

# AUTOHARP QUARTERLY

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



**IN THIS ISSUE**  
THE 1992 WINFIELD REPORT  
OLD 'HARPS ... GOOD BUY OR GOODBYE  
INTERACTION  
*with Julie Davis*  
AUTOHARP CLUBS LIST  
FLAT PICKING ON YOUR AUTOHARP  
IDIOMS IN TRAIN SONGS

ANNOUNCING THE AUTOHARP HALL OF FAME!™



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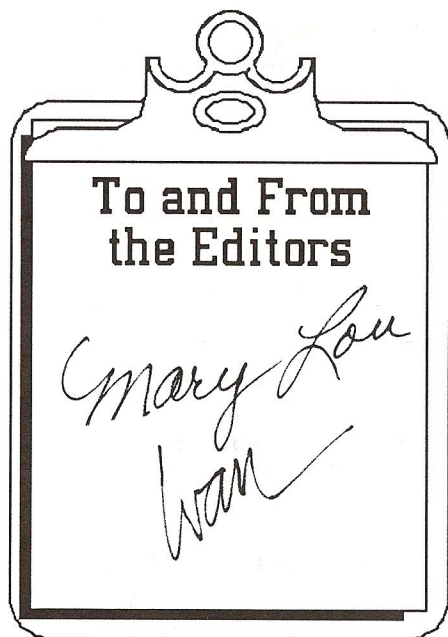
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On the Cover:  
1992 International Autoharp  
Championship Winners  
(left to right):  
Alan Mager, 2nd Place;  
Tom Schroeder, 1st Place;  
Les Gustafson-Zook,  
3rd Place



Otter Harp  
illustration by  
Randy Farran  
Tulsa, Oklahoma





## DEAR READERS:

*It's that time of the year when our Festivals Editor, Ubi Adams, has started her long, arduous task of compiling the 1993 Festival List for publication in the upcoming April issue. We annually seek to list every festival and major event in which there is an autoharp contest, workshop, or performance. This is a particularly demanding assignment. We are asking you to help Ubi by sending her any information you may have regarding a planned 1993 autoharp event by February 15. (See her address on page 7.) Since 1988, more than 700 festivals, workshops, concerts, and contests of special interest to autoharp players have been announced in AQ.*

*Speaking of autoharp activities, we have been able to cover autoharp events in depth, thanks to many fine 'Harpers-At-Large' contributors. Due to their fine efforts, we've enjoyed first-hand reports of nearly 150 festivals and autoharp events throughout the country! We know that the meeting of musicians at workshops and festivals is one of the most important means to further the promotion of music in general, and*

*for us, the autoharp in particular. In this light, we are happy to announce that Mary Lou will be serving on the 1993 Honorary Advisory Board for the Charlotte Folk Music Society Summer Festival along with Harper Van Hoy, Art Menius, Dr. Doug Orr, and Alice Gerrard.*



I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet the words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head  
"There is no peace on earth," I said  
For hate is strong and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep  
"God is not dead, nor does he sleep  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail  
With peace on earth, good will to men."

Till, ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolves from night to day  
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.



## DEAR EDITORS:

Thank you for printing my article "Prevention and Treatment of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome" (October, 1992). One correction please -- in the first paragraph, it says "The median nerve shares this space with the flexor tendons which go to the thumb and are responsible for gripping." It should read, "The median nerve shares this space with the flexor tendons which go to the fingers and are responsible for gripping." The thumb flexors do not pass through the carpal tunnel. Thank you.

*Richard Norris, M.D.*

Congratulations on the five year anniversary of *Autoharp Quarterly!* Laurie Sky is a charming cover girl on the last issue, thanks to photographer Mike Fenton. I always enjoy Lindsay Haisley's articles too.

*Carol Stober*

I enjoyed reading Lindsay's articles on teaching, and also Laurie Sky's piece in the last issue of AQ.

Thanks for the listing of our Autoharp Jamboree. The dates for 1993 are August 19, 20, 21. We will give you more information as it becomes available.

*Elliot Hancock  
The Ozark Folk Center*

I am an elementary music teacher and use my autoharp daily. Of course I also like to play for my own enjoyment. Your magazine is great.

I particularly enjoyed Laurie on the October cover -- I taught her in school!

*Alice Witterman*

Thank you for hosting the Thursday night autoharp jam at Winfield. It was a most enjoyable event!

*Tina Louise Barr*

*Thanks, Tina! We received many favorable comments and several letters from people expressing their appreciation for our sponsorship of the "Meet the Winners" jam at Winfield. We also have been told by many musicians other than autoharp players that this is a great idea. It gives the current winners a chance to unwind, to play in an informal, relaxed atmosphere, and to swap "licks" with others who competed in the contest. Too, it gives the autoharp enthusiast the first-hand experience of enjoying this interchange, and to have his/her moment in the sun, as well! It is, in fact, a joyous celebration of the autoharp.*

*AQ also sponsored hands-on autoharp workshops again at Winfield this year. Excellent, well-attended workshops were given by world-class teachers -- Julie Davis, Bob Lewis, Alan Mager, and Les Gustafson-Zook and Tom Schroeder.*

*-- Editors*



Otter Harp Heaven was a friendly port in the Winfield Whirlwind. Whenever I came by, there was always a smile and a tune waiting for me.

Next year, how about more beginners' workshops?

*Richard Auer*

Even though I lost my favorite pick the evening of the Winners' Jam at Winfield, the fun of picking along with the contest winners and other "really good" players I've read about was a great experience!

*Alice Penovich*

Sorry about my expired subscription: My first trip to Winfield and the jam sessions at Otter Harp Heaven with a great bunch of 'harp players blew my mind! Please renew for two years.

I have 21 'harps. I've dissected some like frogs in high school biology class. My curiosity has screwed up several old 'harps. But, they grow wild here in Texas!

*Cecil White*



*A field of autoharps and bluebonnets in Texas.*

After experimenting with a number of alternatives to felt for chord bar pads, I have concluded that Neoprene rubber is by far the best material. It can be purchased at diving stores, since it's used to make diving suits. I have played my 'harp for hours per day for nearly four years. My pads are as good now as they were when I installed them in 1/89.

*Mike Muench*

*Thanks, Mike. We called Mark Fackeldey, who has used Neoprene as chord bar "felts," as you have. Mark agrees. It works well. He does prefer Dr. Scholl's Work-a-day foot pads. Because this material is less than 1/4" high, the entire chord bar system can be lowered, making it easier to reach the bars. He does concur, however, that Neoprene lasts longer.*

*George Orthey finds Dr. Scholl's Molefoam to be excellent for damping. It comes in 7" x 3 3/8" strips. It can be used under the lock-down bars of OSI Festival 'harps as well as on regular chord bars. (He also points out that Molefoam is good for callouses, bunions, and sore heels. He would not recommend Neoprene for these uses, but again, he bets it would wear longer.)*

*-- Editors*

I've solved the problem of keeping picks on by coating the inside of my metal finger-picks with Barge all purpose cement. (I buy this at stores where Birkenstock shoes are sold.) I put a small bit of cement inside the pick and spread it with a toothpick. It dries overnight.

*Dona Bledsoe*

Dr. Norris' article on

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome in the last issue was of special interest. It sent me running to my autoharp to check wrist flexion, which was only a trace in the left wrist! Thanks, AQ, for helping us to play healthy!

By the way, as a hammered dulcimer instructor, I've shown players who developed CTS from other activities how to avoid further aggravation

when beating their strings to death. Any dulcinating AQ readers are welcome to contact me.

*Lucille Reilly*

*PO Box 49*

*Basking Ridge, NJ 07920*

I've really enjoyed AQ since the first issue. The combination of information on events, articles on how things work, and articles on playing at a variety of levels seems to be a great balance. Thanks!

*John Hook*

I liked the last AQ issue very much. This year, I won eleven ribbons and three trophies on my 'harp and with my folk singing. I also won "Best All-Around Performer" at a festival in 1992!

I'm looking forward to seeing you again next year at Galax.

*Evelyn Farmer*

*We congratulate you, Evelyn! Fourteen wins in one year must be some kind of a record! Let us know when and where you accomplish your autoharp feats in the future. -- And send us some pictures!*

*-- Editors*

I am really enjoying AQ's series, "Oh, I'll Twine With My Mingles." Bill Clifton sent me to my music books trying to "date" old songs. -- And I'll probably have to fight my husband to see who reads the railroad article first!

*Elouise Bailey*

The article about Carpal Tunnel Syndrome was the best. I've heard so much about this subject, and wondered every time I had a twinge in my wrist or hand if this was CTS. It was great to learn more about its cause, diagnosis and treatment. Thank you for such an informative article.

*Dora Miller*



**F**lat picking is yet another style of auto-harp playing. It can sound somewhat like a mandolin or a hammered dulcimer, but has its own unmistakable 'harp charm.

With the flat pick, you can create various rhythm strums and clean, swift, single or double note melody lines.

I'm emphasizing fast fiddle tunes -- that's where this style really sparkles. But it also works well in slower tunes, especially when jamming with other instruments.

Flat picking works best on a single key diatonic autoharp. However, some of the tricks mentioned in this article can also be applied to chromatic 'harps. The chord bar arrangement that's best for me follows the old Oscar 12-bar chromatic setup:



# FLAT PICKIN'

by Mark Fackeldey

IIm	III7	VIIm	VII7	IIIIm
IV	V7	I	II7	V

In the key of D on a diatonic 'harp, this translates to:

x	x	x	x	x	
Em	F#7	Bm	C#°	F#m	(no 3rd note in F#7 & E7)
G	A7	D	E7	A	

(Note: add an A to a C#°. It becomes A7)

My diatonic 'harps feature 15 chords. The top row marked with Xs, consists of elusive, ethereal chords (phlogistic) -- subject to perpetual change.

### Scales

I write a lot about scales because the 'harp strings are arranged that way -- ascending pitches (low ↔ high). The scales are for explanatory, illustrative purposes. I don't seriously expect anyone to practice lotsa scales. Better practice those four tunes for that contest!

No doubt y'all know how to play a major

scale using the I, IV, and V chords:

Notes:	d	e	f#	g	a	b	c#	d
Chords:	D	A	D	G	D(or A)	G	A	D

You probably know this same scale can be played using relative minor chords:

Notes:	d	e	f#	g	a	b	c#	d
Chords:	Bm	Em	Bm (or F#m)	Em	F#m	Em (or Bm)	F#m	Bm

-- And you may be aware these major and minor chords can be mixed to make all kinds of wonderful harmony happen. Or, we can use parallel chords to play that scale:

Notes:	c	d	e	f	g	a	b	c
Chords:	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	B	C

(Notice -- the note and chord use the same letter!)

### Parallel Chords

Notes in the chords		a	b	c#	d	e	f#	g	a
		f#	g	a	b	c#	d	e	f#
Scale →	d	e	f#	g	a	b	c#	d	
Chords →	D	Em	F#m	G	A	Bm	C#°	D	

The "D" chord contains the first, third, and fifth notes of the D scale. The "Em" chord contains the second, fourth, and sixth notes of the D scale. Thus, we can play a six-tone (hexatonic) scale alternating the D and Em chords:

Notes:	d	e	f#	g	a	b
Chords:	D	Em	D	Em	D	Em

Likewise we can play a six-tone scale by alternating Em and F#m (e, f#, g, a, b, c#); F#m and G; G and A; A and Bm; Bm and C#°; C#° and D.

These seven pairs of chords and their scales are the basis for flat picking the autoharp. Why?

1. The chords in each pair cancel one another. Press both, and all strings are muted!



This effectively enables us to play single note, staccato-type melodies.

2. Going back and forth between the same two chords can be done very fast with minimal strain on the memory circuit. This technique works on chromatic 'harps also.

3. When we substitute an open chord for the second chord in each pair, we can play even faster.

(There are also useful five-tone scales between Em and Bm, and Bm and F#m.)

**The Pick**

Now, we'll change the subject. You may have tried a guitar-type flat pick on the auto-harp and found that, up-tempo, the pick invariably slips out of your fingers (usually into the sound hole). Don't use such a pick. Use a thumb pick! -- Not just any thumb pick. Use a Kelly speed pick! This pick comes in color coded gages: yellow = light, orange = medium, white = heavy. I'd recommend you start with the light gage and later graduate to medium. The heavy gage doesn't work for me.

Slip the pick part-way on your thumb and then hold it secured between thumb and index finger as you would a regular flat pick. That's all it takes. No finger pick on the index finger, mind you. If you want to wear finger picks also,\* you'd better secure this thumb pick with a piece of adhesive tape. A 3/4 x 3 inch Band-Aid works well.

\*Flat picking with one pick is a musically satisfying style in itself, but you might like to mix it with other picking styles Try the Silva finger picks (see AQ Vol. 4, No. 3, "Silva Fingerpick").

Personally, I mix styles by using my index (and sometimes middle finger) nail for flat picking -- but those thumb picks really work!

**Upstrokes, Downstrokes**

Flat picking involves picking notes on the downstroke and the upstroke with the pick. We'll be picking lotsa eighth notes, and we'll be alternating downstrokes and upstrokes.

Damp on the downstrokes: v = downstroke symbol  
Open on the upstrokes: ^ = upstroke symbol

Stroke:	v ^	v ^	v ^	v ^
$\frac{4}{4}$				
Chord:	D open	D open	D open	D open
Count:	1 &	2 &	3 &	4 &

Play the above and try to single out the "d" note in the D chord on the downstroke, and single out the "e" note in the open chord on the upstroke. The interval from one note up (or

down) to the next scale note (like from "d" to "e") is called "second interval." Many old-timey fiddle tunes have lots of eighth notes in successive second intervals. These notes are very difficult to play up-tempo in the pinch/strum style but very easy to flat pick.

Let's play this six-tone or hexatonic scale -- try to pick single notes:

Notice how the notes of the D chord act as a drone against which the other notes are sounded. (These other notes form the Em chord, of course.) The entire effect has a rollicking quality.

All of the above applies to all seven pairs of chords and their six tone scales. Fr'instance, when you start on the count of one with Em:

e	f#	g	a	b	c#	b	a	g	f#
Em	o	Em	o	Em	o	Em	o	Em	o

The chord implied in the open chord is F#m, which you can plainly hear when you pick:

e	f#	g	a	b	c#	b	a	g	f#
Em	F#m	Em	F#m	Em	F#m	Em	F#m	Em	F#m

And so on . . .

