

# Autoharp Quarterly®

The International Magazine Dedicated  
to the Autoharp Enthusiast

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## *In This Issue*

*Mission to Saxony  
(A History of the  
Autoharp in Germany)  
Conclusion*  
by Mike Fenton

*Autoharp & Hearing  
Loss – Related or Not?*  
by Cathy Britell, M.D.

*Bringing the 37th  
String Back to Life*  
by Dr. George Orthey

*Interaction*  
with Tom Schroeder

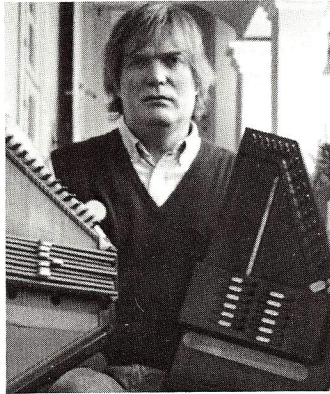
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by Bonnie Phipps

*New!*  
*Simply Classic*  
by Linda Huber  
Classic themes in  
simple arrangements

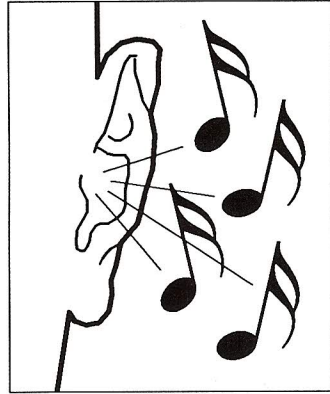
*172 Autoharpers at the 1996 Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering*

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**Autoharp**  
**Quarterly**  
The International  
Magazine Dedicated  
to the Autoharp Enthusiast

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# To And From / The Editors

Mary Lou  Wan

## Dear Readers:

Another fall – another winter. A year ago at this time, we saw our last bare ground until mid-spring. Our trees, although yellow and red bouquets a few weeks ago, are beginning to look barren, cold. Nature is relentlessly progressing and so is time. This quarter has been an especially unusual one for us. As Rosanna Rosannadana would say, “It’s always somethin’!”

And our “somethin’” started with the last issue. We apologize to Drew Smith and Mike Herr for changing their status in the winners’ circle at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering contest. To get it straight, June Maugery won first place, Drew Smith second, and Mike Herr third.

In this issue, we want you to make a special note to read our Medical Editor’s article concerning the autoharp and hearing. We hope you’ll help her with her research by participating in her questionnaire. This is a very important subject, and Cathy, with the help of John Arthur, intends to bring it to a carefully researched conclusion. But they will need your input.

It is that time of the year when we are reminded of our friends who have helped us along the way. Our staff is an excellent one, and we appreciate each member – Mary Ann Johnston for her tireless efforts to contact performers and compile their schedules; George and Dorothy Wagner who have the humongous job of keeping clubs and events current; Alan Mager, for his working quarter after quarter, year after year with talented players producing our important Interaction lessons; Bonnie Phipps, reaching to the young and the folks who teach them, developing interest in the autoharp and its music; Cathy Britell, M.D., our medical guru; Mike Herr, Bob Woodcock, and Judie Pagter for the time and thought they spend organizing and writing their special musical critiques; Mary Umbarger, who brings her down-

home humor and style to the personal news of our community; our feature writers, who, when called upon, help us over hurdles as only they can. And, we thank you, the readers, most of all for your continued encouragement and support through the past eight years.

As we become more involved in the autoharp community, we find less and less time available to do the things we have accomplished in the past. So it is with regret that we have decided to discontinue the Market Place. However, there’s a bright and timely spot in our decision for you. Starting with this issue, and just in time for the holidays, you may purchase any *recording* or *music book* listed on the Market Place page at a 10% discount until our inventory is depleted. This discount is to be added to the existing 10% discount for the *Autoharp Quarterly* subscriber. That, folks, is a bargain! The postage and handling will remain at \$3.00 per order. Happy Holidays!

## Dear Editors:

### AN ENGLISH ROSE

Many thanks for sending me *Autoharp Quarterly*, and for sending me Mike Fenton’s address! He lives only 1¼ hours away and is helping me reposition the bars on my autoharp. I have one of the old German instruments (painted with roses) that he talks about in his article, “A Mission to Saxony.”

Mary Poole

### THE FALKLAND ISLES ILLS

Thanks for sending me *AQ*. I have been pursuing spare parts for one of the school’s autoharps which was of German make, I guessed. I first wrote a couple of music shops in England who advertise repair services. However, they only had Oscar Schmidt spares. I had heard about an English busker who used

a “Musima” German ’harp from Markneukirchen, so I tried just writing directly to “Musima,” Markneukirchen. The letter was passed on to C. Robert Hopf. Jörg Hopf wrote a very nice letter back saying the instrument was one of theirs, and they would supply new strings in three weeks, apologizing for the delay as they had to special manufacture the strings. I received the strings, but haven’t tried them yet, as we have had a slight hiccup due to language difference. I was sent, for what I described as a “tuning peg,” a tuning wrench – and now I have sent them extra money on the invoice and requested a “tuning screw” with descriptive photo. So I hope I can get one, as the instrument is missing one, and an Oscar Schmidt spare will not do...

Mary Amee Smallwood

*Hi to the South Atlantic, Mary Amee! We’re lucky that we don’t have your ’harp problems. We have taken the liberty of introducing your name to Mike Fenton, the “English Busker!” We hope you’re following his articles concerning the autoharp in Germany.*

Editors

### A GAKKI SOLUTION

[In reference to the Gakki autoharp, last issue:] I think Gakki just means “guitar.” But it could be the name of a city or company – you might want to check with your Japanese Autoharp Band on that one.

Jolene Kraushar

*You have a point there, Jolene! – And speaking of the Japanese Autoharp Band, read on.*

Editors

### AGEO, JAPAN – TWICE

My friends and I all enjoyed the festival. They say they want to come back to your place in next year!

Yasuo Mita

I traveled abroad for the first time. It was the happiest trip of my life.

The warmth of people and music felt good at Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering. I was very joyful at playing autoharp and singing with all the members. I was glad they awarded us [The Japanese Autoharp Band] the People's Choice Award.

I was surprised that many people played autoharp because it is played by a few in Japan. I like autoharp very much.

I had a good time all the while. And it was nice I met you.

*Haruko (Spring)*

*We've enjoyed seeing Yasuo every year for the past seven years, when he travels from Japan for the summer 'harp Gatherings in Newport, Pennsylvania. When he first came, he traveled alone. Soon he began to bring friends with him – first one, and this year he reserved rooms in the local motel for five! These folks are very fine autoharp players, and feel right at home here in the international flavor of the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering.*

*Editors*

#### THE CAT'S PAJAMAS

AQ is the cat's pajamas! Or as the youngsters say, "All that and a bag of Doritos!" I want a Mountain Laurel Gathering contest tape, and I'm going to order some goodies from the advertisers –

*Vic Rosenzweig*

*– And you're a bag of Doritos, too, Vic! Thank you!*

*Editors*

#### A WINFIELD WINNER

Winfield was the icing on the cake for a good ending of the season! It was a pleasure to see Limberjack and the Otterharp Gang again. The jam sessions were great...

*Tina Louise Barr*

*We are always very proud to have you around our campfire, Tina. Congratulations for coming in number two in this year's Winfield competition!*

*Editors*

#### PRIDE AND JOY

Below is a shot of my daughter

Lisa and me practicing before our set at the Rose Tree Fiddlers' Gathering in Media, Pennsylvania. We played tunes as well as telling some very bad jokes: "Hey, Lisa, what do people eat in the desert?" Lisa; "The sand-wich is there..."

"You may want to stick this photo in AQ," (he said, his pride coming out of his ears.)

*Bob Woodcock*

*Here you go, Bob! We think it's a pretty good picture, too!*

*Editors*



#### A FEELING FOR FELTS

...I have personally learned a great deal about the technicalities of our instrument from the wealth of information in AQ, but I've not read of attempts by your readers to mix different felt densities when refelting chord bars. My own experience with some arthritis affliction in my fingers led me to try to lessen the pressure needed to press chord bar buttons especially on the lowest four or five chord bars, where the strings are always the tightest, and more resistant to the damping action of the felts. So, I used the softer, less dense felts on those lower chord bars, with the harder more dense felt material on the upper bars, where strings are more resilient.

The less dense felts may be obtained from the Great American Autoharp Emporium [see ad on page 7], and have been very satisfactory in combination with the harder felts usually furnished through Oscar Schmidt, Orthey Instruments, or Fladmark Woodworks. My finger pain is much less, even with extended practice sessions or lengthy performances.

*Maurice Dill*

#### NIFTY FIFTIES

Many thanks to all my friends at Winfield who conspired and plotted to make my 50th a birthday never to be forgotten. My "friends" rose in the pre-dawn hours and stealthily cocooned my campsite with countless yards of white

butcher paper suitably graffitied with messages of well-wishing and sympathy. Toilet paper festoons completed the picture. Then, not wanting me to miss the attractive glow of the early morning sunlight on their handiwork, they gently snatched me from the arms of Morpheus with a cacophony of banging pot lids, catcalls, resounding autoharps (I suspect untuned) and an enthusiastic, if uncoordinated chorus of *Happy Birthday*. I sat bolt upright, looking like the deer in the headlights. As I wiped the sleep from my eyes, I realized at least a couple of dozen people were right outside demanding an immediate appearance. I scrambled around on all fours looking for some clothes. Pulling on a pair of shorts, I threw open the tent flap and found myself inside a giant paper igloo – I'd been "teepeed" in my tee-pee! I poked my head through a crack just in time to be bushwhacked with a battery of cameras, thus memorializing the world's worst case of morning-face (cash paid for all pictures and negatives). You're all great friends but, just the same, next year I'm bringing the alarm system.

*Gregg Averett*

*We believe that the big 50 is one to remember, Gregg! Too bad Cathy Britell and Stew Schneider weren't there to receive the same. They too hit that august age in the past month!*

*Editors*

#### THE UNCOWED, UNBOWED, PSALTERY

This letter is in reference to your "To and From the Editors" column in the Winter 1996 issue of your magazine. Under "The Savage Breast" you explored the effects that music has on animals. My question is why you felt the need to end the article with a "slam" on the bowed psaltery, musical saw, and hurdy-gurdy?

I manufacture Bowed Psalteries that many people call the finest available in this country and I work very hard to overcome the common misconception that the bowed psaltery is not a legitimate musical instrument. You either have never heard a quality bowed psaltery played, or you think that by tearing down another instrument you can somehow elevate your own. In either case it was irresponsible for the editors of a magazine such as yours to make such a comment about an instru-

ment that is as dear [to] many people as the autoharp is to you. Shame on you.

I'm enclosing a picture of a quality bowed psaltery that I guarantee could soothe your cats as well as any autoharp.

I would be very interested in hearing your reply to this letter.

Richard Spencer  
Omega Strings

Well, Richard – what can we say to soothe your savage breast? We apologize profusely to all bowed psalteries and their proud owners out there. As an aside, we both play the bowed psaltery, and Ivan plays the hurdy-gurdy and musical saw, too. Maybe we should apologize to the impresarios of those fine instruments as well. Mary Lou was, in that particular "Editor's Note," making fun of Ivan who "jazzes" his autoharp concerts up with these instruments, "for variety's sake."

And, of course, we apologize for our obviously uncultured cats who do not appreciate some types of music – they are, after all, just common American domestic short-hairs. What do they know? Play on!

Editors

#### NOW THAT'S PROGRESS!

I've been playing the autoharp a little over a year and am enjoying it so much. I was [recently] in a workshop in Mountain View, Arkansas, where Tom Schroeder, Charles Whitmer, Evo Bluestein, Ivan Stiles, and Margie Earles led the classes. Now, last month, I won second place in the senior citizens talent contest at the Mid-South Fair! Wow!

Thelma Ledford

Great! We know those folks are good teachers, but we call that phenomenal progress!

Editors

#### OOPS!

I've been enjoying the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering contest tape. However, there is a correction that should be noted: My tune on side B labeled as *The Musical Priest* is actually *Cuckoo's Nest* –

Mike Herr

Oops! Hope there are no more mistakes on the J-card! Well, wait 'til next year!

Editors

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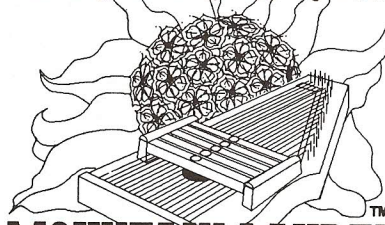
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I arrived in Germany for the first time this last January 4th, being met at Hamburg Airport by Gudrun. On January 6th, I presented a workshop for her clients which was videotaped. Gudrun served as interpreter for the session, although there was a good understanding of English amongst the group. People came from as far away as Berlin and the group numbered about 30. The autoharps in evi-

dence were mostly new Hopf models, although there were a small number of Schmidts in use. I conducted the session mostly on osmosis lines ("I play – you listen!") as there had been no opportunity to pre-tune all the autoharps present to uniform standard pitch.

In fact, they were mostly pretty well together in this respect, so I was able to include some

simple strums with some group playing towards the end of the session.

There was not a lot of time for sight-seeing on my trip, but I did spend a day around the snowy landscape of Hamburg with Gudrun's boyfriend, Hugh Spite, a Welsh actor and former member of the Ballet Rambert. He is also a very keen autoharper. On Sunday, January 7th, Gudrun and I set out by train for Klingenthal down in Saxony in the southern part of the old East Germany. This involved a nine-hour train journey with changes in Hanover, Magdeburg, and Leipzig to our destination at Zwickau where we were met by Jörg Hopf. He drove us the last 40 or so miles to Klingenthal. This proved a better arrangement than taking the train all the way as Klingenthal has just one train a day. There was quite a contrast in the railway service on our journey – the smooth-running, crowded trains of the West were replaced by the slower, more spartan trains of the old East. We often had a compartment – even a whole carriage – to ourselves.

I've come to the conclusion that there's something about the autoharp and mountains – those regions of Ap-

palachia where its use by the Carters, Stonemans, W. P. Davis, B. C. Goad, Myrtle Vermillion, and many more ensured its survival as a folk instrument between the World Wars; the Ozarks in Arkansas where many great autoharp weekends have been hosted in recent years; and here in old Saxony, a pocket of autoharp history waiting to be explored amidst the high country of Vögtland.

Jörg (pronounced "Yurg") Hopf, born November 17, 1964, was "raised with the company" he inherited from his father and has worked hard to keep the concern going. His mother, Beate, supports him in his work, still living in the family home on the factory site. She is a dental technician and has never been involved in the business directly. In addition to Jörg, there are now just four employees in the factory, the longest-serving of whom is Gerd Pranner, who has been there over twenty years and is responsible for all the basic woodwork. Wolfgang Dahn is responsible for all finishing, polishing, and painting. Christina Klier deals with tuning pin insertion and stringing, whilst Renate Kurzenberger puts the manuals (chord bars) on the autoharp, readies them for shipping, and also deals with tuning. The company produces its own unwound strings, but the heavier, wound strings are produced in nearby Markneukirchen – there has always been a very large string production in that town, although there are just two manufacturers left now. All the current Hopf employees have been

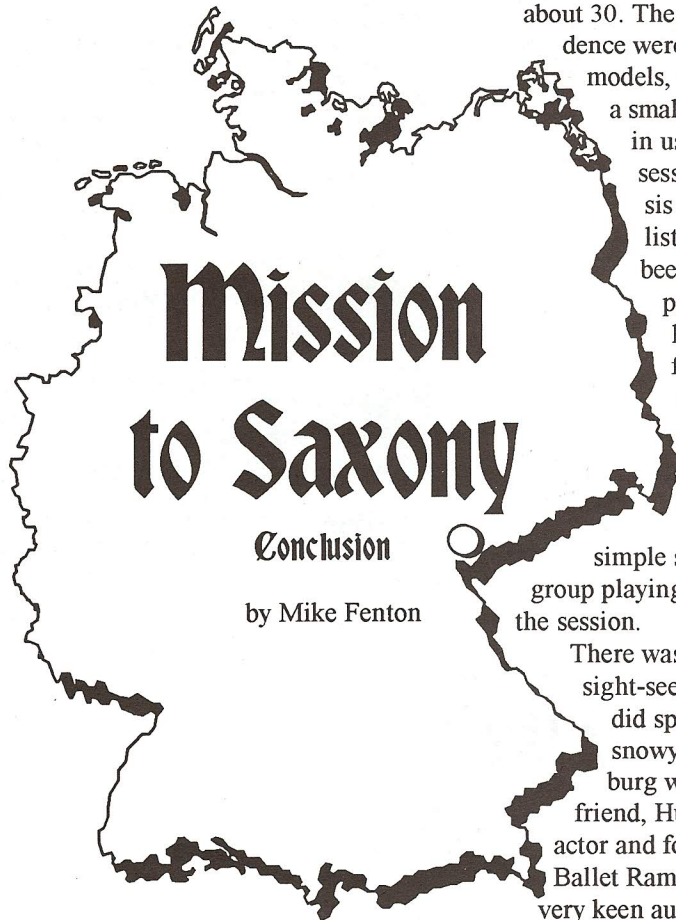


PHOTO BY MIKE FENTON

*The Hopf factory in Klingenthal.*



PHOTO BY NICK FENTON

*The Hopf family home on the factory site at Brunndöbra, a homestead typical of this part of Germany with its angled gables and red brick quions*

there at least ten years.

