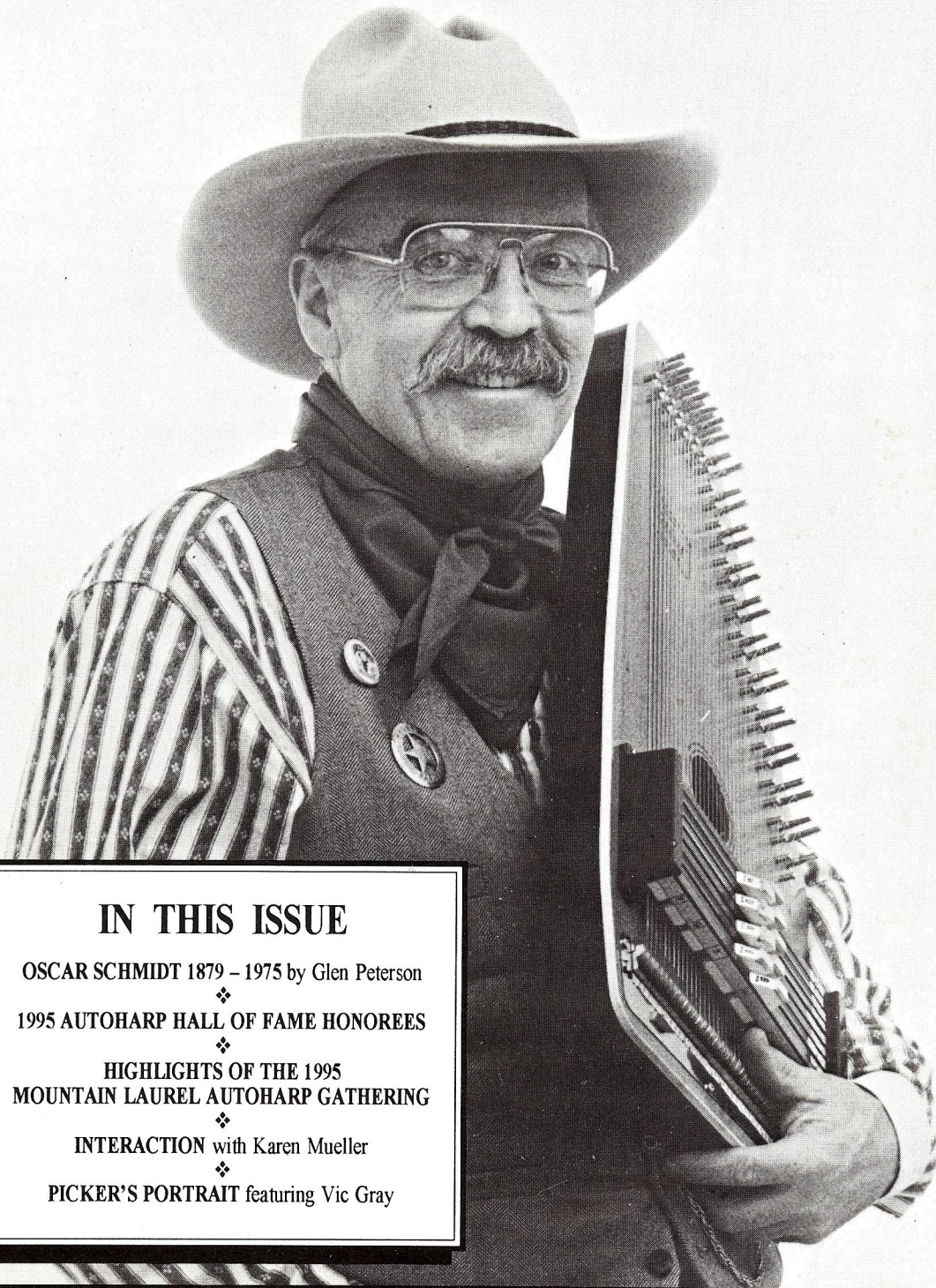


AUTOHARP QUARTERLY

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



IN THIS ISSUE

OSCAR SCHMIDT 1879 - 1975 by Glen Peterson

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1995 AUTOHARP HALL OF FAME HONOREES

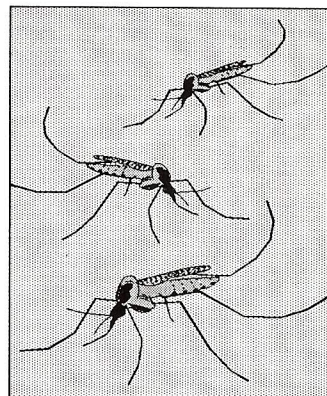
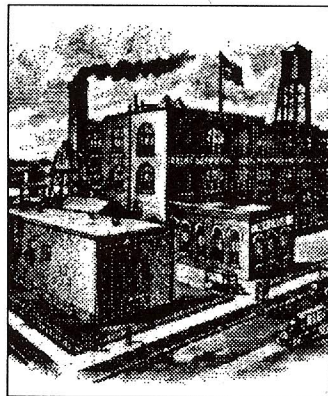
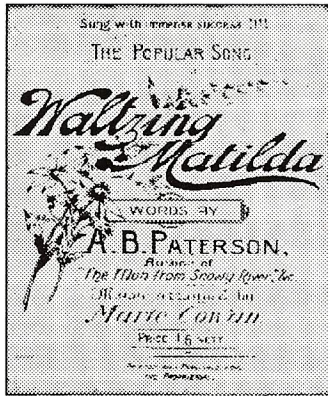
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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1995
MOUNTAIN LAUREL AUTOHARP GATHERING

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SUMMER 1995



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**AUTOHARP
QUARTERLY.**
THE • MAGAZINE • DEDICATED • TO
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To And From / The Editors

Mary Lou  Wan

Dear Readers:

We're now in the midst of our annual frenetic festival frolic and hope to see you in person out there somewhere – the Carter Fold, Galax, Walnut Valley – Look us up at our booth at Winfield, say “Hey!” and check out the festival's 'harp events calendar. And yes, we will be sponsoring our annual top-notch 'harp workshops during the festival again this year. See you there!

We thank Lindsay Haisley and Cathy Britell for their exhaustive and very fine work in presenting the autoharp to the world of Internet (The Autoharp Page on the World Wide Web), and we thank Realtime Communications of Austin, Texas for supplying the “home” for this outstanding page. To access the WWW, you'll need an Internet access account that provides a PPP/SLIP connection, and a software WWW “browser,” such as Mosaic or Netscape. The WWW address of the Autoharp Page is: <http://www.realtime.net/~fmouse/harppage.html>. Check it out!

Due to professional obligations, medical feature writer Dr. Richard Norris, and Fred Koch, Children's Editor, are movin' on. We thank these fine folks for working with us. We'll miss them both.

But rejoice! Catherine W. Britell, M.D. has agreed to be our Medical Editor, and Bonnie Phipps said “Yes!” to us, and will be our Children's Editor! We are delighted and lucky to have these capable folks and great personalities join our staff! Welcome!

Please note these few important announcements: 1. Recordings sent to AQ after August 15, '95 will be considered for review only if the recording is predominantly autoharp; 2. The Market Place is closed this quarter for a much-needed five-year inventory. It will be back in order for the Fall issue. You can still order AQ subscriptions – anytime! And – even though postal costs have increased, we have decided to keep our rates at their present level for as long as possible.

Dear Editors:

YEOW! 

“The Thumb Screw” by Joe Riggs (last issue) has solved my pick problem. Thanks. Of course, I made a few minor changes: I like both thumb and finger picks better with a 2nd or 3rd strip halfway out the pick part to add strength on the down stroke; I used tiny bolts vs the rivets; and I needed an extra half inch to go around my fingers.

Ray Sipes

That smarts!

Editors

FATE 

When I was just a little girl, daddy, [Pop Stoneman] with strict orders to us kids to stay away from his autoharp, hid it away from prying little fingers and inquisitive minds. I found out where he kept it, and began climbing the stairs, taking it out of its hiding place, and strumming it. He found his 'harp out of tune many times, I guess, when he came to the conclusion that someone was disobeying his orders. He didn't raise a fuss, he just went to each one of us, inspecting our fingers carefully. When he came to me, I knew I was in for it. I had a huge blister on my thumb. He casually took out his knife, heated it, and proceeded to cut my blister open. Boy, did that hurt! That was the end of the 'harp for me. I ended up playing the mandolin instead.

Donna Stoneman

Lucky for the mandolin – too bad for the autoharp.

Editors

FRIENDLY FIRE 

I would like to make some corrections to the review done by Bob Woodcock (Spring 1995 AQ) of our “Remind Me” tape. Bob did not read the J-card with the tape, or he would have realized Jesse McReynolds and Raymond McLain were not laid back as he stated on some of the songs. They in fact did

not play on the vocals on this tape, but did play on the four instrumentals. Nowhere on the J-card or the tape does it mention anything about Raymond McLain being related to Jesse McReynolds. In fact, they are not related.

As a reviewer I would expect Mr. Woodcock to recognize the difference between an A Major chord and an A minor chord. Shame on you! The song “Battle Hymn of the Republic” is done in the key of C Major, adding a G⁷, F, A minor and a D minor. This may not be to your liking, but is the accepted practice among Bluegrass musicians.

I would also expect you to be able to tell the difference between the sounds of ‘dubbing’ and live recordings. This tape is a live recording with Raymond and Jesse produced at Bobby Seymour Studios in Nashville, Tennessee.

Sandy Shaner and Paul Hill

REFIRE! 

Thank you for reviewing my “Melodic Autoharp” video [Spring '95 AQ], a Texas Music and Video production. Enclosed is a brief explanation of the questions raised in the review by Mike Herr.

This video was designed specifically for autoharpers who already know the basics of rhythm playing, but want to add variety to their music making, become more melodic, but not necessarily lead players or stage performers. Notice that singing accompanies the music. Tuning an octave seemed sufficient to get “in sync” with the tape, rather than spend countless moments tuning 36 strings via video, probably involving rewind, stop, and start. All of us who practice with cassettes or videos know that some machines play back at a different speed than recorded (usually faster). Therefore it is necessary to tune to the tape pitch, or adjust the audio speed of our equipment which is often not possible.

I elaborated on ways to learn a previously unknown tune via all senses

such as sight, hearing, singing, or using any musical skills from past knowledge. My experience in working with music students has taught me that most folks are not able to go right to the instrument and "pick it out by ear." Very often they get discouraged after stumbling through a song a time or two, or if lucky enough to figure it out, forgetting the chord sequences on the next try. If tab or standard notation is not available, there is no embarrassment in jotting down the words, chords, or whatever is necessary to play sufficiently. Every song doesn't have to be memorized for self-enjoyment.

I introduced backward strums because they result in more volume, and it is possible with metal picks.

Most of us don't make a video purchase very often, so I tried to share as many ideas as I could cram into 60 minutes for the self-taught autoharper who has no teacher in their community, or lacks time and opportunities for networking with other autoharp enthusiasts.

Your local music store can order my videos from Mel Bay Publishing as well as two book/tape sets that will be available sometime in the Fall of '95. The gospel songbook will have both guitar and autoharp tab, as well as standard melody notes, with the tape featuring Steve Kaufman playing guitar for your own duet playing on your 21-chord autoharp. It is almost like having another person to practice along with, instead of playing alone. Great fun! The other book will be Appalachian ballads.

Carol Stober

We are most thankful to Sandy Shaner and Paul Hill, and Carol Stober for writing to us. It is, in our opinion, the professional way to "critique the critiques."

It's extremely hard for us as editors to publish a controversial word of any kind, especially a music review which has been inspired by Carol, a loyal friend and advertiser with AQ since 1989 - and one inspired by Sandy, a hard-working and efficient member of our staff, with whom we have the pleasure of working closely.

Reviews of this kind, however, strongly support the statement that our critics are writing their own opinions concerning their assigned recordings. They're not swayed by the names, their

personal feelings for, nor the importance of the musicians involved. We know that our three staff critics are very knowledgeable in their own music fields, and have the personal fortitude to be absolutely honest, and sufficient bravery to commit that honesty to paper. We are very much aware that all folks certainly will not agree with everything that is written in any publication. And we appreciate response to our writings.

The critics' job in our publication is the toughest job on the staff. We appreciate their work. We also very much appreciate the musicians who send their recordings to us knowing that when they do, because of the honesty of those to whom they commit their music, that music will stand in the spotlight - alone.

Editors

A PICK FOR EVERY STORY

Both articles by Gregg "Scissors-hands" Averett were great, especially the one about picks. I usually play with steel finger picks and a hefty plastic thumb pick, using "Pro-grip" to keep them on for long sessions such as contra dances. But I wanted to add a couple comments about special situations where I find plastic finger picks preferable:

Small fry: I work with kids - a lot of them under eight years old. "Freddy Krueger!" is not the cry of recognition I wish to elicit from these children. I prefer to wear transparent plastic "Dobro" picks...which have been the most satisfactory in fit and performance, and most folks don't even see them.

Practice: Plastic picks' "too sotto voce" quality is perfect when I want to practice late into the night in my motel room...I want to avoid complaints from my next door neighbor (whose pickup truck has a fully loaded gun rack.)...

[Playing with] the blunt ends of the plastic picks take a lot of care to produce a clean melody line...I figure it won't hurt to make some practice sessions more demanding than the performance conditions will be.

The clear plastic "Dobro" picks are not easy to find. My storytelling colleagues know me as the weirdo who slinks away from festivals to check out all the pawn shops and music stores in

town. I'd appreciate a mail order source...

Fran Stallings, Storyteller

AND A STORY FOR EVERY PICK

When I was at Santee Cooper in May, I was hauling in the cats on my 120# Spider-wire, space-age braided line (\$30/100 yd.). I took a meander around the edges and clipped off some great rib bones from some carp whose eye sockets were larger than my watch face, and some perfect catfish spines from the head and back fins. Object - to try them out as prehistoric bone autoharp picks. Well, they sound great! Now I can say to folks who jam with me, "I have a bone to pick with you!"

Joe Riggs

DESIGNER PICKS

Gregg Averett's treatise in the last issue of AQ (Spring '95) on the pros and cons of the "pick world" for autoharpists was informative, as far as it went. However, I failed to find any reference to the need to customize most commercially available picks to match the idiosyncrasies of individual 'harps. Even the Herco picks which he likes, requires sharpening the rounded tips, (which I suspect Marty Schuman also discovered). Without such changes, little volume and attack for group playing can be obtained. This is even more necessary with standard Oscar Schmidt 'harps, never known for their playing volume, anyway. Even with Oscar Schmidt conversions to diatonic, the nylon Herco picks still require customizing for proper volume.

In fact, it has been my experience that unless one plays only melody strumming, all plastic and metal finger picks require straightening the pick flume to be about parallel with the finger in order to do precise and strong melody picking...the white plastic Dunlop finger picks are the most consistent, versatile picks [for me] in that they yield the best friction-free feeling on the strings, between variously tuned diatonics, as well as various models and makes of 'harps.

I've not found any commercially made thumb picks that are really satisfactory with my three custom made 'harps, and have been forced to develop my own [pick] design, which is a rather wide 7/8" in width, but changes

to a sharp and rounded angle of impact. This helps to minimize pick noise, so prevalent in factory-made picks.

Maurice Dill

MAYFLOWER LOVES 'EM

Please send my AQ to the address where we will be living in India.

I have a question: How will I keep my strings from rusting during the monsoon season? (120" of rain in July through September.) Oil them lightly, or what?

...I'm the one who taught herself to play in Africa from Meg Peterson's book - and here I go again! ... See you at Winfield in '98.

Cookie Wiebe

We asked our local autoharp "guru" about this one.

Editors

Dear Cookie,

If you will be living in the wilds, you have a problem. Not only rusted strings, springs, and tuning pegs, but also extreme humidity over a long period of time may cause body warpage.

If you are going to live in civilized circumstances, you may have "hot" closets like we had in Panama. These closets are kept just above room temperature, and are used to control mildew on clothing and such. I would suspect your 'harp would do reasonably well in the closet between playing. (Salt air is worse than humidity.) You will likely want to restring when you get back to the land of the Big Mac. Good luck!

George Orthey

ATTENTION!

- to those wishing to preserve public domain music! I have just received information regarding HR 989 & S 483. A lawyer who understands copyright law has been reading HR 989. He sent three e-mail messages to a friend of mine who is the author of a book listing 5000 public domain songs. The way he's reading this document, not only will it stop public domain for 20 years in the future, it will also be retroactive and return copyrights to items that have already been in the public domain for 20 years, in effect chopping 40 years from the public domain repertoire. It was introduced in the Senate in

March, and could come up for a vote at any time. The bill would attempt to resurrect copyrights which have been expired for 20 years. 17 USC 402 (b) now provides that copyrights in their renewal term or registered for renewal before January 1, 1978, were extended to "endure for a term of seventy-five years from the date copyright was initially secured." This is the section of Title 17 that established the 75-year line between public domain and copyright.