**Playing Tunes**

Always keep the down and up motion going with your pick where the melody has a rest or quarter note, or half note. Keep that picking motion going above the strings. That way your pick will be in the right position for the next note and you won't lose a beat:

Stroke:	v ^	v ^	v ^
Beat:	1	1	1
	Quarter note	Half note	

Also, keep that pick motion going when the melody moves through a chord arpeggio. Don't be tempted to play those groups of notes in the same direction:



Real tunes don't consist of neat little six tone scales, of course. But parts of tunes are recurring, various fragments of those scales. Fr'example:

Take liberties with the notes and/or chords. If folks know what tune you're playing, great! If they can't guess, try again! ■

*Saint Anne's Reel*

D / Em D Em D Em D Em D Em D Em D / G / /  
 or - D / o D o D o D o D o D o D / G / /

In the first two measures of "Whiskey Before Breakfast," the notes are arranged differently, but the chords go the same way: D open D open D open -- try it! Or start "Shenandoah Falls" in the same way -- D open D open D open, etc.

Here's the "A" part of "Eighth Of January." If you can figure this out, you can figure out the "B" part yourself, easily.

*Eighth Of January* (part A)

D Em D o D / D o D / Em o Em o G o G /  
 A o A o A / Em o D Bm D / / / Em


To experiment with the flat picking technique, try "Cluck Old Hen" on page 6. The shuffle introduction is an especially good place for this style.

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## WINTER FESTIVALS

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

*This is an updated list of winter festivals which feature the autoharp in workshop, concert, and/or contest. The complete festival list is published every April.*

### CODE :

AC . . . . . Autoharp Contest  
AP . . . . . Autoharp Performance  
AW . . . . . Autoharp Workshop

## JANUARY

### Old-Time Dance With Concert

Date: January 23, 24  
Place: White Springs, FL  
Code: AP (Makley Family)  
Contact: Jan Milner  
PO Box 668  
Crystal Beach, FL 34681

## FEBRUARY

### Winter Festival of Acoustic Music

Date: February 12, 13, 1993  
Place: Dallas/Fort Worth area  
Code: AP (Charles Whitmer)  
Contact:  
Linda Lowe Thompson  
1517 Laurelwood  
Denton, TX 76201  
817 387-4001

**NOMINATE  
YOUR CHOICES  
FOR THE  
AUTOHARP  
HALL OF FAME™  
TODAY!**

# ANNOUNCING THE AUTOHARP HALL OF FAME™

*Autoharp Quarterly* is pleased to announce a celebration of the autoharp through its inauguration of The Autoharp Hall Of Fame. Autoharp enthusiasts worldwide will be nominating and choosing those persons who have made and are now making exceptional contributions to the autoharp community. As a *one-time only* act, we, the editors of *Autoharp Quarterly*, are immediately inducting Mother Maybelle Carter and Kilby Snow into The Autoharp Hall Of Fame. Now, the rest is up to you.

Each year, two persons will be inducted into The Autoharp Hall Of Fame: one contemporary and one posthumous award. The nominees and inductees will be voted on by autoharp enthusiasts everywhere. The Official Ballot below is your opportunity to tell us your choices for nominees. You must use the Official Ballot (original or photocopy) to cast your vote

and it must arrive at *Autoharp Quarterly* by March 1, 1993. You may only submit one ballot. Since this is open to all autoharp enthusiasts, you may wish to photocopy this ballot to give to others. The nominees will be published in the April issue, along with an Official Ballot to vote for the two persons to be inducted in 1993. Your two choices will be announced at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering and in the October issue of *Autoharp Quarterly*.

Your choices for nominees can be anyone who you feel has contributed significantly to the advancement of the autoharp. You may nominate three persons in each category. After the nominees have been announced in the April issue, you will then have the opportunity to choose one person in each category for 1993.

Send your completed ballot to *Autoharp Quarterly*, PO Box A, Newport, PA 17074 by March 1, 1993.

### The Autoharp Hall Of Fame™ Official Ballot

Please enter my choices for the 1993 nominees.

#### Contemporary:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Posthumous:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

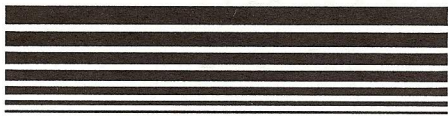
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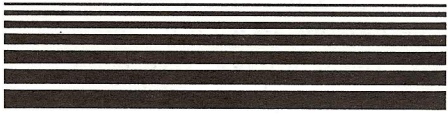
Name/address must be included in order for ballot to be valid. Send to:  
*Autoharp Quarterly*, PO Box A, Newport, PA 17074.





# AUTOHARP WINS AT WINFIELD

by Fran Stallings



When Roz Brown says that autoharps have been at Winfield (the Walnut Valley Festival in Winfield, Kansas) since the beginning, he should know. For every one of the festival's twenty-one years, autoharpist/balladeer Brown has been there, on stage and backstage. He has seen the autoharp grow from an obscure instrument played mostly in the campgrounds by a few amateurs, to the centerpiece of main stage acts.

This year featured Karen Mueller and Julie Davis. But Brown pointed out that the autoharp's credibility as a serious musical instrument has also been enhanced by other soloists and bands who are beginning to bring one on stage along with their guitars, mandolins, and dulcimers. John McCutcheon has done a few 'harp numbers; this year, Tom Chapin added one. This represents a big difference from years ago when audiences either didn't know what an autoharp was, or cracked, "Yeah, my third grade teacher had one."

Brown himself doubtless deserves considerable credit for earning the autoharp some respect at Winfield. Well known as a stage manager and organizer at the festival, he also performs selections from the repertory of western music and lore which he presents regularly at the Buckhorn Exchange Restaurant in Denver, Colorado. He doesn't claim to be a fancy musician, but his accompaniments fit perfectly with his traditional songs, and when he takes a melody break it's clear he knows what to do with that 'harp.

Karen Mueller, a Winfield native now living in Minneapolis, showed how the autoharp could duet with the fiddle. Mueller played both lead and backup in well-balanced arrangements, the two instru-

ments complementing one another. Mountain dulcimer and guitar accompanied some of her songs, but the high point was her solo autoharp instrumentals -- as we would expect of the 1986 International Autoharp Champion.

The International Autoharp Championship, instituted in 1981, has also done a great deal to advance the standing of the autoharp as a serious instrument. The competition gets stiffer each year, notes finalist Les Gustafson-Zook, and the calibre of the playing just keeps improving. Difficult and unusual techniques which may have been pioneered by famous stage performers are now mastered by dozens of self-driven competitors, and the music just keeps getting better -- and more varied. At this year's contest, in addition to well-loved folk songs and traditional dance tunes, we heard calypso, ragtime, cakewalk, and rock from the 50s and 60s. Some competitors suggest the autoharp contest should be divided into separate sections for chromatic and diatonic players, analogous to the separate flat-picking and finger-picking guitar championships. Not likely, says Roz Brown. (This year's contest drew eight chromatic players and seven diatonic. The five finalists were four and one, respectively. Winner Tom Schroeder and 3rd place Gustafson-Zook played diatonic, while 2nd place Alan Mager played chromatic.)

Prizes for the autoharp championship have always been rewarding for the contestants and this year was no exception. Tom Schroeder chose the Orthey Signature Star autoharp donated by George Orthey while Gustafson-Zook and Mager chose the Professional Series Autoharps donated by Oscar Schmidt





Jam session at Otter Harp Heaven: (l to r) Gregg Averett, Alan Mager, Bob Lewis, and Ivan Stiles.

International. Cash prizes and trophies were also awarded to each winner.

Winfield planners have recognized attendee's growing interest in autoharp by scheduling more workshops and performances on the various festival stages. In addition to her many performances, Mueller presented a beginner's workshop in the morning before the championship. The next day, Ivan Stiles hosted a demonstration workshop with Karen Mueller, Roz Brown, and Julie Davis entitled "Autoharp Styles." In addition, hands-on workshops for players at all levels were held throughout the weekend at Otter Harp Heaven in the festival campground. The workshops, sponsored by *Autoharp Quarterly* magazine, were led by Julie Davis (Arranging For Autoharp), Les Gustafson-Zook (Jamming) accompanied by Tom Schroeder, Bob Lewis (Diatonic 'Harp), Alan Mager (Controlling Your Autoharp), and Ivan Stiles (Getting Started On the Autoharp). A die-hard autoharp fan could find

something special to do almost every hour.

Once the stages shut down late at night, there were jam sessions at Otter Harp Heaven. Singalongs and solos, polished performances and experiments (Can we play "Dixie" and "Yankee Doodle" at the same time?) lasted far into the wee hours. Staggering back to camp, one might pass Les Gustafson-Zook giving the bluegrass fiddlers a run for their money, or Bob Lewis surrounded by Irish penny whistles and drums.

"This year was magic," agreed Julie Davis and Mary Lou Orthey. The slowly-growing interest in autoharps seemed to burst into bloom. Activity at the Orthey Instruments and *Autoharp Quarterly* booths, which double as a hang-out for 'harpers, was at an all-time high. Folks on both sides of the table showed their 'harps of various makes and models, demonstrated features, and swapped practical hints. By all accounts, it's evident that folks at Winfield know what an autoharp is. ■

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---

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719 635-7776

**Pro-File:** AQ January 89

**Performance Schedule:**

January 8  
*Friendship Hall*  
*Mt. Prospect, IL*

January 9  
Hogeye Folk Arts  
Evanston, IL

January 10  
*Rural Route Three Radio Show*  
*McComb, IL*

January 12  
Cafe Carp  
Ft. Atkinson, WI

January 13  
*The Ark*  
*Ann Arbor, MI*

January 16  
Canal Street  
Dayton, OH

February 12  
*South Arkansas Arts Center*  
*El Dorado, AR*

March 11  
Ronan Community Center  
Ronan, MT

March 12  
*Myrna Loy Center*  
*Helena, MT*

March 13  
Sun Mountain Lodge  
Winthrop, WA

March 20  
*West Gate Community Center*  
*Calgary, Canada*

---

**ROZ BROWN**

1549 S. Holland Court  
Lakewood, CO 80232  
303 969-9645

**Pro-File:** AQ October 89

**Performance Schedule:**

*Buckhorn Exchange Restaurant*  
*1000 Osage Street*  
*Denver, CO*  
*Wednesday, Thursday,*  
*Friday, and Saturday nights*

---

**MIKE FENTON**

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Persore Road  
Whittington, Worcester  
England WR5 2RT  
0905 354822

**Pro-File:** AQ October 88

**Performance Schedule:**

January 22  
*St. Richard's CE First School*  
*Evesham, Worcester*

February 4  
Rokeby First School  
Rugby, Warwickshire

February 12  
*Emscote County First School*  
*Warwick*

March 9  
Burnt Ash Primary School  
Bromley, Kent

March 16, 17  
*Polesworth County First*  
*& Middle Schools*  
*Dordon, Tamworth*  
*Staffs (Warks LEA)*

March 18, 19  
St. Werburgh's & St. Columba's  
RC Primary School  
Chester

March 25, 26  
*Brookside County Primary*  
*School*  
*Street, Somerset*

---

**BILLY GARRISON**

PO Box 540933  
Orlando, FL 32854

**Pro-File:** AQ April 90

**Performance Schedule:**

*Every 2nd & 4th Friday*  
*Couples Meeting*  
*Every other Saturday night*  
*Singles Meeting*  
*Orlando Christian Center*  
*Orlando, FL*

---

**PAUL and WIN GRACE**

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Columbia, MO 65201  
314 443-2819

**Pro-File:** AQ October 88

**Performance Schedule:**

February 16  
*Fulton Public Library*

*Fulton, MO*

February 17

Daniel Boone

Regional Library

Columbia, MO

March 12

*Canterbury School*

*Fort Wayne, IN*

March 19

Harrison Hills

Elementary School

Fort Wayne, IN

---

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**Pro-File:** AQ January 90

**Performance Schedule:**

January 1, 2  
*Convention Center*  
*Jekyll Island, GA*

January 8  
Joyful Noise  
East Point, GA

January 9  
*Spirit of Suwanee Music Hall*  
*Live Oak, FL*

January 15  
Bethel Hill School  
Roxboro, NC

January 16  
*Franklin County High School*  
*Rocky Mt., VA*

January 22  
Elementary School  
Troy, NC

January 2, 3  
*Holiday Inn French Quarters*  
*Perrysburg, OK*

January 29  
Union Hall  
Brevard, NC

January 30  
*Music City Sheraton*  
*Nashville, TN*

February 1, 2, 3, 4, 5  
Bluegrass Super Cruise  
to the Bahamas

February 6  
*Recreation Area*  
*Lake Ponasoffkee, FL*

February 12  
Hallelujah Supper Club  
Newton, NC

February 13  
*Shoal Creek Music Building*  
*Lavonia, GA*

February 19  
Ozark Folk Center  
Mountain View, AR



February 20  
Hella Temple  
Rowlett, TX  
February 26  
Henry VIII Hotel  
St. Louis, MO  
February 27  
Knights of Columbus Facility  
Davison, MI  
March 5, 6  
Silver Spurr Rodeo Arena  
Kissimmee, FL  
March 13  
School Auditorium  
Rural Hall, NC  
March 20, 21  
The Pines Hotel  
South Fallsburg, NY  
March 28  
Elementary School  
Ellenboro, NC

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908 604-9743  
Pro-File: AQ April 92  
Performance Schedule:  
January 10  
Miriam's Farm  
Pipersville, PA  
March 14  
Scotch Plains  
Presbyterian Church  
Scotch Plains, NY

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**BILL SKY FAMILY**  
PO Box 3496  
Batesville, AR 72503  
501 523-5001  
Pro-File: AQ April 90  
Performance Schedule:  
January 8, 10, 15  
Jimmy Driftwood  
Folk Hall of Fame  
Mountain View, AR  
January 17  
Araby Acres  
Yuma, AZ  
January 22  
Atlasta Resort  
Yuma, AZ  
January 22  
Shangri-La  
Yuma, AZ  
January 24  
Sani-Sands  
Yuma, AZ  
January 24  
Fortuna De Oro  
Yuma, AZ  
January 26  
Villa Alemeda  
Yuma, AZ

February 12  
Lakefront Lodge  
Zapata, TX  
February 14  
Sunshine Resort  
Harlingen, TX  
February 16  
Lakewood Park  
Harlingen, TX  
February 17  
Pine To Palm Resort  
Weslaco, TX  
February 18  
Country Boy Resort  
Harlingen, TX  
February 19  
Canyon Lake Resort  
Mission, TX  
February 20  
Chimney Resort  
Mission, TX  
February 21  
Casa Del Sol  
Donna, TX  
February 23  
Villa Gardens  
La Feria, TX  
February 24  
Winter Ranch Dinner Concert  
Alamo, TX  
February 26  
Isla Blanca  
S. Padre Island, TX  
February 27  
Lake Texano  
Hidalgo, TX  
February 28  
Victoria Palms Resort  
Donna, TX  
March 2  
Mission Bell Resort  
Mission, TX  
March 3  
W & I Resort  
Mission, TX  
March 4  
Palacios School  
Palacios, TX

