middle of her mouth, One pointed north, the other pointed south!
 She had two bumps on the bottom of her chin, One pointed out, the other pointed in!

School Autoharp Club News

The Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School of Charlotte, North Carolina



On December 10, the Elizabeth Autoharp Club played downtown from 12 to 1PM for the luncheon entertainment of the office occupants of Charlotte Plaza. This program was one of several musical presentations booked for the holidays at this giant office complex in the heart of bankers' row. Players from grades three through six performed.

On December 15, the club played for the Elizabeth School PTA Holiday Meeting.

January 17, 1992, Dr. Harry Mamlin will hold a performance-demonstration with the

club for the music teachers of Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System. This is a teacher workday, and ample time will be devoted to the history of the Autoharp Renaissance Project, and setting up and managing the club. There will be a demonstration performance by the players in grades three through six. Doctors Phifer and Riggs will also discuss autoharp maintenance, teaching tips and techniques.

The normal meeting of the Elizabeth Autoharp Club is every Wednesday, 7:30 to 8:20 AM. Attendance ranges from thirty-five to fifty members.

The school day does not officially start until 8:15 AM, so it is a real effort for some parents to get the kids there for the meeting, but they do! ■

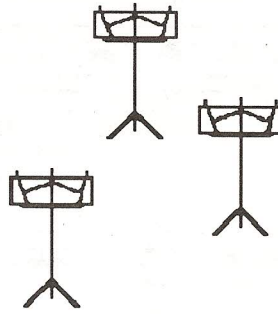


Emily Tate playing her 'harp she got for Christmas.

CLUBS

Clubs Editor:
 Ubi Adams
 2659 Kissel Hill Road
 Lititz, PA 17543

This list includes autoharp clubs, and clubs in which the autoharp player is welcome. If you know of a club we have not mentioned, please send the information to the Clubs Editor. This list will be published every January, and updated each issue.



Happy Hearts Autoharp Club
 c/o Dora Miller
 2111 N. 5th Avenue, East
 Newton, IA 50208

KANSAS

Harps Plus Autoharp Club
 c/o Loren and Marie Wells
 1620 S. Longford, #205
 Wichita, KS 67207

MARYLAND

**Folklore Society
 of Greater Washington**
 c/o D. Nichols 703 281-2228

**Hammers and Noters
 Dulcimer Society (HANDS)**
 c/o Fred Bird
 419 Park Road
 Rockville, MD 20850

MASSACHUSETTS

Country Dance & Song Society
 c/o Brad Foster
 17 New South Street
 Northampton, MA 01060

**Folk Song Society
 of Greater Boston (FSSGB)**
 PO Box 492
 Somerville, MA 02143

New England Folk Fest. Assn.
 1950 Massachusetts Avenue
 Cambridge, MA 02140

MICHIGAN

Autoharps Unlimited
 c/o Kathy Wieland
 1204 Linwood Street
 Ann Arbor, MI 48103

MISSOURI

Music Folk
 8015 Big Bend Blvd.
 Webster Groves, MO 63119

**Singing Strings
 Autoharp Club**
 c/o Alice Penovich
 2740 E. Pythian
 Springfield, MO 65802

Heartland Harpers
 c/o Kathy Wintermeyer
 4425 S. Buckner-Tarsney Rd.
 Grain Valley, MO 64029
 816 229-0144

ARKANSAS

Old Time Music Association
 c/o Valta Sexton
 3643 Wilma or 4818 Grand
 Ft. Smith, AR 72904

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Cowichan Folk Guild
 c/o Deborah Maike
 Box 802
 Duncan, BC V9L 3Y1
 Canada

CALIFORNIA

**California
 Traditional Music Society**
 c/o Elaine Weissman
 4401 Trancas Place
 Tarzana, CA 91356

**El Dorado County
 Autoharp Club**
 c/o Lynn Wick
 4197 East Road
 Placerville, CA 95667

**The Grizzly Flat
 Autoharp Club**
 c/o Bill Bryant
 PO Box 840
 Grizzly Flats, CA 95636
 916 626-3011

**Scottish Fiddlers
 of California**
 1938 Rose Villa Street
 Pasadena, CA 91107

**Southern California
 Autoharp Alliance**
 c/o Bob Lewis
 671 Avenida de la Plata
 Newbury Park, CA 91320

COLORADO

**Denver Area
 Autoharp and Zither Club**
 c/o Margaret Bakker
 1501 S. Estes Street
 Lakewood, CO 80226

DELAWARE

**Brandywine
 Dulcimer Fellowship**
 c/o Earl H. Roth
 2112 Peachtree Drive
 Wilmington, DE 19805
 302 998-7767

ILLINOIS

**The Chicago
 Center for the Autoharp**
 2651 North Central Park Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60647-1101

Fox Valley Folklore Society
 c/o Juel Ulven
 755 N. Evanslawn Avenue
 Aurora, IL 60506

**Hammers and Noters
 Dulcimer Society of Illinois**
 Morris, IL
 815 942-9501

**The Old Town
 School of Folk Music**
 909 W. Armitage Avenue
 Chicago, IL 60614

**Rock River of Folk Music
 Midway Village**
 Rockford Museum Center
 6799 Guilford Road
 Rockford, IL 61107

IOWA

NEVADA

**Southern Nevada
Bluegrass Music Society**
c/o Laura Newton
HCR 89033 Box 3
Las Vegas, NV 89124

NEW YORK

**Adirondak
Bluegrass League, Inc.**
PO Box 901
Corinth, NY 12822

**New York Pinewoods
Folk Music Club**
FM Society of N.Y., Inc.
31 West 95th Street
New York, NY 10025

NORTH CAROLINA

Charlotte Autoharp Club
c/o Martha Kiker
1336 Harding Place
Charlotte, NC 28204

OHIO

**Central Ohio
Folk Music Society**
c/o Gail Reed
136 Letts Avenue
Sunbury, OH 43074

Toledo Dulcimer Club
c/o Dave Dazely, Pres.
3601 Hill Avenue
Toledo, OH 43607

OKLAHOMA

**Flying Fingers Autoharp Club
- Oklahoma City TMA**
c/o Anita Roesler
823 N.W. 43rd
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

Tulsa Folk Music Society
PO Box 1262
Tulsa, OK 74101-1262

PENNSYLVANIA

Appalachian Folk Club, Inc.
PO Box 169
Hookstown, PA 15050

Bald Eagle Folk Collective
PO Box 633
Lock Haven, PA 17745

**The Bar None
Autoharp Society**
c/o Elisa Lang
7306 Emlen St.
Philadelphia, PA 19119

**Cocalico Valley
Jammer's Society**
4404 Tenth Avenue
Temple, PA 19560

**Frosty Valley
Dulcimer Friends**
c/o Helen Miller
713 Bloom Road
Danville, PA 17821

**Lancaster Folk Music
and Fiddlers' Society**
PO Box 4541
Lancaster, PA 17604

**Landis Valley
Autoharp Club**
c/o Ubi Adams
2659 Kissel Hill Road
Lititz, PA 17543

The Local Music Collective
191 Maple Street
Mifflinburg, PA 17844

**Off-The-Wall
Dulcimer Society**
c/o Marcia Bowers
10 South Broad Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

**Susquehanna
Folk Music Society**
3109 N. Second Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110

TEXAS

Harps Over Texas
c/o Nathan Sarvis
1904 Moonlight Drive
Denton, TX 76201

Lone Star State Dulcimer Soc.
1517 Laurelwood
Denton, TX 76201

**Southeast Texas
Autoharp Society**
c/o Charles Whitmer
25650 IH 45N, #1107
Spring, TX 77386

The Southwest Bluegrass Club
c/o Hugh Childress, Pres.
PO Box 278
Glen Rose, TX 76043

Southwest Celtic Music Assn.
PO Box 4474
Dallas, TX 75208

VIRGINIA

The Blue Ridge Autoharp Club
c/o John Hollandsworth
Route 2, Box 40A
Christiansburg, VA 24073

**The Capital Area Bluegrass
and Old-Time Music Assn.**
(CABOMA) Arlington, VA
c/o Elizabeth Nelson
6808 Supreme Court
Springfield, VA 22150

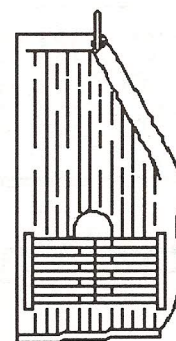
**Dulcimer Disorganization
of Greater Washington (DC)**
c/o Keith Young
3815 Kendale Road
Annandale, VA 22003

Capital Autoharp Club
c/o Alan Mager
PO Box 1221
Annandale, VA 22003

▶▶▶▶▶▶NOTICE◀◀◀◀◀◀

Alas, no room for the 1990-91
Autoharp Quarterly Index.
We'll try again next issue.