Section (d) (1) (B) of HR 989 would change the 75 years to 95 years. The bill does not deal with the question of books, recordings, movies, etc. which are already on the market using 1900-1919 pd material. ... This bill was introduced in the House by Mr. Moorhead, Mrs. Schroeder, Mr. Coble, Mr. Goodlatte, Mr. Bono, Mr. Gekas, Mr. Berman, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Clement, and Mr. Gallegly. It is "A Bill to amend title 17, US Code, with respect to the duration of copyright," and other purposes. It was introduced in the Senate as S 483 (new name, same words) in March by Mr. Hatch and Ms. Feinstein. This could be passed quietly and imminently. *It is essential* that everyone write to his/her representatives now!

Bob Katzmarek

ATTENTION! - THE OTHER SIDE

A prestigious group of song writers, plus widows and heirs of famous writers who feel that American works should be protected for a copyright term coextensive with the term of European works, (the life of the author plus 70 years), have organized as a forceful group. This organization is working hard to protect the copyright of American music to the life of the author plus 70 years. Among the living writer members are Stephen Sondheim, Steve Allen, Jay Livingston, Ray Evans, Peggy Lee, Allen Menken; the estate members include Rodgers and Hammerstein, Larry Hart, Dorothy Fields, Cole Porter, Hoagy Carmichael, Ira Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, and many more. The organization's paramount concern is a quick implementation of copyright extension before too much of our musical heritage drifts into the public domain. For further information, write *AmSong*, 545 Madison Avenue, NY, NY 10022. ❖



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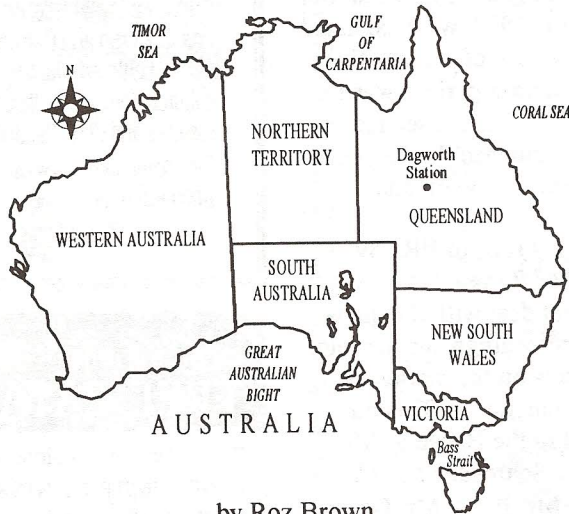
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The Autoharp — Down Under



by Roz Brown

On February 26, 1995 I left the U.S. for my second trip to Australia. There are four folk music festivals which take place every March “down under.” My first trip in 1994 was such fun that I asked to come back in 1995.

It took at least 19 hours of travel time to reach my destination near Melbourne. I had to erase February 27th off my planning calendar because I didn’t have that day this year due to crossing the International Date Line. This can be discouraging should you have a birthday or anniversary on that day. I carry my two autoharps in the Oscar Schmidt semi-hardshell cases so that I can store them in the overhead storage spaces. I strap them together so they count as one carry-on bag. In 15 years of traveling with my ’harps, I’ve never had a problem.

My first festival was in Ocean Grove near Geelong in the state of Victoria. I stayed there with a family for four weeks and traveled from there to each weekend festival. It was wonderful to have a home base to store cassettes, CDs, and extra stuff. Last year I rented a car for part of my trip, but never again. I have found driving on the left to be one of my most stressful life experiences. In Australia, there are trains, busses, taxis, and friends to get you wherever you need to go. I must say the autoharp attracts a lot of attention as there just aren’t many folks

playing the ’harp in Australia.

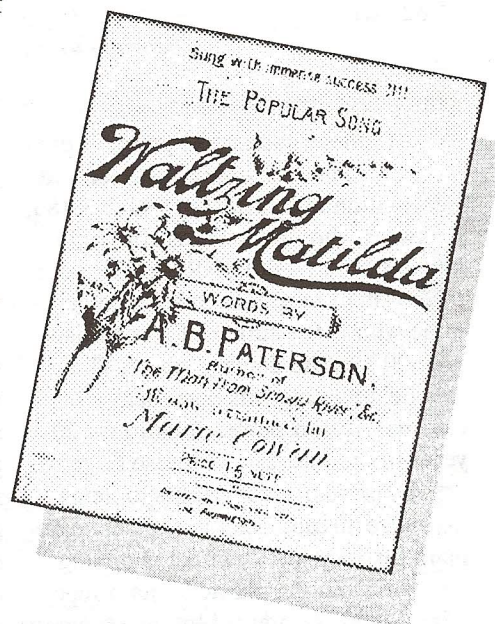
The second festival takes place in Port Fairy which is about three hours north along the coast from Geelong. There are 15 different stages at this festival. Since the festival sells out all of its weekend passes each year, some of these stages are off-grounds in the town itself so that everyone coming to town can experience the festival. It can be fairly wet and cold in this coastal location, so every stage is in a tent or building which keeps everyone dry during performances. I played on several different stages at Port Fairy. These included concerts for seniors, children, and all sea songs at the wharf stage down by the boat docks. (I did a variety of folk songs at the other concerts.) The seniors and the kids knew the words to almost all of our American folk songs. This year I spent a lot of time listening to other performers such as my favorite, Tom Paxton. We were both performing at two of the same festivals and even came home on the same United Airlines flight on March 27.

The highlight for me at the Port Fairy festival was to be invited to participate in a two-hour program telling the story of “Waltzing Matilda.” A. B. “Banjo” Paterson wrote “Waltzing Matilda” in 1895 while visiting Dagworth Station in western Queensland. There, he first heard the

melody which helped inspire his words. It was played on an autoharp by Christina McPherson who wrote the tune as a variation to the “Craigielee” march which she heard at the Warrambol Steeplechase Meeting. The original version of the tune is a bit different from the version we all sing today, but basically the same story. I played the now-familiar version for a rather large audience and it was quite emotional to say the least. To bring this famous song all the way back to Australia from the U.S. on the autoharp really meant a lot to everyone there. I play this song at least five times a week in the States. Unfortunately, the complete background for this song is quite involved and too long for this article.

I did manage to find a few autoharp players at each festival and their big concern was where to get felt and parts for their ’harps. I gave out sample copies of *AQ* and encouraged them to subscribe for help with their needs. My ’harps had a time getting use to the humidity in Australia since they live in the dry Colorado climate most of their lives. Every day for two weeks, I found them very sharp and had to tune them down. It seemed like the instrument must be at least ¼ of an inch longer with all this tuning. The weather in March was sunny and warm most of the time and like our September for the most part. They tell me it was near 100°F at Christmas time there.

Continued on page 6



The Original WALTZING MATILDA

Words by A. B. "Banjo" Paterson
Music by Christina McPherson

C / / / G7 / / C Am / / F / / C / / / / / G7 C G7 C G7
Oh there once was a swag - man_ camped in the Bill - a-bong, Un - der the shade of a Cool - i - bah tree, And he

TAB

C / G7 / / C Am / / F / / C / / / G7 C G7 C G7 C /
sang as he looked at the old bil - ly boil - - ing, Who'll come a'waltz - ing Ma - til - da with me ___?

TAB

C / / F C / / F / G7 F G7 C / / F C / / G7 C G7
Who'll a come a'waltz - ing Ma - til - da my darl - ing, Who'll come a'waltz - ing Ma - til - da with me?

TAB

C / G7 / / C Am / / F / / C / / / G7 C G7 C G7 C
Waltz - ing Ma - til - da and lead - ing a wa - ter - bag, Who'll come a'waltz - ing Ma - til - da with me?"

TAB

Autoharp arrangement © 1995, Ivan Stiles

Down came a jumbuck to drink at the Billabong,
Up jumped the swagman and grabbed him with glee,
And he sang as he put him away in the tucker bag,
"You'll come a'waltzing Matilda with me."

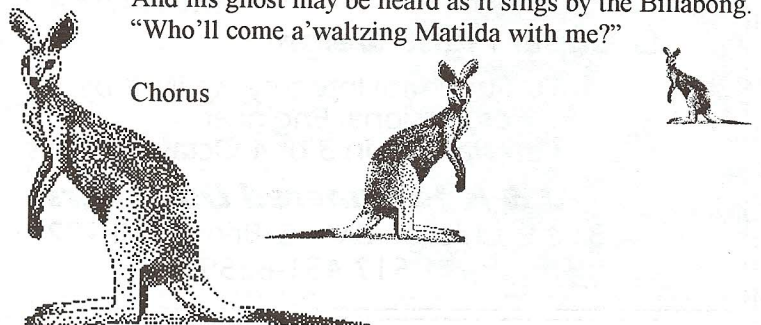
Chorus

Down came the squatter, a'riding his thoroughbred,
Down came policemen, one, two, three.
"Whose is the jumbuck you've got in the tucker bag?"
"You'll come a'waltzing Matilda with me."

Chorus

But the swagman, he up and he jumped in the waterhole,
Drowning himself by the Coolibah tree,
And his ghost may be heard as it sings by the Billabong.
"Who'll come a'waltzing Matilda with me?"

Chorus



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The Autoharp — Down Under

Continued from page 4

My third festival was at Jamberoo in New South Wales. It's about two hours south of Sydney and beautiful rolling dairy country. It reminded me of my home state of Wisconsin. It's a very tiny town with a main street only one block long. I stayed in the 100-year-old Jamberoo Hotel. Once again, I did several concerts and shared the stage with Tom Paxton and lots of great Australian musicians. We did a shorter "Waltzing Matilda" program at this festival and this time I had to learn the original 1895 version as it was first played on the autoharp. I was glad that I remembered how to read music. I really enjoyed this festival, as I did last year, as it is smaller than Port Fairy and we had lots of time to socialize and share our music off stage.

For those of you who listen to short wave radio, you might want to tune in to Radio Australia every morning at 7:30 a.m. Mountain Daylight Time. I hear them on 11,800 kHz, but they broadcast on several frequencies which you'll find in your shortwave directory. They play music from all the folk festivals and Australian music every morning.

Last year, I was able to attend the National Folk Festival in Canberra on Easter weekend. Easter moved to April 16 this year, so I had to skip this festival. This festival is much bigger than Port Fairy or Jamberoo and includes all types of folk dancing. I was really surprised last year when a lady came up to me from the U.S. and told me she knew me from the Winfield, Kansas festival.

In summary, I really love the people of Australia, their country, and their music. They made me feel like I must have lived there in a previous lifetime. Should you decide to travel to Australia, get in touch with me and I'll tell you what festivals are going on. Remember that jet lag can be a real headache coming home. I came home via New Zealand this year. We left Auckland at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, and after traveling some 16 hours, arrived back in Denver on Monday at 3:30 p.m. — two hours before we left New Zealand. It took about 20 days to really recover this time! ♦

A special thanks to Forbes Guckel from New South Wales, Australia ("To and From the Editors," AQ, Spring '95) who sent us an informative book about the history of "Waltzing Matilda," and other related historical material.

Editors

The New WALTZING MATILDA

Words by A. B. "Banjo" Paterson

C / / / G7 / Am G7 Am / F G7 F C / / / / G7 / / / C G7
 Once a jol - ly swag - man camped by a bill - a - bong Un - der the shade of a cool - i - bah tree, And he

TAB

C / / / G7 / Am G7 Am / F G7 F C / / / / G7 C G7 / / / C
 sang as he watched and wait - ed till his bil - ly boiled, "You'll come a - waltz - ing Ma - til - da with me!"

TAB

C / / / / F / / / G7 F C / / / F C / / / G7 C G7 C G7
 Waltz - ing Ma - til - da, Waltz - ing Ma - til - da, You'll come a - waltz - ing Ma - til - da with me. And he

TAB

C / / / G7 / Am G7 Am / F G7 F C / / / / G7 C G7 / / / C
 sang as he watched and wait - ed till his bil - ly boiled, "You'll come a - waltz - ing Ma - til - da with me!"

TAB

Autoharp arrangement © 1995, Ivan Stiles

Down came a jumbuck to drink at the billabong,
Up jumped the swagman and grabbed him with glee,
And he sang as he stowed that jumbuck in his tucker bag,
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!"

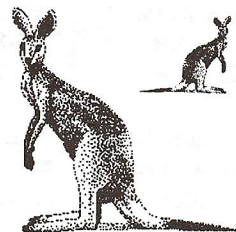
Chorus

Up rode the squatter, mounted on his thoroughbred,
Down came the troopers, one, two, three:
"Where's that jolly jumbuck you've got in your tuckerbag?"
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!"

Chorus

Up jumped the swagman, sprang into the billabong.
"You'll never catch me alive," said he.
And his ghost may be heard as you pass by that billabong,
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!"

Chorus



Summer/Fall Events

Festivals Editor:
Sandy Shaner
7095 Hanson Road
Hanson, KY 42413

The following are major 1995 summer events 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

AUGUST

- **Kentucky Music Weekend**; August 1-3; **Bardstown, KY**; Code: **AP** (Bryan Bowers); 719 635-7776
- **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 Luthern 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
- **The Cypress Creek Park Music Festival**; August 10; **Adona, AR**; Code: **AP** (Bill & Laurie Sky); 901 365-8691
- **Autoharp Jamboree**; August 10-12; **Ozark Folk Center, Mt. View, AR**; Code: **AP, AW**; (Tom Schroeder, Charles Whitmer); Elliot Hancock,

- Box 500, Mountain View, AR 72560
 - **Willamette Valley Autoharp Gathering**; 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
 - **20th Annual Owen Sound Summerfolk Music & Crafts Festival**; August 18-20; **Kelso Beach Park, Canada**; Code: **AP** (Bryan Bowers); Georgian Bay Folk Society, PO Box 521, Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 5R1 Canada
 - **Keithville Jamboree**; August 19; **Shreveport, LA**; Code: **AP** (Bill & Laurie Sky); 901 365-8691
 - **The Front Porch Music Festival**; August 19; **Valpariso, IN**; Code: **AP** (Harvey Reid); PO Box 1134, Portsmouth, NH 03802
 - **CMOCC & Folk Music Society of Midland**; August 26, 27; **Midland, MI**; Code: **AP, AW**; 5568 W. River Rd. Weidman, MI 48893 517 644-3058
 - **Old Time Fiddlers' and Bluegrass Convention**; August 25-26; **The ballfield, Fries, VA**; Code: **AC**; James Lindsey, 703-236-4486
 - **Roots of American Music Festival**; August 26-27; **Lincoln Center, New York, NY**; Code: **AP** (Paul & Win Grace); call or write to Lincoln Center
 - **Old-Time Country Music Contest & Festival**; August 29-September 4; **Pottawattamie County Fairgrounds, Avoca, IA**; Code: **AP, AC**; 712 784-3001
-
- ## SEPTEMBER
-
- **The Wildwood Family Music Festival**; September 1, 2; **Horatio, AR**; Code: **AP** (Bill & Laurie Sky); 901 365-8691
 - **Johnstown Folk Festival**; September 2,3; **Johnstown, PA**; Code: **AP** (Paul & Win Grace); 314 443-2819
 - **18th Annual Fox Valley Folk Music & Storytelling Festival**; September 3-4; **Island Park, IL**; Code: **AP, AW**; Fox Val-

- ley Folklore Society, 755 N. Evanslawn Ave., Aurora, IL 60506 708 897-3655
 - **Johnny Appleseed Festival**; September 16,17; **Fort Wayne, IN**; Code: **AP** (Paul & Win Grace); 314 443-2819
 - **Bryan Bowers Workshops**; September 10-13; **Winfield, KS**; Preregistration required; Workshops, 730 Healy Road, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284 369 826-3439
 - **Walnut Valley Festival**; Sept. 14-17; **Winfield, KS**; Code: **AC** (International Autoharp Championship), **AP, AW** (Bryan Bowers, Roz Brown, Julie Davis, John McCutcheon, Mike Seeger); Bob Redford, PO Box 245, Winfield, KS 67156 316 221-3250
 - **Six Flags Over Texas Heritage Festival**; September 16, 17 & 23, 24 & 30, October 1; **Arlington, TX**; Code: **AP** (Bill & Laurie Sky); 901 365-8691
 - **The Plum Creek Bluegrass Festival**; September 21; **Dew, TX**; Code: **AP** (Bill & Laurie Sky); 901 365-8691
 - **Memphis Dulcimer Festival**; September 22-24; **Idlewild Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN**; Code: **AP, AW** (Karen Mueller, Mike King, Tom Schroeder); Memphis Dulcimer Festival, 95 N. Evergreen St., Memphis, TN 38104
 - **Texas Heritage Festival**; September 23, 24; **Arlington, TX**; Code: **AP** (Paul & Win Grace); 314 443-2819
 - **The Ozark Folk Festival**; September 29, 30; **Eureka Springs, AR**; Code: **AP** (Paul & Win Grace); 314 443-2819
-
- ## OCTOBER
-
- **Landis Valley Museum Harvest Days**; October 7, 8; **Landis Valley Museum, Lancaster, PA**; Code: **AP** (Ubi Adams); 717 569-8465
 - **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, Bill & Laurie Sky); 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

*Received no information from event.

