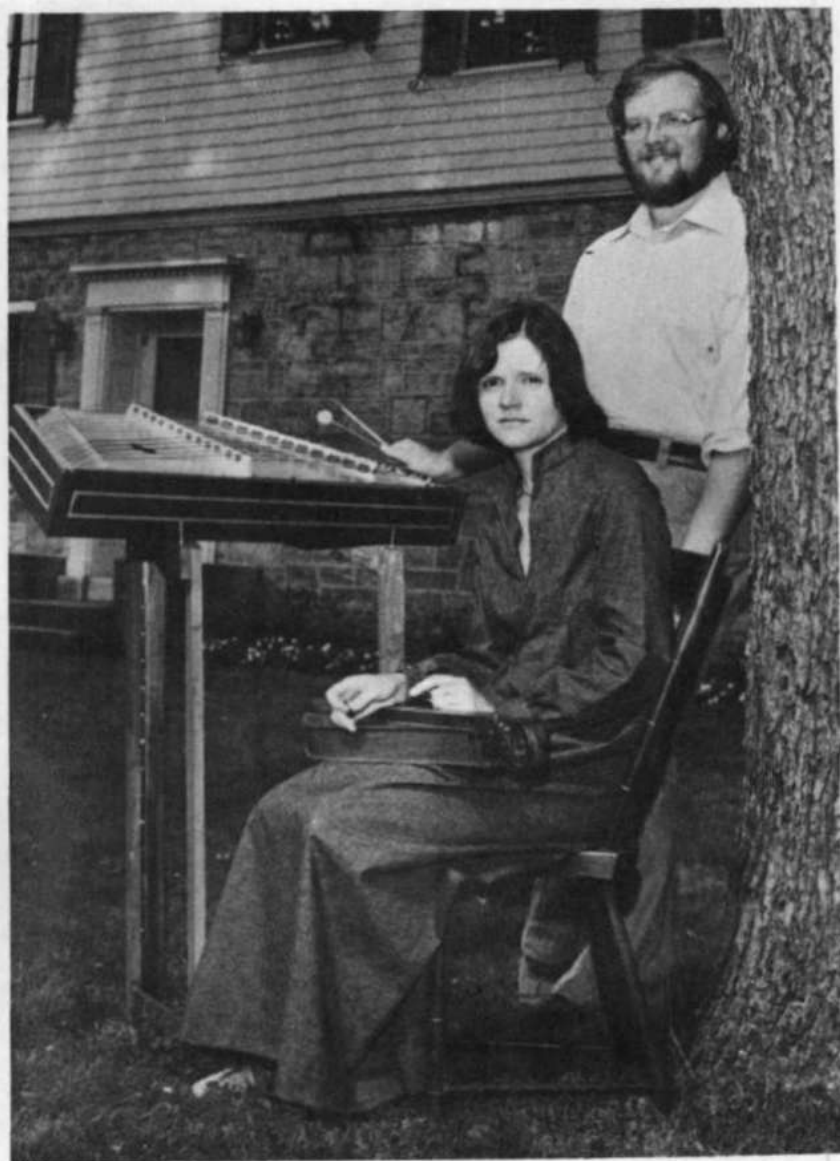


# THE DULCIMER PLAYERS NEWS

75¢

HAMMERED \* PLUCKED \* SONGS \* N' OTHER STUFF

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 6 \* SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1975



DAVE & LINDA TAYLOR

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BANGOR, MAINE 04401

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	Michael Rugg	Jean Finke

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Please do keep all your wonderful cards and letters coming our way. Our News and information comes, in the main, from you the readers and we are into corresponding with one and all about the dulcimer - it's what makes the D.P.N. YOUR information magazine. Love to hear from you. We also assume (unless told otherwise, or for personal mail) that it is ok to publish any material sent into the D.P.N.

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### COVER STORY

The cover photo is a publicity photo taken by Marge Trost, of the Zanesville "Times-Recorder". The photo was taken in front of the oldest house in Zanesville (1810). My wife, Linda Sims Taylor, and I have been very active in playing and singing traditional music in Ohio since before our marriage two years ago. We have appeared at festivals and have presented many music programs to local schools and clubs. I have completed two years of teaching in a school for mentally retarded children in Zanesville, and Linda finished teaching 5 years of communications and Appalachian Studies (a course she wrote herself) at Muskingum Area Technical College. Beginning this fall, we will both be enrolled in the graduate program at Western Kentucky University at Bowling Green, I in the Folklore and special Ed. Departments, and Linda in Library science. Both the hammered dulcimer and the plucked one in the photo were made by Jerry Beall.

NOTE: David and Linda Taylor now reside at 1715 Canton Drive #2, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

THE FEEDBACK LETTER

Dear Readers:

Here we are with another issue and there is no signs yet of a leveling off in interest or subscribers - I'm continually amazed by it all. The mail has been heavy since the last issue and many thanks are extended to all who have been so kind with their letters, information, and warm comments about the efforts here. Without your support the D.P.N. just would not exist, so keep em' coming.

Anyone know of any dulcimer players in the Jackson, Miss. area?? Sr. Dona Degnan would like very much to get to hear and compare notes with other dulcimer players. She can be contacted by writing to: Carmelite Monastery, 2155 Terry Road, Jackson, Mississippi 39204.

Thanks to Eileen Clemons for supplying the "A. Dulcimer" drawings in this issue.

Paul Pyle tells us that the 1974 Smithville, Tenn. Fiddlers Jamboree and Crafts Festival was well attended (unusually so) by dulcimer people. Among the Craftsmen who exhibited dulcimers were: Kate Luke, Tabb, Va. (she was displaying the D.P.N. in her booth); Dorsey Williams, Jefferson City, Tenn.; Homer Ledford of Kentucky; John Maxwell, Cookeville, Tenn; and Choen & Tigie of Oak Ridge, Tenn. Good dulcimerpeople all and your D.P.N. editor was sorry to have had to miss this show.

Roger Nicholson informs us that he is recording a third (and last) dulcimer album for Leader Sound (the "Nonesuch" people) later this year which will be all British traditional songs and instrumentals.

Frank Scott, of J&F Record sales writes: "We are hoping to get some exciting European issues in the near future - one featuring music of the Appalachian Dulcimer and one featuring the European Dulcimer."

We have recently run across yet more good sources for quality dulcimer kits. These can be had from Alpine Dulcimer Co. (see ad in this issue) who use no plywoods or plastics, and utilize highly figured woods and spruce soundboards. Another good source is Hank & Lynn Levin of Musical Traditions (also see ad in this issue). Hank wrote the excellent section in Jean Ritchie's new book "Dulcimer People" on dulcimer construction.

Carl and Julie Gotzmer were invited exhibitors at the National Folk Festival this past August. They make and sell not only plucked dulcimers, but also their near cousins the scheitholt, langeleik, and humle. They are also into psalteries and hammered dulcimers.

Keeping it short this month as there is lots of real good stuff to squeeze into this issue. Oh, speaking of the squeeze, I've only had one letter about the smallish size of the D.P.N. print. It seems to be the best way to get a lot of stuff into as little a space as possible. And the space becomes mighty expensive when running photos and such in a couple of thousand copies - not to mention the fact that some bucks must be put aside for postage and the big volume of correspondence we handle (gladly). Any comments on this?

Dulcimerrily yours,  
Phil Mason, Editor

P.S. If you're ever up our way stop in and visit. The D.P.N. office is always open (in the barn over our milk goats) and visitors are welcome to look through our scrap books and materials and listen to our tapes from readers (we just got 2 more nice ones: CapriTaurus String Band, and a left-handed player tape sent in by Tina Walski). We like pickin' singin' and song swappin' - just for the fun of it!

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(2)

AEOLIAN MODE

THE THREE RAVENS

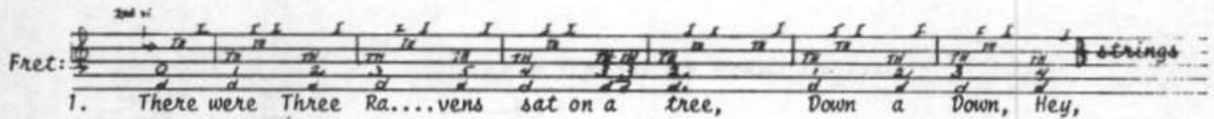
Child Ballad 26, this hauntingly beautiful song dates back at least to 1611. Other versions are the Scottish, "Two Corbies" and American, "Billy Magee Magaw."

Right hand - Thumb & Index Finger  
 Left hand - Finger or Noter  
 Tune is entirely on melody string, except for 2 notes, as indicated.

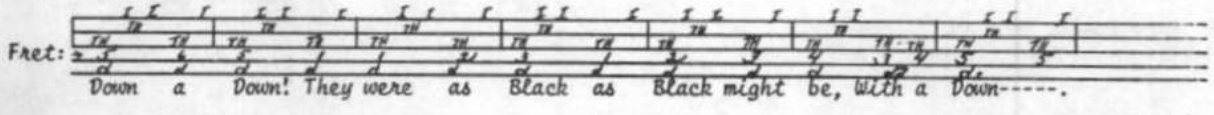
Arrangement for Dulcimer by EILEEN RAINS

3/4 Time - Slowly

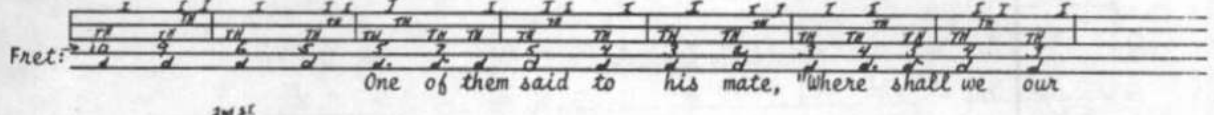
2nd st

Fret: 

1. There were Three Ra...vens sat on a tree, Down a Down, Hey,

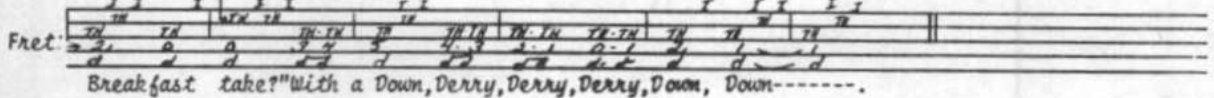
Fret: 

Down a Down! They were as Black as Black might be, With a Down-----.

Fret: 

One of them said to his mate, "Where shall we our

2nd st

Fret: 

Breakfast take?" With a Down, Derry, Derry, Derry, Down, Down-----.

