

AUTOHARP QUARTERLY

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



IN THIS ISSUE
THE JAZZ-STYLE AUTOHARP
SILVA-STYLE FINGERPICK
INTERACTION *with Alan Mager*

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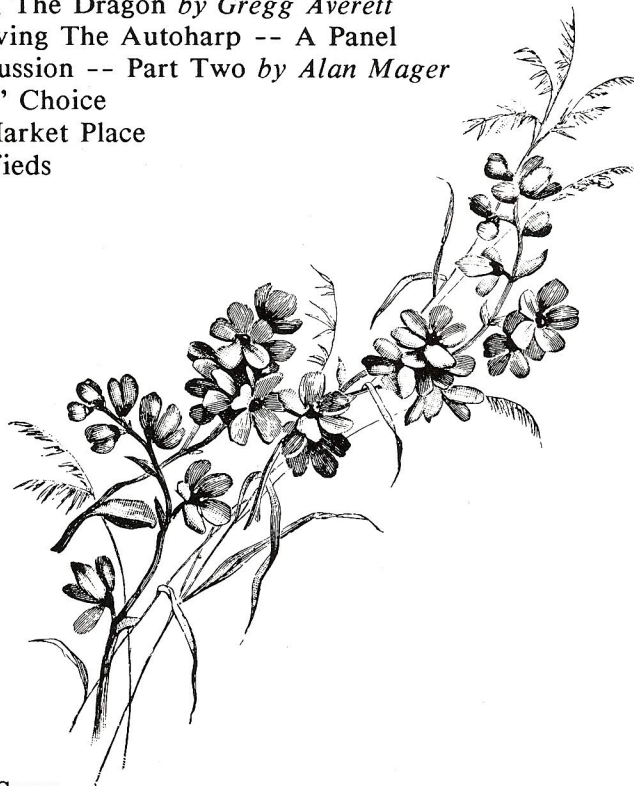
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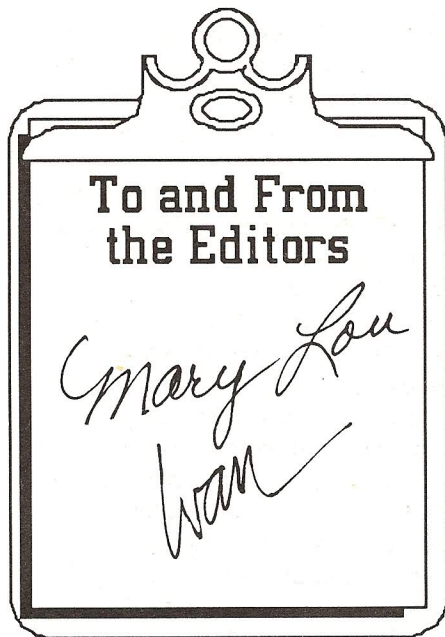
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On the Cover:
Janette Carter and Joe Carter at the
Carter Fold in Hiltons, Virginia



DEAR READERS:

We have found ourselves in a dilemma regarding our reviews column. To paraphrase a saying, "Too many recordings, and not enough time." Our reviewer Judie Pagter leads the typical life of a busy performer, and does not have the time needed to fully cover the recorded autoharp music available today. So, we have called in the Marines! (Well, at least two of 'em.)

Mike Herr is a member of the Irish folk band, Lost In The Woods, and is one of today's finest 'harp technicians. Mike was a finalist in the International Competition at Winfield, Kansas in 1991.

Bob Woodcock, autoharp enthusiast, also plays a most-acceptable guitar, claw hammer banjo, mandolin, fiddle, and pennywhistle. Bob can name, play, and sing more tunes than any collective dozen musicians we know.

Both of these fine musicians are jumping in to help our lady in distress. We are grateful, and welcome them to our staff with fanfare and flourishes.

Please continue sending your recordings to Limberjack Productions for review.

OK, OK! Volumes two and three of *Music from Autoharp Quarterly*, have finally been recorded! We have had so many requests for these tapes! Autoharp players say our *Music From Autoharp Quarterly, Volume One* is invaluable as a learning tool, as well as a good listening tape. Our two new tapes will follow the pattern of our first one -- all the music in each volume, with the exception of Interaction pieces. One difference is that the selections are now all-instrumental with no vocals. As before, they are played in the same style and key as published in *AQ*. The 'harp can read the music and play along with the tape. The cassettes will be available in the near future and will be sold in *The Market Place*.

It is always sad to lose a friend and this is especially true with our colleague and mentor, Leonard Reid. The loss is even greater when it is sudden and unexpected. Leonard died this January leaving a void in the music community that will not be filled. His support extended far beyond his involvement with the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering and *Autoharp Quarterly* magazine. He was an ever-present figure in promoting music, from local school bands to national folk projects. His enthusiastic support of the Gathering was evident to all who knew him. Leonard's contribution to this magazine, "The Neighborhood Instrument Shop," was a very popular column among our readers.

As a continuing remembrance of Leonard, Limberjack Productions has instituted the Leonard A. Reid People's Choice Award, which will be presented annually at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering. This award will be given to the open stage par-

ticipant, selected by the audience, who exhibits the finest in autoharp performance.

Our thanks go to *Bluegrass Unlimited* for its article in the February 1992 issue entitled, "The Return Of The Autoharp." Written by Arthur Ciervo, it highlighted the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering, Limberjack Productions, Orthey Instruments, and much more. We were happy to see the autoharp getting coverage in such a prestigious magazine!

DEAR EDITORS:

My husband and I are enjoying playing our 'harps. Last month we had a concert at Ebet-su, near Sapporo-shi, where I started playing the 'harp. It was an exciting experience for us that some of the audience told us they'd start playing it. Now more than ten people are studying to play the autoharp; there were few a year before last!

We have been very busy during these months -- we moved to Hokkaido, and I am sending my new address.

We are planning to be more active on playing the old time country music, my favorite ones.

Yoko Watanabe
Hokkaido, Japan



Teri Watanabe with his autoharp.

In reference to Professor R. Woodcock's Tonic Chord letter in *AQ*, January 1992:
Dear Prof. Woodcock,

Your comments on "tonic" modes made me wonder if you also might be interested in a recently discovered "tonic" chord, called the VO5. The VO5 makes chord progressions easier to play and more manageable. It is especially useful in the Alberto bass progression. It is also particularly successful in covering up unwanted half-tones which begin to appear in music performed by 'harpists over the age of thirty-five.

If you have any questions about the VO5 chord, please do not hesitate to contact me.

*Professor L. Reilly, Director
Musician's Academy of Chord-
Styling and Cosmemusicology*

As always, there is never a doubt that *Autoharp Quarterly* is top-notch reading for the autoharper!

My congratulations to Ivan on his first place win at Winfield. Best wishes to everyone involved in the magazine. Keep the articles and news coming. I do so appreciate your efforts.

Carole Spicer

I haven't played much 'harp recently -- too much work and not sufficient spare time -- but I'm getting back to it now.

I saw Mike Fenton recently and booked him for a two-day workshop, plus a Christmas concert in my school. It was good to see him and swap a bit of 'harp chat.

*Ian Cooper
Herefordshire, England*

Congratulations to Ivan for his Winfield championship! And the frosting on the cake was to have Les and Alan come in second and third. We are so proud of you all!

AQ, Volume 4, Number 2

was the best magazine I've read yet! It was just full of interesting, amusing, and educational material. Your publication is the best!

Bea Gluck

Thanks for *AQ*. Your readers might like to know that Harvey Reid and Bryan Bowers have been getting good air play on WERS-FM, WUMB-FM, and WCUW-FM in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Jim Barclay

Thumbpick Alert! I grind down the points on plastic thumb picks in four to six weeks. On a run to a nearby city, I bought six made by National for 25 cents each because the shop owner said they'd last longer than the fun, multi-colored ones I'd been using.

A month later, Bob Lewis showed me a thicker version of the same brand. I had to have a pick like that! Sure enough, the tiny music shop down the road had exactly one left just like it. I asked the owner why National had two different "gauges" of picks which weren't marked the way flatpicks are. He said National sells factory seconds, too, and he won't carry them! The "first-quality" pick costs 85 cents, but it's still hanging in there! So, buyer, beware! (Just in case you're wondering what you've got, the finest quality pick measured .053 on a micrometer, the factory "second," .046.)

Lucille Reilly

Enclosed find our check for a gift subscription for our cousin. She is becoming an autoharp enthusiast, and we know she will enjoy and need this magazine.

We enjoy *AQ* very much, and besides all the other goodies in it, we are able to keep up with the whereabouts of

our friends, Bill and Laurie Sky, who are some of our favorite people.

Jack and Jann Barnett

Re: Club News. I'm starting a get-together for autoharper. Will try the 1st Saturday of the month. We are calling ourselves "Bizarre 'Harpers."

Other info: Our band, Whitewater String Band, does library concerts here in Las Vegas. We have two we are doing in February, and another in March. The autoharp, along with our other instruments is showcased. I give a brief historical presentation on the 'harp, and play a solo. Although we aren't famous (maybe infamous), would you like a report on these concerts?

Is Judie no longer doing the review column?

I have reserved my room at the Park Motel for July [Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering]. I'm pretty sure Dona Bledsoe will be at the Gathering again. And, I'm working on another friend in California. Great fun!

Laura Newton

Thanks for the news about your new club. We are listing this information in the Club News along with your address and phone number for contact.

By all means, send in your reports on the Whitewater String Band concerts. Famous doesn't matter. Besides, we want to be able to say, "We knew you when!"

Yes, Judie is still doing reviews, and as noted earlier in this column, Mike Herr and Bob Woodcock have joined her to help cover the plethora of recordings coming out of the autoharp community.

Check out page 16 for news about the "Eastward, Ho!" caravan coming to the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering.

The Editors



THE JAZZ-STYLE AUTOHARP



by Lyman Taylor

Author's Note: Major credit and thanks go to Marty Schuman who for years has been entertaining and delighting us all playing jazz on his very special diatonic autoharp, "The 15 Bar, 30 Chord Ultratonic." (See the January 1989 Autoharp Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 2.) As does George Foss, (see his book, Going Diatonic), Marty alters the conventional diatonic autoharp by using "delete-note" chord bars. Marty also alters conventional playing by sometimes pushing two or three chord bars at once and by so doing expanding the number of playable chords. The present author has merely taken these basic principles, already proven by these "pioneers," and applied them to the 21-bar [chromatic] autoharp. Now, the jazz idiom can be made cheaply and easily available to all autoharpists.

Thanks also to George Orthey who is the source of all wisdom on re-felting chord bars.

Have you ever wished you could play jazz chords on your autoharp? Play swing? Blues? Rock and Roll? It can be done! And it's a lot easier than you think. All it takes is a 21-bar chromatic autoharp, a set of blank chord bar felts, a sharp blade, a little work, and a willingness to push two chord bars at once. If you follow the steps outlined below on your 21-bar 'harp, you will be able to play 34 full chords; six major chords, five minor chords, five major sixth chords (which are also the five relative minor seventh

chords), seven dominant seventh chords, three major seventh chords, and three diminished seventh chords (which are actually 12). This gives a capability for playing jazz chords in four major keys (F, C, G, D) and two minor keys (Dm, Am) and still playing most of the "standard" chords you now play on your 'harp. From the standard Oscar Schmidt 21 chord bar arrangement, you will lose four chords (Ab, Eb, Cm, B7) but you will gain seventeen new ones (Bb6/Gm7, F6/Dm7, C6/Am7, G6/Em7, D6/Bm7, Bm, Fmaj7, Cmaj7, Gmaj7, C°7, C#°7, D°7 . . . plus another nine, if you choose to count all the diminished seventh chords individually).

The arrangement of the chord bars is as follows:

| | | | | | | |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|------|
| Bb6/Gm7 | F6/Dm7 | C6/Am7 | G6/Em7 | D6/Bm7 | Gmaj7 | -G |
| Bb7 | F7 | C7 | G7 | D7 | A7 | E7 |
| Fmaj7 | Cmaj7 | -F | -C | D°7 | C°7 | C#°7 |

Note 1: Major sixth chords contain the same four notes as the minor seventh chords of their relative minor key (e.g.: C6 = C, E, G, A; Am7 = A, C, E, G). The only difference is the bottom/beginning note of the chord (i.e., begin the C6 chord strum on C and the Am7 chord strum on A for the final note of the song, or any other time if you want to be "picky." Sound-wise, it often doesn't matter much where you begin your strum). The five minor seventh chords are often acceptable substitutes for major 9th chords discussed later.

Note 2: The diminished sev-

enth chord bars are placed in this order to make playing easier because the D°7 (F°7) is usually played with the Key of F, and C°7 is most often played in the Key of C.

Pushing The Buttons

One-button chords are:
B6/Gm7, F6/Dm7, C6/Am7, G6/Em7, D6/Bm7, Bb7, F7, C7, G7, D7, A7, E7, Fmaj7, Cmaj7, Gmaj7, D°7, C°7, C#°7.

Two-button chords are:
Barre --
Bb = Bb6 + Bb7,
F = F6 + F7, C = C6 + C7,
G = G6 + G7, D = D6 + D7.
Branch --
Gm = Bb6 + -F,
Dm = F6 + -C.
Fork --
Am = Fmaj7 + -F,

Em = Cmaj7 + -C,
Bm = Gmaj7 + -G, A = A7 + -G.

Delete-Note Buttons

-F, -C, and -G "wipe out" that single note from certain four note chords to produce certain other three note chords, as indicated earlier.

Chording Techniques

Playing one-button chords is the same as on the standard 21-bar chromatic autoharp. Techniques for playing two-button chords can be easily mastered. There are five new

techniques to be learned.

The Barre: Barring is done with the thumb. (On occasion you may find it more convenient to barre with a flat finger or two fingertips.) Lay the thumb flat across the 6th and 7th chord buttons of the same letter; depress both equally and a bit hard.

The Arch: To play the 6th chord only, place your thumb in the barre position; then, straighten it, arching it upward; if necessary, tilt it backward slightly to lift the tip of the thumb off the 7th chord bar button..

The Bridge: To play the 7th chord only, place your thumb in the barre position, then, bend it (just like an arched bridge) enough to "clear" the 6th chord bar button, pushing down on the 7th chord bar button with the tip of your thumb.

The Branch: Depress the prescribed 6th chord button with the tip of your thumb while simultaneously depressing the prescribed "delete" button with a finger.

The Fork: Depress the prescribed major seventh chord button with one finger while simultaneously depressing the prescribed "delete" button with another; normally the index and middle fingers will be used.

Customizing Your Chromatic Autoharp

If you have only one 21-bar 'harp and you follow the plan outlined previously, the conversion will mean the loss of the four chords noted: Ab, Eb, Cm, and B7. However, you can save any two of these by putting them in place of the Gmaj7 and -G bars, provided you are willing to give up the three chords which these two bars yield: Gmaj7, Bm, and A. You will need to decide which

chords are more valuable to you. If you do remove the Gmaj7 and -G bars from your "new" chord bars, you may still be able to achieve a one-octave A chord, provided your left hand is long enough, by depressing the A7 chord button with your middle finger and dropping your thumb over the center of the top edge of the chord bar cover to touch the G string, deleting it from that chord. Other chords of your choice may be inserted here or elsewhere.

If you don't want to sing, but play only instrumental solos and/or play with a string band, you may prefer to customize your 'harp to play in the keys of C, G, D, and A major (plus Am and Em) rather than the keys F, C, G, and D major (plus Dm and Am).

These are all value judgments which you will need to make before you begin to create your Jazz-Style 'Harp. Of course, if you have more than one 'harp, that will make your decisions easier.

If you plan to make an "instrumental" Jazz-Style 'Harp, you may want to cut and arrange your chord bars as follows:

| | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|-------|-----|
| F6/Dm7 | C6/Am7 | G6/Em7 | D6/Bm7 | A6/F#m7 | Dmaj7 | -D |
| F7 | C7 | G7 | D7 | A7 | E7 | B7 |
| Cmaj7 | Gmaj7 | -C | -G | C°7 | C#°7 | D°7 |

With this arrangement of chord bars, chords lost from the first suggested (vocal 'harp) arrangement would be: Bb, Bb6/Gm7, Bb7, Fmaj7, and Gm. Am can still be achieved by playing C6 + -G. Chords gained would be: A6/F#m7, B7, Dmaj7, F#m (Dmaj7 + -D), and E (E7 + -D).