WALNUT VALLEY FESTIVAL

24TH NATIONAL FLAT-PICKING CHAMPIONSHIPS

September 14, 15, 16, 17, 1995

WINFIELD, KANSAS



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- Mike Cross
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- Tom Chapin
- Marley's Ghost
- Bryan Bowers
- Bluegrass, Etc.
- Mike Seeger
- Nickel Creek
- Steve Kaufman
- Nonesuch
- Linda Tilton
- The Plaid Family
- John McCutcheon
- Red Steagall & The Coleman County Cowboys
- Tim & Mollie O'Brien & The O'Boys (Thurs)
- No Strings Attached
- Tom Paxton
- The Bluegrass Patriots
- Aileen & Elkin Thomas
- Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen
- Beppe Gambetta
- The Young Acoustic Allstars
- Friedlander & Hall Little Big Band
- David Parmley, Scott Vestal & Continental Divide
- Andy May
- Crow Johnson
- Roz Brown
- Revival
- Julie Davis
- Bill Barwick
- Phyllis Dunne
- Winfield City Band
- Mary Caitlin Smith
- Barry Patton



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2-day Fri./Sat.	\$38	\$45
Sat./Sun.	\$28	\$35
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Sun. (Gate only)		\$12

*Children ages 6-11...\$3 each, payable at gate upon initial entry. NOT payable in advance.
*Children under 6 admitted free with adult

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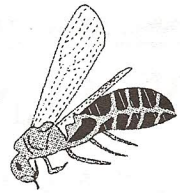
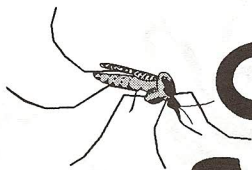
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This will be BEST FESTIVAL IN THE U.S. this year!!!

All God's Critters Got A Place In My Sleeping Bag...NOT!!!



by Cathy Britell, M.D.

With summer festival season here, the issue of how to protect yourself from biting insects without melting your skin or your autoharp is again of interest. Not only is it uncomfortable and upsetting to endure the venom of our six-legged friends...but tick, spider, and mosquito bites can pose a danger as well. Ticks carry Lyme Disease in almost all parts of the country, and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever in certain central areas. Mosquito-borne encephalitis has also been a problem in scattered rural areas of the Northeast and Upper Midwest.

The good news is that there are some new products on the market that are quite effective, when used properly, in repelling or killing the critters without harming you or your loved ones (of course you count your autoharp among your "loved ones"). Treatment of tents, clothing, bedding, and mosquito netting with Permethrin, a chemical analog of the naturally occurring plant insecticide Pyrethrum, is a very effective way to keep bugs away from your sleeping area and off clothed parts of the body. Permethrin (available commercially as "Duranon," "Perma-Kill," and "Repel Permanone") is available in a spray or liquid. It's readily absorbed into cotton, Dacron, and nylon fibers, and after spraying will maintain insecticidal and repellent properties for two weeks, and after soaking in the solution and drying, for four weeks, through approximately six washings. It is odorless after application, and greaseless, is non-toxic to people, doesn't harm plastics, paint, varnish, or other finishes, and is an overall excellent repellent as well as insecticide. The one major precaution is that this substance is highly toxic to fish, and, of course, should not be ingested or used directly on people or animals.

Insect repellents that are used on the skin pose more problems. By far the best repellent is DEET (the active ingredient of "Off," "Cutters," and other popular repellents). It is exceedingly irritating to the eyes, and when used in high concentrations, particularly in infants and children, can cause severe skin reactions, serious neurologic problems, and liver disease. It has not been proven safe in pregnancy, and also melts many plastics and wood finishes.

Before now, alternatives to DEET (Lemon eucalyptus oil, and "Skin-So-Soft") were not very effective, and often greasiness and odor made them difficult to tolerate. However, there are some new products on the market that use polymer microencapsulation of DEET, reducing absorption through the skin and retarding evaporation, providing prolonged effectiveness. One such product is "Ultrathon," available as a cream or spray. It has a faint scent, is non-oily, and water and sweat resistant. It's sticky when first applied but after it dries seems to disappear and is probably not a threat to instrument finishes. The effectiveness of Ultrathon lasts for 12 hours, and adverse reactions have been rare. There is a similar product for children called "Skeedaddle," which has an even lower concentration of DEET, and is effective for up to 4 hours. A third product is called "DEET Plus," and has a relatively low concentration of DEET combined with a synergist. It's available as a cream or pump spray, has a faint scent, is non-oily, and lasts up to four hours.

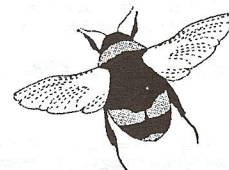
A number of other measures have proved disappointing. Specifically, Vitamin B1 and electronic buzzers have been shown to be totally ineffective against mosquitoes, flies, and ticks. Citronella has some minor useful ef-

fect, and the smell of the burning citronella candle adds a certain ambience to a summer's evening.

So...the best overall protection is loose-fitting clothing with snug cuffs, shoes and socks, and a microencapsulated DEET product on exposed skin areas. Also, avoidance of perfumes and after-shave lotions will make you less attractive to mosquitoes and flies. If you have any chronic skin diseases causing open areas on your skin, or if you are sensitive to many substances, talk to your doctor before using any of these products.

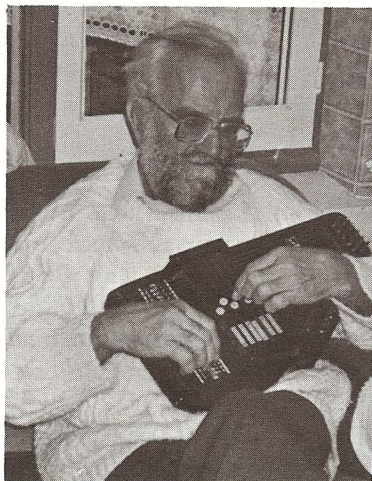
If you do find a tick attached, it's important *not* to try to remove it by putting alcohol, kerosene, or other toxic substance on it, or by burning it. Stressing the tick in this way will tend to make it regurgitate its stomach contents into you, thereby increasing the chance of infection. To remove the tick, grasp it as close to the skin as possible with blunt curved tweezers or fingers protected by tissue, and pull the tick out with steady upward pressure. Once the tick is out, avoid crushing the body, as this can cause spread of infectious material. If there is a red spot where the tick has bitten you, or if you suspect that the tick has been attached for more than 24 hours, see your doctor to determine if antibiotic treatment is necessary.

It's going to be a great summer! A few precautions and wise use of some protective measures will make it even more enjoyable and keep the critters from putting a "bug" into your festival season. ❖



Picker's Portrait

Vic Gray "Penny-Cum-Quick" Hants ❖ England



Vic Gray playing his Musima Markneukirchen, made in the German Democratic Republic.

My introduction to the autoharp was that in a moment of madness, I bought a cheap German one at a "car boot sale," and became fascinated by it. Most of the music shops here were unable to give me any help. Indeed, two had not heard of the instrument! I wrote to Mike Fenton, and he made

a call on me! He duly made the 100 mile trip, and promptly unloaded three autoharps from his little white van, which was packed with other instruments, and spent a very enjoyable day playing my old Lyon and Healy 5-string banjo, and in the evening, we retreated to the home of my friend, George Malcolmson, the area rep for the *British Bluegrass Magazine*, who was host to a tenor banjo player, (an Irishman, of course), so you can imagine the sort of jam session we had that evening. Lovely. So, from never holding an autoharp before in my long, long, life, I now have a famous friend, all at the cost of a toast dinner and night's lodging.

I played the autoharp, (and I use the word, "autoharp" very lightly!) to my 11-year-old granddaughter, who is learning violin at school and she was fascinated by it. I took a Mike Fenton cassette to school to show her teacher. This lady wanted to know more, so I sent Mike's booklet and school tape. She now wants to pay me a visit to see it, and gave my granddaughter an exercise to draw one, played the cassette to her head teacher...and she wants to know more, as well, so I may have a

convert. I don't know about playing for the music teacher. I've only been at it for a few months, and will be extremely nervous. I have played the dulcimer in jam sessions with some pretty good musicians, and have a friend who plays 5-string banjo and guitar. We have done quite a few pubs and

clubs, and once I sit down to play, I'm OK. But up to this point, I'm a wreck!

We have been in the middle of the V.E. Day celebrations...it has been a sad time for me, remembering the friends I lost in the war. I was in the Royal Marines when I should have been enjoying my teen age. Over these last 50 years, I've managed to forget most of the war, or at least put it at the back of my mind. But, this weekend, as I was watching a programme on television about the liberation of some POW camps, there staring at me from the screen, behind barbed wire, was a friend I was called up with. We had lost touch. I still could not find him, the film is pretty old, but it reminded me how lucky I was, and I gave thanks that he, at least, survived. Funny old life, isn't it?

I'm one of those lucky people, that apart from spring's hay fever, I've never been ill a day in my life, so if the saying that the sins of the father visit the son, my dad must have been wearing a halo, God bless him. My wife Joan has a heart problem, but is OK if she takes it easy. I don't think my learning to play banjo, dulcimer, and now the autoharp has soothed her way! ❖

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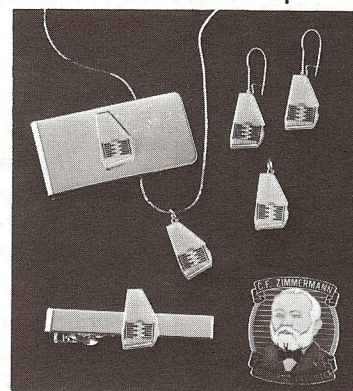
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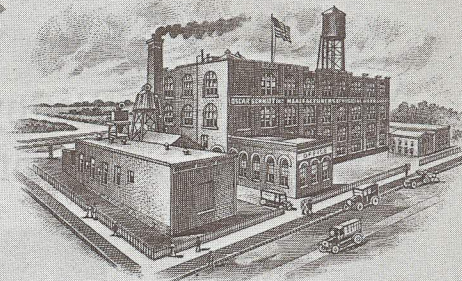
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ACCESSORIES

Has it ever occurred to you that nobody – not Zimmerman, Dolge, Oscar, Finney or myself – all people who made a ‘success’ of the Autoharp was a musical virtuoso? Does Henry Ford drive in the Indianapolis 500? His engines are there. He isn’t. He plays a different role. So do we. I once pointed out to Bill Ludwig (owner of Ludwig Drum Co.) that musicians create nothing other than music. And that it is innovators such as him (and me) who dream up the new musical products that permit the musicians to pick up their part of the ball and run with it. He was modestly amazed at the concept.

Think of modern rock music. It was Don Randall and Lee Fender, the guys out there in California who dreamed up the electric solid-body guitar, who really got it going. Without them there would have been no Beatles or a rock generation. To be sure, someone else might have come along and done it – but the fact is that they did it *then*. To analyze the history of rock music, you must first take into consideration the people who made it possible. And why they did it.

– Glen R. Peterson

Editor’s Note: This series of articles has been taken directly from transcripts written by the late Glen Peterson and presented to us by Meg Peterson, to document the history of the Autoharp during the Oscar Schmidt – Peterson Era. They have not been altered in any way, and are presented on these pages as Glen wrote them.

The Petersons fought long and valiantly to maintain the name of our instrument as a trademark of the Schmidt company, and in deference to them, and to our “no editing” policy, we shall print the word, “Autoharp,” as Glen wrote it. However, due to their efforts of expansion in the use of, and improvements in the manufacture of this instrument, “autoharp” is now a part of the English language – a word of common usage. Thus, rather than having it stand apart, as an unusual and different, – a not-quite-instrument, autoharp is as accepted as banjo, flute, guitar, and violin, according to the United States patent and trademark offices. The fact of legitimacy –

to be placed among the instruments of the English language – the world – is in truth a giant leap forward for our instrument, and a tremendous and forever tribute to the work of Glen and Meg Peterson.

Before you read – I have composed this series of articles from separate reports written by Mr. Peterson in 1975. These reports have been copied verbatim, and have been interlaced with each other, allowing the articles to follow a chronological order as much as is possible. Historical discrepancies are due solely to the fact that the true history of the autoharp was not uncovered until 1991 (see AQ, Vol. 3, No. 3). The words which are in italics, as in this paragraph, are copied from a multi-paged unnamed manuscript. The words in normal type, are copied from a report entitled “Oscar Schmidt-International, Inc. 1879-1975.”

Autoharp Quarterly thanks Meg Peterson for giving us her permission to print this unpublished history written by her late husband, Glen R. Peterson.

– Mary Lou Orthey

Oscar Schmidt

1879 – 1975

written by Glen R. Peterson
in 1975

Oscar Schmidt was born in the Kingdom of Saxony in the mid nineteenth century. As a youth, he was apprenticed as a book-binder. When he completed his apprenticeship he went into that business and failed. Under Saxonian laws of the time, this meant that he had not studied properly as an apprentice. He was required to go back and start all over again.

He decided instead to emigrate to the United States. He wound up in the publishing business. This somehow led to the music publishing business which in turn led to opening a rather extensive chain of music schools along the east coast which he supplied with his music.

Apparently this led him into making the instruments his students were using in the schools. When Schmidt died in October of 1929, he was perhaps the largest, certainly one of the largest makers of musical instruments in the world. He died in Karlsbad, Czechoslovakia, on his 76th round trip to Europe where he had four factories. He had three more factories in the U.S. He was involved in literally everything musical except what the industry calls "keyboard" – pianos and organs.

One month after his death came the stock market crash of 1929 and not too long after that the German inflation and the U.S. depression. His estate and his musical empire shrunk down to one leased factory in Jersey City and in 1936 the company was reorganized under the present name. Everything except what the author calls multi-stringed musical instruments (zithers, Autoharps, psalteries, etc.) was sold off. The Harmony Company of Chicago, this country's largest guitar manufacturer, still sells the Stella and Sovereign guitars – former Oscar Schmidt products.

The Autoharp, which today represents the largest portion of Oscar Schmidt sales volume, was not origi-

nally a Schmidt product. It was invented in 1883 by a man named Zimmerman from Danzig, which was then part of Prussia. He made them in Philadelphia for five years and then went under. Alfred Dolge, after whom the town of Dolgeville, N.Y. is named, (he named it) took over the Autoharp and the history books say he parlayed it into "America's most popular musical instrument." Dolge also finally went under, the Autoharp passed to the Phonoharp Company of Boston, Mass., and then Schmidt merged Phonoharp.

With Phonoharp, the Schmidt organization also acquired Mr. Harold Finney, a man who managed the company until his death in 1963. He also owned slightly less than one-third of the stock in Oscar Schmidt-International. This stock today is owned by his widow, Mrs. Lucretia Finney who resides in Cornwall, NY.

Under the terms of his will, Oscar Schmidt's stock (65%) was held in trust for his son Walter, with his widow to receive the income from it. His widow survived until 1958 at which time his stock passed to his son Walter. Approximately 30 days after this, Walter Schmidt died and the stock passed to his sister, Elsa Schmidt.

In 1963, when Harold Finney died, Elsa Schmidt asked Glen Peterson (her nephew) to run the company for her. He agreed contingent upon an agreement that he would acquire all her common stock. That was arranged and today the 65% is held by Glen Peterson and his family.

The next turning point in the history of the Autoharp came in February 1963 when Elsa Schmidt, one of Oscar Schmidt's daughters and owner of more than two thirds of the company's stock called her nephew Glen Peterson with a panicked announcement – "Mr. Finney is in an oxygen tent. What do I do. Help Me."

Peterson, who had spent a career as a city manager, nonprofit founda-

tion executive, and political campaign manager (but who at the moment was involved in drilling oil and gas wells in West Virginia) was not enthusiastic about helping his aunt. But family is family, she was a woman alone, and he reluctantly agreed to "mind the store" while Finney recovered.

Glen Peterson came into the music industry with absolutely zero experience in it. He had never, since his childhood, ever even set foot in the Schmidt factory. His background was in government, politics and politically-related public relations. In these areas he had an outstanding track record.

But Finney did not recover and about a week later died. Peterson agreed to stick with his aunt, put the books in order, and suggested that she try to sell the company. She did not want to sell it. She begged him to run it and keep it in the family. He told her "I'll run it only if I own it" and Elsa agreed to a deal whereby (for tax reasons) over a period of a few years she would turn over her stock to him and his family.

There is one other stockholder in the company. He is Mr. Fred Reiniger, a retired former director of public relations for the New York Stock Exchange. He owns approximately 3%, a gift from his stepmother who was another of Oscar Schmidt's three daughters. He is completely inactive in the company and lives in retirement in Ocean County, NJ.

During this period, which spanned perhaps two months, Peterson had come to realize that while it was an obviously decrepit operation, it had nowhere to go but up and that it had good potential.

Peterson's misgivings about the company derived from more than the fact that he had never before run a manufacturing operation. For example, he found an office with no electric typewriters, the letterhead hadn't changed in about 50 years, there was

only one phone line (which was frequently tied up by employees placing bets with their bookmakers). The company had been running a boiler plate advertisement in a trade magazine and hadn't changed the copy in 20 years, and the woman who packed the accessory envelopes for the harps worked under a 20 watt light bulb so the company could save money. He was used to much classier operations. Perhaps his first change in the company was to go out and personally buy that packer a 100 watt bulb.