2. "See yonder in that green field  
 Down a Down, Hey Down a Down!  
 There lies a Knight, slain under his shield."  
 With a Down!  
 His Hounds they lay at his feet,  
 So faithfully their Master keep!  
 With a Down, Derry, Derry, Derry,  
 Down, Down.
3. His Hawks they fly so eagerly,  
 Down a...etc.  
 No other fowl dare him come nigh.  
 With a Down!  
 See, there comes a Fallow Doe,  
 As heavy with young as she might go.  
 With a Down, Derry, Derry, Derry,  
 Down, Down
4. She lifted up his bloody head  
 Down, etc.  
 She kissed his wounds which were so red,  
 With a Down!  
 She got him up upon her back,  
 And carried him down to Earthen Lake.  
 With a Down, Derry, Derry, Derry,  
 Down, Down.
5. She buried him there before the Prime,  
 Down, etc.  
 She was Dead, herself, ere Evensong Time.  
 With a Down!  
 God, Send every Gentleman,  
 Such hawks, such hounds, and such a Leman  
 With a Down, Derry, Derry, Derry,  
 Down, Down

Fallow Doe - a female deer - the mate of the slain knight  
 Earthen Lake - a protected place  
 Prime & Evensong Time - hours of the day  
 Leman - mate or lover

As promised, here is my tablature for The Three Ravens. You'll find it not at all difficult to play. As indicated, the tune is entirely on the melody string (in the Aeolian tuning) except for 2 notes. To capture the feel of this ballad as I play it, by putting it on paper with lines and dots was an education in itself (my first effort so criticism is welcomed). It was like trying to count the wing beats of a bird in flight.

This is too lovely a ballad to die out, ancient as it is - a love story is always universal in time and place. Apparently, the Knight was out hunting, since his hawks and hounds were with him. Why was he killed, and by whom? We'll never know. The Ravens see the female of his kind - to them, simply a female deer. Was the Knight the father of the baby - was she his wife? It's still a sad mystery - and still a beautiful song. Hope you enjoy it. Let me know your response to it, ok? And if you want to, you're welcome to include it in your newsletter.

NOTE: Next issue we will have some more of Eileen's thinking about chords and a song structured around chords.

Eileen Rains  
 333 Fayetteville St.  
 Raleigh, N.C. 27601

# MORE CHORDS

By Eileen Rains

(See G and C Major chord charts in July- August Issue - Back Issue 75¢)

Here are the Key of F chords. I've shown the fretboard with double upper case letters - below Middle C on the piano; upper case - low notes; lower case - middle notes; double lower case - high notes.  
The dotted lines indicate "extra frets" at positions  $6\frac{1}{2}$  &  $13\frac{1}{2}$

## DULCIMER CHORDS FOR KEY OF F MAJOR

CHORDS FOR F MAJOR: F-B-C-C7-DM

KEEP TUNING THE SAME AS FOR KEY OF C MAJOR (IONIAN) 6-6-C



CC	D	E	F	G	A	B <sup>♭</sup>	C <sup>♭</sup>	c	d	e	f	g	a	b <sup>♭</sup>	c <sup>♭</sup>	c <sup>♭</sup>
G	A	B	C	d	e	F	G	a	b	cc	dd	ee	ff	gg	hh	ii
G	A	B	C	d	e	F	G	a	b	cc	dd	ee	ff	gg	hh	ii

L EXTRA FRET  $6\frac{1}{2}$  2 EXTRA FRET  $13\frac{1}{2}$

F3-C71 & B1 - good  
F5-C73 & B2 - good

### F CHORDS - TONIC - I - NOTES: F-A-C

①	F	A	C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
②	F	C	A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
③	A	C	F	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Th

### B CHORDS - SUB-DOMINANT - IV - B<sup>♭</sup>-D-F

①	B <sup>♭</sup>	D	F	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
②	B <sup>♭</sup>	F	D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
③	D	F	B <sup>♭</sup>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Th

### C CHORDS - DOMINANT - V - C-E-G

①	C	E	G	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
②	C	G	E	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
③	E	G	C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

### DM CHORDS - RELATIVE MINOR - VI NOTES: D-F-A

①	D	F	A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
②	D	A	F	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
③	F	A	D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Th

### C7 CHORDS - DOMINANT SEVENTH - V7 NOTES: C-E<sup>♭</sup>-G-E

①	C	E <sup>♭</sup>	G	E	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
②	C	E <sup>♭</sup>	G	E	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
③	E <sup>♭</sup>	G	E	C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Th



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## NOTES & COMMENTS

Who says the mountain dulcimer and the 5-string banjo are the only native American stringed folk instruments? I nominate the following for inclusion on the list: Ozark or Arkansas mouth bow, ukelele, gutbucket or washtub bass, and the newest one - it is so new it doesn't have a name other than "pop cans". I choose to call it a Tension Banjar.

Another possible American instrument, though not stringed, is the musical saw. Of course, the Autoharp and Dobro are American, but not folk.

### ABOUT PLYWOOD

While doorskin is readily available and cheap, I have found a much superior material that costs only \$1 per dulcimer more. Most large lumber companies have had BENDABLE BIRCH PLYWOOD in 1/8" thickness for years. It is about \$12 for a 4' by 8' sheet. All three plies are equal thickness good hard birch. It is used for curved cabinet fronts. One side has a good looking grain. I feel that it is superior in tone quality to spruce, maple, cherry, or walnut for dulcimer soundboards. Of course, I apply proper spruce bracing to the back of soundboards of all of the above woods. But even without bracing, or badly located bracing, it is hard to go wrong with this stuff. Of course, it makes a strong dulcimer back too.

If you cut EQUALLY SPACED kerfs about 1/8" apart and HALFWAY through the backside of a strip of this stuff, it is as flexible as a motor drive belt and makes good dulcimer sides. I even use it to reinforce the sides of my otherwise NON-PLYWOOD dulcimers for strength.

### TUNING A DULCIMER

In her article in the May-June '75 D.P.N., Holly Tannen says she chanced upon what is called the 'Bagpipe Tuning' in the Simmons Family Songbook and on Howard Mitchell's record. It sounds great on some songs. She further explains the use of it in a chapter of Jean Ritchie's new book "Dulcimer People". It is partly reprinted in the Vol. 24, No. 1 Sing Out! magazine of March-April 1975 (sic) (I recieved my copy in July).

Here is an experimental tuning I like for wistful songs like Jamacia Farewell. I call it 'mixolydian blues'. Tune to the mixolydian mode, for example D4, D4, A3, D3. Then retune the second string in unison with the third, D4, A3, A3, D3 !! Press down on the melody strings and get harmony! Of course you won't be able to play Jamica Farewell unless your dulcimer has the 6 1/2 fret (doesn't everybody's), but try John Henry.

What's a D4 you say? That is the standard notation of pitch. According to the American Standards Association (ASA), now called ANSI, A4 in the American Standard Equal Tempered Chromatic Scale has a frequency of 440 hz. (hertz, formerly cps or cycles per second). C4 equals 261.63 hz and is called middle C. B3 is the note below C4, and D4 is the note above it. The Standard was adopted in 1936, but musicians are a very independent lot, so some still call C4 by the names of c, C, or C'. Let's all get together so we can communicate.

I hope to write an article for you on string size selection for different tunings and tension, complete with tables. Meantime, I am enclosing a couple of leaflets for your persual. I now disagree with some of the things in my leaflet, but that's life. Some folks have made 30 dulcimers and some have made the same one 30 times. The best one I have ever made is the next one, the next best was the last one.

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⑦



# BACH & THE DULCIMER

By Roger Nicholson

Bach's grandfather was a miller and it is known that he used to play a type of zither while waiting for the corn to be ground. In fact it was probably a scheitholt - the German form of dulcimer described in 1618 by Michael Praetorius.

J.S. Bach would no doubt have liked the dulcimer as its quiet sound is very similar to his favourite instrument the clavichord, for which he composed many works including the monumental '48 Preludes and Fugues'. Of course the majority of Bach's music is very complex and beyond the scope of the dulcimer, but some of his simpler pieces can be readily adapted and are very effective for fingerstyle playing. In particular there is the collection of short pieces entitled 'The Little Notebook of Anna Magdalena Bach' (available on several records) which were written for his many children, while other possibilities include the well known chorale 'Jesu, Joy of Mans Desiring', this is in the Ionian mode and works well if the first section is just played on the first string and the remainder chorded.

The attached tablature is an attempt to dulcimerfy the Gavotte in D from the Cello Suite No. 6 (BWV 1012) which Segovia transcribed for guitar. It is fairly difficult due to the passages of counterpoint involving an active bass string (not to mention the left hand fingers concerned), but its 'Bach is worse than its bite' (apologies!) and is worth learning.

Most Baroque harpsichord suites consist of variations on country dance forms which were popular at the time such as jiggs, hornpipes, musettes, rounds, etc., so here too is a wide field of potential dulcimer music, and written by great composers who were unlucky enough to have missed it on their first time round!

## - GAVOTTE IN D -

(From Cello Suite No. 6)

Ionian Mode

J.S. Bach

Arrangement by Roger Nicholson

①

	4	0	3 4 0	0	0	3 4 2
3	0	0	0	0	0	0
5-4	5 0 0	1 2 3-2 3-4	3-4 5 0 0	1 2 3		

②

4-3 4 5 7	6-5 4-3 4	4 7 5 7	1 2 3
0	0	0	2
0	0	0	2-1 2 3 4

③

0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3-0-3-4	5 6	5 4 5 7	6 4 5 4-3						

④

0	0	0	4 3 2 0	5 2
0	0	0	0	0
2-3 4-2 3	5 5 5 4-3	4-5 6 3-2 1-0		

⑤

0 5 6 4	0	5 2	0 4
5 0 0 0	0	4	0
7 7 7 7	8-7 6-5 4-5 6	3-2 1-0 7 5	

⑥

4-5 4-5 4-5 4	3 3
---------------	-----

SEQUENCE: AABACCAABCAD

## A SEARCH FOR DULCIMERS IN GERMANY

By Michael Rugg  
of CapriTaurus Dulcimers

Here's the letter quoted from my brother, Ken Rugg, who is in Germany now on a sabbatical from Long Beach University studying children's theatre techniques. I sent him a xeroxed copy of Stinson Behlen's letter about the origin of the dulcimer in D.P.N. (Vol. 1, No. 1) and asked him if he'd investigate for me. This is his answer:

Dear Michael,

Well we journeyed to Ludwigsburg to find the source - the easy answer according to the letter you sent - HA! First of all there's hardly a museum there - so after some wandering and asking etc. one of the ladies in the Freudenverkehrsamt (tourist info office) called around to the music school etc. and the trail led to a married couple who are super interested in the history of musical instruments, especially folk instruments of the 15th and 16th Century. So we talked to her on the phone and she invited us over to look through their private archives if we wanted to - could this have been the "Original German Museum" Mr. Behlen was talking about? Anyway, we looked through her stuff and saw hammer dulcimers in some of the old paintings into the mid 15th Century (trunscheit/scheitholt). But she said there were several good museums to visit and gave us the names and addresses of places ... where they have good collections etc. in Norway and Sweden.