March 5  
Oleander Acres  
Mission, TX

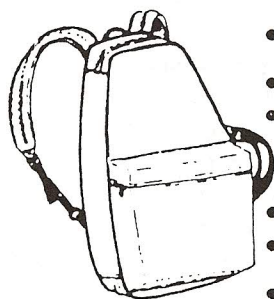
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215 935-9062  
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Performance Schedule:  
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Phoenixville, PA  
January 10  
Spring House Estates  
Spring House, PA  
February 6  
Shepard's Music  
Greensboro, NC  
February 9  
Friends of Florida Folk  
Lakeland, FL  
February 10  
Tunes At Noon, Munn Park  
Lakeland, FL  
February 12  
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Concert Hall  
Clearwater, FL  
February 13  
Friends of Florida Folk  
North Fort Myers, FL  
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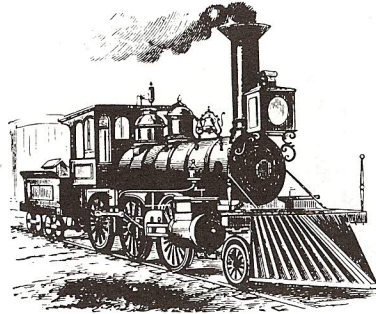
# Oh, I'll Twine With My Mingles

PART THREE

*This is the third in a series of articles concerning the idioms in traditional American music. The Irish by Mike Herr and The Sea by Bob Cohen will follow in later issues.*

## Dad, Is That The Wabash Cannonball?

by Joe Riggs



Most folks who know a train song might think of *Freight Train* or *Ol' 97* first, but my premier train song is *Wabash Cannonball*. I grew up on the banks of the Wabash River, near where Kentucky, Illinois, and Indiana run together. Before I was in school, I stretched trotlines, seined bait, and caught a truckload of fish on the mighty Wabash with my dad, Marlin, and my brother, Jim. Later, my hometown friend and dobro player, Gale Lovellette adopted *Wabash Cannonball* as his trademark song, and to me, *Wabash Cannonball* without a dobro is about as pitiful as Thanksgiving without a turkey. It is this train song, by Roy Acuff, that I remember hearing on the radio as I grew up on the farm. Dad told me one day years later when we were fishing, listening to a coal-hauling freight plodding north, that I had asked him if that was the *Wabash Cannonball* that ran on the track bordering our farm. He said that cannonballs never went that slow, and what ran out back was the Illinois Central. I did not remember asking him that, but I do remember that I walked that

track more days than not, hunting groundhogs, rabbits, and squirrels, or heading up to the trestle over Crawfish Creek to shoot gar or catch a carp or two. One winter, I was walking the track with my .22, and down over the track bed was a little lean-to shelter made of some pieces of barn-roof tin that had blown off Everett Crow's barn, I guess. There was about a foot of snow on it, and it was snowing that soft, wet snow at the time. I had made a big circle after school to run my rabbit traps and was headed down the tracks for home. I smelled the smoke from the campfire before I zeroed in on the shelter. I can see it yet, and it's been almost forty years. I remember that I stood and stared at the tin for a few minutes, and smelled the smoke wisping up, waiting and listening and feeling. It was one of those moments when all your senses are working overtime, and the heavy, falling snow forms an

insulated cup over the small area you're in. I had seen a few "hoboes" along the tracks before, but Mom always warned me to stay away from them. I was wondering where the guy was right then, and how long he was planning to stay. He had not been there the day before, and he was gone the next day, maybe taking the train on up toward Danville, Kankakee, and Chicago, or south toward Cairo. Or, he may have headed west toward St. Louis, if he was an urban hobo, and might have hopped one of my Grampa Comiskey's trains on the Southern Railroad. (Grampa was a fireman on the run to East St. Louis for years.) Wherever the hobo went, I was glad he was gone, and I put a few rounds through the tin to tell him so if he ever came back.

Coal cars full of coal going north, came back empty south -- it was so well understood by everybody that in high school the biology teacher used to say that red blood cells went out full of oxygen from the lungs, like coal cars going north to steel mills in Gary, Indiana, and came back to the lungs



empty, just like the coal cars.

Eventually, the tracks got bad, and trucks got bigger, and soon most freight was moved on the highway. Coal wasn't needed as much up north and there got to be less and less freight coming back south. The tracks got so bad during my college days that the trains had to run on a 10 mph limit. By the time I got back from Viet Nam, there were no trains running at all, even though the tracks were still there, growing closed like a bad cut healing up and hair-ing over. Finally, when my daughter, Jes, was about the age I was when I saw the Hobo Hotel, the last remnants of the railroad were excised; the steel rails are gone, the used cross-ties are now sold at your local lumber yard for landscaping timbers. Only the old trestle remains, but it looks like an old man with no teeth. I miss the smell of creosote-soaked ties and the creaking of the heat-warped rails in August. I miss feeling the thundering power of the diesels and the unimaginable tons of coal and freight barreling by at 35 mph, only a few feet away.

Once I climbed down under the trestle, up over the creek, to have the train go by just a couple of feet over my head. I did not know at the time that these memories would stay so vivid for so many years. Maybe that's why I like train songs so much. I think there is a train song for most moods -- joy, melancholia, grief, adventure, devil-may-care, dare-devil-let 'er rip, romance, true love, kids, old folks, war, and crime.

Within the train song genre, a listener can occasionally hear, or mis-hear, some words or phrases that are unfamiliar, especially now, absent the popularity of the working railroads as we knew them.

Train songs have been found in many kinds of music from Country and Western to Urban, and the disappearance of trains from so many lives and landscapes, has made train songs and the vocabulary more distant from the public today.

I have learned many of the terms in train songs through osmosis by association with railroaders throughout my life. Others I have dug for a little, and a few remain a mystery to me still. Here are some notes that may add some additional imagery to train songs you might hear or sing yourself, while remembering that we can't believe everything we hear, even in train songs.

---

### TRAIN SONG TERMINOLOGY

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**Average:** As in ". . . he lost his average," *Old 97*. A reference to the air pressure needed for the air brakes.

**Baldwin Mountain Engine:** As in "With a Baldwin mountain engine, they made the run on time," *Bill Richardson's Last Ride*. Billy was not really running a Baldwin mountain engine that day, but what the heck . . . the mountain engines were geared for lots of torque and low top end. Baldwin was the locomotive manufacturer. See note under Wheelers.

**Blind:** As in "I will ride the blind," *Georgia Hobo*, and "on the blinds sat Old Bill Jones," *Milwaukee Blues*. This is the toughest word I have run into. Efforts to obtain a precise lock on this term have been only partly successful. I am convinced that blind has multiple meanings, one of which, courtesy of Jim Riggs, means the blind end of the mail car. Mail cars often had only one door in one end, and the other end was "blind," or with no opening, like a blind alley. Hoboes could ride in the front

of the car and no one on the train could see them or get to them since there was no door at that end, especially if the blind mail car was directly behind the tender. Another meaning might be the attachments resembling blinders affixed to the front and sides of locomotives. These fixtures would deflect obstacles such as rocks, snow, or other debris and protect the moving parts of the drive machinery. They would also offer protection to a hobo from discovery and the elements. Michele Keenen researched this one, too, and brought me a photo of an engine so equipped.

**Hobo Pullman:** A box car.

**Brakebeams:** As in ". . . ride the rods and brakebeams." Brakebeams were the small catwalks that traversed the lengths of each box car, a catwalk for the brakeman.

**Brakies:** Brakemen.

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**C&EI:** Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad.

**C&O:** Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad (C&O has the most train wreck songs of any line).

**Caller:** As in ". . . the caller called Casey at half past four," *Casey Jones*. The caller was the person responsible for, among other things, waking up the crew members of a train run so they got started on time.

**Catch 'er on the fly:** As in "I must catch her on the fly," *Dixie Mail*, and the identical phrase in *Little Stream of Whiskey*. To catch a train that did not slow down at the point to be boarded. (Hoboes preferred picking a point where the train was stopped.)

**Concussion:** Collision.

**CPR:** Central Pacific Railroad.

**Dinky:** A small gas engine or hand-powered car used by track crews for transportation out and back along the tracks.

**Ditch:** To jump the track and

dump the train in a ditch.

**Double-track road:** As in "Told his fireman, keep your seat and ride, its a double-track road runnin' side-by-side," *Casey Jones*. In these lines, Casey told the fireman, who was about ready to jump when he saw the headlights bearing down on them, to sit down and relax because the on-coming train was on a second set of tracks alongside their own, not on the same set of rails.

**Drivers:** As in "Put your head out the window see the drivers roll," *Casey Jones*. The large drive wheels powered by the steam engine.

**Dump:** Hill, as in down the dump/down the hill; lots of wrecks occurred on the down-hill.

**Fast mails:** As in "I'll hop the fasts mails," *Hallelujah, I'm a Bum*. Mail trains were contracted by the US Government to haul mail, and had to maintain a rigid time schedule in order to be paid in full. This accounts for many wrecks of

trains trying to make up lost time.

**FFV:** As in "Along came the FFV," *Engine 143*. Stands for Fast Flying Vestibule or Fast Flying Virginian.

**Fireman:** The fireman stoked the wood or coal furnace to heat the water for steam.

**Handcar:** See Dinky.

**Hoggers:** Wild-driving engineers.

**IC:** Illinois Central Railroad.

**Joint:** As in ". . . joint ahead, center back," *Jerry, Go and Ile that Car*. A section of rail, one piece, about 14 feet long.

**Jungle:** As in "Travelin' through the jungle," *Wabash Cannonball*. Hoboes' campground.

**L&E:** Louisville & Eastern Railroad.

**Line:** As in "The north wind came howlin' down the line," *Old Number Nine*. A reference to tracks.

**Mail crane:** As in "His head then struck a mail crane," *Billy Richardson's Last Ride*. Support arm and hook that receives and holds mail bags up and out near the passing train for pickup so that the train would not have to stop.

**Main Line:** The primary track (route) of a railroad.

**Meet order:** This is the railroad equivalent of the "yield" sign. Mail trains had priority over virtually all other trains, then passengers, then freights. Meet orders told engineers what other trains they would meet on the same pair of tracks on their runs, and who had to be switched over to a sidetrack and wait for the priority train to pass in the opposite direction. Failing to keep this straight, and obey, resulted in head-on collisions.

**N&W:** Norfolk and Western Railroad.

**NRRR:** New River Railroad Company.

**Number:** As in Number 9. This number may refer to the designation of the train run, like city bus route 29, which may be run by any bus no matter the serial number of the bus. It also may refer to the identification number of the locomotive itself pulling the train.

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**Pullman:** Brand name of the sleeping/touring cars, many of which were luxuriously outfitted and correspondingly expensive.

**Pump:** As in "I want every man to pump the best he can," *Jerry, Go and Ile that Car*. Pump the handles up and down on the hand-powered dinky to propel it down the track.

**Rattler:** As in "He rolled a rattler called the Cannonball," *Jimmie The Kid*. Probably an old, beat-up train.

**Rod:** As in "I'm goin' to have to ride the rod," in one version of *Make Me a Pallet*. A supporting truss on the undercarriage framework of a car. One might assume this is not the first choice of a hobo for a place to ride a train, latching onto the undercarriage, riding inches from the wheels and the roadbed in a very uncomfortable position.

**Roll:** As in ". . .with orders to roll old Number Nine," *Old Number Nine*. To run as fast as possible.

**Rounders:** As in "Come all you rounders if you want to hear," *Casey Jones*. Maybe employees working in the roundhouse. Could also mean deadbeats.

**Roundhouse:** A large building with a huge turntable, like a Lazy Susan with tracks, for locomotives to roll onto and be worked on. You might say it was the grease rack for trains, and the engine could be turned around to face forward to exit when it was returned to service.

**Seaboard Air Line:** Name of a railroad, as in "We'll go down to Georgia on the Seaboard Air Line," *Georgia Hobo*. Probably a freight line boasting cars with smooth suspension, quite possibly specializing in hauling fruit north from Georgia.

**Shimming up the ties:** As in

". . .while the boys were shimming up the ties," *Jerry, Go and Ile that Car*. To place thin wedges under the rails/ties in order to level the rails and keep them plumb.

**Shortline:** A short run of track between two points, sort of an ad hoc train; trains ran forward from origin to destination, then backed back "home." Shortlines from coal mines to a main line were common, early ones used horses and mules to pull.

**Sidetrack:** As in "Let me be your sidetrack," from the song of the same name. Forerunner of the Interstate Rest Area. Trains could be switched onto a sidetrack for many reasons -- trouble, inspection, clear the track for a higher-priority train to pass, and so on.

**Southern Line/Southern Railroad:** As in ". . .way down on the Southern Railroad," *Ol' 97*. Railroad company where my grampa worked as a fireman. You may see it pass by yet, its motto being "Giving a Green Light to Innovation."

**Spikes:** Big nails used to hold the rails on the cross-ties. It takes three hammer blows to drive a spike, ten spikes per rail joint; four hundred rail joints per mile.

**Stack:** Smokestack.

**Switch:** As in ". . . the train was flyin' by a troublous switch," *Ben Dewbery's Final Run*. Used to shift a set of movable rails in order to guide a train off the main line

onto a sidetrack or another branch line. Wrecks often occurred because someone neglected to activate (or de-activate) a switch.

**Switchyard:** As in ". . .when I got to the switchyard," *The Mystery of Number Five*. The staging area for trains to be made up in their pulling order. Track after track of sidetracks in a large yard, and all with switches at each end.

**Tamping bar:** As in ". . .with a tap of the tamping bar," *Jerry, Go and Ile that Car*. A bar to tap down the cross-ties and seat them into the earthen bed. Ties had to be embedded firmly into the earth to pro-

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- GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN
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vide a solid foundation for the rails carrying the vast tonnage of each car.

**Tender:** As in ". . . you get on the tender and I will ride the blind," *Georgia Hobo*. The small car behind the engine carrying water and wood (later coal), to fuel the fire in the boiler furnace and replace the water in the boiler.

**UP:** Union Pacific Railroad.

**Wheeler:** As in "On the 6-8 wheeler, boys, he won his fame," *Casey Jones*. Like today's 4x4, or 18-wheeler, 6-8 is a locomotive description. The numbers refer to the number of wheels carrying the locomotive, counting from front to back. Convention has it that the first number refers to the first set of wheels which have no power to them, but serve as support. The second number refers to the number of driving wheels and tells how many wheels actually have power driven by the steam pistons.

If there is a third number, it refers to the wheels at the rear of the locomotive, under the cabin where the engineer and fireman worked. Not all locomotives had this rear set of wheels, but many did. The subject of *The Wreck Of The C&O No. 5* was a true Baldwin mountain engine, a behemoth 4-8-2.