(At this point, I will switch to the first person:)

In 1963, I took over a company that was unbelievably decrepit and antiquated. Literally everything about it was over the hill. It occupied two separated floors of a former Schmidt loft building in Jersey City. The woodworking shop (the guts of the operation) was in a subbasement, heated by one 3" steam pipe, and it was not unusual to see workmen wearing overcoats and galoshes to keep their feet dry from the water that came in over the window sills.

Final assembly, finishing, and shipping were on the third floor with everything going up and down one freight elevator which was used in common with two other companies in the building.

The most sophisticated piece of machinery in the operation was a drum sander. Next in order were drill presses. Everything else was done by hand tools.

He was also shocked when he inquired why the words "Manufacturer's Advertising Corporation" were painted on the front door window. He learned that it was a phony company used as a collection agency to dun money from poor farmers down in the Appalachians who had bought zithers or ukelins on the installment plan from one of the three traveling salesmen still involved with the company. He promptly had the words razor-bladed off the door, fired the salesmen, and not long after that abolished the ukelin.

Peterson also began to read the letters of complaint coming into the company – complaints about warping, twisting, panels delaminating, split panels, chord bars that stuck in the

holders or rubbed against each other, almost everything. The first production change he ever made came about because he took a harp home and put it on his dining room table. His five children played with it. Then he found massive scratches in the table. Why scratches? Because, he learned, the nails used to put on the feet on the bottom of the harp were given only one swat with a hammer and often protruded. So the first big change was to order that the nails be countersunk. He was warned by the old timers that this would take more time and "raise production costs." He was astounded by such a response and ordered it done anyhow. That mentality on the part of company employees told him he had a big job ahead.

...it was not unusual
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wearing overcoats
and galoshes to keep
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over the window sills.

The factory manager, Henry Ruckner, was a man in his fifties who had worked for various Oscar Schmidt companies since he was 12 years old. Peterson once asked him what the model number system was all about. Why the fractions such as on the 2³/₄? What did 73 relate to? He didn't know and said the system was so old nobody knew. Or cared.

Approximately 90% of the output of the company was in the Model 73 Autoharp which came off the line and was put into master cartons. When orders were received a shipping label was attached and the shipment made. This sounds efficient except for the fact that identical instruments were sold by Sears Roebuck, Montgomery Ward, and all music retail stores – and Sears and Wards had them priced below wholesale! Naturally, most retail stores refused to carry the instrument for fear of selling one at list, only to have the customer find out that he/she could have bought it at Sears for less than half the price. This is what I call

decrepit marketing, and one doesn't have to spend a lifetime growing up in the music industry to recognize that.

Off the record I advised both Sears and Wards (who bought 39% of our output) that they would either have to raise their catalog prices to sensible levels or I would drastically raise my prices to them. They complied.

Oscar Schmidt, he found, had been basically a zither company until rather recently. As late as 1955 zither sales exceeded Autoharp sales. He found old records going back to 1925 when the company made 41,175 total instruments – of which only 1,838 were Autoharps. Most importantly, he learned that Autoharp sales had grown over the years despite, in a sense, any effort on the part of the company. Music educators across the nation had begun to find them useful in elementary classrooms. Aside from Sears and Wards, the company's three biggest customers were direct mail school musical instrument suppliers.

He also designed the "piano key scale label" after Peterson discovered that the old paper one was still keyed to the Zimmerman dream of a new scoring system. But, worse yet, the notes did not line up correctly under the strings because years earlier the printing plate had become distorted and the company never bothered to change it.

Moreover, it was an absolutely archaic manufacturing operation. All of the equipment was outdated and inefficient. The glue used to make the bodies, for example, was nothing but flour and water, despite the fact that much better adhesives were available at almost the same cost.

Not only did the Model 73 Autoharp represent 90% of the company's sales; it had not had one design or materials improvement (except for the replacement of a couple of wooden parts with plastic parts) since its design in 1883. It was a truly lousy and undependable music instrument whose only virtue, from the company's point of view, was that it could be made by a hammer, saw, and drill press by what can only be gently categorized as sub-skilled minimum wage labor. The volume of complaints and customer returns was so high that at one point (before we redesigned it) Sears advised

me that their returns to some control stores were running as high as 40%. Previous management's system for responding to complaints is commonly known as the circular file. Mr. Finney wintered in Florida, and the company was managed by a bookkeeper and the plant manager, a man who had begun his career with the Schmidt organization at the age of 12.

The company had rerun the same institutional ad in our major trade magazine for 20 straight years. The letterhead was designed in 1936 when the company was reorganized. The most sophisticated piece of office equipment was a hand crank adding machine. We had one incoming line.

How can a company like this survive? The Thirties, World War II, and the late Forties were undoubtedly tough and nothing is known about the company's history. Mr. Finney was a non-degreed accountant who kept all company's records only as long as required by the IRS. In the early Fifties the concept of music education in the early grades began evolving, principally at Columbia University. The pioneers in this field latched on to the Autoharp as an instrument that any classroom teacher could quickly and easily learn to play, which needed no musical knowledge or training, and which could therefore be used by the unmusical teacher to accompany the children singing.

There was happily nothing else to equal it for this rudimentary function. Ideally, according to the educators, every classroom should have a piano. But that simply isn't feasible. The schools don't have the money and the teachers don't know who to play them. The only other practical alternative was the Autoharp.

Sales, therefore, grew without any extensive effort on the part of the company as the concept of elementary music education took hold all over the nation.

So the company was profitable, despite the quality of its product and its general style. Unfortunately, over the years the company had paid out a minimum of 85% of its profits in dividends so practically nothing was left for upgrading the plant and the operations. The company had been milked dry by elderly people who were natu-

rally not thinking ten and twenty years ahead. It was profitable because it felt it had a monopoly (which it did) and could tell the customers to go jump – which it also did.

The most unbelievable illustration of this attitude was forced on me when I was told by a music educator that there was something wrong with what we call the scale label, a printed part with a musical scale on it which lines up under the strings on the instrument and tells the player which string is what note. When I checked I learned that the man was correct. Our scale was wrong. I also learned that the error had been known by the company for a long time, that the company had knowingly shipped tens of thousands of incorrect instruments, and that the cor-



The most sophisticated piece of office equipment was a hand crank adding machine. We had one incoming line.



rection had not been made because this would require the expenditure of \$7.00 for a new printing plate!

Equally shocking to Peterson were the manufacturing facilities and also some things he soon learned about the materials used in the harp's construction. Saws which cut up the frame parts and chord bars could not be held to tight tolerances because they were so antiquated. Much of the machinery was still driven by overhead belts. The antique sanding machine used to smooth the panels could not be trusted and could not use fine grain paper. (The company's solution for that was to use a heavy varnish finish which covered up the defects.) The sides were sanded on a "spindle" sander which guaranteed that scratches would be left on the sides. The bottoms were painted a dull flat black – to save money. The woodworking shop itself was in a subbasement that leaked and when it rained heavily water came in and the employees made harp bodies standing in their galoshes or boots.

And the basswood panels, which came all the way from southern Minnesota, were stored in this damp humid environment.

Ruckner recognized many of these deficiencies and fired one idea after the other at Peterson for improving things. Peterson picked up the ball and the changes and improvements accelerated. The sander was rebuilt, the varnish was changed to lacquer, the "music rack" was eliminated when Peterson surveyed customers and found that nobody used it – because it wasn't suitable for holding a music book.

He found that the tuning pins, which were made for Schmidt by the company that made pins for most of the U.S. piano manufacturing industry, were raw steel and prone to rust very rapidly in various high humidity areas of the nation. He promptly ordered them finished nickel-plated.

Literally dozens of changes were made in all aspects of the company's operations and the harp itself. Between late 1964 and 1968 when the first "B" models were made there was hardly a month went by that some significant change in harp design, construction, or quality didn't take place. Many of them, such as plating the tuning pins, or tightening up frame tolerances, or using better adhesives, went unnoticed by the consumer.

Perhaps the first major change visible to the consumer was the introduction of the styrene 15 and 12 bar holders. The old 12 chord holder was bakelite – a material too heavy, too brittle, and incapable of being molded to tight tolerances. The old 15 chord holder was made of wood and fiberboard – a slow and expensive system which resulted in many unfilled orders because they couldn't be made fast enough. Peterson had an expensive new mold made and, without fanfare, began using the improved holders.

The next big change was the elimination of the soundhole. This was one of Ruckner's ideas. He was very familiar with how frequently the basswood panels cracked – sometimes even while on the production line before they were boxed. And Peterson had stacks of letters from bewildered (and angry) consumers. Because such cracks are not repairable Schmidt had to make good

on the guarantees. Ruckner, without revealing to Peterson what he was doing, contrived to have "listener tests" made using professional musicians, the company's tuning personnel, and mere laymen listening to Autoharps with and without the soundhole. His reasoning was that because of all the internal bracing in the harp the hollow "sound box" was too small to be meaningful and the hole served no useful purpose – it was mainly a tradition.

The unwitting listeners uniformly supported Ruckner. They chose the harps without the holes and termed them "sweeter" and "less twangy." That was all Peterson had to hear – and the new harps, without the holes, were immediately put on stream. These [soundhole] harps had braces that were glued to both the top and the bottom of the harp. They were very near the soundhole, making the air cavity inside the harp very small and virtually ineffective. The braces also prevented the top of the harp (the sound board) from vibrating independently of the back. Consequently, the soundhole did very little to increase the volume of the instrument, and it caused the most problems regarding cracking and

warping. By eliminating the hole, the harp had fewer production problems, fewer consumer complaints, and since the harp was still hollow-bodied, not solid, it retained its sound qualities. They were not to be reintroduced until Peterson found ways of eliminating the basswood panels and much of the internal bracing.

Peterson was aided in all these changes by two key people – both of whom made dramatic contributions to all the harps in the future. One was Joseph DiPisa, an experienced industrial production manager whom Peterson hired as general manager. He found many ingenious ways to build better harps, and do it at lower costs to offset the costs of the quality improvements. Peterson was constantly introducing – such as the molded end pin cover (for which expensive molds had to be built) which replaced the ugly plastic extrusion used previously, and which itself merely replaced a wooden molding. The economic trade off in that case was that the old extrusions had to be sawed off, mounting holes had to be drilled, and then they had to be painted. The more expensive molded parts weren't really very much more expensive. The sawing, drilling, and painting operations were all eliminated. And the harp was a better and more saleable product.

The most significant contributions to upgrading the Autoharp were brought about by Robert McKay of Bronx, NY. Peterson turned to this old friend of his, an artist, when he needed help to redesign the logo on the "A" model harps and also the archaic and useless "scale label" at the big end of the instrument. McKay created the piano keyboard scale label. He also, early on, redesigned the instruction book given away with each instrument.

Once I had my feet on the ground, once I had learned something of my new vocational environment, I began improving both the product and the company. I brought in brighter people. I killed small volume items and added new models which I thought would be more popular and profitable. I began exhibiting at educational conventions. I generally upgraded the whole operation.

Even as he made one improvement after the other to the standard black harps, Peterson came to believe that there was a demand for a better sounding and better looking harp that would

appeal both to the traditionalists and to the new "folk music" fans. In just a few short months he had sought out and had come to know such popular performers of the day as Maybelle Carter, Mike Seeger, Cecil Null, and Tom Morgan. He turned to them for their preferences in such a new instrument. They were delighted to help – and also welcomed the opportunity to finally be able to talk with someone at the factory who would listen to their accumulated complaints.



As an aside, printed below are statements made by the Petersons in published interviews over their Oscar Schmidt years. The following statements pertain to Part I, recorded in this issue.

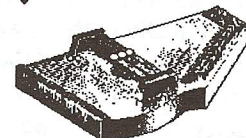
"When his aunt Elsa approached Peterson after the death of Harold Finney, ... Peterson was living in New Jersey with his wife Meg and their five children."

"Although initially not interested in the Autoharp business, once he decided to take it on, Peterson set out to completely redesign the instrument that had shown little or no change for over 60 years."

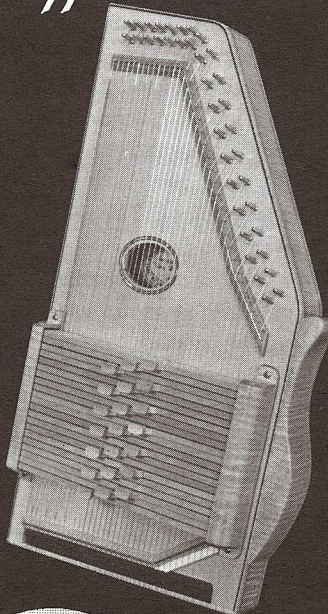
"... Peterson's wife, Meg, a classical violinist who regarded the Autoharp with some disdain, began to learn to play it in order to develop some instructional materials for it. ... Meg began to write the first of what would be a long series of Autoharp instructional books..."

"The first Oscar Schmidt ad appeared in the December 1963-January 1964 issue of Sing Out! magazine."

"By 1964, an entire new line of Autoharps was under way. The familiar scroll logo that had appeared on the harps since 1951 was replaced with a more modern trapezoid-shaped design. Rectangular buttons were put on the wooden bars. A 15-chord molded plastic chord-bar holder was made which brought the 15-chord model's price into direct competition with the 12-chord model. The old extruded plastic end-pin cover was replaced with a molded plastic cover with rounded edges." ◆



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Keeping with Tradition!

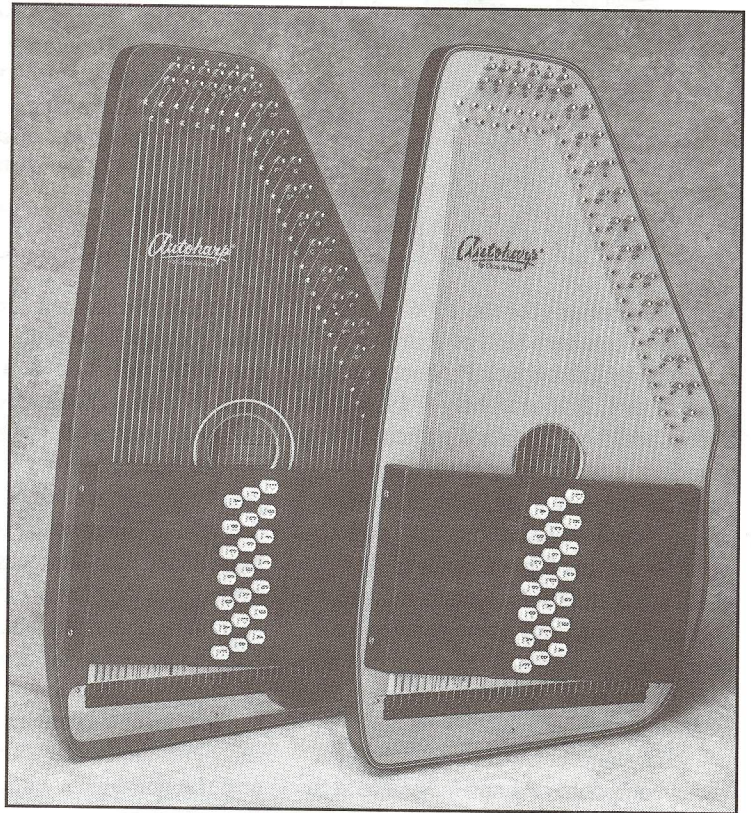
The Professional Series Autoharps by Oscar Schmidt

Charles Zimmerman, who invented the Autoharp 110 years ago this year, would be proud of his tradition continued in the Oscar Schmidt Professional Series Autoharps.

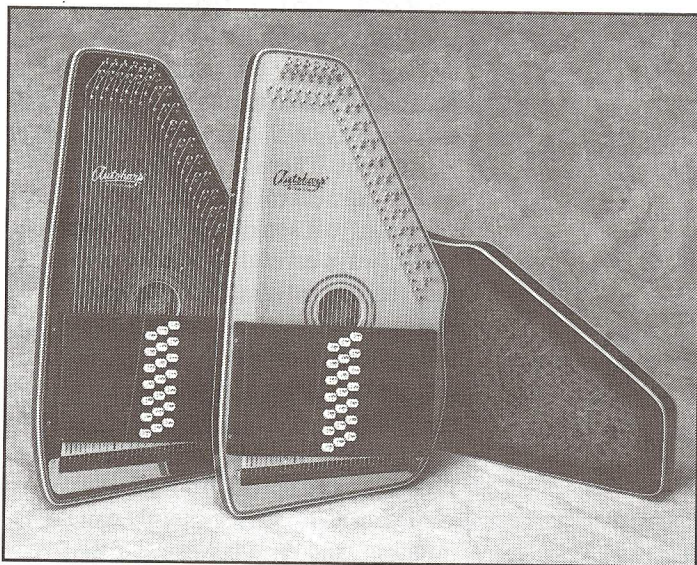
Being an innovator himself, Mr. Zimmerman would appreciate the Professional Series' *fine tuning system* and smooth-action chord assembly. He would also admire the traditional use of beautiful birdseye maple and spruce woods accented with abalone, hardwood or multi-ply bindings. Most of all, he would love the full, singing tone produced by these instruments which is the hallmark of his design.