I saw, in a music store in Munchen, one of those French dulcimers from CAMAC: it was teardrop in form, about 1½" deep, had four strings and mechanical tuners. Nobody in the shop seemed to know how it worked"

Ken Rugg - 27 May 1975

I also sent my brother a xeroxed page from Jean Ritchie's new book "Dulcimer People" where she mentioned a man building and playing scheitholtzes in Waldbockelheim. It turned out the man lived only 15 miles from where they were staying so they called and he invited my brother and his wife (who's native language is German) to come and visit. Here's what he wrote:

"We found the house around 4 pm and he invited us in; he had, just the day before, recieved his copy of the Jean Ritchie book and showed us the picture which he said was quite old because all the kids in it were grown, married and gone. He has instruments hanging on the walls. One wall is devoted to the Scheitholt in various sizes. Then he played a bit while we snapped a few photos. He also had a psaltry and hackbretts.

We asked if he knew of any others like himself? No.. did he have a catalog? - Yes ... I'm sending it to you (and a) 'How to Play Scheitholt Book'"

Thats all for now --- I'll let you know of any more interesting findings when he returns from Europe and I'll follow up on some leads I have concerning the Langeleik.

Your Friend in Dulcimerland,  
Michael Rugg  
P.O. Box 153  
Felton, Calif. 95018  
c/o CapriTaurus Dulcimers



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## A DELIGHTFUL DULCIMER ALBUM

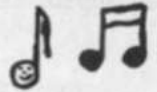
Ila Andersen is a marvelous dulcimer lady whom we at the D.P.N. are happy to have discovered, through our friend Gaille Brenner, living out in Morrison, Colorado. Ila had so many requests for her music from friends and others, who have been fortunate enough to have shared her sensitive and unique dulcimer music, that she finally went out and cut an album on her own. This super album is available for \$6.00 postpaid from Ila at: 7799 South Turkey Creek Road, Morrison, Colorado 80465, and I guarantee that you will like it a lot. Its just Ila unaccompanied except for her own marvelous voice (its special) and dulcimer.

Ila is a self-taught player who has perfected her own chording system and created an amazing and sensitive style of performing which reflects the fact that she is indeed more than just a knowledgeable and talented dulcimer player. The feeling comes across and the more one listens to this album the sweeter and sweeter it gets. Ila has only had a small number of these albums pressed so its bound to become a valued collectors item in time and I'm glad I've got a copy. Some cuts that I especially enjoy are: Simple Gifts, The First Time I Ever Saw Your Face, Whistle Daughter Whistle, Scarlet Ribbons, The Weaving is all Your Own, Old Joe Clark, and Women's Liberation. THANKS for sharing your music with us Ila! ⑨

## BOOKS

## BOOKS

## BOOKS



With so many readers writing in to ask about sources of dulcimer instruction books, etc. we thought it a good idea to contact some of these sources and obtain a batch of their books to offer to the DPN readers. Their sales will also help us to raise the revenues which we find we need in increasing amounts as the DPN continues its fantastic growth and correspondence load. You will find them all to be highly worthwhile publications, and we hope to be adding even more to the list in the next issue. Please order your books early to insure prompt delivery.

"PLAYING LEAD DULCIMER" by Dr. Richard W. Wilkie - \$4.50 plus 25¢ postage. This book is the very best I've seen for helping the beginning player to easily get into the more advanced styles of chord and melody playing. The explanations are extremely clear and easy to follow.

"LIFE IS LIKE A MOUNTAIN DULCIMER" by Neal Hellman & Sally Holden \$3.95 plus 25¢ postage. This is another great book containing 36 songs in both a numbered tablature and musical notation form. It also has a sampler record to go with it of all the songs and tunes in the book. Also contains chording info, tunings, strumming & picking styles, etc. Lots of great songs, including many Richard Farina hits. Well worth it!

"THE BEST DULCIMER METHOD YET" by Albert Gamse - \$3.50 plus 25¢ postage. For all 3 and 4 string dulcimers - E-Z instructions and 139 songs. One DPN reader writes "I like it because of the many and varied types of songs and the clarity of the explanations and diagrams." Just the song collection itself it worth a lot. Really good book!

"PLAYING DULCIMER BY EAR AND OTHER EASY WAYS" by Len & Su MacEachron. \$1.50 plus 25¢ postage. This book by the folks who operate Here, Inc. is a good and easy to follow approach to the theory behind dulcimer playing. Many tips and suggestions are also presented. An excellent 26 pages.

"THE APPALACHIAN DULCIMER" by A.W. Jeffreys - \$2.00 plus 25¢ postage. This 22 page booklet written by one of the most well respected dulcimer families in America through a couple of generations is an excellent all-around playing method booklet with 4 example songs and some chord playing info. A must book for any players library.

"FOUR AND TWENTY" by Lynn McSpadden & Dorothy French. - \$2.95 plus 25¢ for postage & handling. Tuning, chording, traditional & progressive playing styles, dulcimer care, tuning to play with other instruments, and other subjects all combine to make this a mighty fine dulcimer book. Contains 24 songs and ballads for dulcimer in tablature and musical notation.

"NONESUCH FOR DULCIMER" and "MUSICKS DELIGHT ON THE DULCIMER" These two books of tablatures and explanations by Roger Nicholson are extremely interesting and worthwhile. They contain pieces from Roger's two dulcimer albums, "Nonesuch for Dulcimer" & "Gentle Sounds of the Dulcimer". We are in the process of obtaining these books so please write us regarding price and availability. *Now in - See Em! Ad in This Issue !!!*

"THE DULCIMER PLAYERS BIBLE" by Phillip Mason - \$4.95 postpaid. Contains chording, tuning, playing styles, few songs, and the most complete dulcimer reference material in print. (a DPN publication).

PLEASE ADD THE 25¢ POSTAGE FOR EACH SINGLE BOOK ORDERED OR 50¢ FOR 2 OR MORE  
THANKS

THESE BOOKS MAY BE ORDERED FROM:

THE DULCIMER PLAYERS NEWS  
RFD 2, BOX 132  
Bangor, Maine 04401

"Bibliography, Discography, Songs, and Sources Book" - Compiled by the DPN - 75¢  
"Phil Mason's Hammered Dulcimer Catalog & Reference Book" - 25¢  
"How to Make & Play the Fretless Banjo" - Phillip Mason (complete plans) \$3.50

DULCIMER STRINGS - BEST WE HAVE SEEN - 3 string set \$1.50 - 4 string \$1.75

## BLACK JACK DAVY

I would suggest using any Reverse Mixolydian tuning for this song. In other words A-A-E or G-G-D instead of A-E-A or G-D-G. One can use the standard Mixolydian but be sure and reverse the middle and bass string of the tablature. A four string dulcimer with a double melody string seems to suit the song best. The chords are made with the middle finger on the melody and the index finger on the bass string. The "and he charmed the heart of a lady" is best done with the index finger only.

(H)=hammer on!

Dulcimer arrangement by:  
Neal Hellman

BASS STRING →

4/4

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

0 2 4 4 4 4 4 2 1 0 0 2

BLACK JACK DAVY CAME A RIDEN' THROUGH THE WOODS

5 5 5 6 3 3 3 5 5 5 3

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

4 4 4 5 2 0 2 4 4 4 2

SINGING LOUD AND GAILY, HE MADE THE HILLS AROUND

2 3 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

1 0 0 (H) 2 1 0 0 0 0 1

HIM SING, AND HE CHARMED THE HEART OF A LADY,

0 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 3

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

1 (H) 2 1 0 0 0 0 1 0

AND HE CHARMED THE HEART OF A LA - DY.

2. How old are you my pretty little miss?  
How old are you my honey?  
She answered him with a silly little grin  
I'll be sixteen next sunday, (2x)

3. Come way with me my pretty little miss,  
Come way with me my honey,  
I'll take you cross the deep blue sea  
Where you'll never need for money, (2x)

4. She kicked off her high heel boots,  
All made of spanish leather,  
And she put on her low heel shoes  
And they rode off together, (2x)

5. My lord came home late last night,  
inquiring for his lady;  
The servant spoke before he thought,  
She's gone with Black Jack Davy, (2x)

6. Go saddle me up my milk white steed,  
Saddle her slow and easy,  
I'll ride all night till broad daylight,  
And I'll overtake my lady, (2x)

7. Well he rode all day and he rode all night  
Till he came to the edge of the water,  
And there he saw his own true love,  
At the side of the Black Jack Davy, (2x)

8. Will you forsake your house and home?  
Your husband and your lady's?  
Will you forsake your new born babe?  
To ride with Gypsey Davy? (2x)

9. Yes I'll forsake my house and home,  
My husband and my lady's.  
And I'll forsake my new born babe  
To ride with the Gypsey Davy, (2x)

10. Last nite she slept in a feather bed  
With her husband and baby,  
Tonight she'll sleep on the cold clay ground  
At the side of the Gypsey Davy, (2x)

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Mr. D.P.N.

What we seem to have here is an idea whose people have come. And the people are quietly at-strum all across the country.

Saw my first copy of D.P.N. in Newton, Iowa, where a couple of fine craftsmen are working and experimenting with all solid-wood dulcimers at a shop they call BemBrand. Just another piece of the quiet/bright mosaic that we're all a part of.

There's one problem that D.P.N. might be especially suited to help with. For those of us who were not born anywhere near good dulcimer players, traditional or otherwise, there's a real difficulty in finding good teachers to help us over the early rough spots until we can start to develop our own styles. And players to compare notes with. So if there are any would-be teachers out there, send your cards and letters folks.