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CLUB NEWS

The Happy Hearts Autoharp Club meets the second Saturday of every month. Meetings start at 10 AM and last until 4:30 PM. January, February, and March will be pot luck dinners and open to all instruments. They will be held at 2111 N. 5 Avenue E., Newton, IA. Music featured -- Jan. 11, Carter Songs; Feb. 8, Love

Songs; Mar. 14, Irish Songs and Jigs. Harps Over Texas meets the 4th Tuesday of every month. Harps Plus reports that Charles Whitmer will be presenting beginning, intermediate, and advanced workshops January 4 and 5 in Overland Park, Kansas. For information, contact Kathy Wintermeyer at 816 229-0144. ■

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Portsmouth, NH 03802

WINTER FESTIVALS

Festivals Editor:
Ubi Adams
2659 Kissel Hill Road
Lititz, PA 17543

This is a list of the 1992 winter festivals which feature autoharp in workshop, concert, and/or contest.

CODE :	
AC	Autoharp Contest
AP	Autoharp Performance
AW	Autoharp Workshop

JANUARY

Bryan Bowers Workshop
Date: January 12
Place: Ann Arbor, MI
Contact: Kathy Wieland
1204 Linwood
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
313 769-2849

FEBRUARY

Winterfest
Date: February 16
Place: Garland, TX
Code: AW
Contact: Linda Thompson
1517 Laurel Wood
Denton, TX 76201

MARCH

Stringalong Weekend
Date: March 13, 14, 15
Place: East Troy, WI
Code: AP AW
Contact: UWM Folk Center
PO Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Sonoma County Folk Festival
Date: March 14, 15
Place: Sonoma County, CA
Code: AP
Contact: 707 838-4857

RECORDINGS

Recordings Editor
Mary Ann Johnston
RD3, Box 190-A
New Cumberland, WV 26047

Features autoharp:
GREAT HYMNS
ON THE AUTOHARP
Les Gustafson-Zook
1735 Main Street SE
Albany, OR 97321

Includes autoharp:

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Harp! The Herald Angels Sing! by Becky Blackley
Autoharp Praise and Hymns for Autoharp by Meg Peterson

Video instruction by Evo Bluestein and John Sebastian

Recordings by Bryan Bowers, Mill Run Dulcimer Band, Evo Bluestein, Tom Schroedoer, and Mike Seeger, among others



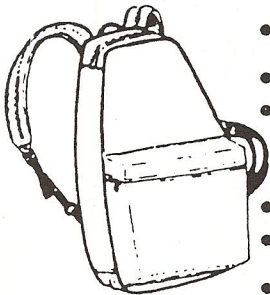
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Sends To
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Instructor
Critiques
Tape And
Sends Reply
To Student

Mike Herr introduced himself to the autoharp in the early '80s. His interest in the instrument was permanently fixed in 1983 and 1984 when he attended autoharp classes taught by David Morris and Bryan Bowers at the Augusta Heritage Arts Workshops in Elkins, West Virginia. Since then, Mike's autoharp interests have included a wide variety of musical types, but have firmly centered on Irish music in recent years. Mike's continuing goal with the autoharp is to produce crisp, clean melody picking. He finds that this is the main focus of Irish music as well as being personally challenging.

Mike has joined the band Lost in the Woods, helping to create an unusual sound in Irish music circles with the autoharp -- obviously not a traditional Irish instrument. Lost in the Woods released its first cassette in March of 1991. The group performed this year at the Fifth Annual Irish Festival in Beckley, West Virginia and has had many other local and statewide engagements.

Mike demonstrated his playing skill last September when he was selected as a finalist in the International Autoharp Championship in Winfield, Kansas.

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HERE'S HOW INTERACTION WORKS

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STEP 2

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- B. The instructor will listen to your recording and following it will critique your playing, answer your questions and, if necessary, demonstrate the lesson further. The instructor will then mail the tape back to you.

You will receive your personalized reply in 3 to 4 weeks.

Jigs are dance tunes in 6/8 time with the emphasis being placed on the first and fourth beats, as follows: *one-two-three-four-five-six*. One can recognize a jig by repeating the nonsense words "pigglety-pigglety." If they fit with the music, the tune is a jig.

"Kesh Jig" is a standard Irish jig that is still popular and is relatively straightforward. The key for my working up this (or any other) fast tune to speed, is to develop the style of playing known as "walking the fingers." This is nothing new, but just takes practice to develop accuracy. When "walking the fingers," forget about pinching with the thumb for a while -- that ol' thumb just slows you down. A good exercise to learn this technique is to remove your thumb from the "playing field" effectively by tucking it into your hand and only using your forefinger and middle finger to find the notes. (These two fingers are designated by the numbers "1" and "2" respectively in the tablature). It also helps to vary the angle of your picking hand slightly so that the two fingers can march or walk easily back and forth on the playing field of strings.

In the tablature, you may notice that I sometimes show different fingering patterns for playing similar passages. This is because I often vary the patterns as I play through a piece. The patterns are not "poured in concrete" -- they merely show possibilities.

THE INTERACTION LESSON: "KESH JIG"

Mike Herr
210 Reservoir Road
Beckley, WV 25801

Sometimes, as shown in the first note of the B part, I use a thumb strum to play the melody note and, of course, some others along with it. While this is less accurate than using a pluck, it helps to give a different sound and more fullness to the playing. Also to give a fuller sound, and to provide a little musical punctuation, I use a pinch on the last note of the B part.

During the spaces created by quarter notes (which get two counts), you can do any number of things. I sometimes leave this space filled by the sound of the preceding note. Other times, I fill the space with certain "licks" or "doodlely-do's." For example, a simple thumb strum can be used to fill the space, as shown in the tablature for the A part.

Another technique is to use a "roll" consisting of a quick upstroke with the thumb followed by a quick downstroke with the forefinger. You can see my tab symbol for this stroke in the B part where the two little strokes are shown in a bracket indicating that both should be played in one word of the count, or in the amount of time that would be given to one eighth note.

A more playful technique is to fill a space by adding a note to the melody line that works well with the notes be-

fore and after it. The passage labeled "Alternative B Part" shows how this might be done. The notes I have chosen are somewhat arbitrary -- you may find others that work as well, or better.

You don't have to leave the space filled by any sound. Instead, you can damp the strings by depressing the G, D, and C chord bars at the same time for a quick accent of silence. This is often very effective in creating exciting, interesting music.

The purpose of this lesson is not to have you play exactly the way I do. Rather, it's to help develop sequences of strokes in your own playing so that you can move easily and quickly from melody note to ornament and back to melody.

One last note on Irish music: All of the above ideas for filling in a space are valid and, I think, sound good. There are very few actual rules in Irish music, with the exception of not putting a roll, trill, or triplet on the last note of a phrase. This rule comes from the practice of fitting the music to the dance, and dancers never put a triplet on the last note. Otherwise, ornamentation is nearly always OK, with some being more OK than others. The idea is to mimic the dance, and one can improve the playing of Irish music by listening to Irish step dancers' feet and listening to their spaces and fill of the spaces.

Now, relax, play cleanly, and above all, have fun.



KESH JIG

Traditional
Arranged by J. Michael Herr

A

G / / / D G D / / G / C G / / / / C G / D C D

TAB : 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

G / / D G D / / G / C G / / / / C G D G

TAB 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 ~ :

B

G / / / / C / / G / / / / / / / D / / / G D

TAB : 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

G / / / / C / / G / / / / / D / G / / /

TAB 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 * ~ :

Alternative B Part:

B

G / / / / / C / / G / / / / / / / D / / / G D

TAB : 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2

G / / / / / C / / G / / C / / D / / G / / /

TAB 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 * ~ :

Electronic Pickups For the Autoharp

PART ONE

by Lindsay Haisley

Illustrated by Janet Harris

This article and its sequel in the next issue will be somewhat different from my previous articles dealing with music, music theory, or the limits of the autoharp. Several people of late have asked me about electronic pickups for autoharps, and since I have some experience in both building and using them, I'm going to delve into the technical details of building and wiring an electronic autoharp pickup.