Play an Oscar Schmidt Professional Series Autoharp today at your nearest dealer and hear how sweet the sound of tradition can be!

Autoharp® Autoharp is registered trademark of Oscar Schmidt International



*Left: OS110 Ozark with solid spruce back
Right: OS115 Alpine with solid spruce top*



*Left: OS120 Smoky Mountain with birdseye top and back
Right: OS120 Adirondack with spruce top and birdseye back*

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THE AUTOHARP
HALL OF FAME
MEMBERS
Maybelle Addington Carter
John Kilby Snow
Sara Dougherty Carter
Bryan Benson Bowers
Ernest Van "Pop" Stoneman
Mike Seeger
Meg Peterson
Marty Schuman

1996 NOMINATION FORM

Nominations for the 1996 inductees into The Autoharp Hall of Fame will be accepted by Limberjack Productions from September 1, 1995 until May 1, 1996. Nominees should have had a significant, long-standing, positive impact on the autoharp community. Any individual wishing to submit nominations may do so by completing this form. Copies of this form are permissible. Names may be submitted for one posthumous and one contemporary nomination. Posthumous honorees must have been deceased for three years to be eligible.

The honorees will be selected by a panel composed of knowledgeable autoharp musicians and enthusiasts, who are

proficient in autoharp history. *Envelopes must contain nominations only*, and should be addressed to: **The Autoharp Hall of Fame**, PO Box A, Newport PA, 17074. These envelopes shall be forwarded, unopened, to the panel. Limberjack Productions shall be informed of the decision of the panel by the third week of May, 1996. The honorees shall be installed into the Hall of Fame at the 1996 Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering, and announced in the Summer 1996 issue of *Autoharp Quarterly*. **When describing a nominee's contributions, specify the significance of those contributions, and the nominee's leadership role in the autoharp community.**

POSTHUMOUS NOMINEE

Name of nominee: _____

Use a separate piece of paper for the required description of achievement, contributions, and/or leadership in the autoharp community.

CONTEMPORARY NOMINEE

Name of nominee: _____

Use a separate piece of paper for the required description of achievement, contributions, and/or leadership in the autoharp community.

Name, address, telephone number of person submitting nomination:

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

I am an AQ subscriber.

I am not an AQ subscriber.
I received my ballot from:

NAME _____

IMPORTANT

All parts of this Nomination Form, including description of achievement, contributions, and/or leadership in the autoharp community, must be completed to validate the nomination.

Do Do That Voodoo



by "Pappa Doc" Orthey

I must preface these remarks with the widely unknown fact that I turn into a werewolf on certain nights, and can do voodoo on a moment's notice. Therefore, I feel fully capable of occasionally dabbling in witchcraft.

Most wooden instruments have a "new" sound when they come out of the egg. Call that sound harsh, raw, hard, - whatever you want. It'll take at least six months of strong, regular playing to teach it to sing. But, it will take longer than that to reach its full sound potential. The more you play, the more the sound's refined. Somewhere in my dark memory, I recall a warlock telling me "Play music to it. Teach it to sing!" I have for some time now placed new, stiff instruments in front of a boom box. Using a tape of wide range which includes autoharp and bass, I bring the volume up to the point where the resonant vibrations can actually be felt in the back of the instrument. There the youngster sits, usually for several nights or a full weekend, just soaking in the "vibes." I am always careful to stand the instrument so the movement of the back is not restricted. I also believe it is only fully effective on a fully strung, in-tune instrument. After all, you want it to sing on key.

I have consulted with guitar building gurus and spirits from Martin Guitar, who agree it certainly can do no harm, and even believe (off the record, of course) there is something logical about it!

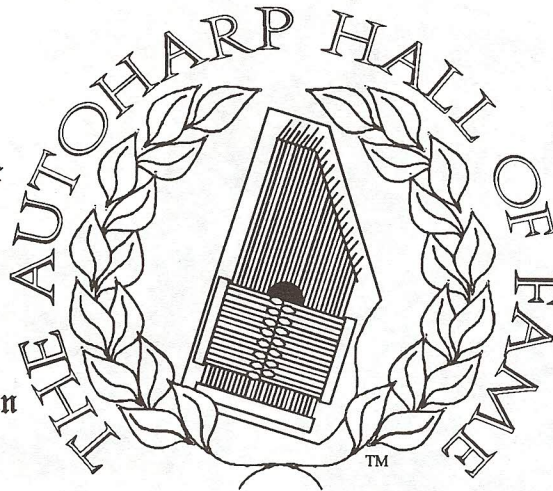
Be it witchcraft, wishful thinking, karma, or unproven scientific fact, the result is a crash (bad choice of words) program that equals several month's playing - all in a few days! A sweeter, more mellow, fuller sounding instrument emerges from the smoke of the boom box! ❖

1992 Honorees

Maybelle Addington Carter
John Kilby Snow

1994 Honorees

Ernest Van "Hop" Stoneman
Mike Seeger



1993 Honorees

Bryan Benson Powers
Sara Dougherty Carter

1995 Honorees

Meg Peterson
Marty Schuman

1995 HONOREES

Meg Peterson

Marty Schuman

As the wife of the late Glen R. Peterson, great grandson of Oscar Schmidt and owner of Oscar Schmidt International Incorporated from 1963 to 1978, Meg Peterson dedicated a large portion of her life to the resurgence and viability of the Autoharp in the capacity of teacher, promoter, and as a writer of an innumerable quantity of instructional books, pamphlets, and other publications concerning the Autoharp and its music.

Because of the devotion she put forth in this capacity, Meg Peterson has taught an entire generation of musicians to play and enjoy the Autoharp, and is in this capacity continuing this process by teaching new generations today.

Entirely because of Meg and Glen Peterson's belief in the credibility and capability of the Autoharp, this instrument was kept alive in a time when it could easily have slipped into oblivion.

Inducted into
The Autoharp Hall Of Fame
the first day of July,
nineteen hundred and ninety-five

As a perennially favorite performer throughout the country, Marty Schuman was an autoharp genius whose pioneering in the theory and practice of autoharp playing and accessories was legendary.

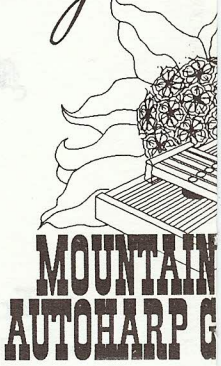
In 1963, Marty Schuman composed and recorded "Runaway Train" for an album of folk music published by the University of Florida.

Marty Schuman became the first International Autoharp Champion in 1981 and the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Champion in 1993, demonstrating a unique style which he incorporated into a prodigious musical repertoire.

Marty Schuman spent over thirty years proving the autoharp to be a respectable, valid musical instrument while he served as an inexhaustible source of inspiration to all he touched with his creative genius.

Inducted into
The Autoharp Hall Of Fame
the first day of July,
nineteen hundred and ninety-five

Highlight



Anyone can can-can!

Frick & Frack:
Bob Woodcock
Gil Falley

Farewell to Al...

Chirley Gilliam
Leonard Reid Peoples' Choice Award

Workshops,
Workshops, Won



Mary Ann Johnston

Bonnie Thayer
Court Empress Chris Low Hall of Fame
Inductee: Mary Ann Johnston

Roz Brown

Jodie Foster



The Dr. Semi-conductor:
Joe Riggs



Jim Snow



Chuck Wall / Marti Hudak



of the 1995



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Will Smith



Mountain Laurel Autoharp Champs:
2nd: Jane Mangery
1st: Lucille Reilly
3rd: Drew Smith



Laurie Skay



Watermelon Seedspitting
Winner: Gregg Awerdt

The Beggar Autoharp



Mike Hoer

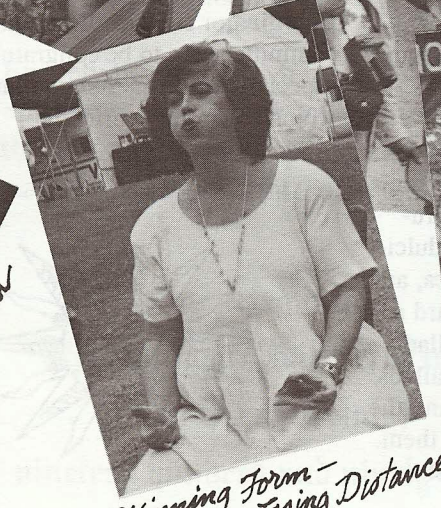
Yoko Watanabe
Yasuo Mita
Teri Watanabe
John
Hollandsworth



Julie Davis



Patay Stoneham

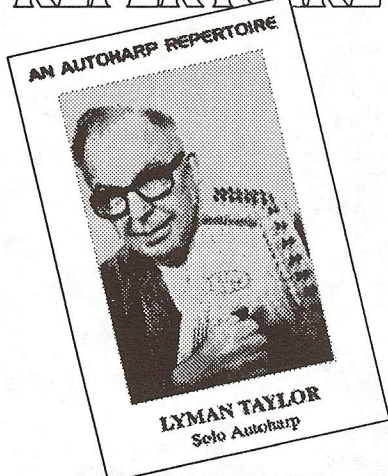


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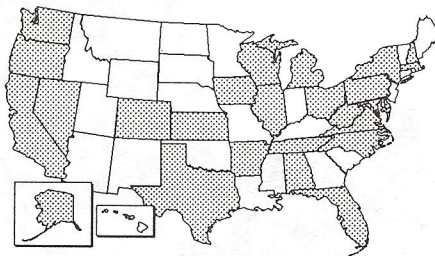
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'Harpers-At-Large



*On-Site Reports of Concerts, Work-
shops, Festivals, and Other Major
Autoharp Events*



Concert and Music History

Programs: Bill and Laurie Sky

Place: Northern VA

Reporting: Kathy Ferguson
Fairfax, VA

I was fortunate to be able to attend several performances by Bill and Laurie Sky during their recent swing through the Northern Virginia area. On May 13th, they did a mountain gospel program at Pohick Bay Church. They performed "Are You Coming to the Wedding," "Sails on the Ship of Zion," and "Beside Still Waters," all religious songs which Bill wrote, as well as his humorous "The Preacher's Knife and Fork Brigade." They also gave the congregation a taste of secular folk music with "Jesse James," "The Wreck of the Old 97," and "Angelina Baker." The concert concluded with a beautiful rendition of "Amazing Grace." Laurie and Bill obviously love sharing their music and it made for a delightful evening.

On May 19th, they gave two music history programs at Woodlawn Elementary School in Alexandria, one for fourth through sixth grades and one for the lower grades. In both programs, they gave the history of each instrument: bass, autoharp, mountain dulcimer, guitar, mandolin, harmonica, and the rhythm instruments washboard and spoons. Bill defined the term ballad and told the stories behind the ballads of Jesse James, Molly Malone, and the Streets of Laredo before playing them. Laurie taught several groups of stu-

dents how to play the spoons. She also demonstrated clogging and the limber-jack. They ended the program teaching the students a fun song, "Just a Bowl of Butter Beans." A good time was had by all.

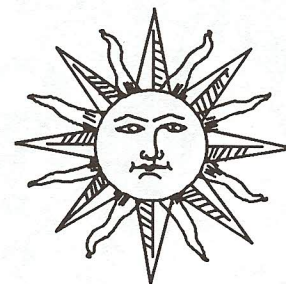


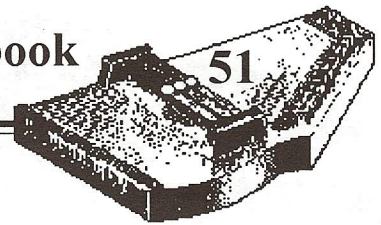
The First Annual Festival of the Dulci-More Society

Place: Salem, OH

Reporting: Mary Ann Johnston
New Cumberland, WV

The Dulci-More Society of Salem, Ohio held its festival on May 27 and 28 at Rainbow Lakes near Leetonia, Ohio. In this participant's opinion, many more should follow. The campground, though small, easily accommodated the 80 or so in attendance. Workshops were offered on a variety of subjects including autoharp, lap and hammered dulcimer, harmonica, guitar, singing with your instrument, and others. Mini-concerts were featured in the afternoons, and longer performances were held in the evening. The ladies of the club prepared meals for sale, and T-shirts were also available. Coordinator Bill Schilling and his committees are to be congratulated — especially the "weather committee," which performed perfectly!





Cuddle Up a Little Closer (2)

C/[G7][C G7] G7 C C C C /D7/G7///
 Cud - dle up a lit - tle clo-ser, Lo - vey mine,

 G7/[A7][G7 A7] A7 G7 G7 G7 G7 / F7/C///
 Cud - dle up and be my lit - tle cling - ing vine.

 [A7 B7][A7 B7] A7 A7 A7 / D7/
 Like to feel your cheek so ros - y,

 [G7 A7][G7 A7] G7 G7 G7 / Am/
 Like to make you com-fy coz- y,

 [Dm Am][Dm Am] Dm F F / C/
 'Cause I love from head to to - sie

 Em /G7 / C///
 Lov- ey, mine.

Ida, Sweet as Apple Cider (2)

D/G /// [D D] G C7 A7 / A7 / ///
 I - da, sweet as ap-ple ci - der,

 Em / A7 / A7 A7 A7 D / ///
 Sweet - er than all I know,

 B7 / B7 // B7 B7 B7 B7 / E7 //
 Come out! in silv-'ry moon- light,

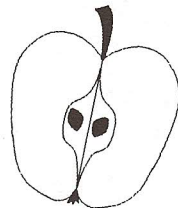
 E7 B7 E7 B7 / E7 // E7 B7 E7 A7 / ///
 Of love we'll whis- per, so soft and low!

 D / G // D G C7 A7 / A7 / ///
 Seems tho' can't live with-out you,

 Em / A7 / A7 A7 A7 D / /// C7 / ///
 Lis - ten Oh! Ho-ney, do - ,

 B7 / B7 // B7 B7 B7 B7 / E7 / ///
 I - da! I i - do-lize you,

 E7 D G G G E7 / A7 / D / ///
 I love ya I - da, deed I do.



Humoreske (2)

G [/ D7] G [/ D7] G [/ G]
 When the moon is shin-ing

 C [/G] C [/D7] D7 [/C] D7 [/D7]
 and the lit - tle stars are pin - ing

 C [/C] G [/ G] C [/ G] G [/ C] G [/G] D ///
 for a sight of you, my pret-ty lit - tle maid;

 G [/D7] G [/ D7] G [/ G]
 Then I come a creep - ing'

 C [/ G] C [/ D7] D7 [/ C] D7 [/ D7]
 'neath the trees where birds are sleep-ing

 C [/C] G [/ G] G [/ G] A7 / D7 / G ///
 And I sing to you this ser - en - ade.

 G / G [/D7] D7 / C / C / D7 [/C] C / - G /
 O - pen thy win - dow, list to my song, dear

 G / C [/C] G // C G [/D7] G ///
 For you a - lone I'm pin - ing,

 G [/D7] G / G [/ D7] D7 / C /
 For I'll ev - er be true, dear,

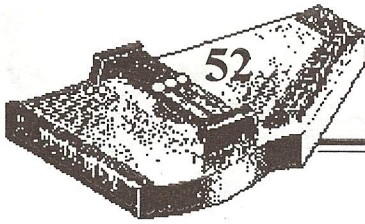
 C / D7 [/C] C / G / G C G C G
 be thou with-out fear, I am thine and thou

 D7 G C G /// D7 /// D7
 art mine for-ev - er, so

 G [/ D7] G [/ D7] G [/ G]
 When the moon is shin-ing

 C [/G] C [/D7] D7 [/C] D7 [/D7]
 and the lit - tle stars are pin - ing

 C [/C] G [/ G] G [/ G] A7 / D7 / G ///
 And I sing to you this ser - en - ade.



Autoharp Songbook

© 1995, Limberjack Productions

Mary's a Grand Old Name (2)

▼
G] [G G] G / E7 / A7 / A7 / [D7 C] [D7 D7] D7 D7 G / [
For it is Ma - ry, Ma - ry, plain as a - ny name can be;

G] [C D7] D7 C D7 C G7 C G7 G7 G7 / G7 / G / [
But with pro-pri-e-ty, so-ci - e- ty will say Ma - rie.

G] [G G] G / E7 / A7 / A7 / [D7 C] [D7 D7] D7 D7 G / [
But it was Ma - ry, Ma - ry, long be - fore the fash-ions came;

G] [G G] G B7 E7 E7 E7 E7 Am
And there is some-thing there that sounds so fair,

[E7 Am] Am / D7 / G / [
It's a grand old name!

I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles (3)

▼
C / [F] [C D7] G7 / F C C / C7 / /
I'm for-ev-er blow-ing bub-les,

F [/ G7] [F G7] F / F G7 / / / / /
Pret-ty bub-les in the air.