Strumbfumblingly yours,  
Hal Taylor

Here's a list of the teachers we know about at the D.P.N. We will add more to the list as we hear of them. They are:

Tom Hobson, San Francisco, Calif. Phone 626-8097  
Kate Christ, 4028 C.T.H. "J", Rt. 2, Cross Plains, Wisconsin 53528  
Lorraine Lee, 234 Eliot St. South Natick, Mass. 01760 (653-8290)  
Bobbie Wayne, Point o' Pines Camp, Brant Lake, N.Y. 12815 (Temp. Address)  
Miss Madeline MacNeil, P.O. Box 157, Front Royal, Virginia 22630  
Eileen Rains, 333 Fayetteville St #410, Raleigh, N.C. 27601  
Kathy Reddick, 39 Highland Ave. #3, Cambridge, Mass. 02139  
Ralph Lee Smith, 1732 21st St., Washington, D.C. 20009  
Holly Tannen, 33 Lawford Road, London, England.  
Ila Andersen, 7799 S. Turkey Creek Road, Morrison, Colorado 80465  
Chelsea House Folklore Center, Box 1057, Brattleboro, Vt. 05301

(Books and records make excellent teaching aids too!!)

A check with any nearby folk society (they are in every city) or college should turn up a few dulcimer people in your area too. Try it.

#### DULCIMER CLASSES BY LORRAINE LEE

"I'll be teaching one afternoon and one evening class in dulcimer playing for beginners at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education, as well as one dulcimer building class. At the Boston Center for Adult Education I'll be teaching one evening dulcimer playing class for beginners and an old-timey banjo class. The classes at the Boston Center tend to be smaller because lots of people aren't aware that the center even exists - it does and it's a good place. In addition, I'll continue to do group and private lessons. (phew!) All classes start in late Sept/early October."

**ED. NOTE:** Lorraine and her husband Rick will be doing workshops at the Eisteddfod (Welsh for Folk Festival) that will be held at Southeastern Mass. University the weekend of September 21st. Lorraine notes that this is always a terrific weekend with free workshops and a reasonable concert admission fee. The D.P.N. hopes to meet and chat with many of the readers and friends during this event also. See ya' there!

Dear Phil,

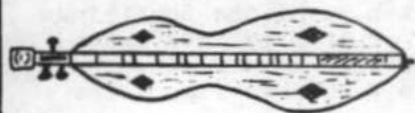
The record by Judy Mahan that Bob Rodriguez reviewed in the last issue is still available. It can be ordered directly from the company from: Everest Records, 10920 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 410, LA, Calif. 90024; or from: Thomas H. Stern, P.O. Box 1228, White Plains, N.Y. 10602. "Folksongs of Old Erie" (Tradition 2075) was originally put out as "Rockin the Cradle" by Horizon Records #1605 - you may find it used under that name. The Guitarist who accompanies Judy is Jake Anders. Too bad they didn't include that credit on the new label.

Happy Music Making,  
Jean Finke

**NOTE:** Jean is in charge of "Folk Notes", the great publication of the Peninsula Folk Music Club. For membership (\$2 - \$3) contact: Jean Finke, 1649 Molitor Road, Belmont, CA 94002.

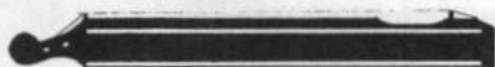
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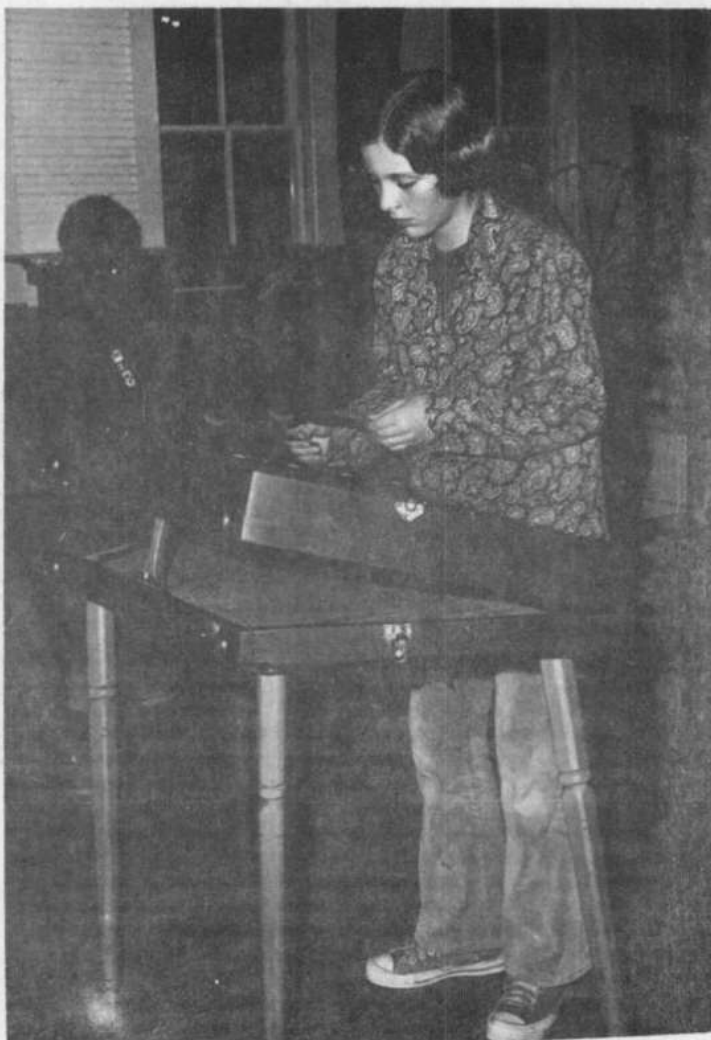
DULCIMERS, KITS, MOUTHBOWS. Made from fine hardwoods, no plywoods or plastics. --- Catalogue 25¢

The following three photographs, supplied by our friends Lee & Jean Schilling, were taken by Larry Howard at the Folk Life Center of the Smokies in Tennessee. Below, Evan Carawan made his second public appearance at the Center's "String Awakening" earlier this year (he is 12 years old and a remarkable h.d. player - learned from his father Guy Carawan).

In photo #2 John McCutcheon jams on the h.d. with Lee Kelly (guitar) and Geoffry LeFevre (fiddle) at the folk games/folk dance workshop at FLCS.

Photo #3 shows Lee Schilling 'tuning up'. This h.d. of the Schillings is nearly a hundred years old. Bob Beers dated it for them by the "potato finish". Since acquiring it they have run across several more pretty identical to it, all of which were found in eastern Ohio - so they figure the same man made them all.

Lee and Jean (who operate Jean's Dulcimer Shop as well as the Folk Life Center of the Smokies - P.O. Box 8, Cosby, Tenn.) also carry h.d. records in their shop. They have a new catalog out now of the dulcimers and accessories that they carry too. Write for it!





LEE SCHILLING 





GEOFFRY LE FEURE

LEE KELLY

JOHN McCUTCHEON

# KEVIN ROTH AT HIS BEST ON DISC

A Review by Robert Rodriguez

With the increasing interest in both dulcimers and dulcimer music, it isn't any wonder that a company like Folkways, always interested in the finer folk music traditions, would release a rather exciting record by an equally exciting musical talent; which is exactly what Folkways has done. To be precise, I am talking about the brand new album recently recorded by Kevin Roth of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania; an album entitled Kevin Roth Sings and Plays Dulcimer, which certainly lives up to its title to say the least. This album (Folkways Records FA-2367) features the dulcimer in several uses - both as an instrument for solo pieces, dance tunes and fiddle pieces, and as an accompaniment for vocals. In both areas Kevin certainly knows what to do with the instrument. But then, having seen him close up in both workshop and concert settings, it is no surprise that the album is worth it, and more to boot. The tunes on this record are for the most part taken from the traditions of both America and England; ballads from both sides of the Atlantic are well represented here: songs including such familiar tunes as Soldier's Joy, June Apple, plus two beautiful renditions of Greensleeves and Kevin's own Flowers of the Field. Some purely native tunes are included, such as The Water is Wide, Jean Ritchies I & N don't Stop Here Anymore, plus a song which I actually thought was a traditional piece, but which Kevin told me was a contemporary tune he had written the music for recently, a song called Bold Pirate, which when first heard actually sounds like a throwback to a lively British Isles dance tune. Both Kevin's instrumental work and his vocal renditions are an excellent blend of a hard-driving use of voice and instrument and yet a simple and loving presentation of solid good traditional music at its best. This is a dulcimer record, and the dulcimer is featured up front, lively, but yet with a warmth which makes this album worth running out to get in a hurry. One listens to this record and gets the feeling that human music is still with us yet; its hard to tell where Kevin's music ends and his personality begins - that's what sort of a person and musician he is. Kevin makes his dulcimer come alive, both in person (he can even play Irish pipe tunes on the dulcimer incidently, and that ain't easy), and on record. And, whether his dulcimer is played bagpipe style, chording for ballads, hammering-on for fiddle tunes, or simple melody tunes, it's a refreshing piece of musical artistry to see Kevin at work. Besides, he owns and collects dulcimers himself. He presently has at least twelve, and is always looking for more. What more can one say want in both a person and a performer. Well, there you have it folks, all about Kevin Roth's fine and wonderful album, so the rest is up to you out there in "recordland". This is Kevin's first album; let's hope it's not his last by any means.

Dear Phil -

... One of these photos shows one of our Hammered dulcimer kits assembled. The other is of Su and me playing hammered and plucked dulcimer together. Usually, Su plays melody while I do backup chords. We also do 'ceili' (gaelic version) style playing (both on melody) and occasionally will have Su playing backup semi-chords while I play melody. As far as we know, we are the only people playing these two instruments together. If there are others, we'd love to hear about them or encourage others to try this combination. We often can attract and hold a crowd at a festival on sheer novelty as we are not at all accomplished musicians.

The hammered dulcimer Su is playing on is the original prototype from which our superior new structure evolved. The individual bridges avoid the necessity of compromise on getting both sides of each course "right". A single bridge means everything has to be perfect or else some notes are "off" a little as the whole bridge must be moved to tune the two sides of a course and at some point a compromise is necessary - at least usually.