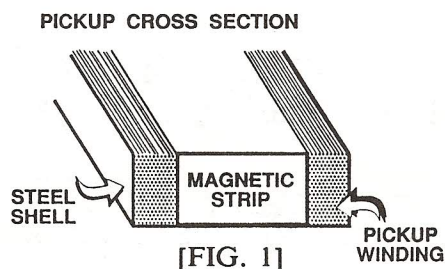
Since the Oscar Schmidt company discontinued its "E" lines with built in pick-ups, the only option for someone wanting to use an electronic autoharp pickup has been either to buy an OS add-on pickup or to make one from scratch. The former is by far the easiest option, and even though the OS add-on comes with its controls placed in an awkward position, the "guts" of the pickup (the magnetic strip, its wire windings and its shell) may easily be used independently from the controls. The latter may be built in at any convenient place on the instrument. As long as OS add-on pickups are available, there is no need for anyone wanting a simple standard pickup to endure the trials of do-it-yourself pickup making. However, the history of OS is one of ups and downs, and just in case we all have to start "rolling our own" again, I'm going to start by discuss-

ing the how-tos of electronic autoharp pickup winding.

Glen Peterson introduced autoharps with pickups to the general music market in 1975. The early pickups suffered from a number of problems, the most severe being that they were too short for the instrument by a quarter of an inch or so. The built-in pickup could be moved slightly toward the high or low sides of the instrument, but either way one of the outside strings (the low F or the highest C) would be under-represented in the output sound. My solution to this problem was to wind my own pickups, and I still regularly use the two that I made around that time.

A magnetic pickup works on a principle similar to that of the alternator in your car. A magnet placed under the metal strings of a 'harp surrounds them with its magnetic field. Since all the strings contain steel (the brass strings have a steel core) they likewise act as little magnets where they pass over the pickup, responding to the field around them. When played, their vibrating motion causes them to move alternately closer to and further from the pickup magnet, and the total magnetic field (string and magnet) varies accordingly. Physics tells us that an electric current is induced in a wire running through a changing magnetic field. By wrap-

ping many turns of wire around the pickup magnet, each adding to the induced current, enough electrical energy is built up to drive the input of an amplifier. Figure 1 shows a cross section of an autoharp pickup. Imagine strings running horizontally just above the pickup and you have the whole picture.



The ingredients required to build an autoharp pickup are a magnet, a wire winding around it, a steel shell to hold them both and concentrate the magnetic field, and a generous portion of patience.

The Shell

The steel shell of the pickup consists of a shallow sheet steel trough, open at the ends, which runs the full width of the strings and then some. The shell on an OS pickup is 9" long and 7/8" wide and is turned up at the edges about 1/8". It *must* be made of steel to conduct the magnetic field and allow it to be concentrated just below the strings. Standard OS pickups are easy to come by, and the steel shell is plainly visible for compari-

son. Tabs on the ends to fit under the chord bar holders are recommended, however they are not functionally necessary from an electronic standpoint.

The Magnet

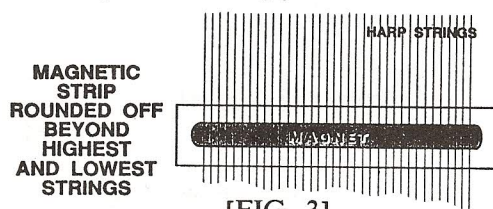
The magnetic material used in autoharp pickups should be reasonably easy to obtain from an industrial supplier in a medium-sized city. Just look up "magnets" in the yellow pages and let your fingers do the walking. The material you are looking for is nearly the same as the rubber magnetic strip material available in crafts shops (and from the same magnetic materials suppliers) for use in note-posters on refrigerators. However there is a subtle but very important difference between craft shop rubber magnetic strip material and the "right thing." If you cut a thin cross section of a rubber magnetic strip and use iron filings or some other method to view the magnetic field, you will see that most, if not all of the magnetic material used for refrigerator magnets actually consists of several different magnets laid side by side running the length of the strip with their poles on the strip faces, their polarity alternating across the strip. This makes the strip stick more tightly to your refrigerator, but makes it completely useless as a pickup magnet since the electrical currents induced by the several side-by-side magnetic regions cancel each other out. Figure 2 shows how the magnetic fields of different kinds of magnetic strip material are arranged. The material you use for a pickup *must* have what is called a *dipole cross section*, which is to say that it must have a *single* north pole on one side of the strip and a corresponding *single* south pole on

the other side of the strip. Commonly available rubber magnetic material which I have seen is either quadrupole (two magnets) or octapole (four magnets).

MAGNETIC STRIP MATERIAL

[FIG. 2]

The strip you use should be about 1/2" wide and about 1/16" thick, common for such material. Cut a length, rounded at the ends, so that the length of the strip *excluding the rounded ends* extends from the highest to the lowest string on your autoharp (see Figure 3). If you want to slant your pickup across the strings (more on that later), you should make your magnetic strip and your steel shell longer accordingly.



[FIG. 3]

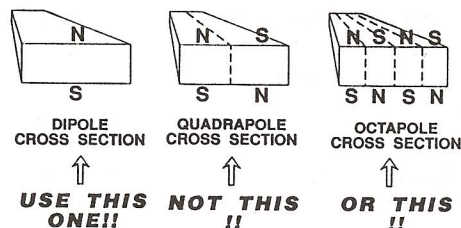
The Wire

The coil around your magnet should be made of 38 AWG enameled wire. A small (1/4 pound) roll will be enough for two or three pickups, depending on how careful you are in your winding. You can buy or order this wire at any good electronics supply shop. Don't bother with Radio Shack. They won't have it. Most small cities have at least one electronics supplier which caters to TV repair shops, ham radio folks, serious do-it-yourselfers and the like. You'll be surprised at how tiny 38 gauge wire is. Handle it with care. It is literally hair-thin and breaks at

least as easily.

The Patience

Now comes the fun! Winding a pickup is a very delicate operation. The first thing I did when I wound my pickups

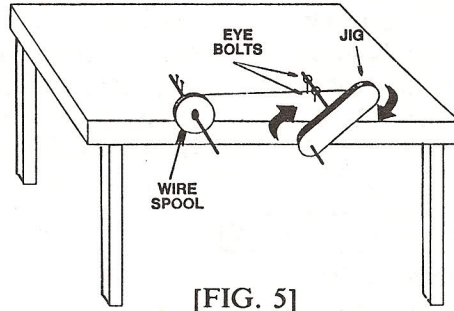


was to make myself a winding jig. This is not difficult. The jig consists of a couple of pieces of wood about 1/4" x 1" x 9", rounded on the ends and with the all edges severely sanded so that there are *no* corners or edges on which a tiny wire might catch. Drill a hole in the middle of one piece and glue a substantial (1 foot or so) piece of 3/8" wooden dowel into the hole. Sand the other side smooth so that no trace of the dowel protrudes. This dowel will run through a couple of eye bolts screwed into your working surface in such a fashion that the wooden jig face can hang out over the edge of your table or workbench and spin like a propeller in the eye bolts. Drill a similar hole near the end of the second jig piece and glue in a short (about 1" or 2") piece of dowel to act as a turning handle. Again, none of this dowel must protrude beyond the inner surface.

Next, make a "sandwich" with the magnetic strip, placing it between two sheets of waxed paper and then between the sides of the jig. Trim off the waxed paper to about the size of the jig faces, drill two or three very small holes through the jig, the paper and the magnet. Fasten the lot together with several very small machine screws and nuts -- the kind they sell in the

hardware section at the store at which you bought your wire. These screws and the holes through which they pass should probably be no more than 1/8" in diameter or so to avoid drilling out any more of the magnetic strip than is absolutely necessary. The screws should be tightened securely so that the thin 38 gauge wire can at no place slip down between the magnet and the adjacent wax paper. Figure 4 shows the result.

hold the spool of wire. Place the jig in the eye bolts, the spool of wire on the second dowel and run the end of the wire between the sides of the jig and along the magnet, as shown in Figure 5. Allow about 6" of wire to extend beyond the end of the jig and tape this free end to the outside of the jig with Scotch tape.