F F F C / / [F G7] F F C / /
They fly so high, a-lmost reach the sky,

D7 D7 G D7 / D7 G / D7 G7 / /
Then like my dreams they fade and die;

C / B7 C / C E7 E7 / / / / /
For-tune's al- ways hid-ing,

Am / E7 Am / Am G7 / / / / /
I-'ve looked ev - 'ry where,

C / [F] [C D7] G7 / F C C / / /
I'm for -ev-er blow-ing bub-les,

[G7 C] C D7 / D7 / G7 C / / / / /
Pret-ty bub-les in the air.

Softly Now the Light of Day (2)

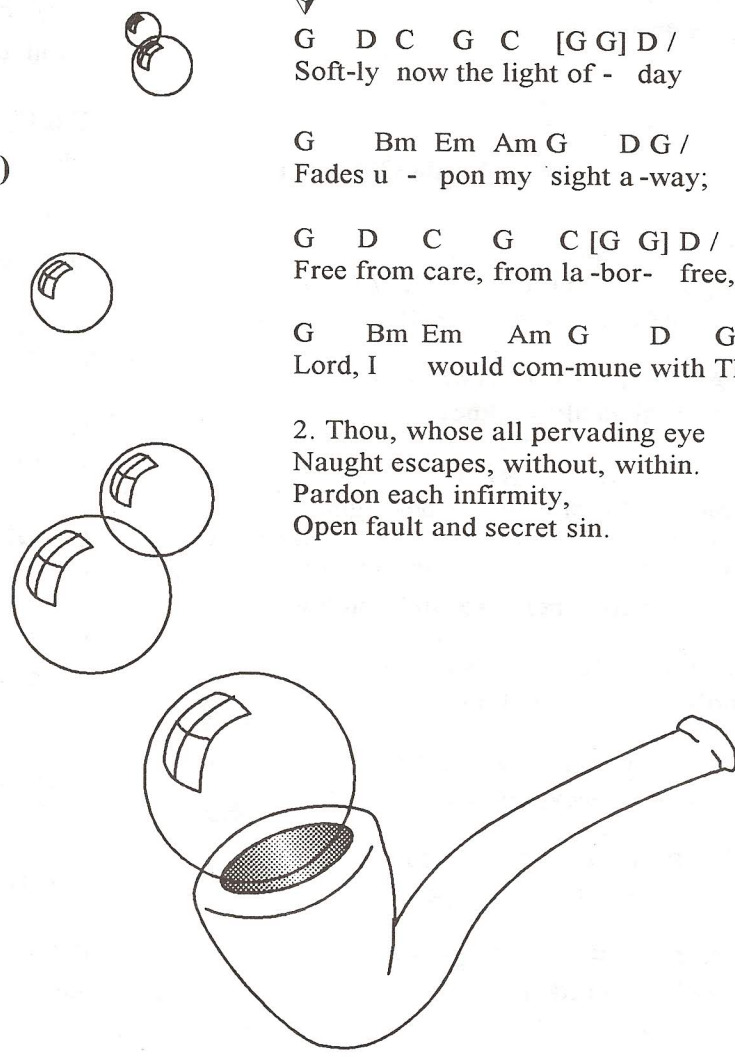
▼
G D C G C [G G] D /
Soft-ly now the light of - day

G Bm Em Am G D G /
Fades u - pon my sight a-way;

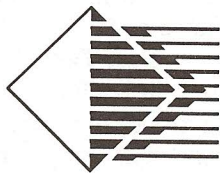
G D C G C [G G] D /
Free from care, from la - bor - free,

G Bm Em Am G D G /
Lord, I would com-mune with Thee.

2. Thou, whose all pervading eye
Naught escapes, without, within.
Pardon each infirmity,
Open fault and secret sin.



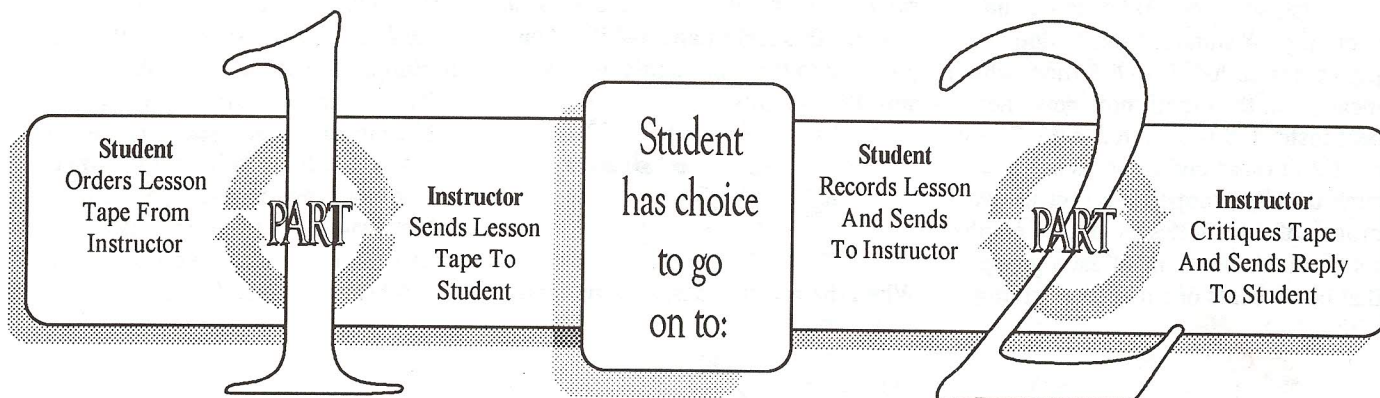
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Karen Mueller began developing her unique autoharp style as a high school student in Winfield, Kansas. Attending the Walnut Valley Festival there, she was introduced to Bryan Bowers, Bonnie Phipps, Ron Wall, and Becky Blackley, and counts them all as early influences. After graduating from the University of Kansas in Lawrence, she continued to live there for several years, working as a jeweler and forming two successful bands, Full Circle (folk) and Newgrange (Celtic). She returned to Winfield for the festival every year, and won the International Autoharp Championship in 1986.

Karen currently lives in Minneapolis, where she is a full-time performer and instructor. She has appeared at many events across the country including Augusta, Winfield, Mountain Laurel, Memphis, and Summer Solstice. She gives regular lessons to students on autoharp, dulcimer, guitar, and mandolin. Through her teaching she developed her "Autoharp Gourmet" tape and book set. Karen's latest album, "Clarity," has received critical acclaim from national publications, including *Bluegrass Unlimited*, which called her a "true virtuoso."



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THE INTERACTION LESSON "SHIP IN FULL SAIL"

Karen Mueller • PO Box 80565 • Minneapolis, MN 55408

I have always been drawn to the joyful energy of Irish jigs, and have found that this quality makes them especially well-suited to the autoharp. To learn Irish tunes, I have listened extensively to fiddle and flute players, and have worked towards matching my phrasing and ornamentation to these instruments as much as possible. One prominent feature of traditional Irish dance music is its ornamentation, or embellishment of the basic melody, particularly through various kinds of rolls. The classic sourcebook of Irish tunes, *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (Krassen ed., Oak Publ.), includes a lengthy explanation of these ornaments as played on the fiddle. While many of these techniques can only be done on a fiddle, some are quite autoharp-friendly. In this lesson I will show you two different, but closely related, ways to play a triplet roll that you can learn for "Ship In Full Sail" and then apply to other tunes.

First, some general background about jigs. A standard jig, or double jig, as it is called, is in 6/8 time, which means that the eighth note gets one beat instead of the quarter note. There are six of these eighth notes per measure, usually grouped together in two groups of three notes each. The emphasis is on the first note of each group, that is, on beats one and four, giving

you a rhythm of 1 2 3 4 5 6, etc. You can also say "jig-it-ty jig-it-ty" to get the rhythm. Being in 6/8 time also means that the quarter note (♩) gets two beats and a dotted quarter note (♩.) receives three beats.

Now on to the roll technique. You'll need three fingerpicks for this. Look at measure four of "Ship In Full Sail" where the roll first happens. Push down your D (or D⁷) chord and leave it down to practice the right hand. The first way we'll learn it is the *full roll*. Start with your right hand pointing up a little more than usual, close to the strings and parallel to the up and down direction of the strings. Then quickly draw your fingers in toward your palm, one at a time beginning with your ring, then middle, last index. As you do this, let your hand drop down from the wrist to give you momentum and separation of the fingers. Roll your hand around in a quick arc, with a snap. We're going for all three fingers hitting the same note, one at a time in succession. Practice this right hand awhile, then plug it into the tune in this way: Measure #4 rhythm:

Play:

Count: 1 2+3 4 5 6

When the roll finishes, your index fin-

ger will be on that melody note of beat 3. This is done again in part B, also in the fourth measure.

The second way uses only the middle and index fingers, leaving out the ring finger and the half beat it occupied as well. It looks like this:

Play:

Count: 1 2+3 4 5 6

This version is especially handy when you're picking up speed. Do pay attention to the right-hand tab for the rest of the song — the alternation between pinches and plucks helps achieve that accent on beats 1 and 4 mentioned earlier. (Note that the melody is quite high in part B.) Also try your hand at the back-up pattern given, using the circled chords.

To get the feeling for Irish rhythm, listen to fiddlers (such as Kevin Burke), flute players (Matt Malloy), and bands like the Bothy Band. I recorded my own arrangement of "Ship In Full Sail" with a fine fiddler on my "Clarity" album. This tune is simple yet beautiful, so take your time and get to know it. I hope to hear from you to see how it goes for you. If you order an Interaction tape and would also like a copy of "Clarity," just include an extra \$10.00 (tape) or \$15.00 (CD).



SHIP IN FULL SAIL

(Similar to "Kitty's Wedding")

Irish Jig

Form: AABB

Sheet music for guitar in G major, 6/8 time, featuring Irish Jig notation. The score is divided into two systems, A and B, each with four measures. System A includes a note for 'ROLL' in the third measure of the first system. System B includes a note for 'ROLL' in the third measure of the second system. The notation includes standard musical notation with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), and guitar tablature with pluck symbols (upward and downward arrows) and sustain symbols (circles).

(All plucks with index finger except triplets)

*May use D7 instead of D. Lesson and music ©1995 by Karen Mueller. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Arrangement © 1993 by Karen Mueller.

Back-Up Pattern

↓	○	↓	↓	○	↓
Low			Mid		
1	2	3	4	5	6

IN THE TAB

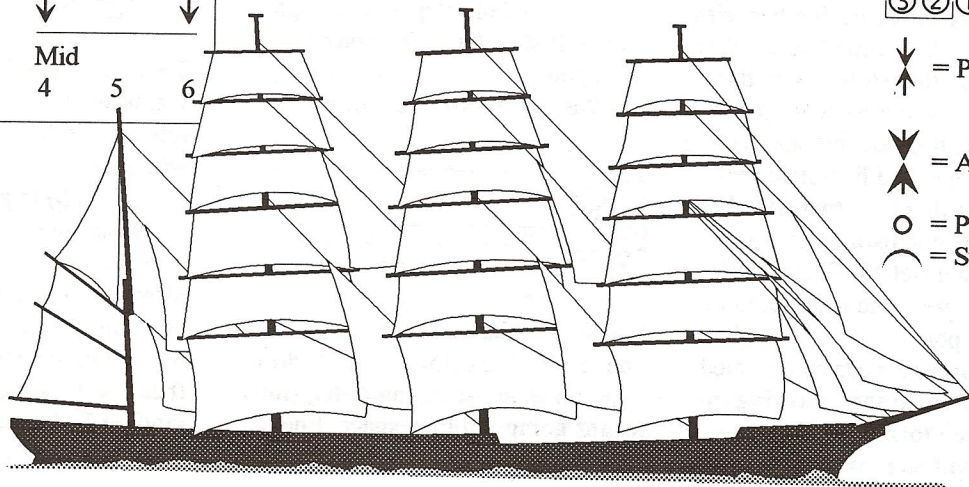
③ ② ① = (R) (M) (I)

↓ ↑ = Pinch

↓ ↑ = Accented pinch

○ = Pluck

○ = Sustain





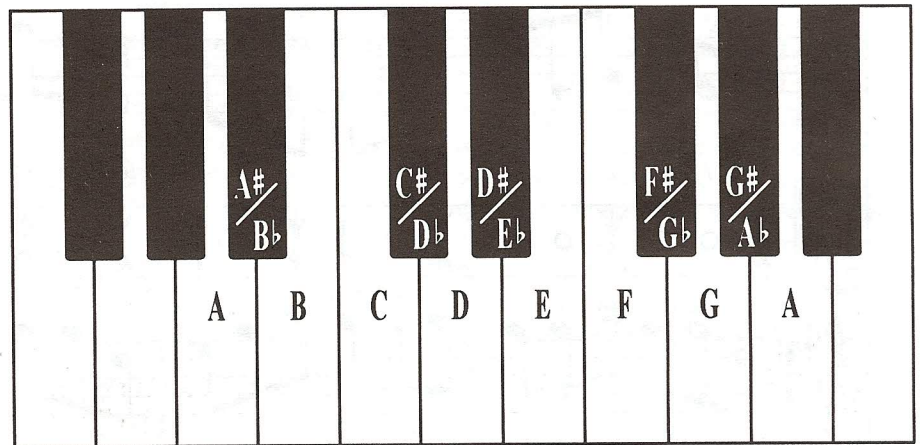
We've seen the intellectual approach to music theory with George Foss and the avant garde approach with Lindsay Haisley. Now, meet "Hooter" – the wise owl (spelled "tough bird") who takes the "no-nonsense and no excuses" approach to music theory. Careful, though. This bird doesn't cut any slack! Just ask Becky.

– Editors

Theoretically Speaking –

by "Hooter" the Owl
as told to Becky Askey

This article is for those few individuals who would like to know a little more about musical theory. Oh, man! I can hear the quick turning of the pages already! Well, if you are the one person who will actually read this article, perhaps it will be interesting and helpful to you. If not, tough. I'm going to do it anyhow. *So, pay attention!* Today, we will learn about major scales.



LESSON ONE: MAJOR SCALES

A Major scale is the one that goes: Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do. If you have ever looked at a piano keyboard, you noticed that there are white keys and black keys. This allows you to play in half steps and whole steps. If you go from a white key up or down to an adjacent black key, you are moving in *half* steps. If you move from one white key to another white key that has a black one *in between it*, or from one black key to the next black key in the little group of two or three black keys, you are moving in *whole* steps. There are places on the piano where you have two white keys beside each other with no black key in between. There, when you move from the white key to the next white key, you are only moving a *half* step. This happens between B and C and between E and F. Notice that on the black keys there are two alphabetical characters, one using a sharp (#) and one using a flat (b). These black keys can be either note depending on your starting point.

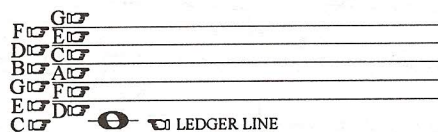
All *Major* scales are constructed the same way using the following intervals between tones. Whole step, whole step, half step, whole step,

whole step, whole step, half step. *Are you paying attention to this?* That last sentence was important. Underline it please and burn it into your brain. Each scale *must* be constructed using this series of intervals. Got it? Good. Now please continue.

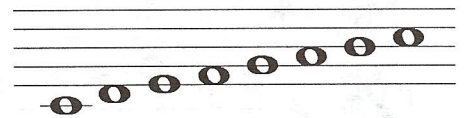
Using the chart below, you will see how to construct scales on the staff. (If you aren't familiar with the names of the lines and spaces, I have labeled them at the left of the line. If you go below or above the staff, you use little "partial" lines called *ledger lines*.)

You will move two spaces on the chart for a whole step and one space for a half step. (Just like you are playing a game.)

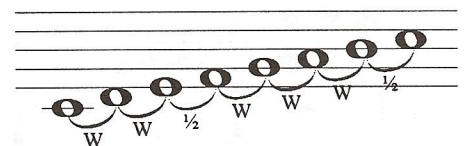
We'll start with the key of C.



Starting on the first note, C, which is one ledger line below the staff, draw in eight notes in ascending order, (this means going *up*) line, space, line, space, etc. until you reach the next C.



Next, connect these notes with a little connector and under the connector write either W (whole) or 1/2 (half) using the interval chart you have committed to memory. If you can't remember it (dummy!) go back to the second paragraph and this time, *remember it!*

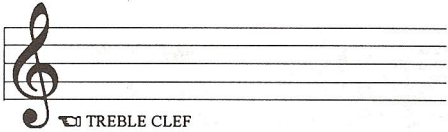


There, see how I did it? That's what you were supposed to do. Now, while referring to the keyboard above, you will determine if you have any sharps (#) or flats (b) to add to this scale.

