

# AUTOHARP QUARTERLY

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



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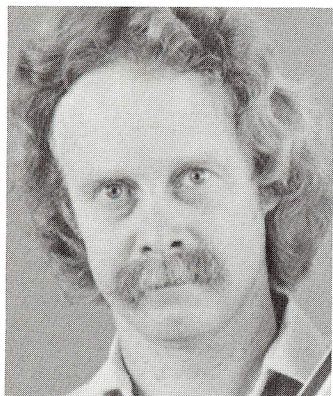
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**AUTOHARP  
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**Coeditors:**  
Mary Lou Orthey  
Ivan Stiles  
**Books Editor,**  
**Recordings Editor,**  
**Pro-Files Editor:**  
Mary Ann Johnston  
**Clubs Editor,**  
**Festivals Editor:**  
Sandy Shaner  
**Interaction Editor:**  
Alan Mager  
**Children's Editor:**  
Fred Koch

**Feature Writers:**  
James R. Adams, Esq.  
Lindsay Haisley  
Mike Herr  
Richard N. Norris, M.D.  
George F. Orthey  
Judie Pagter  
Mary Umbarger  
Bob Woodcock

**Cover Photo:**  
Bonnie Phipps



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# To And From / The Editors

## Dear Readers:

*Spring is sprung,  
The grass is riz;  
And now you know  
Where AQ iz!*

In January, we had a run of frantic letters, phone calls, and checks sent 'way ahead of time, when folks thought their subscriptions had expired. They'd not received their first '95 issue "on time." They also hadn't read the October '94 editorial. That's OK—our coffers bulged with overlapping payments. Had we known we'd be missed like that, and receive checks like that, we would've happily changed our publishing dates sooner! (Kidding. Just kidding.)

Since Bill and Laurie Sky had a car accident in March, Laurie's been a bit behind in her paper work. We're looking forward to her excellent "Laurie's Corner" in our Summer issue. She and her dad are doing well, but the faithful van was totaled. They continued their appointed rounds as soon as they could replace it with another vehicle.

We're excited about a summer AQ exclusive! You'll be reading an interesting account of the history of Oscar Schmidt International during the Peterson years. This report has been taken directly from Glen Peterson's writings, and shall be printed verbatim as he wrote it. We thank Meg Peterson for presenting this material to us.

## Dear Editors:

### OF 'HARPS AND TUNES

A special "thank you" to Dr. George for his information on diatonic autoharps. It was very helpful, as I built two this winter.

I enjoy all of AQ, but I think I'd enjoy the *Songbook* more if I knew the melody to all of the songs...

*Lyle E. Behrends*

*Lyle, could you share a good, clear picture of you and your 'harps with us?  
As for the AQ Songbook, pick a*

song you "don't know." Note the number of beats per measure, and follow the chords exactly to the beat (each chord or slash equals one beat).

Chords inside a set of brackets are to be played in one beat. Do this, and you might "hear" the melody. You may recognize the tune from your past — these tunes are all copyright-free.

*Editors*

### NOW HEAR THIS, LYLE!

My AQ came last week, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The *Songbook* selections were a special joy as five of the songs were some of the ones my dad used to play.

*Lu Ann Jerome*

### OF GOODBYES

We here in Florida greatly appreciate AQ's recent article about our good friend, Marty Schuman, "Here's to You, Our Ramblin Boy."... The article Ivan Stiles wrote for *Sing Out!* is also much appreciated....

Perhaps you'd like to know that a wake was held for Marty at Don and Sue Groom's home in Gainesville. Many friends attended, and many of us rose to voice tributes to Marty and to tell stories about good times with him. His daughter sang a song she'd written about her dad. Marty's ashes were carried down a steep slope to a river behind the house, and we participated in scattering them on the water. Later, as recordings of Marty's music played, there was a giant potluck supper.

*Charley Groth*

### HELP!

I bought a ChromA harp which says "Sekova" on the label. It's a 15-bar model, all wood, with a highly polished finish. The edges are dark, but the wood grain shows in the center. (#569084841). Rhythm Band couldn't give me any info on this instrument. Can anyone help?

*Millie Cameron*

### OF MEMORIES

I want to take the opportunity to thank Alex Usher for including me in her workshop at Winfield last year. I had a ball, and I even learned some things! Thanks, Alex!

*Tiarr Watkins*

### WELCOME SWAGGIES & BILLABONGS

Having just attended the annual Folk Festival at Jamberoo [Australia], I met and interviewed Roz Brown, who made a big impact at the festival. I was intrigued by his instruments... I also was fascinated to learn from Roz that Australia's most famous folk tune, *Waltzing Matilda* (by Australian poet and songwriter, Banjo Paterson) — was first publicly played on an autoharp.

...1995 is the 100th anniversary of *Waltzing Matilda* first being performed... in the Town of Winton in the State of Queensland, in 1895. A special festival is being planned to celebrate that anniversary, in Winton... Perhaps you could publish the words and music of *Waltzing Matilda*... in AQ.

*Forbes Guckel*

AQ is happy to have you aboard, Forbes! Between you and Roz, we'll read more about *Waltzing Matilda* in the next issue. Thank you for the information you sent to us. (Neat stamps!)

*Editors*

### OF SPINNING WEBS

I have recently learned of a "Tune-Web." I do not know if you have knowledge of this one or not. I'd like to pass this information on (to you and your readers.)

Most of the tunes are Celtic, some traditional American. It is broken down into groups: reels, jigs, slip jigs, slides, hornpipes, polkas, slow airs, English country dances, waltzes, marches, and American tunes.

Inquiries are made through email (darsie@ece.ucdavis.edu). If you are interested in hearing more, there are

## 2 AQ

tunes that never appeared in print before. The material is maintained by the affiliate of the ECE Department, Regents of the University of California. Support material can be mailed to: support@ece.ucdavis.edu. To the best of their knowledge, all tunes are in public domain.

The index lists things by category. They used the GIF format files on a Macintosh using MusicProse.

Dutch Wigman

*Thanks, Dutch! We were talking with Lindsay Haisley about this and he sent the following which will also be of interest to autoharp/computer buffs:*

The Cyberpluckers, an Internet-based autoharp club, now has a home page on the World Wide Web service on the Internet. For those with access to the World Wide Web, "The Autoharp Page" can be reached at the address: <http://www.bga.com/~fmouse/harppage.html>. The page has links to the performance schedules of Bryan Bowers and John McCutcheon, courtesy of *Dirty Linen*, a contemporary folk music publication with a presence on the Web, as well as to a number of documents listing festivals with autoharp features, autoharp publications, and other information of interest to autoharp players and enthusiasts. A link leads to Lindsay Haisley's home page, The Castle of the Flying Mouse, with sound snippets from his forthcoming album, *String Loaded*. "The Autoharp Page," and several of those linked to it, are formatted for optimum viewing with the Netscape web browser, but can be accessed using any available browser.

The Cyberpluckers communicate via an email mailing list, and are open to anyone with access to Internet email. For more information, write cyberpluckers@bga.com.

Lindsay Haisley

## A STERLING QUESTION

I have an old (1900?) autoharp which I rebuilt. It was made by "Sterling Auto Harp." Do you have any information on this maker? I would like to build a more modern one.

Harry Meikle

*Yes, we do know about the maker! We learned from our Canadian friend, Jo Brennan, that the "Sterling Auto Harp" was made in a small town in Ontario, Canada. The company was called "Sterling Action and Keys." Their main manufactured product was piano keys and other parts for the piano. As we understand it, the Sterling Auto Harps were made up until the mid-1940s.*

Editors

## THANKS, AMERICAN STRANGER!

"Appalachian Instruments Sales and Service" specialises in sales and repair of musical instruments which would be found in the Appalachian Mountain area. We have been in business [Canada] since 1982. A recent American customer advised me of the *Autoharp Quarterly*. Being an old autoharp musician, I am very much interested in a subscription. I look forward to your first copy.

Bob Briehl

## A MARKED REBUTTAL

I like reading constructive letters from readers, but was sorry to read the April '94 AQ "To and From the Editors," in which Mark Fackeldey says that there is only one best way to chord the 'harp. I have seven 'harps and they are all both strung and chorded in different ways. We have a saying over here [England], "One man's meat is another man's poison." ... To some of us the autoharp is so versatile that we try this, that, or the other to see how it handles or what it sounds like. Some we loose, some we win, but we won't know till we try. A little more tolerance, please... There surely can be no single "best" to both string and chord the 'harp to suit all styles of playing and all circumstances under which it is played.

Roy Rowntree

*Here, it's "To each his own," said the old lady as she kissed the cow."*

Editors

## MARKED AGAIN

The "Harmonics" articles were very informative, as was Mark Fackeldey's response. Keep up the good work!

Leigh Ann Hardcastle

## PLAY IT AS MANY TIMES AS YOU WANT, SAM!

If you are interested in public domain music, we will be glad to put you on our mailing list. We ask that, if you would wish to reprint any articles of interest from our newsletter, *Public Domain Chronicle*, feel free, but please cite us as the source. We would appreciate a clip of the article published. We think we should all unite together on behalf of "PD" music.

Bob Katzmarek

612 295-5504

## IT'S A SMALL WORLD

I have been enjoying the article about Meg [Peterson] in AQ. It's particularly nice for me to find that I'm featured in the same edition. I would never have believed something like that could happen when I first saw a copy of AQ via Mike Fenton a couple of years ago!

Sheila Brain

## WHERE LEGENDS ARE BORN

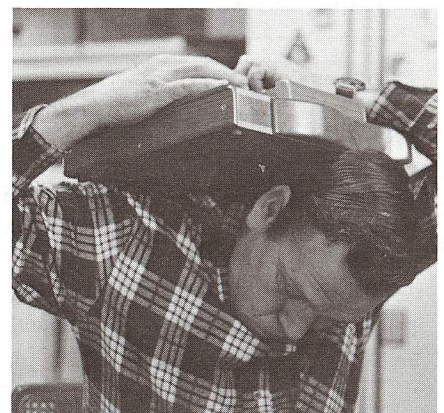
The International Society for Contemporary Legend Research was formed to link legend scholars internationally. All who have an interest are welcome to join.

*Paul Smith, Department of Folklore Memorial Univ. of Newfoundland, St. John's, Nwfnld, Canada A1C 5S7*

## WITH BOTH HANDS TIED BEHIND HIS BACK

I thought you and your readers might enjoy this picture I took of Jim Snow when he and I were jamming this past winter.

Joe Marlin Riggs



*The 1994 Mountain Laurel Autoharp Champion Jim Snow, shows how it's done.*

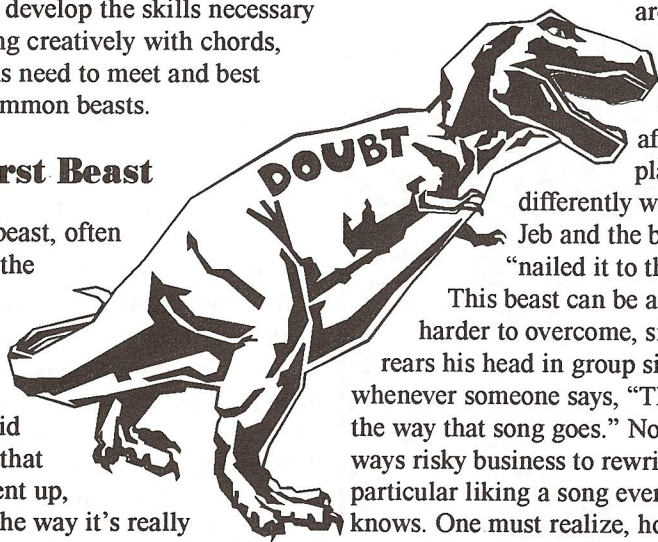
# Beyond Basics, Chordwise

by Lindsay Haisley

This is an absolutely beastly article about an absolutely fascinating topic. All of us have played the old standard folk tunes with three chords for about as long as we've played the autoharp. Most of us at one time or another, have had either the ambition or desire to go beyond the simple traditional chord arrangements in our playing. We often lack the experience or knowledge to know what works and doesn't work in developing our own chord arrangements for the songs we know and like. The ability to work creatively with chords is, like most musical skills, part intuition and part acquired skill. A good part of developing creative arrangements is confidence in the validity of our intuition in this regard, and a good part is just plain old fashioned musical learning, listening, imitating, mixing and matching, and other skills which we all use to keep growing artistically. To develop the skills necessary for working creatively with chords, many folks need to meet and best several common beasts.

## The First Beast

This beast, often known as the *Beast of Doubt*, asks, in so many words, "Did you make that arrangement up, or is that the way it's really played?" We often lack confidence in the validity of our "play." So many of us have had to grow up and take life and it's pleasures with the seriousness of adults. "Playing is, after



all, for children," says the Beast of Doubt. Overcoming this beast can be somewhat scary, and it may take a while to realize that this beast really has no teeth. He growls and threatens from within us as we diverge from the beaten musical path, but is powerless to hurt us.

## The Second Beast

This beast, known as the *Beast of the Experts*, is actually a cousin to the first beast. He says, "The way you're playing that song is nice, but it's not the way Uncle Jeb and the Pie Ridge Waffle Stompers play it." Now you've been listening to Uncle Jeb for years, and you think the Pie Ridge boys are the cat's pajamas, and who are you, after all, to play a song differently when Uncle Jeb and the boys have "nailed it to the wall."

This beast can be a little harder to overcome, since he rears his head in group situations whenever someone says, "That's not the way that song goes." Now it's always risky business to rewrite to your particular liking a song everyone knows. One must realize, however, that "standard" arrangements are often just agreements about chords, words, melody, etc. so that people can play together harmoniously. Observing standard arrangements in group musical

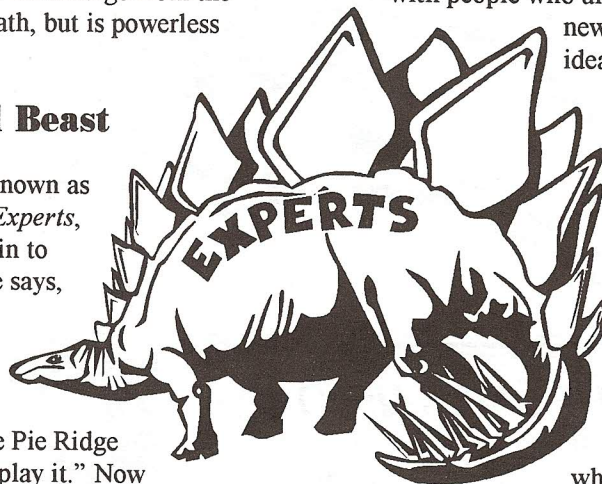
situations is a form of courtesy and one often finds that courtesy given is courtesy returned, and can build the basis for collective exploration of new musical ideas. One has the most fun playing with people who are open to

new musical ideas and interpretations – and if it's not fun, it's not going to be good music. Playing with friends who like

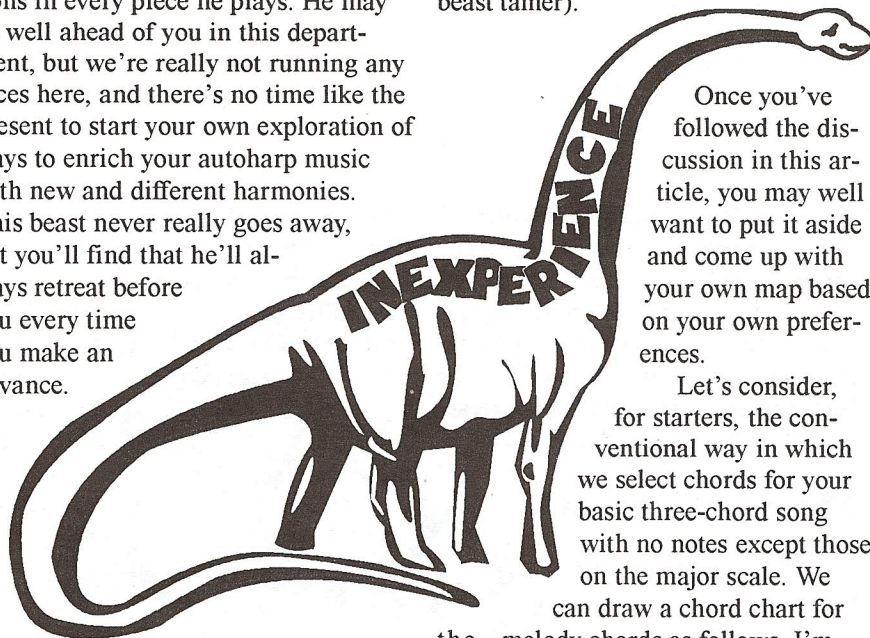
your musical style, and whose style you appreciate as well, easily leaves this beast behind. Diverging from and improvising on standard chord arrangements can even be a way to emphasize their simplicity and beauty. One may return again and again to a traditional arrangement in a song with flights of fun and fancy in between making clear the solid ground on which the piece stands.