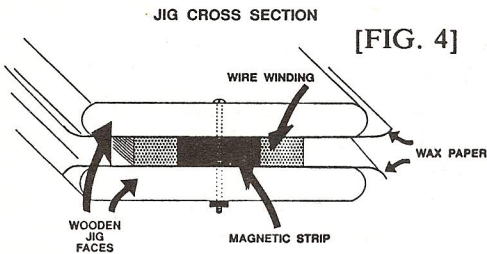
[FIG. 5]

the glue and the wood, which would prove disastrous! *Be careful!* If you break the wire, which is easy to do, you will have to start all over. Once you get a feeling for the winding process, it should go fairly smoothly.

Now begins the winding process. Start turning the jig, guiding the wire with your hand between the jig faces around and around the magnetic strip. About every fifty turns or so place several drops of Elmer's glue evenly around the developing coil. This will insure that the coil will stay in place once the jig is removed. The waxed paper will prevent contact between

Wind approximately *eight hundred* turns of wire around the magnet. Cut the wire and tape the second end to the jig just beside (and at the same end as) the inside wire. Be sure to keep track of which end is which, since the outside end will be the grounded end when the pickup is connected into its circuit. Let the whole thing dry at least overnight before removing the screws from the jig. The waxed paper should peel easily from the glue and wire, leaving a thin, tight package of magnet and coil no more than 3/32" thick.

Glue the magnet and coil into the shell with epoxy, or some other non-solvent glue. Solvent glues, such as Duco cement, can dissolve the enamel on the wire, allowing the windings to short to each other and to the shell and ruining the pickup. Finally, cover the magnet and wire winding with a piece of wide plastic stretch tape cut wide enough to cover the magnet and wire without lapping over the edges of the shell. ■



[FIG. 4]

If possible, fasten another section of dowel rod about a foot along your workbench parallel to the turning axis of your jig. This will be used to

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■ In the next issue, Lindsay will address the details of connecting a pickup to an improved on-board volume and tone control circuit.



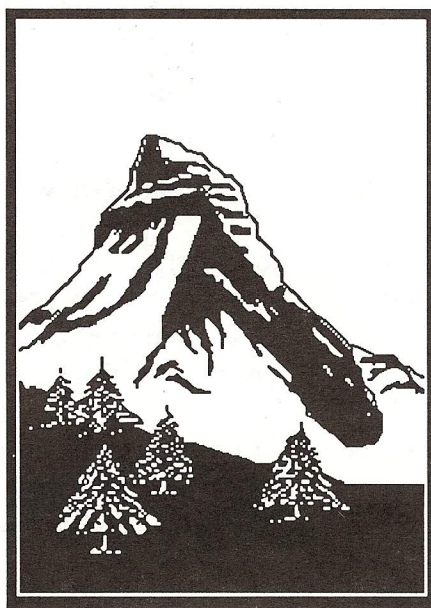
Go Tell It On the Mountain (2)

↓
 F FF Dm F F /
 When I was a learn - er,
 F Bm Bm Dm C F //
 I sought both night and day,
 FF F Am Dm F F /
 I asked the Lord to help me,
 F Dm Dm Bm Bm C / C7 /
 And He showed me the way - ,
 Chorus:
 F / [F C7][BbBb] F / F /
 Go tell it on the moun - tain;
 [C7C7] C7 C7 F F F Bb F
 O - ver the hills and ev' - ry where - ;
 F / [F C7][BbBb] F / F
 Go tell it on the moun - tain;
 F F F [C7 F] C7 F // /
 That Je - sus Chri - st is born.

He made me a watchman
 Upon the city wall,
 And if I am a Christian,
 I am the least of all. Chorus:

While shepherds kept their watching;
 O'er wand'ring flock by night,
 Behold! From out the Heavens
 There shone a holy light. Chorus:

And lo, when they had seen it,
 They all bowed down and prayed,
 Then traveled on together,
 To where the Babe was laid. Chorus:



Sweet Betsy From Pike (2)

↓
 G G G G G D7 D7 D7 G G G / G G G G G D D D D7 /
 Oh, don't you re - mem - ber sweet Bet - sy from Pike, Who climbed the tall moun - tain with her lov - er, Ike,
 D7 G G G D D G C G C G / G G G G G D7 D7 D7 G G G /
 With two yoke of ox - en, a large yel - low dog, A tall Shang - hai roos - ter and one spot - ted hog.
 Chorus [G D7] G G G G D7 D7 D7 G G G / G G G D7 D7 D7 G G G /
 Sing - in' Too - ral lal loo - ral lal loo - ral lal la. Too - ral lal loo - ral lal loo - ral lal la.

Their wagon broke down with a terrible crash,
 And out on the prairie rolled all kinds of trash,
 A few little baby clothes done up with care,
 Twas rather suspicious, though all on the square. Chorus:

The Shanghai ran off and their cattle all died.
 That morning the last piece of bacon was dried.
 Poor Ike was discouraged and Betsy got mad.
 The dog drooped his tail and looked wondrously sad. Chorus:

She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain (2)

↓
 C F C C C CF C C C C / C C C /
 She'll be com - in' round the moun - tain when she comes, when she comes.
 C G7 C C C C C C G7 C G7 / G7 G7 G7 /
 She'll be com - in' round the moun - tain when she comes, when she comes.
 C G7 C C C C G7 C C CF F F F G7 F
 She'll be com - in' round the moun - tain, she'll be com - in' round the moun - tain,
 G7 F C C C G7 C G7 C G7 C / F F C /
 She'll be com - in' round the moun - tain when she comes, when she comes.
 She'll be ridin' six white horses when she comes, when she comes .
 She'll be ridin' six white horses when she comes, when she comes .
 She'll be ridin' six white horses, She'll be ridin' six white horses,
 She'll be ridin' six white horses when she comes, when she comes .

We will kill the old red rooster when she comes,
 Yak, yak! -- etc.

We will all have chicken and dumplin's when she
 comes, Yum yum! -- etc.

We'll be singin' "Hallelujah!" when she comes,
 when she comes. -- etc.

She'll be shinin' just like silver when she comes,
 when she comes. -- etc.

She'll be breathin' smoke an' fire when she comes,
 when she comes. -- etc.

We will all go out to meet her when she comes,
 Hi, Babe! -- etc.

They soon reached the desert, where Betsy gave out,
 And down in the sand she lay rolling about;
 While Ike, half distracted, looked on with surprise,
 Saying, Betsy, get up, you'll get sand in your eyes. Chorus:

Sweet Betsy got up in a great deal of pain,
 Declared she'd go back to Pike County again;
 But Ike gave a sigh, and they fondly embraced,
 And they traveled along with his arm 'round her waist. Chorus:



Autoharp Songbook

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Londonderry Air (2)

↓
 D7 G D7G//D7G C G G D7 C C//
 Would God I were a ten-der ap-ple blos--som
 G G D7 G//C G G G G A7//D7
 That floats and falls from off the twist-ed bough,
 D7G D7 G//D7 G C G G D7 C C//
 To lie and faint with-in your silk-en bo-som,
 D7 C D7 G//C G D7 C D7 G////
 With-in your bo--som as-that does now.
 G C D7G//D7D7 C G C GGG//
 Or would I were a lit-tle bur-nished ap-ple,
 G C D7G//D7 D7 C G G A7//D7
 For you to pluck me gli-ning by so cold,
 D7 D7 D7 G//D7 D7 C C C GGG//
 While sun and shade your robe of lawn will dap-ple
 D7 C D7 G C G G D7 C C D7 G////
 Your robe of lawn-and your hair's-spun-gold.