**Yazoo Delta:** A railway in Mississippi, known as the YD, as in Yellow Dog. The railway was immortalized in the phrase, "where the Southern crosses the Dog," in Big Bill Broonzy's blues song, *Southern Blues*.

**Yellow Dog:** See Yazoo Delta.

I have relied upon two of my favorite books for much of the technical and historical background information sprinkled throughout this article. I express my gratitude to the authors for their mastery. They've given me many hours of joy, and I give them credit for much of the information contained herein.

**Scalded to Death by Steam**  
*Katie Letcher Lyle*

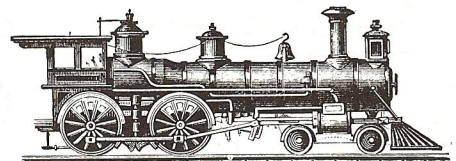
Contains "Authentic Stories of Railroad Disasters and Ballads" that were written about them (Algonquin Books, Chapel Hill, NC, 1983). ISBN 0-9126 97-01-6

**Long Steel Rail**

*Norm Cohen*

The Railroad in American Folksong (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, IL, 1981). ISBN 0-252-00343-8.

My intent in this article has been to impart flavors of both books to season my own stew of train songs and share my long, beloved association with that short stretch of rail running along the banks of the Wabash. ■



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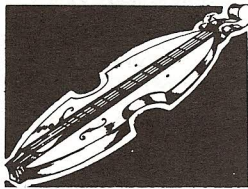
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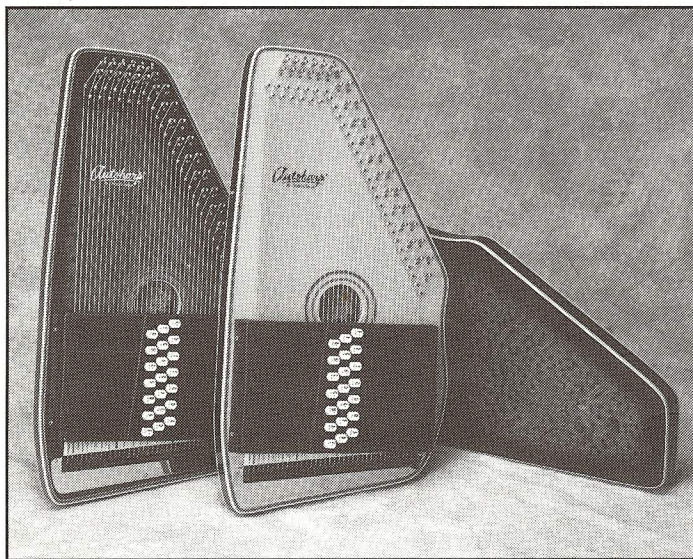
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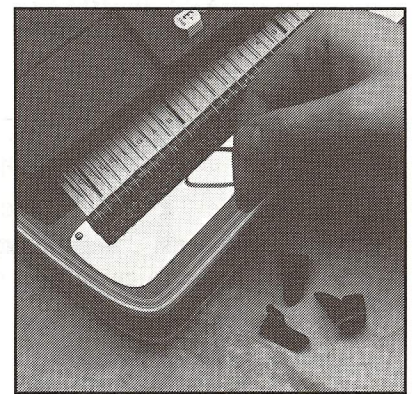
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*Left: OS120 Smoky Mountain with birdseye top and back  
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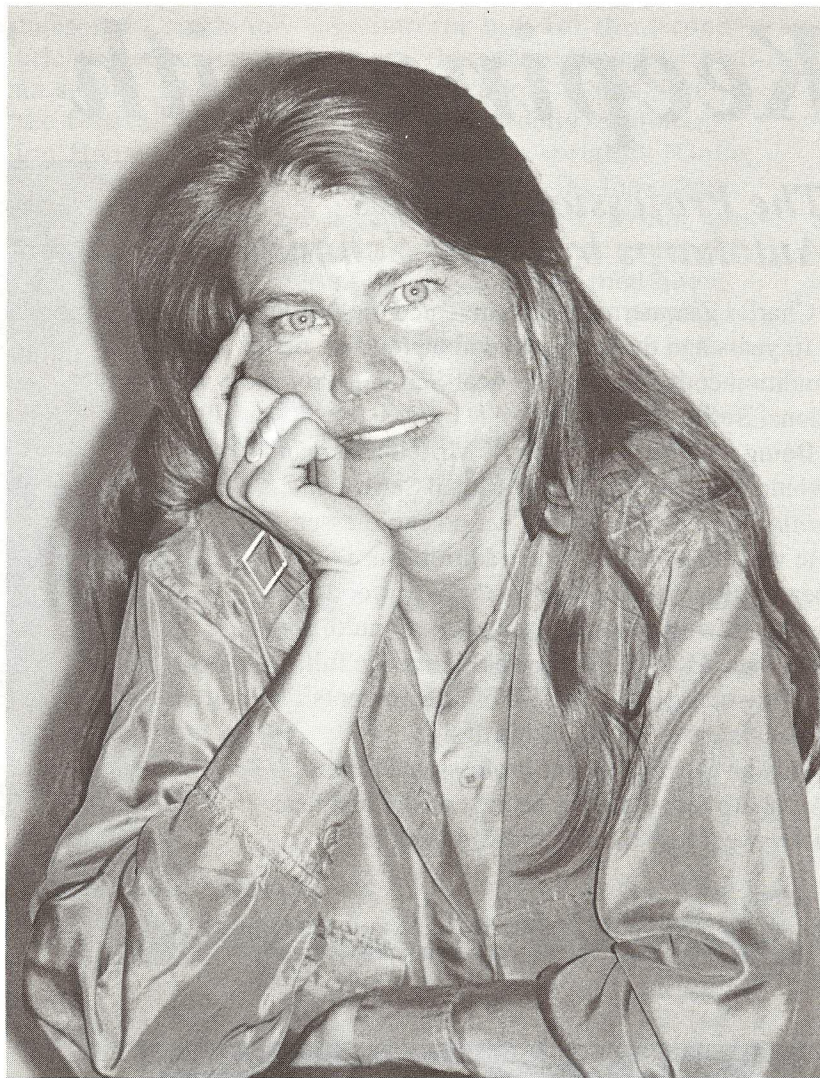
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Julie Davis is known as an enthusiastic and inspiring teacher. She teaches autoharp to all ages in workshops throughout the Rocky Mountain region and at the Swallow Hill Music School in Denver where she also teaches an autoharp class for music teachers and classes on music theory and musicianship. Having a long history of playing the autoharp in bands, she offers a "Stringband 101" class that entices shy autoharp players into working bands.

Julie first began playing autoharp in 1963 when she was working at the Denver Folklore Center. She began exploring it as her primary instrument after being reintroduced to the autoharp by the inimitable Bonnie Phipps in 1983. She is part of Denver's thriving autoharp scene with Bonnie, Roz Brown, Michael Stanwood and the Denver Area Autoharp Club.

Julie has worked with colleges, schools, and arts councils in several states. She tours throughout the West, and was recently part of the "Outstanding Colorado Artists" series which gave her an opportunity to give concerts throughout the state. Her first tape, "Heart Full of Song," was released in February 1992.

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## THE INTERACTION LESSON: "GIVE ME BACK MY HEART"

Julie Davis  
PO Box 1302  
Nederland, CO 80466

I first learned the Slovenian song "Give Me Back My Heart" -- "Die, Die, Sark Shick Nasi" -- while working at a historical festival in Leadville, Colorado. Slovenian, Hispanic, and Irish miners were among the first to settle the mining camps in Colorado where their descendants keep the traditions and music alive today. These ethnic pockets have retained such a strong sense of identity that the Irish in Leadville even hold an annual "St. Patrick's Day Practice Parade" on September 17, because by March 17, the high mountain town is too snowed in for a proper parade. Of course, drinking and music are required both days.

"Give Me Back My Heart" is a beautiful song on the autoharp. The notes of this slow waltz are so accessible they almost play themselves. The distinctive A and B sections -- with their modulation, rhythmic change and different tessitura -- make the song interesting to play and lovely to hear. I also like it because I

have a strong romantic streak and this waltz is the tune most often played to close Slovenian dances in Colorado. I often pair it with the Hispanic "Valse Apasionada," (or "The Passionate Waltz"), which is used to close Hispanic dances. If it were up to me, I'd let you dance the last waltz all night.

This song may be played on either a chromatic 'harp or an F/C diatonic. The tune should be played at a danceable waltz speed, about 126 on your metronome. It is usually played A-B-A-B and ends on an A part.

The first section is leisurely and flowing. The fingering for this section is straight forward, and the effect, with its abundance of dotted half notes, is graceful and uncluttered. I have notated a basic 3/4 strum and fills which should be light and varied in their highness or lowness on the 'harp.

The B section modulates to the key of C, moving the primary notes higher on the 'harp by a fifth. It also, while keep-

ing the same tempo, rhythmically shifts to eighth notes that create a polyrhythm against the basic waltz beat. All of this has a delightful effect. In contrast to the A section, there are virtually no fill strums as every available beat is taken by the melody.

The fingering on this section is the heart of this interactive lesson. For those of you who do not normally use your third finger, it will give you an opportunity to introduce yet another wee digit to the joys of autoharp playing.

The simplest way to play the B section is to use your three fingers (without any pinching) in a repeating pattern of:

Count	1	&	2	&	3	&
Fingers	3	2	1	3	2	1

With your third finger highest on the 'harp, the second in the middle, and the first lowest, this puts your hand in the right position to catch the repeated descending arpeggios (broken chords) of this section.



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If you have trouble at first, don't be discouraged. Your fingers will catch on soon.

Your third finger creates the melodic accent. This places the accent on the first beat of the measure, and then, somewhat unconventionally, on the "&" after the second beat of each measure, as follows:

Accent	>	>	>	>	
Count	1	&	2	&	3 &
Fingers	3	2	1	3	2 1

Written out in music it looks like Figure 1, below.

A more challenging and rewarding approach is to add

the pinch on the downbeats, which have a slightly different pulse from the melodic accent, and thus create a subtle polyrhythm. The fingering pattern in each measure then becomes that shown in Figure 2.

The B section, while still flowing, is very rhythmically and melodically engaging and leads back to the simplicity of the A part only in the last few measures.

To add a little variety, Figure 3 shows a commonly-heard alternate ending for the B section.

Enjoy playing! I look forward to hearing from you.

Figure 1

Accent: > > > >

Count: 1 & 2 & 3 & 1 & 2 & 3 &

Fingers: 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1

Figure 2

Count: 1 & 2 & 3 & 1 & 2 & 3 &

Fingers: 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1

T T T T T T

Figure 3 - Alternate Ending

\*\*\* G F G F C G C

TAB \* \* \* \* \* ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ \* ~ ~

### TAB SYMBOLS

- \* = PINCH with the thumb and finger. When shown with a number, use that numbered finger with the thumb.
- = PLUCK with the finger. When shown with a number, use that numbered finger.
- ↑ = UPSCRATCH with the fingers from low notes to high. This action can be substituted with a thumb strum.
- ↓ = DOWNSCRATCH with the fingers from high notes to low.
- ~ = SUSTAIN No action taken here.





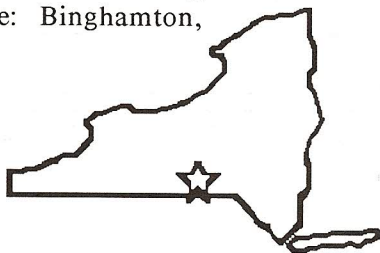


## 'HARPERS-AT-LARGE

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

### **Festival: Cranberry Dulcimer Gathering**

Place: Binghamton, NY



**Reporting: Kathy Thorpe**

Alexandria, VA

The sixteenth annual Cranberry Dulcimer Gathering was held July 24, 25, and 26 at the Unitarian Universalist Church. The featured autoharp performer for the weekend was John Hollandsworth. John's wife, Kathie, joined him on stage for the Friday night concert where she played hammered dulcimer, string bass, and sang. They charmed the audience with their down-home southern style.

During the weekend, John led two valuable workshops. The first focused on basic melody playing and included many tips for learning to play a clean, clear melody. In his second workshop, John helped participants learn important techniques for playing fiddle tunes and increasing picking speed.

Dr. George Orthey presented an informative hands-on session entitled "Doctoring Your 'Harp." He encouraged players to take their 'harps apart to make improvements and repairs and answered questions about all kinds of autoharp problems.

Ivan Stiles shared some of

his contest winning strategy in "Building Winning Autoharp Tunes." He discussed ways to make a tune interesting and exciting by using various keys, time signatures, and unusual playing techniques.

Drew Smith presented two workshops during the weekend. He discussed ways to be more comfortable while playing, thereby producing a better product. Next, he explored the playing of Russian music on the autoharp using both minor and major chords.

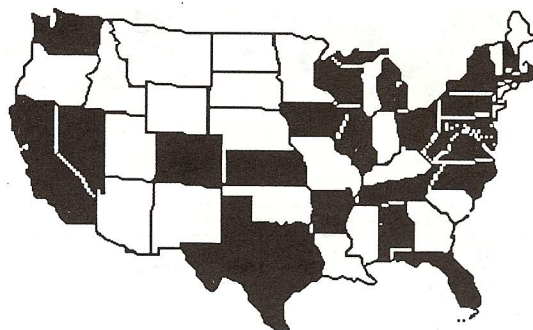
Eileen Kozloff-Abrams led a group in thinking about and trying the song writing process. Eileen has written many songs, and she shared the steps that she follows for her songs.

Charlene Thompson helped a group of beginners to start off with the basics of chords, strums, and accompaniment. She also coordinated a "jam session" where players were given the opportunity to share a song with the group and have a good time doing it.

In "Bold Strokes," Lyman Taylor shared some different strums and strokes that can be used to inspire an audience.

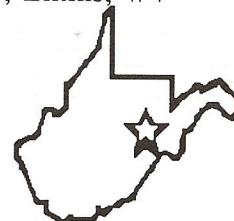
While there was no lack of good 'harp instruction, there was also plenty of time for jamming with many other instruments. Carrie Crompton and Madeline MacNeil were the featured hammered and fretted dulcimer performers.

The weather cooperated to give unusually cool air for the end of July -- a wonderful three-day escape!



### **Workshop: Augusta Heritage Advanced Autoharp Class**

Place: Davis & Elkins College, Elkins, WV



**Reporting: John Dettra**

McLean, VA

Since I'm accused of being a workaholic and never taking a vacation, it seemed that the perfect solution would be to take an autoharp class for a week in beautiful West Virginia. A twenty dollar deposit at the time seemed harmless when the preliminary schedule came out. After you've made your plans and convinced yourself and everybody else what a relaxing vacation this will be, you get the student qualifications/course emphasis letter telling you that you should have a repertoire of twenty-five tunes and be ready to play two tunes for open mike the first day. You then understand why the instructors don't want to hear another arrangement of "Wildwood Flower."