## The Third Beast

The third beast is known as the *Beast of Inexperience*, and is actually a blood brother to the second beast. Uncle Jeb and his confectionery crew have been playing for years and years, and know chords that you didn't even know existed until you heard them from up on Pie Ridge. Everything you make up sounds like lite syrup compared to their rich and sugary harmo-



nies. "Why bother?" says this beast. "You'll never be that good." Now this beast takes some work to overcome, and this is where the fun comes in. Uncle Jeb didn't get where he got by not bothering. He absolutely loves to play, and has experimented with all kinds of chords and chord combinations in every piece he plays. He may be well ahead of you in this department, but we're really not running any races here, and there's no time like the present to start your own exploration of ways to enrich your autoharp music with new and different harmonies. This beast never really goes away, but you'll find that he'll always retreat before you every time you make an advance.



### Onward Through the Fog

What I'm going to give you here is a sample road map to the edge of uncharted territory. Beyond this, you'll have to keep going on your own. Think of your 'harp, if you will, as a musical off-road vehicle (or an all-terrain beast tamer).

Once you've followed the discussion in this article, you may well want to put it aside and come up with your own map based on your own preferences.

Let's consider, for starters, the conventional way in which we select chords for your basic three-chord song with no notes except those on the major scale. We can draw a chord chart for the melody chords as follows. I'm referencing everything to the key of C,

however the same general discussion applies to any key with appropriate transitions. G(7) means either G or G7.

Note:	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
Chord	C	G(7)C	F	C	F	G(7)C		
Alternate Chord:	F	-	-	G7	G	-	-	C

We're sticking with "stock" chords here, so let's proceed by applying the above to a bit of a "stock" song such as *Oh, Susanna*. I've placed the melody chords below the words.

*Oh I come from Al - a - bam - a*  
C G C C C F C C

*with a ban - jo on my knee*  
C G C C G C G

Just to break the mold for the sake of watching the Jell-O spill, let's construct an arbitrary chord scheme based on chords which are rooted on the notes of the scale. This chord scheme looks as follows. The chord based on the note of B is a diminished chord (sans the 7th) which we'll ignore for the moment since there's no B in our sample phrase.

Note:	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
Chord	C	Dm	Em	F	G	Am	??	C

We have a few new chords in here, obviously, and are well away at this point from a three-chord scheme. Using this chord scheme to play *Oh Susanna* is rather surreal.

*Oh I come from Al - a - bam - a*  
C Dm Em G G Am G Em

*with a ban - jo on my knee*  
C Dm Em Em Dm C Dm

The phrase, played this way, sounds as if it doesn't really belong anywhere. Although the notes are from the C scale, we've lost the sense of the piece being grounded in a key. On the other hand, the introduction of minor chords here shows promise. Let's consider how we might modify this chord scheme to give it more of a sense of having a home. The introduction of minor chords provides us with a place to go here. For every major key with its major chords there is a corresponding minor key, known as the relative minor

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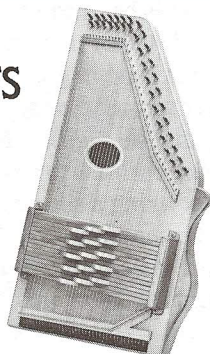
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of the major key with its own set of minor chords but using the same set of notes as its relative major. A relative minor key is always two notes down (actually a minor third interval) from its major cousin. In the case of C, the relative minor is A minor. The chord set which works with a minor key certainly has a sense of home, being almost as strong in our cultural musical genes as the major mode. Let's look at the chords which we might use to play the same notes in an A minor scale.

Note:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A
Chord:	Am	Em	Am	Dm	Am	Dm	Em	Am
Alternate Chord:	Dm	-	-	-	Em	-	-	Dm

We now have three possible sets of chords for the notes of the C scale, each with some sort of consistency, albeit the second has something of the consistency of thumb tack pudding. We could easily continue this process as long as our musical sandbox has sand in it and, in fact, could attach an entire set of chords to each note of the C scale. However, we're not exploring all the possibilities here, only trying to point out where a few of them lie. As a principle of exploration, let's decide that comfort is to be our guide in making something new, since comfort is something which can be understood by everyone. For comfort's sake, let's say that we're going to start and end the phrase with the chords familiar to us from the traditional arrangement of the tune. Let's also limit our chord focus for the moment to notes which fall on the beat, these being the ones which are close to the harmony chords which go along with melody as we're familiar with it (the syllables "come," "Al," "bam," etc.)

We have the armory and mobility now to begin a quest to vanquish the third beast. We can mix and match from our chord sequences and see what we come up with. A common chord motion at the beginning of a phrase is from the major chord to its relative minor, in this case from C to Am. If the word "Come" is on a C chord, can we get to an A minor for the "Al" in Alabama? On the autoharp, it doesn't quite fit, but let's see if we can get there in a roundabout way. "Al" falls on a G. A G chord here doesn't really take us anywhere (try playing it and

see). Since we're exploring minors, let's look at the relative minor chord scheme. We see that a G note can use an E minor chord which is a move in the right direction. "Bam" could still be an E minor chord, but we're trying to get to A minor here, so let's fall back down to a C chord, dropping finally to the A minor chord on "with." The "ban" syllable in banjo falls on an E note. We played a C chord on "bam" so let's play an E minor chord here to keep things moving. To complete the phrase,

we can easily put a D minor on the "on," and conclude the phrase with the traditional G chord on "knee." What manner of mischief have we created? Let's stop and take stock.

*Oh I come from Al - a - bam - a*  
C Em C

*with a ban - jo on my knee*  
Am Em Dm G

This definitely has comfort. The feeling of the phrase flows nicely between major and minor modes on which chord sets we've drawn here. We haven't used any thumb tack pudding here, so let's see what happens if we fill in the rest of the notes using our second scheme.

*Oh I come from Al - a - bam - a*  
C Dm C G Em Am C Em

*with a ban - jo on my knee*  
Am Dm Em Em Dm C G

This is definitely interesting, but needs a bit of polish to make it feel good all around. We've put an A minor from our tacky chord set on the first "a" in Alabama. We've not used an F chord in here yet, and that will fit nicely here. That will save the A minor for "with." The final result...

*Oh I come from Al - a - bam - a*  
C Dm C G Em F C Em

*with a ban - jo on my knee*  
Am Dm Em Em Dm C G

I hope you've been playing along with this. If so, you have doubtless heard the third beast howling with disap-

pointment. You can work on this phrase further, simplifying it if you like, keeping in mind that what we've uncovered here is the nice flow between the major and minor modes. By the time you're done, the third beast will be nowhere in sight. There are other ways to approach the same process. Consider the differences between major and minor chords. Each major chord in a major mode has one or two minor chords which differ from it by only one note. Often these minors can be substituted for the similar major with interesting results. A D minor, for instance, can often be used in place of an F (still in the key of C) and an A minor for a C chord. Sometimes simple substitutions such as these will work and sometimes they won't. There are no fixed rules. One finds that creative chord sequences in a song have a natural flow to them much like the melody. There is no formula for composing a masterpiece, however we know when we hear something strong, whether we hear it from another or make it up ourselves. Listening sincerely for that sense of "rightness" in our music and in that of others – the inner smile, is the magic to banish the first beast. What of the second beast? Well you can bet that Uncle Jeb has picked a lot of thumb tack pudding over the years. It took him a long time to get to where he could hear really good musical lines and chords in his head, and his trail is littered with thumb tacks – and beasts! They just stand there scratching their heads and tapping their feet. Uncle Jeb more or less ignores them, which is, in the long run, what it takes to get where you're going. ❖



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# Annual Festival Guide



Festivals Editor:  
Sandy Shaner  
130 Gregory Road  
Salisbury, NC 28144

*The following are 1995 festivals which feature the autoharp in contest, workshop, and/or performance. If you know a festival we have not included, please send the information to the Festivals Editor. The complete festival list is published every Spring, and seasonally repeated and updated in every issue.*

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

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## MAY

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- **Spring Folk Festival**; May 21; Claremont, CA; Code: AP (Bryan Bowers); 719 635-7776
- **Ole Time Fiddler's & Bluegrass Festival**; May 26-28; Fiddler's Grove Campground, Union Grove, NC; Code: AC, AP, AW; Harper Van Hoy, PO Box 11, Union Grove, NC 28689 704 539-4417
- **Dulci-More Festival**; May 26-28; Rainbow Lakes, Franklin Square, OH; Code: AW, AP (Bill Schilling); 984 Homewood Ave., Salem, OH 44460 216 332-4420
- **Memorial Day Stringalong**; May 26-29; East Troy, WI; Code: AP, AW (Karen Mueller, Ivan Stiles); UW-Milwaukee Folk Center, Fine Arts-Music 130, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201 1-800-636-FOLK
- **43rd Annual Florida Folk Festival**; May 26-28; Stephen Foster State Park, White Springs, FL; Code: AP; Bureau of Florida Folklife Programs, White Springs, FL 32096 904 397-2192

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## JUNE

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- **23rd Annual Bluegrass and Old-Time Fiddlers Convention**; June 2-3; Veterans Memorial Park, Mt. Airy, NC; Code: AC; Jack E. Jones, 319 W. Oakdale St., Mt. Airy, NC 27030 910 786-6830
- **Landis Valley Museum Fair**; June 3-4; Lancaster, PA; Code: AP (Ubi Adams); 717 569-8465
- **Ozark Folk Center Beginners' Autoharp Workshops**; June 5-8; Ozark Folk Center, Mountain View, AR; Code: AW, AP (Charles Whitmer); Elliot Hancock, Ozark Folk Center,

- Box 500, Mountain View, AR 72560
- **Part-Time International Bluegrass and Old Time Competition**; June 9-10; Tripple Creek Park, Rocky Mount, VA; Code: AC; Sterling T. Belcher, Rte 7, Box 500, Rocky Mount, VA 24151 703 483-9839
- **19th Annual Cosby Dulcimer and Harp Festival**; June 9-10; Cosby TN; Code: AP, AW; Jeananee Schilling, PO Box 8, Cosby TN 37722 615 487-5543
- **Four River Folk Festival**; June 10-11; Golden Pond, KY; Code: AP (Paul & Win Grace); 502 924-1263
- **Ozark Folk Center Intermediates' Autoharp Workshops**; June 12-15; Ozark Folk Center, Mountain View, AR; Code: AW, AP (Charles Whitmer); Elliot Hancock, Ozark Folk Center, Box 500, Mountain View, AR 72560
- **20th Annual Bluegrass Festival**; June 15-18; Nevada County Fairgrounds, Grass Valley, CA; Code: AP (Bill Clifton); 707 762-8735
- **Bloom's Day Festival**; June 17; Kansas City, MO; Code: AP; 819 W. 77th Street, Kansas City, MO 64114
- **Mozart Festival**; June 9; Bartlesville, OK; Code: AP (Fran Stallings); 918 333-7390
- **Old Songs Festival of Traditional Music and Dance**; June 23-25; Altamont Fairgrounds, Altamont, NY; Code: AP, AW (Ginny Hawker); Andy Spence, PO Box 399, Guiderland, NY 12084 518 765-2815
- **Black Hills Bluegrass Festival**; June 23-24; Rapid City, SD; Code: AP (Bryan Bowers); 719 635-7776
- **Southern Michigan Dulcimer Festival**; June 23-25; Barry Expo Center, Hastings, MI; Code: AW; Warren

Guiles, 9575 Peach Ridge, Sparta, MI 49345 616 887-9436

- **15th Annual Summer Solstice Folk Music, Dance, and Storytelling Fest**; June 23-25; Campus of Soka University, Calabasas, CA; Code: AP, AW (Karen Mueller, John Hollandsworth, Stephen Young); Traditional Music Society, 4401 Trancas Place, Tarzana, CA 91356-5399 818 342-7664
- **Grayson County Old Time & Bluegrass**; June 23-24; Elk Creek School, Elk Creek, VA; Code: AC; Jerry Teeterman, Rte 1 Box 145B2, Elk Creek, VA 24326 704 655-4740
- **Summer Stringalong**; June 24-29, Lake Geneva, WI; Code: AP, AW (Charles Whitmer, Ann Schmid); UW-Milwaukee Folk Center, Fine Arts-Music 130, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201 1-800-636-FOLK
- **Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering**; June 29-July 2; Orthey Farm, Newport, PA; Code: AC (Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship), AP, AW (Bonnie Phipps, Bill and Laurie Sky, Will Smith, Patsy Stoneman, Roz Brown, Orchard Grass Gospel Singers, Jim Snow, Julie Davis, Bob Lewis, Alan Mager, Steve Young, Mike Herr, John Hollandsworth, Judie Pagter, Carole Outwater, Joe Riggs, Mary Umbarger, Linda Huber); Limberjack Productions, PO Box 34 A, Newport, PA 17074 717 567-9469

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## JULY

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- **Fire Fly Festival**; July 1; Watawga Stadium, Boone, NC; Code: AP (Back Porch Strings, Mary Umbarger); 704 539-5424
- **Summerfest 1995**; July 7-9; Carthage, MO; Code: AP, AW (Anita Roesler); L. Woods 316 389-2377
- **Bliss Festival**; July 7-9; Harbor Springs, MI; Code: AP (Paul & Win Grace); 616 348-2815
- **Gebhard Woods Dulcimer Festival**; July 8-9; State Park, Morris, IL; Code: AP, AW; Donna Tufano, PO Box 59, Elwood Park, IL 60635 708 456-6292
- **Augusta Heritage Center - New Players**; July 10-14; - **Intermediate Players**; July 17-21; Elkins, WV; Code: AP, AW (Charles Whitmer); 713 367-6260
- **Peaceful Valley Bluegrass Festival**; July 12-15; Peaceful Valley Campground, Shinhopple, NY; Code: AP (Judie Pagter); Arnold Banker, HC 89, Box 56, Downsville, NY 13755 607 363-2211
- **23rd Annual Original Dulcimer Players Club Funfest**; July 13-16;



Evart, MI; Code: AP AW (Carole Spicer, Lu Ann Jerome, Carolyn Egelski); Carole Spicer, 1229 Lacombe Rd., Alpena, MI 49707 517 595-6668

●The Venetian Festival; July 14-15; Downtown St. Joseph, MI; Code: AP (Paul & Win Grace); 616 471-4111

●Swannanoa Gathering Old Time Week; July 16-22; Warren Wilson College, Asheville, NC; Code: AW, AP (Evo Bluestein); The Swannanoa Gathering, Warren Wilson College, PO Box 9000, Asheville, NC 28815 704 298-3325, extension 426

●4th Annual Bluegrass and Old Time Fiddlers Convention; July 21-22; Laurel Bloomery, TN; Code: AC, AP; Dana Holthscaw, Rt. 5 Box 980, Bristol, TN 37620 615 878-3874

●Cranberry Dulcimer Festival; July 28-30; Unitarian Universalist Church, Binghamton, NY; Code: AP, AW (Bryan Bowers, Drew Smith); Ed Ware, 1259 Fowler Place, Binghamton, NY 13903 607 669-4653

●Country Dance and Song Society at Pinewoods and Buffalo Gap Camps 1995; July 29-August 5; Pinewoods Camp, Plymouth, MA; Code: AP, AW (Evo Bluestein); 209 297-8966

●Kentucky Music Week 1995; July 31-August 4; Bardstown, KY; Code: AP (Cathy Barton); 502 348-5237

## AUGUST

●Carter Family Memorial Festival; August 4-5; Hiltons, VA; Code: AP (Bryan Bowers, Janette Carter); Carter Fold, PO Box 111, Hiltons, VA 24258

●SAM Fest (Summer Acoustic Music Festival); August 4-5; St. Martin's Lutheran Church, Houston, TX; Code: AC, AP, AW (Charles Whitmer); Peg Carter, 21626 Gentry Rd., Houston, TX 77040 713 370-9495

●Minnesota Bluegrass and Old-Time Music Fest; Aug. 4-6; Camp In The Woods Resort, Zimmerman, MN; Code: AW; Jed Malischke, RR 3 Box 3119, Spooner, WI 54801 715 635-2479

●John C. Campbell Folk School; August 6-11; Brasstown, NC; Code: AP, AW (Ivan Stiles); Bob Dalsemer, % JCCFS, Rt. 1 Box 14A, Brasstown, NC 28902 1-800-365-5724

●Augusta Heritage Center - Old Time Week; August 7-12; Elkins, WV; Code: AP, AW (Old Time Repertoire - John Hollandsworth); 703 382-6550

●Autoharp Jamboree; August 10-12; Ozark Folk Center, Mt. View, AR; Code: AP, AW; Elliot Hancock, Box 500, Mountain View, AR 72560

●Willamette Valley Autoharp Gath-

ering; August 11-13; Corvallis, OR; Code: AP, AW (Meryle Korn, Stephen Young, Les Gustafson-Zook); 1316 S.E. 35th, Portland, OR 97214 503 235-3094

●Salt River Folk Festival; August 12-13; Florida, MO; Code: AP (Paul & Win Grace); 314 443-2819