Gudrun and I stayed in a local hotel very close to the Hopf factory, but we spent most of the time at the factory and Hopf family house where we were well looked-after by Mrs. Hopf with some superb German cooking. I was asked to play an informal concert demonstration for the Hopfs and their employees and, for them all, it was the first time they had heard and seen an autoharp seriously played. I had just two 'harps with me, an Oscar Schmidt chromatic 21-chord Centurion and my Orthey "Winfield" 'harp from 1987 (diatonic in the key of A). During this time, Beate Hopf became quite emotional and wished her husband could have lived to have heard me. I, too, felt some of those same emotions and wished that this encounter could have taken place years before, but of course circumstances had made that impossible. I dearly wished I could have met Roland Hopf. It was some small consolation to me to know that at least he had been able to hear me on tape and had written to me appreciatively about it. My *Accent on Autoharp* cassette does show a Hopf Rosen autoharp on the liner picture and I did enjoy seeing it displayed in a company display case in Jörg's office.

We were joined at this time by Hans Körner, a local musician with an interest in playing autoharp. After I played, I gave him some of my picks – Kelly speed thumb picks and Herco blue nylon finger picks. It was a thrill to play

for them, right there in the factory from whence came my first autoharp nearly three decades previously. I formed the impression that they were all highly motivated by our visit. I asked Jörg about the "Rosen" design and he confirmed that this was a Hopf motif going back more than 50 years, and I did come across a reference in an old catalog – think the word was "rosencraux" or something similar. It's an old German word meaning "bearing rose transfer," and it occurred to me that this might be the origin of the word "Rosen" to describe those 'harps.

The Hopfs and their employees told me much of the sad way of life they led under the old East regime. In the East Germany ruled by the USSR, the best way to survive was to keep your head down and not show any initiative. Why bother to produce a good autoharp? You simply did as you were told and were paid a pittance so everyone was kept in work. Then someone came along and took away your wares for sale abroad. There was no incentive to ensure quality – the State did everything for you, including break your spirit if you showed any originality. Anonymity was the German way in the East – that's why those old Rosens simply bore that "Made in Germany" on them. During the years of the VEB collective (1972-1989) there was no increase in quality. It just appears that, for the better part of four decades, German autoharps stood still because the great increase in autoharp knowledge

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and building that took place in the USA during the 70s and 80s could not penetrate the Iron Curtain. And further, there was no playing tradition in Germany. As far as we know at present, the autoharp was never a folk instrument there, and could never usurp the zither tradition that had already existed there in a very stable form for



Jörg with his newly designed 15-bar, 36-string "Chordharp." The 'harp has a more elaborate body design with a curvature at the top end.

generations. It is believed that the C. Robert Hopf Company is the only major zither producer left in the world. Jörg Hopf tells a very touching story of how he was inspired with creativity

after the fall of the Wall and made a new "Chordharp" in an updated design.

Of one thing I am absolutely clear following my Saxony trip, confirming what I have suspected for years, is that there is a vast history of the autoharp in Germany which remains undiscovered. Now that I have contact with the Hopfs and Gudrun Derlin, I have hopes that some of the German history may be at last chronicled – maybe even recordings found? There are great difficulties associated with this, though. For instance, two world wars must have caused a great loss of instruments and written records – it is known that there were producers of the autoharp in Dresden, but of course, this is one of the cities laid waste in WWII bombing. Further, under the socialist system in the GDR, the histories of private firms were of no interest. It is almost certain that the effects of the war and the attitudes of the Communist system resulted in the destruction of many documents which would have given great insight into Germany's part in autoharp history. But surely, not all has been destroyed. The catalogs and in-

struments I saw in Markneukirchen are proof of that.

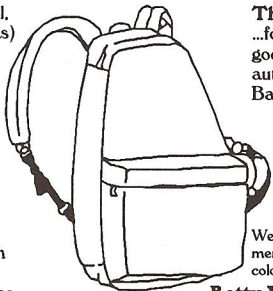
I have merely scratched the surface in my short time there, but it is hoped that future visits will enable me to explore these connections further. What it really needs is for a team to go over for a longer period – a player, maker, photographer, historian, interpreter, media expert – a group with the necessary varied expertise to really explore the instrument's history properly in greater depth. Jörg Hopf is himself very interested and in a recent letter to me expressed his wish to look for "more information about K. Gütter." I already have hopes that probing there locally via newspaper appeal may turn up a photograph someday!

On the second of our two full days in Klingenthal, Jörg Hopf took Gudrun and me to the Music Instrument Museum in Markneukirchen where we were greeted by curator, Heidrun Eichler and taken on a tour of the building. I have to admit I was like a cat on hot bricks waiting to get at their autoharps, although I was very interested to see the hurdy-gurdies and was pleased to meet Frank Fickelsherer-Fasz, their restorer of old instruments, who was entertaining visitors with excellent demonstrations on the didgeridoo, nose-flute, and jawharp. As a fellow jawharp enthusiast, we got along fine, me giving him something of a surprise when I recognized the make of jawharp he was playing – an East German Schlutter, probably the best in the world for the money, and which comes in a cute little wooden clog-shaped case. I was able to spend several hours looking through old catalogs of the area's music companies, and photocopied much of the autoharp-related material. There were just three autoharps on display; a Zimmermann, a Weber's Martha, and a most strange pre-1900 Lindemann Volkzither with seven chords, three short bars and four long! Hermann Lindemann is known to have bought the rights to the chorded zither from Karl Gütter in 1883 and he owned a company that traded in a variety of instruments locally. The museum has several other autoharps, some of which were brought up from the vaults for my inspection, but I did not have time to view them all. Maybe it is possible there exists somewhere in Saxony a

## Autumn Wind

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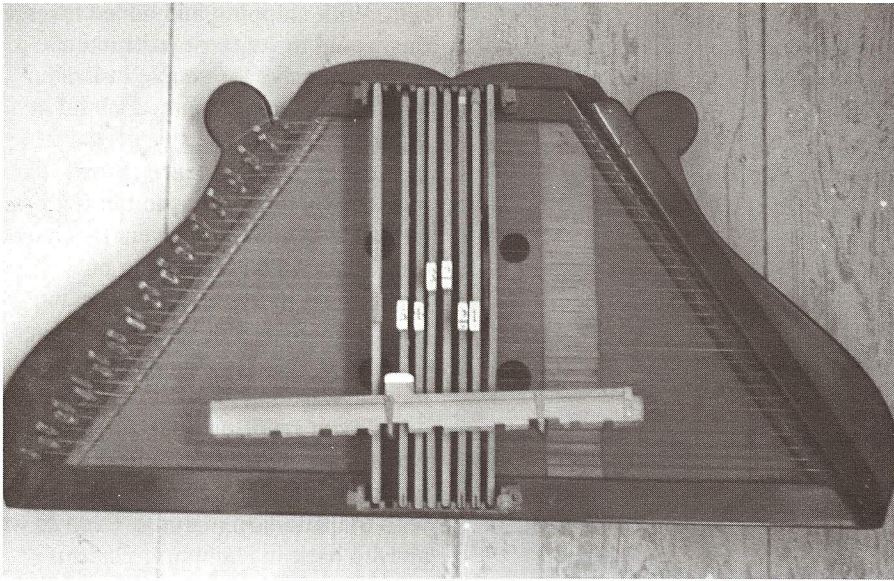
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FROM THE COLLECTION OF MIKE PERFORO



The unusual autoharp found at the Musikinstrumenten museum in Markneukirchen. The shape closely resembles the autoharp designed and patented by Charles Zimmermann. Compare this photo with the one of Zimmermann's (AQ, April, 1991, page 3).

'harp bearing the name "Gütter" on it. What a find that would be!

A most fascinating autoharp in the Markneukirchen collection bears a strong resemblance to the instrument patented by Charles Zimmermann in Philadelphia. It is a symmetrical shape with chord bars running centrally. However, the chord bars on this instrument moved vertically in the manner with which we are familiar, unlike the Zimmermann original manner in which the bars were moved horizontally. You can bet I'll have those other 'harps out on a future visit, possibly even get some of them operational! It would be good to see the museum here doing more to present the autoharp's history locally, and I'm sure this could happen in the future with the appropriate support and interest from those keen to be involved as research progresses.

My time spent in the museum pouring over those old catalogs confirmed for me much of what I had already suspected – that there were companies operational in this part of Germany before 1900 producing a variety of autoharps for export. *Müllers* were based in Dresden during the late 1800s and were well-known for their "Orpheus" and "Erato" models. The "Erato" offered 39 chords as the 13 bar positions could be shifted (three positions per bar) sideways by simply moving the chord button sideways, thus moving felt and spaces underneath to a different posi-

tion. By having a completely chromatic scale, therefore, a C position could be altered to a C# major or to a D major.

*Meinhold* was a well-known company in the Klingenthal area which produced a range of autoharps. (Often known as akkord zithers, they were usually painted black like so many German 'harps, and named after girls – the Miranda, Norma, Gloria, and Mignon, for example). I have seen this company listed as "T. Meinhold" and "F. A. Meinhold" but assume them to be the same. I have a diatonic 'harp produced by them (diatonic is not new) which physically resembles the Zimmermanns being produced in the USA in the late 19th century. It is a 25-string 'harp with six chords and tuned in G diatonic and its rubber damping pads are held on the underside of the chord bars diagonally! I have a fine-condition Miranda in my collection which offers 36 chords from 12 buttons in which the chord bar positions are shifted by a set of cream and red plastic-headed levers. One day I hope to present a recorded collection in which some of these old German 'harps are heard, probably for the first time publicly in many cases. The Meinhold company eventually became Wilhelm Meinel, based in Klingenthal where it also produced gramophones and advertised its catalog of the "genuine Meinhold Zithers."

England was a major destination for German autoharp exports. I recall

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PHOTO BY JÖRG HOPF

Gudrun Derlin and Mike Fenton outside the C. Robert Hopf factory.

coming across an "Otto's Autoharp" in an antique shop years ago in which the chord bars were moved horizontally over the strings from buttons at the side of the instrument, in a manner not entirely removed from the model patented by Zimmermann. This 'harp is now with Eileen Roys in Maryland. A London catalog of James T. Coppock, dated 1929, shows imported Lohengrin and Silver Bells autoharps from Klingenthal with a range of accessories including cleaners, tuning keys, string sets, and wrest pins – try going into an English music shop today and asking for these items!

Undoubtedly the most important reason for our visit, though, was to assist the Hopf company in updating and improving its product so that a more secure market might be created for it, particularly in Germany itself, so that the work of the Hopfs and Gudrun Derlin might complement each other. Much of the discussions that took place were of a business nature between Gudrun and Jörg and are therefore clearly beyond the scope of this feature. It was my job to offer input as to the facilities provided by the new Hopfs instruments, and to provide a player's perspective. This I could do from a position of considerable strength having owned and played a great variety of German, Oscar Schmidt, and handmade 'harps by USA builders during three decades of interest. It has become very important to me in a historical context that Saxony produces a top line autoharp, and the fact I now have at

last come to know the Hopfs emphasises that feeling for me.

I found that on the newer Hopf 'harps, made during 1995 and supplied to Gudrun's clients, some of the chord bars were incorrectly labeled and felted. I was able to get access to their factory diagram and have these faults put right. Clearly, these are problems which can occur when the makers have no playing knowledge – I can think of such problems occurring with Oscar 'harps too. Subjects discussed included ways of laying out a chord system, chord bar action, inclusion of a recess under chord bars holders for insertion of an electric pickup bar, provision of spare parts, use of a laminated pin block, alternative chord bars, depth of soundbox, and most importantly, the subject of pricing. I had hoped to talk about other issues such as diatonic tuning and fine tuning provision, but began to realize as we talked (with Gudrun continually interpreting, remember – she confessed to being quite exhausted by this as we journeyed back north) that there are other priorities for the moment.

One thing is for certain – with the disappearance of a repressive political system and new knowledge and receptiveness on the part of Jörg Hopf, gone are the days of cheap German autoharps. Many would say this is to be welcomed if the price increase is accompanied by a corresponding increase in quality. It is likely that the trade price of the new Hopf 'harps will be about 400 German marks, about \$270, making them on a price level similar to a Schmidt Centu-

tion. With shipping and added taxes, this would make these instruments quite expensive for people in Britain and the USA, so that I am doubtful at the moment as to the size of market they could hope to secure abroad. I am particularly doubtful as to the USA market as American players have such easy access to an increasing number of exceptional individual autoharp builders. Germany is a different situation, though, as there is a lot of money in the old West and a well-made German instrument retailing at up to 800 marks would have no trouble in finding a market particularly as Gudrun's work with the autoharp matures. Even as we arrived back in Hamburg, Gudrun's answering machine had several inquiries on it about purchasing autoharps.

My journey to Saxony has opened up new possibilities for research and for the development of German autoharps. If I can make a contribution in these areas, I'll be delighted to be involved. Major considerations for a future trip include a more detailed study of the Musikinstrumenten Museum collection, more liaison with Jörg Hopf on the progress of their new 'harps, a visit to Morgenröthe (Zimmermann's birthplace), and an attempt to uncover further information about Karl Gütter. I'd also like to spend some time in a summer with more command of the language as it is a beautiful area. On this trip, I could only appreciate the countryside fleetingly through the snowy cold with my mind on many things unconnected with being a tourist! Maybe in the future I may have the chance to play for a wider German audience and perhaps show them something of what they've been missing and give the autoharp a boost there. I only wish I could have done so during Roland Hopf's time.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Gudrun Derlin and Hugh Spite for making my visit possible at long last; Gisela Schark for her hospitality in Hamburg; and Jörg Hopf and his mother, Beate, for their generous attentions and hospitality in Klingenthal. ❖





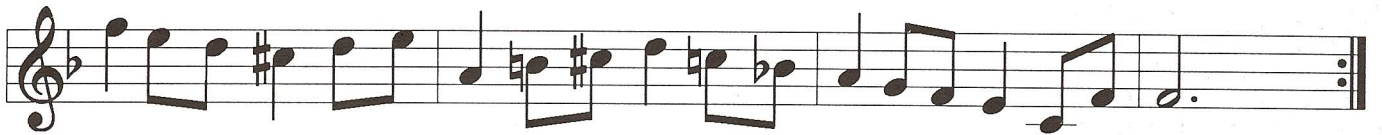
# Bourée

from the Em Suite for Lute

J. S. Bach



Dm A7 Dm A7 Dm A7 Gm A7 Dm G7 A7 Dm Am Gm Dm A7 Dm A7 Dm A7 Dm A7 Dm / A7  
(Dm)



Dm A7 Dm A7 Gm A7 Dm G7 A7 Dm Am Gm F C7 F C7 / F /  
(Dm) (C7 /)



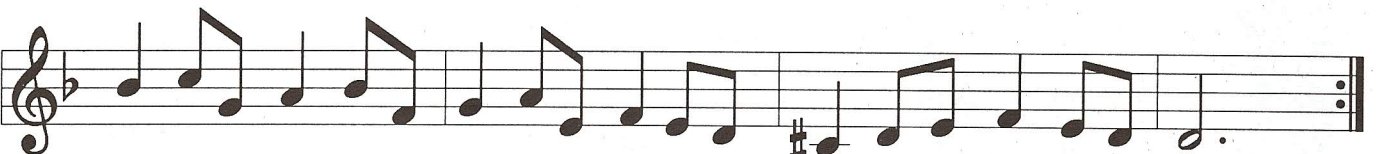
/ / C7 / / F / / B<sup>b</sup> D7 / Gm D7 Gm D7 Gm D7 Gm / C7 /



F / / B<sup>b</sup> D7 / Gm G7 / C E7 / Am E7 Am E7 / Am / A /



D7 C D7 G G7 / C7 B<sup>b</sup> C7 F F7 / B<sup>b</sup> G7 / E7 / / A / D7 /



Gm C7 / F B<sup>b</sup> / C7 A7 / Dm A7 Dm A7 Gm A7 Dm A7 Dm /  
(A7) (Dm)

Arrangement © S. J. Young 1983

This arrangement has been transposed down a tone from the usual Em guitar/lute arrangement. It just fits a standard 21-chord autoharp and uses chords from one end of the chord-bar assembly to the other. Bach's lute arrangement is a two-line polyphony. The top line has been used for the melody and the bass line to suggest the melody chord sequence. (Chord sequences in parentheses are alternate possibilities.) Although keyed in Dm, the piece modulates through F, Gm, Am, and A before finally ending back in Dm. The recommended playing technique is simply to pinch out the melody (and maybe to insert a rhythm fill on quarter, half, and dotted half notes).