Tom Schroeder was the instructor for the week. Tom, a clinical psychologist, had difficulty in breaking away from his funny world, and we spent Monday morning being analyzed in an effort to rid us of our anxieties of playing in front of other people. This was a worthwhile exercise



since everyone in the class had performed in public, and we got to know each other as a class. There were six in the class ranging from a runner-up at Mountain Laurel and Winfield, to those of us who just like to associate with those who place or show in the contests. Any thoughts of "relaxing" quickly vanished, as Tom had us into open chording on the diatonic 'harp, and several different methods using the thumb lead. A short time was spent on "patting," but when we learned that it doesn't go over well at Winfield, we moved on. We spent quite a bit of time on other single-note techniques, beyond pinching, which leads to many variations on the same tune.

Becky Blackley, fresh back from the "Out" country of Australia, brought a native song, "Hoki Mai," which echoed the male bonding of the warriors after a conquest. Beware of male autoharp players shouting "Hoki."

Michael King was the special instructor on Friday. He has a way of tickling the strings (no finger picks) that gives the 'harp an awe-inspiring, celestial sound. I doubt that it can be duplicated. His arrangements are ones that you want to add to your own repertoire.

The last day, we had our humorous songs sharing session. When Sue Bullock sang "Maids, When You're Young, Never Wed an Old Man," it was no contest.

Everyone felt the challenge to participate, and to get as much as possible out of the class. This was the third time for this perpetual student to be in the advanced class, and every year the studies are so different that you don't let down for one minute. Nothing is being repeated.

I guess the class was better

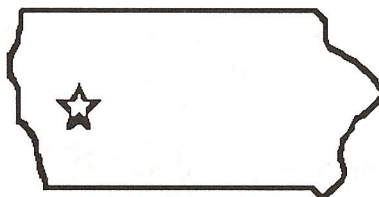
than I thought. Tom went on to win first place at Winfield. Congratulations, Tom. We're all behind you, some of us further back than others.

Since I'm used to working twelve-hour days, I signed up for the mini-class of playing in a string band, which happened to be Stewed Mulligan, a very popular band in West Virginia. Me. I played with Stewed Mulligan! It was great fun, and we actually played for the dance classes.

Going to Augusta is far more than going to a class. It is a way of life that is a common denominator to all kinds of people enjoying music, dance, and being in a different life-style for a week. Can't wait 'til the '93 schedule is out, 'cause I'll be there!

#### **Festival: Two Rivers Music Contest and the National Traditional Music Performers Awards**

Place: Denison, IA



**Reporting: Dora Miller**

Newton, IA

I missed most of the Denison Festival this year, and didn't hear Ivan Stiles perform on the main stage on Saturday night. He was on stage during the time that was taped live for eight different radio programs. Everyone said that Ivan was great on the 'harp.

I arrived Sunday morning. It was a privilege to meet Ivan and sit in on a jam session with him. He was the emcee for the National Performers Awards. Kathy Wood won the autoharp performer's award this year. Laurie Sky won the clog dancing award.

In the autoharp contest, Dora Miller was first-place winner, Kathy Wood won second, and Jenni Wallace-Grate came in third.

We all hope that Ivan will come to Avoca next year.

#### **Capital 'Harpers Club Meetings and a Workshop by Mike Fenton**

Place: Annandale, VA



**Reporting: Kathy Thorpe**

Alexandria, VA

Quite a number of the Capital 'Harpers, as well as several guests, were privileged to be able to attend a terrific workshop given by England's Mike Fenton on August 22. Alan and Janice Mager hosted the event in Annandale. Folks from at least five states were in attendance.

The three-hour workshop covered a wide variety of interesting subjects. Mike did a great job at relating the material to folks with various playing levels. He was able to get around to each player to insure that everyone was grasping the material.

The session began with everyone playing a couple of numbers together. Mike then stressed the importance of learning and practicing scales in both directions, and using different techniques. This was followed by a time to work on the thumb lead technique. An excellent discussion on contest playing was next, then work on using the pinch. Mike then discussed playing the blues and led the group in several blues tunes. The workshop ended with a discussion of diatonic 'harps.

Most of the participants stayed for the splended pot-



luck supper which followed, and the informal jam session. Old favorites were featured during the group playing. During the jam, Mike cleverly reinforced some of the techniques he taught in the workshop.

There was no lack of "hot" playing with jammers including 1991 Winfield finalists Mike Herr and Alan Mager, and a perennial prize winner in the autoharp contest at the Galax Old Time Fiddlers' Convention, Michael King.

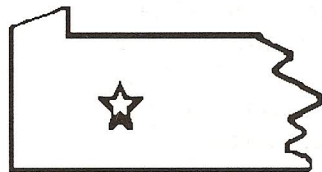
At the June meeting of the club, fourteen members were in attendance. Songs were shared that pertained to the theme of "Ships and Other Boats." Keith Young gave an impromptu lesson on playing by ear and led some songs to reinforce what he had presented.

Eleven members enjoyed the July meeting of the Capital 'Harpers, which was held at Ellie Holsopple's home in Falls Church. We shared songs with the theme, "Celestial Bodies." The moon, sun, and clouds were well represented.

A delicious pot-luck meal is enjoyed during each club meeting.

### **Festival: The Great Dulcimer Round-Up**

Place: Cook Forest State Park, Sawmill Center, Clarion, PA



**Reporting: Ken Longfield**

Reedsville, PA

The fifth annual Great Dulcimer Round-Up was held on September 12 and 13. Coordinated by AbNormal Sines from Dayton, Ohio, the festival featured two concerts and sixteen workshops.

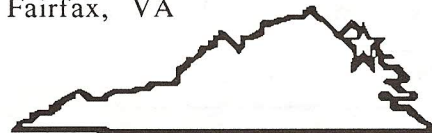
Participants came from

several states and Canada to enjoy music and education in this sylvan setting. The highlight of the festival was a concert by Jim Hudson (the 1988 second-place winner of the National Hammered Dulcimer Championship, Winfield, Kansas). Jim's concert featured his skill on the dulcimer, entertaining stories, and the introduction of the autoharp to the festival. Jim's 'harp is a custom-made mahogany instrument with a pleasant, captivating sound.

This festival continues to grow each year with the addition of new participants and workshop leaders. Perhaps some 'harpers could be encouraged to seek inclusion of the autoharp in next year's festival!

### **Concert: Mill Run Dulcimer Band**

Place: Colvin Run Mill Park, Fairfax, VA



**Reporting: Kathy Ferguson**

Fairfax, VA

The Band played its first set outside. Behind the stage, the wooded area displayed all shades of yellow, gold, red, and rust on the fringes of its summer greenery. Billowy clouds drifted overhead. What a pleasure to stretch out on the hill of this picturesque park and enjoy the crisp fall day, listening to beautiful music. A new addition to their repertoire was "Young Jane," a lovely Irish air with Woody Padgett playing autoharp. The Band's arrangement of "Little Birdie" with banjo, triangle, bass, and autoharp is a favorite of mine.

Toward the end of the first set, it became obvious that the clouds were serious rain-type clouds, and the Band moved

into the mill for the second set. Here they played without amplification. It was pure acoustic. Woody's autoharp solo was the sprightly "Going To Scotland." On the other tunes, he played rhythm back-up with occasional breaks. Much can be learned about effective ensemble playing by seeing how Woody uses the autoharp to complement the other instruments. The Band concluded the set with the melancholy "Midnight On the Water." As always, a great show.

### **Festival: Millpond Traditional American Music Festival**

Place: Bishop, CA



**Reporting: Laura Newton**

Las Vegas, NV

The base of the awesome Sierra Nevada Mountains was the site of the First Annual Millpond Festival. It's a rare and welcomed opportunity in the West to have a music festival wherein the autoharp is so well showcased. The Millpond promoters had the good sense to book three -- count 'em, three -- extremely talented 'harp players in Mike Seeger, Bryan Bowers, and Evo Bluestein.

Along with their stage performances, Bowers, Seeger, and Bluestein all featured the autoharp in their individual workshops. The highlight of the event, however, had to be the three of them together in a "super workshop" setting, providing some incredible moments in 'harp history. Mike and Evo received a standing ovation for their old-time

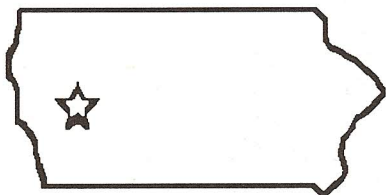


music duet with a Kilby Snow flavor. As both an old-time music and autoharp fanatic, that presentation was well worth the price of admission and the six-hour drive.

The festival was a well-rounded representation of Traditional American Music, as the name suggests. Bob Brozman did a superb job on acoustic blues, Laurie Lewis and Grant Street held up the bluegrass reputation admirably, Queen Ida and her Bon Temps brought the house down with their hot Zydeco. These, along with the autoharp virtuosos, secure my vote for a Second Annual Millpond Festival!

### **Festival: National Old Time Country Music Contest**

Place: Avoca, IA



**Reporting: Dora Miller**

Newton, IA

Even with heavy rain, the enthusiasm, love, and sharing of old time acoustic music was not dampened at this festival held over Labor Day Weekend. The rain dampened the attendance, but still people came from around the world to participate in this annual event that has been called a "place to come to hear America sing."

This was the first year that the autoharp, lap, and hammered dulcimer had their own building. George Orthey displayed his 'harps, Carroll Pace had a booth for Oscar Schmidt 'harps, and Allen Mortimore had a booth for the lap dulcimer. There was plenty of room in our building for the stage and benches as well.

The first part of the week,

we showed the three instruments and demonstrated how to play them with video and cassette tapes. There was also plenty of time for jamming.

Seventy-six 'harpers from twelve states attended the festival. There were at least eighteen hammered and thirty lap dulcimer players. Look for more to come next year!

There was a variety of 'harp music from the different stage areas. On Friday, Homespun Harmony, a new group from Iowa, performed. Six out of eight members play autoharp and lap dulcimer. We hope to hear more from this group. The Down Home Old-Time Music Party featured Drew Smith, and the Carlisle Cut Off Band with John Fleckenstien playing some good old fiddle tunes. A group of children clog-danced to the music. Pat Walke and Mike Mumm also performed Friday night.

On Saturday, Bill and Laurie Sky were on stage along with the Claytons, and the Turners. That day, there were hands-on workshops for the autoharp and dulcimer. John Fleckenstien started the morning for autoharp with a beginners' session, followed with George Orthey's maintenance workshop. In the afternoon, Laurie Sky gave a workshop on competition. Drew Smith gave a wonderful thumb lead workshop, and Marcella West taught a children's workshop.

In our building on Sunday, the Matney Sisters played a concert, and Bill and Laurie Sky gave us a nice concert on Sunday night. Sunday was a full day of thirty-minute concerts for all three instruments. Carroll Pace started the morning playing several of his favorite songs on the autoharp. Faith and Harold Willis were next with gospel and Carter songs, and Doris Gatterman did a lovely job of playing

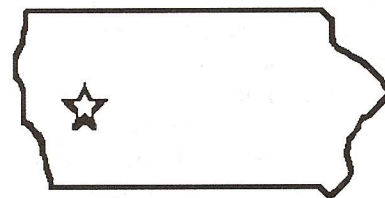
and singing songs of the Old West. John Fleckenstien then demonstrated a variety of ways to play a simple song. Marcella West played her favorite hymns on the 'harp, and Drew Smith and his 'harp took us on a trip around the world.

Drew was the winner of the autoharp contest this year, with John Fleckenstien in second place, and Les Gustafson-Zook third. It was so nice to see Les and his family again this year at Avoca.

Next year our center will be called the "Happy Hearts Folk Center." We hope to have at least one night for shape-note singing, a big 'harp jam session, and plenty of open mike time. Mark your calendar for September 1-6, '93. Join the fun!

### **Concert and Radio Show Taping: The Bill Sky Family**

Place: Walnut IA



On a rainy Halloween night, we drove to the Walnut Opera House. The evening started with an appreciation dinner for the Avoca Festival volunteers. At 7:30, Bill and Laurie Sky started the taping of the Old-Time Country Music Radio Show. Their first song was "I'm Going Back to Dixie," followed by a song Bill wrote, "Sails on the Ship of Zion." Laurie dedicated the next songs, including "Old Spinning Wheel," to all of the 'harp players in the audience. They continued with their delightful stories and songs for forty-five minutes. After an intermission, they opened the second hour with "Mountain Dew." They are a favorite performing team on the Old-Time Music Hour.

Tom Willis, and Bob and Sheila Everhart rounded out the evening.

*Continued on page 27*



# Is "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" Bluegrass?

*A Correspondence Between Tina Louise Barr and Lindsay Haisley*



Dear *Autoharp Quarterly*:

I really appreciate the practical approach taken by your publication. The "hands-on" advice bypasses some of the mystique associated with performing and recording.

Also, the article "Get Ready for the Judgment Day" by Laurie Sky in the October issue was especially helpful to me. I was just at Winfield, and my experience there was enjoyable. The contest, however, left me with some unanswered questions concerning the format and contest rules.

The International Autoharp Championship rules stipulate that "tunes may be traditional, bluegrass, folk, classical, or old-time country." I am open to all types of music, and I enjoyed the variety of styles of music that were so well executed by the contest participants. The selections that were played by the winners were tastefully demonstrated, and certainly a showcase for their skills. I was confused about the limitations of the rules, however. Is "The Entertainer" a traditional song? Is a marimba-bar calypso style of playing encompassed within these rules or is it considered to be a technique judged upon the arrangement of the tune? Is "quoting" a brief phrase from another unrelated tune, by

incorporating it into a piece, acceptable?

Also, (under protection of the "There are no dumb questions" clause on page 39 of the aforementioned *Autoharp Quarterly* issue), do the judges base their final decisions partly by the audience response (microphones are likely to transmit some of the clapping and cheering)?

Perhaps these questions could be addressed in a future issue of *Autoharp Quarterly*?

Thanks for your help.

*Tina Louise Barr  
Modesto, California*

Dear Tina:

*We were not surprised by your questions. Many others have raised them, as well. We are fortunate to have Seasoned Judge Lindsay Haisley on our staff. (His experience possibly dates back as far as the Ben Hur races.) We have asked him to respond to you. If you have questions after reading his reply, please let us know.*

-- Editors

Dear Tina:

Thanks for your letter. Having judged a number of autoharp contests operated nominally under the Walnut Valley Association rules, perhaps I can address your questions. It has been my observation that, although the Walnut

Valley Association specifies that contest "tunes may be "traditional, bluegrass, folk, classical or old-time country," it doesn't attempt to wade into the swamp of defining which pieces do or do not fit into these categories. Is "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" bluegrass? Maybe not, but a lot of bluegrass bands play it. Is Steve Goodman's "City of New Orleans" folk? Traditionalists would say "definitely not!" However, Arlo Guthrie, who popularized it, is frequently characterized as a "contemporary folk" performer. In a letter to the Walnut Valley Association years ago (before I ever performed at the Walnut Valley Festival) I inquired regarding the suitability for the contest stage of a number of contemporary pieces (one or two of which I wrote myself) and was told that I'd be welcome with any of them. I think this is for the best. The autoharp, being only a little over 100 years old, has so little "tradition" and lends itself to so much creativity that in my humble opinion we need all the exploration of styles we can get.