●60th Annual Old Time Fiddlers' Convention; August 9-12; Felts Park, Galax, VA; Code: AC, AW (Drew Smith); Pre-registration required; PO Box 655, Galax, VA 24333

●Old Time Fiddlers' and Bluegrass Convention; Aug. 25-26; The ballfield, Fries, VA; Code: AC; James Lindsey, 703-236-4486

●Roots of America Music Festival; August 26-27; Lincoln Center, NY, NY; Code: AP (Paul & Win Grace); call or write to Lincoln Center, NY, NY

●Old-Time Country Music Contest & Festival; August 29-September 4; Pottawattamie County Fairgrounds, Avoca, IA; Code: AP, AC; 712 784-3001

## SEPTEMBER

●18th Annual Fox Valley Folk Music & Storytelling Festival; September 3-4; Island Park, IL; Code: AP, AW; Fox Valley Folklore Society, 755 N. Evanslawn Ave., Aurora, IL 60506 708 897-3655

●Walnut Valley Festival; Sept. 14-17; Winfield, KS; Code: AC (International Autoharp Championship), AP, AW (Bryan Bowers, John McCutcheon, Roz Brown, Julie Davis); Bob Redford, PO Box 245, Winfield, KS 67156 316 221-3250

## OCTOBER

●Museum of Appalachia's Tennessee Fall Homecoming; October 12-15; Museum of Appalachia, Norris, TN; Code: AP (Janette Carter, Judie Pagter, Ron Wall, Knoxville Dulcimer Club, SassyFrasTea); John Rice Irwin, PO Box 0318, Norris TN 37828 615 494-7680

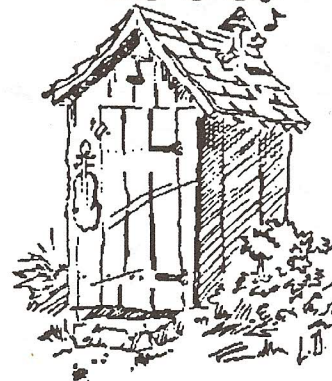
●Heritage Village Harvest Festival; Oct 21-22; Heritage Village Museum, Woodville, TX; Code: AP (Charles Whitmer); Marjorie Schultz, PO Box 888 Woodville, TX 75979 409 283-2272

●Autumn Folklife Festival; Oct. 21-22; Downtown Hannibal, MO; Code: AP (Paul & Win Grace); 314 443-2819

## NOVEMBER

●Barberville Jamboree; November 4-5; Barberville, FL; Code: AP, AW (Mark Fackeldej, Sue Bullock, Charley Groth); Jan Milner, PO Box 668, Crystal Beach, FL 34681 813 784-1771

## July 7, 8, 9 SUMMERFEST 1995



### Performances & Workshops By:

Cathy Barton & Dave Para  
Judith Schmidt ■ Gallier Bros.  
Princess Harris & The Plaid Family ■ David Moran  
Scott Odena ■ Anita Roesler  
Neil Gaston ■ Jim Curley

### Workshops:

Mountain & Hammered  
Dulcimers ■ Autoharp  
Fiddle ■ Guitar ■ Accordion  
Saw ■ Spoons ■ Mouth Bow  
Banjo ■ Leaf ■ Yodeling

### Admission:

Entire Weekend  
\$15 with workshops  
\$10 without workshops  
(Kids under 15 free with parents.)

### Gates Open:

Friday, July 7, 9:30 am  
Saturday, July 8, 8:00 am  
Sunday, July 9, 8:00 am

**Family Entertainment!**  
**Bring your instruments  
and lawn chairs. No  
alcoholic beverages.**

**Ozark Wildnerness  
Dulcimer Club  
and Red Oak II  
at Red Oak II**

**Carthage, Missouri**  
Located 3 miles east  
of Carthage on Highway  
96 - then one mile north  
on Road 12

**For more information:**  
**L. Woods: 316 389-2377**  
**E. Smith: 417 624-3580**  
**J. Johnston: 417 624-2387**

# PIPPA'S SONG

Arranged for Chromatic Autoharp

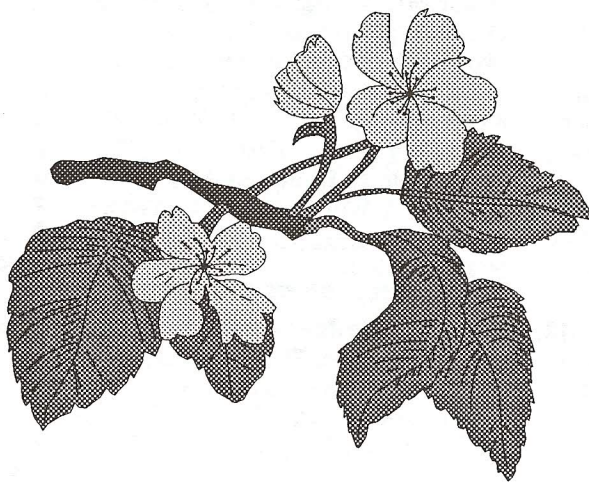
Words by Robert Browning  
from "Pippa's Passes"

Music & Arrangement  
by Lyman Taylor

Accompaniment Melody	D7	G	Bm	Em	Bm	Em	Am	Am	E7	Am	D7	G	Bm	Em	Bm	Em	Am	Am	E7	Am	D7	G	Bm	Em	Bm	Em	Am	Am	E7	Am
The year's at the spring and day's at the morn;																														
<b>T</b> <b>A</b> <b>B</b>	↓	↑	↓	↑	○	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	
D7 Am Morn - ing's at sev - en; the hill - side's dew pearled; The lark's on the																														
<b>T</b> <b>A</b> <b>B</b>	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑		
G G wing; G7 the C C snail's on the Am Am on the E7 E7 the Am Am thom; D7 D7 God's Bm Bm in His G G heav - en. D7 D7 All's																														
<b>T</b> <b>A</b> <b>B</b>	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑		
C C right with the G G world! The G G heav - en. Em Em All's Am Am night with the G G world.																														
<b>T</b> <b>A</b> <b>B</b>	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑		

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- ↓ = Pinch
- ↑ = Short Strum (Thumb)
- ↓ = Strum (Thumb)
- = Pluck (Finger)



Alternate Vocal Accompaniment:  
Alternating pinches in low,  
middle, and high octave

# Picker's Portrait

## Doug Dempster ❖ Carmichael, California

An Introduction  
by Taylor Finlay  
Sea Ranch, California

Doug Dempster doesn't enter contests, but he's really one of the better autoharpists around. He's liked and respected by musicians throughout the Central Valley. He's probably one of the best woodshed piano players in the Valley, and he may be the best "gut-bucketer" in the West. Honest. But he spends most of his playing time on his autoharps. He's just a super guy. But he won't tell you that, for sure.

*Taylor Finlay*

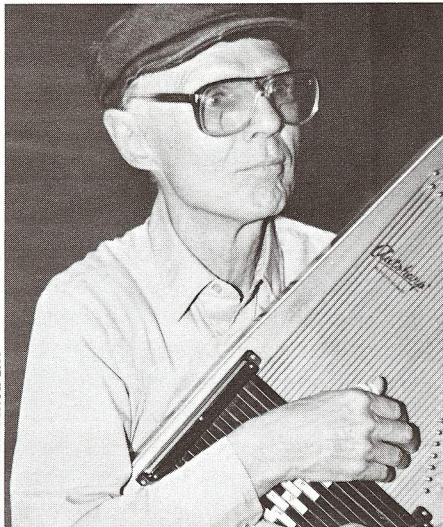


PHOTO BY TAYLOR FINLAY

*Doug Dempster and his autoharp*

You don't have to be Bryan Bowers or my friend Bill Bryant to play an autoharp. You can start easily just strumming tunes for yourself or accompanying other instruments on easy tunes.

It helps to have played other instruments. I took piano lessons as a child. As a teenager in the 1940s, I began playing pop tunes by ear off the radio and records, and jammed with my trombonist brother, Stu. Our parents sang, and introduced us to show tunes.

Much later, my wife, Betty, introduced me to folk and country music. And, it probably didn't hurt that my grandmother's maiden name was Harper.

In any event, in the mid-60s we got turned on to autoharp after attending a workshop by Mike Seeger at one of the fine folk music festivals put on by Barry Olivier at the University of California, Berkeley. After the workshop, Betty, myself, and our friend, Colleen Chandler, who was blind, but had played and sung in piano bars, took turns using a borrowed 'harp. We had the basics down within an hour.

I consider my two 'harps "portable pianos." Sure, they're fussy to tune, but it only takes about 15 minutes to get a standard 'harp without fine tuners to sound good enough for jamming. Be sure to use a chromatic tuner – the kind that handles all 12 notes of an octave. If you have just tuned, (and I don't mean so-called "just" tuning), and something sounds funny in a jam, walk a short distance away and see how your instrument sounds. Usually it's another instrument that's out of tune. Wait for a judicious opportunity to offer to loan your tuner.

In jams, I try to place myself opposite guitar players so I can "read" their chords when the tune starts and follow changes if the tune is unfamiliar. Also, I hold 'harps in an unorthodox position – almost horizontal – so I can read seldom used chord bars easier. When you become adept and are offered a break, step right up and play loud because autoharps often are hard to hear.

I use a standard guitar thumb pick and Dunlop metal picks .020 or thicker on the second, third, and fourth fingers, picking melody with the fourth

finger. Because I play breaks hard, I occasionally throw a pick, and if it's the fourth one, I'll finish the break with the third or second finger, then hunt for the pick later. Also, since I tend to play hard, I occasionally break a string. I carry a full set of extras plus a second set of spares for the upper octave – numbers 24 through 36 – the most apt to break, being thin and the work horses for picking. I carry extra picks, also.

Both of our 'harps are 15-bar Oscar Schmidts. One – an OS 100-15 – is about five years old, and bars are set up as manufactured. Our friend, autoharp Barbara Larsen, helped us modify the other one – an Appalachian that we bought in 1968 – so that we are able to play basic three-chord songs in the keys of A and E, besides C, F, G, and D.

Chord setup on our modified Appalachian:

E	A	A <sup>7</sup>	Dm	E <sup>7</sup>	Am	D <sup>7</sup>	D
B <sup>7</sup>	B <sup>b</sup>	C <sup>7</sup>	F	G <sup>7</sup>	C	G	

This gives us lots of flexibility. However, if a jam gets too big and drowns out autoharps, or if guitarists capo into keys like B or F#, I often retreat to my Martin tub bass aka "gut bucket." But that's a different story. ❖



PHOTO BY TAYLOR FINLAY

*Doug and Betty Dempster*

Sit back—  
take it easy!  
You may be  
about to  
discover

# The Last 'Harp You'll Ever Need

by Gregg Averett



Indulge your fantasy. Imagine your ultimate dream 'harp. Would it play in any key, make any chord, double every string, weigh ten ounces, play *sotto* or drown out a tuba? Well, keep dreaming. But autoharp player/inventor Bill Newton of Knoxville, Tennessee, has realized a significant part of that ideal by conceiving a system that allows unparalleled flexibility.

Bill's motivation arose from a preference for blues and jazz tunes — music that requires many more "color" chords than are normally present on an autoharp. He was dissatisfied by the compromises we have all faced in deciding which chords to include and which to leave off.

Marty Schuman employed and promoted a 15-bar diatonic system that he called the "Ultra-tonic" 'harp. By depressing up to three chord bars simultaneously, he was able to achieve thirty useful chords. He worked around the single-key tuning by

using incomplete and substitute chords to finesse a couple of more keys.

Lyman Taylor expanded the principle for the 21-bar chromatic 'harp and manages 34 chords in four major keys using his "Jazz-Style" set-up.

Bill Newton's system can play in any key and produce any chord, (over 300 by his reckoning), using just 12 bars! A miracle, you say? No, he achieves this flexibility by approaching

the problem of chord construction in a unique way.

A conventional autoharp begins with all strings open. A chord bar must be depressed against them, damping all but the desired strings making that chord. Marty and Lyman achieve the same result by depressing multiple chord bars.

The fact that Bill uses only twelve bars is a clue — each bar corresponds to an individual note in the chromatic scale. He begins with all strings on the 'harp *damped* and *depresses* bars to open individual notes in the scale. Thus, any chord may be constructed. In effect, he has taken the "auto" out of autoharp.

While it is technically feasible to do this using standard chord buttons, constructing some chord sequences could be very much like playing Twister with your fingers. Bill has gotten around this difficulty by arranging his bars into a keyboard —



With just 12 bars, Bill Newton makes over 300 chords.

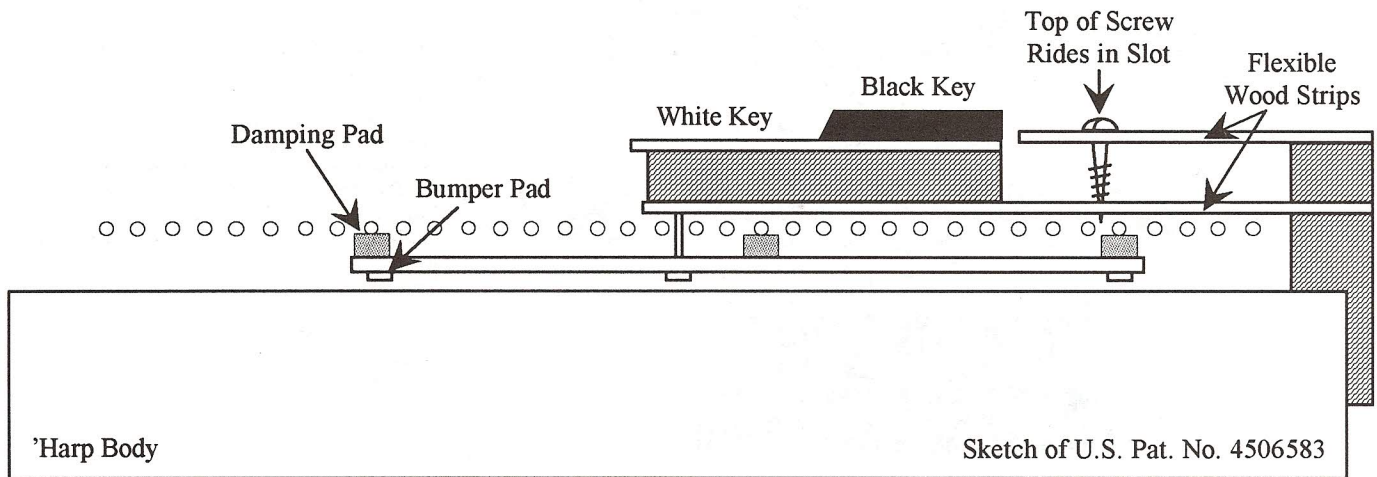


FIGURE 1  
(Keyboard Cover Removed)

one octave of seven white keys and five black.

Now, if this sounds somewhat daunting to all you “classically-trained” autoharpists, imagine how inviting this system might be to a piano- or keyboard-trained musician. The main difficulty would be getting used to chord inversions, since the ’harp has only one octave of keys.

Other advantages I can see are really clean melody playing (you are guaranteed the right note with only one bar depressed) and easier rhythm chops.

One disadvantage of the system is bound to be a choppy sound since, when the fingers are lifted to form another chord, all the strings are damped and none will continue to ring into the next chord. Still, the system offers some intriguing advantages.

Bill conceived the idea about 12 years ago. The first iteration of the concept mounted chord bars similar to a conventional B-model ’harp. Each bar had three or four hooks fashioned from sheet metal with damping material in the crook of the bend. The hooks extended down between the strings and springs at each end of the bar kept upward tension, damping all the strings of that particular note.

Bill took his idea to Lee Schilling, a luthier in Cosby, Tennessee, who made some suggestions that would make manufacturing more practical. 20 such ’harps were eventually produced (so, if you have one, it’s a rarity). Sales were slow, principally due to a lack of detailed, printed instructions on how to play the ’harp.

Rhythm Band bought an option on Bill’s patented system, but for reasons of economics and difficulty of manufacture, no ’harps were made, and the option was allowed to lapse.

At the recent Cosby Dulcimer and Harp Festival, Bill was present with a second-generation prototype. For an experimental model, it was very clean. It sported a red-painted, hand-made body, a piano-style keyboard, and not a tuning pin in sight.

Strings are threaded through grommets holes with the ball end anchored in countersinks in the back of the ’harp. Passing over a bridge, (he uses no bridge pins), the strings break over a bridge at the bottom to an angled pin block where the tuning pins are concealed under a cover. It’s a clever arrangement but hampered by the fact that no wound strings are, presently, designed to work this way, leaving excess bare wire in places and windings over the bridge.

The real news lies in Bill’s new concept for the bar mechanics. Starting from scratch, he relocated the bars *beneath* the strings. The keys are cantilevered from the bass side (See Fig. 1) on thin wooden strips, which produce the spring action as well as support. A shorter strip above the first added spring and stability. A screw, passing through a slotted hole, connects the two strips and also permits fine adjustments to level the keyboard.