If your autoharp is a 12- or 15-bar, you need to know that such autoharps can be converted to 21-bar 'harps. This can be done by ordering a 21-Chord Conversion Kit from Oscar Schmidt. (O.S.I. part

number is 21CK. It currently lists for \$79.90.) This kit is not difficult to install.

Felting Your Jazz-Style 'Harp

Remove the old chord bar felts and re-felt the chords you have chosen. [For information on felting chord bars, see AQ, October '91, page 34.]

Felts should be cut to allow the following strings to sound:

Bb6/Gm7 = Bb (A#), D, F, G
 F6/Dm7 = F, A, C, D
 C6/Am7 = C, E, G, A
 G6/Em7 = G, B, D, E
 D6/Bm7 = D, F#, A, B
 Fmaj7 = F, A, C, E
 Cmaj7 = C, E, G, B
 Gmaj7 = G, B, D, F#
 Bb7 = Bb (A#), D, F, Ab (G#)
 F7 = F, A, C, Eb (D#)
 C7 = C, E, G, Bb (A#)
 G7 = G, B, D, F
 D7 = D, F#, A, C
 A7 = A, C#, E, G
 E7 = E, G#, B, D
 D°7 = D, F, G#, B
 C°7 = C, D#, F#, A
 C#°7 = C#, E, G, A#

For the "Delete-Note" bars, cut pieces of chord bar felt 1/2" long leaving that length on the glue side and trimming to 1/4" on the felt side. After depressing the "naked" bar

and marking on the bar-metal the location of each string to be deleted, remove bar from 'harp and center small felt piece exactly on the mark. Test "Delete-Note" bar by depressing the bar and then plucking the "dead" string plus the string on either side to be sure that only the one string is "wiped out." Trim if necessary. Replace chord bars and rename the buttons to conform to the new chords.

Strings are tuned the same as the standard chromatic 'harp.

Making Music on Your Jazz-Style 'Harp

Make a chart of your chord bar arrangement with notations on it as to how to achieve those "extra chords." For the first week or so, while you are training your brain, lay this chart alongside your music. You will be amazed at how smart you are and how soon you can dispense with the chart.

Practice techniques for playing two-button chords and write chord symbols on your music, transposing if necessary. If you must, you can use the "chord bracket" to write the names of the bars depressed for two-button chords (e.g., [C6C7] for a "C"). I strongly recommend that you *not* do this. It is far better to train your brain to read the C chord telling your thumb to depress the C6 and C7 bars simultaneously. (After all, standard music notation will be written with a "C.")

Blues and Rock & Roll

The standard 12 measure blues progression, which is the basic accompaniment for many blues and rock and roll songs, can be played in any one of four different keys on your Jazz-Style 'Harp by pushing, in succession, four adjacent single chord bar buttons. (Example: C6, C6, C6, C7, F7, F7, C6, C6, G7, F7, C6, C6.) Available keys for this progression are F, C, G, and D. **Major Ninth Chord Substitutes**

There are no ninth chords on your Jazz-Style Autoharp, but often substitutes can be made to work. Sometimes the seventh chord of the same letter will "do" in place of the ninth chord. Sometimes a minor seventh will "do." Equivalents are: Gm7 for Ebmaj9, Dm7 for Bbmaj9, Am7 for Fmaj9, Em7 for Cmaj9, Bm7 for Gmaj9, F#m7 for Dmaj9.

Passing Notes, Suspensions, Augmented, and Other "Schmaltzy" Chords

These chords are more difficult to play but can be achieved with sufficient practice. These use a combination of "chording" (depressing the chord bar) and "open chording" (lifting the chord bar) in a four-step process, as follows:

1. Strum the basic chord with your thumb pick.
2. Move thumb or finger pick to the "odd" string, but do not pluck it yet. (If you move the thumb silently over the intervening strings, you can count the "bumps" and assure accuracy.)
3. Raise the chord bar, letting the basic chord ring.
4. Pluck the "odd" note, adding it to the basic chord.

All of these things must be done in rather rapid succession before the sustain of the basic chord dies.

Enhancing The Melody

Enhancing the melody, when playing an instrumental solo, is highly desirable. This is especially true when playing jazz chords which usually have four notes, three of which tend to "cover up" the

melody note. I recommend using a simultaneous thumb strum for the harmony and a "push pluck" for the melody. To accomplish the latter, lay the tip of your finger pick on top of the string. Then *push* downward (toward the wood), pushing quite hard until the string literally "snaps" off the end of the pick. This will measurably increase the volume of the melody note.

Electronics

Electronics can increase the volume and sustain of your 'harp and enhance the beautiful sound of these great chords. Use a microphone and/or an electronic pickup on your 'harp plugged into an amplifier.

Experiment!

While 34 chords is a small number compared to the hundreds possible, the variety is wide enough so that when the music calls for an unusual chord, an acceptable substitute can often be found. When all else fails, push a diminished seventh chord bar and pluck a single note. Even if you can't sing it, now you can "swing it" with your Jazz-Style Autoharp. ■

The Jazz-Style Autoharp 21-Bar Chromatic

| Two-Button Chords | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|------------|------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Bb | F | C | G | D | | |
| Bb6 / Gm7 | F6 / Dm7 | C6 / Am7 | G6 / Em7 | D6 / Bm7 | Gmaj7 | -G (A+Bm) |
| Bb7 | F7 | C7 | G7 | D7 | A7 | E7 |
| Fmaj7 | Cmaj7 | -F (Gm+Am) | -C (Dm+Em) | D ^o 7 | C ^o 7 | C# ^o 7 |

Gm = Bb6 + -F
 Dm = F6 + -C
 Am = Fmaj7 + -F
 Em = Cmaj7 + -C
 Bm = Gmaj7 + -G
 A = A7 + -G

Substitute Ninths
 Ebmaj9 = Bb6/Gm7
 Bbmaj9 = F6/Dm7
 Fmaj9 = C6/Am7
 Cmaj9 = G6/Em7
 Gmaj9 = D6/Bm7

1992 FESTIVALS

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

The following are 1992 festivals which feature the autoharp in contest, workshop, or performance. If you know of a festival we have not included, please send the information to the Festivals Editor. The complete festival list is published every April, and seasonally repeated and updated in every issue.

CODE :

AC Autoharp Contest
AP Autoharp Performance
AW Autoharp Workshop

APRIL

Ozark Folk Center Gospel Jubilee

Date: April 10
Place: Ozark Folk Center
Mountain View, AR
Code: AP (The Bill Sky Family)
Contact: Ozark Folk Center
Box 500, Mountain View, AR 72560

New England Folk Festival (NEFFA)

Date: April 24, 25, 26
Place: Natick High School
Code: AW
Contact: Beth Parkes
PO Box 641, Bedford, MA 01730

Mossy Creek Arts & Crafts Festival

Date: April 25, 26
Place: Perry, GA
Code: AP (Helen Blackburn)
Contact: 404 423-9293

MAY

Bluegrass Festival

Date: May 3
Place: Virginia Beach, VA
Code: AP (Little Roy Lewis)
Contact: 404 359-3767

14th Annual Claremont Spring Folk Festival

Date: May 16, 17
Place: Alta Loma, CA
Code: AP, AW
Contact: Folk Music Center
220 Yale Ave., Claremont, CA 91711
714 987-5701

Ole-Time Fiddlers' and Bluegrass Festival

Date: May 22, 23, 24
Place: Union Grove, NC
Code: AC, AP, AW
Contact: Harper Van Hoy
PO Box 11, Union Grove, NC 28689

Stringalong Weekend

Date: May 22, 23, 24, 25
Place: East Troy, WI
Code: AP, AW (Ann Schmid)
Contact: UWM Folk Center
PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201

Northwest Folklife Festival

Date: May 22, 23, 24, 25
Place: Seattle Center
Code: AP
Contact: Paul DeBarros
Northwest Folklife Festival
305 Harrison Street, Seattle, WA 98109
206 684-7300

39th Annual Florida Folk Festival

Date: May 22, 23, 24, 25
Place: White Springs, FL
Code: AP, AW (Marty Schuman)
Contact: 904 338-1682

SpringFest

Date: May 23
Place: Fiddler's Green, Denver, CO
Code: AP (Julie Davis)
Contact: 303 258-3444

Carnegie Hall

Folk Festival
Date: May 27
Place: Carnegie Hall
New York, New York
Code: AP (The Bill Sky Family)

21st Annual Kerrville Folk Festival

Date: May 21-June 7 weekends
Place: Kerrville, TX
Code: AP (Lindsay Haisley,
Bryan Bowers)
Contact: Rod Kennedy
PO Box 1466, Kerrville, TX 78029

Sun Fest

Date: May 29, 30, 31
Place: Bartlesville, OK
Code: AP (Fran Stallings)
Contact: 918 333-7390

JUNE

Bluegrass and Old Time Fiddlers' Convention

Date: June 5, 7, 8
Place: Veteran's Memorial Park

Code: AC
Contact: Fiddlers Convention
319 W. Oakdale Street
Mount Airy, NC 27030

Bluegrass Festival

Date: June 6
Place: Carlisle, Canada
Code: AP (Bryan Bowers)
Contact: 719 635-7776

Beginning Autoharp Mountain View, AR

Date: June 8, 9, 10, 11
Place: Ozark Folk Center
Code: AW for new players and beginners
(Charles Whitmer)
Contact: Ozark Folk Center
PO Box 500, Mountain View, AR 72560

Sander's Family Festival

Date: June 10
Place: McAlester, OK
Code: AP (Little Roy Lewis)
Contact: 404 359-3767

16th Annual Cosby Dulcimer and Harp Festival

Date: June 12, 13
Place: Cosby, TN
Code: AP, AW
Contact: Jean & Lee Schilling
PO Box 8, Highway 32, Cosby, TN 37722

Mozart International Festival

Date: June 12
Place: Bartlesville, OK
Code: AP (Fran Stallings)
Contact: 918 333-7390

Mid Atlantic Championship Old Time and Bluegrass

Fiddlers' Convention
Date: June 12, 13
Place: Triple Creek Park
Code: AC

Charlotte Folk Music Society Latta Festival

Date: June 12, 13, 14
Place: Latta Plantation Park,
Charlotte, NC
Code: AP, AW (Ivan Stiles,
The Annabelles)
Contact: Marilyn Price
5301 Alexa Road
Charlotte, NC 28270
704 846-5508

Bluegrass and Old-Time Fiddler's Convention

Date: June 19, 20
Place: Vaughn Intermediate School
Athletic Field, Fries, VA
Code: AC
Contact: United Citizens Civic League
Fries, VA 24330

Grass Valley Festival

Date: June 19, 20, 21
Place: Grass Valley, CA
Code: AP (Judie Pagter)
Contact: 804 985-3551

Southern Michigan Dulcimer Festival

Date: June 19, 20, 21
Place: Barry County Fairgrounds
Hastings, MI
Code: AW, AP
Contact: Warren Guiles
9575 Peach Ridge, N.W.
Sparta, MI 49345

City Stages

Date: June 20, 21
Place: Birmingham, AL
Code: AP (Maiden Heaven,
Lucille Reilly)
Contact: 206 362-6471

George D. Hary Memorial Festival

Date: June 20, 21
Place: Veedersburg, IN
Code: AP (The Bill Sky Family)

Summer Stringalong

Date: June 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26
Place: East Troy, WI
Code: AP, AW (Ann Schmid)

Contact: UWM Folk Center
PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201

California Traditional Music Society Summer Solstice

Date: June 26, 27, 28
Place: SOKA, Calabasas, CA
Code: AP, AW (Becky Blackley,
Bruce Hutton, Tom Schroeder)
Contact: CTMS
4401 Trancas Place, Tarzana, CA 91356

JULY

Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering

Date: July 2, 3, 4, 5
Place: Newport, PA
Code: AC (The Mountain Laurel
Autoharp Championship), AW, AP
(Bryan Bowers, Joe and Janette Carter,
Lindsay Haisley, The Bill Sky Family,
Judie Pagter, John Hollandsworth, Julie
Davis, Ivan Stiles, Alan Mager, Fran
Stallings, The DeBusk/Weaver Family)
Contact: Limberjack Productions
PO Box A, Newport, PA 17074
717 567-9469

4th Annual Warrenville Folk Music Festival

Date: July 11, 12
Place: Warrenville, IL
Code: AP, AW
Contact: Donna Benkert
PO Box 248
Warrenville, IL 60548
708 717-8495

Gebhard Woods Dulcimer Festival

Date: July 11, 12
Place: Gebhard Woods
State Park, Morris, IL
Code: AP, AW
Contact: 815 942-0113



20th Annual Non-Electrical Musical Funfest

Date: July 16, 17, 18
Place: Osceola County Fairgrounds
Ewart, MI
Code: AW, AP
Contact: Donna Beckwith
817 Innes NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616 459-6716

Cranberry

Dulcimer Gathering

Date: July 24, 25, 26
Place: Binghamton, NY
Code: AW, AP (John Hollandsworth,
Ivan Stiles, Drew Smith, Charlene
Thomson, Lee Vaccaro, Eileen
Kozloff-Abrams, George Orthey)
Contact: Ed Ware
329 Marion Avenue
Endwell, NY 13760
607 669-4653

Augusta Heritage Arts Workshops*

Contact: Doug Hill
Davis & Elkins College
Elkins, WV 26241-3996

Rockford Folk Museum Festival

Date: July 25, 26
Place: Rockford Museum
Rockford, IL
Code: AP, AW
Contact: 815 397-9112

Carter Family Memorial Weekend

Date: July 31, August 1
Place: The Carter Fold
Hiltons, VA
Code: AP (Janette Carter, Mike
Fenton)
Contact: Janette Carter
PO Box 111, Hiltons, VA 24258
**Minnesota Bluegrass and
Old-Time Music Festival**
Date: July 31, August 1, 2
Place: Princeton, MN
Code: AP, AW (Mike Seeger,
Paul and Win Grace)
Contact: Jed Malischke
RR 3, Box 3119
Spooner, WI 54801 715 635-2479

AUGUST

56th Annual Galax Oldtime Fiddlers' Convention

Date: August 5, 6, 7, 8
Place: Galax, VA
Code: AC, AW
Contact: Oscar Hall
328 A Kenbrook Dr., Galax, VA 24333

25th Annual Willow Folk Festival

Date: August 8, 9
Place: Stockton, IL
Code: AP
Contact: 312 861-0798

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 Talladega, AL 35160

**Ozark Folk Center
 Autoharp Jamboree**
 Date: August 13, 14, 15
 Place: Ozark Folk Center
 Code: AP, AW (Becky Blackley,
 George Foss, Lindsay Haisley,
 Charles Whitmer)
 Contact: Ozark Folk Center
 Box 500, Mountain View, AR 72560
**Old Time Fiddlers and
 Bluegrass Convention**
 Date: August 14, 15
 Place: Fries, VA
 Code: AP, AC
 Contact: Fries Vol. Fire Department
 Fries, VA 24330 703 744-2242

SEPTEMBER

**17th Old-Time Country Music
 Contest and Festival and Pioneer
 Expo of Arts and Crafts**
 Date: September 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
 Place: Pottowattamie Frngds, Avoca, IA
 Code: AC (National Autoharp
 Contest), AP, AW (Laurie Sky, Mike
 Fenton, George Orthey)
 Contact: Bob Everhart
 PO 438, Walnut, IA 51577
**14th Annual Fox Valley
 Folk Festival**
 Date: September 5, 6
 Place: Island Park, Geneva, IL
 Code: AP, AW
 Contact: Juel Ulven

755 N. Evanslawn Ave.
 Aurora, IL 60506 708 897-3655
**10th Annual Labor Day
 Musical Family Weekend***
 Contact: Keith Young
 3815 Kendale Road,
 Annandale, VA 22003
**National Traditional Music
 Performer Awards**
 Date: September 11, 12, 13
 Place: Crawford Frgrnds, Denison, IA
 Code: AC
 Contact: Bob Everhart
 PO Box 438, Walnut, IA 51577
Doc Boggs Memorial Festival
 Date: September 12
 Place: Wise County Frngds, Wise, VA
 Code: AP
 Contact: Anna Breeding
 PO Box 67, Wise, VA 24293
Walnut Valley Festival
 Date: September 17, 18, 19, 20
 Place: Winfield, KS
 Code: AC (International Autoharp
 Championship) AP, AW
 Contact: Walnut Valley Association
 PO Box 245, Winfield, KS 67156
 316 221-3250
SMU Eisteddfod*
 Contact: SMU Eisteddfod
 Southeastern Mass. University
 c/o T. Bullard
 North Dartmouth, MA 02747 508 999-8546

OCTOBER

Tennessee Fall Homecoming
 Date: October 8, 9, 10, 11
 Place: Norris, TN
 Code: AP (Tom and Mary Morgan,
 Janette Carter, The Bill Sky Family,
 Judie Pagter)
 Contact: John Rice Irwin
 Museum of Appalachia
 PO Box 359, Norris, TN 37828
 615 494-0514

NOVEMBER

Barberville Country Jamboree
 Date: November 7, 8
 Place: Barberville, FL
 Code: AP, AW
 Contact: Jan Milner
 PO Box 668, Crystal Beach, FL 34681
 813 784-1771

DECEMBER

CTMS New Year's Camp*
 Contact: CTMS
 4401 Trancas Place, Tarzana, CA 91356

* Activities marked with an asterisk
 have been contacted, but have failed to
 respond to our inquiry. Nonetheless, we
 have kept them in our listing, and have
 included their addresses for your
 convenience.