# Pro-files

If you are a professional autoharper and wish to be featured, please send photo, biography, and schedule to:  
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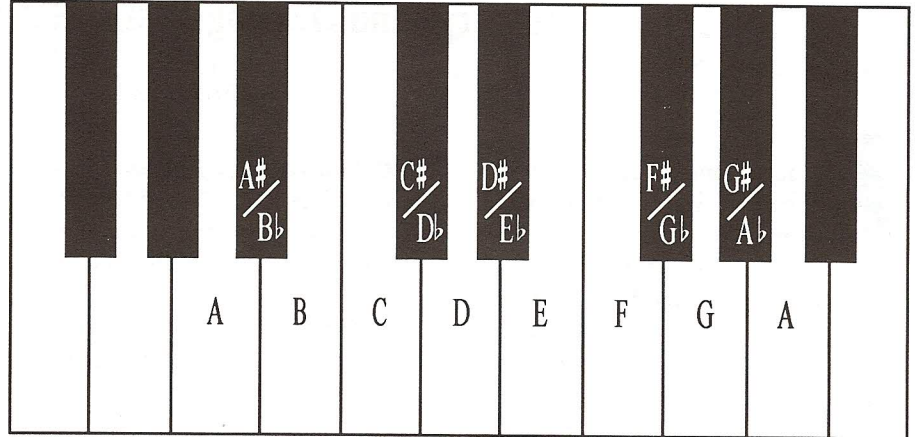
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# Theoretically Speaking

by "Hooter" the Owl as told to Becky Askey



## LESSON SIX



Wipe the tears from your eyes, yes, it's time for the theory lesson. Oh, the joy! The ecstasy!

I know you have all done your homework and are ready for the rest of the relative minors. Last issue you were to construct the relative minors for the keys of D and A. You are correct if you found that Bm goes with the key of D and that F#m goes with the key of A. If you said Fm, you are wrong – it has to be F#m. And when you raise the 7th tone, you will have an E#. The same thing will happen in the relative minor you do for the key of E.

You will construct the relative minors for the remaining keys that use sharps (E, B, F#, and C#) the same way. When you are doing the relative minors for those last three major keys you will notice that, *Yikes!* the 7th tone is *already* sharped. Oh! What to do?! Well, I will tell you so just be quiet. To raise the 7th tone you have to sharp the sharp and now it becomes a *double sharp*. A double sharp has its own little symbol and it looks like an "x." So when you do the relative minor for the key of B, for example, it will go like this: first the pure minor – G#, A#, B, C#, D#, E, F#, G#. Now, the harmonic minor with the raised 7th tone – G#, A#, B, C#, D#, E, Fx, G#. Ta Da!

When you play the F double sharp, you will actually be playing a G natu-

ral but you notate it as Fx. Remember, all the sharps will be in the key signature except for the raised 7th tone.

Perhaps there is some confusion in the use of the words relative minor, pure minor, and harmonic minor. The relative minor refers to the key it belongs to and the pure and harmonic term means what kind it is. Something like identifying your blood. If you had blood removed it would be labeled with your name and then identified as type "A" or type "B" (or whatever – werewolf, vampire, etc.). The term "relative minor" would be like the name label and the pure or harmonic minor identifies the type.

Some of you are asking, "Why on Earth do I have to know this? Or even *want* to know?" Well, I suppose you don't if you want to remain happily in the dark. But when you are on Jeopardy and the answer is D# minor, won't you feel the blood draining from your cranium when you remember that *if* you had done your theory lesson, you could have won the \$864,239,422? And the new car and Mary Lou Orthey as the chauffeur? Hmm?

Once you finish the keys that use sharps you can start on the ones that use flats. Please construct the relative minors for the keys of F and Bb. You will find that when you raise the 7th tone, you will have a sharp on that

note and a flat on the note in the key signature. *Do not despair!* This is correct. (Did you notice I said, "Please?" I am trying to be nice. It is very hard.)



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Howzzat Again???

## Howzzat Again???

**Howzzat Again???****Autoharps and Hearing Loss -- Related or Not?**by  
Cathy Britell, M.D.

**A** few months ago, an AQ subscriber wrote a letter posing the question of whether playing one's autoharp next to the left ear as many of us do could result in hearing loss. When I first heard this, I thought, "What? An autoharp? Certainly not!" However, after thinking it over and realizing that when I'm playing my 'harp next to my ear, I can't hear the phone ringing, the dog barking, or my husband or children talking to me (talk about an escape!), I decided that this question deserves a better-researched answer.

As we age, there is a normal deterioration in hearing acuity. For most of us, the process is gradual and the effect does not interfere with our normal activities of daily living, work, or relationships. If, however, there is an acceleration of that deterioration either by natural processes or by damage to the ear, we can become significantly impaired in our daily functions.

Hearing loss can have many causes, but acquired hearing loss falls into two major categories: conductive loss, and sensorineural loss.

Conductive loss often occurs when the tiny bones behind the eardrum lose their ability to vibrate normally and conduct the sound from the eardrum to the nerves of the inner ear. This can happen as a result of repeated severe ear infections or more commonly as a result of a process called "otosclerosis" (hardening and fusion of the bones of the middle ear). Often this can be corrected by a delicate but simple surgical procedure. People with conductive hearing loss can hear sound conducted through the bones of the head and face much better than they can hear sound through the air. These people can hear their own voices unusually well, and so

often talk very softly. A conductive hearing loss is not caused by noise exposure, and hearing aids can be very effective with some types of conductive loss.

Much more common is sensorineural hearing loss. The most common cause of sensorineural hearing loss is noise damage. Most commonly, noise-induced hearing loss is the result of repeated exposure to loud noise, rather than a single event. Exposure to noise causes damage to the delicate hair cells in the inner ear that are responsible for conducting auditory signals to the brain. With each exposure, a few more cells are damaged and some may be destroyed. Once these cells are destroyed, they cannot be replaced. The cells responsible for conducting higher pitches of sound are usually the first to be destroyed. With a noise-induced sensorineural hearing loss, a person's hearing often deteriorates so gradually over a period of years that they may be unaware of the extent of the damage until they "suddenly" realize that normal conversation is difficult to understand. They will often speak more loudly than normal, because they have trouble hearing their own voice as well as those of the people around them. There is no treatment for noise-induced hearing loss. Hearing aids are sometimes fairly useful but may not significantly improve speech discrimination in some individuals.

Hearing loss is caused by both the loudness and duration of the noise. Consequently, the louder the noise, the less time it will take to produce hearing damage. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), noise over 85-90 decibels (the sound of a large truck motor at about 15 feet) can produce hearing loss in

many individuals.

OSHA has published the following guidelines for safe levels of industrial noise exposure:

Duration per day, hours	Sound level dBA slow response
8 .....	90
6 .....	92
4 .....	95
3 .....	97
2 .....	100
1½ .....	102
1 .....	105
½ .....	110
¼ or less .....	115

According to OSHA, workers at greatest risk for occupational noise-induced hearing loss include loggers, fire fighters, police and military personnel, construction and factory workers, farmers, truck drivers and *musicians*.

Extended exposure to noises around the home can also put a person at risk for hearing loss. Loud hair dryers, vacuums, dishwashers, lawn mowers, and home repair tools such as drills, sanders and saws, can take their daily toll on one's hearing as well. Of course, work exposure and non-work exposure are additive. People who are exposed to loud noise recreationally or around the home may not take the exposure as seriously as those who work around it. For example, if you use power tools or un-muffled gas engines, you are exposing your ears to potential injury which will be additive to work exposure, exposure from music, or other noises.

There are other things that can add to or potentiate noise-induced hearing loss. One is use of aspirin or other anti-inflammatory drugs in high doses. Another substance that is very toxic to the

nerves of the ear is DMSO, an industrial solvent which is absorbed readily through the skin, that many individuals have used against medical advice for the treatment of arthritis pain. Also, high doses of certain antibiotics, such as Streptomycin and Gentamycin, used to treat life-threatening infections, can have a toxic effect on the ear.

Where does the autoharp fit into all this? Well, whenever I need to know something technical, I ask autoharper and friend Dr. John Arthur (yes, one and the same John Arthur of felt-siliconing fame). I think he has a PhD in everything important. At least he has access to some great equipment. He has started performing some measurements of the sound produced at the level of the ear by a number of autoharpers. So

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**According to OSHA, workers at greatest risk for occupational noise-induced hearing loss include loggers, fire fighters, police and military personnel, construction and factory workers, farmers, truck drivers, and musicians.**

---

far, he has found that indeed, sound levels over 100 decibels can be measured at the left ear for short periods of time while playing the autoharp. It isn't yet clear, however, how significant this information is. For example, we don't know for how long or how many times the level reaches that high during a typical session of playing. We also don't know whether the effect of the sound frequencies produced by the autoharp is different from typical industrial noise at a broader spectrum of frequencies.

Clearly, this topic deserves more

study. In addition to more acoustic measurements, we need to look at autoharpers. In order to determine whether there is left ear damage from playing the autoharp, it's going to be necessary to measure the hearing of a fairly large number of individuals who play a great deal, compare the hearing in each ear, and attempt to correlate that with hours of playing. This will require a well-designed study and perhaps some on-site testing at a future autoharp gathering. In order to acquire some pilot data to see if such a study is indicated, I am asking autoharpers to do the following:

1. If you suspect you have hearing problems or if you have concern about whether your hearing could be affected by your autoharp playing, go to an audiologist and have your hearing tested. People who have abnormal hearing should be checked out by an otolaryngologist (physician specializing in ear, nose, and throat problems). Most likely any hearing loss you have is not related to the autoharp. Sometimes the problem is caused by something as simple as a buildup of wax in the ears.

2. Send me a copy of your audiogram (the chart that shows your hearing

acuity at various frequencies), along with your address, telephone number, and e-mail address if you have one. Send it to:

Catherine Britell, M.D.

PO Box 494

Mercer Island, WA 98040

I will contact you and ask a number of questions about your playing habits and other hearing-related issues.

3. If you have any hearing loss (in one or both ears), or if you experience ringing of your ears after playing the autoharp, it would probably be a good idea to use a specially-constructed foam sound filter (not a wad of cotton) in your left ear if you play the autoharp Appalachian-style. These can be obtained at a very low cost from your local pharmacy or via mail-order from Musician's Friend (1 800-776-5173).

Now, I've said a lot of stuff here, but still didn't answer the question, did I? Well, here it is:

Q: Can playing the autoharp adversely affect a person's hearing?

A: I don't know.

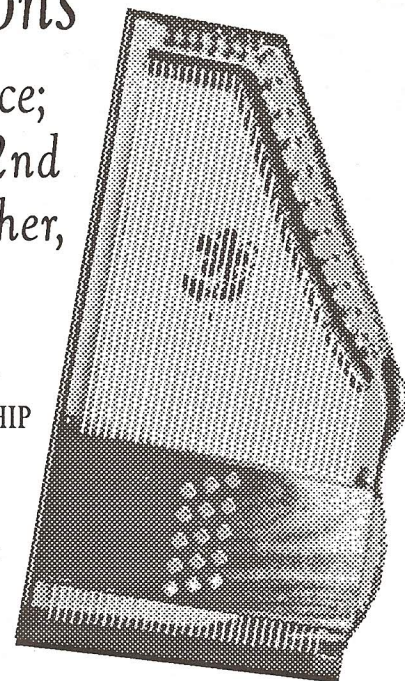
But I'll let you know as soon as I find out. ❖

## Congratulations

Bob Lewis, 1st Place;  
Tina Louise Barr, 2nd  
Place; and Alex Usher,  
3rd Place

1996 INTERNATIONAL  
AUTOHARP CHAMPIONSHIP

- and thank you all  
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## Piano Song No. 1

*Moderate Tempo*

C / G7	C / G G7	C / G7 /	F G7 F /
<b>T</b> <b>A</b> <b>B</b>			

C G7 C E7 A7 /	Dm D7 G G7	C F C°7	C / Am G7
<b>T</b> <b>A</b> <b>B</b>			

*Smoothly*

C / / G7	C / G G7	C / C7 /	F G7 F /
<b>T</b> <b>A</b> <b>B</b>			

C E7 A7 /	Dm D7 G G7	C F C°7	C / Em G7
<b>T</b> <b>A</b> <b>B</b>			





# — Autoharp Edition

Lyman Taylor

*With Expression*

Musical notation and TAB for the first system. The TAB row shows finger plucks (circles) and short thumb strums (Y-shapes).











Musical notation and TAB for the second system. The TAB row includes various strumming techniques like long thumb strums and duet pinches.

Musical notation and TAB for the third system, marked *Majestically*. The TAB row features broad pinches and melody squeezes.

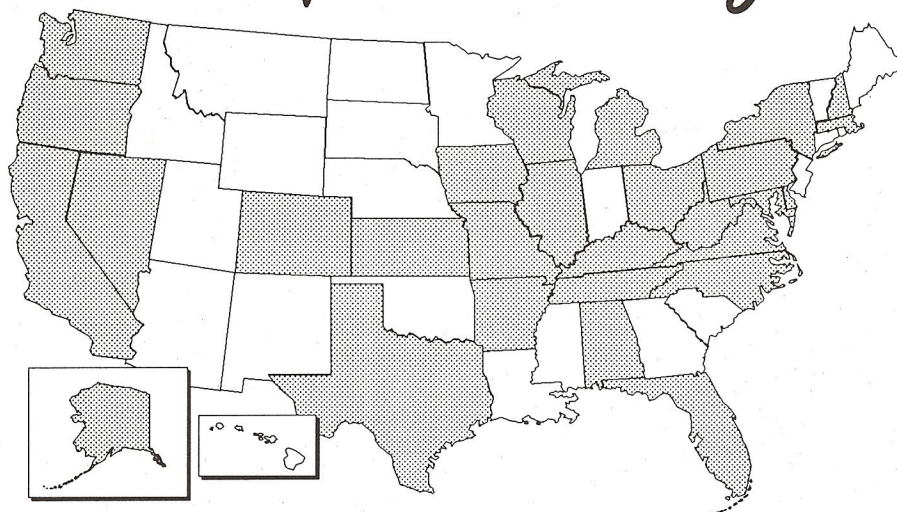
Musical notation and TAB for the fourth system. The TAB row includes harp runs and sustain marks.

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## T A B L A T U R E

 = Finger Pluck	 = Pinch (1½ octaves, pluck + short strum)
 = Short (Thumb) Strum	 = Broad Pinch (3 octaves, slow strum + pluck)
 = Long (Thumb) Strum	 = Melody Squeeze (Melody scratch + strum)
 = Duet Pinch (Thumb & finger)	 = Harp Run (Spiral: thumb up, finger down)
 = Mini-Pinch (3 or 4 contiguous notes)	 = Sustain (No action taken)

# 'Harpers-At-Large



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

## **Orchard Grass at the Carter Fold**

Place: The Carter Fold, Hiltons, VA

Reporting: Doneen Key

Madison, NC

One of the music houses we especially enjoyed going to over the past several years is the Carter Fold in Hiltons, Virginia. This was the home of a pioneer group in the music field – The Original Carter Family. They lived in what is called Poor Valley, and that is where the music and dancing takes place every Saturday night.

There are many avid cloggers who crowd the dance floor each week. Sara and A.P.'s daughter, Janette, operates the Carter Fold with the help of her brother, Joe.

We attended the concert at the Carter Fold on April 27, and were privileged to see and hear "Orchard Grass" perform. They are from the Roanoke, Virginia area, and we had seen them last summer at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering in Newport, Pennsylvania. We enjoyed them immensely both times we heard their performance. They played many good clogging tunes for all the folks who wanted to clog that night – and there were lots of folks – and tunes.



## **24th Annual Original Dulcimer Players Club Funfest**

Place: FAA Fairgrounds, Ewart, MI

Reporting: Sharon Skyard

Saginaw, MI

It was sooo much fun! I've been in a state of numbness since then. I'm still in a musically-induced "high." The festival was blessed with perfect weather. Cool nights and pleasant days.