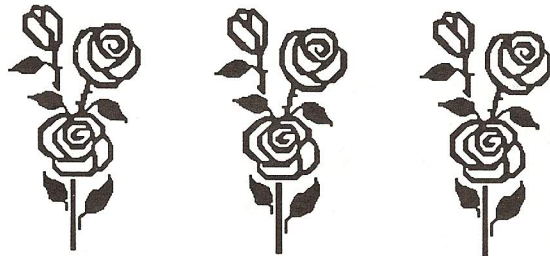
Rose of Tralee (3)

↓
 C C [F] C C [G7] C F F F F C
 The pale moon was ri-sing a-bove the green moun-tain,
 C G7[F] G7 C C C D7[G] D7 G7/
 The sun was de-clin-ing be-neath the blue sea.
 [G7 G7] C [F] C C [G7] C F F F F C
 When I strayed with my love to the pure cry-stal foun-tain
 C G7[G7] G7 C C F C C G7 C/
 That stands in the beau-ti-ful vale of Tra-lee.
 [C G7] C C G7 Am/[AmEm] F F F C C
 She was love-ly and fair as the rose of the sum-mer,
 Am Am Am Dm Am Am Dm Am/[Dm] Em Am/
 Yet, 'twas not her beau-ty a-lone that won me.
 G7 C [F] C C [G7] C F F F F C
 Oh no, 'twas the truth in her eye ev-er dawn-ing,
 C G7[G7] G7 C C F C C G7 C/
 That made me love Ma-ry, the rose of Tra-lee.

↓
 C C G7 C D7D7D7/ F G7 F G7 C/C/
 As the black bird in the spring, 'Neath the wil-low tree-
 C C G7 CD7 D7 D7/ F G7 F G7 C///
 Sat and piped, I heard him sing, Sing-ing Au-ra Lee.
 C C C/ Am Am Am /C G7F G7 C///
 Aura Lee, Au-ra Lee! Maid of gold-en hair!
 C C F C D7 D7 D7 D7 F G7 F G7 C///
 Sun-shine came a-long with thee, And swal-lows in the air.

The Last Rose of Summer (3)

↓
 [F C7] F [F C] [Bb F] F F [F C7] [F F] F [C7 F] F/
 Tis the last rose-of-sum-mer, left-blo-o-ming a-lone
 [F C7] F [F C7] [Bb F] F F [F C7] [F F] F [C7 F] F/
 All her love-ly com-pan-ions, are-fad-ed and-gone.
 [F F] F [/C7] [Bb F] F F [F F] Dm [/C7] [Dm Am] Dm C7
 No-flow-ers of her kind-dred, No-rose-but is-high-
 [F C7] F [F C7] [Bb F] F F [F C7] [F F] F [C7 F] F/
 To re-flect back-her-blush-es, or-give--sigh for sigh.
 [F C7] F [F C7] [Bb F] F F [F C7] [F F] F [C7 F] F/
 Where thy mates of-the-gar-den, lie-scent-less and die.



The Yellow Rose of Texas (2)

↓
 [C D7] C C C C F C/
 There's a yel-low rose in Tex-as
 D7 C C C D7 C//
 I'm go-in for to see,
 C C C C C C D7/C D7 C D7 C D7//
 No oth-er fel-la knows her, no-bo-dy, on-ly me.
 D7 C C C C F C/
 She cried so when I left her,
 D7 C C C D7 C//
 It al-most broke my heart,
 F F F F F C D7 C C C C D7 C//
 And if we ev-er meet a-gain, we nev-er more shall part.
 She's the sweetest little rose bud this fella ever knew,
 Her eyes are bright as diamonds, they sparkle like the dew.
 You may talk about your Clementine and sing of Rosalie,
 But the Yellow Rose of Texas beats the belles of Tennessee.

Aura Lee (2)

On her cheek the rose was born, Music when she spake;
 In her eyes the rays of morn Sudden splendor break.
 Aura Lee, Aura Lee! Maid of golden hair!
 Sunshine came along with thee, And swallows in the air.

Action is the ease, smoothness, and travel distance of autoharp chord bars when they are depressed. Bar action should be quick, easy, smooth, and silent. Speed of play, noise reduction and minimum hand and arm fatigue are the principal benefits of good action.

Our objectives in action adjustment are: (1) to reduce bar travel to the minimum without interfering with the strings; (2) to minimize spring pressure (resistance) needed to return the bar to its resting position; (3) to eliminate any source of friction, catching, or irregular travel of the bars.

In Part One, we repaired the open-bar type 'harp, (e.g. the fifteen bar instrument). Part Two will address the action of bars in 'harps with bar covers.

BARS... Where The Action Is

PART
TWO

by Dr. George Orthey

On to a new bar. Get out your Oscar 21, and hum a few verses of "How Dry I Am." The open bar discussed and enjoyed in the last issue was simple and easy. With OSI plastic covers, it's harder. (Cover charge?) Noise suppression is again closely related to action correction.

The way these 'harps are set up, the chord buttons hold the bar position downward and the springs hold them up in whatever slap-dash position they may take. The lower tier

buttons (minors) usually hold the bars close at the base and way off the strings at the treble and the upper tiers (majors) are just the reverse. In almost all cases there is over all 1/8" to 1/4" travel of the button to get contact. Someone once told me "The sounds of the chord bars remind me of a construction company setting up for business on a Monday morning."

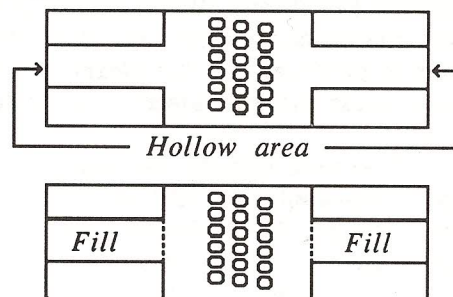
The first thing we must do is to get the chord bars to lie in the proper position essentially independent of the chord buttons. This position relative to the string bed is exactly the same as described in Part One for open bar 'harps. (Note: if you don't know the chord bar arrangement, write it down before you take it apart. Also, when

you take the chord bars off, be sure they have identification on them. Mark them so you can easily get them back in the right place.)

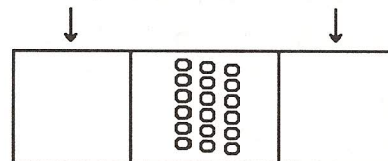
Take your cover off and remove all the buttons. Lay the buttons in order on a flat pan, making it easier to get them back in place.

You will notice on the inside of your beautiful decorator cover there is a hollow from end to end of the cover. This hollow needs to be filled in so the area above and

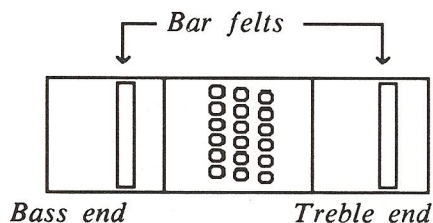
below the chord button area is flat.



Put silicone glue in the hollow areas to make them level with the adjacent area. Now lay a sheet of wax paper on the silicone glue and a flat square of wood on top of that. When the glue sets up by the next day, you will have these two areas essentially flat:



Remove the wood blocks and wax paper. By trial and error based on a good guess, place two strips of bar felt across the under side of the cover as shown.

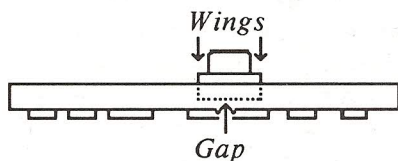


Now you understand why we had to make that area flat. We need to have this bar felt lie flat across. I use the self adhesive on the felt to keep it in place. Don't press it tightly. Just put it in place enough that it will stay, but can be removed. Put the cover in place without the buttons, just the bars on the 'harp. Look through under the cover to see the set of bars. Since the cover slopes closer to the bars at the ends, the bar height can be adjusted by how close to the ends of the cover you set the strips of felt. Move the felt if necessary



to the locations that give you the right bar height above the strings at each end. When you find the exact spot for the felts to give you correct clearance, press them in place firmly.

When you put the buttons back in place, you will find there is a good bit of play between the buttons and the bars/cover. This must be corrected by build up of the button base and/or bar groove.



This gap must be reduced. Build-up in this gap should be slightly cushioned so it won't rattle, and sufficient in thickness to bring the button up so the "wings" just bear on the padding under the cover.

I start the build-up by gluing a narrow strip of double thick felt to the bottom edge of the button base.

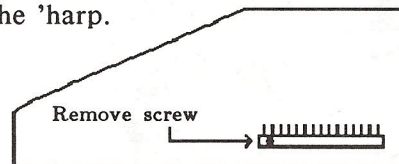


To do this, put a layer of contact cement on the bottom edge of the button. Then touch it while still wet to a 1/8" x 1" strip of felt. This sticks the felt on without saturating and hardening it with glue.