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DAISY BELL

Words and music by Harry Dacre (1892)

Dai - sy, Dai - sy, Give me your

TAB: F / / / Bb C7 Bb

ans - wer, do! I'm half cra -

TAB: / / F C7 / F

zy, All for the love of you! It won't be a

TAB: / G7 C7 G7 / F C7 F C7 F C7

sty - lish mar - riage, I can't af - ford a

TAB: / F C7 F C7 F / Bb /

car - riage, But you'll look sweet up - on the

TAB: / F C7 F / C7 / F /

seat of a bi - cy - cle built for two!

TAB: C7 F C7 F / / C7 / F

Electronic Pickups for the Autoharp

PART TWO

by Lindsay Haisley

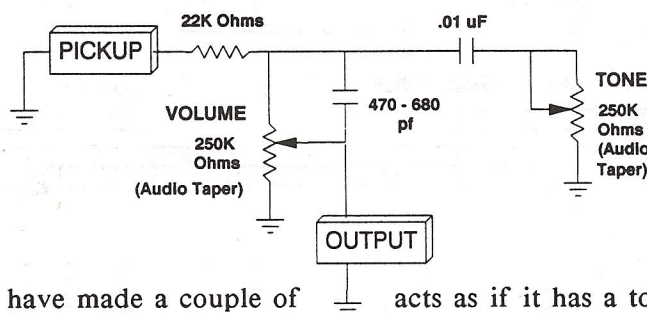
Illustrated by Janet Harris

In the last issue of AQ, I discussed the details of winding your own magnetic autoharp pickup. In this issue, I'll address the details of connecting a pickup to an improved on-board volume and tone control circuit.

If the job of winding your own autoharp pickup strikes you as excessively daunting, you have my sympathy. It took me several tries to get it right what with the wire breaking, and learning the hard way about the dangers of using solvent glue. You can, of course purchase an add-on OS pickup and avoid the job of winding one, assuming the stock pickup meets your needs. If you do this, and decide to move the pickup control electronics to a more convenient location, your job is somewhat simplified. You must unsolder or cut the wires from the pickup at their connection point inside the volume and tone control housing. Be gentle with these wires, as they connect directly to the tiny winding wire in the pickup which is easily stressed and broken. A pair of metal cutters should suffice to separate the electronics module from the pickup itself. Leave just enough metal to slip under the chord bar holder and hold the pickup in place.

The electronics connected

to OS standard pickups has come a long way since the pickup was first introduced. Early pickups had badly mismatched components. The volume control went from zip to max in about 1/4 turn of the knob, making precise control difficult. The tone control either did very little, or else had the same problem as the volume control. The design of the control circuitry on the last E 'harps produced by Oscar Schmidt was passable, but could still stand some improvement. The standard circuit, plus my improvements, is shown below.



I have made a couple of modifications to the circuit. First, I have replaced the 250K ohm volume and tone potentiometers with ones of the same value with what is called an "audio taper." The pot supplied by OS has a "linear taper." The difference here is the result of the fact that the human ear doesn't respond in a linear fashion to changes in sound level. Halving the signal voltage output by the circuit doesn't necessarily result in the perception by a listener that the resulting sound has been reduced to half its volume. Audio taper potentiometers take this fact into account and are conventionally used as volume and tone controls in electric guitars, radios, amplifiers and the like. I'm not sure that the tiny potentiometers used in OS control circuits are available with an audio taper, however your favorite electronics supply house should be able to tell you.

One of the characteristics of a magnetic pickup is that its *impedance* increases with frequency. Impedance is an electrical characteristic of all circuits and devices which input or output sound or radio signals, and it determines the way these signals behave in the circuitry to which they are connected. With an autoharp pickup, this means that as one decreases the volume using the on-board volume control, the high, or treble frequencies are reduced in the output more rapidly than the mid-range and low frequencies. The volume control therefore

acts as if it has a tone control connected to it -- not necessarily the sort of thing we expect from a volume control. The placement of a small capacitor between the slider and the signal side of the volume pot goes a long way to correct this problem. I experimented a bit and got excellent results with a (commonly available) value either a 470 or 680 picofarads. This capacitor allows some of the high frequencies from the pickup to bypass part of the volume control and results in much improved high frequency response when the volume is reduced.

Putting It All Together

The connection between the pickup and the volume and tone control circuit should be made with great care, especially if one is using a hand-wound pickup. If the controls are at all distant (more than an inch or so) from

the pickup, the connection should be made with single conductor shielded wire. Shielded wire is actually a wire within a wire, the outer wire being a metal mesh or foil covering which completely surrounds the insulation covering the inner wire. The outer shield is the "ground," and should be connected to the wire from the pickup coming off of the outermost windings, while the inner (shielded) wire should be connected to the end of the windings lying next to the magnet. Use very light shielded wire (OS pickups use wire no more than 1/8" total diameter) and anchor it with tape or by some other means to the shell of the pickup, since any flexing of the connection between the shielded wire and the winding wire is bound to break the latter in fairly short order.

Shielding and Grounding

The tiny voltages and currents produced by a magnetic pickup are not alone in their electronic environment. The space around us in this technological age resonates with "noise" -- hum from our 110 volt household wiring, buzzes from dimmer controls on lights and fans, squeaks and feeps from computers and computerized devices, spark plug noise from cars, and much more. In order for the signal from a pickup to make it to an amplifier without being joined by all kinds of extraneous noise, it's necessary to shield the signal at all points by surrounding it with metal parts which are "grounded" by connecting them ultimately to the sleeve of the plug on the wire going to the amplifier.

It's very important that several points on the pickup and the instrument be electrically connected to ground. These are the steel shell of the

pickup, the cover plate (if any) holding the controls and the strings of the autoharp itself. The shield of the connecting wire and the outside end of the pickup wire can both be soldered at the same spot to the pickup shell near the end of the pickup, providing both an electrical connection and an effective stress relieving anchor. The pickup wire is easy to clean for soldering by scraping the enamel off with a pen knife against a hard surface. Grounding of the strings was a detail often overlooked on OS electric 'harps. The grounded metal cover holding the controls came very close to the aluminum bar holding the strings at the bottom of the harp, but sometimes the connection wasn't quite there. On all of my OS electric harps, I have a

The issue is this.
The closer a pickup is to the end of a vibrating string, the more high overtones (harmonics) it picks up . . .

short piece of bare copper wire placed under the control cover so that it touches the aluminum bar holding the string ball ends. This provides a very definite ground for the strings. OS add-on pickups make no provision for this at all, and I strongly advise anyone using an OS add-on pickup to run a small wire from the control housing to any metal part of the instrument which is in contact with at least one of the strings.


If you are doing your own control installation and want

a natural wood panel to hold your controls instead of the polished metal plate used on OS 'harps, glue foil or metal screen on the inside of your wooden cover. Make sure that some exterior part of the control pots (the can or shaft sheath) makes contact with this screen or foil, and that one of the control pot cans, or the cover itself, is electrically connected to the rest of the grounded portion of the circuit. This is frequently done by soldering a short wire from the grounded terminal on the volume or tone control to the small can surrounding the potentiometer.

Pickup Placement

The standard placement of a 'harp pickup -- centered under the chord bar mechanism -- was doubtless chosen for practical and aesthetic reasons rather than for function,

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although the result is not at all bad. The Lancer 'harp produced at one point by OS had a long pickup slanted across the strings, more closely following the midpoints of the strings than the line of the chord bars. This is a more conventional arrangement from an electronic point of view. The issue is this. The closer a pickup is to the end of a vibrating string, the more high overtones (harmonics) it picks up relative to the low overtones and the fundamental (the note to which the string is tuned). A pickup right next to the bridge picks up almost none of the string fundamentals but many high overtones. A pickup placed in the exact middle of all the strings picks up *lots* of fundamentals and a fair number of odd numbered harmonics. Conventional wisdom splits the difference. If you have ever played an electric guitar you know that most

electric guitars have two or three pickups placed at varying distances from the bridge. The pickup farthest from the bridge is generally referred to as the rhythm pickup, while the one next to the bridge, because it produces a more penetrating sound, is called the lead pickup. If one were very electronic and ambitious, it would not be at all out of line to put two pickups on an autoharp using a similar scheme. This might well be a good addition for anyone playing autoharp with a country band. A pickup slanted across strings as on a Lancer 'harp, passing under each string at close to the same relative point would probably be ideal. This would, of course, require a longer pickup than the stock OS pickup.

||| Sound Advice |||

The sound of an electronic autoharp pickup has several characteristics to which you should pay attention.

First, the pickup sound is fairly heavy in midrange frequencies (between bass and treble). I frequently use, and recommend the use of a graphic equalizer to smooth out the pickup response. A graphic equalizer is no more than an octave by octave tone control. The small eight-band variety sold in most music stores will be helpful; however, I prefer a full ten-band equalizer.

Second, the output of an autoharp pickup is rich in bass. If you are putting it through a sound system which can handle good bass, you'll be delighted with its fullness. Most acoustic 'harp are not built to resonate to the fundamentals of the lowest strings on the instrument, and most of what we take for bass sound is actually the sound of

the harmonics of the bass strings. Judicious use of this bass by a solo performer can add a real richness to the sound of the instrument. One must be careful in ensemble situations, however, where these notes can easily muddy up the collective sound, especially if there is already a bass player in the group!

Finally, the sound produced by a pickup contains very little of the "pick and string" sound produced by finger picks, or even bare fingers on an acoustic autoharp, and no chord bar sounds whatever. It's sometimes necessary, in a performance or recording situation, to reintroduce a certain amount of "stringiness" to give the 'harp a sense of presence. Placing a microphone in front of the instrument is a good way to add a little of its acoustic ambiance to the sound of the pickup. The resulting sound combines the richness of the pickup sound and the reality of a front mike and is truer and more pleasing to most ears than either separate sound.

||| In Conclusion |||

Much of the above may be over the heads of the average reader. It's hard to write a technical article and put in something for everyone. On the other hand, the subject of the physics and electronics of amplified music is an immensely technical one, and I've only just scratched the surface here. Anyone who is interested in the information contained herein should feel free to write me in care of AQ and I'll help out as I can. ■



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AQ POSTSCRIPTS

PS.

Congratulations to 'harper Fran Stallings, who has just released a cassette, "Crane's Gratitude." Fran is a nationally-known storyteller, and her tape is a delightful collection of ancient folktales. 918 333-7390

PS.

Dorothy Wagner will be on a performing tour of Switzerland with her autoharp during the month of July.

PS.

Luthier Ken Hamblin has recently written, illustrated, and published "Fodder Sled Ride Off Graveyard Hill -- A Journal of the Spur Branch Gang 1930-1942." This fun, easy-reading book is a collection of his childhood memories from Spur Branch, Bland County, in southwestern Virginia. PO Box 892, Salem, VA 24153

PS.

Congratulations to Marty Schuman, who will be the honored guest at the 39th Annual Florida Folk Festival in White Springs!

PS.

Marie Wells, 'harper extraordinaire of Wichita, Kansas has just retired from her "regular" job. We wish her the best.

PS.

Luthier George Orthey has just started building his 300th 'harp.

PS.

More in the continuing saga of the AQ Index for Volume Three -- again, no room in this issue either. So, an index for Volumes Three and Four will be in the next issue. Honest!

CLUB NEWS

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

The complete club list is published in January. Please send club information to the Clubs Editor.

NEW CLUB

Laura Newton is starting a new autoharp club called the **Bizarre 'Harpers**. Meetings will be held the first Saturday of every month. Contact her at HCR 89033, Box 3, Las Vegas, NV 89124. 702 363-6348.

CLUB NEWS

The Happy Hearts Autoharp Club Events: April 11 and May 2 workshops in Newton, Iowa; June 12, 13, 14, Bluegrass Music Festival in Salem, Iowa; June 26, 27, 28, Gospel Bluegrass Music Festival at the Jasper County Fairgrounds, Colfax, Iowa (contact 515 792-3977). The **Harps Plus** club's new meeting time is from 2 to 4:45 pm. Its April meeting will be held on the 26th of that month (contact 312 682-8048). The **Heartland Harpers** report that the Charles Whitmer Workshops in Overland Park, Kansas earlier scheduled for January 4 and 5 was postponed until May 9. Charles will be presenting beginning, intermediate, and advanced sessions. Contact 816 229-0144. Charles is also giving two workshops in Spring, Texas on April 25 and May 16. For information, call 713 367-6260. Chicago 'harpers should be aware of the **Nast House**, 528 Calhoun Street, Woodstock, Illinois. Folk musicians meet here every first Saturday of the month at 7 pm, April through December, for workshops, performances, jams, and open stages. For more information, call 815 338-0011.

RECORDINGS

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

Please send recordings and books listings to the Recordings and Books Editor.

Features Autoharp:
ROLLING HOME,
Songs of the Sea
Roz Brown, 1549 S. Holland
Court Lakewood, CO 80226

Includes Autoharp
HEART FULL OF SONG
Julie Davis, P.O. Box 1302
Nederland, CO 80466

IN A NUTSHELL
Wanda Degan
P.O. Box 6187
East Lansing, MI 48826

SWEET DIXIE HOME
Little Roy Lewis
Route 1, Box 75
Lincolnton, GA 30817

PASS THE WORD
DOWNRIVER
Karen Billings Sutherland
Epact Music, P.O. Box 123
Monkton, VT 05469

Video:
MELODIC AUTOHARP
Carol Stober
Texas Music and Video
Box 8101, Levelland, TX 79338

BOOKS

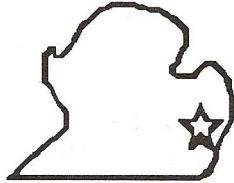
THE AUTOHARP
COMPLETE METHOD AND
MUSIC, Alexander Shealy
Elderly Instruments
P.O. Box 14210
Lansing, MI 48901

GOING DIATONIC -- A COM-
PREHENSIVE GUIDE TO
AUTOHARP CONVERSION
George Foss
Rt. 1, Box 243-A
Edgemont, AR 72044

'HARPERS-AT-LARGE

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

Workshop: Bryan Bowers
Place: Ann Arbor, MI



Reporting: Kathy Wieland
Ann Arbor, MI

Bryan Bowers gave a well-attended workshop on January 12th in Ann Arbor. We played some tunes and we learned a lot about picks, straps, and injury prevention. Bryan gave us advice on determining our best key for playing and singing. He also demonstrated some of his playing techniques. It was a great workshop, and the time flew by too quickly. Lucky for us, Bryan was doing a concert at a local coffeehouse that evening. It was a great day for local 'harp players.