As a board member and chairman of workshops, it's hard to be objective, but I think it was the best ever! We had about 150

workshops! They covered every acoustic instrument: of course hammered dulcimer because it is a hammered dulcimer festival, but also autoharp (galore), accordion, bodhran, bass, banjo, bowed psaltery, clogging, fiddle, guitar, harmonica, instrument building, harp, mandolin, harmonica, mountain dulcimer, nose flute and kazoo, penny whistle, and saw.

It was just grand fun. The people were wonderful. Evert-goers always seem to be blessed with a laid back attitude yet full of friendliness and cooperation and this year it was even more prevalent.

For the autoharp crowd, we had Lucille Reilly demonstrating diatonic autoharps, Larry Carpenter who vocalizes beautifully with his 'harp, and other autoharpers: Hazel Meek, Louann Jerome, Carol Spicer, and Kathy Wieland leading workshops. Lucille played in the Saturday night show and I saw Carol Spicer, Carolyn Egelski, and Louann Jerome on stage too. I'm pretty sure that Larry made an on-stage appearance but I missed it.

Every festival leaves behind memories special to it. This year, my own personal high points were because of a friendship established on the internet. A young lady, Suzane, I'd been exchanging messages with for eight to ten months attended from Indianapolis, Indiana. We'd never met before but I found her totally charming and the most musically talented person I think I've ever met. She's a classically trained violist and the whole folk music festival scene was totally new to her. I got to enjoy the event from her eyes. Her wonderment at the impromptu nature of our jams and the intensity with which music is shared made me even more appreciative of what we enjoy so much. She said she loved the whole Ewart event because everyone played with such gusto and love. She said it was "as if they thought they'd never get to play again."

I think in 1995 we had 8,000-9,000. This year we were at 12,000! Saturday night there were 212 dulcimers on stage at one time.

So the whole festival was grand. Everything went off without a hitch. The autoharpers were super, as were all of the other components.



## **The Kentucky Music Weekend/Week**

Place: Louisville/Bardstown, KY

Reporting: Marty Lane

Pleasant Hill, OH

The Kentucky Music Weekend held in Louisville at the Iroquois Amphitheater begins the annual week-long celebration of Kentucky traditional music. That weekend is traditionally followed by Kentucky Music Week, which is held in nearby Bardstown. This entire celebration features workshops and performances, which lean heavily toward mountain and hammered dulcimer. This year, mountain dulcimer legend Jean Ritchie, was a special weekend guest.

Evo Bluestein was the autoharp performer/teacher for the event, and taught three levels of autoharp classes. I certainly enjoyed the Beg./Int. class and got a lot out of it. The classes were held in an elementary school near Bardstown and the instructors' concert, open stage, and the student follies were held at the Bardstown Civic Center. (I didn't drive from campground to school, to motel, to Civic Center – I hitched rides with anybody I could find going the right direction at about the right time.)

Other classes included tin whistle, Celtic harp, vocal harmony, banjo, pottery, basket making, broom making, and Kentucky quilting. Each class lasted 75 minutes each day for five days. It was possible to register for five classes per day.

Participants either camped at a local campground (my choice) or found other local accommodations. There were nightly jams as well as pick-up jams during the day at the school, during the night at the motel, campground, or wherever and whenever two or more players would meet.

This was the only week-long event I have attended which offers a kids' camp (ages six through twelve) in conjunction with the adults' camp. From what I could see, the kids had a blast and turned out some good crafts and played some good music.

This is a sometimes loosely organized event, but with our kind of music, I was in good company while waiting for things to happen. What better time to pull out our instruments and jam!



## **The Autoharp Jamboree**

Place: Mountain View, AR

Reporting: Elaine Wall

Memphis, TN

The Autoharp Jamboree was the best yet and I haven't missed one. There was such a power pack of instructors.

Charles Whitmer got the new players off to a good start. Tom Schroeder taught his

classes his techniques, stops, dynamics, pats, and some good corny jokes. Margie Earles was there with her fluid, graceful, lyrical style.

Ron Wall demonstrated his fiddle tunes on the 'harp, played up to speed. He pinches with his *little* finger, walks with all, so fast they blur. Very advanced stuff.

It was great to be in Ivan Stiles' class again. His playing is smooth, relaxed, and beautiful – he's so easy-going and relaxed you think he might just crumple onto the floor. He is a real pleasure to be with.

Evo Bluestein was there for the first time and new to most of us. His classes were almost like starting over on the 'harp. His Kilby Snow techniques on that old 12-bar gold blackbody OS were a real challenge.

The music never stops, with mini-concerts, nightly auditorium concerts and jams both at the Ozark Folk Center and down in the square with the locals.



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

Place: Fairfax County, VA

**Reporting: Kathy Ferguson**

Fairfax, VA

Northern Virginia often has gorgeous Indian Summer weather in September, and this year is no exception. On Sunday, the 15th, the Mill Run Dulcimer Band played at Colvin Run Mill under clear skies to a crowd of several hundred. Early in the program autoharp enthusiasts were treated to Woody Padgett's rendition of *Going to Scotland* and *Mark's Tune*.

Neal Walters sang several songs new to the Band's repertoire: *Give Me Just a Little More Time*, an upbeat gospel song; *Darling Let's Turn Back the Years*, a Hank Williams song (with additional verses by Neal, and Heidi Cerrigione); and the Carter song, *You're Gonna Miss Me When I'm Gone* – the title speaks for itself. Keith Young, the band leader and who plays bass, sang several fun songs, *You Ain't Talking to Me*, *Buster Brown Shoes*, and *Old Jack*.

There were several instrumental tunes as well. Instruments in this band include bass, autoharp, guitar, banjo, fiddle, lap dulcimer, and kazoo.

These concerts are always outstanding and an excellent way to spend a Sunday afternoon.



#### **The Southern Michigan Dulcimer Festival**

Place: Hastings, MI

**Reporting: Kathy Wieland**

Ann Arbor, MI

This festival took place at the Barry Expo Center in Hastings at the end of June. The weather was great (this is a new trend) and the autoharp was taught at four workshops. Verry Beginning Autoharp was taught by Jane Hillaker, who taught a few simple tunes and how to use different strums; Hayden

Carruth taught an intermediate/advanced class that included right hand rhythm, melodic picking techniques, and embellishments for accompaniment. Autoharp Strums were taught by Brenda Vetter, and I taught a rhythm and blues workshop. We worked on four different tunes with blues strums and embellishments including the twelve-bar blues. This festival was lots of fun, and there were plenty of autoharp players (especially around the Lumbert camp) to jam with.



#### **Carter Family Memorial Festival**

Place: Hiltons, VA

**Reporting: Mary Lou Orthey**

Newport, PA

This is an annual pilgrimage for the Ortheys. The music is mostly old-time on stage (2 pm until 11:30 pm), and definitely old-time outside the Fold (the rest of the time). This year on stage, The Lewis Family deviated from old-time with their bluegrass gospel music. Little Roy wowed the crowd with his ferocious (and well-done) autoharp playing.

Natives appeared out of the woodwork as they always do to dance the buck and wing in the Fold two days and nights running. Cousins by the dozens came out of the hills, and Janette carried it all off with her usual friendly aplomb.

For someone who appreciates folk music, the Carter Fold/Museum – at any time of the year – is a must. Janette opens the Fold every Saturday evening for an old-time concert with "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Carter Fold! My brother Joe and I will play and sing a few songs for you..." The Carter Fold, Janette, Joe, the surroundings, the Original Carter Family are legend.



#### **The 61st Annual Galax Old Time Fiddlers' Convention**

Place: Galax, VA

**Reporting: Mary Lou Orthey**

Newport, PA

Every year, at the close of the Carter Family Memorial Festival, we pack up our gear and set our sites on Galax, Virginia, approximately a four-hour drive away. This very large old convention takes place in a huge indentation in the earth called Felt's Park, a few blocks from downtown Galax. Folks of fiddle-tune music persuasion collect 10,000 strong for a solid Sunday-to-Sunday jam. During this week, old-time and bluegrass music floats from the corner of every single camper, car, tent, and mud hole in the place. By Saturday night, the countless fiddles and banjos blend into one pulsating tone, making it nearly impossible to engage in a normal conversation anywhere.

Many 'harpers were there. The top five winners of the '96 Galax Autoharp Contest (29 contestants): 5th, Robert Higgins; 4th, Bill Williams; 3rd, Mary Umbarger; 2nd,

Drew Smith; and 1st, David Kilby! Congratulations to these fine autoharp players!

Michael Barker, remembered by Galax old-timers, showed up for one day of the festival. Boy, can he play! He promises he'll venture into the world of 'harp again. When he does, we're in for a real treat!

Drew Smith played *The Star Spangled Banner* on his autoharp to open Thursday night's festivities – with a mandolin (something *everyone* should hear), and carried it off with finesse. On Friday morning Drew led the traditional round robin get-together for autoharp players in the main tent. Approximately 35 'harpers were present to swap tunes, stories, to greet old acquaintances, and to make new ones.



#### **Sky House Concert**

Place: Cambridge, IA

**Reporting: Dora Miller**

Newton, IA

On July 31, the Hermans hosted a house concert for Bill and Laurie Sky. It was wonderful to see them again. They have written several new songs in the last year. I'm looking forward to getting their new tape, "Master's Bouquet."

Laurie performed one of the new songs that she wrote, *It Was Jesus*. That song is going to be recorded by the Washington D.C. Mass Choral Group. Other songs the Skys performed were *Bring the Sheep In*, *Beside Still Waters*, and *Going to the Wedding*. They also played many old-time favorites.

After a break for coffee, tea, and cookies, there was a jam session for everyone.

Bill and Laurie will be back in our area in March, 1997.



#### **Augusta Heritage Workshop**

Place: Elkins, WV

**Reporting: Charlie Long**

Salisbury, MD

Well, I survived my first week at Augusta. Karen Mueller was wonderful. I started out an intermediate autoharp player on Monday, and by Friday I was a beginner. After a couple of days practice at home, though, I have decided not to sell my 'harps.

What an incredible experience! Music was everywhere. By Thursday, my wife was imposing a curfew on me so I would survive the week. I could have started the week over, done entirely different stuff and had a great time. If you ever get a chance to do a week of Augusta, go for it!



#### **Swannanoa Gathering**

Place: Asheville, NC

**Reporting: Leone Peterson**

Spokane, WA

I had fun this summer at the Swannanoa Gathering. What a beautiful setting, nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It was a week of classes, nonstop

music, fellowship – good food, lots to do, and many new friends to jam with. There was dancing in the big hall, and right across the road was the open air pickin' tent. Groups of fiddles, banjos, guitars, dulcimers, and what-have-you abounded on the grounds and under the shady trees.

It was definitely a music camp, so I missed visiting the crafter areas found at Augusta. Evo Bluestein taught autoharp, Don Pedi had dulcimer classes, fiddle instruction was taught by Ralph Blizzard, Bruce Greene, and Brad Leftwich. Harmony Singing was great fun with Carol Elizabeth Jones and James Leva. Sheila Kay Adam delighted us with stories and ballads of mountain folk and her family.

Every day after lunch, just a few steps away, in a small auditorium we had a guest speaker, a master artist. One day it was Janette Carter, another day, Mary Jane Queen, and another, fiddler Red Wilson. We were delighted to hear these folks play, dance, or tell stories of days gone by.

We had open mike night at the "Be Here Now" club in Asheville. [There were] Lots of acts on the stage and our fellow Gathering friends were in the audience. Student and instructor showcases were exciting. A Master Musician Award was given to Ralph Blizzard, who is known for his long-bow method of old-time fiddling.

The introduction of the camp song was a first for the group. I enjoyed learning tunes at a slower pace as in the slow jams, and my classes were first-rate. I recommend that you try this Gathering, and am really going to try to get back again.



### 24th Annual Dulcimer Musical Funfest

Place: Ewart, MI

Reporting: Kathy Wieland  
Ann Arbor, MI

This festival took place on July 18-21. The weather was wonderful and there were lots of 'harp classes for the player to attend.

Larry Carpenter, Hazel Meek, Lucille Reilly, Kathy Wieland, Carole Spicer, Carolyn Egelski, and Louann Jerome were the 'harp workshop leaders. The classes varied in content – mechanics of the autoharp, singing with the 'harp, learning how to pull a tune out of the accompanying chords, a question and answer session called "Been There, Done That," and introduction to diatonics, and expanding familiar songs, strums and embellishments on the autoharp.

'Harp classes were well attended at all levels, and I saw lots of autoharp players at jams – especially at Buck and Lois Lambert's campsite.



### 8th Annual Memphis Dulcimer Festival

Place: Memphis, TN

Reporting: Phil Passen  
Chicago, IL

The second best feature of the eighth annual Memphis Dulcimer Festival, held Sept. 26-28, was the beautiful Idlewild Presbyterian Church, which cosponsors the festival and housed all its proceedings. Great, large classrooms; large spaces for dances and day concerts; and an acoustically perfect chapel for the evening concerts contributed mightily to the success of the festival.

The third best feature of the festival, by the way, was the Memphis barbecue lunch served at Friday's midday concert. Did you know that Memphians eat their coleslaw on their barbecue sandwich, rather than on the side?

Feature primo was the music – in workshops, concerts, and informal jams at vendors' booths. The festival was a great one for autoharpers. Over twelve hours of 'harp workshops (far more proportionately than at any other dulcimer festival and most general folk festivals I've been to) were taught by Karen Mueller, Alex Usher, and Ron Wall. There were workshops for all playing levels – from absolute beginners to advanced melody pickers. All reports I got indicated that the teachers were well prepared and the workshops were all good learning experiences.

Karen and Alex shared the stage, each with a half hour set, on the Saturday afternoon day stage. Both 'harpers lit up the room – Karen with some great, cleanly-picked, fast fiddle tunes; and Alex with her affectionate personality and fine playing and singing.

Friday night's concert was highlighted by David Schnauffer – the mountain dulcimer player absolutely in a class by himself; and old-time players Jimmy Costa and Jim McGee, playing predominantly Uncle Dave Macon material. Saturday's evening concert was one high-powered act after another, starting with US Navy harpist Mary Fitzgerald playing primarily Celtic and Civil War era pieces on her Celtic harp. Next up were Duck Baker and

Molly Andrews – a duo so good one wonders why they're not famous coast to coast. They play an eclectic mix of old-time music, jazz, blues, gospel, and Appalachian music. He's a phenomenal guitarist; she plays mountain dulcimer and autoharp. But it was Molly's powerful, earthy voice that blew everyone away. The grand finale fell to Ron Wall, Ramona Jones, and friends. Their hard-driving acoustic country music, featuring Ramona on fiddle, Alissa Jones on hammered dulcimer, and Ron on autoharp had the audience shouting for more. Autoharp fans had to be a little disappointed that Ron wasn't featured more. He did get one solo (a Civil War medley which ignited the audience) and one song in which his 'harp accompaniment was up front... just left autoharp fans wanting more, though.

All in all, an excellent, well-organized festival which gave a lot of space and attention to the autoharp.



### The Third Annual Willamette Valley Autoharp Gathering

Place: Nofzinger Farm, Albany, OR

Reporting: Fuey Herring  
Yuma, AZ

Thank you, thank you to John Arthur, Cathy Britell, and Les Gustafson-Zook for an unforgettable, unrepeatable, autoharp-intensive weekend! Also, thanks to all of the Willamette Valley Autoharp group, who worked to keep things running smoothly.

My enthusiasm for the 'harp has been renewed, as I had become a bit stagnant; I can hardly wait to open up my two 'harps and whip them into shape. The only problem is that I also can hardly wait to sit down with the notes and handouts and tapes, and learn to play new tunes and old ones better.

Seeing old friends and making new ones was a very special part of the experience.

Bryan Bowers was frosting on the cake. I could have listened to him for hours more, and keep chuckling to myself as I remember



*The stage at the Willamette Valley Autoharp Gathering – nestled against a backdrop of forest and perfect for music-making.*

some of his remarks. He is an utterly natural, outspoken person – an expert at “playing” his audience as well as his autoharps. I thought it was really good to have him confirm that the ’harps have personalities – i.e. if they are upset with us for some reason, they refuse to tune up properly...



**25th Annual Walnut Valley Festival**

Place: Winfield, KS

Reporting: Ivan Stiles

Phoenixville, PA

The Walnut Valley Festival celebrated its 25th anniversary this year in grand style with no less than 21 performances which featured or included the autoharp. Oh, yes, there was also some mud.

The four-day fest began with an autoharp demonstration workshop featuring Bryan Bowers, Julie Davis, Karen Mueller, and Ivan Stiles. These same performers went on to individual sets throughout the weekend. In addition, Roz Brown, Cathy Barton, and John McCutcheon rounded out the musicians playing the autoharp this year. Oh, yes, there was also some mud.