Photos next page

Cordially,

Len MacEachron  
HERE, Inc.  
410 Cedar Ave.  
Minneapolis, Minn. 55404



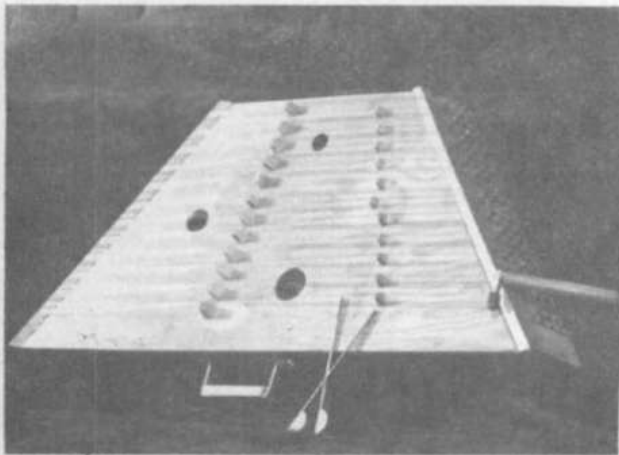
"A. DULCIMER"



"A. DULCIMER USING A  
HAMMERED DULCIMER"



LEN + SU Mac EACHRON

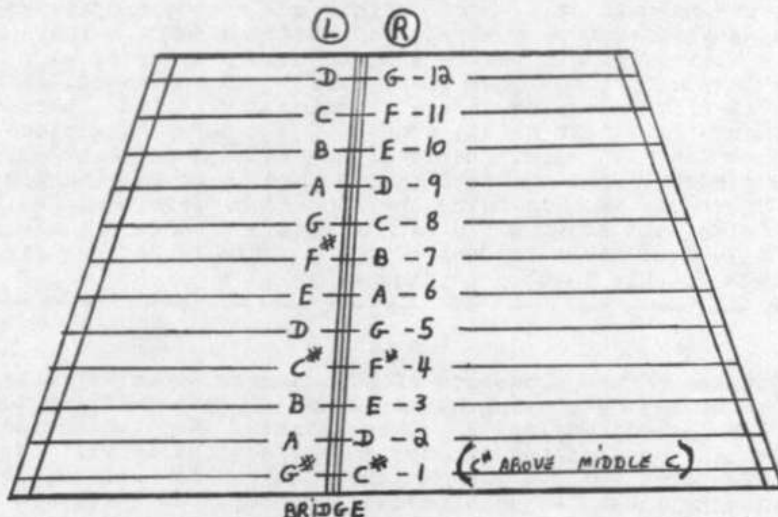


HERE .INC - H.D. FINISHED KIT

## HAMMERED DULCIMER TABLATURES

By Phil Mason

The treble bridge string courses (upon which the majority of h.d. playing is done) of your h.d. will look something like the following diagram:



The string courses are numbered 1 to 12 beginning at the long side of the instrument, in front of which the player usually positions him/herself. Assuming you use the fifth interval tuning scheme (most popular), your string sets (courses) will be tuned as indicated in the diagram above. To indicate a tune in tablature, a little number is simply written above each note to indicate which string course corresponds to each particular note of the music. For example, 1-R means to strike the 1st course to the right of the bridge, and 1-L would mean a strike to the left of the bridge on the 1st string, etc. With this simple enough system well in mind, here is a tablature for the popular jig "Irish Washerwoman". Two more tablatures appear in this issue for the h.d. on page 32.

"IRISH WASHERWOMAN"

Tablature - P. Mason

5 8 7 5 5 2 5 5 7 5 7 5 8 7 9 6 6 3 6 6 8 7 8 6 5 8 7 5 5 2 5 5 7 5 7 5 8 7

L R R R R R R R R R R R L R R R R R R R R R R R R R R L L L R R R R R R R R R R R R R R

7 8 6 5 8 7 5 5 5 8 9 10 8 8 5 8 10 8 10 9 9 9 7 7 5 7 7 9 7 9 9 8 7 6 8 8 5 8 8

R R R R L R R R R R L

8 8 8 7 8 8 3 7 8 6 5 8 7 5 5 5 5 7 5 5 5 5

A L L L L L R R R R L L 1 2

## PAUL PYLE -- MOUNTIAN DULCIMER MAN

For a long time the Dulcimer lay decaying like a 'sleeping giant' amid family treasuries in the lonesome attics of many Appalachian mountain homes before its introduction to craftsmen like Paul Pyle a few years ago. Their painstaking efforts saw the results of a steady revival of an art that in a few short years might have been lost into eternity. Paul and his wife Louella had seen success in many fields - writing, photography, woodcraft - before entering into the production of the hand made Dulcimer at an age when others were planning a restful life of retirement. Many hours of research and effort saw the result of the first Dulcimer with the Pyle label. Soon Paul was helping others in the production of their own instruments. He was encouraged to publish a book of plans that would be so simple that an amateur could follow them. Paul has also published a most delightful and worthy playing instruction book (34 songs too).

NOTE: At the last minute before press time the D.P.N. Book List (page 10) has been fortunate enough to acquire a stock of Paul Pyle's two enjoyable books: "The Appalachian Mountain Dulcimer Book" (\$2.95), and "To Build a Dulcimer" (\$4.00). Both can be ordered from the Dulcimer Players News, or the Author himself. Both books make use of many fine photos, drawings, and diagrams excellently prepared by a man who truly loves his work.

PAUL PYLE STUDIOS  
414 CAMPBELL AVE.  
TULLAHOMA, TENN. 37388



Dear Phil,

... This is my first year building hammered dulcimers, so I have no profound construction tips to offer the D.P.N. readers.

I'd like to make mention of some good suppliers of dulcimer wood, with whom I've delt personally: (1) Gurian Guitars Ltd., Canal Street, Hinsdale, N.H. 03451. Gurian's prices are very reasonable, the service and quality are good. My personal purchases have been spruce tops (quality fair to excellent, mostly good or very good) and birdseye maple backs and sides (quality fair to very good). I've also seen some nice mahogany from them; (2) Metropolitan Music, 160 Tillman St., Westwood, N.J. 07675. Metropolitan's prices are reasonable, and the service is good. The wood quality I've seen has been very good. My personal purchases have been guitar tops, mahogany and cherry dulcimer wood and spruce dulcimer tops (quality ranging from good to excellent mostly very good).

I now re-saw most of my own wood, so I don't do a whole lot of purchasing of pre-cut woods now. My opinions of the above suppliers are based not only on my own experiences, but the experience of other builders I know also.

Maybe the above will be of some guidance to prospective dulcimer builders:

----- Scotty

Scott E. Antes, Guild of Am.  
Rt. 1, Box 130 Luthiers  
Hanover, Ind. 47243

(19)

Dear Phil:

Greetings from Appalachian Ohio! Ever since I heard about the D.P.N. I've wanted to send you a brief rundown on the status of dulcimers and playing out here... The mountain dulcimer is comparatively prevalent in this part of southeastern Ohio. This is tracable to the recent boom in interest, and not to traditional playing and/or a handing down of the instruments. There are several luthiers in the general area. I'm not personally acquainted with them all, but can tell you this: One Michael Murphy is at Yellow Springs, Bob Brewer is in Wapakoneta, Nick Engler in Athens, and some others in Athens, Marietta, and Columbus. Probably the greatest number of instruments is found in the N.E. area of the state, encompassing Akron, Canton, and Cleveland.

Without a doubt, the largest supplier of mtn. dulcimers is Jerry Beall from Newark. He tells me that he has filled you in on his operation to some extent. (Ed. - Yup, Vol. 1, No. 5) He has been building for several years, and although very close friendship precludes too much objectivity, his are still the best I've seen.

Relative to hammered dulcimers, not too much can be said. Paul Gifford, in "Mugwumps" (Vol.3, No. 5, Sept. '74) notes that a factory was located near Liberty Center, near Toledo, Ohio, in the late 1800's. I have a fair idea that there were a goodly number of hammered dulcimers in these parts at one time. I've located 15 in this county (Muskingum) alone, most factory-produced, and, according to Gifford's specs, from Liberty Center. Their condition runs from almost unsalvagable to fully strung and very playable. So far, however, I've run across only recollections of one hammered dulcimer player anywhere around here. He was apparently active up till his death in 1927, and I'm in the process of tracing his relatives (if any survive). No sign of his dulcimer so far. As far as today's players go, I think I am the only one actively involved in playing the hammered dulcimer in the whole state. Jerry is the most prolific builder.

I feel sure that you're aware of Anne Grimes, considered to be the possessor of the world's largest collection of old mountain dulcimers. She lives in the college town of Granville, about 45 miles from us. She has completed some very fine collections of traditional Ohio singers, and has been active since long before the folk boom. She has a recording on Folkways.

Well I've bent your ear enough. I'm very pleased with your magazine so far, and wish you the very best in the future.

David L. Taylor  
1715 Canton Drive #2  
Bowling Green, KY 42101

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Dave is going to be doing some things for the D.P.N. on the hammered dulcimer in the future, and we are quite happy to have him aboard as a contributing hammered dulcimer editor.)

Dear Mr. Mason,

On page 28 of the last issue of the "News" mention was made of some dulcimer cuts on a National Geographic Album. The album is titled, "Music of the Ozarks". The dulcimer cut is 'Harrison Town' by Elliot Hancock - its the only one, I think.

The Rackensack Folklore Society of Mt. View, Arkansas has produced a two record set of their music. Album 1 has a cut by Kathy Morrison playing "Turkey in the Straw" on dulcimer. Album 2 has the following dulcimer cuts: 1. Elliot Hancock performing "Cotton Eyed Joe". 2. Lynn and Mary Catherine McSpadden doing "Lady Mary". 3. The Simmons Family doing "Amazing Grace".

The Arkansas Traveller Theatre near Hardy, Arkansas has an album titled: The Arkansas Traveller Folk Theatre, which has several dulcimer cuts.

Jimmy Driftwood has a new album, available only by mail order from Battle Music Co., Timbo, Arkansas, which has one dulcimer cut by Driftwood.

The Simmons Family have an album titled Stone County Dulcimer which is a fine teaching aid for beginning dulcimer players.

Finally, Tut Taylor, best known for the instruments he builds at his Tennessee Dulcimer Works in Nashville, Tenn., will soon be making a dulcimer album.

Best Wishes, Art Coats

P.S. We are giving a Tut Taylor Dulcimer away at our National Guitar Flat-Picking Championships this year. (Held Sept. 19-21 at Winfield, Kansas Fairgrounds. For info write Walnut Valley Assoc., Box 245, Winfield, Kansas.



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15 minute cassette tape & photos of  
our instruments \$3.00 - refundable.