Concert: The Bill Sky Family
Place: Bailey's Crossroads, VA



Reporting: Kathy Ferguson
Fairfax, VA

The Bill Sky Family put on a fine show Sunday, December 8th, at the Church of God. Bill played guitar and harmonica, and Laurie played bass and autoharp. It was an enjoyable evening of lively, authentic mountain music. As you'll note in this magazine's Pro-File section, they travel all over the country, so look for them in your area. Don't miss an opportunity to see these fine musicians.

Concert: Bryan Bowers
Place: Berkeley, CA



The site was the Freight and Salvage Coffeehouse by the waterfront, a cozy theater with a sixty's atmosphere. Bryan played there on December 22nd, and a delightful concert it was. In keeping with the season, white snowflakes decorated the dark walls, and a bright Christmas tree shared the stage with Bryan and his six 'harps.

Before the audience had a chance to realize it, they were caught up in the glorious music. Bryan combined stories and jokes with his songs.

A super concert.

Concert: Mill Run Dulcimer Band
Place: Annandale, VA

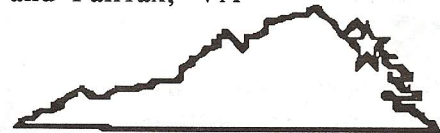


The Mill Run Dulcimer Band held its Christmas concert on December 7th. This concert is one of the highlights of the Christmas season for me -- joyful music in a beautiful setting.

Among the all-time favorites they played were Woody Padgett's stellar autoharp renditions of "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," and "Music Box Dancer."

This is a truly talented and entertaining band. Its leader, Keith Young, is to be commended for the outstanding performances it puts on throughout the year.

Club Meetings:
Capital 'Harpers
Place: Arlington and Fairfax, VA



Reporting: Kathy Thorpe
Alexandria, VA

On December 14th, the Capitol 'Harpers met in Fairfax for an enjoyable evening of sharing music, food, and fellowship.

After a pot luck supper and a short business meeting, the group warmed up by playing several songs together. We then enjoyed open stage, and a lengthy jam session which included many holiday songs and even a recitation of poetry. It was a wonderful way to enter the holiday season.

On January 19th, eighteen members and guests attended the club meeting, which was hosted by Fran Field and Tom Sipusic of Arlington, Virginia. The session began at noon with a pot luck luncheon. We then warmed up with "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," "Wildwood Flower," and "I'll Fly Away." During open stage, five members shared songs with the group.

The theme for the meeting was "favorites," and quite a variety of songs were presented. The afternoon ended with a jam session.



by Fred Koch

It's Request Time -- Volume One

First of all, thank you for taking time to write to me with your song requests. Our songs for this issue are requested from our friends in Charlotte, North Carolina, who are members of the Elizabeth Traditional Autoharp Club. Please keep those letters coming!

I am working on arrangements for some of your requests. I will be saving "Silent Night," "Go Tell It On The Mountain," and "O Channukah" for the holiday issue. "Heart And Soul" is a song I have always wanted to arrange for the autoharp! So, look for that to appear in an upcoming issue. "Get Along Little Dogies," which has its origins in "The Streets Of Laredo," will all also pop up soon in Cocohouse.

To save space, I am presenting these arrangements with words and chords only. To find your first singing note, strum the first chord of the song a few times until you have located, and can sing to yourself, the first phrase of the melody. You are now ready to decide your tempo and start your count. Ready, sing!

In his letter, Will tells us, "I would like to play 'Home On The Range'." So, here it is!

Home On The Range

Performance Notes: With a 6/8 time signature, each time you see a chord symbol (F) or slash mark (/), play a waltz-type [1-2-3] rhythm pattern. Use the [LONG-short-short] strumming pattern. Remember to accent the first beat of each pattern.

F / Bb / F G7 C7 /
Oh, give me a home where the buf - fa - lo roam, And, the deer and the an - te - lope play — ,

F / Bb / F C7 F /
Where sel - dom is heard a dis - cour - a - ging word, And the skies are not clou - dy all day — .

F C7 F / F G7 C7 /
Home, home, on the range — , Where the deer and the an - te - lope play — ,

F / Bb / F C7 F /
Where sel - dom is heard a dis - cour - a - ging word, And the skies are not clou - dy all day — .

Allison Bowling wrote to us and said, "I don't want to cause any trouble for you, but can you please try to put 'I've Been Working On The Railroad' in . . ." Sure, Allison. Great choice!

I've Been Working On The Railroad

Performance Notes: When playing this song, keep a steady march-type feel to your strums. Also, remember to use long strokes. If your feel the accompaniment is too slow for you, strum two times for each chord or slash mark. This will give you that quick, double-time feel that you might be looking for. For contrast, try the double-time strum just in certain sections. Experiment! There's no right way to do it. That's the beauty of making music -- it allows you, the performer, to make choices based on what feels right. So, have fun!

C / / C7 F / C /
I've been workin' on the rail-road, all the live long day.

C / / / D7 / G7 /
I've been workin' on the rail-road, just to pass the time a-way.

G7 / C / F / E7 /
Can't you hear the whistle blow-in'? "Rise up so early in the morn."

F D7 C Am C G7 C /
Can't you hear the captain shout - in'? "Dinah, blow your horn!"

C C7 F D7 G7 / C /
Dinah, won't you blow? Dinah, won't you blow? Dinah, won't you blow your horn?

C C7 F D7 G7 / C /
Dinah, won't you blow? Dinah, won't you blow? Dinah, won't you blow your horn?

C / / / C / G7 /
Someone's in the kitchen with Di-nah. Someone's in the kit-chen I know . . .

C C7 F D7 G7 / C /
Someone's in the kitchen with Di-nah . . . Strummin' on the old ban-jo. And singing:

C / / / / G7 /
Fee - Fi - Fidd - ely - I - O; Fee - Fi - Fidd - ely - I - O - O - O - O,

C C7 F D7 G7 / C /
Fee - Fi - Fidd - ely - I - O Strummin' on the old ban-jo.

Get Set For The 1992 Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering!

Plans for the 1992 Gathering are in full swing! We couldn't fit everything into three days, so we threw in an extra day for good measure! Get set for 1992's *four-day* autoharp extravaganza!

Unforgettable Performances by Bryan Bowers, Janette Carter and Joe Carter, Lindsay Haisley, The Bill Sky Family, Judie Pagter, Julie Davis, John Hollandsworth, The DeBusk/Weaver Family, and Ivan Stiles!

Swap-Meet Times when participants can trade 'harps and 'harp paraphernalia!

A Self-Help Maintenance Area for those whose 'harps need

minor repairs or modifications. Assistance will be available!

The Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship, which attracted 22 contestants in 1991. Prizes this year include an Orthey Signature Star Dulci-Harp valued at \$1354; an Oscar Schmidt OS110-15 Ozark Autoharp valued at \$479.90; a Mountain Laurel 'Harp Kit valued at \$200; trophies and cash prizes; a ticket and contest registration to the International Autoharp Championship at the Walnut Valley Festival in Winfield, Kansas; and

an invitation to be a headliner at the 1993 Gathering!

The opportunity to break the World Record for the most 'harps playing one song at one time!

Our world-famous Watermelon Seed-spitting Contest!

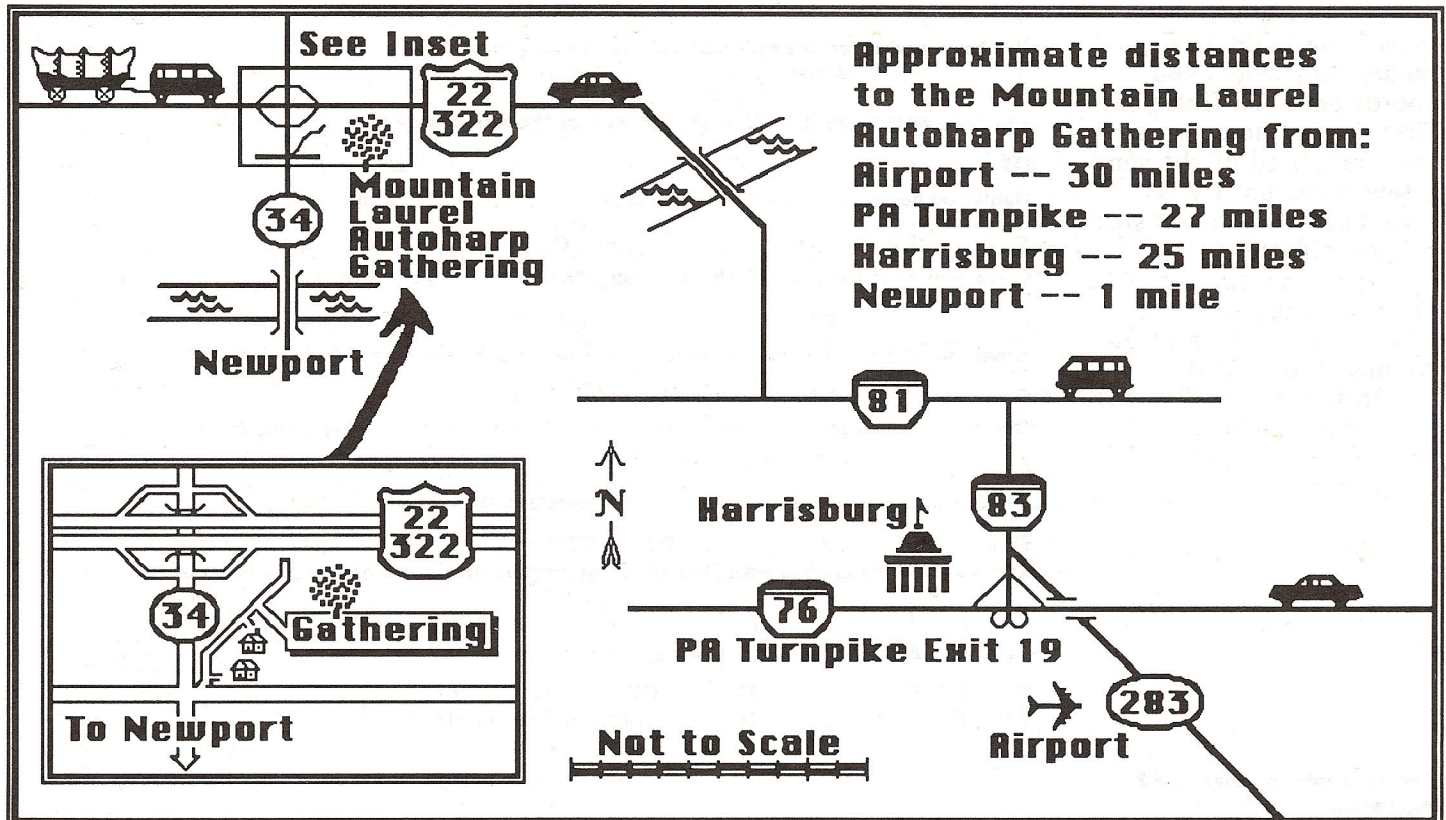
A very special addition this year is the Leonard A. Reid People's Choice Award, which will be awarded to an open stage performer.

Plus, **World-class Workshops!**

The finest autoharp performances in the world, stimulating workshops, exciting contests, open stages, autoharp-related vendors, down-home cooking, camp-fire jams, and the friendliest people to meet in one place makes the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering the place to be in 1992! ■



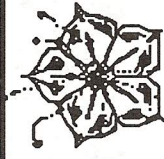
EASTWARD HO! Julie Davis of Nederland, Colorado, is organizing a "wagon train" to come to the Gathering! You can start with her, or meet her along the way -- (she'll be traveling I-70 to I-76). She'll protect you from coyotes and buffalo stampedes, and she promises evening jams! Call her at 303 258-3444.



Home of the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship • Newport, Pennsylvania • July 2-5

| | THURSDAY, JULY 2nd | FRIDAY, JULY 3rd | SATURDAY, JULY 4th | SUNDAY, JULY 5th |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:00 Main Tent Pole Barn | Greetings & Announcements | Workshop: Julie Davis Workshop: Laurie Sky | Contestants Draw Numbers For Championship--Main Tent | Workshop: Judie Pagter Workshop: John Hollandsworth |
| 9:30 Main Tent Pole Barn | Meet The Workshop Leaders | Free Time For Jamming, Practice, and Swap Meet | Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship -- Main Tent -- | Free Time For Jamming, Practice, and Swap Meet |
| 10:00 Main Tent Pole Barn | Workshop: Laurie Sky Workshop: Julie Davis | Workshop: Bryan Bowers Workshop: Alan Mager | | Gospel Sing With The DeBusk/ Weaver Family--Main Tent |
| 12:00 | Lunch Open Stage | Lunch Open Stage | Lunch Open Stage | Lunch Open Stage |
| 1:00 Main Tent Pole Barn | Watermelon Seed Spitting Contest -- Next to Main Tent -- | Mountain Laurel Invitational Concert -- Main Tent -- | Workshop: Lindsay Haisley (B) Workshop: Fran Stallings | Workshop: Lindsay Haisley (B) Workshop: Jim Hudson |
| 2:00 Main Tent Pole Barn | Workshop: Bryan Bowers Workshop: Alan Mager | | Panel Discussion: Improving The Autoharp -- Main Tent -- | Free Time For Jamming, Practice, and Swap Meet |
| 2:30 Main Tent Pole Barn | | | | |
| 3:00 Main Tent Pole Barn | Workshop: Lindsay Haisley (A) Workshop: Fran Stallings | Workshop: Pleasant Valley Audio | Break A World Record With The Most Harps Playing One Song At One Time -- In The Big Field -- | Concert: John Hollandsworth Judie Pagter The Bill Sky Family Lindsay Haisley |
| 3:30 Main Tent Pole Barn | A Visit With The Carters | Workshop: Lindsay Haisley (A) Workshop: Jim Hudson | Workshop: John Hollandsworth Workshop: Judie Pagter | |
| 4:00 Main Tent Pole Barn | Learn A Song With Gil Palley & Bob Woodcock | Learn A Song With Bob Lewis | Learn A Song With The Annabelles | Dinner and Farewells |
| 5:00 Main Tent Pole Barn | Dinner Open Stage | Dinner Open Stage | Dinner Open Stage | |
| 6:00 | | | | |
| 7:30 Main Tent | Concert: Julie Davis Janette Carter and Joe Carter | Concert: Ivan Stiles Bryan Bowers | Concert: John Hollandsworth Judie Pagter The Bill Sky Family Lindsay Haisley | |

Schedule subject to change.



Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering

Schedule

INTER ACTION

YOU ARE INVITED
TO PARTICIPATE IN AN
INTERACTIVE LESSON WITH

ALAN MAGER



2-PART FORMAT

Part 1

Student
Orders
Lesson Tape

Instructor
Sends Tape
To Student

Student has choice to go on to:

Part 2

Student
Records
Lesson On
Reverse Of
Tape And
Sends To
Instructor

Instructor
Critiques
Tape And
Sends Reply
To Student

Alan Mager has been the Interaction Editor for *Autoharp Quarterly* since his first lesson appeared in the April 1989 issue. He has also contributed many musical arrangements and articles to *AQ* and other publications.

Known as one of the finest autoharp instructors, Alan teaches group and private lessons in Northern Virginia and gives workshops for players of all levels at various festivals in the eastern United States.

Alan is also known for his playing ability. His first full-length cassette tape, "The Fairhaired Boy," was released in 1990. This tape features a wide variety of musical selections played on both chromatic and diatonic autoharps.

Last year, Alan took the plunge and entered his first two autoharp contests. In the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship in Newport, Pennsylvania, he finished in the top five, and he took third place in the International Autoharp Championship in Winfield, Kansas.

Alan looks forward to participating in more festivals, contests, and workshops this year.

Are you interested in becoming an Interaction Instructor? We'd like to hear from you.
For information, write to: Alan F. Mager, P.O. Box 1221, Annandale, VA 22003.

Interaction is your opportunity to have a personalized lesson from a top-notch performer.

HERE'S HOW INTERACTION WORKS

STEP 1

Send \$8.00 to the instructor for a tape of the lesson including the instructor's rendition of the tune. Make check payable to the instructor.

-- Then decide if you want to go on to Step 2 --

STEP 2

A. Record your rendition of the lesson on the reverse side of the tape along with any questions, and return it to the instructor with an additional check for \$8.00.

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.