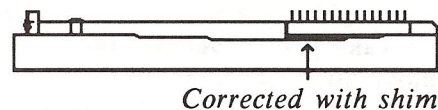
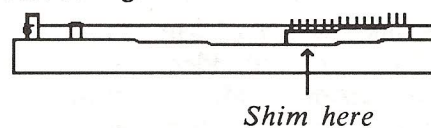
To determine the amount of additional build-up needed, put it all together and check the bar clearance again to be sure it's all right. Press each bar down with its button and let it up gently so the button comes up, but still sits in the bottom of the bar groove. With a fine point felt tip pen, make a mark on the side of the button even with the face of the cover. Now grip the button and raise it so the wings just bear against the under side of the cover. Make another mark on the side of

the button. The distance between these two marks is the amount of fill you still need between the button base and the bottom of the bar groove. Using strips of cardboard, wood veneer, or paper match body, build up a layer in the bottom of the bar groove equal to the correction determined by the two pen marks you made on the side of the button. The correction should be about the same for each button in the same tier. The correction will be slightly more in the tier toward the treble than in the tier of minors toward the bass because of the slope of the chord bar.

You should also note here that if your 'harp has a bow so that the action is different at one side of the chord bar set than at the other, a correction will be necessary to make the action uniform on all the bars. This correction can be done in either of two ways. First, you can remove the cover and chord bars, and the screw through the chord bar bass end comb nearest the middle of the 'harp.

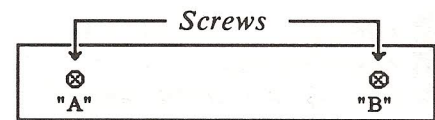


Place a shim under the comb and metal clip to raise the comb so it is parallel to the bass string.

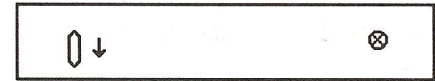


Then re-assemble. This should correct the action variance.

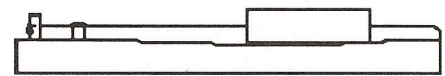
A second way you can make the correction is to change the hole in the cover alone, not the comb, is raised at that same corner.



Just take "A" and make the hole in the cover a slot rather than a hole.



Make the slot extend downward from the original hole. Raise this corner of the cover up until the cover is exactly on a plane with the strings. The cover will sit like this:



It is normally not necessary to make any correction at the treble end since there is no significant bow to the 'harp body up there on the short edge.

You will note that with all this muxing about, we have not only shortened and made the action uniform, but we have also added felt between chord bars and cover, and between buttons and bars. The result being not only excellent action, but a noise reduction of the construction company to some thumping and mumbling of workers down under the cover.

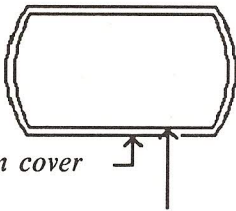
I have not normally found it necessary to make changes in the springs or chord bars to improve action or noise. The bar and comb system is inherently quiet and smooth once the cover and bar travel corrections are made.

One additional correction that is more noise related than action related is replacing the under cover foam cushion with silicone glue and double thick felt. Eight years ago when I routinely used the OSI 21-bar kit on my new 'harps, I always replaced the foam pad with felt. It's simply quieter, and

more durable.

Remove all of the foam pad and its adhesive from the inside of the bar cover. Lightly sand the flat area that you will cover (same area you removed the foam pad from). Use a medium to coarse sand paper -- just enough to rough the surface. Cut a piece of double thick felt cloth large enough to cover this area. Put a wet coat of silicone glue on one face of the felt. Place the piece (glue face down, of course) onto the inside of the cover. Smooth it in place so it is glued firmly with no air pockets between the felt and plastic. Allow it to set up over night.

Now the tedious part, cutting the holes through the silicone and felt. I now use a tool steel die made for this purpose to cut out the felt and silicone in the perfect button shape with one smack. Before I had a die, I used a small curved chisel and small straight chisel to cut the felt out. Wood carving or leather working tools work well for this. Careful work with an X-acto knife and small cuticle scissors will do too. Anyway, the object is to cut the hole in the felt and silicone slightly smaller than the hole through the plastic cover.



Hole in cover

Felt and silicone cut slightly smaller than the cover hole

This allows the chord button to ride only against felt and silicone and it is absolutely silent. Place the cover over a piece of wood so you cut through the hole, through the felt, against the block of wood. This will prevent you from tearing the felt away

from the back of your cover while giving you good clean cuts through the felt.

now you have done away with the heavy machinery of the construction company. You've seen the bright lights, heard the loud noises. Relax. Enjoy. All your bars are closed and quiet. ■



Luthier's Tip
Shimming
Tuning Peg Holes

In the article, "The Doctor is In" (AQ April '89), loose tuning pins were discussed. Here's a tip to aid you when solving the problem.

Place shim in pin hole as described in the article. Push a 1 1/2" #8 screw into the hole beside the shim. This will hold the shim in position until the glue sets. In an hour, the screw can be easily removed with a screw driver. Replace the pin according to the article. ■

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Sacred 'Harp

Submitted by
Janette Carter

The Mount Vernon United Methodist Church in Hiltons, Virginia was built in the year 1906 on land donated by Mr. Rufus Bays. Trees were dug out of Clinch Mountain and were taken to Bill Vermillion's to be sawed into lumber. There is no family in Maces Springs which didn't help in some way with the church.

To name a few of the older generation -- Squire Delaney, John Neal, Rufus Bays, Lish and Robert Carter, Charlie and Will Flanders, Flint Bays, Crockett Vicars, Charlie Vermillion, Ike Dennison, John Moore, Ingle Barker, the Harpers, Hensleys, Hiltons, and Shaffers. All families helped. The women cooked and even children did their part.

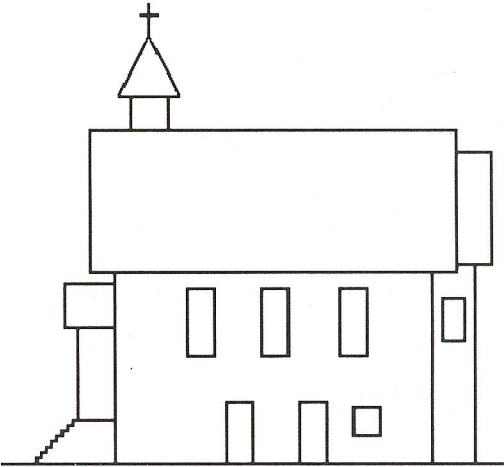
The first service was the third Sunday in October, 1906. The first pastor was Baker

Leonard. The first church member was Zura Vicars. She was blind and had to be led in and out of the church. She came shouting and left the same way. She loved the Lord! The first person buried at the church was Freddie Fugate.

Five generations of Carters have attended this beautiful, sacred spot -- to be saved, join the church, marry, have babies christened, and last of all, to be buried. This quiet, peaceful spot is nestled among the tall pines on a lone-some hill.

The church has touched the lives of all who have ever lived here in Poor Valley. Even strangers who visit A. P. Carter's grave are touched by its beauty.

The church is a cornerstone of this valley -- a place to go to worship, pray, and have fellowship with your neighbors on Sunday. ■



UNCLOUDED DAY

O they tell me of a home far beyond the skies,
O they tell me of a home far away,
O they tell me of a home where no storm-clouds rise,
O they tell me of an unclouded day.

Chorus:

O they tell me of a home where my friends have gone,
O they tell me of that land far away;
Where the tree of life in eternal bloom,
Sheds its fragrance thro' the unclouded day.

Chorus:

O they tell me of the King in His beauty there,
And they tell me that mine eyes shall behold;
Where He sits on the throne that is whiter than snow,
In the city that is made of gold.

Chorus:

O they tell me that He smiles on His children there,
And His smile drives their sorrow all away;
And they tell me that no tears ever come again,
In that lovely land of unclouded day.

Chorus:

UNCLOUDED DAY

Count: 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Words and Music by Rev. J. K. Alwood

G / / / / / / / D7 / C / G / / /
 O they / tell me of a home far be - yond the skies, O they

TAB * * * * * ↓ ↓ * *

/ / / / / / / D7 / / / / /
 tell me of a home far a - way; O they

TAB * * * * * ↓ ↓ * * ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ * *

G / / / / / / / D7 / C / G / C /
 tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise, O they

TAB * * * * * ↓ ↓ * * * ↓ ↓ * ↓ ↓ * *

FINE. CHORUS

G / / / D7 / G / D7 / / / G / C /
 tell me of an un - cloud - ed day. O the

TAB * * * * * ↓ ↓ * * * ↓ ↓ * ↓ ↓ * ↓ ↓ *

G / / / / / / / / / C /
 land of cloud - less day, O the

TAB * ↓ ↓ * ↓ ↓ * ↓ ↓ * ↓ ↓ * ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ * *

D.S.