One highlight every year is the International Autoharp Championship. After all the smoke had cleared, Bob Lewis of Lakewood, Ohio surfaced as this year’s winner. Second place went to Tina Louise Barr of Modesto, California, and third place was garnered by Alex Usher of Webster Groves, Missouri. Oh, yes, there was also some mud.

When not listening to their favorite ’harpers on stage, autoharpers were often found jamming at Otter Harp Heaven in the campground. It was also the place for hands-on workshops on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Leaders this year were Les Gustafson-Zook, Alex Usher, Bob Lewis, Mary Umbarger, Lucille Reilly, Tina Louise Barr, and George Orthey. Oh, yes, there was also some mud.

Good news came during the weekend, too. After much speculation as to the future of this festival, a decision was made to continue holding the event in Winfield. Bob and Kendra Redford, founders of the festival, were honored at a special presentation on Stage One on Saturday night to commemorate the silver anniversary. “It’s your party, and we plan to be at the next one, right here,” commented Bob Redford. We’re glad they’ll be there ’cause we’ll be there, too! Oh, yes, there was also some mud.



**THE AUTOHARP HALL OF FAME MEMBERS**

*Maybelle Addington Carter  
Ernest Van “Pop” Stoneman  
John Kilby Snow  
Sara Dougherty Carter  
Marty Schuman*



*Glen R. Peterson  
Bryan Benson Bowers  
Mike Seeger  
Meg Peterson  
Becky Blackley*

**1997 NOMINATION FORM**

Nominations for the 1997 inductees into The Autoharp Hall of Fame will be accepted by Limberjack Productions from September 1, 1996 until May 1, 1997. 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, 1997. The honorees shall be installed into the Hall of Fame at the 1997 Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering, and announced in the Summer 1997 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**

***Form must be filled in completely and a description of achievement, contributions, and/or leadership in the autoharp community, must be completed to validate the nomination. You may submit your nomination for posthumous, contemporary, or both.***

# Club News

## Clubs Editors:

George and Dorothy Wagner  
155 N. Harbor Drive #1102  
Chicago, IL 60601-7318

*The Annual Club Directory is published in the Winter issue. If you belong to an autoharp club or one where the autoharp player is welcome, and it was not included in our winter listing, please send the information to the Clubs Editors. We also welcome club news.*

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## CLUB NEWS

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On December 14 and 15, the Ark-La-Tex Autoharp Club and the Harps of the Ouachitas are hosting their annual jam session at the Queen Wilhelmina Lodge in Mena, Arkansas. Information, contact Glen Flesher, 318 686-5727.

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## NEW CLUBS

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### Bucks County

#### Folk Song Society

*1st Sunday each month, 6:30 -10:00 PM*  
Wrightstown Friends School, Rt. 413  
Wrightstown, PA  
John Hook  
215 675-0497  
rscjwh@rohmmaas.com

### Winfield Autoharp Club

*Second Thursday each month, 7:00 PM*  
c/o Karen Nickel  
1910 W. 14th Street  
Winfield KS 67156  
316 221-1219  
wd5eev@horizon.hit.net

THE FOLLOWING "GATHERINGS" ARE NOT CLUBS, THEY ARE OPEN TO AUTOHARP FOLK WHO WISH TO PARTICIPATE:

### Slow Jam

*Second Thursday each month  
7:00-9:00PM*  
beginners and/or intermediates  
Chuck and Karen Daniels  
9002 Grandview Drive  
Overland Park, KS  
kdaniels@gvi.net

### HAAMS

(Houston Area Acoustic Music Society)

### Houston, TX

#### Acoustic Music "Showcase"

*Every 4th Friday, 7:00 - 10:00PM*  
Hickory Hollow Restaurant  
101 Heights Blvd., Houston

#### Acoustic Jam

*Every 2nd Friday, 7:00 - 10:00PM*  
Pufferbellies Restaurant  
Main St., Old Town Spring

#### Acoustic Jam

*Every Tuesday, 7:00 - 8:00PM*  
St. Mark Lutheran Church  
1515 Hillendahl, Houston

Contact for all above:

Peggy Carter  
16142 Hexham Drive  
Spring, TX 77379  
713 370-9495  
carterm@spring-branch.isd.tenet.edu.  
web page: [www.flex.net/~arts2304/carter/](http://www.flex.net/~arts2304/carter/)

### Seattle Area Third Thursday

#### Autoharp Thing

Seattle, Washington  
Cathy Britell 206 232-7352  
britell@u.washington.edu



# Autoharp Events

Events Editors:

George and Dorothy Wagner  
155 N. Harbor Drive #1102  
Chicago, IL 60601-7318

*The following are major fall/winter events which feature the autoharp in contest, workshop, and/or performance. If you know of a major event we have not included, please send the information to the Events editors. The annual events list is published every Spring, and seasonally repeated and updated in every issue.*

#### CODE:

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

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## NOVEMBER

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►Stringalong Weekend; Nov 1-3;  
Edwards Conference Center on Lake  
Beulah, East Troy, WI; Code: AP, AW;  
Must preregister, Contact Ann Schmid,  
UW-M Folk Center, Fine Arts-Music  
130, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI  
53201 800 636-FOLK or 414 229-4622



# Recordings

Recordings Editor:

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

*If you know of a new or re-released recording which contains at least 50% autoharp, please send the information to the Recordings Editor. It will be listed in this column.*

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## FEATURES AUTOHARP

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### The Gander In The Pratie Hole

*Autoharp: Mike Herr*  
Mike Herr  
210 Reservoir Road  
Beckley, WV 25801

### Fifty Miles of Elbow Room

*Autoharp: Judie Pagter*  
Dutch Farm Recordings  
Rt 1, Box 280  
Barboursville, VA 22923

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## INCLUDES AUTOHARP

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### Quartet Gospel Favorites

*Autoharp: Donnie Weaver*  
DeBusk-Weaver Family  
5103 Media Raod  
Oxford, PA 19363

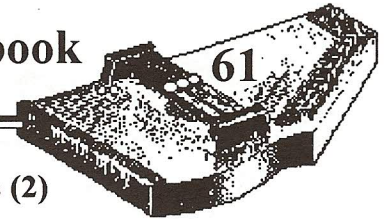
### Repeat Offenders (CD only)

Stewed Mulligan  
*Autoharp: Pat McIntire*  
Route 2, Box 229  
West Union, WV 26456

### Songs of Lake Champlain

*Autoharp: Stan Ransom,*  
*The Connecticut Peddler*  
39 Broad Street  
Plattsburgh, NY 12901-3447





## Angels, from the Realms of Glory (2)

In 1816, *The Sheffield Iris* contained a Christmas Eve poem written by the editor of the *Iris*, James Montgomery. The melody for the poem was composed by Henry T. Smart in 1867. The music had to be committed to dictation, for he had become blind in the latter part of his life:

∨  
C C C C C [ / G7 ] C C  
An-gels from the realms of glo-ry

F F C C G [ / G7 ] C /  
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;

C C C C C [ / G7 ] C G7  
Ye, who sang cre-a - tion's sto-ry

Am Em Am [Em Am] G D7 G /  
Now, pro-claim Mes - si-ah's birth:

G / [ / G ] G G C / [ / G ] F F  
Come and wor-ship, Come and wor-ship,

F C G C C G7 C /  
Wor-ship Christ, the new-born King.



## The Coventry Carol (2)

Among the Coventry Corpus Christi plays performed by local guilds and sponsored by Queen Margaret of England in 1456 and later by Henry VII in 1492 was one entitled, "Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors." A scene in this pageant portrays the women of Bethlehem singing this lullaby carol just before Herod's soldiers came to slaughter their children:

∨  
Gm Gm D7 Gm / Gm D7 / Gm D7 //  
Lu - lay, thou lit - tle ti - ny child,

Gm D7 Gm D7 / D7 Gm // //  
Bye bye, lu - ly, lu - lay.

Gm D7 / Gm D7 / Gm D7 / Gm D7 //  
Lu - lay, thou lit - tle ti - ny child,

Gm D7 Gm D7 / D7 G // //  
Bye bye, lu - ly, lu - lay.

- O, sisters, too, how may we do, For to preserve this day,  
This poor youngling for whom we sing, Bye, bye, luly, lulay.
- Herod the King in his raging, Charged he hath this day,  
His men of might, in his own sight, All children young, to slay.
- Then woe is me, poor child, for thee; And ever mourn and say;  
For thy parting nor say nor sing, Bye, bye, luly, lulay.

## While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks (2)

In 1700, a supplement of sixteen hymns to the new version of the Psalms was published for the Church of England. The only Christmas hymn included in the collection was this hymn, and is the only one still in use today:

∨  
[D A7] D D A7 G D [D A7] D  
While - shep-herds watched their flocks by - night,

[D A7] D D D [G D] D A /  
All - seat-ed on the - ground - ,

[A D] A A A7 A7 A7 [D A7] D  
The - an- gel of the Lord came - down,

[D A7] G D G D G D / A7 D D D A D //  
And - glo-ry shown a - round - , And glo-ry shown a - round.

- "Fear not," said he, for mighty dread, Had seized their troubled minds,  
"Good tidings of great joy I bring,  
To you and all mankind! To you and all mankind."
- "To you in David's town this day, Is born of David's line,  
A Savior, who is Christ the Lord,  
And this shall be the sign, And this shall be the sign."
- "All glory be to God on high, And to the earth be peace;  
Good will henceforth from heav'n to men  
Begin and never cease. Begin and never cease."

## Hark! the Herald Angels Sing (2)

John Wesley's brother, Charles, wrote 6,000 hymns, and is sometimes called the "Prince of Hymn Writers." It is said he became interested in hymns when he heard a group of Moravians singing their hymns aboard a ship on a journey to America. This is one of his best-loved:

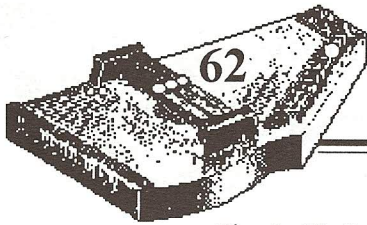
∨  
G G G [ / D7 ] G G G D7 G D G [ / C ] G D G /  
Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing-, "Glo-ry to the new-born king!

G G G [ / D7 ] G G G D7 D D D [ / D ] D A7 D /  
Peace on earth, and mer-cy mild - , God and sin- ners re-con-ciled."

G G G G C G G D7 G G G G G C G D7  
Joy-ful, all ye na-tions rise-, Join the tri-umph of the skies-;

C [ / C ] C G Am Em Am / D7 G D7 G [ / G ] G D7 G /  
With an- gel-ic hosts pro-claim, "Christ is - born in Beth-le- hem!"

C [ / C ] C G Am Em Am / D7 [G D7] G [ / G ] G D7 G /  
Hark! the her-ald an - gels sing, "Glo-ry - to the new-born king!"



# Autoharp Songbook

© 1996, Limberjack Productions

## Jingle Bells (2)

John Pierpont died a failure. In 1866, at age eighty-one, he came to the end of his days as a file clerk in Washington, D.C. He graduated from Yale, and failed at being a teacher. He went to school to become a lawyer. He was a poor lawyer. He turned to being a merchant and failed as a businessman. He was a poet, and collected no royalties. He finished Harvard Divinity School, and was a failure as a minister. He ran for congress and lost. He volunteered as a chaplain in the Civil War and had to quit two weeks later due to poor health. There is a small headstone in Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts which reads: Poet, Preacher, Philosopher, Philanthropist. But he was not really a failure at all, because John Pierpont left us a wonderful simple song about the joy of whizzing through the cold, white dark in a sleigh:

▼  
G G D7 G G// [G G]G G D7 G C//  
Dash-ing through the snow On a one-horse o - pen sleigh

C C G D7 D7/// D7 D7 D7 D7 G/G/  
O'er the fields we go, Laugh-ing all the way -;

G G D7 G G/// G G D7 G C//  
Bells on bob-tail ring, Mak-ing spi-rits bright,

C C CGD7D7 D7 D7 D7C G D7 D7G///  
What fun it is to laugh, and sing a sleigh-ing song to -night!

Chorus:  
G G G/ G G G/ G G G/[D7]G///  
Jin-gle bells, jin-gle bells, Jin-gle all the way!

C C C/[C] C GG [GG]G D7 D7G D7/ D7/  
O what fun it is to ride in a one-horse o - pen sleigh - !

G G G/ G G G/ G G G/[D7]G///  
Jin-gle bells, jin-gle bells, Jin-gle all the way!

C C C/[C] C GG [GG]G G D7 D7G///  
O what fun it is to ride in a one-horse o - pen sleigh!

2. Now the ground is white. Go it while you're young.  
Take the girls tonight, And sing this sleighing song.  
Just take a bob-tail nag; two-forty for his speed,  
Hitch him to an open sleigh, and Crack! You'll take the lead!  
Chorus:



Autoharp Quarterly thanks Dorothy Wagner for her permission to use excerpts from the history of these carols as published in her 254-song Christmas book written especially for autoharp, *Glad Tidings*.

## Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly (2)

Many centuries before the British Isles were Christianized, there was held a winter festival called Yule, which was celebrated about the same time that we now celebrate Christmas. Yule, a jolly season, was initiated by bringing in the yule log, decorating with holly and ivy, singing, dancing, feasting, and drinking from the wassail bowl:

▼  
G/[D7]G D7 G D7 G G  
Deck the halls with boughs of hol-ly,

[D7 G] [D7 D7] G [D7] G D7 G/  
Fa la la la, la la la la la;

G/[D7]G D7 G D7 G G  
'Tis the sea-son to be jol-ly,

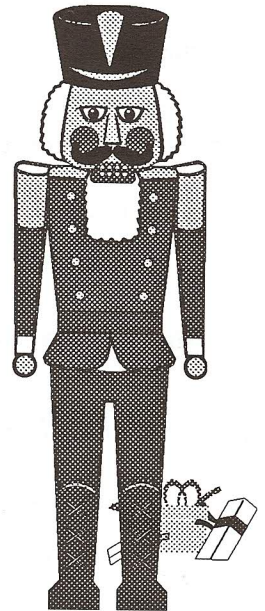
[D7 G] [D7 D7] G [D7] G D7 G/  
Fa la la la, la la la la la;

D7/[G]D7 D7 G/[D7]G D7  
Don we now our gay ap - par-el,

[G C]G [C D7] A7 D A7 D7/  
Fa la la, la la la, la, la, la;

G/[D7]G D7 G D7 G G  
Toll the an-cient Yule-tide ca - rol,

[C C] [C C] G/[C]G D7 G/  
Fa la la la, la la la la la.



This page is perforated for your convenience.

## God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen (2)

In his immortal "Christmas Carol," Charles Dickens refers to this song.

▼  
Bm Bm Bm Bm Em Bm F#m Bm F#m Bm F#m Bm Em Bm//  
God rest you mer-ry, gen-tle - men, Let no-thing you dis-may.

Bm Bm Bm Bm Em Bm F#m Bm F#m Bm F#m Bm Em Bm//  
Re-mem-ber Christ our Sa - vior Was born on Christ-mas day.

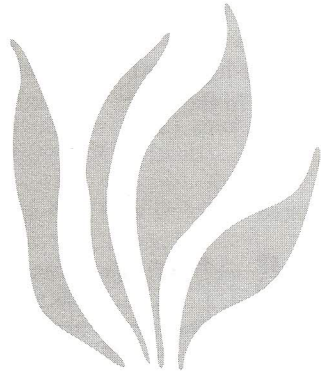
Bm Em Em D G D G D A7 Bm Bm F#m Bm A/  
To save us all from Sa-tan's power, E'er we have gone a-stray,

D A D/G D D A D A Bm/[Bm F#m] Bm A/  
Oh - ti - dings of com - fort and joy, com-fort and joy,

D A D G D G D A Bm F#m Bm/////   
Oh - ti - dings of com - fort and joy.



# SOME THINGS CAN'T GET ANY BETTER

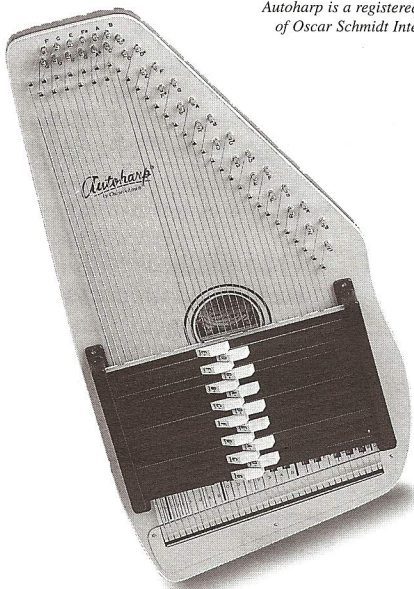


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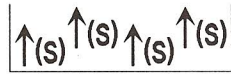
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# Kidstock

by Bonnie Phipps

The holidays will be coming up before you know it, starting with Thanksgiving right through Valentine's Day. I would like to share an adaptation of a well-known Chanukah song, *Oh, Dreidel I Will Play*. You can add this to your holiday song collection. It works well in group singing. Once everyone gets the idea, the verses they make up are wonderfully delightful! Try it, you'll like it!  
Hint: Again, you can make the

strum pattern some bounce and give it by adding a stop after the second and fourth beats of each measure. The pattern would look like this.