An L-shaped metal strip passes through the strings, and is soldered to the bar. Pads are located atop each bar corresponding to its respective note. The spring strips pull the bar upward

against the strings, damping them. Pads on the bar bottom cushion against the ’harp body when the key is depressed. Key travel may be controlled by adjusting the thickness of these pads. The stiffness of the soldered metal connecting strip is sufficient to keep the bar perpendicular and ensure even release of the strings, but lever action when the bar contacts the ’harp body corrects any misalignments.

A nifty wooden housing, also cantilevered, protects the mechanism, with only the keys exposed.

I must admit, when I tried it, I felt the same helplessness I had when trying to make a guitar chord. A novice musician will not find this concept inviting. But anyone with piano or music theory background will find it a natural.

Bill is still making refinements, but has achieved a remarkably workable system. Will it replace your ’harp? Maybe not. But, as a potential addition to your collection, no one can deny that a bright, new star has begun to shine in the universe of ’harps. ❖

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# THIS YEAR AT THE



## SPECIAL EVENTS

### *The Stoneman Family*

A Presentation by Special Guest  
Patsy Stoneman

A highlight of this year's Gathering, special guest Patsy Stoneman will present a multimedia retrospective of Ernest "Pop" Stoneman and the Stoneman Family. Hear first-hand Patsy's experiences being raised in one of America's famous musical family. — Saturday Evening Concert

### *Most Autoharps Playing One Song At One Time*

Grab your 'harp and join the throngs in "Will the Circle be Unbroken." Help break last year's world record — Saturday Afternoon

### *The Bazaar Autoharp (Swap Meets)*

New for this year — If you have made or produced an autoharp recording, you can sell it at the Bazaar Autoharp. As in past years you can also swap or sell autoharp-related goods made or used by you.

## CONCERTS

### *Thursday Evening*

Julie Davis, Ivan Stiles, Roz Brown, Will Smith

### *Friday Afternoon — Invitational*

Mike Herr, Mary Umbarger, John Hollandsworth, Joseph Marlin Riggs, Bob Lewis, Judie Pagter

### *Saturday Afternoon — Invitational*

Tom Fladmark, Linda Huber, Steve Young, Alan Mager, Carole Outwater, Orchard Grass Gospel Singers

### *Saturday Evening*

Jim Snow, Bill & Laurie Sky, Patsy Stoneman, Bonnie Phipps

### *Sunday Morning*

Orchard Grass Gospel Singers

### *Sunday Afternoon*

Jim Snow, Roz Brown, Will Smith, Bill & Laurie Sky

## CONTESTS

*Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship* — Friday Evening

*Watermelon Seed Spitting Contest* — Thursday Afternoon

## PRIZES

### *Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship*

Oscar Schmidt 21-bar Centurion Model  
w/gig bag: \$550

Fladmark Autoharp, 2-key Diatonic  
w/Blue Heron Case: \$1400

Orthey Dulci-Harp, Carter Gold 2-key Diatonic  
w/Blue Heron Case: \$1600

*First Prize:* Choice of instrument — plus \$100 cash — plus invitation to return the following year as a performer valued at \$250 — and trophy.

*Second Prize:* Choice of remaining two instruments — plus \$70 cash — and trophy.

*Third Prize:* Remaining instrument — plus \$40 cash — and trophy.

**CASH & PRIZES TOTALING \$4010**

## WORKSHOPS

### *Autoharp Stew*

Roz Brown

Level: Beginner

Many ingredients are needed to make a good player. Roz leads you through many of his picking techniques as well as how to build a repertoire of songs. He'll give you one of his cowboy songs to start you off.

Keys used: C, G, D, A

### *The "Right" Technique*

Bonnie Phipps

Level: Beginner

Learn to create textures in your melody playing and accompaniment patterns through a variety of right-hand techniques.

Keys used: F, C, G, D

### *Mastering Melody*

Laurie Sky

Level: Intermediate/Advanced

Pick the light fantastic with Laurie's personal approach to getting the right note while keeping your arrangements clean and fresh.

Keys used: C, G, D

### *Improvising with the Right Hand*

Will Smith

Level: Intermediate/Advanced

Using the familiar fiddle tune, "Soldier's Joy," as a jumping off point, you'll spice up the arrangement with a variety of rhythm and melody techniques using the right hand. Included will be syncopation, triplets, hammer-ons, stops, thumb lead, taps, etc. which can be mixed and matched spontaneously.

Key used: D

### *Amplifying the Autoharp*

Tom Fladmark/Bill Belz

Level: All

Join the dynamic duo for a discussion and demonstration of various microphones, mini-microphones, and magnetic and piezo pick-ups on the autoharp and their interaction with the sound system.

### *That "Circle" on Your Autoharp*

Linda Huber

Level: All

Unlock the secrets in harmonic theory as it applies to playing the autoharp based on the circle of fifths. Linda shows how the keys relate to one another (including minor keys) and how chords within a key are related. Key signatures, chord building, transposing, and scales round out the circle. Bring your 'harp and find your circle!

### *Chameleon Chords (and Other Deceptions)*

Alan Mager

Level: Intermediate/Advanced

Using a chromatic or diatonic autoharp with "standard" chord bars, learn how to create the illusion that you're playing "color chords" such as 6ths, major 7ths, and suspended 4ths that aren't on your 'harp. You'll also get to play with other illusions such as backing up melody notes with chords that don't contain those notes.

Keys used: C, F

### *Behind the Barn Door*

George Orthey

Level: All

Join George for a tour of his barn followed by a demonstration of 'harp harmonics — their presence and control. From there, it's on to many of the maintenance tips and projects you can do to keep your autoharp in peak condition. Bring your questions and problem 'harp.

Key used: The one to the barn door

### *This Is New for Me...*

Carole Outwater

Level: New players

Now that you've decided to play the autoharp, what do you need to make progress? You'll identify where you are, what your hopes are, and then cover those fundamentals that will bring you musical satisfaction. You'll work from your needs...be it "How do I play in a jam?" to "How do I know what chords to play in a melody?" Packet included with material and music for continued progress.

Key used: F

### *Diatonic Open Chording*

Steve Young

Level: Intermediate/Advanced

Open chording, a technique for playing some melody notes with no chord bar pushed down, takes the diatonic autoharp to its full potential. You'll cover its use from simply getting a few passing notes all the way to allowing complete melody development at dance speed. Bring a G diatonic instrument and brush up on your pinch/pluck ahead of time. Be forewarned that once you learn open chording you might never want to play a chromatic 'harp again.

Key used: G

### *Autoharp Styles*

Julie Davis with Jim Snow, Mike Herr, and John Hollandsworth

Join hostess Julie Davis as she leads a round robin of distinctly different playing styles from the panel. Bring your own 'harp to add to the music.

Keys used: Who knows?

### *Tuning Your Autoharp*

Ivan Stiles

Level: All

Join an (as yet) undetermined assemblage to explore the many ways to tune your autoharp. You'll learn practical, sensible ways to tune that won't drive you three cents flat or six cents sharp.

## LEARN A SONG

Everyone can learn a song from beginning to end in these multi-level workshops. Songs are built from the accompaniment on through to the melody. Learn everything from the basic rhythm to tips for playing those "tricker" passages.

**Bob Lewis**

*I Wish I Had Someone To Love Me*

Key of G

**Joe Riggs**

*Careless Love Blues*

Key of G

**Judie Pagter**

*Angelina Baker*

Key of F

**Mary Umbarger**

*Da Slockit Light*

Key of D

# 19 SCHEDULE

# OF EVENTS 95



## T • H • U • R • S • D • A • Y

	Main Tent	Pole Barn
9:00	Meet The Workshop Leaders	
10:00	Workshop: George Orthey Gather by the Main Tent. Workshop will be held in George's Barn. Limited to 20 participants.	Workshop: Carole Outwater
11:00	Lunch & Open Stage	Learn A Song: Bob Lewis
12:00	Watermelon Seedspitting Contest	
1:00	Workshop: Autoharp Styles	Workshop: Linda Huber
2:00	Workshop: Roz Brown	Workshop: Will Smith
3:00	Swap Meet/Jam Sessions	Jam Sessions
4:00	Workshop: Alan Mager	Learn A Song: Mary Umbarger
5:00	Dinner & Open Stage	
6:00	Concert Julie Davis • Ivan Stiles Roz Brown • Will Smith	Contra Dance Gather on the driveway outside the Main Tent. Dance begins after the evening concert and ends at 11:00 p.m.
7:30		

## F • R • I • D • A • Y

	Main Tent	Pole Barn
9:00	Learn A Song: Mary Umbarger	Workshop: Alan Mager
10:00	Workshop: Tuning Your Autoharp	
11:00	Swap Meet/Jam Sessions	Jam Sessions
12:00	Lunch & Open Stage	
1:00	Invitational Concert Mike Herr • Mary Umbarger • John Hollandsworth Joseph Martin Riggs • Bob Lewis • Judie Pagter	
2:00	Workshop: Tom Fladmark/Bill Belz	Workshop: Laurie Sky
3:00	Learn A Song: Joseph Martin Riggs	Workshop: Steve Young
4:00	Workshop: Bonnie Phipps	Learn A Song: Judie Pagter
5:00	Dinner & Open Stage	
6:00	Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship Sign-up deadline: Friday, 6:30 p.m.	
7:30		

## S • A • T • U • R • D • A • Y

	Main Tent	Pole Barn
9:00	Workshop: George Orthey Gather by the Main Tent. Workshop will be held in George's Barn. Limited to 20 participants.	Workshop: Carole Outwater
10:00	Swap Meet/Jam Sessions	Learn A Song: Bob Lewis
11:00	Lunch & Open Stage	Jam Sessions
12:00	Invitational Concert Tom Fladmark • Linda Huber • Steve Young Alan Mager • Carole Outwater • Orchard Grass	
1:00	Most Harps - World Record Attempt	
2:00	Learn A Song: Judie Pagter	Workshop: Bonnie Phipps
3:00	Workshop: Autoharp Styles	Workshop: Linda Huber
4:00	Dinner & Open Stage	
5:00	Concert Jim Snow • Bill & Laurie Sky Patsy Stoneman • Bonnie Phipps	
6:00		
7:30		

## S • U • N • D • A • Y

	Main Tent	Pole Barn
9:00	Workshop: Steve Young	Learn A Song: Joseph Martin Riggs
10:00	Workshop: Tuning Your Autoharp	
11:00	Orchard Grass Gospel Singers	
12:00	Lunch & Open Stage	
1:00	Workshop: Will Smith	Workshop: Roz Brown
2:00	Workshop: Tom Fladmark/Bill Belz	Workshop: Laurie Sky
3:00	Concert	
4:00	Jim Snow • Roz Brown Bill & Laurie Sky • Will Smith	
5:00	Dinner & Farewells	
6:00		

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# TOP 10 WAYS TO ANNOY AUTOHARP PLAYERS

1.

Yell "Termites!" and run screaming from the house.

2.

Ask if playing the 'harp is part of their therapy.

3.

Approach a 'harp player while deliberately peeling a hard-boiled egg.

4.

When they finish playing "Wildwood Flower," ask what they were playing.

5.

Ask them to play "Wildwood Flower" again.

6.

Tell them your grandmother used to play one of those things.

7.

Hide one of their picks - any one.

8.

Shorten their autoharp straps.

9.

In a sincere tone ask, "That's like a banjo, isn't it?"

10.

Play the banjo.

-Ivan Stiles



# Recordings

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

*If you know of a new or re-released recording containing autoharp, send the information to the Recordings Editor. It will be listed in this column.*

---

## FEATURES AUTOHARP

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### My Best to You

*Autoharp: Roz Brown*  
CD includes "Colorado and The West" and "Music for Old Goats" cassettes  
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### From Somewhere Out West

*Autoharp: Roz Brown*  
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**Straw into Gold**  
Barry and Holly Tashian  
*Autoharp: Will Smith*  
Rounder 0332

# Club News

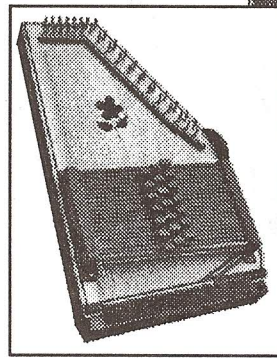
Clubs Editor  
Sandra Shaner  
130 Gregory Road  
Salisbury, NC 28144

### Happy Hearts Autoharp Club Dora Miller

On March 26, Bryan Bowers did a workshop and concert at the Church at Living History Farms near Des Moines, Iowa. We all gathered in the basement of the church at 5:00 p.m. for the workshop. Bryan started with a song of welcome, "It's A Gift to be Simple." Among other things, he showed us the three- and four-finger rolls and also stressed taking the "I can't" out of your vocabulary.

Bryan opened his concert with an old time Carter favorite, "Gold Watch and Chain," followed by "Golden Slippers." In the middle of the concert, we were treated to a beautiful duet by Bryan and his wife, Kate. He closed the concert with his song, "Friend for Life." It was really wonderful to have Bryan come back to Iowa. ❖

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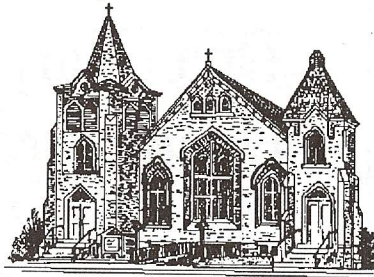
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# Sacred Harp

by Bonnie Condran

The Incarnation United Church of Christ of Newport, Pennsylvania had its beginning in 1820. A group of people of the German Reformed tradition organized a congregation which affiliated with the Reformed Church in the United States. They met in many facilities over the years, including a warehouse and a school.



On October 27, 1868, the plot on which the church now stands was purchased for \$300, and the cornerstone was laid May 23, 1869.

Today, the Incarnation United Church of Christ congregation stands as a fine example for the town it serves, and the building reflects its rich German heritage and architecture. ❖

Augustus M. Toplady

## ROCK OF AGES

Thomas Hastings

Musical score for 'Rock of Ages' in 3/4 time. The score consists of four systems, each with a treble clef staff, a TABLATURE staff, and lyrics. The lyrics are: 'Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee. Let the water and the blood, From Thy wound - ed side which flowed, Be of sin the dou - ble cure, Safe from Am wrath and make me pure. FA - men.'

**TABLATURE**

- ↓ = Pinch
- ↘ = Long strum to melody note
- ↘ = Strum
- = Pluck
- ⤵ = Sustain

Could my tears for ever flow,  
 Could my zeal no languor know,  
 These for sin could not atone;  
 Thou must save, and Thou alone;  
 In my hand no price I bring;  
 Simply to Thy cross I cling.

While I draw this fleeting breath,  
 When my eyes shall close in death,  
 When I rise to worlds unknown,  
 And behold Thee on Thy throne:  
 Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
 Let me hide myself in Thee.

# Take Your Pick!

by Gregg "Scissorhands" Averett

If I were one of my finger picks, I'd be an insecure wreck: Few in the musical world are quite so fickle with picks as an autoharp player. Every harper secretly harbors a belief that the only thing holding him or her back from musical nirvana is having that perfect set of picks. They would wear as comfortably and securely as the very skin of our fingers and guide on the right strings like homing missiles. The fastest jigs and reels would succumb in a cloud of sixteenth notes. Yes, we all have it in us, if only we had the right picks. So, very little causes the excitement in autoharp circles as someone holding up a hand and saying, "What do you think of these?"

I would be willing to bet that every autoharper is a collector of sorts. My own arsenal of attachments for finger and thumb is ever-expanding. Part of the ceremony of every festival I attend is meticulously scouring vendors row for any new developments. Even if I don't particularly like a new pick, I'll buy several, just in case I change my mind later. Playing in jams or watching a performer, I always keep an eye peeled for unfamiliar types of picks or tricks of the trade in their use.

It wasn't always thus, of course. Early autoharps didn't have such a smorgasbord of choices. They might have found a celluloid thumb pick or a flat plectrum in the case, but otherwise, they were on their own. Some proved to be quite resourceful. Kilby Snow made his picks out of sheet metal from old, brass car headlights. Using tin snips, a file and some careful bending, he fashioned custom picks to suit his unusual style. (He only used a pick on his thumb and forefinger.) His son, Jim, does the same today, but automobile styles not



being what they were, he uses sheet brass from a ceiling fan housing. Mike Hudak learned the technique from Kilby and used nickel silver stock. Details of his pattern are in the July 1990 *Autoharp Quarterly*.

"Pop" Stoneman proved equally resourceful. His daughter, Patsy, related

**If I were one  
of my finger  
picks, I'd be an  
insecure wreck.**



how he would take some of those old-fashioned hair rollers and remove the spiral wire stiffener from them. A little judicious bending to form a loop on the end, and *Voila* – finger picks! (See *AQ* October 1994.) I tried one that Patsy supplied. I found it to be very comfortable and secure. (The spiral winding extends over the second joint.) It was easy to pluck strings accurately, but was a little thinner sounding than conventional picks.