I have never judged an autoharp contest in which a contestant was disqualified for playing an "unsuitable" selection, although I'm sure that in contests at strictly traditional festivals (which I



don't generally attend) the matter is taken more seriously. Infractions such as talking on stage, stopping and starting over or playing a true medley (as opposed to inserting a phrase from another song into a selection) are much more likely to be brought to the attention of the contest promoters by one or more judges with the question "does this disqualify the contestant?"

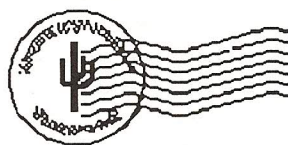
The contest judging guidelines and point categories under "Winfield Rules" make no provision for judging a contestant's performance based on audience response, and in my experience judges are generally not swayed by it. If a contestant plays well and excites everyone, including the judges, the latter will usually express their approval by giving the contestant high marks. If a performance does not move the judges but they can hear lots of audience response, they usually assume that the audience is reacting to some visual or other non-musical aspect of the performance. The contestant may have brought in a contingent of fans (one of the purposes of a contest from a promoter's point of view). This is an easy call to make in a "blind" judging situation. Additionally, I find that I, and other judges, frequently complete our grading of a performance before it is finished so that we can be ready to give our full attention to the next selection or contestant, thus precluding any judgement based on audience response.

If you are planning to enter a contest and you have questions about the suitability of a particular piece or style, you should address your questions in a letter to the promoters of the event who will, in all likelihood, be happy to answer you. Also, I should mention that I wrote at some

length on the subject of competitions in the January 1990 AQ, an article which you might find interesting. One of my contentions is that a lot of folks take music competitions entirely too seriously. We need to remember that while judges and promoters attempt to be fair, a contest is purely an entertainment event and should be entered in a spirit of fun.

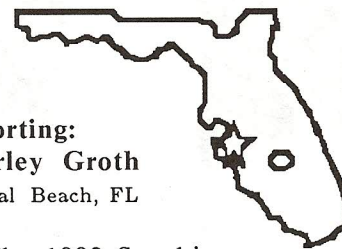
After all is said and done, from a professional point of view, winning contests is of minor importance. The act of playing in a contest gives people the chance to hear your work, and in the last analysis, it's audiences which "judge" you, not judges. A friend of mine, Catfish Keith, got far more career mileage out of losing the finger picking contest at Winfield year after year than most of the winners did. He plays a wonderful blues guitar style, very much in the tradition of many of the black blues masters. His style is his own, but what with his slapping and snapping of strings and other "tricks," (which were elements of the style of many of the old bluesmen), it was apparently too off-beat for the contest judges. Nonetheless, I've sat in the stands and heard the murmurs of "It's the Catfish" which passed through the audience when he came on the contest stage. Over the years, Catfish's work has become known to traditional blues fans all over the country. His yearly "losses" on the Winfield contest stage were certainly part of this process.

Lindsay Haisley  
Leander, Texas



'Harpers-At-Large  
Continued from page 15

**Workshops: Sunshine State Acoustic Music Camp**  
Place: St. Petersburg, FL



**Reporting:**  
**Charley Groth**  
Crystal Beach, FL

The 1992 Sunshine State Acoustic Music Camp, October 9 through 11, was just great! All the folks who have been involved in the camp agree that it is becoming one of those "magic" events for students and instructors alike. The camp focuses on high-quality teaching (with all instructors either recognized professionals, state or higher level contest champions, or both) with a "family" atmosphere. Enrollment is kept limited so each student can get plenty of attention from instructors. Ample time is scheduled for jamming. These sessions are treated as learning experiences, with instructors and musician guests helping students.

1992 Florida State Champion Sue Bullock taught beginning and intermediate autoharp to students ranging in age from children to retirees. Sue's skill, gentle manner, and clear explanations of techniques make her a favorite with students. Charley Groth joined Sue in teaching advanced autoharp classes. Charley is a lifelong touring folk performer and recording artist now settled in Florida. In 1991, the Florida Department of State named him a Florida Master Artist for his autoharp work.

Classes in lap dulcimer, hammered dulcimer, sound/group playing/backup, banjo, and more are also offered. ■



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**CRITICS' CHOICE**

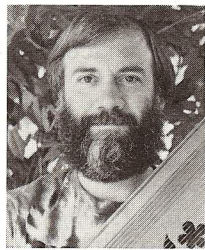

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Judie Pagter



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 be returned.

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**Mike's Choice**


---

*Learn From Mike Seeger:  
How to Play the Autoharp*  
Mike Seeger

Homespun Tapes  
Box 694  
Woodstock, NY 12498

This is vintage Mike Seeger: straight ahead, no-nonsense basic stuff that is firmly rooted in the Carter Family tradition as well as the playing styles of Pop Stoneman and Kilby Snow. Mike's teaching style is easy to follow, as I tried to imagine myself as a beginning player again, and feel what was going on in my hands. When reviewing this tape, I did not have the written materials that accompany it, but there is apparently quite a bit of helpful material to peruse before even picking up the 'harp to play.

Some of the songs that Mike uses to demonstrate his points include: "Skip-to-My-Lou," "This Land Is Your Land," "Down in the Valley," and "Storms are on the Ocean."

He starts with simple strumming techniques and builds to a mildly energetic rhythm that will only tax the very infirm. He then reviews how to begin to pick out a melody line, with two different techniques, followed by

the difference between chromatic and diatonic instruments. He goes on to play several more intermediate to advanced techniques, such as thumb-lead melody picking, slurs up to a note, melody picking in diatonic-style with chord bars up and down, utilizing drag notes, pinches, and melodic runs.

The real treat comes when Mike lets go and shines on two tunes he has been using for teaching, "Skip-to-My-Lou," and "This Land is Your Land." Pure gold. Lovely stuff.

For any beginner, for any intermediate player wanting to learn some basic techniques, or for that matter, for any advanced player wanting Kilby Snow-style sounds, this tape is highly recommended.

---

**Mike's Choice**


---

*Autoharp Gourmet*

Karen Mueller  
1992 Streamline Productions  
PO Box 80565  
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Greenfields Of America, Swallowtail Jig, Gold Watch and Chain/I'll Fly Away, Planxty George Brabazon, La Bastringue, Liberty, Hatikva, Wind That Shakes the Barley, Wabash Cannonball, St. Anne's Reel, Planxty Fanny Powers, Whiskey Before Breakfast, Ode To Joy/Simple Gifts, Blackberry

Blossom, Tripping Up the Stairs/  
Fynbo, You Are My Sunshine/Will the  
Circle Be Unbroken, Old Mother  
Flanagan

"Welcome to the House of Musical Delectables," bubbled our host Georges Zimmerfield, as the bus emptied of thirty voracious music-lovers. "Today we are absolutely delighted to display for you the tasty talents of one of the world's spiciest 'harpers, Karen Mueller, the Autoharp Gourmet. You'll be whisked through several servings of Irish fancy, schirred into ecstasy over exotic French Canadian and Danish Delights, and gelled back with solid American staples in expert fashion."

This month's trip to the musical gallery was indeed exciting, as each listening station revealed more and more of Karen's expertise. We "Oohed" and "Aahed" at the Irish exhibit. Her rendition of "Greenfields Of America" would leave any Irish musician beaming. We delighted in the chord substitutions and modal changes during the "Swallowtail Jig." I caught several members of our group commenting favorably over the basting Karen applied to the ever-popular O'Carolan tunes, the Planxties "Fanny Powers" and "George Brabazon." "Old Mother Flanagan" and "Wind That Shakes the Barley" both received nice rounds of applause. But, to my liking, the most exciting event of this area in the gallery was the melt-down of a fun jig, "Tripping Up the Stairs," with its rhythm changes and stops, into a Danish dance tune, "Fynbo." Several of the dancers in the crowd spontaneously broke into a spirited Scandinavian couples dance, right in front of the gallery guards!

Karen then led us into the



large U.S. old-time, traditional, and folk exhibition. Here our effervescent host, Georges, made sure we were all quite aware of Karen's ability to take a tune and stretch it outside its normal boundary. He compared her efforts on "St. Anne's Reel" to that of the gourmet, "who transforms a dip of ice cream into a Mint Parfait." We were impressed. He also expounded on the wonderful technique Karen used when whipping up the old favorite, "Whiskey Before Breakfast." Here, she shunned the usual rocket-speed form of rendition, and used the huge room in this tune for harmonic exploration which she baked through and through with a full, rich sound.

The afternoon wound on in a pleasurable fashion. We were sauteed ever so quickly amongst the various arrangements of "Blackberry Blossom," sandwiched in the slow-fast-slow tempos of "Liberty," and allowed to mature in a stately vintage of "Ode to Joy" and "Simple Gifts."

Many other American favorites skipped over our musical taste buds, and to wrap up a superb trip to the gallery, we were treated to two tunes which could hardly have been more in contrast. The first was "Hatikva," from Israel, in which we were let in on the serious side of Karen -- that side which is so conducive to expression through music. The second and last was the Best tune of the day-- the French Canadian "La Bastringue," in which Karen's greatness shone through yet again. Our appetites were fully satiated.

As we poured our stuffed bodies back into the bus, we looked forward to trying out these tunes in the handy companion book Karen had for sale. We also look forward to returning to the H.M.D. for Karen's next musical treat.

## Judie's Choice

### *Harper's Ferry*

Alex Usher

Music Folk Recordings

8015 Big Bend Blvd.

Webster Groves, MO 63119

Harper's Ferry, The Solution to Pollution, La Cucaracha, Brahm's Waltz, Redesdale's Hornpipe, Faust Waltz, Year of Jubilo, Whistling Rufus, Merry Widow Waltz, La Paloma, Bidy the Bowl Wife, German Shepherd's Song, Flop-Eared Mule, Georgia Campmeeting

This tape is a strictly solo autoharp recording. It starts out on Side One with the title song, "Harper's Ferry," which is a very nice instrumental done with style. Alex puts some fancy licks in here. I really like this tune, which reminds me of "Fisher's Hornpipe."

"The Solution to Pollution" is different. Alex plays "America The Beautiful" while reciting a remedy (original poem) to our pollution on earth.

There's a bit of Mexican flavor to "La Cucaracha," which she does very well. Then Brahm's Waltz gives us a change of pace. It's an easy-to-listen-to tune, as is "Faust Waltz." Next in line is a tricky version of "Redesdale's Hornpipe." This is such a pretty hornpipe, and she carries it off very well, tempting me to take a week off and learn it myself!

Alex ends off this side with a good ole' Civil War song, "Year of Jubilo." This is a northern song, (at least I've been playing it as one), and has a lot of good words if you want to sing it. I enjoy humming along with this rendition, which is done well.

Side Two starts off with "Whistling Rufus." This tune has been around for quite some time, and Alex plays it

in her own unique style. I enjoy listening to it. The "Merry Widow Waltz" and "La Paloma" are done with elegance, and are quite pretty.

"Biddy the Bowl Wife" is a new one on me. It sounds like a pretty hornpipe. -- And, speaking of ones I've never heard, "German Shepherd's Song" is another. It must have words?

Now, I know "Flop-Eared Mule" because I play it, sing it, and besides, I have a flop-eared mule that I sing it to! I love this song, as well as "Georgia Campmeeting." Both sound good on the autoharp, and Alex does a fine job with both.

Well, there you have it, folks -- another good autoharp tape, if you like solo autoharp. I would prefer to hear a few more words. Never the less, I think you'll enjoy this tape. It'll give you some pleasant listening. ■

### *Forty Three Arrangements of O'Carolan Tunes for Diatonic Autoharp*

*played in the open-chording style*

Stephen J. Young

(1989 International Autoharp Champion)

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# Sacred Harp

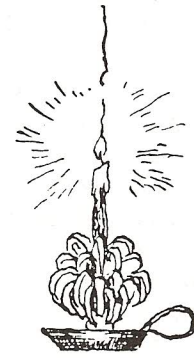
by Art and Nelda Shoemaker

*"In essentials unity, In non-essentials liberty, In all things charity."*

The Moravian Church is the very oldest of the Protestant churches, preceding the Reformation of Martin Luther by a number of decades. Its history began in ancient Bohemia and Moravia, proceeded to Germany, and then later to North America, as Moravians spread the Gospel to all lands. A Pennsylvania Synod was formed, and in 1746, a congregation was established in Lancaster. Today the Lancaster Moravian Church has about 275 members.

The candle pictured here is used in the Christmas Eve vigils of the Moravian Church. This custom dates to Germany, 1747, when it was introduced by Bishop John deWatterville.

Music is a most important and integral part of the Church program. This Moravian hymn is a favorite, and when sung as the recessional for special services, it is often accompanied by a soprano descant and a trombone choir.



## Sing Hallelujah, Praise the Lord

Bishop John C. Bechler, 1784-1857

G7 C C G G C F C F C C G G C
Sing hal - le - lu - jah, praise the Lord, Sing with a cheer - ful voice;
G7 C C G G C F C F C C G G C
Ex - alt our God with one ac - cord, And in His name re - joice.
G7 G7 G7 C C G7 C G7 G7 G7 G7 C C G7 C G7
Ne'er cease to sing, thou ran-somed host, Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost;
G7 C C G G C F C F C C G G C F C
Un - til in realms of end - less light Your praises shall u - nite. A - men.

**Making the Moravian Christmas Eve Candle:** Cut a 4" x 12" strip of either red or white flame-proof tissue paper. Fold in half making a 2" x 12" strip. Cut a 1 3/4" long slit every 1/4" along that fold. Open the strip and flip inside-out. Tape or glue the outside of one uncut end of the paper to the inside of the other solid end of the paper, making a long cylinder. Wrap spiral around and around a (pure beeswax) candle, starting 1" from the base, wrapping downward. Anchor to candle with tape. ■





## Santa Lucia (3)

↓  
 D D [ / D ] [ D A7 ] A7 / A7 A7 [ / G ] [ G D ] D /  
 Now 'neath the sil-ver moon O - cean is glow - ing,  
 D G D [ D E7 ] A7 / A7 D A7 [ G D ] /  
 O'er the calm bil - low Soft winds are blow-ing;  
 D D [ / D ] [ D A7 ] A7 / A7 A7 [ / G ] [ G D ] D /  
 Here balm - y breezes blow, Pure joys in - vite us,  
 D G D [ D E7 ] A7 / A7 D A7 [ G D ] /  
 And as we gent - ly row, All things de - light us.