Finding C, you will move two steps (a whole step) and land on D. Move two steps on the keyboard (whole step) and you land on E. Now, you have to move one step on the keyboard (because you need a half step), and you land on F. Another two steps (whole step) to G, another two steps (whole

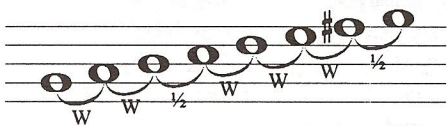
step) to A, another two steps (whole step) to B, and one step (half step) to C. So, for the key of C you did not land on any sharps or flats.

That was very easy, wasn't it? The C scale is played on all white keys. The Key Signature is shown right after the treble clef making the key signature for the key of C look like this:

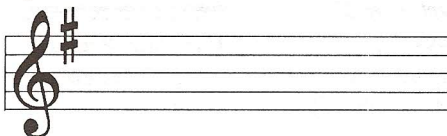


What's that you say? It doesn't look like anything? There's nothing after the clef sign? Well, of course there isn't anything there! You have no #s or b's in the scale so there are none in the key signature. *Pay attention!* Go and eat a cookie. Cookies are brain food, did you know that? Now you do. Eat two of them while you're at it.

Now, we will construct the G scale using the same method. Start with the G on the second line of the staff and draw in eight ascending notes; line, space, line, space, etc., ending with G on the space above the top line of the staff. Next, draw in your little connection lines. No, you *cannot* skip this part. This is important. *Draw in the little connecting lines.* Thank you. Starting on G, you will move a whole step to A, a whole step to B, a half step to C, a whole step to D, a whole step to E, a whole step to...aha!...you landed on a different note. You thought you were going to land on F and you landed on F#/Gb, didn't you? Well, you have to keep everything in alphabetical order and therefore, you will use the F#, not the Gb. They are the same note but you must write a sharp in front of the note that is already drawn on your staff. Now, you will move the half step to G. Your G scale will look like this:

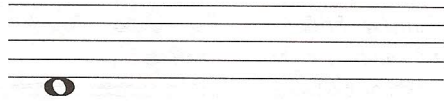


So, the key signature for the G scale will have one # (F#) written on the top line of the staff.



This means if you play a piece of music with this key signature on it, you will play F#s instead of F naturals.

Now, you are going to do the D scale all by yourself. Start on D (the note just below the bottom line of the staff) and go up in ascending order. Put in your little connectors and label them using the whole step, half step rule (refer to keyboard). Clue: it has two sharps (#).



I can just hear you out there muttering to yourself that you *aren't* going to do that and what the heck do you need to know that for *anyhow*. Well, smarty-pants, if you are ever going to construct chords on your own, you need to know what notes go into each chord. For instance, the C chord uses the first note, third note, and fifth note: C, E, and G. The G chord uses first, third, and fifth notes: G, B, and D. Those are the easy ones. Most of the others have sharps (#s) or flats (b's) in them and you need to know what they are. So there! You can't always rely on

having someone like *me* around whooo *knows* what chord you are looking for. Show some initiative for heaven's sake! ❖

Look for continuing articles from "Hooter" to appear in future issues — or should we say "Look out for..." — Editors



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Music Festival
Valparaiso, IN
August 20
Cuyahoga
Folk Festival
Brecksville, OH
October 20
Uncle Calvin's
Coffeehouse
Dallas, TX

TOM SCHROEDER

819 W. 77th Street
Kansas City,

MO 64114
Pro-File:
 AQ October 88
Schedule:
August 10-12
 Ozark Folk Center
 Mountain View, AR
September 22, 23
 Memphis
 Dulcimer Festival
 Memphis, TN
November 3-5
 Stringalong Weekend
 Milwaukee, WI

BILL & LAURIE SKY
 PO Box 70060
 Nashville,
 TN 37207-0060
 901 365-8691
Pro-File: AQ April 90
Schedule:
August 10
 Cypress Creek Park
 Music Festival
 Adona, AR
August 19
 Keithville Jamboree
 Keithville, LA
 (Shreveport area)
August 20
 Carthage, TX
August 23-30
 Southwest Tour
 TX, NM, AZ
September 1, 2
 Wildwood Family
 Music Festival
 Horatio, AR
September 3
 First Baptist Church
 Haslam, TX
September 12
 Dixie Attendance
 Center
 Hattiesburg, MS
September 14
 Burnsville, MS
September 16, 17
 Six Flags Over Texas
 Heritage Festival
 Arlington, TX
September 21
 Plum Creek
 Bluegrass Festival
 Dew, TX
September 22
 Church of the
 Nazarene

Carthage, TX
September 23, 24
 Six Flags Over Texas
 Heritage Festival
 Arlington, TX
September 26
 Blue Mountain
 College
 Blue Mountain, MS
September 27
 Simpson Central
 High School
 Pinola, MS
September 29
 Dierks
 Elementary School
 Dierks, AR
September 30,
October 1
 Six Flags Over Texas
 Heritage Festival
 Arlington, TX
October 7
 Gospel Fest #5
 Nashville, AR
October 7
 Atlanta, TX
October 12, 13
 Museum of
 Appalachia
 Tennessee Fall
 Homecoming
 Norris, TN
October 14
 Repton, AL
October 21
 Church of God
 Gymnasium
 Athens, TN
October 22
 Bethany United
 Methodist Church
 Weyers Cave, VA
October 24
 Rockingham Court
 United Methodist
 Church
 Roanoke, VA
October 27
 Appalshop Theater
 Whitesburg, KY
October 29
 First Baptist Church
 Republic, MO
October 31
 Richland, MO

DREW SMITH
 529 Ardmore Road
 Ho-Ho-Kus,

NJ 07423
 201 444-2833
Pro-File: AQ July 89
Schedule:
August 4-6
 Clifftop Appalachian
 String Band Festival
 Clifftop, WV
August 9-11
 Old Fiddlers
 Convention
 Workshop:
 Friday, 11 a.m.
 Galax, VA
August 25-27
 Philadelphia
 Folk Festival
 Schwenksville, PA

FRAN STALLINGS
 1406 Macklyn Lane
 Bartlesville,
 OK 74006-5419
 918 333-7390
Pro-File: AQ April 92
Schedule:
August 5
 Oklahoma City
 Traditional Music
 Association Workshop
 & Showcase
 Oklahoma City, OK
August 6
 1st Unitarian Church
 Worship Service
 Oklahoma City, OK
August 11
 Tulsa Folk
 Music Society
 Tulsa, OK
September 5
 Southern Hills
 Methodist Church
 Tulsa, OK
September 25-29
 Tour of high schools
 & senior centers
 Copan &
 Coffeyville, KS
October 13, 14
 Eagle Festival
 Sand Springs, OK

IVAN STILES
 Route 29, RD2
 Phoenixville,
 PA 19460
 610 935-9062
Pro-File:
 AQ October 88

Schedule:
August 6-11
 Workshop
 John C. Campbell
 Folk School
 Brasstown, NC
August 10
 Concert
 John C. Campbell
 Folk School
 Brasstown, NC
August 26
 Workshop & Concert
 Wellsville, PA
September 21, 28;
October 5, 12, 26;
November 2
 Workshop - Adult
 Education Program
 Owen J. Roberts
 High School
 Pottstown, PA

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 Oxford, PA 19363
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 Jersey, and northeast
 Virginia

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 Spring, TX 77386
 713 367-6260
 (evenings)
Pro-File: AQ April 93
Schedule:
August 4-5
 Summer Acoustic
 Music Festival
 Houston, TX
August 10-12
 Ozark Folk Center
 Autoharp Jamboree
 Mountain View, AR
October 21
 Heritage Village
 Fall Festival
 Woodville, TX

❖ ❖ ❖

Recordings

Recordings Editor:
 Mary Ann Johnston
 RD 3, Box 190-A
 New Cumberland, WV 26047

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

FEATURES AUTOHARP

Bill And Carolyn
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 6700 French Road
 Alpena, MI 49707
The Kilby Boys
Autoharp: David Kilby
 281 Black Barren Road
 Peach Bottom, PA 17563

INCLUDES AUTOHARP

As You Like It
Autoharp: Mary Umbarger
 The Front Porch Strings
 Rt. 2, Box 46-B
 Harmony, NC 28634
Dreamland
Autoharp: Margie Earles
 Dixie Darlins
 PO Box 156
 Mountain View, AR 72560
Monsters' Holiday
Autoharp: Bonnie Phipps
 WF Kids
 PO Box 100427
 Denver, CO 80250

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Laurie's Corner

New and original music for the autoharp

by Laurie Sky

My father began playing guitar when he was eight. Before his teens, Daddy was a regular radio performer in Arkansas and Texas. At age sixteen he was hosting his own half-hour show – in fact, he was “chief cook and bottle-washer,” since he was the lone cast member – singing, playing his guitar, and acting as master-of-ceremonies to boot! Daddy’s repertoire consisted of not only current hits, but included songs which had been done by folksingers Burl Ives, Woody Guthrie, Cisco Houston, Pete Seeger, and others. His program also drew heavily from old songs he had learned at four or five years of age (“Wreck of the Old 97,” “Maple on the Hill,” “Worried Man Blues,” etc.) which had been handed down over the years in Daddy’s family. Almost everyone on “both sides of the house,” so to speak, were either singers and/or musicians for as long as anyone could remember.

Shortly after Daddy and Mommy were married, he got the opportunity to begin working on television with Anita Carter (Mother Maybelle’s daughter), and enjoyed performing on occasional shows with Maybelle, Helen, June, and Anita, the Grand Ole Opry act known as “Mother Maybelle and the Carter Sisters.” These fortuitous experiences turned Daddy even more in the direction of his traditional roots.

About this time a growing family demanded more money to provide the necessities of life. Daddy took a job as



announcer-deejay-program director at a little radio station in Alabama. In a few years, however, the wolf was again knocking at the door and Daddy decided that he could make more money in radio advertising. He moved into that field where he sold all the commercials, wrote all the ad copy, and produced the broadcast spots in order to make all the commissions possible.

He ended up managing a couple of stations, but all during his commercial radio and TV career of about 20 years, his heart was still in the music. He kept his ear to the ground and his finger on the pulse of entertainment as a songwriter for Nashville music publishers and by performing wherever he could.

Becoming aware of the Brandywine Festival, Daddy was immediately taken by the charm and lilting, musical sound of the name. He tells me that one night, as he was trying to go to sleep, the name “Brandywine” kept running through his mind. Finally, he

drifted off to sleep, only to awaken in the wee hours of the morning with the song almost totally complete in his mind. Jumping out of bed, he pounded it out on an old Olivetti-Underwood portable before the words could escape.

He took a rough demo of “Brandywine” to the Wilburn Brothers’ Sure-Fire Music, his publishers in Nashville at the time. They accepted the song

on the spot and pitched it to a folk group who liked it so well that they wanted to use it as their debut release on a new label. But, as luck would have it, the group’s recording deal fell through at the last minute and the song languished for years, gathering dust in the publisher’s file.

I was only vaguely aware of the song’s existence until the late 1980s, when Daddy thought of it again. He tried to sing it for my sister and me, but couldn’t remember all the words. The happy-go-lucky, toe-tapping spirit of “Brandywine” hooked us, and we were soon singing along, adding words here and there to replace the ones forgotten and bending the tune whenever necessary to make it fit our new phrasing.

A few months later, the publishing company accepted the revised version of the song and added my sister’s and my names to the writer’s credits.

Daddy and I have been performing “Brandywine” for a number of years now, and people seem to enjoy it a lot. ❖

BRANDYWINE

Lively

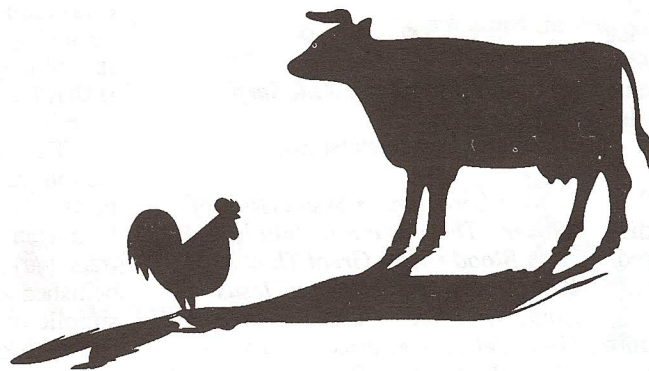
Bill Sky, Laurie Sky, Tara Sky

Sheet music for guitar, including melody and tablature for the song "Brandywine". The music is in G major and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: "Go - in' down to Bran - dy - wine; go - in' down to - day. Go - in' down to Bran - dy - wine; yes, I'm on my way. Go - in' down to Bran - dy - wine to have my - self a big time. in Bran - dy - wine; mer - ry Bran - dy - wine."

The tablature includes various techniques such as pinches, plucks, strums, downscratches, and extended strums, as indicated by the legend below.

© 1989, Sure-Fire Music, Inc. Nashville, Tennessee.

TABLATURE
 ↓ = Pinch
 ○ = Pluck
 | = Strum
 ↓ = Downscratch
 [] = Rhythm Fill Bracket
 ↗ = Extended Strum
 ◡ = Sustain



Critics' Choice

If you have an autoharp-related book, or video, or a recording which is predominantly autoharp that you would like to have considered for review, please send it to Autoharp Quarterly, PO Box A, Newport, PA 17074. Submissions cannot be returned.



**Bob's
Choice**

Bob Woodcock

You Can Teach Yourself Autoharp
Meg Peterson
Mel Bay Publications
The Market Place

OK, let's start this review on an honest footing: in 30-odd years of playing traditional stringed instruments, I have taken *one* formal lesson. My attention span is so short that my mind is usually in three or four places while the instructor is trying to show some basic strum or chord. Ditto for instruction books. I just don't seem to have the attention span or patience or something to benefit from formal instruction. Yet I have taught; for five years, I taught guitar and banjo with some pretty good results.

So in all fairness to Meg Peterson, I decided to get some objective opinions from a variety of 'harpers, from beginners to virtuosos. Why, I even put out a request over the Internet. So the review that follows will consist of three ingredients: objective (as much as possible) description of the content, my personal opinion, and the opinions of my interviewees. Lets go...

YCTYA is a combination book and tape consisting of 13 chapters. The lessons proceed very slowly, methodically, and completely, both in the book and in the recording. It is obvious that Meg is an experienced autoharp teacher who has given a lot of thought to the needs of the 'harp student. She starts with the absolute basics; storage, tuning, and changing strings, and covers them nicely. The discussions of holding the 'harp and fingering left me a little disturbed. She states that "More advanced" players put the 'harp on the chest, but that for the present, the beginners should keep it on a table or lap. I don't understand this. Why learn one way,

only to reorient yourself later on down the road? Both the left and right hands play almost the opposite when changing from lap to chest – why not start with the chest from the beginning. This is one of my major gripes with YCTYA; this opinion was shared by two other people.

About 2/3 of the book/tape discusses and demonstrates right-hand techniques for backup strums. They are, in general, clearly described in the text and reinforced on the tape. In my opinion, the lessons are a bit overburdened in this area. No less than seven backup strums (with variations) are presented. Many of them, like Travis picking and "arpeggio strums," do not work on the autoharp – at least to my ear. In all fairness, the best thing about this kind of learning is that you can pick what you like and keep it, and ignore the rest.

Melody picking, the area that I feel would interest the majority of students, is given only eight pages. Meg really addresses only one style of melody picking. She then goes on to touch on jazz, rock, calypso, and more on the recordings. It is obvious that she is running out of tape. She tends to hurry things along a bit.

So what of the other opinions? Well, folks seemed to be divided in two camps. About half feel that these lessons are nicely paced and complete and would recommend them. The other half felt that much of what was included was superfluous and obvious and that the "desirable" lessons were underplayed.

My feelings? I tend to fall into the second group. However, all things considered, I would recommend this book/tape, especially to beginners. It is clearly written, contains a whole barrelful of useful tips and shows respect and affection for the autoharp. Well worth the investment.



Great Hymns on the Autoharp – Volume One

Autoharp: Les Gustafson-Zook

Fairest Lord Jesus • Sweet Hour of Prayer • There is a Fountain Filled With Blood • How Great Thou Art • What a Friend We Have in Jesus • Amazing Grace • Guide Me Oh Thou Great Jehovah • Jesus Loves Me • When Peace like a River • All Hail the

Power of Jesus Name • Abide With Me • Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken • Break Thou the Bread of Life • We that Love • I'm Pressing on the Upward Way • Blessed Assurance • A Wonderful Saviour is Jesus • Saviour Like a Shepherd Lead Us • He Leadeth Me • Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross • I Stand Amazed • All the Way • To God be the Glory • Children of the Heavenly Father

Les clearly loves to play the autoharp. Anyone who has watched him play and seen the look on his face can attest to that. And Les obviously rejoices in his faith; he has made a career of working for the Mennonite Church. And he is clearly a musician of the first order – his standing in national autoharp competitions proves that. These elements combine to produce a recording that is inspiring, up-lifting and lovely to hear. And, boy, does it bring back memories...

The first few seconds of this tape took me back almost 40 years to the summer Bible School of the local Methodist Church near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Mrs. Detwieler leaned her corpulent Teutonic frame down to the floor and arose with an old black autoharp in her hand – probably the first I had ever seen. I remember "Jesus Loves the Little Children" coming out of her mouth as clearly as I remember the warm chocolate milk and Graham crackers that, later that morning, went into mine. The 'harp was probably out of tune, but what did I know at six?