Some tab definitions:

(S) This means to stop the sound of the chord right away by pressing about three chord bars down at the same time.

— — This signifies the beat and means there is no action to be taken with the right hand. For example means to let the last pinch sustain through the last beat of the measure.



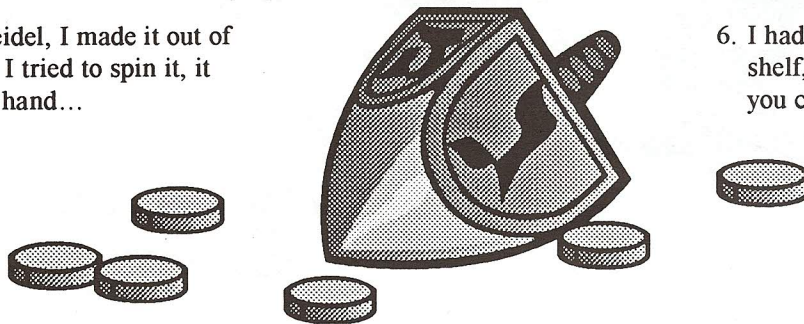
This shows the movement of the strum on the

strings. This strum pattern means to pinch in the high half of the strings, then strum in the lower area and so on.

## OH, DREIDEL I WILL PLAY

I	C had a lit-tle drei-del, I	G made it out of clay, and	C when it's dry and rea-dy, Oh, drei-del I will play. Oh,
TAB			
drei-del, drei-del, drei-del, I	G made it out of clay, and	C when it's dry and rea-dy, Oh,	C F C G C drei-del I will play.
TAB			

- I had a little dreidel, I made it out of mud, and when I tried to spin it, it fell down with a thud...
- I had a little dreidel, I made it out of sand, and when I tried to spin it, it broke off in my hand...
- I had a little dreidel, I made it out of soap, I'll spin it in the bathtub, it will not melt I hope...
- I had a little dreidel, I made it out of bread, I did not try to spin it, I ate it up instead...
- I had a little dreidel, I put it on the shelf, and if you want more verses, you can make them up yourself...



P.S. You can get a cassette lesson of me playing the autoharp tab on *Oh Dreidel I Will Play* by sending \$6.00 to PO Box 9656, Denver, CO 80209.

You can also order my cassettes for kids from the same PO box. *Monster's Holiday* and *Dinosaur Choir* cassettes are \$10 each and *Singing With Young Children* book and tape are \$15.

# Bringing the 37th String Back to Life

by Dr. Victor Frankenharp

Dateline, Transylvania.  
AQ Press



In the early part of this century, my instrument of choice, the autoharp, had 37 strings. Ah, I remember well playing lovely tunes for my faithful friend Igor while he gathered monster parts from here and there. We enjoyed these pastoral scenes immensely – Igor with his shovel, me with my Oscar Schmidt 'harp. Those were the nights!

Regrettably, those memorable times ended abruptly. After my Monster paid a friendly, get-acquainted visit to the local village, the ungrateful inhabitants torched our castle. My beautiful autoharp was cremated! I was heartbroken.

Igor's collection was lost as well, but that was easily refurbished. However, he found his gatherings dull without my hauntingly beautiful music, and complained bitterly. I, too, was uncommonly morose. Thus, one fine rainy evening, I sent Igor down to the village to collect a replacement for my beloved 'harp. But to my horror, the replacement did not come up to the standards of my beloved autoharp. I. Müller's *Pray for the Dead* lacked that old pizzazz. *Crossing the Bar* was awash. Even Walton's *Death* just didn't have that "git up and git." Why? Oscar Schmidt had buried the 37th string – the high D zinger was missing! I immediately called for my master scavenger-assistent. With Igor's parts and my know-how, we created a most satisfying 37-string autoharp!

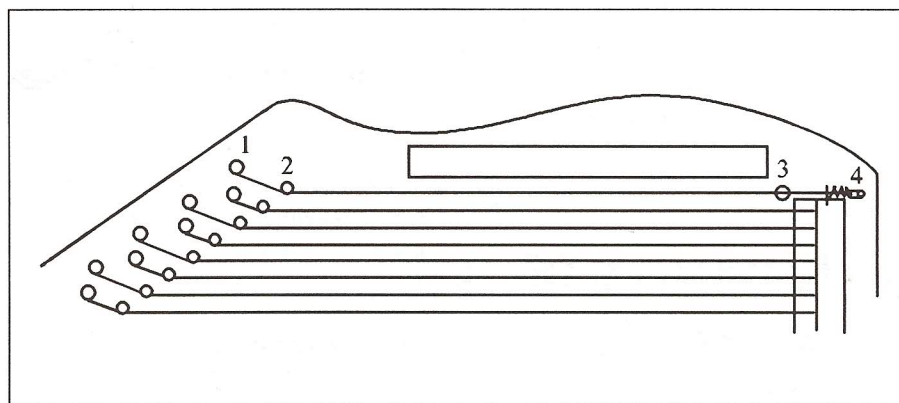
In this article, I will share my secrets which will enable you to ~~stitch together~~ create your own masterpiece. Take care to follow my formula. Otherwise, your creation could turn into a monstrous nightmare.

## It Begins

Oscar Schmidt didn't redesign the body and chord bars to eliminate the 37th string's space when they laid it to rest. The space is still there. The "Wild-

wood Flower" would be a lot more satisfying with a C $\sharp$  and D at the top, since it is a D diatonic instrument. Any 'harp often played in G or D would benefit from a D zinger. A friend of mine, Lyman Taylor, suggested dropping a note in the bass and retuning the instrument to get a D zinger at the top of the 'harp. This could cause some string-length problems. So, since the space is still there, why not bring that 37th string back to life?

To accomplish this, you must install a tuning pin (see #1 in the illustration below), a dead pin (#4), and a guide post or bridge stop (#2 and #3) for each end of the string.



The existing top string (C string) is 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ " – 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long. It can be tuned up to a C $\sharp$ , but will suffer breakage in some cases if tuned up to D.

By installing a guide pin at #2 on the same line as the other guide pins, you will reduce the string length of the new top string to 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " or less which can easily be tuned up to D.

The bridges can be extended up on the ChromAharp and Oscar Schmidt Model "A" types enough to accommodate the extra string. If you do this, it would best to replace the bridge rod with a piece long enough to extend under the new string.

## Equipment Needed

1. Drill – preferably a drill press
2.  $\frac{3}{16}$ " New sharp drill bit
3.  $\frac{3}{32}$ " Drill bit (Model "B" 'harps only)
4.  $\frac{5}{64}$ " Drill bit (Model "A" 'harps only)

5. Guide pin (Model "B" 'harps only)
6. #6 Round head steel screw 1" long (Model "B" 'harps only)
7. One tuning pin
8. Model "A" #36 C string or 2' piece #5 or #6 music wire
9. Two 4d finishing nails (Model "A" 'harps only)

## Scavenging for Parts

(Igor's job)

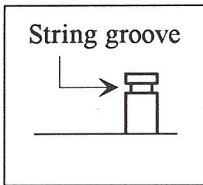
All except the tuning pin, guide pin and string can be found in a good hardware store. The other parts can be collected from an Oscar Schmidt dealer or autoharp or hammered dulcimer makers.

Even I, Dr. Victor Frankenharp, usually have an extra auto-cadaver with serviceable parts. (I can bribe Igor out of a part or two with a rousing 'harp rendition of *Day Is Dying* [his favorite].)

## The Procedure

Carefully mark the position of the new guide pin and tuning pin so each is in the same relative position as the existing pins, just one step up. Using the  $\frac{3}{16}$ " drill, set up so you will drill a hole approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$ " deep. Don't drill through the back! (I once slipped while altering my monster's neck. He complains constantly about the keg bungs I used to plug up the holes. He is very vain.) Drill the hole in *one clean motion*. Do not reenter the hole with the drill, because you will ream it.

Put the guide pin in its hole and tap it in until the string groove is at the same



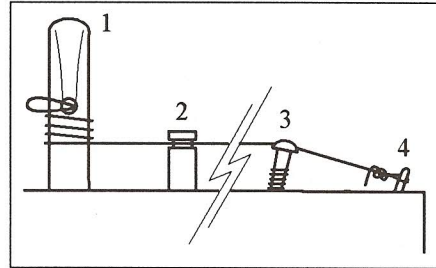
exact height as the existing strings. If this pin fits loosely, put a bit of glue on the side walls of the hole.

At the dead pin end of the string, (anchor bar fine tuner end – see point #3 on illustration below), find a spot exactly 1/4" above the top string. Drill a 3/32" hole on a slight angle away from the vibrating string bed.

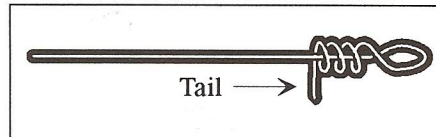
Be sure you drill this into solid wood which is clear of the chord bar assembly.

When you turn the screw (at position #3) into the 'harp, the groove in the top of the screw should end up in line with the string. And the screw should be turned into the 'harp to a depth that the string will lie at the same height as the existing strings.

Last, put the dead pin/anchor pin (at #4 position) either through the metal



cover found behind the anchor bar slot, or just beyond the edge of that metal cover. Be sure the hole is drilled on a slant away from the direction of the string pull so the loop end won't slip off the pin, and to repeat, be sure it is into solid wood. Also, be sure a tail is left on

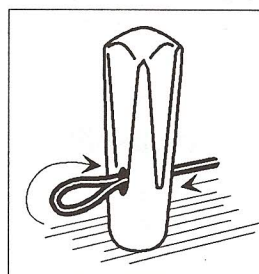


the loop end of the string to prevent it from unwinding. (See Vol. VI, #4 for the procedure of making the loop on the string).

If you have a Model "A"-type 'harp, you won't need the guide pin (#2) or dead pin end screw (#3). You simply extend these bridges up if necessary. Drill for a dead pin down over the end of the 'harp – and for a bridge guide pin like the existing pins just 1/4" up from the last pin on the 'harp. I use #6 bridge pins. You can make one out of a 4d finishing nail.

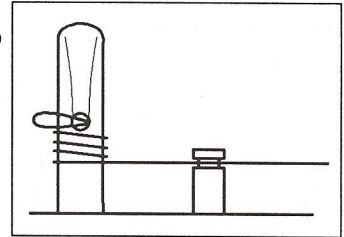
In any case, a #36 C Model "A" string or a similar piece of .014 wire can now be put into place. Cut off excess wire so that about 2" of wire will be wound on the tuning pin. Drive the tuning pin into the hole so it reaches the same height as the existing tuning pins. (The timid

can turn it in with a tuning wrench.) Back it out four full turns. Insert the tip of the wire through



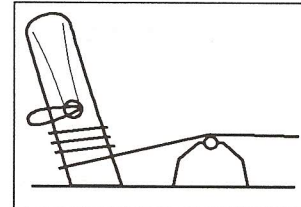
the hole in the tuning pin. Bend a little loop in the end (again, see Vol. VI, #4). Then turn the pin until the string comes tight. The tuning pin should be at the same height as the other pins when the string

comes up to tune. Keep the string as level as you can off the



guide pin to the tuning pin on your "B" Model 'harp:

If you have bridges, (Model "A" style), be sure the string winds on the pin



close to the sound board as shown at left.

Now for your Wild-

wood Flowers, where this change is almost a "must," change the tuning of the top strings as shown in the chart below:

String:	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
Tune From:	F#	G	G	A	A	B	-
To:	F#	G	A	A	B	C#	D

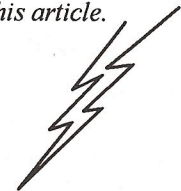
For instruments other than a D diatonic autoharp on which you have installed this string, simply tune that string up to a high D.

Isn't that much better? Ending on a D tonic zinger is so very satisfying. It reminds me of the time Frau Müller and Igor – but that's another story.

### Scared To Death?

I'm dead sure you want to get to your masterpiece now. If you have a problem, call me, Dr. V. Frankenharp at 717 567-6406. Or better yet, drop by the laboratory for an unforgettable experience. – And be sure to tell Igor you have come to *get* parts – not to *give* them. He does occasionally get carried away. ❖

Editors' note: Thanks to Lyman Taylor for initiating this article.



@ @

@

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E-mail us your address for your free listing in the next issue of *AQ*.  
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@ @

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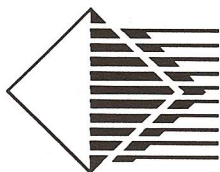
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# Interaction



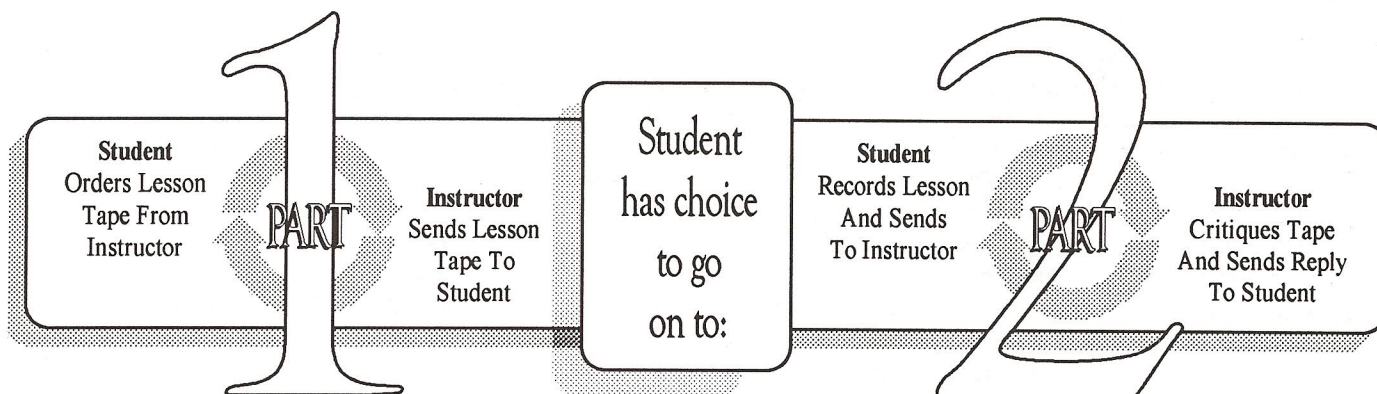
## YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERACTIVE LESSON WITH TOM SCHROEDER

**T**om Schroeder is a nationally recognized author, performer, and teacher of the autoharp. Over the past ten years, he has written regular instructional columns and published music in the *Autoharp Clearinghouse* and *The Autoharpoholic*. Author of the book, *Music from Missouri: Dance Tunes for the Autoharp*, he is also the author of the autoharp section in *American Folklore: An Encyclopedia*.

Tom's playing has been referred to as "dazzling and beautiful." He is the only two-time winner of the International Autoharp Championship, 1985 and 1992 and performs folk songs, dance tunes, and traditional stories. His dynamic style can be heard on his album, *Suite Liz*. Tom has performed at major festivals throughout the United States.

Tom has taught the autoharp for 20 years. His beginning students have gone on to win national autoharp contests. He has done autoharp workshops for beginning to advanced players at the Walnut Valley Festival, The Augusta Heritage Weeks, the Ozark Folk Center, and the Summer Soltice Festival, among others.

As a performer and teacher, Tom has been referred to as "a master of the autoharp."



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

\$8. The instructor will listen to your recording and following it will critique your playing, answer your questions and, if necessary, demonstrate the lesson further. The instructor will mail the tape back to you. You will receive your personalized reply in 3 to 4 weeks.

When I was about ten years old, a family friend died. The night we got the news, I was lying in bed, falling asleep. I was thinking about how in Catholic school the nuns told us that when a nun dies, the angels come down to take her to heaven. All of a sudden, I heard this sound that I was convinced was the sound of the angel wings. I thought, "The angels were coming to take me to live with the dead nuns!" I called out in distress, "Dad!" When my dad came in, the sound disappeared.