Some notables in the contemporary autoharp community have pursued this personalized path to picking. Joe Marlin Riggs carries on the Kilby Snow tradition with similarly fashioned picks, with some added refinements. They are

literally screwed on to his hand, and are reminiscent of devices used to elicit confessions from witches. They are also massive enough to exert their own gravitational field! But Joe gets that characteristic sound that few can emulate. (See page 23.)

I've seen Mary Lou Orthey with nickel silver picks much like Mike Hudak's. She likes the comfort they provide by gripping between the first and second finger joint instead of around the cuticle of the nail. I found them to be everything she said, with yet an additional quality – I play louder with them on. This could be especially useful in jam sessions. I believe the reason for the increased volume is the leverage and additional purchase on the string they afford, as well as a loss of flexibility in the first joint, which encouraged me to do more pinching than plucking. For the past four or so years, Mary Lou has been using Ernie Ball metal finger picks that taper to a little claw-like point. She says that playing for a year or two with the large ends of the Snow-type picks has made melody playing accuracy with the Ernie Ball picks a piece of cake. Mary Umbarger likes the Ernie Ball picks, also. I never warmed to them. I even found some metal picks that look like ladies glue-on fingernails. I could never figure out whether they were supposed to go on the top or bottom of my finger.

Bill Bryant concocted a doubled pick that permits him to strike a string in either direction. Nesting a pair of Dunlop picks to form a top and bottom, he solders the tip and one side, leaving the other side to adjust the size. He uses these to achieve an extremely rapid rhythm that has become a signature of his playing style.

Roz Brown has used sitar picks for years. They are a sort of piano wire origami that fits over his finger, gripping

# ROZ BROWN

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at the sides and making a vertical "V" over the tip. It can brush the strings in either direction, although the fit is a bit loose to be really effective this way. Also, they can be uncomfortable to wear. Roz is the only source I know for them. (Have you ever gone into a music store and asked for sitar picks?)

Most of us manage with the picks readily available in the marketplace. Actually, there is quite a variety to choose from. The runaway favorite is the old standby, Dunlop, in stainless steel or brass, usually .0225 or .025 gauge. Some people swear by brass. I can't really detect a difference in sound between the two metals, but I do feel better, somehow, using the brass. (It's not all science, you know!)

**If the science is in  
the pick, the art is in  
the methods intended to  
ensure that the darn  
things don't  
fly off.**

Tom Bogardus supplied me with two versions of a metal pick he is developing. Its most salient feature is that it wraps around the end of the finger allowing, in theory, two-way picking. In its present form, I believe the tip is too rounded. When I was first learning to play, I experimented with thimbles because they were less prone to getting tangled in the strings. But I soon gave up on them because they just brushed over the strings without getting much sound. A good finger pick needs a sharp end or edge that will draw the string and then release it suddenly and cleanly to produce a satisfactory sound.

There are many plastic finger picks available, but I see few 'harpers using them. They are not very comfortable, and it's hard to find a set that fits all the fingers. Plus, I just never did like the sound of them; too *sotto voce*, and the clacking pick noise was irritating.

A few years ago, Marty Schuman turned me on to Herco's nylon finger picks, and they are still my personal

favorites. They deliver a tone that is mellower than metal, but not as muted as plastic. Being of the fingertip type, they do not interfere with first joint flexibility, allowing easy plucking of a melody line. You can pat with them, but not as well as metal, of course. They are quite comfortable. Marty said you could do tricks with boiling water, but I never had trouble finding some to fit me out of the box. You can't miss them. They're electric blue. (Read what Marty had to say about Herco picks in the April 1993 issue of AQ.)

Ronnie Williams, a close friend of Maybelle Carter, gave us one of the picks he had for her. Ronnie "kept Maybelle in picks," and had a few left from her last order. Sure enough, I could see Maybelle wearing one in an old photo close-up. Ronnie tells us that Maybelle suffered from arthritis in her hands in her later years. This pick has cutouts in the wings that bend around to grip the finger, thus relieving pressure on the side of the joint. Another unique feature of these picks is that the wings slant back as they curve around to the top of the finger. This produces several desirable effects. The bottom back edge is clear of the first joint, allowing it to flex. The top of the pick extends back just past the joint, giving better leverage against the force that wants to rotate the pick off and that digs the back edge into the top of your finger. Third, since it grips higher on the finger than, say, a Dunlop, it doesn't have to fit as tightly to remain secure. This is a very comfortable pick. It is stamped: "Stevens Pat. Pend." I called every store in Atlanta, but no one was familiar with that name or knew if they were still in business.

Last year at Galax, I was checking out a vendor behind Otter Harp Heaven, and ran across a pick called the "John Pearse Hi-Rider™." I don't know John's relationship to Mr. Stevens, Esq., but guess what? The picks are virtually identical! (Should any lawsuits be forthcoming, you didn't hear that from me.) All the above kudos and qualities apply equally to the Hi-Rider picks. I bought a bagful and I recommend them to you. If I had one criticism, it is that the steel gauge is too light. I like something a little beefier and less springy where it contacts the strings. So I still mainly use

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my Hercos.

Thumb picks are another matter of highly personal taste, and choices abound. I've seen very few metal ones that weren't of the homemade variety. Plastic, celluloid, and nylon seem to be the favorites for commercial manufacture. The large, wide ones are the most comfortable and secure on my big thumb, and they produce less pick noise; but broad tips sound too muddy to my ear. They are also more clumsy when I thumb lead. I haven't tried cutting down and reshaping the tip. That would be a good experiment.

I lean toward narrower, pointy thumb picks, but comfort and security become more problematical. The pick I prefer of all the "conventional" designs is one I found last year for sale with the Hi-Rider. It's another John Pearse design called the Vintage thumb pick. It fits well onto the thumb because the tip angles outward, and it doesn't loosen from the heat of your hand. The tip is stiff and sharp, which is what I like, and I don't hear any objectionable pick noise. It's my personal choice for all-round playing.

I don't stick with one pick for all purposes, however. For instrumentals I absolutely prefer one that Mike Fenton and Marty Schuman turned me on to: the Kelly Speed Pick. Made of nylon in three degrees of stiffness, the business end is a narrow tongue that affords an amazing versatility in playing techniques. While perfect for most instrumentals, especially fast fiddle tunes, it can sound harsh and may not be best for vocal accompaniment.

Of course, I cannot broach the subject of thumb picks without mentioning Drew Smith and his Pick of Intimidating Proportions. He plays thumb lead, and uses a plastic thumb pick of his own design and manufacture. I'm not saying just how long it is, but I understand, when he's not using it, he carries it in a sheath! He could use it for fondue and never get his knuckles warm. But, if you've heard him play, you know how well it works for his style.

If the science is in the pick, the art is in the variety of methods intended to ensure that the darn things don't fly off. Some just clamp them on till their fingers turn blue. Others tape them on. A few use tape on the inside. Mary

Umbarger puts the soft side of velcro on the inside of hers; Bob Woodcock uses moleskin; some folks just stick a pick on every finger to ensure enough will be left to finish the tune. I subscribe to the stickum theory. When the occasion demands absolute security, I use a spray-on product, Rosinit. It remains sufficiently tacky to remove and replace picks several times, and still keeps them glued securely to the fingertips. Yet, some vigorous rubbing will remove all trace without the need to wash. I've also heard bowlers' rosin products will work.

Lastly, I should mention that, for some, this whole discussion is superfluous. Ask Mark Fackeldey, who gets a marvelous and unique sound using just his fingernails. But then we'd have to get into a discussion of nail care products and gelatin in the diet. Care to share any recipes, Mark? ♦

*Do you have any favorite tricky picks or picky tricks? Let us know! Editors*

#### PICK SOURCES:

**Bogardus picks:** Tom's Musical Supplies, 2309 Anderson, Lawrence, KS 66046

**Bill Bryant picks:** Info from Bill Bryant, PO Box 968, Marion, MT 59925

**Mike Hudak picks:** The July '90 issue of *Autoharp Quarterly*; directions, stock, and pattern available from *AQ*

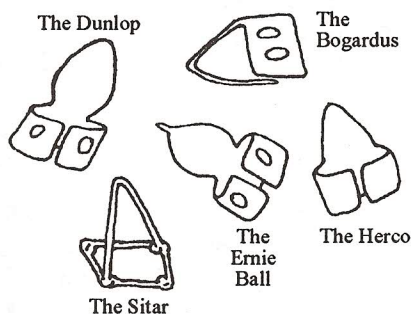
**John Pearse picks:** Breezy Ridge Instruments, Ltd., PO Box 295, Center Valley, PA 18034 1 800 235-3302

**Joe Riggs thumb screw:** See page 23 in this issue.

**Sitar picks:** Echo Lake Productions, PO Box 150518, Lakewood, CO 80226

**Drew Smith thumb pick:** Info from Great All-American Autoharp Emporium, 529 Ardmore Rd., Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ 07423

**Pop Stoneman picks:** The October '94 issue of *Autoharp Quarterly*



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# Cocoonhouse

by Fred Koch

Hi, Kids — Here's a fun song to play and sing. For starters, just play the song through by strumming on the first and third beat of each measure. Then play the song again using pinches for the melody notes and strums for the rhythm fills. Sing along till you get to ten where you can start it "once again." ♦

## THIS OLD MAN

Traditional

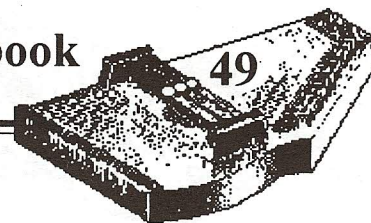
<p>C / /</p> <p>This Old Man,</p>
<p>TAB</p> <p>↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑</p>
<p>F C F C</p> <p>He played knick knack</p>
<p>TAB</p> <p>↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑</p>
<p>C / / /</p> <p>knick, knack pad - dy whack,</p>
<p>TAB</p> <p>↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑</p>
<p>G7 / / /</p> <p>This Old Man came</p>
<p>TAB</p> <p>↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑</p>

2. On my shoe    3. On my knee    4. On the door  
 5. On the hive    6. On the sticks    7. Up to heaven  
 8. On the gate    9. On my spine    10. Once again

Replace the word "one" with the word "two," and so on.  
 Replace the words "on my thumb" with "on my shoe," and so on.

↓ ↑ = Pinch with thumb and middle finger.    ↓ ↑ = Strum with thumb from low notes to high notes.    □ = Rhythm Bracket. Complete all actions inside bracket within one count of music.





## In The Sweet By and By (2)

▽  
[G D7] [G /] [G G] [D7 /] [C C] [G /] [ / ] [ / ]  
There's a land that is fair - er than day,

[G D] [G /] [G G] [G /] [G G] [D7 /] [ / ] [ / ]  
And by faith we can see it a - far,

[G D7] [G /] [G G] [D7 /] [C C] [G /] [ / ] [ / ]  
For the Fa - ther waits o - ver the way

[G D7] [G /] [D7 G] [D7 /] [G D7] [G /] [ / ] [ / ]  
To pre - pare us a dwell - ing place there.

Chorus:

[G D7] [G /] [ / ] [ / ] [G G] [D7 /] [ / ] [ / ]  
In the sweet by and by

[D7 G] [D7 /] [D7 D7] [D7 /] [G D7] [G /] [ / ] [ / ]  
We shall meet on that beau - ti - ful shore;

[G D7] [G /] [ / ] [ / ] [G D7] [C /] [ / ] [ / ]  
In the sweet by and by

[C C] [G /] [D7 G] [D7 /] [G D7] [G /] [ / ] [ / ]  
We shall meet on that beau - ti - ful shore.

## Shoo Fly, Don't Bother Me (2)

Chorus:

▽  
C C / C C G7 G7 / G7 G7 / G7 G7 C C /  
Shoo, fly, don't bo - ther me! Shoo, fly, don't bo - ther me!

C C / C C G7 G7 / G7 G7 G7 [ / G7] C G7 C  
Shoo, fly, don't bo - ther me! I be - long to comp - ny G.

Verse 1

CC CC CC // CC [C C] C G7 G7 //  
I feel, I feel, I feel, I feel like a morn - ing star,

G7 G7 G7 G7 G7 G7 // G7 G7 [G7 G7] G7 C C //  
I feel, I feel, I feel, I feel like a morn - ing star

Chorus:

2. I feel, I feel, I feel, That's what my mother said,  
Like angels pouring 'lasses down, right upon my head.

## Tenting Tonight (2)

▽  
C C [C G7] C [C G7] F F C /  
We're tent - ing to - night on the old camp ground,

[C C] [ / C] G7 [ / G7] C //  
Give us a song to cheer

C C [C G7] C [C G7] F F C [ /]  
Our wear - y hearts a song of home,

C] G7 [ / G7] F G7 C // //  
And friends we love so dear.

Chorus:

[C C] [C C] C [C C] [F F] [ / F] F /  
Man - y are the hearts that are wear - y to - night,

[C C] [C C] F F G7 // //  
Wish - ing for the war to cease,

[C C] [C G7] C [C G7] [F F] [F F] C [ /]  
Man - y are the hearts that are look - ing for the right,

C] C [ / C] C G7 F // //  
To see the dawn of peace.

[C C] [ / C] C [ / F F] [ / F] F /  
Tent - ing to - night, tent - ing to - night,

[G7 G7] [G7 G7] F G7 C //  
Tent - ing on the old camp ground.

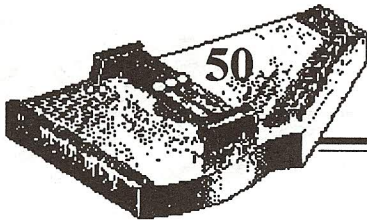
## O God Our Help in Ages Past [2]

▽  
DD G D Bm G A D  
O God, our help in a - ges past,

D Bm D Bm E7 A //  
Our hope for years to come,

A D G Em A D G A7  
Our shel - ter from the stor - my blast,

D G Bm Em A D //  
And our e - ter - nal home.



# Autoharp Songbook

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## O Du Lieber Augustine (3)

▼  
 A [D] [A D] A A A E7 E7 E7 A A A  
 O du lie-ber Au-gus-tine, Au-gus-tine, Au-gus-tine,

A [D] [A D] A A A E7 E7 E7 A /  
 O du lie-ber Au-gus-tine, Al-les ist hin!

A E7 E7 E7 A A A E7 E7 E7 A A /  
 Gel ist weg, Mad'l ist weg. Al-les weg, Al-les weg,

A [D] [A D] A A A E7 E7 E7 A //  
 O du lie-ber Au-gus-tine, Al-les ist hin!

## Oh, Dear! What Can the Matter Be? (3)

▼  
 G // G // G G G G G G  
 Oh, dear! What can the mat-ter be?

D7 // D7 // D7 D7 G D7 G D7  
 Dear, dear, what can the mat-ter be?

G // G // G G G G G G  
 Oh, dear! What can the mat-ter be?

D7 G D7 G D7 D7 G // //  
 John-nie's so long at the fair.

G G G D7 G G D7 G G G G G  
 He pro-mised to buy me a trin-cket to please me,

G D7 D7 G D7 D7 G D7 D7 G D7 G  
 And then for a vow, o he said he would tease me,

D7 G G D7 G G D7 G G G G G  
 He pro-mised to bring me a bunch of blue rib-bons

G D7 G D7 G D7 D7 G // // //  
 To tie up my bon-nie brown hair.

2. Oh, dear! What can the matter be?  
 Dear, dear, what can the matter be?  
 Oh, dear! What can the matter be?  
 Johnnie's so long at the fair.  
 He promised to buy me a basket of posies,  
 A garland of lilies, A gift of red roses,  
 A little straw hat to set off the blue ribbons,  
 That tie up my bonnie brown hair.

## The Loreley (3)

▼  
 D D [ / G ] D D A7 G D // G /  
 I know not what spell is en-chant-ing,

G D / D A7 G A7 D // //  
 That makes me sad-ly in -clined,

D D [ / G ] D D A7 G D // G /  
 An old strange le-gend is haunt-ing,

G D / D D A7 A7 D // //  
 And will not leave my mind.

D A [D] A A A A A // E7 /  
 The day-light is slow-ly go - ing,

E7 A / A E7 A E7 A // A7 /  
 And calm -ly flows the Rhine

A7 D [ / G ] D D A7 G D / D A7 /  
 The mount - ain's peak is glow -ing,

A7 G / G A7 G A7 D // //  
 In eve-ning's mel - low shine.

2. The fairest maid is reclining,  
 In dazzling beauty there,  
 Her gilded raiment is shining,  
 She combs her golden hair;  
 With golden comb she's combing,  
 And as she combs, she sings,  
 Her song, amidst the gloaming,  
 A weird enchantment brings.