Chorus:

D A7 D [ A7 G ] Em / A7 G Em [ E7 D ] D /  
 Hark, how the sail - or's cry Joy - ous - ly ech - oes nigh:  
 [ D D ] [ D D ] [ D D ] [ A7 A7 ] A7 / A7 G [ / A7 ] [ A7 D ] D /  
 San - ta Lu - ci - a! San - ta Lu - ci - a.  
 D A7 D [ A7 G ] Em / Em G Em [ E7 D ] D /  
 Home of fair Poe - sy, Realm of pure Har - mon - y,  
 [ D D ] [ D D ] [ D D ] [ A7 A7 ] A7 / A7 D [ / A7 ] [ A7 D ] D /  
 San - ta Lu - ci - a! San - ta Lu - ci - a.

When o'er thy waters Light winds are playing,  
 Thy spell can soothe us, All care allaying;  
 To thee, sweet Napoli, What charms are given,  
 Where smiles creation, Toil blest by heaven.

Chorus:



## Cradle Song (3)



↓  
 [ F F ] F [ / F F ] F [ / F F ] F C7 [ / Bb ] Bb C  
 Lul - la - by and good night! With ro - ses be - di - ght,  
 [ C F ] C7 C7 [ C F ] C7 [ / C7 C7 ] [ C7 Bb ] C7 C7 F /  
 Creep in - to thy bed, There pil - low thy head  
 [ F F ] Bb [ / Bb Bb ] F [ / F F ] C7 F Bb [ F F ] /  
 If God will thou shalt wake, When the morn - ing doth break,  
 [ F F ] Bb [ / Bb Bb ] F [ / F F ] C7 F C F /  
 If God will thou shalt wake, When the morn - ing doth break.

Lullaby and good night! Those blue eyes close tight,  
 Bright angels are near, So sleep without fear.  
 They will guard thee from harm,  
 With fair dreamland's sweet charm,  
 They will guard thee from harm,  
 With fair dreamland's sweet charm.



## Love's Old Sweet Song (2)

↓  
 C [ C C ] C C C [ G7 G7 ] [ F G7 ] /  
 Once in the dear dead days be - yond re - call ★  
 G7 [ G7 G7 ] G7 [ / G7 ] [ G7 C ] [ C G7 ] C /  
 When on the world the mists be - gan to fall,  
 C [ G7 C ] G7 [ / G7 ] [ G7 G7 ] [ C G7 ] C /  
 Out of the dreams that rose in hap - py throng,  
 Em [ Am Em ] [ Am Am ] [ D7 Am ] D7 D7 G7 /  
 Low to our hearts love sang an old sweet song;  
 Dm [ Em Dm ] Dm [ / Em ] [ Am Em ] [ Am Dm ] Am /  
 And in the dusk, where fell the fire - light gleam,  
 Am [ D7 C ] [ G G ] [ Am Am ] G D7 G7 /  
 Soft - ly it wove it - self in - to our dream.

Refrain: (3)

[ C F ] C F G7 G7 [ / G7 F ] G7 G7 C //  
 Just a song at twi - light When the lights are low;  
 [ Am Dm ] Am Dm Am Am [ / D7 Am ] D7 D7 G7 //  
 And the flick'ring sha - dows soft - ly come and go;  
 [ C F ] C F G7 G7 [ / G7 F ] G7 G7 C //  
 Tho the heart be wear - y, sad the day and long,  
 [ Em G7 ] C7 C7 F F / C G7 G7 C /  
 Still to us at twi - light comes love's old song,  
 Am [ Am Dm ] C [ G7 G7 ] C  
 Comes love's old sweet song.

Even today we hear love's song of yore,  
 Deep in our hearts it dwells forever more,  
 Footsteps may falter, weary grow the way,  
 Still we can hear it at the close of day;  
 So till the end, when life's dim shadows fall,  
 Love will be found the sweetest song of all.  
 Refrain:

## Stars of the Summer Night (2)

↓  
 G / A7 G G [ / D7 ] G /  
 Stars of the sum - mer night, ★  
 C / G G G [ / D7 ] D7 /  
 Far in yon az - ure deeps,  
 C / C C G [ / D7 ] G  
 Hide, hide your gold - en light,  
 G G [ / G ] G D7 G /  
 She sleeps, my la - dy sleeps.  
 C / G // G G [ / G ] G D7 G ///  
 She sleeps, she sleeps, my la - dy sleeps.







## I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day (2)



↓  
 G G [ / Gm ] G G7 D7 [ / G ] D7  
 I heard the bells on Christ - mas day  
 A7 G G D7 Em Am [ / D7 ] D7  
 Their old fa - mi - liar car - ols play,  
 D7 G [ / D7 ] G D7 Em [ / Am ] Em  
 And wild and sweet the words re - peat  
 Am G D7 G C D7 [ / D7 ] G  
 Of peace on earth, good will to men.

I thought how, as the day had come,  
 The belfries of all Christendom  
 Had roll'd along th' unbroken song  
 Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bow'd my head  
 "There is no peace on earth," I said,  
 "For hate is strong, and mocks the song  
 Of peace on earth, good will to men.

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep  
 "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
 The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,  
 With peace on earth, good will to men."

Till, ringing, singing on its way,  
 The world revolved from night to day,  
 A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,  
 Of peace on earth, good will to men.

## Nearer My God to Thee (2)

↓  
 G / D7 G C [ / C ] C / G / G G D7 / / /  
 Near-er, my God, to Thee, Near-er to Thee!  
 G / D7 G C [ / C ] C / G G D7 D7 G / / /  
 E'en tho' it be a cross That rais-eth me,  
 G / C G G G G / G / C G G G D7 /  
 Still all my song shall be, Near-er, my God, to Thee.  
 G / D7 G C [ / C ] C / G G D7 D7 G / / /  
 Near-er, my God, to Thee, Near-er to Thee!

Tho' like the wanderer, The sun gone down,  
 Darkness be over me, My rest a stone.  
 Yet in my dreams I'd be, Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
 Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.

There let the way appear Steps unto heav'n;  
 All that Thou sendest me In mercy giv'n;  
 Angels to beckon me, Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
 Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.

Or if on joyful wing Cleaving the sky,  
 Sun, moon, and stars forgot, Upward I fly.  
 Still all my song shall be, Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
 Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.



## God Be With You Till We Meet Again (2)

↓  
 G [ / G ] [ G G ] [ G G ] G DG /  
 God be with you till we meet a-gain  
 C [ / C ] [ C C ] [ C C ] C / G /  
 By His coun-sel guide, up-hold you,  
 D [ / D ] [ D D ] [ D7 D7 ] G / G /  
 With His sheep se - cure - ly fold you,  
 G [ / G ] [ C G ] [ G D7 ] G D7 G / / /  
 God be with you till we meet a - gain.

Refrain:

[ G D7 ] G G G [ D7 G ] C C /  
 Till we meet, till we meet,  
 [ D7 C ] G [ / C ] [ C C ] [ C C ] D7 / /  
 Till we meet at Je - sus' feet,  
 [ G D7 ] G G G [ D7 G ] C C /  
 Till we meet, till we meet,  
 [ C C ] [ G G ] [ G D7 ] G D7 G / /  
 God be with you till we meet a - gain.

God be with you till we meet again  
 'Neath His wings protecting hide you,  
 Daily manna still provide you,  
 God be with you till we meet again. Refrain:



*This is the last in a three-part series of articles defining steps to be considered when contemplating the possibility of recording your music. Jim Hudson is a professional hammered dulcimer player, as well as a knowledgeable sound engineer.*

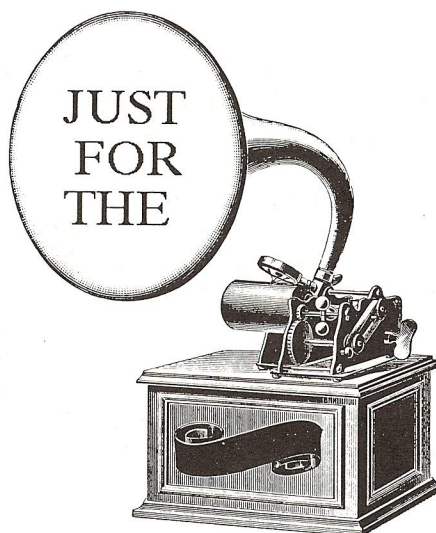
-- Editors

In this, the last of the series, we will be discussing the final mix-down, cover art, duplication, and distribution. Any one of these would be a great title for a fair-sized book. All are as important, if not more so, than the actual recording process. There are several variables to consider in making these critical final decisions.

1. What is the basic "theme" of the recording?
2. What is the general "message" of the recording?
3. What is your perceived expectations for the quality and appearance of the finished product?
4. Where do you want to market your product?

#### *Basic Theme*

This is critical to the mix-down process. If this is meant to be primarily an autoharp tape, then the autoharp needs to be the predominant instrument in the mix-down. But maybe I'm getting ahead of myself. The mix-down process is simple, but critical. This is when you take all of the tracks of music you have recorded and balance them out volume-wise. If you have a clean multi-track tape, you can adjust the volume of every instrument involved. You must decide how loud or quiet each instrument should be for every part of the song. Once this is accomplished, the sound engineer will transfer all of these tracks of music to a two-track master. This is where your stereo recording



## RECORD

### PART THREE

by Jim Hudson

originates. One track is left, the other is right, and you determine what is to be on each of these tracks. This is known as a "Half-Track Master." This can be done digitally by dumping to DAT or to a reel-to-reel mastering deck. I don't recommend trying to mix down to cassette format. You will have very limited editing capabilities and for the most part, will have a weak master. The wider tape (1/4 inch) or the DAT will give you a much clearer tape and a much lower signal-to-noise ratio.

If you don't have a general idea of how the recording should "shape up," then you will probably have a tough time in the final mix-down. So, again, if it is a 'harp tape, make it a 'harp tape in the final mix. If it is a group project and features other lead instruments, you must be sure to allow them their place in the sun. You can take a great multi-track and produce a terrible finished product with poor or ill-advised mix-down. However, you cannot take a terrible multi-track and turn out a great finished product, so be sure the quality is there before you try to mix.

#### *What's the General Message?*

Your cover art should, in some way, be representative of what the music inside is like. This can be tough, but can also be very rewarding when you finally accomplish it. Too many times, a truly great recording is passed into obscurity because the cover art doesn't justly represent what is recorded.

Pen and ink, silhouettes, line drawings, black and white, etc. can all detract from the appearance of finished product. I personally use photos or commissioned artists for my cover. In the case of the artist, I have always taken them a sample of the tape to listen to, a brief outline of what I see in my mind, and then ask them to close their eyes and listen to the music. So far, this has worked pretty well. As with most musicians, artists have a very active imagination, and are moved by emotions.

Photos are great too, but you have to be sure the image you use is crisp and clear, and can be cropped to fit. I had a really great picture, but couldn't use it because of the dimensions and content. To cut it to fit would have lost most of the focal point of the photo.

I do most of my own typesetting now. Not so in the past. For your first project especially, seek the assistance of a professional graphic artist. You really don't want your project to look like you ran it on your home typewriter and photocopied it for your cover.

I have also noticed a real trend toward a "full bleed" front cover. This means the picture covers the entire front of the cassette or CD.

Some of my earlier recordings had the picture on the top half of the front and the play list on the bottom half. I have gradually been re-designing these J-Cards to comply with the



more popular "full bleed" look.

### *Your Perceived View*

Unfortunately, there are no books to say *you must do this*. We must be like water and seek our own level. Hopefully, your first will be a success, and you can follow those patterns on subsequent recordings. You must listen to the project and determine in your mind what images the music conjures up. Then ask friends to listen and see what their perceptions are. I know one musician who had this really great concept for a cover. He paid an artist over \$7,000.00 to do the art work. The end product is messages within messages, pictures within pictures, and a jumble of *stuff* that is virtually meaningless unless you happen to be as spaced-out as he was when he first conceived it. The cover says nothing about the music inside, has nothing that captures the imagination of the beholder on first glance and has generally doomed a great recording to sit on the shelf virtually unnoticed. His name is known to some extent and this helps, but is not enough to capture the attention of the first-time buyer.

Choose your cover art carefully and try to stay away from really strange concepts. On one of my tapes, I wanted the rays of sun filtered down from between the clouds after a rain storm. I shot 160 photos, and finally, out of desperation, chose one that just didn't work. It looks like a dreary cloud and the tape doesn't do as well as some of my others. I suggest you make several trips to the local music outlet in the mall and just walk around and see what type of cover really appeals to you. Take along a friend and do some comparison viewing.

You may hit on some great concepts and also weed out a lot of negative approaches.

### *Duplication*

There are a lot of reputable duplication companies. Which one you choose is a toss-up. Prices vary according to the quality of the tape you purchase. As with anything else, you get what you pay for. I found a company that could reproduce my cassettes at a substantially lower price than what I had been paying. I changed companies. The new duplicators used a sub-standard quality of printing, on sub-standard quality paper, using sub-standard shells, put

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## Fudge on quantity, but hold out for top quality.

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them in cheap boxes, did a terrible job of shrink-wrapping, and saved me four cents per cassette. Boy, what a deal! By the time I paid out postage to replace all the countless defective tapes, counted the sales lost to dealers who got tired of having their customers returning my tapes for refund, and then found out they were out of business, I figured my cost per tape to be somewhere around \$7.00 per cassette. Be careful. Unfortunately, there is no way to tell for sure. Ask your prospective duplicators for samples of their product, J-Cards from their printers, and a demo of the quality of

their reproductions.

Prices can vary with quantity as well as quality. Fudge on quantity, but hold out for top quality. I currently pay a local company about ten cents per tape more, simply because I know they are top notch and I get really great service from them. Low price is great, but if it takes the company eight to ten weeks to get product to your door, it can also become very costly when you run out of tapes, and you are just another number on their list and must wait your turn. Sometimes it's nice to be able to get bumped ahead in the line if you're in a bind. Smaller duplication companies generally charge more, but they also still remember what it's like to have to struggle to have enough business to stay alive, and generally appreciate their customers more.

### *Now I Have It -- What Do I Do With It?*

What do you want to happen with the recording? Do you want international distribution, nationwide, regional, dealers, etc. These are some questions you must answer for yourself before you can create an effective marketing plan.

There are numerous distributors who are always looking for new products to sell. Our biggest problem is tracking them down. *Autoharp Quarterly* always has advertisers listed. So does *Dulcimer Players News* and other such magazines. In many cases, these advertisers are potential distributors for your product. I subscribe to a magazine that specializes in listing trade shows for craft people. From this list, I have selected two trade shows per year that I attend. Each of these provide me with an opportunity to reach store owners who will



hopefully do repeat business with me.