Please write for our catalogue  
(postage appreciated)

20

Dear Phil

Must respond to several letters appearing in D.P.N. re:plywood dulcimers. During the seven years the company has been functioning, and in the five or six years before that when I was experimenting with materials I came to the conclusion that plywood sound boards, like most really hard hardwoods, produces a sharp brittle and usually relatively short duration of sound in a dulcimer unless it is a very large instrument. If you get a large enough expanse, a pine or other soft wood ply top can give a reasonably mellow sound. Now the harsh sound is not all bad. There are songs that call for this sort of thing. Also, they have one interesting advantage - they are very sturdy. They will tolerate treatment "good" instruments won't.

\* I should say at this point that we use solid spruce or cedar tops (sound boards) on all of our instruments and kits unless especially ordered otherwise; I wanted you to know where our prejudice lies.

I am inclined to think, however, that most people will find the sound of solid softwood sound boards more pleasing across the board. The tone that is produced can be controlled by the shape and placement of the soundholes and the shape of the instruments soundbox; the weight of the string boards is also important. The bright (if you like it) harsh (if you don't) sound can be achieved - and with more purity of the sound - (whatever that means) - by using the hour glass shape or plenty of variously spaced sound holes, and/or tying down the ends of the string board tightly. You don't literally tie them down of course, you glue them. Vice-versa, you get a big guitar sound with teardrop or mellow shaped soundboxes, minimum sound holes and free bridge end of the dulcimer. In our standard instruments and kits that we make the tear drop leans toward guitar sound and the hour glass shapes toward mandolin and banjo. In a few experimental models we have incorporated ways for alternately tying down and releasing the string board to try to get the best of all possible worlds. Not wildly successful so far. Our kit instructions tell people what to do to make the instruments from our kits that lean either way in sound.

I also must respond to Dr. Moe re: Strings and plywood dulcimers. I agree that new strings are nice and if you are rich or a professional you might (perhaps) change them often. I must report a statement from Kenny Hall, of the Sweets Mill String Band (a notable mandolin player if you have'nt been lucky enough to have heard him), who has this to say about changing strings: "I can either change my strings often or eat hamburger. I'd rather eat hamburger". So, says Kenny, he changes his strings whenever they break. That's what I do also and I cannot really say that I can tell a tremendous difference in sound. Further more, I don't think that the pros I pick with on occasion would overlook being "out of tune" because I have such a great personality either. In short, I believe that if your instrument "won't stay in tune" there is likely to be something wrong with it besides old strings. If your instrument is cold (or even cool) when you start playing, the vibration of playing will warm the strings enough to throw them out of tune; they get longer as they get warm.

Now about the need of plywood dulcimers to get inexpensive ones. You don't have to have a plywood soundboard to get an inexpensive kit or dulcimer. ALL of our dulcimers and kits have solid spruce or cedar sound boards. Our least expensive kits and instruments compete in price with most plywood instruments and kits. Many of our all solid wood cherry or walnut dulcimers/with solid tops and kits compete with fancy plywood models. SO you don't have to have a plywood sound board to get an inexpensive kit or instrument.

Cordially, Len MacEachron  
Here, Inc.  
410 Cedar Ave.  
Minn., Minn. 55454

Sandy Davis (compiler of the Hammered Dulcimer sheet entitled "It's a Dulcimer": RD #1, Weston Road, Lincoln, Mass. 01773) has given us the following exciting information: "A record is being put together this summer by a hammered dulcimer consortium called "TRAPEZOID", to be released in the Fall. The group includes Sam Rizzetta, Paul Reisler, Pete Vigour, and Paul Yeaton. All four are makers of hammered dulcimers, and play instruments of their own design and construction. Their instruments include bass dulcimer, baritone and treble dulcimers, and a dulcetta, or piccolo dulcimer, plus other assorted string band instruments. The record promises to be exciting and worth waiting for.

(21)

## THE RETURN OF ROGER NICHOLSON

A Review by Robert Rodriguez

If they liked it once, they'll love it twice; that goes not only for folk festivals, but also for newsletters, Chinese cooking, and good dulcimer records as well. Roger Nicholson has given both folk music and especially dulcimer fans a real treat with his second and latest album from England, and this is really a good one indeed. Entitled *Gentle Sound of the Dulcimer*, Argo Records ZDA-204, this album has several major differences from the first Nicholson album, *Nonesuch for Dulcimer*. When I reviewed his first album, I mentioned that, even with its defects, the record was still worth its weight in value because, outside of one other obscure record of dulcimer songs from the Irish tradition, now out of print, Nicholson's album was the only one outside the United States which featured a prominence in the use of the dulcimer. Happily, this second record has all the great qualities of the first, and so few defects that they are almost irrelevant. The first major difference is that there are no vocals on this album; whether or not vocals hurt or help a dulcimer record is a subject for a whole other article, but as far as this record is concerned, the absence of vocals does not hurt the quality one bit. There are dulcimer records where vocals are absolutely essential because of the nature of the music involved, but in this case vocals would be almost superfluous. Nicholson's dulcimer playing speaks for itself not only in the quality of the tunes and songs encompassing this album, but in the very wide selection and spectrum this album takes in. The first side contains a variety of tunes and pieces, all the way from traditional favorites as Spanish Fandango and a Southern Medley (*Soldier's Joy, Traveller & Buck Dancer's Choice*), to tunes from the British Isles tradition: *Flowers of the Forest, Bonaparte's Retreat, Father Halpburn's Waistcoat, King of the Faries*, etc., to one avant garde piece which Nicholson calls *Mood Piece #2*. These tunes are designed to illustrate the incredible range and use of the dulcimer: from its traditional use as accompaniment for fiddle tunes, to modern composed pieces and contemporary tunes. The second side of the album contains mostly Elizabethan, Renaissance, and Medieval dance tunes, courtly tunes, and pieces designed for instruments such as lute and guitar. These tunes include pavaanes, galliards, and court dances from the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries from England, France, and Italy. This album features a number of pieces done on double dulcimers with other such musicians as Gerry Roff, Jacob Walton, and Trevor Crosier on such other instruments as banjo, mouth bow, percussion instruments, 2nd dulcimer, and guitar.

The fact that, unlike his first album, Nicholson's superb dulcimer playing is not overbalanced by other instruments is perhaps one of the finer points of this record. The use of double dulcimers on some of the medieval pieces is particularly interesting, while the use of banjo and mouth bow on the Appalachian Medley is as authentic a way to show the actual uses of the dulcimer in its natural setting accompanied by other instruments traditional to its use. The guitar is featured for instance on *Bright Shines the Moon*, a Russian Balalika piece, which Nicholson has skillfully interpreted for dulcimer as a spritely dance tune. Two differing, but somewhat similar, renditions of *Buck Dancer's Choice* is another nice addition to this record. Finally, is Nicholson's ability to use even unfamiliar modal tunings such as Phrygian, Aeolian, and Locrian modes for some of his more interesting medieval pieces, plus his contemporary pieces. All in all, the *Gentle Sound of the Dulcimer* is an album which features Roger Nicholson at his musical excellence and best, showing the numerous uses of the Appalachian dulcimer in various settings, both traditional, modern, vintage, and offbeat. Nicholson has successfully crossed the Rainbow Bridge, Bifrost, with this record which begins where *Nonesuch* left off, and this album deserves every rave it can get; it's a winner all the way.

THE ROUND FAMILY OF MICHIGAN: HAMMERED DULCIMER FOLKS

Out Michigan way (thick with hammered dulcimer tradition) lives the Don Round Family who are a bunch of mighty swell folks very much into all aspects of the hammered dulcimer. Don builds beautiful instruments and son Jay is a well known performer on the instrument with two great albums to his credit already. (See ad in this issue for info on Jay's albums).

The two photos below show Jay playing one of Don's fine instruments and an ebony encased h.d. set on a beautiful stand incorporating many nice woods, including zebrawood bridges. Don tells me that as far as he knows this is the first and only h.d. of its kind in existence. If you are ever looking for a fine h.d. do stop in and see the Round family. They like to have visitors.



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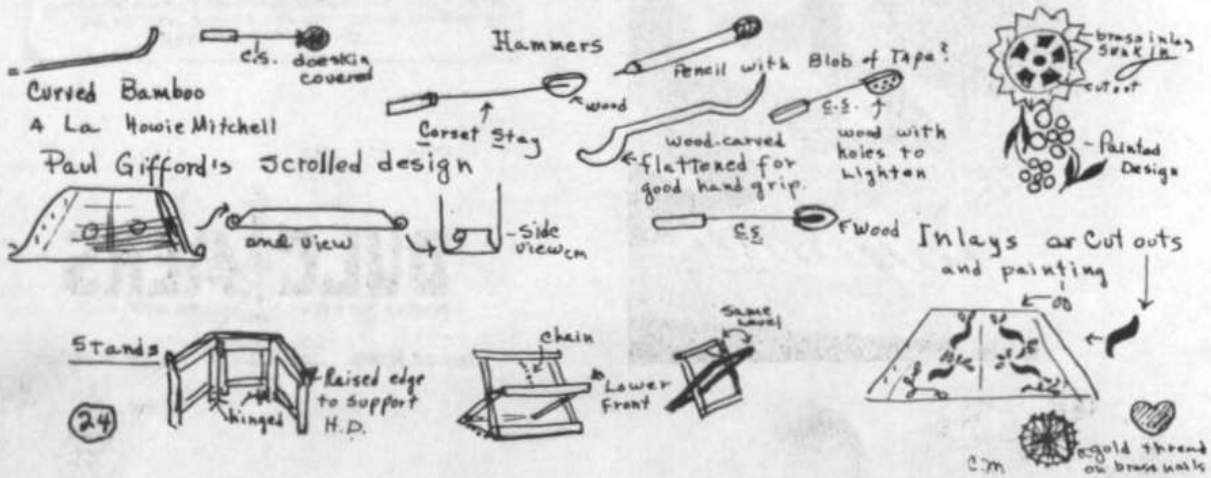
THE ORIGINAL DULCIMER PLAYERS CLUB, INC. OF MICHIGAN (TODPCIM)

Reprinted from Vol. 13, No. 3 of  $\frac{1}{2}$  Lyre courtesy of:  
 Detroit Folklore Society.