## Gaily the Troubadour (2)

▼  
 G / G G G G G / D7 / G D7 G //  
 Gai-ly the Trou-ba-dour touch'd his gui-tar,

G / G G G G G / D7 / G D7 G //  
 When he was hast-en-ing home from the war;

G / D7 C G C G / C / G C G //  
 Sing-ing, "From Pal - es - tine, hith-er I come;

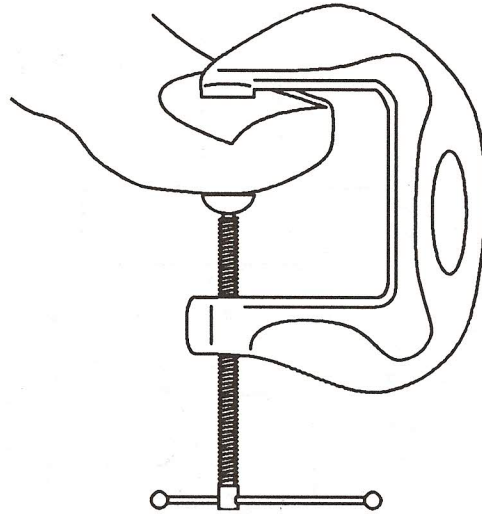
G D7 G / C G C / C D7 / D7 G //  
 La-dy love, la-dy love, wel-come me home."



# The Thumb Screw:

## A New Twist for Picks

by Joe Marlin Riggs



Much has been written about autoharp picks and a lot has been written about no picks. However, those who use picks and who thought they had seen it all had failed to count on the latest product to roll off my "Rube Goldberg" basement assembly line and into the sump pump.

I made picks out of a brass alloy drum cymbal for several years, after having experimented with most brass materials known to mankind. Nothing brass escaped my shears. (Once I went into an East Indian import store and had to be restrained.) In my quest, I made a list of characteristics that the perfect pick would exhibit. A pick must:

1. Stay on during "Black Mountain Rag," "Autoharp Special," and "Deep Elm Blues."
2. Be stiff enough to command the attention of the oversize bass strings.
3. Be flexible enough to finesse the top strings without cutting them.
4. Pick both ways.
5. Be long enough for the right feel and short enough not to "Woody Woodpecker" the soundboard.
6. Be easily replicated from easily-obtainable materials using only household hand tools.

For some years, the cymbal filled the bill fairly well except for item number six; it was too time-consuming and haphazard to make a pick from the

cymbal, and more picks had to be discarded in frustration after a couple of hours' work that were usable. The T-shaped, one-piece pattern used by Kilby Snow and Mike Hudak (*AQ* 7/90) for a finger pick was fine, but tricky to get just right. Also, an inherent design flaw was the tendency for the pick to bend and break at the junction of the finger band portion and the picking portion of the T. Also, antique car headlight reflector material does not qualify in item number six of the criteria. Some experimentation was done with soldering, but results were not satisfactory and good products were erratic rather than consistent.

Finally, after yet another failed attempt to capture the Fiddlers' Grove Autoharp Championship on Memorial Day '91, and the wild run (thumb pick held on with rubber bands) at the Mountain Laurel Championship, I attempted to clear my mind-set on picks and start fresh.

The biggest problems were mechanical: picks have to stay on, and they have to be easily made of something easy to find. With a mechanical concept in mind for attachment-to-finger, I found six 32 x 1/2" screws readily available, and that knurled nuts could be found a few drawers away in the hardware store. Brass strips 1/2" wide and .032" thick were at the end of

the aisle, and something called 10 ounce tinner's rivets looked to be ideal for fastening two strips together to make the T configuration for finger pick.

These are the ingredients that I now use for making both a brass thumb pick that screws on from a single strip, and a brass finger pick that also screws on from two strips. Tightness can be adjusted from loose to snug to bright purple fingertip in a matter of seconds. My thumb pick must be loosened by turning the knurled nut in order to be put on and removed; when tight, "Autoharp Special" does not even phase it. The finger pick, once adjusted, need not be loosened and tightened each time it is put on and removed, at least on my finger.

To make the two-piece finger pick requires a little bit of trial and error. I made the first one by cutting two pieces of the 1/2" brass strips that were both far too long, two inches each. Then I arranged the two pieces in the shape of the old T design, with the vertical piece of the T overlapping the horizontal piece completely; I then drilled one hole (anywhere) through the overlapping pieces at the crossing of the T. I put a tinner's rivet into one hole, flattened it out on a piece of iron with a small hammer, checked the alignment of the two pieces of the T (I like mine with a slight angle, the *italic*

**N O W A V A I L A B L E !**



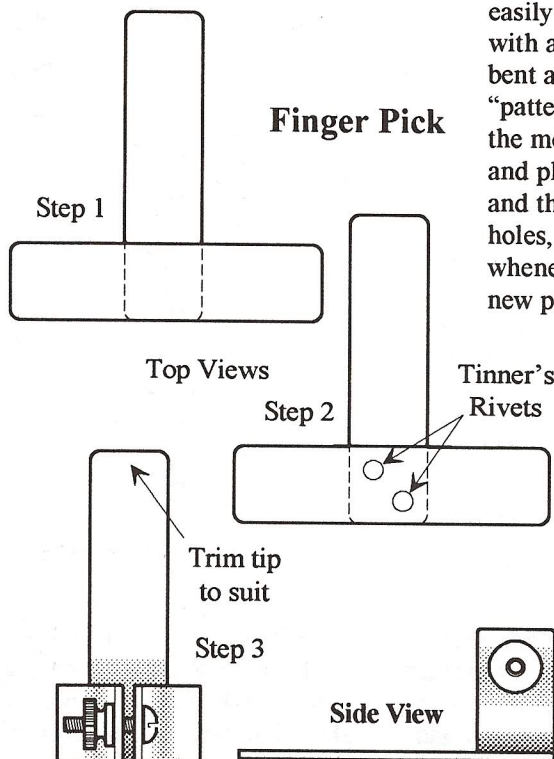
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T model), drilled the second hole near the first, and riveted again. That takes care of the first part. The pick must now be fitted around your finger and bent and cut so as to be the right length

and shape to drill and insert the adjustable screw, which will be at the top of your finger as your hand lies on a table palm down. Some experimentation will yield a pattern that can be easily and forever duplicated with absolute accuracy. I unbent and flattened out the "pattern" pick so as to retain the model. I have the length and placement of the strips, and the positioning of the four holes, for ready reference whenever I want to make a new pick.



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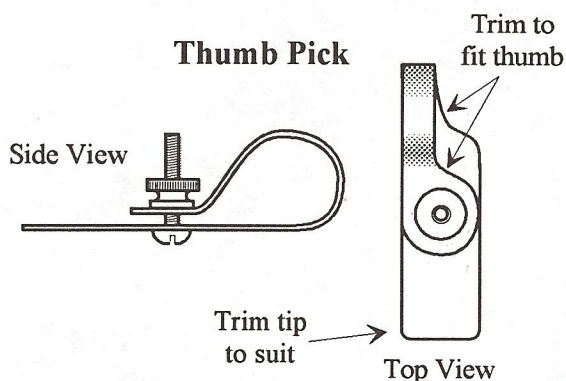
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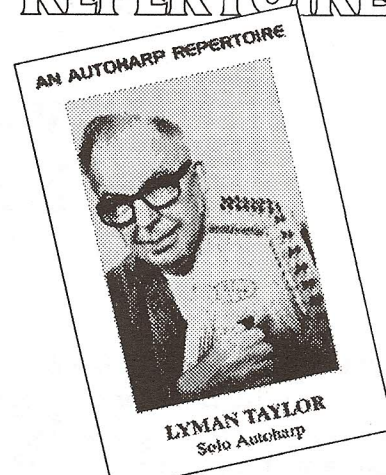
The process is the same for making a thumb pick, although a single piece is all that is required for the thumb (*AQ* 7/90). On the thumb pick, the screw holes are drilled to be on the outside of your thumb, the side of your thumb closer to your strings in normal playing position. Shaping of the picks can be done to match an individual's particular playing style and the angle of attack of pick-to-strings. A model of the thumb pick should also be made and retained so that precise duplication can occur when needed.

This thumb screw pick design is

the best I have ever tried, and I never have to worry that I feel the thumb pick sliding off when I am halfway through "Black Mountain Rag." It has never budged when adjusted down tight with the screw. I use only two picks, one on my index finger and one on my thumb, in Kilby Snow fashion. Hudak used one thumb pick and one on his middle finger because he liked the reach better. Pickers who play with four or five picks might find the thumb screw design too bulky or cumbersome, but for me and the rough-and-tumble break-down picking I like the best, it couldn't be better! ♦



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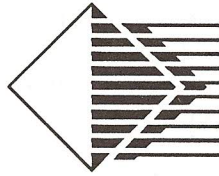
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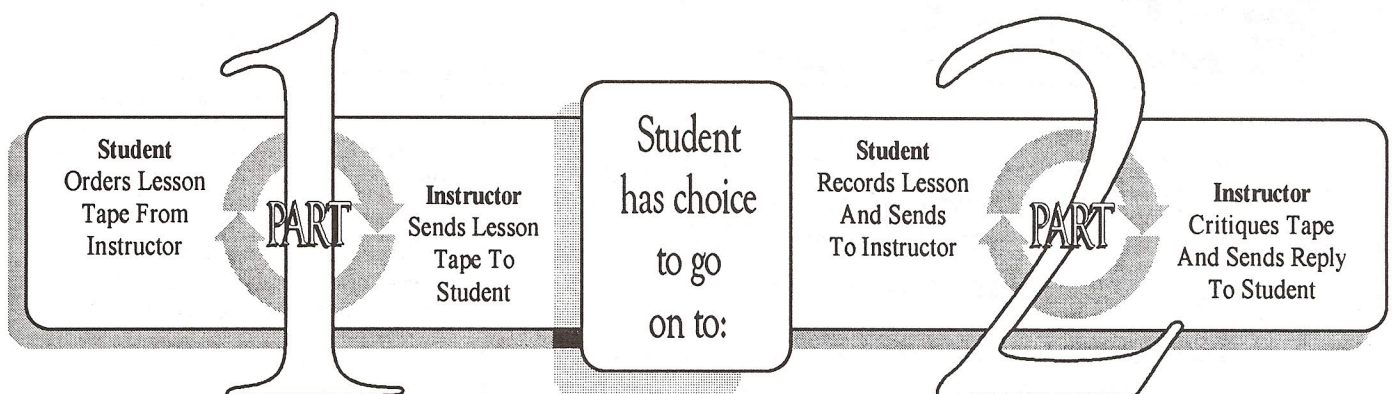
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In addition to performance work, Evo teaches privately and through continuing education programs at California colleges and universities, as well as at festivals throughout the country. Current activities include weekly guitar classes at a California state prison. Evo has made several recordings which feature his autoharp playing and other musical talents in styles ranging from traditional folk to zydeco. He has also produced a line of instructional videotapes for autoharp, fiddle, banjo, and guitar. When not on the road, Evo tends his garden in Academy, a rural community in the foothills of central California's Sierra Mountains.



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## THE INTERACTION LESSON "BUDDED ROSES"

Evo Bluestein • 10691 N. Madsen • Clovis, CA 93611-9704

"Budded Roses" is a traditional song that appears on my recording "Evo's Autoharp," as an autoharp duet with Mike Seeger on diatonic 'harp and me on chromatic. My inspiration is pure Kilby Snow, but I couldn't bear to record all the sappy verses, so I chose to include only two. The tune is catchy, though, and I'm using it in this lesson because it aptly demonstrates my style.

I play using primarily a thumb-lead style in which the thumb plays a single note on every beat. The middle finger then comes back on every half beat to play an answering note a little higher up towards the treble end of the 'harp. To play in this style smoothly and effortlessly you must play these thumb and finger licks by turning your wrist. The motion is just like turning a key back and forth in a lock; that is, the wrist turns about 180° creating an axis around which the fingers rotate.

Put on your finger and thumb picks and make this key-in-the-lock twisting motion back and forth with your wrist. Relax your fingers so that the thumb and fingers are not touching, as they would be if you were holding a key. The tips of your thumb and middle finger should be a couple of inches apart. Continue making the same twisting motion with your wrist, noticing how the picks rotate around the axis created by your turning wrist. Now transfer this motion to the strings of the autoharp. Hold down one chord bar and keep turning your wrist back and forth so that the thumb clearly strikes a single note as it moves in an upward direction toward the treble strings and the middle finger strikes a single note on the return stroke moving toward the bass strings.

Keep practicing this motion until it

becomes smooth and natural. Experiment with using different fingers in combination with the thumb. I use the middle finger, but you may find it more comfortable to use the index or ring finger. It doesn't really matter which finger you use. The idea is simply to develop a nice, smooth back and forth playing stroke.

Once you start to feel comfortable with this stroke, try playing a little bit of "Budded Roses." For almost every beat of the music, I've written the tablature as a thumb pluck followed by an echoing finger pluck on the half beat. This is exactly the stroke you've just been practicing.

For variety, I break up the repetitious monotony of the stroke you've just been learning with an occasional drag note. Notice that the symbol for the drag note appears in three places in the tablature for "Budded Roses." You could certainly add more of them, but these three spots seemed to be the most obvious places to begin experimenting with drag notes in this piece.

A drag note is really a small chromatic run that ends on the specific melody note shown in the music. I play drag notes by starting my thumb melody stroke (towards the high strings) just a couple of strings below the intended melody note. In the time allotted to one beat, the thumb "drags" sharply across two or three strings ending on the melody note. To play this correctly, you've got to develop some rather precise coordination between your two hands. While you are dragging your thumb pick across the few strings to create the drag note, you must not be pressing down any chord bar. However, when you reach the melody note, you must press down the proper chord bar sharply to allow only

the melody note to continue ringing. In the chord line I show this action with the chord bars as "O-C" or "O-G7." The "O" indicates that the stroke is begun in the open position (no chord bar depressed) and then ends with the indicated chord bar depressed so that the melody note can sound alone.

It will probably take some time for you to develop the knack of playing drag notes, but once you get it I think you'll love the special sound these notes give to the music. Try to resist the temptation of dragging across too many notes on your way to the melody note. Two or three is about right. Much more than that, and your drag notes will start to sound sloppy and offensive.

I call the version of "Budded Roses" shown here a "basic" transcription because it is a good starting point. I rarely play it this way more than once or twice in a given rendition. I vary the melody, play drag note embellishments, add lead-in and lead-out phrases (extending the normal phrase), and bounce between playing melody and harmony.

The three drag notes indicated here are a recommended starting point. Sometimes, when I put them in other places, the new location causes an adjustment of the melody line, necessitating creation of further variation.

If you order my lesson tape, you will hear my version of "Budded Roses" with several variations. I will also give you more insight into how to play the drag notes and other elements of my style. I look forward to hearing from you.



# BUDDED ROSES

Musical score for guitar with four systems. Each system consists of a treble clef staff with a melody line, a chord progression, and a guitar tablature line. The lyrics are written below the melody line.

**System 1:**  
 Chords: C, G7, C, F, C, G7, C  
 Lyrics: Down a - mong the bud - ded ro - ses,

**System 2:**  
 Chords: /, C, G7, F, G7, F, O-C, C7  
 Lyrics: I am noth - ing but a stem.

**System 3:**  
 Chords: F, G7, F, G7, F, C, O-C, /, G7, C  
 Lyrics: I have par - ted from my dar - lin' /

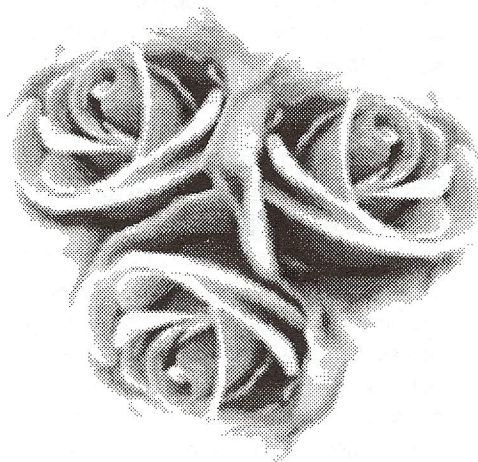
**System 4:**  
 Chords: O-G7, F, G7, /, /, /, C  
 Lyrics: Nev - er - more to meet a - gain.

The tablature uses the following symbols:  
 ○○ T 2: Thumb and finger pluck unit.  
 ○○ T 2: Thumb lead with answering rhythm finger stroke.  
 ✖: Drag note.

## TABLATURE

○○  
T 2 Thumb and  
 finger pluck unit:  
 Thumb lead with answering  
 rhythm finger stroke

✖ Drag note



# Now That's *Progress*

by George Foss

## Chord:

Three or more tones sounded simultaneously... (*Harvard Dictionary of Music*)

## Progress:

Movement toward a goal... (*American Heritage Dictionary*)

## Chord Progression...

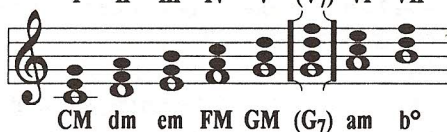
A sequence of chords within a key leading to a point of repose or cadence... (*George Foss*)

**I**n learning most musical instruments (violin, flute, trumpet, etc.) we are concerned with the melodic progression from one single tone to the next. Even if we are primarily interested in the tune or melody line, we must also consider the full chords which contain the individual melody tones. This idiosyncrasy of the autoharp makes an understanding of the principles of chord progression very important for the autoharp performer or student.