Many years later I heard the sound of angel wings again. I was holding my autoharp and had pushed down the G chord. I rested my finger picks on the treble strings and brushed the picks lightly, back and forth, over the strings. There it was... the sound of angel wings.

This Interaction lesson will teach you how to use the sound of angel wings as treble accompaniment while playing the melody of *Angel Band*. I will also teach you another form of treble accompaniment using finger strokes.

The autoharp is usually played with the accompaniment done below the melody note. So with "pinch" styles, the finger is plucking a melody note while the thumb is playing the accompaniment on some bass strings below the melody note. In treble accompaniment, the thumb is plucking the melody note while the fingers are playing the accompaniment on strings above the melody note. It is backwards to what you are used to doing.

Start by putting a thumb pick and three finger picks on your right hand. Place your hand, fingers together, flat against the strings of your autoharp. Your fingers should be at a 45° angle to the strings. Now slightly raise your palm so only your finger picks rest against the strings. Keep your fingers together and spread your thumb towards the bass strings so there is about a 45° angle between your thumb and fingers. This is the hand position you want to maintain.

With your hand in this position, practice the angel wing treble accompaniment. Raise your thumb pick so it clears the strings. With your finger picks resting on the middle tone strings of the autoharp, slide your hand "up"

## THE INTERACTION LESSON "THE SOUND OF ANGEL WINGS"

Tom Schroeder  
819 West 77th Street  
Kansas City, MO 64114-1752

(bass to treble strings) over six to eight strings and then slide it "down" (treble to bass strings) over six to eight strings. The movement is like you are trying to wipe something off the strings. You should produce a whispering sound. The more pressure on the strings the more volume you get. While counting "one and two and three and" over and over, slide your finger picks "up down up down up down" over and over. You will be sliding your finger picks "up down" throughout the tune, *Angel Band*, while your thumb plucks out the melody.

Now practice plucking the melody of *Angel Band* with your thumb pick. Assume the position described above. You want to do a thumb pluck "up" by moving your thumb toward your fingers. Do not do the thumb pluck by moving your hand. Practice playing the melody using thumb plucks with your hand in the correct position.

Now try to combine playing the melody with your thumb while doing the accompaniment with your finger picks. Look at the first note of *Angel Band*. You pluck the d note while your fingers slide "up" and then your fingers slide "down." The first measure shows you pluck the second note, d, while your fingers slide "up" and then your fingers slide "down" and "up" and "down." Then you pluck the third note, g, while your fingers slide "up" and then your fingers slide "down." Practice these three notes over and over until they are easy to play smoothly with the treble accompaniment. Once the three notes are smooth, learn the tune, with the accompaniment, a line at a time.

A second form of treble accompaniment

is a variation of the angel wing accompaniment. In this second form, you do the "up down" accompaniment using a finger stroke "up" followed by a finger stroke "down." You should be familiar with the finger stroke "down." The "up" finger stroke sometimes causes problems because the pick keeps getting caught in the strings. The technique to overcome this is to angle the pick steeply enough so the back side of the flat part of the pick slides across the strings. Then you angle the pick back for the regular "down" finger stroke.

With your hand in this position, practice plucking the melody of *Angel Band* with your thumb pick while you do the "up down" finger strokes. Look at the first three notes of *Angel Band*. The first note is d. You pluck it with your thumb while your finger does a finger stroke "up" and then you do a finger stroke "down." You next pluck the second note, d, while you do a finger stroke "up" and then you do a finger stroke "down" and "up" and "down." Next, pluck the third note, g, while you do a finger stroke "up" and then a finger stroke "down." Practice these three notes over and over until they are easy to play. Then learn the rest of the tune, one line at a time, using this form of treble accompaniment.

Treble accompaniment can be used for many different tunes. These two forms work well for tunes in ¾ time. Try them with *Down in the Valley* or other easy waltzes.

The last verse of *Angel Band* is, "I've almost gained my Heavenly home, My spirit loudly sings. The Holy ones, behold they come, I hear the noise of wings." Now you can make your own noise of angel wings to accompany your tunes.

On the Interaction tape you can hear these two forms of treble accompaniment, used for vocal and melody accompaniment, in an arrangement of *Angel Band*. You will also get to hear the sound of angel wings without the threat of being taken to live with the dead nuns!



# ANGEL BAND

Count 1 & 2 & 3 &

J. Haskell & W. Bradbury

Musical notation system 1: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff contains a sequence of notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. Below the staff are guitar chords: G, /, /, /, D7, C, /, G, /, /, /, /. Below the chords is a TAB line with pluck symbols (circles) and arrows indicating pluck direction: up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down.

Musical notation system 2: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. The staff contains notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. Chords: D7, G, D7, G, /, G. TAB line includes pluck symbols and arrows: up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down.

Musical notation system 3: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. The staff contains notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. Chords: D7, /, G, D7, G, D7. TAB line includes pluck symbols and arrows: up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down.

Musical notation system 4: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. The staff contains notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. Chords: /, G, D7, G, D7, G, C, /, /, D7, C, /. TAB line includes pluck symbols and arrows: up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down.

Musical notation system 5: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. The staff contains notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. Chords: G, /, /, /, /, /, D7, G, D7, G. TAB line includes pluck symbols and arrows: up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down.

Musical notation system 6: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. The staff contains notes: quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter, quarter. Chords: D7, D7, G, D7, G. TAB line includes pluck symbols and arrows: up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down, up/down.

**TAB Symbols**  
 ○ = Thumb Pluck  
 ↑↓ = Accompaniment Direction

John and I had a great time at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering! We enjoyed taking part in the exchange of tunes and ideas as well as the open mikes and performances given by all levels of players. It never ceases to amaze me how many different styles an autoharp can be played. I've never seen any two people play exactly alike. That's the magic of the instrument, which always leaves something yet to be learned.

Tina Louise Bank

The Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering was my favorite festival of all.

Adam Miller

Thanks for the warm welcome! So much talent, so much fun. I'd say more but I have to practice for next year.

Diane Pienhuse

One of the things I enjoy is playing all the new and different 'harps one sees. Fackeldey, Fladmark, and Orthey 'harps get better and better each year. I have to say that anybody in the market for a quality 'harp *must* play these three 'harps in a number of their permutations (diatonic and chromatic). How great it is to have three such wonderful choices!

Cathy Britell

Thanks for the memories.

Dona Miller

What a wonderful Gathering! May the music ring all winter long!

Meg Peterson

Ah, Mountain Laurel... Every year for the past five has remained be a special memory that lingers... Many thanks to a hundred people from myself and my partner Frack, [Gil Palley] for making it a wonderful, wonderful Gathering.

Bob Woodcock

We thank Limberjack for running such a well-done festival that fits autoharp players to a T... what a good time we had with all of you, old and new friends, and with the other performers. We had fun!

John and Kathie Hollandsworth

I'm home from the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering... I've been on my feet so much, the wrinkles have wrinkles... I've got one very big deal, and it was interesting to finally put faces with names. I'm happy to report: 1. Everybody you had pictured as fat is skinny. 2. Everybody you had pictured as skinny is built like a fireplug. 3. Karen Mueller is every bit as nice as her photo. 4. Mary Lou cleans up *real* nice for the concert. 5. George doesn't.

Stew Schneider

The festival was great this year and I don't know how you would improve it. Even the weather cooperated. Thanks for everything!

Tony and Marie Vitale

What a well-organized event... My wife is already making plans for next year - and she doesn't even play.

Brent Johnson

Many thanks for a marvelous festival. Also, my highest praise and thanks go to all the volunteers who helped set up the event and made it run ever so smoothly. I can't wait for the next one. It's my favorite weekend of the year. Every year I think I say it was the best one ever, but this year's Gathering will be for me the standard by which all others are measured... what really made it great was the lineup of entertainment, workshops, and other events. The pacing was perfect - plenty of content, but nothing seemed rushed. The featured performers were all truly entertaining, and I enjoyed sitting through every minute of every concert. [My wife] Janice agrees with me on this, and she's a good barometer of such things. As a non-player, she tends to get bored more quickly than we autoharp freaks do. But not so this year - she loved it all.

Alan Magen

I want to thank you for making the Autoharp Gathering possible again this year. We really had a great time and enjoyed meeting new people. I got a lot of tips and techniques this weekend, now I just have to try to apply them. We really loved the Original Orchard Grass Band Gospel Concert.

Diane Streeper

The music was great, and the friendliness of the participants was wonderful. I don't think I would have played nearly as well [contest finalist] without the feelings of support I received from the crowd and other contestants! We hope to attend next year... You folks have the biggest, brightest, longest-lasting and most beautiful fireflies we have ever seen!

David Rubin

## Dear Folks at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering



What a fabulous Gathering! Gib and I had a wonderful time – super. How did you manage the perfect weather? My first workshop was with Tina Louise Barr. She set the tone for the whole weekend for me. She does a *rock solid* workshop and you come away feeling fulfilled. She is a gem! Speaking of jewels, George Foss is another one. His workshop on Theory/Fact was great – accessible for the musically challenged, even, and he was a grand emcee. Les Zook's workshop was very good – felt like I was beginning to “cook.” I must thank you for Hollandsworth's slow jam – wonderful! It was so much fun it practically made my weekend. Those two are treasures. When I think of seeing old friends at the Gathering, I always think of the Grange. The food was so good, (I'd come for the chicken alone!), and they are such lovely folks. Giving up their holiday weekend for us – and their pie and ice cream is legendary. They really do a fine job. The concerts were super – Lindsay Haisley is a dynamo! During the concerts I thought many times that it was magic. The competition was chatting with Patsy Stoneman and having her place her Stoneman 'harp in my lap, ten listed in my pick of the top five. My treasured moment was chatting saying “Play it, Honey!” What a kick! She is lovely. One of the wonderful things about the Gathering is that even I hob-nob with autoharp royalty! – And, next year I'll have to bring a whole roll of nickels for the parking meter – I almost got a ticket one afternoon...

Janet Ottman

Thank you for another great Gathering! ...My favorite memory is when the dancing broke out, George jumped up and placed a large piece of plywood on the field for the dancers.

Sarah Andree

It was a fantastic festival! June was awesome in the contest. *Wow!* And all the 22 contestants were winners in my book. I'd not have wanted to have to choose the finalists or winners. We must have had 40 Cyberpluckers in the annual gig (an invasion force of green T shirts)...*What a riot!* We filled the stage, the brass section was off to one side of the stage and several people had to be in front of the stage to fit us all in. My head is still spinning (that may be from lack of sleep and at 4 hours/night I got more than many) – *oops!* I'm supposed to be working not glowing...

John Hook

I really enjoyed the gathering so much this year. Well, I always do, but it seemed even more special. The instructors and performers were great! And I was so happy to see Charles Whitmer again!

Bea Gluck

What can I say about the Gathering but awesome! My head is still reeling with all that beautiful autoharp music. We'll be there next year!

Bobbi Roberts

Sitting here in my office, the past four days seem like a dream. I remember waking up to the resonant sounds of a neighbor's 'harp and falling asleep to the lively sound of a string band jamming up the hill. In between there was walking barefoot through cool, dewy morning grass, listening to pickers and pluckers create music as naturally as breathing, watching awe-inspiring stage performances, and during a nighttime jam discovering it was already 2 am. When I returned to Connecticut I was asked: “How was it?” I'd prepared for this on the drive home and came up with the following response: “The breadth of the answer is beyond the scope of the question.” I never got to make my snappy comeback, though. Upon seeing my broad smile and happy eyes, “How was it” was immediately followed by “Never mind, I can tell.” Many thanks to all the folks who travelled from near and far to share their expertise in some very helpful workshops. Many, many thanks to Limberjack for making such an event possible.

Mike Nevensky

We tried very hard to follow the camper's creed of “take nothing and leave nothing but footprints,” but I'm afraid I brought something home with me – lots of good memories, new tunes, new friends... Thanks for a great weekend... I smiled all the way home, and I'm still smiling four weeks later!

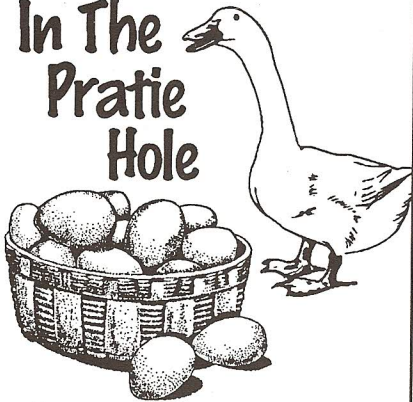
Marty Lane

I want to add my word of thanks for all your hard work last week (and before). I thoroughly enjoyed the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering, and appreciate your including me in the mix of things. The late night jamming was superb. I will never forget being in John and Heidi's [Cerrigione] pop-up at 3 am with two fiddles, a bass, mandolin, and three autoharps playing fiddle tunes. It was as if I was inside an autoharp the volume was so intense. It was amazing.

Les Gustafson-Zook



# The Gander In The Pratie Hole



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cplumley@citynet.net

The Gathering was *great!* Four plus days of music and fantastic people...[Our] Cybergig was truly an inspiration to all in attendance...the combination of trombones, cornet, tuba, drum, and of course, the autoharps, made this the most unusual musical experience I expect in my lifetime. I was proud to be a part of it. As a first timer, I can't say enough good things about the Gathering. The workshops were great, the music super, the talents presented were awesome, and those who worked hard to put this event together succeeded admirably.... I'm back in Southwest Ohio counting the days until next year...

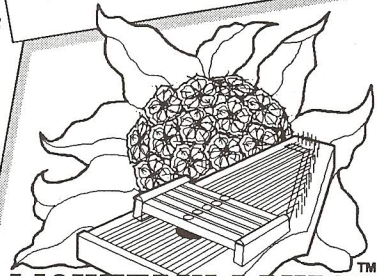
*Marty Lane*

Three cheers to Limberjack... This was my first year, and I was only there one day but *wow!* We had a great time. Learned a lot. Met some wonderful people. Heard great music. Thanks to everyone for sharing. See you next year.

*Ron Schloyer*

You folks sure know how to put on a festival!

*Bob and Sue Taylor*



## MOUNTAIN LAUREL AUTOHARP GATHERING

This has been by far the best festival experience I've ever had.

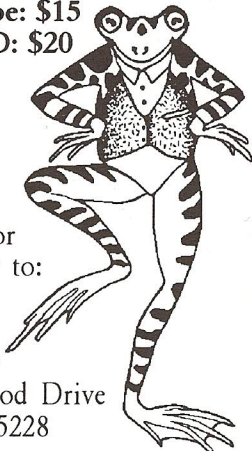
*Carey Dubbert*

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## 1996 Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering

### Awards, Statistics, and Facts

#### Autoharp Hall of Fame Honorees

Posthumous: Glen R. Peterson

Contemporary: Becky Blackley

#### Autoharp Contest Winners

June Maugery, First; Drew Smith, Second; Mike Herr, Third. Rounding out the five finalists were David Rubin and Alan Mager.

#### The Leonard Reid Memorial

##### People's Choice Award

The Japanese Autoharp Band - Yasuo Mita, Spring, June, and Yoko and Teri Watanabe

#### Watermelon Seed-Spitting Contest

John Hook: Distance

Coleen Walters: Accuracy

Carey Dubbert: Pitooey Award

#### Autoharp Toss

Tom Schwanke: Distance 94'

Diane Streeper: Accuracy

#### OSI Autoharp Drawing Winner

Fluffy Clark

#### World Record Group Picture

172 autoharps

#### States Represented

28

#### Countries Represented

England, France, Japan, Scotland,  
United States

# All Day

A traditional American  
leader's call and  
group response song

## Singing



The 1996 Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering Choir

Traditional

C / / / C / / / F / C F C F / C F C

All day sing - ing, *All day sing - ing,* Sup - per's on the ground, *Sup - per's on the ground,*

C D7 C D7 C / C D7 C D7 C / C D7 C D7 C D7 C D7 C D7

Old — folk and young folk, *Old — folk and young folk,* Ga - thered a - round. *Ga - thered a - round.*

C D7 C D7 C / C D7 C D7 C / C C F C F C C C F C F C

Ev - 'ry kind of vit - tle, *Ev - 'ry kind of vit - tle,* That you ev - er did see, *That you ev - er did see,*

F D7 F F C F C F C F D7 F F C F C D7 C

Come a-long, Ma - ry, and sit by me. *Come a-long, Ma - ry, and sit by me — .*

Arrangement © 1996 David Rubin

2. Come from Kansas,  
And Texaway.  
Come in the morning,  
And stay all day.  
Tell your friends and neighbors  
They all may come too.  
Come along Mary,  
Oh, come along you.

3. Bring along the chicken,  
And the chocolate cake.  
Along the best cooking  
You ever did make.  
Bring along your fiddle,  
And the banjo on your knee.  
Come along Mary,  
Oh, come along you.