THE INTERACTION LESSON: THE HUNDRED PIPERS

Alan F. Mager

P.O. Box 1221

Annandale, VA 22003

Several years ago, I observed that people who were winning prizes in autoharp contests were often playing simple tunes. It was their arrangements of the tunes and the dynamics they used in playing them that made the judges take notice, rather than the complexity or difficulty of the tunes themselves. Since realizing this, I have tried to find ways to make simple tunes more interesting to the listener and more fun for me to play.

"The Hundred Pipers" is a simple tune that I dressed up and played in some autoharp contests last year. It was the simplest of all the tunes I played, but I thought it was the best thing I played. (Who knows what the judges thought?) This lesson is designed to show you what I did to this piece, and possibly give you ideas for creating arrangements of other tunes.

In Version 1 of "The Hundred Pipers," you can see that the tune is diatonic -- there are no accidental sharps or flats. All the notes are in the F major scale, so the entire tune can be played using the I, IV, and V major chords (F, Bb, and C), as shown. If you're

unfamiliar with "The Hundred Pipers," play Version 1 several times, until you have the tune in your head.

I think this Version 1 sounds a little lifeless. To make the tune more interesting, I created Version 2 by syncopating the rhythm and by using some minor and 7th chords as alternatives to the three majors.

To create the syncopation, I changed some of the eighth notes to sixteenth notes and replaced others with two sixteenth notes. This helps to break up the monotony of the regular timing in Version 1.

I found that the C7, G7, and Dm chords sounded good in many places instead of the original three major chords. Using these new chords gives the whole piece a decidedly different, and -- I think -- improved, flavor.

The piece in Version 2 remains a diatonic piece, melodically, but the newly-added G7 chord has a B note in it which is not contained in the F diatonic scale. The sound of this note really adds some spice to the piece. I play "The Hundred Pipers" on a chromatic autoharp so that I get that extra note. (You could

achieve the same result playing this tune on a two-key, F/C diatonic 'harp, as the B note is in the C scale.)

Once you have the tune in your head from practicing Version 1, try Version 2. Play it over and over, first concentrating on the new chords and working out the fingering patterns you'll need to play the piece smartly.

When you start to feel comfortable with the new chord patterns and the somewhat different sound the new chords give the piece, try playing the syncopated rhythm of Version 2.

"The Hundred Pipers" is a Scottish bagpipe tune. After I had been playing it for some time, I discovered that every chord I use to play it, except the C7, contains the F note. The C7 isn't used much and is never held very long. This means that the F note rings almost constantly throughout the piece, sounding something like a bagpipe drone. To emphasize this effect, I hold down the F and Bb chord bars and give the strings a few strums to the beat of the music before I start playing the melody. Together, these two chords allow only the F

note to sound. This simple introduction sets up the droning sound that I want to continue throughout the piece.

Now for the tricky stuff! Below Version 2 is an alternate B Part which shows some dynamic tricks I use to play "The Hundred Pipers."

Measures 1 and 2 each show a pair of rest symbols in both the music notation and the tablature. This means that you should stop all sound coming from the autoharp for the two counts represented by these rests. To do this, push down sharply on the F, C7, and Bb chord bars at the same time. You should hear a very abrupt halt to the ringing sound of

the 'harp, leaving nothing but silence to fill two beats.

One note is left out of both measures 3 and 4. What's left is played by four repeats of a two-count thumb strum for the duration of each quarter note and a one-count pluck for each eighth note. This technique gives only an approximation of the melody, as it is difficult to make a single melody note sound when playing a strum. The idea here is to create a brief variation in rhythm and overall sound, not to reproduce the "correct" melody accurately.

In measure 6, the two sixteenth notes that made up

the last beat in Version 2 are replaced by a tiny downward glissando from the last note played (F) to the first note of the next measure (C). Perform this by dragging a finger across all the strings between the F and C notes. The "O" in the chord line means to play this open, that is, with no chord bar depressed.

The techniques shown in the alternate B Part may be best understood by hearing them played, rather than by reading about them. In the lesson tape, I go over them in some detail, and I urge you to send for the tape to get the full flavor of what I'm doing with "The Hundred Pipers."

THE HUNDRED PIPERS (Version 1)

Traditional Arrangement copyright 1992, Alan F. Mager.

The score consists of four systems, each with a treble clef staff, a chord line, and a guitar tablature staff. The tablature includes fret numbers (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4) and strumming symbols (arrows for strums, circled numbers for plucks). The chord line uses letters A, F, C, Bb, and F to denote chords. The music notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and a glissando symbol in the final measure of the fourth system.

THE HUNDRED PIPERS

(Version 2)

Traditional

Arrangement copyright 1990, Alan F. Mager.

Musical notation system 1: Treble clef, 6/8 time signature. Chords: A, F C7, F / / Bb F, Bb / / / /, F / Dm G7 Dm, G7 / C7, F C7.

TAB: 6 8 | X X (1) | X X X X X (1) (T) | X X X X X (1) | X X X X X (1) (T) | X X X X X (1) (T) | X X X X X (1)

Musical notation system 2: Treble clef, 6/8 time signature. Chords: F / / Bb F, Bb / / / /, F / C7, F C7, F / /.

TAB: X X X X X O O | X X X X X O | X X X X X (O) O | X X X X X (O) O | X X X X X (O) O | X X X X X (O) O

Musical notation system 3: Treble clef, 6/8 time signature. Chords: B / Bb, F / / / /, Bb / / C7 Bb, F / Dm G7 Dm, G7 / C7, F C7.

TAB: B / Bb | X X O | X X X X X O O | X X X X X O | X X X X X O O | X X X X X O O | X X X X X O

Musical notation system 4: Treble clef, 6/8 time signature. Chords: F / / Bb C7, Dm / Bb C7 Bb, F / C7, F C7, F / /.

TAB: X X X X X O O | X X X X X O O | X X X X X O O | X X X X X O O | X X X X X O O | X X X X X O O

Alternate B Part

Musical notation system 5: Treble clef, 6/8 time signature. Chords: B / Bb, F₁ / / Bb / /, F₃ / Dm /, G7₄ / C7 /.

TAB: B / Bb | X X O | X X X X X O O | X X X X X O O | X X X X X O O | X X X X X O O

Musical notation system 6: Treble clef, 6/8 time signature. Chords: F₅ / / Bb C7, Dm₆ / Bb, F₇ / C7, F C7, F₈ / /.

TAB: F₅ | X X X X X O O | Dm₆ | X X X X X O O | F₇ | X X X X X O O | F₈ | X X X X X O O

PRO-FILES

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

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

HELEN BLACKBURN
1447 Glynn Oaks Drive
Marietta, GA 30060
404 423-9293

Pro-File: AQ April 91
Performance Schedule:
April 25, 26
Mossy Creek
Arts & Crafts Festival
Perry, GA

EVO BLUESTEIN
Folklore Productions
10691 N. Madsen
Clovis, CA 93612
310 451-0767

Pro-File: AQ October 88
Performance Schedule:
April 10
College of the Sequoias

Visalia, CA
May 15, 16
California State University
Autoharp Extension Class
Fresno, CA
May 18 to 24
Lone Pine, Independence,
Big Pine, and Bishop, CA
Info: Council for the Arts
619 873-8014

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:
May 1
Corvallis, OR
May 2
Friendship Hall
Pistol River, OR
May 31
Kerrville Folk Festival
Kerrville, TX
June 6
Bluegrass Festival
Carlisle, Canada

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

JULIE DAVIS
PO Box 1302
Nederland, CO 80466
303 258-3444
Pro-File: AQ July 91
Performance Schedule:
April 7
Beginning Autoharp Class
Swallow Hill Music Asso.
Denver CO
April 7
Beginning Children's
Autoharp
Swallow Hill Music Asso.
Denver, CO
April 12
Children's Hospital
Denver, CO
April 13-16
Northridge Elementary School
Residency & Family Concert
Highlands Ranch, CO

April 18
Earth Day Exposition
Denver City Park
April 24
Boulder Alternative
High School Residency &
Family Concert
Boulder, CO
May 1
May Day Children's Concert
Denver Public Schools
May 7
Wray, CO
May 10
Mother's Day Concert
Denver, CO
May 12
Teaching Autoharp to
Children Class (Teaching
recertification credit
available)
Swallow Hill Music Asso.
Denver, CO
May 14
Family Concert
Phillips School
Denver, CO
May 23
Springfest, Fiddler's Green
Denver, CO
June 21
Summer Solstice Concert
Chepita Park
Nederland, CO

MIKE FENTON
High Park Cottage
Pershore Road
Whittington
Worcester, WR5 2RT
England
0905 354822
Pro-File: AQ October 88
Performance Schedule:
April 6
Grappenhall Hall Special Schl.
Warrington, Cheshire
April 7
Greenbank Residential School
Northwich, Cheshire
April 8
Southgate Primary School
Runcorn, Cheshire
April 9
St. Teresa's RC Infants School
Chester, Cheshire
April 10
Mount Carmel RC Junior Schl.
Chester
April 11
Malmsbury Further
Education College
Wiltshire

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April 13
 Alsager College
 (Teacher's course)
 Cheshire
 April 28, 29
 Jesmond Road Primary School
 Hartlepool, Cleveland
 April 30
 Low Grange Junior School
 Billingham, Cleveland
 May 1
 Brambles Primary School
 Middlesbrough, Cleveland
 May 5
 Horncastle Primary School
 Lincolnshire
 May 6
 St. Lawrence Special School
 Horncastle, Lincolnshire
 May 7, 8
 Weavers' Close CE
 Primary School
 Earl Shilton, Leicester
 May 12
 Winchelsea Special School
 Parkstone, Dorset
 May 13
 Friarn Primary School
 Bridgewater, Somerset
 May 14, 15
 St. Paul's VC Junior School
 Shepton Mallet, Somerset
 May 18
 Viewly Hill Infants School
 Hemlington, Cleveland
 May 19
 Brougham Primary School
 Hartlepool, Cleveland
 May 20, 21
 Fairfield Infants School
 Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland
 May 22
 Saviour CE Primary School
 Manchester
 May 25
 Kelloholm Primary School
 Sanquhar, Dumfriesshire,
 Scotland
 May 26
 Rephad School Stranraer
 Wigtownshire, Scotland
 May 27
 Lochans School
 Stranraer, Scotland
 May 28
 Dalbeattie Primary School
 Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland
 May 29
 St. Michael's School
 Dumfries, Scotland
 June 1
 Crowhurst CE Primary School
 Battle, East Sussex
 June 2
 Allhallows CE Middle School

Rochester, Kent
 June 3
 St. Nicholas & St. John
 Primary School
 Kingsdown, Deal, Kent
 June 4
 Mongeham Primary School
 Deal, Kent
 June 5
 St. Peter & St. Paul
 CE Primary School
 Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex
 June 8
 Woolfardisworthy Primary
 School
 Bideford, Devon
 June 9
 Bluecoat Junior School
 Barnstaple, Devon
 June 10
 Kentisbury Primary School
 Barnstaple, Devon
 June 11
 Chittlehampton
 CE Primary School
 Umberleigh, Devon
 June 12
 St. George's
 RC Primary School
 Taunton, Somerset
 June 15
 Elmley Castle


CE First School
 Pershore, Worcestershire
 (Doing 'live' recording for
 new children's album)
 June 16
 Holy Trinity School
 Kidderminster, Worcestershire
 June 17
 Lawley Primary School
 Telford, Shropshire
 June 18
 St. Chad's CE Primary School
 Oldham, Greater Manchester
 June 19
 Ditton County
 Nursery School
 Widnes, Cheshire
 June 22
 Pinchbeck West Primary School
 Spalding, Lincolnshire
 June 23
 Hemswell Primary School
 Gainsborough, Lincolnshire
 June 24
 Ambergate Special School
 Grantham, Lincolnshire
 June 25
 Ermine Infants School
 Lincoln
 June 26
 Lancaster Infants School
 Lincoln

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 Evo Bluestein, Tom Schroedoe, and Mike Seeger, among others

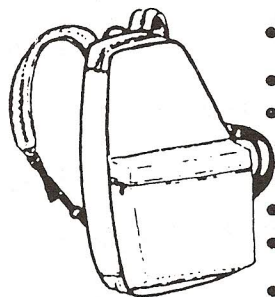


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 June 30
 Sedlescombe
 CE Primary School
 Battle, East Sussex

PAUL and WIN GRACE

Route 1, Box 182
 11990 Barnes Chapel
 Columbia, MO 65201
 314 443-2819
Pro-File: AQ October 88
Performance Schedule:
 April 3
 Early morning -- Live TV
 performance
 Evening -- Concert with
 Oklahoma City Music Asso.
 Oklahoma City, OK
 April 4
 Cross Timbers
 Country Opry
 Stephenville, TX
 April 5
 Cafe des Artistes
 La Madeleine Bakery
 Ft. Worth, TX
 April 10
 Concert with Crow Johnson
 Uncle Calvin's Coffeehouse

Northpark
 Presbyterian Church
 Dallas, TX
 April 16
 Ozark Folk Center
 Mountain View, AR
 April 18
 Greer's Ferry Visitor's Center
 Heber Springs, AR
 April 25, 26
 Civil War Re-Enactment
 Keokuk, IA
 June 13
 Four Rivers Folk Festival
 "The Homeplace"
 Land Between the Lakes
 Golden Pond, KY

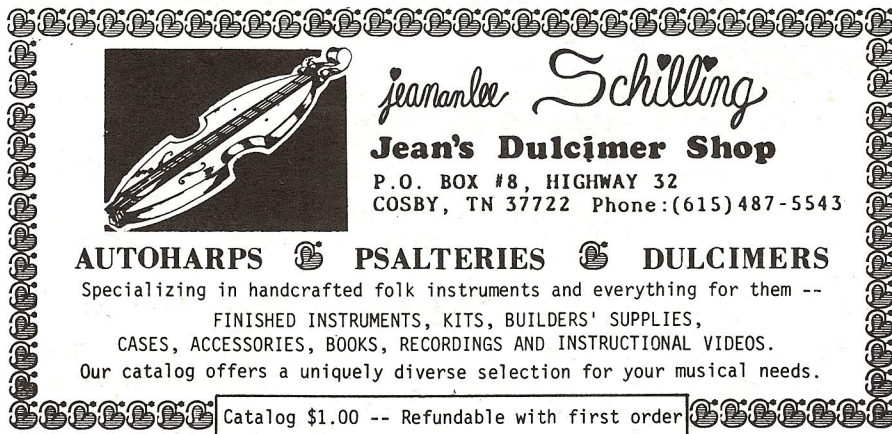
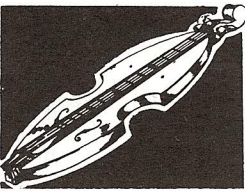
BRUCE HUTTON

6 Pine Avenue
 Takoma Park, MD 20912
 301 270-2217
Pro-File: AQ April 90
Performance Schedule:
 June 27, 28
 Summer Solstice Festival
 Los Angeles, CA

LITTLE ROY LEWIS

The Lewis Family
 Route 1, Box 75
 Lincolnton, GA 30817

404 359-3767
Pro-File: AQ January 90
Performance Schedule:
 April 3
 Flowers Hall
 Hanover, OH
 April 4
 Junior High School
 Bellevue, OH
 April 5
 Peddler's Auction Barn
 Goshen, IN
 April 10
 High School
 Monterey, VA
 April 11
 Mennonite High School
 Lancaster, PA
 April 12
 Wm. Monroe High School
 Stanardsville, VA
 April 18
 Junior High School
 Shawnee, OK
 April 23
 Joyful Noise Supper Club
 East Point, GA
 April 24
 Fieldale Collinsville
 High School
 Collinsville, VA
 April 25
 Junior High School
 West Boyertown, PA
 April 26
 Mr. B's Family Restaurant
 Massaponax, VA
 April 30, May 1, 2
 Elijah Clark State Park
 Lincolnton, GA
 May 3
 Bluegrass Festival
 Virginia Beach, VA
 May 8
 Opry House
 Milton, WV
 May 9
 Wolfe Civic Center
 Asheville, NC
 May 10
 Granite Hill Campgrounds
 Gettysburg, PA
 May 15
 Salem Baptist Church Grounds
 Cochran, GA
 May 22
 Local 988 UAW Hall
 Memphis, TN
 May 23
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 May 24
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 908 604-9743
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 May 7
 The Playhouse
 Crossville, TN
 June 20
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Birmingham, AL
 June 23 & 30
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 Wynnewood, PA 19096
 215 649-0732
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April 12, 13
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 April 14
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April 17
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Mena, AR
 April 19
 Hatfield, AR
 May 6
 Memphis, TN
 May 27
 Carnegie Hall Folk Festival
 New York, NY
May 31
Memphis, TN
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June 16, 17, 18
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 June 20, 21
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 Phoenixville, PA 19460
 215 935-9062
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Performance Schedule:
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 May 1, 2, 3
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May 29, 30, 31
SunFest
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 June 12
 Mozart International Festival
 Bartlesville, OK

CAROL STOBER
 Maiden Heaven Band
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 Talladega, AL 35160
 205 362-6471
Pro-File: AQ October 88
Performance Schedule:
June 20, 21
City Stages Festival
Birmingham, AL

Dates can change or be cancelled --
 contact performer for details.