First, let us review briefly the basic chords found in every Major key. (c.f. *Autoharp Quarterly*, Spring 1991, "Play Your 'Harp by the Numbers"... Foss)

### In the key of C Major:

I II III IV V (V<sub>7</sub>) VI VII\*



In any  
Major Key

In the Key  
of C Major

I The TONIC chord is a Major C Major (CM)  
quality chord.

- II The SUPER-TONIC is a minor d minor (dm)  
quality chord.
- III The MEDIANT chord is a minor e minor (em)  
quality chord
- IV The SUB-DOMINANT chord is F Major (FM)  
a Major quality chord.
- V The DOMINANT chord is a G Major (GM)  
Major quality chord.
- V<sub>7</sub> The DOMINANT SEVENTH G major (G<sub>7</sub>)  
chord is a combination of all  
the tones found in the Major  
quality Leading-tone (VII) chord.
- VI The SUB-MEDIANT chord is a minor (am)  
a minor quality chord.
- VII\* The LEADING TONE chord is b dim (b°)  
a diminished quality chord.

\* Diminished quality chords are not found on standard autoharps

To simply move randomly from one chord in a key to other chords in the same key will not necessarily produce a *chord progression*. A true *chord progression* creates a classic pattern:

REPOSE—TENSION—RESOLUTION

To help us understand (and to recreate) the nature of chord progression, let us divide the chords of a Major key into four classes:

**3rd Class chords (III and VI)** are the most static chords with the least inherent tension and sense of movement,

**2nd Class chords (II and IV)** are intermediate chords with some quality for movement but still distant from Tonic,

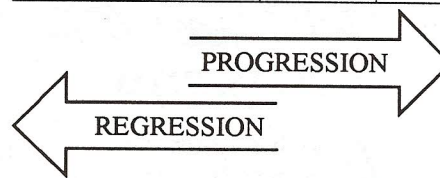
**3rd Class chords (V and V<sub>7</sub>, also VII)** are the chords of greatest tension demanding further motion, usually directly towards...

**TONIC chord**, the point of resolu-

tion and the chord within every key which produces the ultimate repose.

The following table lays out the various Classes of chords in graphic fashion. If the chord classifications are followed from left to right, a chord progression is achieved. If we move in the opposite direction (even temporarily) a *retrogression* results.

3rd Class chords	2nd Class chords	1st Class chords	TONIC
III (em) Mediant	II (dm) Super-tonic	V (GM) Dominant	I (CM) TONIC
VI (am) Sub-mediant	IV (FM) Sub-dominant	V <sub>7</sub> (G <sub>7</sub> ) Dominant seventh	
		VII (b°) Leading-tone	



Here are a few observations about chord progressions to consider when choosing the chords for your harmonizations:

Progressions to Tonic re-enforce the sense of Tonic or key feeling.

Retrogressions tend to weaken the sense of Tonic or key feeling.

A chord progression may begin with the Tonic chord or a chord from any of the other chord classifications.

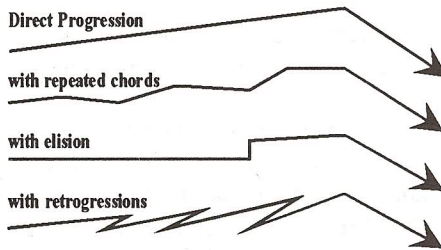
A Tonic chord may be inserted at

any point in a progression without disturbing the sense of chord progression.

Any chord in a progression may be repeated consecutively without disturbing the sense of chord progression.

A chord classification may be omitted or skipped within a progression. This is termed *elision*.

Here are some graphic representations of various chord progressions:



A chord progression usually equates to a musical phrase ending with a pause point or cadence. This length of musical "stuff" represents the same amount as a line of a poem. Therefore, in a song, a line of the lyric ending with a comma or period is

matched directly by a melodic phrase ending with a pause or cadence. If this melodic phrase is harmonized, we have a chord progression.

If we always play from printed sheet music or from the arrangements found in *Autoharp Quarterly*, we do not need to worry with the details of chord progression. That has already been done by the composer or arranger and we can simply follow directions. If, on the other hand, we are harmonizing a tune we know only by ear or if we have only the printed melody line, then we must accurately and effectively choose our chord progressions. This process is much like planning a motor trip, we have various options and desired results to consider. We can opt for the fastest and most economical route by heading directly to the nearest Interstate and follow the I-network to our final destination. Or we may choose the route of greatest scenic beauty with points of interest and diversion. Unfortunately, many autoharp players travel entirely on the Interstate network I to IV to V<sub>7</sub> to I. It's direct, it's fast, it's easy to follow, you can't get lost, and it's boring if it is the only route taken phrase after phrase after phrase. By using the chart of chord classifications we can choose alternate routes for variety and a myriad of other subtle effects; side roads III or VI, route II instead of IV, or highway V instead of the congested traffic on V<sub>7</sub>.

The nature and tempo of a tune are of great importance to the types of progressions needed and to the style of harmonization which is appropriate. Quick dance or fiddle tunes have short phrases with frequently simple melodic lines. These require equally short and direct chord progressions; I - V - I or I - IV - I - V - I. Slow tunes with longer phrases and frequently sentimental lyrics beg for a more colorful and less direct treatment. Remember

Each musical phrase usually ends in one of *cadence*:

V or V<sub>7</sub> to I This is the most common pattern and is called an *Authentic cadence*.

Phrase ending on V This elision pattern at the final cadence is called the *plagal* or "Amen" cadence.

V or V<sub>7</sub> to VI This surprise ending is called a *deceptive cadence*.

Autoharpists frequently speak of "sustain." The quality called sustain can be effected by the quality of workmanship in the basic instrument and in the chord-bar mechanism. It is also effected by the quickness and smoothness of coordination of the player in changing from one chord button to another. It can also be enhanced greatly by a consideration of *common tones*. In music theory, common tones are tones shared between two consecutive chords in a progression. For example, when we move from the I chord (c-e-g) to the IV chord (f-a-c) the tone "c" is a common tone. When we play these chords on the autoharp, no matter how slowly or ill-coordinated, the tone "c" rings through the shift and enhances that quality we call sustain. Play the following progressions with the common tones given in parentheses:

I (eg) III - IV - V (g) I

I (ce) VI (ac) IV (f) V<sub>7</sub> (g) I

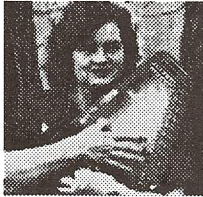
The second progression has more common tones and a noticeable increase in "sustain."

that the I, IV, and V(V<sub>7</sub>) chords are all of Major quality and their exclusive use, especially in slow pieces, becomes extremely colorless.

With your autoharp in hand (or on lap) begin on the I (Tonic) chord and travel across the classification chart many times, each time slightly changing your route. Continue doing this with the insertion of Tonic chords at various points in your progressions. Try some progressions with elisions, skipping from VI to V<sub>7</sub> or from IV to I. Experiment with repeating chords within the progression, I - VI - IV - IV - V - I or I - II - I - V - V - I. Also try lateral moves from one chord to another within the same classification, I - III - VI - IV - II - V - V<sub>7</sub> - I. Then do it all again in each of the keys you find yourself using frequently. This experimentation will not only familiarize you with many different chord progression patterns, but hearing some of these new progressions may inspire in you an original piece. (I recall hearing Ron Wall talking to a class session and telling how his composition of "Majestic Waltz" came about in exactly this way.) ❖

Janette Carter

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A lot has been written about "The Carter Family." Their life and their music have made history. This book dwells a lot more on their personal life and how it feels to be the daughter of a famous family. I loved them because they were my people - not because of their fame...

- Janette Carter

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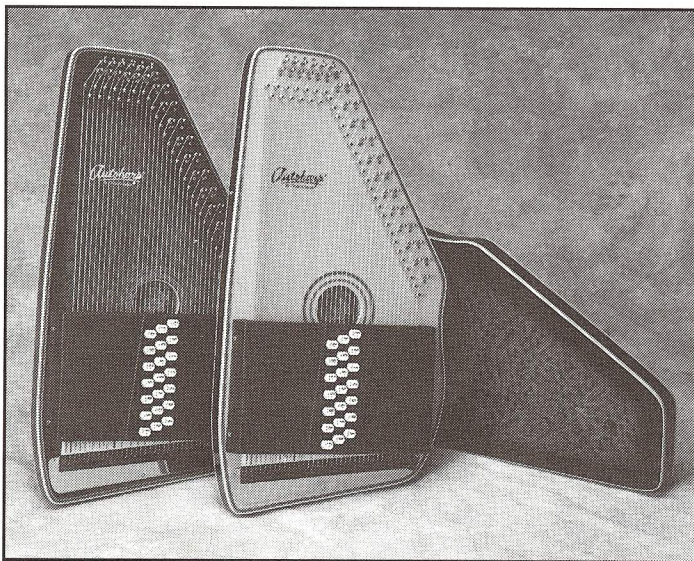
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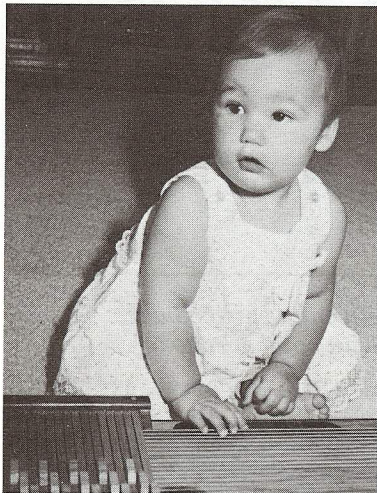
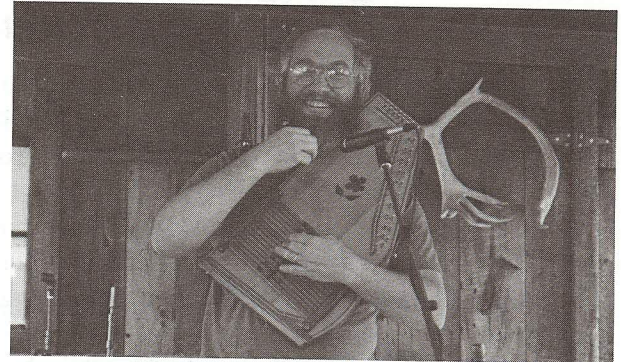
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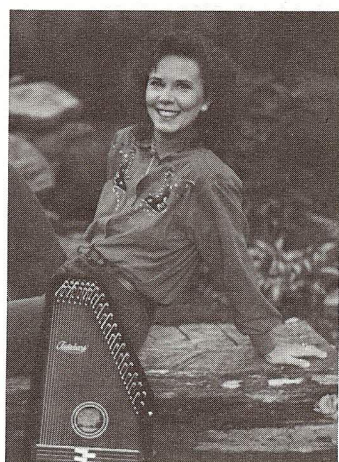
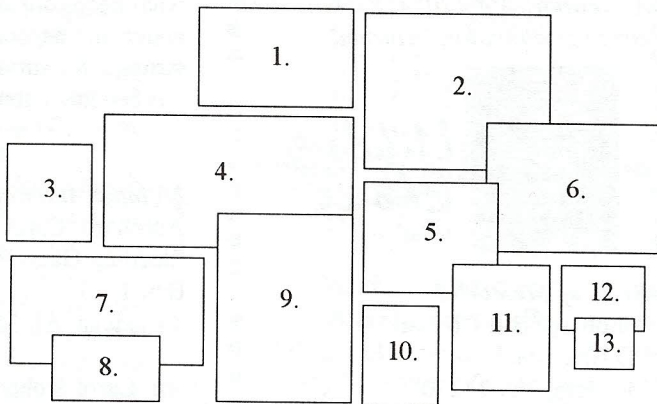
# HARPER'S

From the AQ Archives

1. John Hook 2. Michael Pease and Bill Clifton 3. Alan Mager's granddaughter, Kimberly 4. Mike Fenton's "Houseband" – Kellohotin Primary School, Scotland 5. Capital Area 'Harpers 1.-r., t.-b.: Kathy Thorpe, Tim Thorpe, Rosalind Ekermeier, Mary Dettra, John Dettra, Alan Mager 6. The late Rosa Cox and Galax friends 7. Carol Johnson, Melva Gass, Bev Pratton 8. Lou Stump with sister, Shirley 9. The Adams Family: Ubi and Jim with Elizabeth and Woody 10. Judy Austin 11. The late Mike Hudak with Gil Palley, Mark Fackeldey, and Mike Herr 12. Joe Carter, Janette Carter 13. Patsy Stoneman



# GALLERY



# Critics' Choice

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.



## Mike's Choice

Mike Herr

### *River of Memories*

Autoharp: Bill Clifton  
PO Box 123  
Mendota, VA 24270

*Church in the Wildwood • River of Memories • Beautiful • Where the Roses Never Fade • Brighten the Corner Where You Are • Home of the Soul • Shall We Gather at the River When I Get to the End of the Way Whispering Hope • Deep on the Sunny Side • Give Me the Roses While I Live • In the Garden • Sunny Side of Life • Will There Be Any Stars in My Crown • If We Never Meet Again • Who Will Sing for Me • May an Angel Sleep on Your Pillow Tonight*

*River of Memories* is a pleasant, relaxed CD of mostly old chestnuts, sung and played by Bill Clifton and Jimmy Gaudreau. In a thoroughly professional recording, these songs are sung in a rich, full tone with guitar, autoharp, and mandolin backup.

This is not an "autoharp recording," since Bill uses the 'harp on only two selections – "Give Me the Roses" and "When I Get to the End of the Way." In these selections, the 'harp is used predominantly in an accompaniment, backup role, with minimal lead playing. In this regard, I was a bit disappointed in not hearing Bill play more of his particular brand of "'harpiness." Oh well, next recording, I hope.

In any case, many of the readers of this column will feel very comfortable with this recording and relax in the familiar and secure songs put forth by Bill and Jimmy. Bill's comment in the

liner notes sums up the predominant thrust of this sentiment: "Together, they [the songs] represent much of what keeps our lives focused on values above and beyond our day-to-day struggle for survival in a world that has become a maze of complexity."



### *Melodic Autoharp*

Autoharp: Carol Stober  
Sleeping Giant Productions  
Box 1275  
Talladega, AL 35160

Carol Stober's second video of autoharp instructions, *Melodic Autoharp*, is designed for the player who has at least a rudimentary knowledge of the autoharp and of music. You'll need to know the two and six minors. You'll also need to know what an introduction, a tag, and a turnaround are, as these are demonstrated quickly, but not explained.

Carol moves quickly and covers a lot of material. Tunes are often played once through, and you'll want to rely on your remote control to practice tunes with her more than once. After an intro of "Angel Band," played with granddaughter Rebekah Stober singing, Carol continues with her recommendations for tuning. She tunes the second "G" string up through the octave, and asks you to tune to her, then asks you to tune the rest of your 'harp to the tuner. I didn't actually do it, but I couldn't help thinking that if she is tuned to the tuner, why not just tune this octave to the tuner as well? (It'd be much more accurate.)

After reviewing correct holding of the autoharp, Carol gives us tips on rhythm strums. These will be useful to many players, but one of her tips I *definitely* would not recommend. She strums with the second, third, and fourth fingers going backward up the strings, and says that the picks won't catch and fly off after enough practice unless you're playing in thirty degree weather at midnight. I think that many, if not all, early players will find

this much too difficult, will become frustrated picking up picks off the floor, and may even put their 'harps back in the closet. My advice is to try this if you like, but don't work at it if it doesn't come easily. Use another strum technique going the opposite direction in a more comfortable fashion.

When moving to learning melody picking, Carol's technique is to learn the tune to hum it, pick it out on a piano, write it down on paper, assign a chord to each note, and finally try to pick it out on the 'harp. I found this method somewhat cumbersome and time-consuming, but it will work. My viewpoint is that if you can hum the tune, go right to the 'harp and try to pick it out by ear, which is just as valuable a process as reading music off a paper. My soapbox message here is that I see so many people hampered in their learning of tunes by requiring the music or the chords to be written in front of them. It just doesn't have to be this way.

Carol then demonstrates a turnaround, an autoharp break, a bluegrass lick, basic/double/triple shuffles, playing in high and low registers, and various strumming and pinching patterns she uses for various types of songs. She also elaborates on her perspective of jamming and playing with a group of instruments, most of which I would concur and support. At several points, I wondered if the fact of shooting a video was making her somewhat anxious, as a fair amount of the melody playing was not too accurate for a teaching tape.

One very bright spot was the great fiddle rendition of "Bile Them Cabbage Down" that Rebekah Stober presented. Lookout, Winfield, here comes another precocious youngster!

All in all, I was not too enamored of this teaching video, although everyone can pick up some pointers and tips. I'm sure Carol is probably like most of us, and shines more brightly live and in person, rather than talking and playing to a camera.