Editor: Carolyn Montgomery  
 23428 Plumbrooke Dr.  
 Southfield, Mich. 48075

The TODPCIM had a gala meeting on Sat. May 17 at Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Mich. complete with costumes, tophats and a Gay '90's stage backdrop. Having just given birth, so to speak, to a new hammered dulcimer, the Montgomery family traipsed over to see what its all about. What its all about is people, old tunes, respect, appreciation, love, friendship, and 30 hammered dulcimers. What a variety of sizes, shapes, and ages! Some of the highlights of the afternoon for me were: The youngest member first, 10 year-old Stevie of Toledo, Ohio, who played a h.d. which his Grampa built for him last year. After zipping through 3 or 4 tunes very well done he was given a tremendous hand. At that point several people immediately decided not to play. Stevie's Grandpa demonstrated a real Zither and played it briefly ... The passing of Michigan's Chet Parker was a sad note to the proceedings. Jonathan Round played Chet's h.d. at the funeral and we heard a short tape of it... Gene's 75 year-old Mother played a 150 to 175 year-old heirloom h.d. in a pert and snappy manner that was thoroughly appreciated by the crowd... Oldest member present was 89 year-old Fen Watkins (who owned the ponies on Bob-Lo Island) who displayed a mean hammer on Sweet Georgia Brown and Yessir, That's My Baby... A Pontiac teacher, Patty Luan, played beautifully on a very large h.d., a schottich (sp?), O Sole Mio which had beautiful harmony and a Mountain hornpipe... Ready?? Paul Gifford, luthier, played one of the most attractive instruments. After a warm-up tune he played a Bach Prelude for Violin that was unbelievably beautiful. Gene Cox, President and presiding Host remarked that this was the second time in his life that he had had chills when hearing a h.d. playing so lovely a piece of music. Paul's address is 1046 Withington; Ferndale, Mich. 48220. His h.d.'s are bargain priced but exquisitely built. A family from Albion, the Urquharts, Mamma Carol on h.d., Dad on guitar, and 4 kiddos on voice charmed the audience with Will the Circle Be Unbroken? and a version of Bright Morning Stars similar to the up tempo version we heard at Fox Hollow last year... Dot and Bill Colvin's h.d. was among the most attractive of the h.d.'s at the fest. The fine instrument finish that Bill puts on his work is outstanding. Dot's fine instrument playing was remarked by Host Gene as a welcome fresh new sound to the club proceedings. Gene Cox performed Lara's Theme and Devil's Dream which I'm sure made the Devil jealous of Gene's virtuosity. Gene demonstrated his topsy-turvy h.d. which has strings on both top and bottom of the soundbox. One side basically in key of "C" and 'tother in "D". There was a great variety of h.d.'s and people. The larger size h.d. did not always have louder sound, however. Paul Gifford's scrolled design for sides was the most artistic exhibited; Bill Colvin's the finest finish and most delicately scaled size instrument. Many old timers played as well as the Johnny-come-lately players and all were accepted and appreciated with equal enthusiasm. The majority of the performers only used the bass strings for a note or three and a missed "fancy lick" was cheered on the perfect repeats... TODPCIM meets again on Sept. 27, in Ann Arbor. Please miss the meeting so I won't be so crow in the front row listening attentively. You don't really want to be in on all those good times with friendly folk. Or do you? \*\* Carolyn Montgomery \*\*

Sept. 27, 1975 TODPCIM (Hammered Dulcimers) Stern's Musical Collection, Stern's Building, North Campus, Ann Arbor, Mich. Info: Gene Cox, Box 136, Byron Center, Mich. 49315. Fall Meeting. Bring your Hammered Dulcimer.



Dear Mr. Mason,

... We are a mother and son team of dulcimer makers. I bought my first dulcimer, made from a Hughes kit in Washington 8 years ago, and taught myself to play. During the next 2 years I purchased an Edsel Martin 4-string dulcimer and a three string one made by Clifford Glenn. I play the three string in a traditional fashion with noter and feather and also using some chords. The four string is used in more progressive styles, and I even play Bach and also sonatinas and other classical and semi-classical pieces.

We moved to the peninsula area of the state a few years ago and Dan and I began making our own instruments. We have made 100 instruments in the last two years, and half of them have been made since December of last year. Dan has made himself a guitar and is in the process of making a fretless banjo. We hope to be making hammered dulcimers for sale within the next six months.

Dan and I give programs on folklore in the Tidewater area schools. Our dulcimers have been exhibited at the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum in Williamsburg, Virginia. I have given workshops and performed at the Old Dominion University Folk Festival and at the Newport News Bicentennial Folk Festival. Last August I played at the National Folk Festival.

Enough of my rambling; the above gives you a little background and we really applaud what you are doing with your publication. We will be glad to promote the Dulcimer Players News on this end.

NOTE: Persons who might be interested in a Luke Dulcimer may write them for their nice brochure.

Kate Luke  
Luke Dulcimers  
22 Crandol Drive  
Tabb, Virginia 23602

Dear Phil,

... I've been making and playing dulcimers since 1965, when I was turned on to them by Herb David (fine luthier) in Ann Arbor, where I was a law student. Herb let me build my first dulcimer in his shop since I lived in a rooming house, and it was patterned after an A.W. Jeffreys model he had in the shop. After moving to Denver, I continued to build dulcimers and through the efforts of Ed and Penny Trickett, began correspondence with Howie Mitchell. I have an old mimeographed work-up of Howie's that preceded his fine book and record. The Tricketts are friends of Harry Tuft (prop. of the Denver Folklore Center), and have brought some fine concerts to us. Howie was a major inspiration to me.

I expanded to building guitars in 1970, and to date have built 36 dulcimers (all sold or given to friends) and 6 guitars. I've enclosed a photo of the three shapes I make - Ritchie, Bill Davis, and Jeffreys styles. I'm not an innovator and am strictly a traditionalist (no plywoods, 3 string, friction pegs) I do, however, make some concessions to modern woodworking techniques. I use vida tuning pegs from Sckerl & Roth (rosewood or ebony), I hollow the fingerboard (though I don't cut through the top like Morris Pickow - I think it sets up disturbing overtones), and I use a Dremel Moto-Tool to cut the heart and scroll shaped sound holes. I use 1/8" thick, quarter sawn sides with no linings and have never had a separation (use Titebond glue throughout), I am also going to start cutting out the pegbox slots with a router (I think Lynn McSpadden does that). The tops are braced 90 degrees to the length at 4 points, as are the backs with 1/8" by 1/4" walnut or spruce. This not only gives structural support, but intergrates the whole soundbox into an efficient tone chamber. I think Howie's study has shown that even a pillow will respond when a fingerboard is placed on it.

I have a friend who has a dulcimer his mother bought in the 1930's from Jethro Amburgey on a trip to the south. If you want I'd like to take some pictures and do a piece on it for the D.P.N. (We'd love it - Ed.)

Traditionally, Jack F. Smith

Dear Phil -

... Question: I am repairing a santur ( Persian cousin to the Hammer Dulcimer). What strings should I use? They are laid on in threes - Alternating 3 steel and 3 brass. Thought you might know what to use.

(Can anyone help??) Best wishes,

Charles Dudley  
11th St Dulcimer Co.  
120 East 11th St.  
N.Y., N.Y. 10003

## NEWS FROM READERS

Dear D.P.N.

Your July issue prompts me to write to all fellow Dulcimaniacs.

The issue of plywoods versus solid woods will be a more interesting one as there is a company now experimenting with plastic. At present they are not producing this material for the retail market, but their research shows it is equal to and in some cases superior to solid wood. If you can hold your breath, just think, you could be the first on your block with a plastic dulcimer!

I've been working for a company that is one of seven distributing one brand name of dulcimer for five years on a nationwide basis. The public is constantly becoming more aware of dulcimers through T.V., advertising, street fairs, etc. I personally feel your magazine is well timed to act as a guide to aspiring and perspiring dulcimer players and makers.

Fondest wishes for your continued success,

P.S. Did you know the Japanese are sending dulcimers over??

David Mollis  
1122 Hawthorne Dr.  
San Mateo, Calif. 94402

### ANNUAL DULCIMER CONTEST-CONVENTION INFORMATION

By David Taylor

On May 17 and 18, the restored canal town of Roscoe, in Coshocton, Ohio, was the scene of what may have been the first performing contest devoted exclusively to dulcimers. The contest was to encompass plucked as well as hammered dulcimers, but as only one entry was received for hammered dulcimer, no hammered dulcimer contest was held this year. Twenty-five mountain dulcimer players came from all parts of Ohio to compete in the two-day contest and get-together, sponsored - and planned as an annual event - by the Roscoe Village Foundation. An audience of more than 125 viewed the contests both days in the recently constructed Triple Locks Center.

Saturday's contests were for excellence in performing only; vocal accompaniment was permitted but was not judged. The category breakdown was as follows: Men's solo - 1st, Dan Madden, Columbus, completing his Ph. D. in math at Ohio State; 2nd, David Taylor, Norwich, an instructor of mentally retarded children; Dave Neff, Uniontown, 3rd. In the Women's solo - Lizbeth Scheider, Dayton, 1st; Diana Neff, math teacher from Uniontown, 2nd. In the Children's category, both prizes were won by members of the same family: 1st to 11-year old Kathy, and 2nd to 10-year old Scott Brewer, children of Bob and Margaret Brewer, of Wapakoneta. Bob is an industrial arts teacher-luthier, and built the dulcimers that the winning children played on.

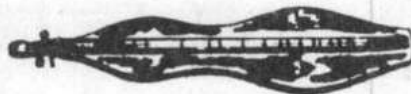
Heaviest competition was for the Courting Dulcimer honors. A tie for 1st resulted between Iris Shanks and Lizbeth Schneider, and Dave and Diana Neff. Second place trophy was awarded to Ray and Andrea Nicholas, from Carrollton and Navarre, respectively. Both of the Nicholas' are members of the Nicholas Family, long associated with dulcimers in northeast Ohio. Bob and Margaret Brewer were the recipients of third place in the Courting Dulcimer category.

Sunday saw the competition for the best overall performance using mountain dulcimer or dulcimer and voice. 1st prize in this contest was offered by Jerrold R. Beall, a well-known luthier from nearby Newark, Ohio. He gave a three-string cherry dulcimer, with flowering dogwood painted on the soundboard. This prize was won by David Taylor, performing "The May Day Carol", and "The Death of Queen Jane". 2nd prize trophy was awarded to sisters Barbara and Pamela Fisher, of Canton, Ohio.

Judging for this First Annual Dulcimer Convention-Contest was carried out by Ken Hall, Coshocton High School music director; Dr. Ray Zepp, head of the music dept at Muskingum College; Dr. Bill Schultz, luthier and instructor of English and dulcimer construction at Muskingum; Dave Partington, dulcimer player and teacher of autistic children; and Jerry Frankhouser, leaded glass artist and friend of old-time music.