Red River Valley (2)

↓
 G G G / G G G / D7 G D7 G ////
 From this val - ley they say you are go - ing.
 G G G / G G G / D7 G D7 ////
 We will miss your bright eyes and sweet smile,
 G D7 G / G D7 G / D7 G G C ////
 For they say you are ta - king the sun - shine
 C C G / G D7 G / D7 D7 G ////
 Which has bright - ened our path for a while.

Come and sit by my side if you love me.
 Do not hasten to bid me adieu,
 But remember the Red River Valley,
 And the cowboy who loved you so true.

Won't you think of the valley you're leaving.
 Oh how lonely, how sad it will be.
 Oh think of the fond heart you're breaking
 And the grief you are causing to me.

As you go to your home by the ocean,
 May you never forget those sweet hours
 That we spent in the Red River Valley,
 And the love we exchanged 'mid the flowers.

Down in the Valley (3)

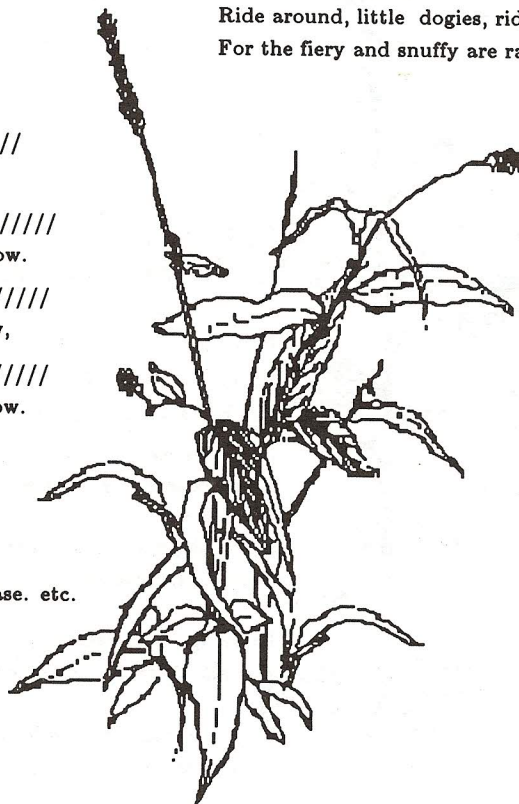
↓
 F F C7 F // F / F F C7 F C7 ////
 Down in the val - ley, the val - ley so low,
 C7 C7 C7 C7 // C7 // C7 F C7 F ////
 Hang your head o - ver, hear the wind blow.
 F F C7 F // F // F C7 F C7 ////
 Hear the wind blow, dear, hear the wind blow,
 C7 C7 C7 C7 // C7 // C7 F C7 F ////
 Hang your head o - ver, hear the wind blow.

Roses love sunshine, violets love dew,
 Angels in heaven know I love you. etc.

If you don't love me, love whom you please.
 Throw your arms 'round me, give my heart ease. etc.

Build me a castle forty feet high
 So I can see him as he rides by. etc.

Write me a letter, send it by mail
 Send it in care of the Birmingham jail. etc.



I Ride an Old Paint (3)

↓
 CC / C C F C C C / C C F C
 I ride an old paint -, I lead an old Dan -,
 C G7 / G7 G7 G7 F G7 C / C C G7 C /
 I'm goin' to Mon - tan - a to throw the hoo - li - han.
 C G7 / G7 G7 G7 F G7 C / C C G7 C /
 They feed in the cool - ies, they wa - ter in the draw,
 C G7 / G7 G7 G7 G7 C / C C F C /
 Their tails are all mat - ted, their backs are all raw.
 C C G7 / G7 G7 G7 C G7 G7 C / G7 C /
 Ride a - round, lit - tle do - gies, ride a - round them slow,
 C C G7 / G7 G7 G7 G7 C C F C /
 For the fier - y and snuf - fy are rar - in' to go.

I've worked in the town and I've worked on the farm,
 And all I got is this muscle in my arm.
 Got a blister on my foot and a callous in my hand,
 But I'll be a cow - puncher as long as I can.
 Ride around, little dogies, ride around them slow,
 For the fiery and snuffy are rarin' to go.

Oh, when I die, take my saddle from the wall,
 Put it on my pony, lead him out of his stall.
 Tie my bones to his back, turn our faces to the west,
 And we'll ride the prairies that we love the best.
 Ride around, little dogies, ride around them slow,
 For the fiery and snuffy are rarin' to go.

Ol' Texas (2)

↓
 C C C C ////
 I'm gon - na leave
 F C C C C ////
 Ol' - Tex - as now.
 C C C C ////
 They've no more use
 F C C C G7 ////
 For the long horned cow.
 G7 F C G7 ////
 They've plowed and fenced
 C G7 C F C ////
 My - cat - tle range,
 C C F C G7 ////
 And the peo - ple there
 C G7 C F C ////
 Are - all so strange.



Autoharp Songbook

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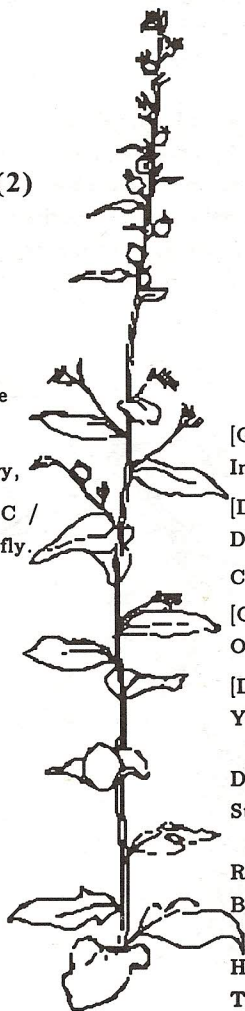
Turkey in the Straw (2)

↓
 [G D7] G G G [G D7] G G G
 As - I went down a - long the road,
 [G D7] G G [G D7] [G D7] G D7 D7
 With a ti-red team - and a hea - vy load,
 [GD7] G G G [G D7] G G G
 I - cracked my whip and the lead - er sprung,
 [GD7] G [G C] [G G] [G D7] G D7 G /
 I - said good - bye - to the wa - gon tongue.
 [G G] [G G] G / [G G] [G G] G /
 Tur-key in the straw, Tur-key in the hay,
 [C C] [/C] C C [C C] [/C] C /
 Tune up the fid-dles, Heigh - o de - ay,
 [G G] [G G] [G G] [G G] G [G G] D7
 Roll 'em up and twist 'em up, a high tuck - a haw,
 [G D7] [G G] [G C] [G G]
 And - hit 'em up a tune -
 [G D7] [G G] [D7 D7] G /
 call-ed "Tur-key in the Straw".

Jimmy Crack Corn (2)

↓
 C F C G7 C F F F
 When I was young I used to wait
 F C C [C C] C G7 G G7
 On my old mas-ter and bring his plate
 C F C [G7 G7] C F F F
 And pass the bot-tle when he got dry,
 F G7 [/G7] G7 [/G7] C C C /
 And brush - a - way - the blue tail fly.
 Chorus:
 [C C] C C C G7 G7 G7 /
 Jim-my crack corn and I don't care,
 [G7 G7] G7 G7 G7 CC C /
 Jim-my crack corn and I don't care,
 [C C] C C C F F F
 Jim-my crack corn and I don't care,
 F G7 G7 G7 G7 C //
 My mas-ter's gone a - way.

The pony run, he jump, he kick,
 He threw my master in the ditch.
 He died, and the jury wondered why,
 The verdict was the blue tail fly. Chorus:



You are My Sunshine (2)

↓
 G G D7 G / G // G D7 G G / G //
 The oth-er night, dear, as I lay sleep - ing,
 G D7 G C / C / G / C / G // //
 I dreamed I held you in my arms
 G D7 G C / C // C G C G / G // //
 When I a-woke, dear, I was mis-tak- en
 G D7 G // D7 D7 // D7 G // //
 And I hung my head and cried.
 Chorus:
 G G D7 G / G // G D7 G G / G //
 You are my sun - shine, my on - ly sun - shine
 G D7 G C / C // C G C G // //
 You make me hap-py when skies are gray
 G D7 G C / C // C G C G / G // //
 You'll nev-er know, dear, how much I love you.
 G D7 G // D7 D7 / D7 G G // //
 Please don't take my sun-shine a-way.

I'll always love you and make you happy
 If you will only say the same
 But if you leave me to love another,
 You'll regret it all someday.
 Chorus:

Clementine (3)

↓
 [G G] G G [G G] G G [G G] G [/G] [D7 G] D7 /
 In a ca-vern, in a can-yon, ex-ca - va - ting for a mine,
 [D7 G] D7 D7 [G D7] G G [G G] D7 D7 [D7 D7] G /
 Dwelt a mi-ner, for-ty - ni-ner, and his daugh-ter, Cle-men-tine.
 Chorus:
 [G G] G G [G G] G G [G G] G [/G] [D7 G] D7 /
 Oh my dar-ling, Oh my dar-ling, Oh my dar - ling, Cle-men-tine,
 [D7 G] D7 D7 [G D7] G G [G G] D7 D7 [D7 D7] G /
 You are lost and gone for - ev-er, dread-ful sor-ry, Cle-men-tine.

Drove she ducklings to the water every morning just at nine
 Stubbed her toe against a splinter, fell into the foaming brine. Chorus:

Ruby lips above the water, blowing bubbles soft and fine,
 But alas I was no swimmer, so I lost my Clementine. Chorus:

How I missed her, how I missed her, how I missed my Clementine,
 Til I kissed her little sister and forgot my Clementine. Chorus:

A GUIDE TO THE MAKING AND USE OF THE SILVA-STYLE FINGERPICK

by Stephen Silva

My grandfather, Agnelo Silva, created this pick design because, as a manual laborer, he could not maintain his fingernails. He played the 12-string Portuguese viola which requires a vigorous fingerpicking style where the first, and occasionally the middle, finger picked the strings in both directions to produce rapid tremelo effects. Brushing the strings backward as well as forward with the fingers necessitated that his fingerpicks be wedged in the gap between the underside of the nail and the flesh of the fingertip. His picks were heat-formed to wrap around the underside of the finger like a conventional dobro pick would if it were put on upside down. (My updated version of my grandfather's design covers only the top of the fingernail and must be secured to the very back edge of the fingernail with a tiny piece of tape. I prefer this style after much experimentation because it feels more natural. After wearing my picks for a couple of minutes, I don't even know the picks are on.)

The "Silva Fingerpick" has several major advantages over almost anything but a perfect set of fingernails:

- Can use any hand position and incorporate strokes that are difficult with traditional fingerpicks
- Is more secure on the finger than any other style fingerpick
- Can be made of a wide

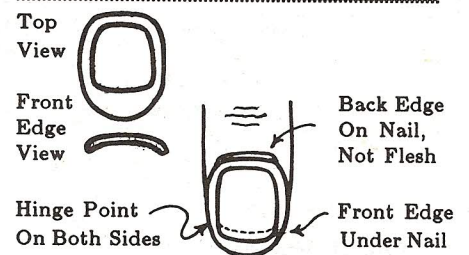
variety of material from light plastic to metal

- Can be curved and shaped into any form, thus compensating for even the most misshapened fingernails
- Can be made to produce any contact (with the strings) sound characteristic from very subdued to overly brilliant
- Several sets can be made with different characteristics.
- Are very durable
- Fingertips are exposed to dampen string sound or incorporate soft "tapping"

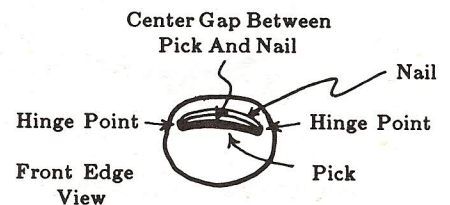
MATERIALS

Non-brittle, tough plastics seem to work the best. The clear, flexible plastic from a shampoo bottle works well. The curvature of the side of the bottle fits the shape of my fingernail perfectly. The clear plastic material produces a very clear tone without "clicking." Another acceptable material is the translucent brown plastic from prescription pill bottles. These are available in a wide variety of diameters so you can always find what you need to fit the curve of your fingernail. I use the bottles that are about one inch in diameter for my sets. This material produces a semi-brilliant, non-clicking sound and is very durable. You may also experiment with plastic microwave frozen food plates and other plastics and metals.

SHAPING THE SILVA PICK

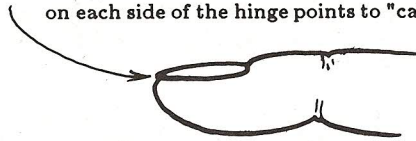


The only real points of contact between the front portion of the pick and the front portion of the nail are at the corner, or the "hinge" points shown above. The entire front playing edge should flex at the hinge points. The gap between the pick and the middle portion of the nail (shown below) provides space for the front portion of the pick to move into when the strings are struck.



The greater the pick flexing, the more brilliant the sound will be. If the pick is very stiff, or contacts the underside of the nail in the middle, the sound will be more "dull" or "blunt." The difference in sound varies in the same way as the contact sound created by heavy or thin gauge picks on the strings. Experimentation is required to find the right shape.

Fingernail can be very short as long as there is a small corner on each side of the hinge points to "catch" the pick.



Tape -- shown in position, but not pressed down.

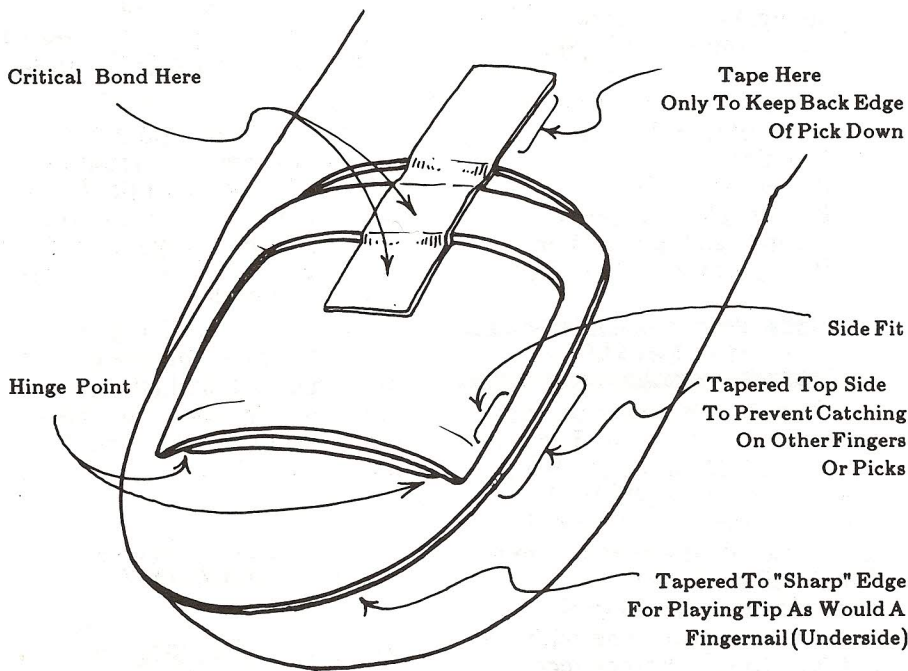
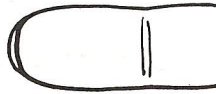


Side View -- Pick In Place

Top View -- Pick In Place

The pick should look exactly like a perfectly trimmed fingernail when viewed from underneath. It should be no wider than the fingernail would be if it were visible. The pick edge that is wedged under the nail should conform to the curvature of the fingertip.