What a contrast, picturing a much less corpulent Les G-Z lovingly cradle his diatonic 'harp to his chest and hearing "Abide With Me," or "He Leadeth Me" come from the tape player. These are the songs of my childhood, songs my grandfather would sing while doing dishes, songs we sang in church every Sunday, songs we heard at funerals and weddings. I think the main reason they resonate so strongly in me is that Les plays them with such tenderness and feeling.

This is a simple recording. The selections are brief. The autoharp is alone, no vocals, no backup. Les plays in the lush, rich style that is, to my ear, his trademark. These hymns are not as embellished as his contest pieces, but the simplicity is just right. The feeling comes through.

For me, this is a recording for the

quiet times; a late evening alone, times of deep thought and remembrance. This tape just plain makes me feel good. I think it will do the same for you.



Mike's Choice

Mike Herr

Yesteryear

Autoharp: Sandy Shaner
7095 Hanson Road
Hanson, KY 42413

Wildwood Flower • You are My Sunshine • Storms are on the Ocean • Log Cabin Waltz • Old Spinning Wheel Bury Me Beneath the Willow • Seeing Nellie Home • Freight Train • When You and I Were Young • Home Sweet Home • Mockingbird Hill • Red Wing

Yesteryear is a work of familiarity, of campfire tunes and of pleasant instrument breaks. Sandy Shaner is your autoharpist in a five-musician ensemble consisting also of Paul Hill on guitar, Jesse McReynolds on mandolin and mandolobro, Raymond McLain on banjo and Ruth McLain Smith on bass.

The level of musicianship seems to reside in the intermediate level, with the autoharp shading toward the lower end and the mandolin definitely up toward the higher end. In fact, I would give Mr. McReynolds note as the most exciting individual to listen to, with mention of Paul Hill's guitar work for being clean, simple and effective. Ms. Shaner's autoharp playing is the familiar pinch, strum method with an occasional simple, adequate melody line. She plays a supporting role on many tunes and can be heard most prominently on *Wildwood Flower* and *Red Wing*.

This is a tape geared to an audience content with the secure, the comfortable, and the familiar. Autoharpists in the beginner to intermediate levels can use this work to hear a decent example of how to play with other string instruments, and perhaps even play along on a few.



Harps & Hammers

Lindsay Haisley and Jim Hudson
Autoharp: Lindsay Haisley
PO Box 126
Leander, TX 78641

All of Me • Moon River • Aura Lee •

Georgia on My Mind • Harbor Lights • 'Till There Was You • Anytime • Twelfth of Never • Autumn Leaves • Whispering • Stardust • Golden Earrings

This is one of those recordings that grows on you, that seems so simple, even plodding, when first encountered, but contains with a wealth of material and an enormous amount of work. This is one of those paradoxical ways you know you have a real gem on your hands.

All of these tunes selected for recording are of the slow, meandering variety – no quick-paced, galloping, get your feet tapping types here. Rather, the emphasis is placed on careful instrumentation, collaboration, and dialogue between musical voices. Attention has been masterfully paid to correctly using the exact chord on the autoharp for the right sound, be it a major seventh, a diminished chord, a sixth, a ninth, a minor seventh – whatever – Lindsay made a chord bar to fit and Jim paid attention on the hammered dulcimer. Complementing their work is excellent back-up bass by Paul Arntz, percussion by both Scott Schmidt and Jamie Rusling, keyboard by Chris Ranney, and guitar and violin by Michele Ramo.

Lindsay's 'harp playing is characterized by his trademark half-step runs,

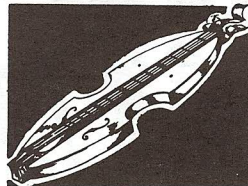
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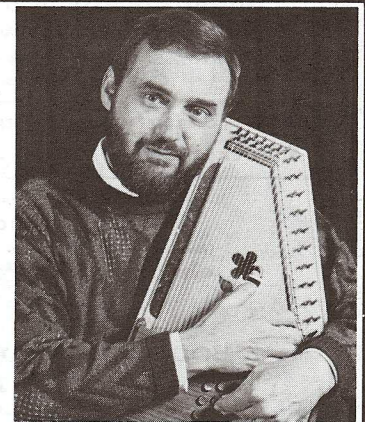
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using the diminished chords, and by his clean, clean melody playing. A very strong point of this tape is the complementary back and forth talking between Lindsay and Jim. Also, the violin and dulcimer get into a wonderful conversation on *Twelfth of Never*; the variety of the string sound is a welcome change. So to, is the addition of the tablas in *Golden Earrings*, which is saved from sounding too much like several other offerings. The contrapuntal harmony lines exhibited in *Autumn Leaves* deserves special mention as well.

All in all, this is a slow-paced, relaxing tape of show tunes that is finely crafted and melds an excellent array of

talents into a first-class offering. The only drawback I feel about the tape is a similarity in tempo and timing off all the pieces – I would have liked a bit more variety. But, it's that old thing of picking a tape for a particular mood and this work is a dandy for a romantic spell, maybe, an after-work slow-down, maybe, at least a calming trip through forty minutes of time to settle those jangled nerves from whatever-ails-ya.

Now, I'd love to hear what these two could do with a set of rockin' tunes of a different genre... well? What about it, Jim and Lindsay?



Oldtime Country Music

Autoharp: Mike Seeger

Tennessee Dog • Ground Hog • Roustabout • Sallie Gooden • The Wreck of the Tennessee Gravy Train • Shaking the Pines in the Holler • Dog and Gun • Candy Girl • Tucker's Barn • Wind and Rain • Faire You Well • Green Fields • Poor Indian • We're Stole and Sold from Africa • Rockridge Holler • Quill Ditty • Rolling and Tumbling Blues • Blue Tail Fly • Prairie Ronde Waltz

"Oldtime Country Music," a solo CD by Mike Seeger includes 18 songs and tunes, favorites of Mike's from over the years. Mike utilizes 11 instruments including a gourd banjer (???) and plays two on the autoharp; these last will constitute the bulk of my review material.

Tucker's Barn is an instrumental piece, as Mike says, "a beautiful, rare, archaic" tune learned from Doc Watson's father-in-law. It's also crooked as a country and, I suspect, played differently every time through. Technique-wise, Mike's style consists of thumb lead predominantly, with his characteristic and distinctive drag notes. He also clues us in that he uses more sevenths each successive time through but reverts to "straight majors" for the last few times. Listening to Mike play these types of incredibly crooked tunes causes me to feel partly very frustrated, as they are so difficult to learn, but also very awed, as I'm sure he's caught in the oldtime flavor from the fiddler from which it came.

Wind and Rain is a simple, morose ballad from many years ago, telling the story of a woman who dies at the hands of her jealous sister. She is thrown into a brook, fished out by a miller, and found on the riverbank by a fiddler; he then proceeds to make a bow from her golden hair, tuning pegs from her little finger bones, and a violin body from her breast bone. The only tune the fiddle plays is the tale of the wind and the rain. I think Mike does an exemplary job of open-chording and dragging his thumb to imitate the fiddle throughout the instrumental breaks. This is the type of song that, while performing, one has to clench one's emotional teeth and not think too much about what story one is weaving.

The rest of this CD is all excellent solo performance untouched by special effects and unfettered by overdub. It's worth a review on its own, but is beyond the scope of this publication. Suffice it to say, this entire CD is a great representation of one of our revered masters of folk music, Mike Seeger.



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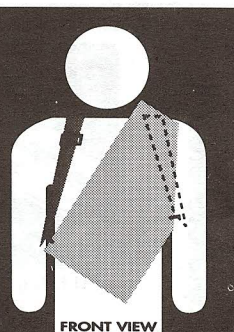
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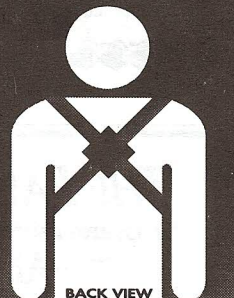
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Sacred Harp

In Memory Of
Beverly Ann Pratton

December 3, 1938 – July 2, 1995

The autoharp community is stunned at the sudden loss of Bev Pratton. Early on a Sunday morning in July we lost a cheerful, kind, warm friend, a knowledgeable and trusted mentor. We extend our caring sympathy to Bev's family and friends in Galt, California, and to her extended family across national and international boundaries.

PHOTO BY MATTHEW PRATTON



Bev's memorial service was held July 7 and was very special with her autoharp students and friends participating. The music was extremely moving. Along with the music of her students, another important legacy of Bev's life is Horse and Buggy® Music. We have been told that it shall continue through the efforts of her partner, Carl Loll.

NEAR TO THE HEART OF GOD

Cleland B. McAfee



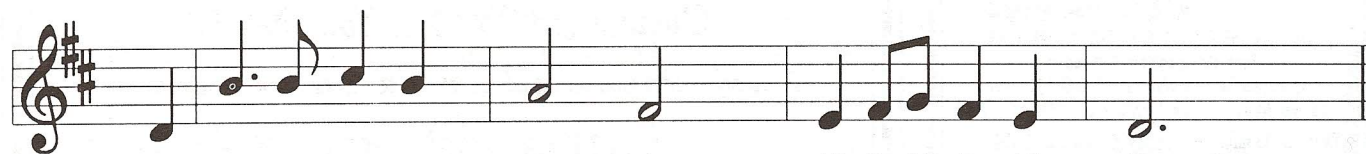
D / D°(B♭) D C°(D) A7 C°(D) A7 / / / / / D
 1. There is a place of qui - et rest, Near to the heart of God,
 2. There is a place of com - fort sweet, Near to the heart of God,
 3. There is a place of full re - lease, Near to the heart of God,



D / D°(B♭) D C°(D) A7 C°(D) A7 / / / D A7 D
 1. A place where sin can - not mo - lest, Near to the heart of God.
 2. A place where we our Sav - iour meet, Near to the heart of God.
 3. A place where all is joy and peace, Near to the heart of God.



REFRAIN
 D G / / / / D / A7 D A7 / D
 O Je - sus, blest Re - deem - er, Sent from the heart of God,



D G / A7 G D / A7 D A7 D A7 D
 Hold us, who wait be - fore Thee, Near to the heart of God.

Chords shown in parentheses are substitute chords. If used, *pluck* the melody note or use a *small pinch* in order to minimize the sound of the substitute chord.

Janette Carter

Living with Memories



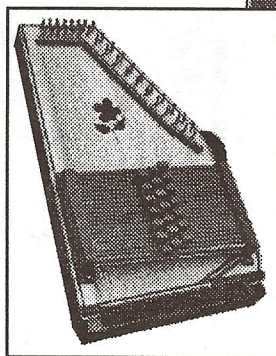
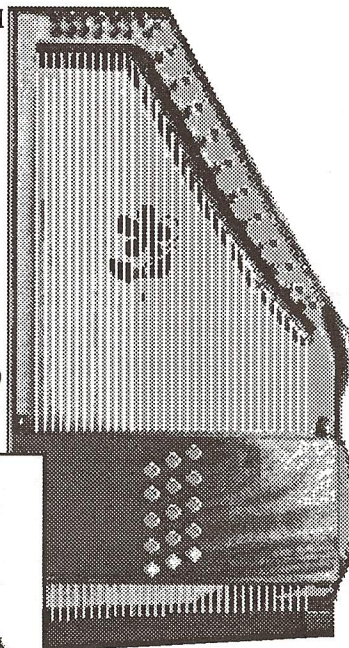
A lot has been written about "The Carter Family." Their life and their music have made history. This book dwells a lot more on their personal life and how it feels to be the daughter of a famous family. I loved them because they were my people - not because of their fame...

— Janette Carter

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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

*Oh, what a beautiful summer,
Oh, what a wonderful time!
Go out and visit those festivals,
Hear all those autoharps chime!*

Have you noticed the increase in autoharp participation and competition in music festivals all across the country? Way to go 'harpers!

P.S.
Congratulations to **Bonnie Phipps**. Her childrens tape, "Monsters' Holiday," was awarded the 1994 National Parents' Publications Award and the Parents' Choice Award! (And, of course, we're delighted that Bonnie is now on our staff!)

P.S.
Anita Roesler and her family, who live in Oklahoma City, were not involved in the tragedy there, but felt the blast as did **Bryan and Kate Bowers** in their traveling. **Marie and Loren Wells'** daughter was in the process of moving back to Wichita from Oklahoma City on that very day.

P.S.
The Front Porch Strings, in which yours truly is the autoharpist, had the privilege of participating in the Fire Fly Festival in Boone, North Carolina on July 1. We opened for Doc Watson – what a thrill! Doc is a master musician, top-notch entertainer, and a true gentleman. He was quite "taken" with my Carter Gold Orthey 'harp, and even played it backstage! Wow! I understand that Doc used to play the autoharp a lot. Who knows – ?

P.S.
Sandy Boone, Dublin, Virginia, received her BA degree in Human Resources in May. Congratulations and much luck in the future. Sandy says she has had to neglect her music during this learning experience – time to

get back on key, Sandy!

P.S.
Carole Spicer, Alpena Michigan's autoharpist extraordinaire, recently played for the annual fund-raiser for the museum in that town. Carole, who usually performs with one group or another, decided this time to share the stage with her girls only. She was announced on the printed program as

*Carole Spicer – Solo
and her*

Autoharp Entourage:

Eve...Annie...Pandora...OrphaMary

Each 'harp was introduced separately on stage. Carole and her entourage played very well, naturally.

P.S.
Alex and Rich Usher are making their way West this summer. Alex tells us that she played her 'harp for a huge field of prairie dogs at Devil's Tower, Wyoming. "They especially liked 'Whistling Rufus' – one of them sang along with his funny little buck teeth and pudgy cheeks."

P.S.
We were unhappy to learn that **Vi Elliston** has had a rather bad year. Thank goodness she is finally feeling better. The medical profession has finally come up with a strange-sounding diagnosis. But it's live-with-able, and Vi has been doing that with aplomb and her autoharp club! Sad news from our friend, **Jo Brennan's** Canadian home. She and her husband, George, have recently lost their son. Folks who have heard Jo's tape, *Autoharp Stylings*, will remember Rick's fine performance on that tape...

P.S.
Hats off to and Harpland pride in the **Paul and Win Grace Family** who have been chosen to perform at the prestigious Lincoln Center in New York City for the *Roots of American Music Festival* in August! (See festivals listing.)

P.S.
Kathy Roush's daughter, **Shelley Burke**, entertained **Bryan and Kate Bowers** while the Bowers were in Charlotte, North Carolina. Shelley and her family enjoyed the entire visit, and made it through, in spite of the fact that Shelley's six year-old son, Jeffery, reminded Bryan he should be sure to make the bed, (Jeffery's bed), *just right!*

P.S.

Last Minute Stuff – Report from Fiddlers' Grove Festival, NC: weather – miserable (rain, cold); crowd – slim, (due to above); spirits – high (no one there but die-hards); good time – you bet! We'll be the first at the gate next year! Congratulations to autoharp contest winners: first place, **Carole Outwater**; second, **Ronnie Burroughs**; third, **Mary Umbarger**. Report from Mt. Airy Festival, NC: Almost ditto of above, except some dry hours on Saturday! Autoharp contest winners: first place, **Joann Redd**; second, **John Hollandsworth**; third, **Rick Hull**.

The Bar None Autoharp Society of the Delaware Valley will be restarting in Fall 1995. Philadelphia area residents interested in being on the mailing list should write to Bob Woodcock, 268 Barren Hill Road, Conshohocken, PA19428. E-mail: banjerbob@aol.com

P.S.

Oops! Please make note of the following corrections in the article "Now That's Progress" by George Foss (Spring '95). In the first paragraph, insert the following after the first sentence: "However, in a few instruments (piano, guitar, and especially autoharp) we must consider the movement of full chords from one to the next." Near the top of column two, the definition for the V₇ chord should read: "The DOMINANT SEVENTH chord is a combination of all the tones found in the Major quality Dominant (V) chord and the diminished quality Leading-tone (VII) chord." The chart in the box at the bottom of column two on page 30 should read:

Each musical phrase usually ends in one of the following patterns called a *cadence*:

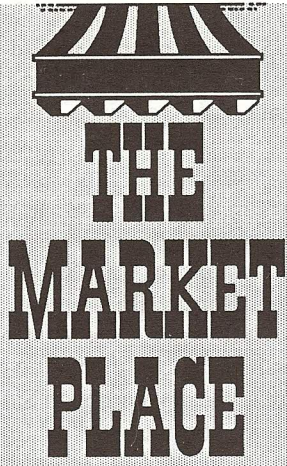
V or V₇ to I This is the most common pattern and is called an *Authentic cadence*.

Phrase ending on V This pattern usually occurs at the mid-point in a melody and is called a *half-cadence*.

IV to I This elision pattern at the final cadence is called the *plagal* or "Amen" cadence.

V or V₇ to VI This surprise ending is called a *deceptive cadence*.





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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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