*All Day Singing* reminds me very much of the atmosphere at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering. I believe this song to be a traditional American leader's call and group response song from the early 20th century. The leader sings the first phrase in normal type, the group responds with the italicized phrase. The three verses are sung, and then the first verse is repeated again to complete the song. *David Rubin*

# 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. Submissions cannot be returned.



## Mike's Choice

Mike Herr

### Glory to God

Autoharp: Linda Drewello  
RD1, Box 35  
Coxsackie, NY 12051

God Made Me Special/Dance on the Clouds • God has Promised Us a Rainbow • Come and Sup with Me • Help Me Climb this Mountain • Stir Up the

Gift • Laugh at the Devil • Watch out Satan • There's Been a Change in Me • Some Day Soon • Come Unto Me • Be Ye Holy

Linda Drewello is to be commended for singing and playing fearlessly and boldly for her faith. There's no doubt of the depth of her conviction as revealed in this collection of Christian songs she's written and performed.

The autoharp is used in a simple strumming rhythm fashion and there are no pretensions that this is an "autoharp tape." Rather, the focus of this tape is the vocals, the words, and the message. I will not stray out of my area

of expertise to comment on the lyrics or content of the songwriting except to say that the appeal of this type of music is obviously to the contemporary charismatic Christian community.

There are several other instruments utilized on some cuts, including bass, drums, and guitar, and they are kept tastefully in the background. I wish the liner notes would credit the personnel who assisted in the making of the music. Oh well...

Finally, those of you who are excited by this type of music will no doubt enjoy Ms. Drewello's voice, as she has a very confident, beautiful, and appealing sound to her vocals. She will inspire those who are ready to be inspired...



## TINA LOUISE BARR

Renowned for her innovative styles on the Autoharp, Tina plays all the instruments recorded on this lively, 14 tune release. "To-be-listened-to-often . . . she scorches those picks like some hot chili peppers."

Mike Herr, Reviewer Autoharp Quarterly



"One of our instrument's best practitioners . . . Tina plays with drive, fluidity, and clarity." Eileen Roys, Editor Autoharp Clearinghouse

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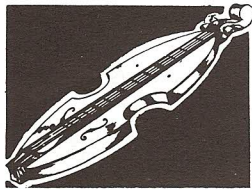
**TINA LOUISE BARR**  
BREAKIN' TRADITION  
1801 H Street Suite B-5 #225  
Modesto, CA 95354



### Thirty Old Time Songs and Tunes

Autoharp: Heidi Cerrigione,  
Neal Walters  
Doofus Music  
56 Egypt Road  
Ellington, CT 06029

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Well, 'harper friends, you have a real treat awaiting you! Neal, Heidi, and

John took a slew of those mostly obscure tunes they sit and play for hours on end and made them available to us all. They made them accessible in a user-friendly format, echoing their manner of hosting friendly and accessible jam sessions around the country.

Although staying mutedly in the background, John Cerrigione, Heidi's husband, is never-the-less palpable as the steady bass partner; sort of like the corner beams holding up the porch on which the jam is happening.

Waiting for your eyes and ears are a tape and tunebook combination that are a great example of comfortably-paced familiar and unfamiliar tunes arranged in easy-to-read fashion. At times the actual music doesn't exactly follow the written notes but that's okay. You see, the folk process dictates that you learn the tune, adapt it to your style and rework it to a reasonable FAX, er, facsimile thereof. And besides, Neal's mountain dulcimer and Heidi's shimmering autoharp are so complementary and so pleasing to behold that only the most compulsive of you won't totally appreciate their musical meanderings away from the page.

What you get is a great way to expand your repertoire without having to guess what the musicians are playing or saying. The *most helpful* of these exposés are the crooked tunes which are written out and therefore – understandable! (Oh, so you switch to 6/4 time for one measure – ahhh...) The pace and timing of this collection, though sometimes very similar from tune to tune, is nonetheless rock-steady and never speeds up nor slows down. This is, for cryin' out loud, primarily a learning tape, not a concert/performance tape. However, it is a porch concert, with incredible clarity from one of those little DAT portable recorders, and you'll get the feeling you're sitting there rocking right along with them.

The downsides are few, thankfully, with some noticeable buzzing before and after some of the songs at the end of side B. The last third of the tunebook is turned upside-down to physically separate the autoharp and dulcimer sections. Nice idea!

The overall quality of this tape is so high, however, that any minor annoyances are easily forgiven. The whole concept is so appealing and the product

is so well-thought-out and so attractively performed that you simply can't go wrong. In short, you have to buy this combo.

Keep 'em coming, Doofi, we'll all be smarter the next time you see us and we'll be able to last much farther into the wee hours with you.



## Bob's Choice

Bob Woodcock

### *The Master's Bouquet*

Autoharp: Laurie Sky

Hudson Records

Bill and Laurie Sky

PO Box 70060

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*Are You Going to the Wedding • Poor Wayfaring Stranger • Fallen Leaves • Row Me Over the River • The Day They Drove the Nails • The Masters Bouquet • Two Men A-Prayin • Bring the Sheep • Let's Have an Old-Time Revival • I'm Living the Right Life Now*

The word "gospel" derives from the Old English "goode," or good, and "spell," or tidings/news. Good news, joyful happenings, better things to come. It follows, in my mind, that a gospel recording should be upbeat and happy, filled with music that makes you smile, regardless of your personal religious philosophy. This is exactly what Bill and Laurie Sky have managed to accomplish with their latest tape. It's a winner.

Laurie and Bill have become perennial favorites at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering, and for good reason. They are clearly a "working" band. They are polished, professional, and seasoned entertainers who are very good at their craft. Daughter Laurie is the 'harpist/bass player/buck-dancer. Father Bill does the guitar work, fills in on mandolin and shares lead and harmony vocals with Laurie. They play the same roles on this tape, save for the dancing, and they play them *very well*.

The instrumental work is just right; there is no attempt to burn up the strings with

(Continued on page 38)



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# SIMPLY. Classic

by Linda Huber

This offering is the first in a series of popular classical tunes arranged for simple playing on the autoharp. If you have a favorite classical piece you'd like to see here, drop a note to Linda here at *Autoharp Quarterly*.

TABLATURE			
↓ ↑	= Pinch with the thumb and middle finger	⎵	= Strum with the thumb
○	= Pluck with the index finger	□	= Rhythm Fill Bracket. Execute all actions within bracket in one count

## MENUET

From Anna Magdalena's Notebook

*Allegro moderato*

The score is divided into four systems, each containing a musical staff, a chord diagram, and a tablature line. The tablature line includes a vertical box labeled 'TAB' on the left. The symbols used are: a downward arrow for pinch with thumb and middle finger, an upward arrow for pinch with thumb and middle finger, a circle for pluck with the index finger, a downward arrow for strum with the thumb, and a square bracket for a Rhythm Fill Bracket. The piece concludes with a repeat sign (double bar line with two dots).

# ANNA MAGDELENA'S NOTEBOOK

Anna Magdalena married Johann Sebastian Bach in 1721 while he was serving as Court Capellmeister at Anhalt-Cöthen. Bach's first wife died in 1720, leaving him with seven children. Anna raised Bach's children and bore him 13 more.

Many of Bach's most inspired arias were written for Anna who had a beautiful soprano voice. She was a singer at the court and participated in Bach's work with great enthusiasm. She was responsible for preserving

many of Bach's works in what has now become known as Anna Magdalena's Notebook.

The notebook was probably given by Bach to Anna on her 24th birthday. It is covered in green leather with a gold border and has two locks and a red satin ribbon. The monogram "A.M.B." and the date "1725" were gold-stamped in the center of the cover. Later, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach added to the initials with letters in ink reading "Anna Magdal Bach."

The notebook is filled with per-

sonal favorites of the Bach family circle. Many of the entries are in Anna's hand, with some in J. S. Bach's hand and some in the hand of younger family members. Collecting many of the simple examples of the light and short selections in the "gallant style," Anna provided future generations with an ideal introduction to music of the baroque period. No one knows which selections in the notebook can be attributed to J. S. Bach, but surely, they were enjoyed by members of the entire Bach family. ❖

*Tip: If you have a 21-chord harp and your chord fingering is identical in each key, you can change to the key of D position here.*

The musical score consists of four systems, each with a treble clef staff and a guitar tablature line. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The tablature lines include chord names and fingerings indicated by numbers 1-4 and circles for natural harmonics.

- System 1:** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp. Chords: G / D G / D / A D / Em / Bm G / A E7 A /
- System 2:** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp. Chords: A E7 A D A D G D A D / A D
- System 3:** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp. Chords: G / D G C / D C G C D C D. Note: "Go back to G chord bar position." is written below the first two chords.
- System 4:** Treble clef, key signature of one sharp. Chords: D C D G D G C G D G / / D G

(Continued from page 35)

musical acrobatics. Backup and breaks are done, to my taste, perfectly. Laurie's autoharp playing has always gotten my attention. She plays with a gusto and style that is wonderful. She also frequently adds little syncopated brushes that I love.

The songs are a mix of traditional and contemporary gospel. Three songs were written by Bill or Bill and Laurie. They chose songs of the highest caliber, in my opinion. *The Masters Bouquet* and *Living the Right Life Now* are classics, and beautifully performed. Two of my favorites, *Bring the Sheep In* and

*Let's Have an Old-Time Revival* were written by Bill and Laurie.

If my enthusiasm for this tape is obvious, blame it on the recording. It's that kind of tape. It makes you feel good. It has songs that stay with you. It has songs you want to learn. It has performances you want to hear over and over. It is a "gospel" recording in the truest sense of the word.



## Guest's Choice

Cathy Britell

### Live at the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Championship 1996

*Autoharp: Yasuo Mita, Ronnie Burroughs, David Rubin, Alex Usher, Joe Riggs, David Kilby, Mike Herr, Mary Umbarger, June Maugery, Alan Mager, Drew Smith, Yoko Watanabe, Gregg Averett, Bob Woodcock, Alex Usher, Judy Austin, Carey Dubbert, George Haig*

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Wow. This tape came as a bit of a surprise last week! I'd mailed the check before leaving on the last trip, and forgotten I had (this, my dears, is a sure sign of aging). I'm listening to it for the second time now – what a treat!

Cyberpluckers Bob Woodcock, Judy Austin, Carey Dubbert, and Alan Mager did themselves proud. I think I personally enjoyed Mike Herr's playing the most of anyone's, but I'm not sure about that. So many were so good.

Alan Mager's *Moonlight Bay* is so solid and precise, I don't think it gets any better than that – except the *Tsu-Tisa Lya-Lya* (really?) *Polka*, which, to my way of thinking is the best finger-lead chromatic playing I've ever heard. Of course, June's playing is mystical and magical and wonderful. *Hangman's Reel* fairly bubbles over – one expects to see foam emanating from the tape player –

Another cut that was a "feel good" piece for me was Ronnie Burroughs' *Steel Guitar Rag*, and his *Alabama Jubilee* was another winner – very nice playing. Drew Smith's erratic foot-tapping was a bit distracting, and there are certainly other recordings that showcase his playing better, but still, the *Bourée Buscatelle* was pretty neat.

Well, I have to say, this tape has some very nice, unadulterated, unproduced, unaccompanied, darned fine autoharp playing!



# Autoharp Quarterly

## COVER PHOTO CONTEST

Get your cameras out, folks, and win a year's subscription to AQ! Your submission must be autoharp-related. Send your non-returnable photo(s) to:

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# AQ

## Postscripts

F R O M ' H A R P L A N D

Do you have some news to share with the autoharp community? Send it to: Mary Umbarger  
144 Umbarger Road  
Harmony, NC 28634

Attention AHTOW (Autoharp troops of the World)! Its time to regroup. The days are getting shorter and there's a little nip in the autumn air, at least here in Harmony, North Carolina. The time has come to move autoharp happenings from the porch to the parlor, from the campfire to the fireside... a time when jams become smaller, but more intimate. Ah, yes, a time to take advantage of all the new music and licks we ahve heard over the summer. So, at ease, and harp on!

**P.S.**

Proud autoharper, **Phil Passen**, announced that his better half, **Barbara Gregorich**, has written a book entitled "Women at Play: The Story of Women in Baseball." This book reveals the exciting story of women in baseball, and is published by Harcourt Brace and Company.

**P.S.**

**Lucille Reilly**, who has actively protected her registered title, "The Dulcimer Lady," was recently billed as

### Summer Sounds

Presents

Lucille Reilly, Autoharp Champion  
in Concert!

also playing the hammered dulcimer

**P.S.**

A few months ago, the magazine *Gold Mine* reported that autoharpist, guitarist, singer, song-writer **John Sebastian** accepted membership in Canada's Juno Awards Hall of Fame for his work in "The Lovin' Spoonful." "Spoonful's" guitarist **Zalinsky** was also inducted at the same time. Keep an eye and ear open for **Dolly Parton's** latest recording, on which John accompanied her on several songs with his 'harp.

**P.S.**

If you're interested in ordering old **Folkways** recordings from the **Smithsonian**, write to Smithsonian Mail Order Department, 414 Hungerford Dr., Suite

444, Rockville, MD 20850 or call 301 443-2314

**P.S.**

One of the songs from **Bill and Laurie Sky's** new tape, "Master's Bouquet," - *Lets Have an Old-Time Revival* has been placed in the Library of Congress.

**P.S.**

Autoharp tapes are just bloomin' in the fall, tra-la! **Judie Pagter** has just announced a solo tape which features Judie, her singing, and her autoharp. (It's about time, you released it, Judie! We understand you've been sitting on it for six plus years!) **Mike Herr** has just made a brand new tape! Hope we don't have to wait until another grandchild is born for its sequel. See "New Recordings" for listings of Judie's and Mike's tapes. **Alex Usher**, having just completed a new autoharp instruction book for Mel Bay, is now working on her next tape. Alex, third-place winner at Winfield this year, is a self-proclaimed senior citizen - and proud of it! **Ron Wall**, autoharp impresario, is also in the process of making some new tapes. **The Lewis Family** has recorded a new tape with the autoharp featured on several tunes.

**P.S.**

**Mike Herr** could hardly contain himself when he announced: "Gotta tell ya - I'm a Grandpa! Daughter **Kirsten** delivered a healthy, eight pound boy - **John Nicholas Floyd**, on September 3. Both mother and child are doing great! The babe is *sooo* cute. *Hurrrraaayyy!*" (He was just a bit excited.) Would you believe Mike's already taken Nicholas to work with him? Congratulations to the very proud grandparents, **Mike and Donnie!**

**P.S.**

**Meg Peterson** is on an extended sojourn to places only dreamed of by most mortals. She started with a September visit to **Mike Fenton** in Worcester, England, then on to Sussex to see **Sheila Brain**. From England she traveled to Calcutta, and as you read this report, she should be traipsing in the wilds of Kathmandu. She expects to visit Tibet, traveling to Kangchenjunga, Gunsa, and Pangpema, with a side trip to Anna-

**P.S.**

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purna Sanctuary and Chitwan National Park. She'll touch down in Sikkum, Bangkok, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and will enjoy a Christmas holiday in Indonesia. Then to Malaysia, Singapore, Sumatra, Bali, to name just a few stops. In the spring, Meg expects to enjoy snorkeling in Cairns, the weather in Australia, and friends in New Zealand. Meg never did let moss grow under her feet. Safe trip, Meg!

**P.S.**

**Marie and Loren Wells** are really enjoying their new home. But in the move, they've misplaced one black boot, one blue earring, one little black book, a ceramic tile, and a brown felt tablecover. Autoharps are intact! So what's a blue earring, more or less? We're more interested in that little black book!

**P.S.**

**Patty and David Highland** are the proud parents of **Emma Bell Highland**, born October 24 at 2:30 AM. David says the baby is perfect! But of course, David! The Cyberpluckers are proud godparents, every one. Congratulations!

**P.S.**

*The Nashville Musician*, a quarterly newspaper, has just run an article chronicling the exploits of **Patsy Stoneman** and **Mary Lou Orthey** as they played into the recording machine at the Edison Studios in Orange, New Jersey. They made recordings on wax cylinders to commemorate "Pop" **Stoneman's** work with Edison.

**P.S.**

**Dorothy Wagner's** Christmas songbook is now up to 254 songs with accompanying historical information about the tunes. Proceeds benefit the children of Chicago. See the address under clubs and events.

**P.S.**

Beginning 'harper **Clarence Roberts** went to the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering where he took several workshops. He went on to Galax a few weeks later and placed in the competition!

**P.S.**

**Carol Outwater's** husband, **Fisk**, was recently promoted to the rank of Brigadier General in the Air National Guard! Congratulations! ❖



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