View From Under Side Of Finger



All underside edges should be tapered back to allow the closest possible fit with the nail and finger flesh. The underside playing edge of the pick should be filed and buffed the same way as a fingernail would be. It is most effective to get the final shape of the playing edge by filing it while in place on the finger. This is easy to do if the entire pick is form-fitted first and the playing edge left until the very end.

The side fit between the nail and pick should be perfect -- that is, neither tight, nor loose. If the side fit is loose, the pick will still be usable but will not be as snug on the finger as it could be. A properly fitted pick can almost be used without tape at all on the back edge. If the side fit is too tight, it will tend to buckle the nail and not have the flex at the hinge points required to produce a "clean" sound. If the pick is

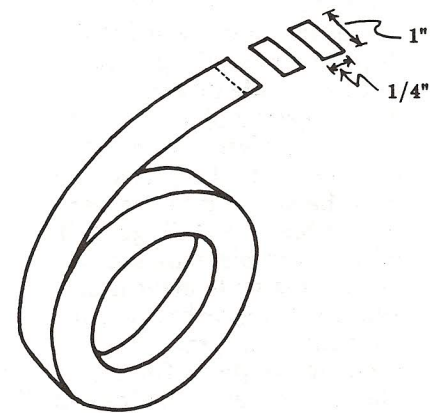
properly fitted it will feel *exactly* like playing with your fingernails after a few minutes of playing.

Note: Being meticulous with the fit is well worth the effort in comfort, finger dexterity, and tone production.

TAPE

The tape on the back edge of the pick provides the additional insurance (piece of mind) that the pick will remain in place during vigorous playing. This pick style allows the player the freedom of brushing the tops of the nails across the strings in a finger-opening "flail" as in the Flamenco style. The tape, therefore, should not be applied at all to the front one-half of the top of the fingernail.

I use a flesh-colored version of the familiar (usually silver-colored) duct tape. It comes in a one inch wide roll. I cut it right off the roll as shown below. The one inch width of the tape creates the perfect length of the strip I use on my fingers.



Thumb



Finger

(Picks Not Shown)

I apply a wider strip across the base of my thumbnail because of its width and because I don't use the top side of my

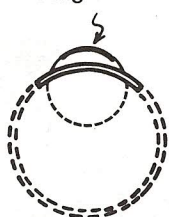
thumb nail at all for playing. I found the tape I use at a local surplus store. I don't know if it is still available. The manufacturer, as listed on the inside of the paper core, is: Manco Tape Inc. P.O. Box 685 Cleveland, OH 44107

TOOLS

I use a Dremel hobby tool to rough out and shape all of my picks. It is quick and easy to use a common twist drill to "mill out" the rough shape and separate it from the bottle. This can also be done with a knife, but it takes longer. A bullet-shaped grindstone bit is used to finish-shape the pick and add all of the tapers to the edges. I hand file and buff the playing edge with a "diamond dust" metal emery board and pliable buffing sticks (both from Revlon). Jewelers files may be of some use in fitting the pick precisely to the nail and finger, but I've never had need for them.

BASIC PROCEDURE

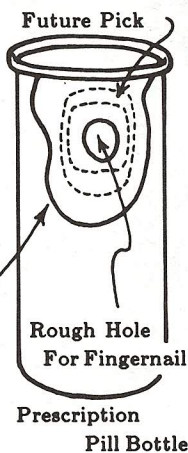
Fingernail



Bottle - Edge View

1. Cut an oversized rough shape from a plastic bottle having a diameter slightly larger than the curvature of the nail.

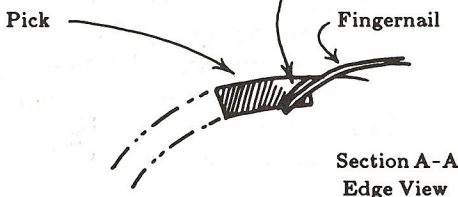
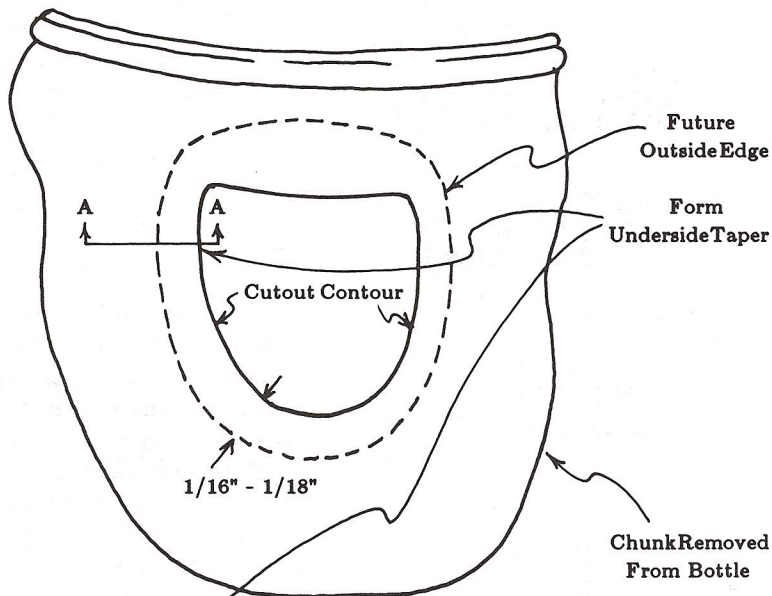
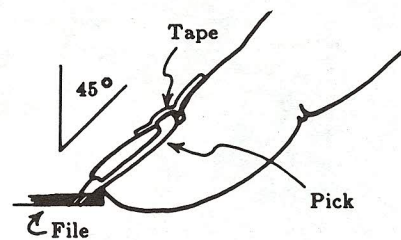
2. Rough out the hole for the fingernail. Leave it undersized to start. (It is sometimes easier to cut this hole before the piece is removed from the bottle.)



Rough Chunk Of Material

Prescription Pill Bottle

3. Slowly and carefully form the inside cutout for the fingernail. Take great care in matching the front inside edge where it goes under the fingernail.
4. Taper back the underside edge all around the cutout so that the pick will fit closely with the nail.
5. Form outer edge of pick to follow contour of cutout. The width of the pick as viewed from the top should be kept to a minimum (typically 1/16" to 1/8"). Leave the playing edge long.
6. When the pick is formed to fit on the finger perfectly, begin forming the playing edge. The length of the playing edge is a matter of preference. The underside should be tapered to form a sharp edge



with the top (chisel point). If the playing edge is left blunt or square, it will make a scratching sound on the strings. The chisel-point edge can be formed by filing the underside of the playing edge on a 45 degree angle while the pick is secured to the finger.

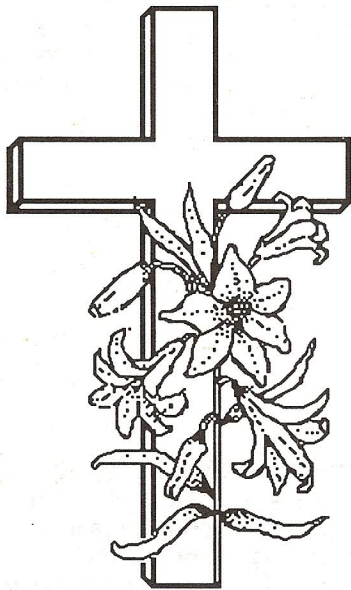
SUMMARY

When properly formed, these picks should give you an increased ease of playing and great tone production. It has taken many hours to develop this pick design. It now takes me about three hours total to make a complete set of custom-fit picks. The effort you put into these picks will be rewarded many times over. ■

Editors Note: We thank Stephen for permission to reprint this article. To correspond with him about the Silva Pick, write:
 Stephen Silva
 P.O. Box 686
 Dighton, MA 02715

Sacred 'Harp

IN MEMORIAM
LEONARD A. REID



On January 26, 1992, Leonard A. Reid, music lover and mentor to many, died at the age of 60. As word of his death spread through the music community he so steadfastly supported, all felt disbelief, shock, and a disconsolate loss.

Owner and operator of Reid's Instrument Shop in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, Leonard was a networker who brought music and people together. His shop was a repository of an eclectic assortment of folk instruments. They hung from the walls, were displayed in the window, exhibited in and on the counters, stacked in corners, and stored in back rooms. From this collection, he connected music lover to instrument. He served with equal interest and respect the professional musician and the shy neophyte -- swapping, selling, all the while radiating quiet support and belief that the person with a yen to make music could do it. Visitors to his shop were channeled to others who shared like inter-

ests. All were welcome at Reid's Instrument Shop, from high school punk rocker to nationally-known old-time musician.

Leonard was the originator and writer of this magazine's "The Neighborhood Instrument Shop," having written many articles about autoharp-related instruments found in his store. He was also a steadfast friend and supporter of Limberjack Productions, working quietly and diligently behind the scenes to assure the success of the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering.

Leonard's daughter, Ginny, will be operating Reid's Instrument Shop. For this, we are grateful. However, we will miss his presence as he rose from his repair work to spend time with us, whether we came to buy or just to talk.

It was our good fortune to have been granted time with this deeply involved, quietly caring man. With our music, we will celebrate the life of a most special friend, Leonard A. Reid.

-- Marcia Bowers



Blest Be the Tie That Binds

Rev. John Fawcett

H. G. Nagell

Blest be the tie that binds Our

hearts in friendship and love. The

fellowship of kindred minds is

like to that above.

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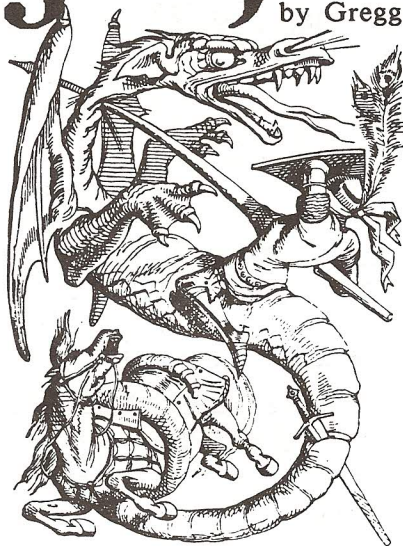
1. Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in friendship
and love.
The fellowship of kindred
minds
Is like to that above.

2. We share each other's woes,
Each other's burdens bear.
And, often for each other
flows
The sympathizing tear.

3. When we are called to part
It gives us inward pain,
But we shall still be joined
in heart,
And hope to meet again.

Facing The Dragon

by Gregg Averett



I would like to address those players who, like me, have sat in the audience at autoharp competitions and admired the contestants, not only for their skills, but their courage. I want to speak to the Mr. and Mrs. Walter Mittys who imagine the glory but shiver from the icy grip of the monster who knots our insides at the mere thought of appearing on stage all alone. "Some-day -- when I'm a better player, when I'm better prepared -- I'll enter a contest, somewhere. But not today. I'm not ready. I just couldn't do it."

I've never been able to play a musical instrument. I played a clarinet for several years in high school, but, if you had heard me, you'd know that was no exception. Over the last few years, I have attended half a dozen or so autoharp events featuring workshops. I focused initially on 'harp rebuilding and modifying techniques, and made some embarrassed attempts to participate at the new player and beginner level. Usually my frustration led me to just throw the infernal instrument in the closet when I got home.

The summer of last year marked a milestone. I learned my first tune. During free time at a festival I sat off by myself and puzzled through the fingering of a simple three-chord song I liked until I could get all the way through with only a few miscues. I was ecstatic! Bursting with pride, I cornered the principle autoharp instructor and forced him to listen as I pounded out my modest rendition of "Gathering Flowers for the Master's Bouquet." I guess I expected some sort of

encouragement for my accomplishment when I asked his opinion. His blunt, if honest, critique was, "Well, you know, that wasn't very good." I was crushed, of course. But, despite his thoughtless comment, it still felt wonderful to go off alone and play my simple tune. Only that morning I hadn't been able to play anything. That afternoon I could. I was . . . *a musician!*

Somehow, even then, I sensed the truth -- that my playing enjoyment is not dependent on anyone else's opinion, or whether I'm "any good," or whether I'm better (or worse) than anyone else. The pleasure I feel arises from a sense of personal achievement and growth. Am I better than I was yesterday? Some of my best playing "highs" have come alone, late at night, when I master a challenging new tune or technique -- when it all comes together and I can lean back and think, "Wow!"

So why, after little more than a year of playing, was I considering entering a contest if not to seek approval? I think I really just wanted to learn something more about myself. Could I do it? I don't mean win -- just participate.

Could I cope with the pressure? I guess it's sort of like the time, years ago, when I was mustering the courage to make my first dive off the high board. It mattered little whether I executed a perfect swan or whether better divers followed me. Just taking the plunge was a personal victory. So, when I registered for the Autoharp Jamboree in Mountain View, Arkansas, I took the plunge and signed up for the contest, too.

I drew some comfort from the knowledge that I could always chicken out later, but, as the day wore on, it was not nervousness that concerned me as much as indecision over what to play that night. In a late afternoon workshop the instructor assured us that we should just go with the tunes we could perform the best and not worry about what the judges wanted to hear. I made my choice and managed an hour of practice before dinner.

Contestants were to check in a half hour early for briefing and drawing of numbers. I arrived twenty minutes before that to tune and run through my songs once or twice. But things started to unravel when I found all of the breakout rooms occupied by performers for the show that was to follow our contest preliminary. I finally found a secluded spot, but I could sense the minutes ticking past. Time was compressing and my fingers turned to thumbs as I fumbled with the wrench and tuner. Sure enough, only half-done and we were called together back stage for role-taking, briefing, and number drawing. The emcee's instructions seemed to

drag on and on as I dwelt on my half-tuned 'harp and tried to visualize my song chording. Contestants passed anxious glances and nervous pleasantries. I was not the only one getting tense. The knot I felt in my stomach was not so much anxiety as a sinking feeling of unpreparedness, like being asked to turn in a homework assignment I had forgotten. Just a few minutes. That's all I needed. If I could just luck into a middle or high number I'd have some time while the first contestants perform. My anxiety bordered on panic, however, when I opened the folded slip I had drawn and saw the dreaded number "ONE."

Only ten minutes till curtain call. My hands now raced over the pins. Thank goodness the short strings were mostly in tune. I gave my fingers a last cram session as I went through each song once. Well, that was that. I breathed a deep sigh of relief. I was as ready as I could be. If I wasn't perfect, well, so what. It wouldn't be the end of the world. Even if I wasn't very good, I thought I could at least be entertaining. I won't say I was relaxed, exactly, but I was looking forward to my moment in the limelight. After some opening remarks, the emcee called my name, and I emerged into the glare. I was vaguely aware of the audience but the auditorium was darkened, and I was somewhat blinded by the stage lights. The next thing I noticed as I sat down were the unfamiliar microphones mere inches from my fingers. I made sure I had plenty of playing room. Left alone on stage, I took a few composing breaths and began.

There are two kinds of mistakes one can make. The first involves mechanical miscues that are simply a reflection of playing skill. I had a couple of those. The second involves losing one's mental focus, such as losing track of whether an A or B part comes next. I planned to

play the first tune through three times, but I got so caught up in how well things were going that I started listening to myself play instead of thinking about the next measure. With no conscious guidance, my fingers launched into an ending flourish after only two times, leaving the song a little short, but not otherwise marred.

By the time I finished the second tune, I felt I had performed credibly, if not competitively. I may not have slain the dragon, but I had at least survived the encounter. I harbored secret hopes but, regardless of the outcome, I was proud of myself for what I had accomplished and the step I had taken. I had a story to tell back home and a new appreciation for the stage as a source of enjoyment instead of terror. I quickly packed up my 'harp and took a seat in the audience to view the rest of the contest from a more familiar angle.

"I drew some comfort from the knowledge that I could always chicken out later . . ."

Just before show intermission, the emcee came out to announce the five finalists who would compete the following night. I must tell you, my heart fairly leapt into my throat when he read my name. I had hardly dared to hope but making the finals was the goal I had secretly set for myself. Now it had happened! Surely, goodness and mercy would follow me always, for God had blessed me this night.