G / / / D7 / G / / / D7 / / /
 land of an un - cloud - ed day;

TAB * ↓ ↓ * * * ↓ ↓ * * * ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↗

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* = Pinch ↓ = Strum ↓ = Downscratch ↗ = Long Strum □ = Rhythm Bracket (Play all actions in one word of count)

HARPERS-AT-LARGE

On-The-Spot Reports from Festivals, Concerts,
Workshops, and other Autoharp Events

**Festival: Mid-Summer Grass
Valley Bluegrass Festival**
Place: Grass Valley, CA



Reporting:
Bill Bryant
Grizzly Flats, CA

Well, the 7th annual Mid-Summer Bluegrass Festival is over. But it won't soon be forgotten! The chorded zither was well presented with the top-of-the-line performers, Bryan Bowers, Judie Pagter, and Harvey Reid. Their shows were evenly distributed over the weekend.

Two workshops offered a wealth of information to take home and work on. The jam sessions, at times, were unbelievable, with guests like Carl Pagter, (Country Ham), and Steve Young joining Laura Newton and her friends from Las Vegas. Barbara Larson and my wife and I came from this area, and countless others dropped by for a while. How can you not have a fantastic time!

In my opinion, the high point of our jam session on Saturday night was the unexpected visit of Homer Welty, luthier of oversize chorded zithers. Homer hails from Oregon, and brought with him two that appeared to be more than four feet long! Being so different from our

conventional 'harps, we all took turns playing them, sometimes serious, sometimes giddy (because of the extra height over our head, one had the sensation that someone was pulling back on the top!). Unaccustomed to such an unusual instrument, many of us were still able to play Homer's 'harps without much difficulty. The button arrangement was different, and the feel of the buttons was new to me. It was a wonderful experience, thanks to Homer, and to his daughter for bringing him! I personally look forward to seeing Homer again!

We received two reports of this festival, and are happy to print them both.
--Editors

Reporting: Laura Newton
Las Vegas, NV

The bluegrass festival traditionally known as Mid-Summer Grass Valley, was held over the Labor Day weekend this year. This later date provided welcomed pleasant weather in this beautiful setting of pine trees in Northern California. The Grass Valley location is always a treat because of the autoharp attendance, and this festival was no exception. It was, happily, another "gathering of the clan." There were plenty of late-night jams with even hard-core bluegrassers taking notice. People later stopped me and said, "You're one of those 'harpers, aren't you." Since this wasn't said in a threatening manner, I took it as positive input. Do you sup-

pose the 'harp is finally starting to be taken seriously in non-'harp circles?

Bryan Bowers was on stage. What more can be said or printed about Bryan? He was, as always, superb. He was unable to present his workshop due to an emergency, but Bill Bryant filled in for him very effectively.

Judie Pagter sparkled playing with Country Ham. I especially enjoy her old-time music style. Bryan joined Judie and the band on stage for a beautiful rendition of "Angel Band." What a treat!

Harvey Reid was great on stage, including autoharp with his flawless guitar performances. He also presented an informative workshop fielding questions and elaborating on his ideas for mics and amplification of the 'harp.

I went home a happy autoharper, anxious for next year.

Concert: Roz Brown
Place: Buckhorn Exchange
Restaurant, Denver, CO



Reporting: Kathy Ferguson
Fairfax, VA

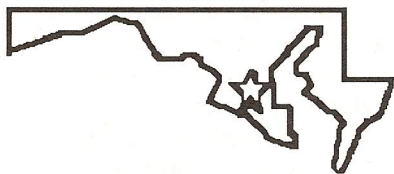
During a recent trip to Denver Colorado, I spent a delightful evening attending Roz Brown's performance at the Buckhorn Exchange Restaurant. Perched on a stool at the end of the barroom, Roz played the autoharp, sang songs, recited western poetry, and demonstrated his skill with limberjacks. His talented limberjack, Tim, clogs, does the split, dances on his knees, break dances, and moon walks. Roz's repertoire included sea and western songs, children's songs, train songs, Caribbean and Australian songs, folk, and

and gospel songs. For each type of song, he wore an appropriate hat. For the "Wabash Cannonball" and "Daddy, What's a Train," he wore a striped engineer's hat and passed out train whistles for the audience to blow.

Roz played "Fiddlers Green," "Home Dearie Home," and "Hills of Isle AuHaut" from his new cassette. My favorite was "Daisy A Day," which couldn't help but touch the romantic in anyone. There were several children in the audience, and they joined in his "Puff, the Magic Dragon." Roz added a new last verse where Johnny comes back to see Puff and they renew their friendship. (It was nice to have a happy ending instead of leaving poor Puff all alone in the cave forever.)

The cozy setting, variety of material, Roz's singing and playing talent and infectious good humor guarantee a fun evening. When you're in Denver, catch his show. It's great.

Campout: 9th Annual Labor Day Family Musical Weekend
Place: Cedarville State Forest, Brandywine, MD



This campout, jointly sponsored by the Dulcimer Disorganization of Greater Washington and Hammers and Noters Dulcimer Society, occupied Loop D of the state forest on Labor Day weekend.

Saturday afternoon workshops were held on beginning and intermediate autoharp, as well as lap and hammered dulcimer. Lois Parks taught the beginning autoharp class, with the use of charts. She explained chord relationships and the circle of 5ths. Mike King taught the intermediate

autoharp class with handouts of "Simple Gifts," "I'll Fly Away," and a very nice arrangement of "Farther Along."

After a dinner, the group gathered for the open stage. Sunday, those who camped overnight gathered for several hours of delightful and inspiring gospel singing.

These campouts are always a treat. Next one will be Memorial Day Weekend. Attend it if possible.



Cheryl and Ray Bellinger performing at a Florida festival.

Festival: Old-Time Country Music Contest and Pioneer Exposition of Arts and Crafts
Place: Avoca, IA



Reporting: Dora Miller
Newton, IA

The 16th annual festival was held at the Pottawamie County Fairgrounds in Avoca, Iowa from August 28 to September 2. It was complete with workshops and contests for over thirty different instruments.

This year I arrived on Monday night to get a good camping spot near the Farmers' Market and under the beautiful big shade trees. Tuesday

morning I set up the Autoharp Center. The afternoon was spent visiting and jamming with friends. There was an Early Bird Show that night with the people that had come early and wanted to be on stage. Later, there was more jamming.

Wednesday the Center was open and we played autoharp cassettes and videos to people who came by. The Orthey Instruments booth was set up next to the Center.

Mike Fenton was on the Early Bird Show that night. He had the audience laughing and singing with him.

Friday afternoon, we had a great jam session at the Center. After supper, Mike had his Children's Hands-On Workshop. Oscar Schmidt had sent five of the small 'harps to use. There were also two adults at the workshop that had bought 'harps after arriving at the festival. It was a great experience and every one really enjoyed it. Dr. Orthey, Drew Smith, and Laurie Sky also gave workshops during the weekend.

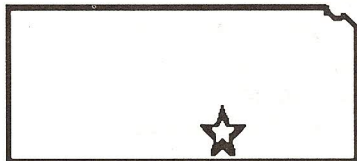
The next two days were busy at the Center. Sixty people signed the Center's book, and twenty-one made it for the group picture.

The winner of the autoharp contest was Kathy Wintermyer; second place, Drew Smith; third place, Idabel Brandt; fourth place, John Fleckenstien; and fifth place, Carroll Pace. This year the winner had first choice of a Mountain Laurel 'Harp or an Oscar Schmidt Professional Series Autoharp.

The autoharp has been growing so much at the festival that next year, we will share our own building with the lap and hammered dulcimers.

Bob Everhart works hard to bring in some of the best of traditional music.