## Bob's Choice

Bob Woodcock

### Remind Me

#### A Collection of Sacred Songs

Autoharp: Sandra Shaner  
130 Gregory Road  
Salisbury, NC 28147

*Keep on the Sunny Side • Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho • Farther Along America the Beautiful • Pass Me Not Whispering Hope • Build My Mansion I Feel Like Travelling On • Remind Me Dear Lord • Battle Hymn of the Republic*

The trio of Bonnie Hill, Sandy Shaner, and Paul Hill have attempted to put together a recording of sacred and inspirational songs. They have gathered some first-rate backup musicians and appear to have put their hearts into the effort. The result is an inconsistent album, with some lovely highs and a few disappointing lows.

Of the ten selections, four are instrumentals featuring autoharp breaks. The vocals all have autoharp background. Sandy's 'harp playing is, for the most part, clean, enthusiastic, and competent. There is one exception, and I'll get to that. Paul's guitar work is mostly in the Libba Cotton three-finger style, and he plays it quite well. It is unusual in ensemble work, and I like it. Bonnie has a lovely voice; refined and clear, but not to my liking. Note that this is an opinion. I have no doubt that others will find her vocals most enjoyable.

The backup on the instrumentals include the bluegrass legend Jessie McReynolds on mandolin and his son-in-law Raymond McLain on banjo. These two musical giants are pretty laid back on this tape, sometimes almost lethargic, with a few flashes of brilliance. From the sound of the recording, I would guess that they were dubbed in.

Some tunes are memorable; "Pass Me Not" is my favorite, Alice Hawthorne's classic "Whispering Hope" is very nicely done. The recording ends with the worst piece, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." It opens with

Sandy playing autoharp. In the first stanza, at "terrible swift sword," she goes from C to A Major, and the song crashes like the Hindenberg. The note to be played is C natural, and A Major has C#. Ouch. In all fairness, my fiddler-friend listened and thought that it sounded "modern," but not absolutely incorrect. Nonetheless, I find it difficult to recommend this inconsistent album.



### An Autoharp Repertoire

Autoharp: Lyman "Bud" Taylor  
105 Wesley Heights  
Shelton, CT 06484

*Lo How a Rose Ere Blooming • Lover Come Back to Me • Piano Song I Love You Truly • Brahms Melody Londonderry Air • Chopin Etude in F Sunrise, Sunset • Alpine Maid's Sunday Romance • Lord's Prayer • Ol' Man River • Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life Now on Land and Sea Descending Believe Me if All those Endearing Young Charms • Panis Angelicus Easter Parade • Waltz of the Autoharps • Anniversary Song • Rose of Tralee • Over the Rainbow*

It seems that wherever a significant number of autoharpers gather, you will most likely find Bud Taylor. No, not in the middle of things jamming at a cyclone's pace; rather off to the side, gently caressing his 'harp, patiently demonstrating a style he has dubbed "Jazz-Style Autoharp." I must admit that I am usually swept up in the cyclone and never really listened closely to the man on the sidelines, though what I heard impressed me.

In 1994, Bud was a finalist at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship, and more folks began doing double-takes. "How does he do that?" This year, Bud produced a tape of twenty tunes that, in my opinion, makes a significant contribution to the autoharp world.

The pieces, as you can see, range from hymns, to show tunes, to some of Bud's own compositions. But that is not the real story in this recording. The picking/strumming is pretty straightforward, with some unexpected ruffles thrown in. But that isn't the real story either.

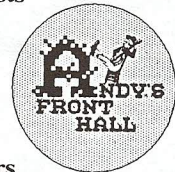
The mother lode in this tape is in the chords, chords that are round and

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full and subtle and unexpected. As I understand it, Bud has spent many, many years developing this unique style of chording and I think that it was well worth the time. I wish I could communicate these musical subtleties in more musical terms. Alas, I am not really "paper-trained" and most of my musical knowledge is from the ear, not the eye. And, I tend to be pretty much a I-IV-V kinda guy. But, when I listen to this tape, I see those chords as ripe, juicy musical apples, dripping with sweetness.

I think that any serious autoharper can listen to this tape and garner some musical gems. (I may even learn to spell "augmented!") And, I predict that the next time there is a significant gathering of autoharpers, Lyman Taylor will be in the center.



*Judie's Choice*  
Judie Pagter

*Through the Cabin Door*  
Homespun Harmony

Autoharp: Bernice Herman  
Bernice Herman  
RR Box 110  
Cambridge, IA 50046

*Seneca Square Dance · Hickory Wind  
Crooked Ridge · Wreck of the Ninety  
Seven · Billy McGhee · Whiskey Be-  
fore Breakfast · Run, Kate Shelley,  
Run · Renfro Valley · Shenadoah/The  
Water Is Wide · Gathering Flowers  
From the Hillside*

1. "Seneca Square Dance" features hammered dulcimer, and is done very nicely.
2. With "Hickory Wind," I can't understand the words very clearly. But it has nice harmony on the chorus with a couple of autoharp breaks.
3. "Crooked Ridge" is a unique tune with a featured lap dulcimer. Good guitar backup.
4. "Wreck of the Old Ninety Seven" is a familiar song. Lots of nice autoharp is heard in the background, which also includes train whistle. The singing is OK. It's not powerful enough, but they have good timing.
5. There is not enough power in the singing in "Billy McGhee," but it has many autoharp breaks. The guitar player is doing a very nice job on this one.
6. I love "Whiskey Before Breakfast." No matter how you do it, it's pretty. On this cut, the autoharp, the lap dulcimer, and the mandolin each take a break. Nice.
7. "Run Kate Shelley, Run" is done as a duet. I'm not familiar with this song, but it's different. Not heard every day.
8. The dobro leads off on "Renfro Valley." There is a lot of singing, and even what sounds like a harmonica in the background.
9. The harmonica once again is accompanying "Shenadoah/The Water is Wide," which also features autoharp and penny whistle. This makes for a pretty mix. Take a listen!
10. The group plays "Gathering Flowers from the Hillside" a bit differently than most people would. But I think theirs is the original way.

The instrumentation on this recording is very good. The singing is not very powerful, and sometimes the words are hard to understand. But all in all, it's a nice listening tape with a lot of effort put into it, especially since they have seven musicians and instruments to work with. To *Homespun Harmony*, I say "Please do more with the hammered dulcimer. It was great!"



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RD3, Box 190-A  
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NOTE: These performance and/or workshop listings are limited to those which feature at least 50% autoharp. Contact the performer for additional information. Also, cancellations and/or changes can occur. Check with the performer before traveling far.

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 of Philadelphia  
 Richmond Branch  
 Philadelphia, PA  
 June 10  
 Main Line  
 Art Center Festival

Haverford, PA  
 June 21  
 Pottstown  
 Public Library  
 Pottstown, PA  
 June 28  
 Upper Dublin  
 Public Library  
 Fort Washington, PA  
 July 4  
 4th of July Celebration  
 Wynnewood, PA  
 July 27  
 Easttown  
 Public Library  
 Berwyn, PA

**TOM SCHROEDER**  
 819 W. 77th Street  
 Kansas City, MO  
 64114  
 Phone Area 816  
 Pro-File: AQ  
 October 88  
 Schedule:  
 May 6  
 MVFS Barn Dance  
 Kansas City, MO  
 June 17  
 Bloom's Day Festival  
 Kansas City, MO

**BILL & LAURIE SKY**  
 PO Box 3496  
 Batesville, AR 72503  
 901 365-8691  
 Pro-File: AQ  
 October 88  
 Schedule:  
 May 2  
 Carrollton Academy  
 Carrollton, MS  
 May 2  
 Kilmichael Masonic  
 Lodge Hall  
 Kilmichael, MS  
 May 6  
 Woodward Avenue  
 Church of God Gym  
 Athens, TN  
 May 7  
 Etowah, TN  
 May 9  
 United Meth. Church  
 Roanoke, VA  
 May 10  
 Weyers Cave, VA  
 May 11  
 Newington Bus. Park  
 Springfield, VA  
 May 14  
 Franconia Freewill  
 Baptist Church  
 Alexandria, VA  
 May 17  
 Community

Baptist Church  
 Alexandria, VA  
 May 18  
 House Concert  
 901 3665-8691 details  
 Alexandria, VA  
 May 19  
 Woodlawn  
 Elementary School  
 Alexandria, VA  
 May 19  
 Harrisonburg, VA  
 May 20  
 Andy Griffith  
 Play House  
 Mt. Airy, NC  
 May 21  
 Smyrna Second  
 Baptist Church  
 Smyrna, GA  
 May 24  
 Ripley, MS  
 May 25  
 Franks  
 Elementary School  
 Ashdown, AR  
 May 26, 27  
 Texas Royal New Life  
 Center Gospel Jubilee  
 Autoharp workshop  
 on May 27  
 Paxton (Teneha), TX  
 May 28  
 Church of  
 the Nazarene  
 Hot Springs, AR  
 May 29  
 Memorial Day Com-  
 munity Celebration  
 Tiplersville, MS  
 June 3  
 Viburnum, MO  
 June 4  
 Licking, MO  
 June 16  
 Vivian, LA  
 June 17  
 Atlanta, TX  
 June 23  
 Salem Opry House  
 Collins, MS  
 June 24  
 French Camp  
 Academy Auditorium  
 French Camp, MO  
 June 25  
 Carthage, MS  
 June 29, 30, July 1, 2  
 Mountain Laurel  
 Autoharp Gathering  
 Newport, PA  
 July 4  
 Alexandria, VA  
 June 9  
 Swansboro, NC

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 517 451-8259



June 22

Music Festival  
Tupelo, MS

June 23

Pearl, MS

---

**DREW SMITH**529 Ardmore Road  
Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ  
07423

201 444-2833

Pro-File: AQ July 89

Schedule:

July 28, 29, 30

Cranberry Dulcimer  
Gathering

Binghamton, NY

---

**FRAN STALLINGS**1406 Macklyn Lane  
Bartlesville, OK

74006-5419

918 333-7390

Pro-File: AQ April 92

Schedule:

May 11

Southside

Elementary School

Broken Arrow, OK

June 9

Mozart Festival

(with Gail Huggett)

Bartlesville, OK

June 22

Public Library

Owasso, OK

July 11

Tulsa Central

Public Library

Tulsa, OK

July 20

Tulsa West Regional

Public Library

Tulsa, OK

---

**IVAN STILES**Route 29, RD2  
Phoenixville, PA

19460

610 935-9062

Pro-File: AQ

October 88

Schedule:

May 26-29

UW-Milwaukee

Folk Center

Stringalong Weekend

East Troy, WI

June 29-July 2

Mountain Laurel

Autoharp Gathering

Newport, PA

---

**DONNIE WEAVER**The Ole Harpweaver  
5103 Media Road  
Oxford, PA 19363

Pro-File: AQ April 90

Schedule:

Every Sat. 6:30-8pm

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WGCV-FM 96.1Covering most of  
Pennsylvania, Mary-  
land, Delaware, New  
Jersey, and northern  
Virginia

May 5

Bethany

Baptist Church

Airville, PA

May 12

Calvert Grange Hall

Calvert, MD

---

**CHARLES****WHITMER**

25650 IH 45N #1107

Spring, TX 77386

713 367-6260

(evenings)

Pro-File: AQ April 93

Schedule:

May 20

Intermediate

level workshop

The Woodlands, TX

June 5-8

New players/  
beginners week

Ozark Folk Center

Mountain View, AR

June 12-15

Intermediate

autoharp week

Ozark Folk Center

Mountain View, AR

June 24-29

Milwaukee

Folk Center

Summer Stringalong

Williams Bay, WI

July 10-14

New players/  
beginners week

Augusta

Heritage Center

Elkins, WV

July 17-21

Intermediate

autoharp week

Augusta

Heritage Center

Elkins, WV

❖ ❖ ❖

AQ

## Postscripts

FROM HARPLAND

*Do you have some news to share with the autoharp community? Send it to:*

Mary Umbarger

1360 Tabor Road

Harmony, NC 28634

As Spring spreads its blanket of warm breezes and showers, (as well as pollen), the flora breaks out, all nature quivers with life, and one by one we house-bound citizens of 'Harpland tune up and start moving to countless festivals and jams. We travel by cars, trucks, busses, planes, RVs, and occasionally, thumbs! We're excited; we're practiced; we're armed with heads filled with new tunes and licks; and we're ready to sally onward to learn more of the same!

Keep me posted on your activities, and maybe I'll see you at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering! – Meanwhile, lots of news –

**P.S.**

From Ohio: **Tiarr and Tina Watkins** became the proud parents of Tessa Rose on September 27, '94. Mom and baby doing great! And from Switzerland: Marc Simon; 11. Februar 1995; Die glucklichen und dankbaren Eltern **Madeleine und Tom Lochbrunner-Augustburger**. Congratulations!

**P.S.**

**Jim Hudson** and Kathy Foster will marry on a Key West beach at sunrise on July 21. I do hope that Jim wears an appropriate tee shirt. Good luck to Jim and Kathy! **Merle and Rosie Zimmerman** (Wichita, Kansas) celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary in January! Any words of wisdom for Jim and Kathy?

**P.S.**

The Ole' **Grizzly Flat Harper (Bill Bryant)**, will soon not be so Grizzly. He and Sharon are moving to Montana. Bill is planning to give 'harp lessons, workshops, and just may record his third tape! **The Happy Harps Club** celebrated its sixth anniversary on April 8th. Keep up the good 'harpin,' gang! Members of the **Harps Plus Club** are absolutely crazy about

**Lindsay Haisley and Jim Hudson's** tape, "Harps and Hammers." **Mark Fackeldey** is building autoharps! They are made under the name, "ZephyrHill Autoharps," – and the folks who have them say they love them! Great, Mark! Our community grows bigger and better with every new autoharp luthier! Speaking of luthiers, **Kathy Wieland** found a picture of **Ken Hamblin** playing his autoharp on the cover of a *National Geographic* brochure. The pamphlet is advertising "Crossing America: National Geo-graphic's Guide to the Interstates."

**P.S.**

The Autoharp Winners' Circle includes: The Florida State Autoharp Competition – 1st place **Sue Bullock**, and 2nd place **John Amon**; The Star Fiddlers' Convention in Bisco, NC – 1st place in the miscellaneous category, **Sandy Shaner**. Kudos, all!

**P.S.**

Our hearts go out to **Herral Long** and **Jan Goodsite**. Herral's wife, Marcy, who had suffered from Alzheimer's disease for many years, passed away in April. Jan's husband, Jim lost his battle to cancer last December.

**P.S.**

Good news! **Janette Carter's** autobiography, "Living with Memories," has recently been reprinted and is available from The Carter Fold, Box 111, Hiltons, VA 24258.

**P.S.**

Two Oopses (oopsae?) are in order here. Please refer to the **Meg Peterson** article (Oct. '94 AQ). Her portrait on page 22 was not photographed by **Carole Outwater** as noted. It was taken by **Charles McCue**. We hope that Meg, Charles, and Carole will forgive us. The second oops involves the Winter '95 AQ, and once again, it involves a picture. The picture of the autoharp ensemble (on page 39) should read: L. to R. **Mary Lou Orthey, Betty Waldron, Carole Outwater, Ronnie Burroughs, Mary Umbarger, John Hollandsworth, and Glenna Anderson.**





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*Bouquet Of Dandelions\**

**Bill Clifton**  
*Autoharp Centennial Celebration\**

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*I'll Be Leaving*



**Julie Davis**  
*Traveling Light*  
*Heart Full of Song*  
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*Blue Eyes & Sad Songs\**

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*My Privilege\**  
*Accent On Autoharp\**

**Mike Fenton & The Bill Sky Family**  
*Welcome to Galax\**

**Lindsay Haisley**  
*Harps & Hammers\**  
*(Auto) Harps Alive!!\**

**Mike Herr**  
*Lost in the Woods\**

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**FOLK ARTIST NEWS**, an eclectic magazine, published quarterly, for folk music and dancing performers and hobbyists. Encompasses acoustic folk instruments, voice, dancing, and related topics. \$15 per year. Info: 21626 Gentry Rd., Houston, TX 77040. 713 955-6052

**DULCIMER PLAYERS NEWS**, established in 1975, is a quarterly journal for players, builders, and enthusiasts of hammered and fretted (mountain) dulcimers. Subscriptions for 1 yr. (4 issues): US, \$15; Canada & other surface, \$17; Europe, \$19 (air); Asia, \$21 (air). 2 yrs. (8 issues) in US, \$27. Dulcimer Players News, PO Box 2164-AQ, Winchester, VA 22601

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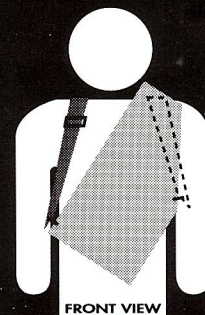
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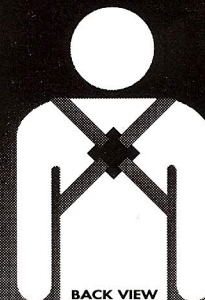
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