I only half-paid attention in the next day's workshops as my mind was on the competition. I wondered where I would come up with three more contest-level songs. During breaks, I literally learned one tune, polished another, and chose a third as good

enough. It seemed silly to expect that I could achieve anything more, but making the finals was no longer enough. I felt a fire in my belly. I wanted to win, if I could.

Well, I will tell you. I came in fourth out of the five. I finished out of the money but, inside, I felt like a winner and I couldn't have been any prouder taking my place on stage. I had conquered a personal dragon and learned to be less afraid, less ruled by my doubts. If I had waited until I was "ready" I probably would never have entered a competition. Too often in the past I had avoided doing anything that might have made me feel foolish, only to miss out on feeling altogether. This contest reinforced the lesson that the risks were mainly imaginary but the rewards were very real. Next time I'll be back for the fun of it. I hope many of you will decide to share in that fun with me. I'm confident you, too, will find your fears are just a paper dragon. ■

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Improving the Autoharp

Transcribed and Edited
by Alan Mager

A Panel Discussion at the
Mountain Laurel
Autoharp Gathering

Part Two

On July 6, 1991, a panel discussion concerning the improvement of the autoharp was held at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering in Newport, Pennsylvania. Part One of this discussion was printed in the January 1992 issue. What follows are continuing excerpts from this dialog. The Panel: Mark Fackeldey, Autoharpist; Mike McClellan, Luthier and Autoharpist; George Orthey, Orthey Instruments; Mike Seeger, Moderator; Bob Taylor, Clapping Trees; Jim Thomas and David Rice, Goose Acres.



Bob Taylor: As I said, I really loved working at Oscar Schmidt. They really were very good to me and my ideas. Towards the end, we developed this relationship where I'd come in and sometimes I'd come in on the clock and sometimes I'd come in on my own time and do my own crazy things. So I went through a period of kind of flying-by-the-seat-of-my-pants experimentation as I'm sure everybody on this panel did, where you just kind of shut your left brain off and just kind of went with it. Most of those things were disasters.

Moving into some general

ideas I have about autoharps -- There are two things: You look at the body, and you talk about tone and structure. The other half of the autoharp is "the works" -- how to get the greatest number of chords in the smallest space and the best action and many other contraptions and ideas that everybody has. With regards to the tone and the volume, I think we do have to have a little bit of realism here, as George said. All too often, our autoharps get compared to mandolins and guitars which are bridged instruments where you drive the sound board from the middle with a bridge. You can do that with an autoharp, and I think we all probably tried that at one time or another, too, but it doesn't sound like an autoharp anymore -- it sounds like a banjo. You lose all your sustain, and you get a lot of volume. It comes down to a real trade-off between volume and sustain. The way to get both is to build light -- is to have a really strong, resonant frame. You have to think of the frame of the 'harp as the bridge. That's where the energy is delivered. The frame has to radiate the energy into the sound board. In a way it's like a guitar or a bridged instrument turned inside out. So, when you look at the frame, you have to be thinking not only of structure, but you have to be thinking of how is this going to radiate the sound.

Mike Seeger: We should hear from a really good player. Mark, what would you like to hear in an autoharp.

Mark Fackeldey: What I like is lots of volume and nice, bright sound.

I'd like to go back to this resonator thing. You all probably had the experience of when you hold the 'harp away from the body you get more

fullness of sound and volume and I think maybe something could be done to capture that. I don't think it would need an entire resonator, but something to keep it off your body. An exception is George's 'harp which gets more volume when I press it against me.

I like nice low action and not much tension to the springs -- make them very easy to play -- just tap the button and there should be a chord. One way I check the quality of a 'harp is to strum all the strings and then slowly lower the chord bar to see whether all the strings are muted at once or whether they mute one after the other. I think that maybe if the strings were brought all to the same level, you could improve your action. But I don't see many people filing notches in the bridge or whatever just to accomplish that. But it works. I've tried it, and it does improve your action.

Comment from Bill Bowes: For the manufacturers; would it be possible to change the philosophy of the manufacturing? I see that you're all looking to find a combination of the sustain and the volume in one 'harp, but different people have different needs and different styles of playing. Some people are primarily string band or bluegrass or solo performers. They might want a 'harp that only has volume. Other people like to play in churches or nursing homes, or like jamming with friends. They might want more sustain. So maybe what we ought to be doing is looking for different types of 'harps, rather than putting all of the combinations of things you can do with the 'harp into one. This is my volume 'harp; this is my sustain 'harp. Which model do you like? Pick the one that's right for you. What do you think?

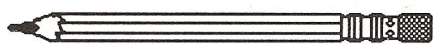
Mike Seeger: I think that's what these makers are doing, each on his own. The company

[Oscar Schmidt] itself is going, just as Bob discussed, in one direction. I think, myself, that it would be nice for the company to go into a premium player's instrument on a sideline, but you can't do that. So, you're talking basically about the makers here, or hand making.



"I really loved working for Oscar Schmidt."

-- Bob Taylor



George Orthey: Some years ago, Glen Peterson asked me to set up a factory operation to make dulcimers. You have to understand what a manufacturer is doing. The Koreans that make the 'harp are probably not getting more than maybe \$25 or \$30 for a 'harp that you pay \$150 to \$200 for. How much can you expect them to do even in Korea for 30 bucks? A manufacturer has to have a price structure where the retail price is going to be three to four times what the original price is. That forces them into a position we don't have to put up with. We end up, by the time we get done making a 'harp which is a deviant from our standard model, probably working for \$2.23 an hour. Business just doesn't operate like that

Jim Thomas: Gee, I wish I could make that much building 'harps. I do want to say that, at least from the Goose Acres standpoint, we build 'harps in many different combinations of front and back wood. One guy's taste might be in this all-mahogany that I'm holding; another guy's taste might be in maple and spruce, which is brighter -- a little more forward sounding

than this all-mahogany, and so forth. We are trying to pay attention to that and without going completely outside the realm of what we call "producibility." We don't mind building a 'harp for 75 cents an hour, or whatever it is, but we sure don't want to lose a lot of money.

Comment: Bob Lewis -- This is on the subject of sustain versus power. I make clear choices when I pick up an instrument whether I'm going to do instrumental work or sing. If I want to sing, I want more sustain -- I don't want that brightness and power -- I want the ringing of the strings to carry through to complement the singing more. I know the builders seem to try to get the loudest 'harp or get the most power out of what they're dealing with. And I think it's very difficult for me to find or have built for me, an instrument that's really mellow and fine for singing over the instrument. I have some really fine autoharps from George, Goose Acres, Timberline, and some old Centurions that I value very highly. But I would hope to see the builders not just go for a middle-of-the-road model, because there's a clear choice between what you would play to sing with and what you would play to do instrumental work. My first Orthey 'harp was an extremely powerful instrument that is always my choice if I'm going to be playing with fiddlers, 'cause they can hear me. I bought it to be able to be heard at a festival and as absolutely the best choice for me, but if I want to sing, I want an instrument that's much more mellow, much more smooth. I don't want all the power at one time. You can say that it has sustain and that the string will ring for a long time, but how fast does it give you the power and how long does that power last? I don't want it all at one time. So I think that the mes-

sage that I would get across is to have a clear separation in models -- you'd have a vocal model and you'd have an instrumental model. Another great concern is that you get a nice sound in the middle, the bass is generally weak, and the high is too shrill. I think you often get that with too much coupling -- too low impedance in the higher end of the 'harp. I would suggest that maybe the positioning of the bridges -- style of bridges -- is something that needs to be looked at. If the bridge is on the edge of the frame in the middle octave, it doesn't necessarily mean it should be there in the high octave. Maybe it should be angled off a little bit. I find that the high strings are just topping too fast in those kinds of designs.

Mike Seeger: In the last ten minutes of this workshop, are there other areas that should be covered here?

Mark Fackeldey: I have another comment about the weight of the instrument. I would ask you to keep the weight down. Now, I can handle it myself -- I play a 50-pound electric bass for a swing band -- it pays better than playing the autoharp.

Another way you can reduce the weight is . . . I love the fine tuners, but they're so heavy -- I don't think you



"A friend of mine wanted to make an aluminum frame for an autoharp. . ."

-- Mike Seeger



need ten pounds of heavy duty steel.

George Orthey: We all complained about the aluminum fine tuners, Mark, till they

Continued on page 39

CRITICS' CHOICE



Judie Pagter



Mike Herr



Bob Woodcock

If you have a recording you would like to have considered for review, please send it to Autoharp Quarterly, PO Box A, Newport, PA 17074. Submitted recordings cannot not be returned.

Judie's Choice

I Want Us to be Together in Heaven

Orchard Grass

Old Time Gospel Singers

Jackie Ferguson; vocal

Gary Ferguson; guitar, vocal

Rhoda Kemp; autoharp, banjo, vocal

Barry Kemp; bass fiddle, vocal

Ebo Clifton; dobro, fiddle

Just Over in Gloryland; Lord, I Want to Go to Heaven; When I Wake Up; Steal Away and Pray; Green Pastures; Blessed Jesus Hold My Hand; Darkest Hour; By the Side of the Road; Jacob's Ladder; How Great Thou Art; I Want Us to be Together in Heaven; Feel Like Traveling On

Rhoda Kemp leads into "Just Over in Gloryland" with her good ole' time banjo. Solid quartet singing makes this one of the better songs on the tape.

She takes autoharp lead on several of these gospel songs, as she does on "Lord I Want to Go to Heaven." This song also has good quartet harmony. Her banjo sparkles again on "When I Wake Up."

"Steal Away and Pray" is a beauty. It's been around for quite some time, and is a good choice for a gospel tape. Ebo's dobro shines on this cut.

We all know "Green Pastures." I would have liked to have heard a bit more emotion in this rendition. A little

more feeling could have been applied to express the beauty of its heart-felt words.

The autoharp leads on "Blessed Jesus Hold My Hand," which is well done. I like the guitar break.

I don't know who is singing what on "Darkest Hour." I wish the "J" card could tell us more. That one fault I find with recent tapes. I would like more extensive notes on the liners. The song is decently performed.

"By the Side of the Road" is done well acappella, and there's lots of good singing with a nice autoharp break on "Jacob's Ladder." There's good singing and autoharp, too, on "I Want Us to be Together in Heaven."

"How Great Thou Art" is one of the favorites of all times. It is done well by the Gospel Singers.

"I Feel Like Traveling On" -- oh, don't we all! The quartet starts this one out, and I hear Rhoda's banjo once again. Not a bad job!

This is a good all around gospel tape with good singing, and solid autoharp breaks. I find it a little dragging in a few places. I would like to hear a little more zip in the gospel music, as it's supposed to be a happy and powerful "lifting of spirits" type of music. ■

Bob's Choice

Songs of the Sea

Roz Brown, ELP-103

Rolling Home; Leaving of Liverpool;

The Water is Wide; Wee Dark Engine

Room; Hills of Isle Au Haut; Dark Old

Waters; Good-bye Fare You Well;

Fiddlers Green; Come Fare Away; Yea

Ho Little Fish; Isle Au Haut Lullaby;

Threescore and Ten; Home Dearie Home;

Final Trawl

When I first opened this tape, I expected to be disappointed. After all, what does a guy from Colorado know about sea songs? When Side A began with gentle rolling surf and sea gulls, I was determined to be disappointed. So I was wrong! With some reservations, I have grown fond of this nice, if unexciting collection of maritime tunes.

My main objection to this recording is conceptual. My grandfather and several uncles were fishermen on Cape Cod. My great grandfather was a whaler out of Provincetown. I grew up knowing that the life of a fisherman was very hard, and very lonely. The music was born out of that life. I think of sea songs in terms of extremes: the deep, dark undercurrent of Gordon Bok and the raucous, outrageous tunes of Ian Robb. Roz Brown has a voice like a calm mountain lake, very nice to hear, but not anything to capsize your dinghy. I find it hard to

reconcile this dichotomy. You may not.

The strongest aspect of this tape is the selection of tunes. Long ago, Roz must have gone to the vault marked "Best Maritime Tunes -- Authorized Personnel Only!" and carefully selected some of the choicest of the old and the best of the new. He serves them to us in a careful, caring manner. Serious as well as casual "chanty-philies" will get something from his selection. Of note are some wonderfully obscure verses to the old chestnut, "Rolling Home," and a fresh arrangement of "Home Dearie Home." I guess "The Water is Wide" was left in the vault by mistake. This tune is also known as "Waly, Waly", a derivative of an old Scots ballad which, as far as I know, never put out to sea (I am willing to stand corrected here.)

As for the autoharp, Roz plays a full, rich diatonic 'harp with grace and style. Sad to say he uses it only for melodic backup for his singing. There are no 'harp breaks or solo riffs to be heard, though he certainly sounds capable of kicking out a few jigs or hornpipes. His dubbing on the concertina is nicely done, but again too restrained and infrequent for me. Vocal backup by Jim Ratts and Bob Turner add a nice touch, as does the somewhat overly classical flute of an uncredited artist.

This performance is well worth the price of admission. You will learn some very nice tunes and you will hear some very nice, thoughtfully arranged music. Maybe in his next recording, Roz will kick off his boots, picture himself after three months of constant danger and work, put down a few beers, put a little gravel in his voice, fire up the old Oscar and really let loose. That would be unbeatable! ■

Panel: *Continued from page 37*
quit making them.

Mark Fackeldey: I loved them; I'm still using them. They work for me. The fine tuners could be reduced in weight, I'm sure, as long as you run them across the bridge.

Mike Seeger: A friend of mine 35 years ago wanted to make an aluminum frame for the autoharp, something like the Steinway that George was talking about; but then we realized that it would flex even more than the wood for its weight probably. But that is a possibility that could be worked out. How it would work out in the sonority of the instrument, I don't know.



**"We're
not done --
we've got a
long way to go
yet -- but we're
making a lot of
progress."**

-- Jim Thomas



Question from the audience:
Why are new autoharps built with such high action?

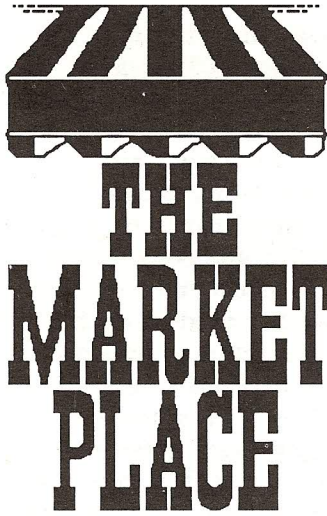
George Orthey: The chord bars are not fitted 'harp by 'harp. They make sets of parts that go together, and the parts all have to fit, so they have to be set high enough that, given the variance from one instrument to the other, the bars will always work. If you would set the action --build the parts -- so they would fit perfectly on one instrument and the next instrument was not identical --had a little bit of bow --the bars would sit on the strings and would not play, which would make you very unhap-

py. So the way to insure that they will all play, at least a little bit, is to make the action very high.

The difference with any of us that make a handmade 'harp, is we put the bars on a particular 'harp, and we make the necessary adjustments to our bars, and bar holders, and the felts we use, and so on, so that *those* bars fit *that* 'harp. Now, they should be reasonably interchangeable, but still you have to adjust 'harp to 'harp to give just perfect action. And you vary that according to the player. There are some people who play very gently and they want the action a 64th of an inch off the strings. On the other hand, you have somebody that's going to get in there and hit the thing like Marty Schuman or Drew Smith and some of these guys that are trying to take the strings off.

Let me comment on one other thing, and that is on the business of going to extremes with resonators and other things. Setting aside Marty Schuman and Mark Fackeldey, normal people tend to work back toward the center. I've found that the exotic is interesting for a short time, but people, by and large, tend to want a traditional-looking, -feeling, -sounding instrument. These deviances we talk about are limited to the special person who wants that deviance. But across the board, people tend to come back to say, "I want an *autoharp* autoharp when I look at it and when I hear it."

Mike Seeger: The hour is up. We'll continue this workshop for the rest of the festival, I'm sure -- around and about. I think the point is that we should continue to be in communication and evolve the autoharp and our playing based on some of these ideas. Thanks to the panel. ■



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