**Festival: 20th Annual
Walnut Valley Festival
Place: Winfield, Kansas**



Reporting: Alex Usher
Webster Groves, MO

What is it that makes a festival so memorable, I wonder? I've been to many through the years. Some I can hardly remember, but others still bring poignant memories. The best ones seem to breed a feeling of comradeship, a peaceable kingdom of acceptance and encouragement for all the playing participants. When the festival ends, there is a sadness tempered by the promise of a joyful reunion the next year, and a quiet resolve to become the performer you know you can be -- to personalize what you have absorbed.

I had never been to the Walnut Valley Festival before. I had heard that it was big, popular, and that the instrumental competitions were the toughest in the country. We had been warned to get there a week in advance if we expected to get a good site with water and electric hook-ups. It all sounded pretty overwhelming, but with a free pass, I could hardly turn down the chance to check it out.

We discovered when we got there on Friday afternoon that Jack and Mary Ann Johnston --- remember them from the registration desk at the Mountain Laurel Gathering? -- had been in the original land-rush group of 125 vehicles waiting at the gate when the campgrounds opened the previous morning. They and the Ortheys had staked out a fine claim for Otter Harp Heaven,

which served as a central gathering spot for 'harpers to jam and chat as the week went by. The evenings were pleasantly spent in jam sessions.

The balmy pre-festival days turned abruptly cold and cloudy for Thursday, the opening day of the festival. I ran my fingers over the 1/8" layer of frost on the car hood in the morning chill and wondered how it would be to play in the 'harp competition with gloves on.

By 11:30 AM, a group of nervous hopefuls were clustered outside Stage 4 to draw for playing order numbers. There are really no losers at Winfield -- just to reach the level of competing there is an achievement in itself -- but try to tell that to the contestants who are eyeing the prizes and the prestige of being the Winfield Champion. I would have hated to be a judge, for there was one fine performance after another, but somehow they managed to pick the five finalists, then the three winners. (See page 3 for more about the contest.)

The rest of the day I flipped from one to another of the four stages sampling the Winfield musical menu. Most of it is country western and bluegrass fare, but there's a good measure of old-time, folk, and Irish music as well.

When your ears start to wear out, you can duck under the grandstand and amuse your eyes with all the craft displays.

The Orthey Instruments and *Autoharp Quarterly* booths were the places to hear and/or join in some informal picking, and to check the schedule of autoharp events. For us 'harpers there was almost always an autoharp concert -- or workshop -- to attend. Autoharp performers included Bryan Bowers, Mike Fenton, The Bill Sky Family, Cathy

Barton, John McCutcheon, Roz Brown, and Julie Davis. Since the performers repeat their sets over the course of the three and a half days, there's no chance of missing your favorites while you take in some of the other competitions on guitar, banjo, fiddle, mandolin, and lap and hammered dulcimer.

Hands-on 'harp workshops were organized throughout the weekend by AQ and Orthey Instruments at Otter Harp Heaven. Bryan Bowers, Mike Fenton, Laurie Sky, Julie Davis, Tom Schroeder, and the current five Winfield winners -- Ivan Stiles, Les Gustafson-Zook, Alan Mager, Mike Herr, and Bob Lewis were the instructors. Each of the well-attended workshops was timed to occur between stage performances.

Walnut Valley sponsors a creative campsite contest, so in the morning before the stage events began, it was fun to walk around this temporary city of some one thousand campsites, and grin at some of the decorations.

The management thinks of everything here. You can take a free shuttle bus to town to take a shower or pick up groceries, drop off your kid at the child care center, or visit your dog at a local boarding kennel. They even have a temporary post office on the grounds offering a special Walnut Valley cancellation.

There was only one thing missing -- walnut trees! Imagine that! Walnut Valley without walnut trees! (I later found it is named for the turgid Walnut River that meanders through the grounds.)

Winfield -- now that is an appropriate name. I intend to be there again for September 17, 18, 19, 20, 1992 unless I wear myself off up to the arm-pits getting ready for the event.

**Festival: 12th Annual
Tennessee Fall Homecoming**
Place: Museum of Appalachia,
Norris, TN
Staff Report



This three day pioneer craft/country and old-time music festival is a treat for crafters, historians, and music lovers alike. Integrated in a huge field with pioneer crafts are three music stages packed full of country and old-time music performers. This year's performers of interest to autoharpers were: Janette and Joe Carter; Tom and Mary Morgan; Judie Pagter; The Bill Sky Family; The Stewart Family; and Ron Wall.



Tom and Mary Morgan



Joe and Janette Carter

This annual celebration has something to offer for every member of the family. It is held completely outside, and it would be worth your while



The Stewart Family



The Bill Sky Family



Judie Pagter

to come prepared for the elements. A folding chair is also a must if you plan to spend the day.

PRO-FILES

Continued from page 13

February 24
Palmdale Village
San Benito, TX
February 25
Chimney Park
Mission, TX

February 26
La Feria Park
La Feria, TX
February 27
Sleepy Valley
Mission, TX
February 28
Pleasant Valley
Mission, TX
February 29
Alamo Rose Resort
Alamo, TX
March 1
Llano Grande
Mercedes, TX
March 2
Citrus Park
Edinburg, TX
March 4
Pine to Palm
Weslaco, TX
March 5
North Bentson Palms
Mission, TX
March 6
Oleander Acres
Mission, TX
March 7
Fiesta Village
Mission, TX
March 8
Victoria Palms
Donna, TX
March 20
Taylor, MI

IVAN STILES

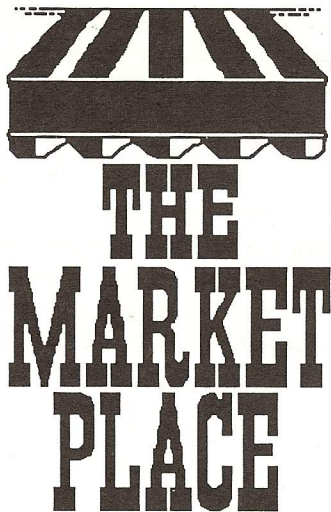
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Pro-File: AQ October 88

Performance Schedule:

January 17
Prophet's Corner Coffeehouse
Ambler, PA
January 25
Fiddle & Bow Society
Winston-Salem, NC
February 10
Bothy Folk Club
Brittingham's Irish Pub
Lafayette Hill, PA
February 24
Boyertown Senior Center
Boyertown, PA

Note: Date changes or cancellation of events can occur. Contact performer for details before traveling long distances.



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Bill Clifton
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Country Ham
Old Country Church
My Old Paint Mare

Margie Earles
*Blue Eyes and Sad Songs**

Mike Fenton
*My Privilege**

Mike Fenton & the Bill Sky Family
*Welcome to Galax**

Lindsay Haisley
*(Auto) Harps Alive!!**

Mike Herr
*Lost in the Woods**

John & Kathie Hollandsworth
A Mountain Music Sampler

Alan Mager
*The Fairhaired Boy**

Mill Run Dulcimer Band
Sweet Songs of Yesterday

The Original Orchard Grass Band
Old Time Music
I Want Us To Be Together In Heaven

Tom Schroeder
*Suite Liz**

Bill Sky Family
Sweet Sunny South

Ivan Stiles
*Rounding Pickering Bend**

Betty & Mark Waldron
*Just A Rose Will Do**
*Parlor Pickin'**

Ron Wall
*Autoharps**

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ADVERTISER'S INDEX

Andy's Front Hall	22
Autumn Wind	22
Catania, Steven -- Catpaws	28
Elderly Instruments	4
Foss, George	33
Great All-American Autoharp Emporium	22
Haisley, Lindsay	17
Jean's Dulcimer Shop	33
Limberjack Productions	Back Cover
Mager, Alan	17
Performance Group	28
Rackensack Review	16
Optimus Art Company	21
Oscar Schmidt International	IBC
Stiles, Ivan	16
Stober, Carol	11
Usher, Alex	33

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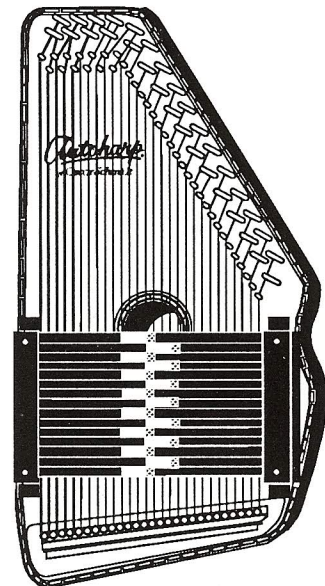
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