There are also a number of jobbers (fancy name for distributors) who will purchase tapes from you at a substantial discount for the purpose of resale to wholesale accounts. These are great sources because they usually order in quantity and pay promptly. They also have their own customer network set up so you get much faster distribution and recognition in varied geographical locations.

Just starting out, however, you need to make as many personal appearances as possible. This is an opportunity for you to contact large numbers of people at one time who all have an interest in your music.

Craft shops, drug stores, gift shops, book stores, hobby shops, etc. are all possibilities for distribution points. You just have to be patient and do some looking. Start in your local neighborhood and then branch out. Whenever possible, I go into an area where I will be performing earlier than really necessary, to do some public relations work. I visit local shops and talk with folks. Many times, the people who arranged your personal appearance will know of shops in the area that sell or specialize in traditional and old-time music.

It is my most sincere hope that all of this has been useful to you. There is so much great music out there already, but so much waiting to be heard. My best wishes go to each of you for success in your recording projects. ■

*This concludes Jim's three-part series on recording. During the nine months time covered in the process of publication, Jim has acquired 16 track, fully digital equipment. So, his fee has increased to \$40 per hour.*

-- Editors

## AQ POSTSCRIPTS

**PS.**

**Dora Miller** of Newton, Iowa won first place honors in the autoharp competition held during the Two Rivers Old Time Music Festival in Denison, Iowa. **Kathy Wood** won the second place slot, and **Jenni Wallace-Grate**, third. Congratulations to all of these winners!

**PS.**

**Bill Clifton** accepted the Certificate Of Merit Award at the International Bluegrass Music Association in September. Look for more about Bill in the April '93 issue.

**PS.**

The National Old Time Country Music Contest in Avoca, Iowa has announced the winners of the 1992 autoharp contest -- **Drew Smith**, first, **John Fleckenstien**, second, and **Les Gustafson-Zook**, third place. Kudos to these fine players!

**PS.**

We read in *USA Today* that **General Norman Schwarzkopf** likes Bob Dylan music, and that he, when he had his **autoharp**, would sneak down into the depths of his basement, and sing *The Times They Are A'Changin'*!

**PS.**

Just in -- **The Mountain Dulcimer Society of Dayton, Ohio** is sponsoring **Bryan Bowers** for two workshops and a concert on January 16, 1993. For information and workshop pre-registration, call **Gretchen Beers** at 513 767-1457. These are the first workshops Bryan is giving in the Dayton area. ■

## RECORDINGS

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

*Features autoharp*

HEART OF SERVICE  
Autoharp: Carol Johnson  
17505 Tyler Road  
Fiddletown, CA 95629

THREE ON A STRING,  
FINALLY  
Three On a String  
Autoharp: Carole Spicer  
552 Brentwood Drive  
Alpena, MI 49707

*Includes autoharp*

LONG TIME TRAVELIN'  
Mill Run Dulcimer Band  
Autoharp: Woody Padgett  
Keith Young  
3815 Kendale Road  
Annandale, VA 22003

CARVED OUT OF TIME  
Paul and Win Grace  
and Family  
Autoharp: Win Grace  
Wellspring Music  
Rt. 1, Box 182  
11990 E. Baker Rd.  
Columbia, MO 65201

CHRISTMAS IN THE  
MOUNTAINS  
Autoharp: Jim Hudson  
3148 Bolgos Circle  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105



### NOTE-ABLY YOURS

Books for Mountain and Hammered Dulcimer, Harp, Autoharp, Recorder, Banjo, Guitar, Penny Whistle, Balalaika, Concertina, Bodhran and Harmonica.

Also... Celtic, ethnic, religious and gospel, children, folk, music theory gift items - cassettes and CD's. Retail Catalogue.

6865 Scarff Road • New Carlisle, Ohio 45344  
1-800-828-0115





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**CLUBS**


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



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

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**ARKANSAS**


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

**Harps of the Ouachitas  
 Autoharp Club**  
 c/o Jann and Jack Barnett  
 1419 Miller Avenue  
 Mena, AR 71953  
 501 394-3665

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**BRITISH COLUMBIA**


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

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**CALIFORNIA**


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

**The Grizzly Flat  
 Autoharp Club**  
 c/o Bill Bryant  
 PO Box 280  
 Grizzly Flats, CA 95636  
 916 626-3011

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

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**COLORADO**


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

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**DELAWARE**


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

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**ILLINOIS**


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

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

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

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

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

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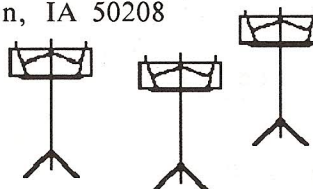
**IOWA**


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




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**KANSAS**


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

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**MARYLAND**


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

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

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**MASSACHUSETTS**


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

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

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

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**MICHIGAN**


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

**Jolly Hammers and Strings  
 Dulcimer Club**  
 c/o Bill Kuhlman  
 2769 S. Homer Rd.  
 Midland, MI 48640

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**MISSOURI**


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

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



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

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## NEVADA

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**Southern Nevada  
Bluegrass Music Society**  
c/o Laura Newton  
HCR 89033 Box 3  
Las Vegas, NV 89124  
702 363-6348

**Bizarre 'Harpers**  
c/o Laura Newton  
(see information above)

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## NEW YORK

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

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

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## NORTH CAROLINA

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

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## OHIO

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

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

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## OKLAHOMA

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

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

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## PENNSYLVANIA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**The Local Music Collective**  
191 Maple Street  
Mifflinburg, PA 17844

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

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

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## TEXAS

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

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

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

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

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

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## VIRGINIA

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

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

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

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

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## CLUB NEWS

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**The Singing Strings Autoharp Club** will be meeting at 627 S. Newton, Springfield, MO from 7 to 9 PM on the following dates: 1/4, 2/1, 3/1, 4/12, 5/10, 6/7, 9/13, 10/11, 11/8, and 12/6. We welcome new members and hope to see our club grow. **The Harps of the Ouachitas Autoharp Club** was born on November 16, 1992. Officers were elected and bylaws adopted with eleven founding members in attendance. As a kick-off event, the club sponsored an autoharp workshop conducted by Laurie Sky on December 12. ■



# YARD SALE FIND -- MUSICAL TREASURE OR MUSICAL PLAQUE?

by Dr. George Orthey



After a two hundred dollar renovation, a ten dollar treasure found in a used furniture store, yard sale, or in Aunt Tillie's attic, may be worth as much as *up to five or ten dollars* as a musical wall plaque. Even the most skillful do-it-yourselfer will probably spend seventy-five to one hundred dollars for parts to reinstate an old autoharp from total disrepair. Of course, some used 'harps will be in good playable condition, and will, in fact, be a bargain!

So, what do you look for in a used 'harp to find a bargain?

**1. Does it have strings -- is it tuned up and playable?** If not, it definitely falls into the "pig in a poke" category until you string it up. If the joints are obviously disjointed, or if the body is warped, there is no use stringing it without making it structurally sound. If it looks solid, tune it up and let it stand at least a few days. Then continue your evaluation. If the 'harp is just a bit out of tune, tune it up and evaluate it now. Keep in mind that a good 'harp is designed to have its strings pulled up to tension, and stay that way for its entire life, be it one or one hundred years.

**2. Are the tuning pins tight?** If they turn very easily and drop back out of tune with the slightest touch of the wrench, you have loose pins. This is repairable. (See "Loose Tuning Pins" AQ Vol. 1, No. 3.) If the pins are badly rusted or if

the square heads of the pins are all grubbed up from rough wrench usage, you may require pin replacement. They are zither pins, and can be obtained from piano supply houses, or from hammered dulcimer or psaltery makers.

**3. Check out the body of the 'harp.** Is it straight or bowed down along the base (long) edge? A slight bow down less than 1/8" is normal in many 'harps. This is particularly expected in a ten year old instrument and is more than likely stable as long as no other frame or sound board failure is noted.



Look at that sound board. Is it flat, caved in, or bowed up? Again, slight deviation in an older 'harp is likely to be stable and of no consequence. Handcrafted 'harps by Tom and Mary Morgan have arched sound boards. They are made that way, like a mandolin top.

Check carefully for cracks and frame creep. This may be slight. Just a crack in the finish over the joints is not unusual or dangerous in an older instrument. You may, however, see a gross displacement where the frame pieces

join each other, or where the frame joins the top or back. The most common displacement is at the dead pin end. In general, without the aid and advice of an experienced luthier, these body failures should be considered an absolute "no-no" for the average 'harp buyer.

General wear and tear, finish marks, scratches, and other such surface blemishes should not harm the performance of the instrument.

**4. Look at the dead pin end of the strings.** Check the bridge to see if it is straight. It should not be curved so the mid-portion bows in toward the sound board. This is true of either the ChromAharp bridge or the Oscar Schmidt aluminum anchor or fine tuners. Looking straight down on the 'harp, there should not be a curve to this bridge or anchor.

Also, with Oscar's anchor bar/fine tuner, be sure the bar is not riding up out of the body of the 'harp. The ride-up, if present, usually goes hand in hand with a curvature of this piece. These problems may be serious, or easily repaired. They should be evaluated by a professional instrument repair person.

One final check for body condition is the flatness of the string bed. Going from bass to treble at the middle of the 'harp, the string bed should be essentially flat. The wound strings at the bass will normally stand slightly above the other strings due to their larger diameter.



With all this checked out, listen to the sound. If it has all the musical quality of a twig stuck in the spokes of a bicycle wheel, it should revert to the above-mentioned wall plaque. If it has acceptable sound, you're in business, body-wise.

**5. The bar system is the essential mechanics of the 'harp.** You can adjust the bar system and make it quiet with relatively little cost. (See "Bars . . . Where the Action Is" *AQ* Vol. 4, Nos. 1 & 2 .) Be sure all the felts are present and in good order. Hold the 'harp up and look through under the bars (between the bars and the strings). Press each bar down. See that each felt is touching its relative string, and that none have deep grooves cut where the strings touch the felts. Also play each chord, listening for notes that should not be there, or notes that should be there, but are not. Discrepancies indicate some repair or possibly a refelting job is in order. Refelting will cost about two dollars a bar for felts of good quality. If you pay someone to refelt your 21-bar 'harp, the cost will be about one hundred dollars.

My general advice to novice buyers is to find an experienced 'harper/teacher who has done basic maintenance and repair to assist you. Or buy only from a reputable dealer who stands behind what he sells. (For a list of used 'harp dealers, see "Used Harps For Sale" *AQ* Vol. 2., No. 4. Also see the *Buyer's Guide* in Vol.4, No.4 for used instruments, parts, repairs and used and new dealers.)

If you do turn up a treasure for a buck or two, it's worth dragging home and messing about with it. I have a playable 100 year old Dolgeville 'harp bought for twenty-five cents at a yard sale! Happy treasure hunting! ■

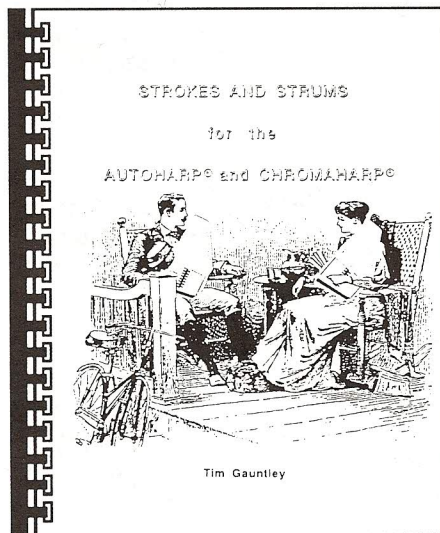
## I'LL BUY THAT

### STROKES AND STRUMS FOR THE AUTOHARP AND CHROMAHARP

Tim Gauntley

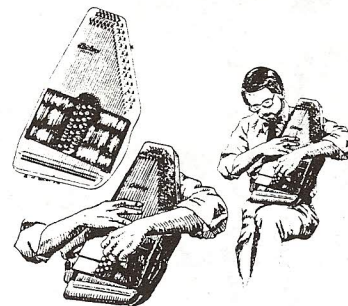
100 pages, 8 1/2" x 11"

Illustrated



This instruction book covers everything from a short history of the instrument to techniques for rhythm and melody picking. Chapters include: A Short History of the Autoharp and Chromaharp; Preparing to Play; Basic Strokes and Strums for the Thumb; Basic Strokes for the Finger(s); Intermediate Strokes and Strums for Thumb/Finger(s); More Strokes and Strums; Pattern, Rhythm, and Melody Picking; Song Index by Title; and Song Index by Difficulty. In addition to strumming and picking techniques, topics also cover the parts of the autoharp, tuning, picks, holding the instrument, and transposing (with chart). The 34 tunes and songs included in this book are accompanied by tablature and an explanation of the system is given. Available from: Tim Gauntley 33 Beresford Avenue Toronto, Ontario M6S 3A9 Canada

### STATIONERY, AND MORE, WITH THE AUTOHARP ENTHUSIAST IN MIND



If you've ever felt that the autoharp corner of the market is sadly neglected, you'll be pleased to know that a brand new line of stationery has been design and illustrated with autoharp enthusiasts (and others) in mind.

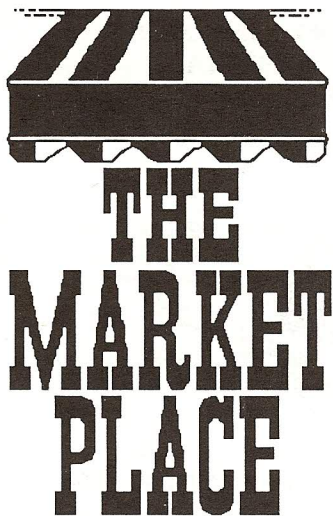
Folknotes,<sup>TM</sup> created by folkie/illustrator Vikki Appleton as "stationery for musical folks," features two different autoharp drawings, as well as drawings of hammered dulcimer, mountain dulcimer, and fiddle.

All illustrations are available in a variety of formats: 8 notecards (with envelopes), 5 post cards, 5 "mini-notes" (can be used as gift-enclosure cards), 2 1/4" diameter button or magnets, and signed 8" x 10" prints suitable for framing.

Vikki has taken pains to make these products environmentally friendly. The paper is 50% recycled and the packaging is cellulose which is biodegradable even under landfill conditions. The "mini-notes" are packaged in plastic, but as Vikki notes on the order form, ". . . these sleeves are being re-used; in a former life they held computer disks."

For more information, see ad on page 9, or contact: Vikki Appleton Folknotes Dept. AQ 1-2 17325 Cambridge Southfield, MI 48076 313 552-0817 ■





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