Since the response to this year's contest-convention was so favorable, the Roscoe Village Foundation has definitely planned a second get-together for 1976. The date will be May 22-23. For hammered dulcimer players, if more than three entries are received, a contest will be offered in that category. In order to be put on their mailing list for next year, interested folk should write to: Dulcimer Convention, 381 Hill Street, Roscoe Village, Coshocton, Ohio 43812

David L. Taylor  
Norwich, Ohio  
29 June, 1975



SEE PAGE 1 FOR OUR AD RATES

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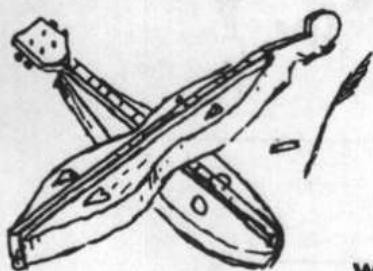
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28

Dear Phillip Mason,

We make (of special interest to you) plucked and hammered dulcimers as well as guitars, etc. One style of hammer dulcimer we make is a "pedestal" type, where the working components are built into a 3-foot high solid hardwood pedestal - great volume and tone and beautiful looking too - for the connoisseur.

As an afterthought, in Kevin Roth's article (Vol. 1, No. 5) he mentions a six string chromatically fretted dulcimer - it sounds more like an acoustic Hawaiian steel guitar rather than an Appalachian Dulcimer.

P.S. The photo (below) was taken at a Renaissance Fair. Loved the last issue.

Thank you, Larry English  
Songbird  
P.O. Box 615  
Arnold, Calif. 95223



Dear Phil,

Enclosed you will find photos of the "Dolphin Special" I built. The inlay is both M.O.P. and Abalone. The face is red cedar, back and ribs of black walnut. The carved head is mahogany and it has a herringbone strip down the back and up the end block.

Keep up the good work, Bill Wasel

451 11th Ave. S.  
St. Pete., FL 33731

(see photos above left) Nice work Bill!!

Dear Phil:

I've had a hammered dulcimer for some time now - a Chinese one - which I got on the way out here. (I'm British actually, not born here in New Zealand, and have been teaching here for a couple of years.) I bought the instrument after becoming interested in Tibetan music - it's one of their main instruments. There are quite a few hammered dulcimer players in New Zealand though; one I know of is of Scottish decent and plays folk music of Scotland on his instrument. He says that they are quite common in Scotland.

Geoffrey Samuel  
Dept. of Anthropology  
University of Otago  
Dunedin, New Zealand

Dear Phillip,

Suppose it's about time I crawled out of the sawdust and dropped a line to the D.P.N. It's exciting to see the growth in circulation of this newsletter, and I have a few notes which may be of interest to prospective or novice dulcimer builders. All statements are my own opinion, based on building experience and observations of other builders' work.

Let me begin by saying that simplicity is close to perfection. No matter how elegant a dulcimer may be styled, its real beauty is in its construction. Wherever one part may take the place of two, or be omitted altogether, so much the better. The goal is a clean, sound, functional design; one that sounds good, looks good, and is put together well.

To quote my good friend Jerry Beall (sorry 'bout that, J.R.): "They make you feel good, but braces just aren't necessary in a dulcimer". Jerry is referring, of course, to instruments built with the standard 1/8" thick (roughly) soundbox components, and I agree. Unless a soundboard is quite thin (less than 3/32" thick), the fingerboard surely provides enough rigidity. Even the back without any form of stiffener, is pretty darn rigid at 1/8" thick. (Many hardwoods could be used even thinner.) After all, we're talking about a piece of wood that is four times as long as it is wide, and secured to the soundbox all around its perimeter. If the wood feels flimsy, brace it (or throw it away), otherwise, what for?

Linings are another thing that "makes you feel good." If your sides are thin (3/32" or less), by all means use them. Sides roughly 1/8" thick, however, provide adequate gluing surface for any of today's modern glues.

Speaking of glues, avoid "super glues". Epoxies are unnecessary. Hot glues set up too fast. (I'm referring to "glue gun" glues, not hide glues.) Forget contact cement. When in doubt, use Elmer's, but many better glues are available. Titebond is a good one; so is Rivit. Liquid hide glue is okay, but vulnerable to molds as well as to heat and moisture. Keep in mind that your instrument may one day need repair. Will it be able to be disassembled?

Thin wood does not necessarily mean better sound. The wood must be rigid enough to vibrate and/or transmit vibration. I've built dulcimers of wood 1/16" thick, and they had to be braced like crazy, and weren't very loud. Nor was their tone in any way exceptional. I find that a top roughly 1/8" thick gives great results on a dulcimer soundbox roughly 30" long by 7 1/2 - 8" wide by 2 - 2 1/2" deep. (No braces) The sides are more rigid if they are thinned not much less than 1/8" thick, too. We've already discussed the advantage of a 1/8" thick back in a previous paragraph. Remember! Thin wood is light, but delicate. If you must use it, brace accordingly. (Try, not to use wood thicker than 1/8", thinner than 1/16").

I'll save more of my opinions for a future article. I hope these few items will help out a little. My shop is open to visitors in the area. Please drop in if your building (or buying, of course).

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## THE KEVIN ROTH COLUMN

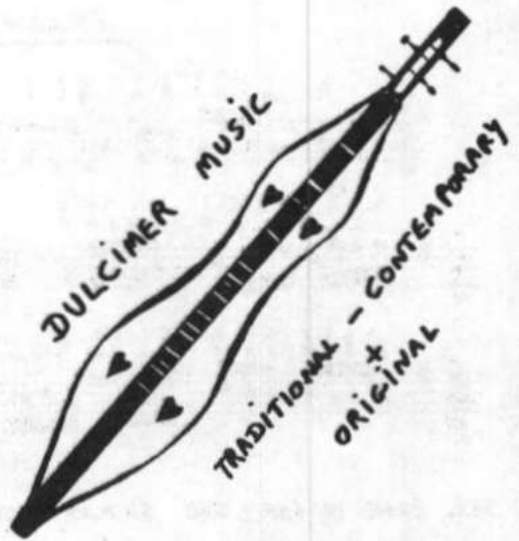
In my last column I wrote about the growing number of dulcimer players and explained that the more dulcimer players we had the more changes would be made with its music and construction. Time does not stand still!

Now then - I find that most dulcimer players have heard only of such people as Jean Ritchie, Howie Mitchell, and other such players who started most of us on our way through either their books and/or recordings. Much to my surprise most folks did not have any idea that Richard Farina played the dulcimer, or even that the Rolling Stones have used it in their recordings. It seems that the dulcimer has been limited in its reach to peoples ears. Most of the problem is not the recordings themselves but our lack of motivation in searching for these outstanding pieces of music. For this reason, I am producing a radio show called : Dulcimer; The Music and It's People.

This program will be compiled of recordings and tapes from the most traditional player right on up to the most contemporary. Some of the artists will be: Jean Ritchie, Joni Mitchell, Howie Mitchell, Judy Collins, Richard Farina, Roger Nicholson, Bert Jansch, Mary Rhodes, Holly Tannen, Paul Clayton and myself, plus many others. There will also be interviews, some of which concern the electric dulcimer, the five-string, and other areas of dulcimer interest and expansion. I personally invite anyone who wishes to be part of the program to send tapes and/or information that will be of help in getting people to open their eyes and ears and hear that there is another side of the mountain other than the Appalachians for the dulcimer. For more information please write: KEVIN ROTH, Unionville, PA. 19375 or phone 215-347-1808.

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2 R 5 6 7 5 3 3 2 2 3 5 6 6 7 7 6 7 6 5 3 2 5 6 7 5 3 3 2 2 3 5

*mf* 8 7 8 5 6 8 5 8 7 5 6 4 5 7 8 8 5 8 7 5 9 7 6 8 7 6 5 7 6 4 2 5 5 6 6

7 6 5 7 6 7 8 5 8 7 5 8 7 6 8 7 6 5 7 6 4 2 8 7 8 5 6 8 5 8 7 5 6 4 5

SEE PAGE 19 FOR THE EXPLANATION OF THESE HAMMERED DULCIMER TABLATURES

## WEARING OF THE GREEN

5 6 7 7 7 7 7 5 5 7 7 6 6 6 6 5 6 8 8 7 6 5 7 5 6 5 5 5

*mf* 5 5 8 7 6 6 5 7 5 5 6 7 6 7 8 7 8 7 6 6 5 7 5 5 7 6 5 4 3

2 5 6 7 7 7 7 5 7 7 6 6 6 6 5 6 8 8 7 6 5 7 5 6 5 5 5 5

MF

## FISHER'S HORNPIPE

2 3 4 5 2 4 2 5 3 2 5 4 2 4 2 5 3 2 5 4 2 4 2 5 3 5 3 4 2 4 2 3 2 3 4 5 2 4 2 5 3 2 5

*mf* 4 2 4 2 5 3 2 5 4 2 5 7 6 4 2 4 5 7 5 4 5 6 4 2 4 6 4 8 6 7 5 2 5 7 5 9 7

6 4 2 4 6 4 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 3 5 2 5 3 5 5 3 2 4 2 4 5 2 3 5 4 3 2 5 4 3 2 5

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Looking for a dulcimer builder in your area??? Drop us a line (include a stamped and self-addressed envelope please) and we will send you the names of any builders in your area.

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The Dulcimer Players News is published semi-monthly (6 issues per year) as a source and information flow magazine on all aspects of the dulcimer, both plucked and hammered, of traditional as well as contemporary interest.

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LAST MINUTE NEWS

Just prior to press time we've recieved word from Holly Tannen (who's now settled in England). Next issue will contain a new article by Holly entitled "Basic Tips for Beginning Dulcimer Players" We've also recieved a nice photo of Holly which will appear on a future D.P.N. cover.

Also have heard from Neal Hellman, who with Sally Holden wrote "Life is Like a Mountain Dulcimer", sent us a handy "quick tune" chart for the next issue. Neal also promises us some more nice tablatures for some neat songs and tunes. We are in this mans debt for all his fine contributions to the efforts of spreading dulcimer information.

Bonnie Carol, a builder from Boulder, Colo., (Salina Star Route, 80302) has sent us in a whole bunch of photos describing in detail her neat steps in dulcimer building from start to finish. Beginning next issue, we will start running these as a series.

Steve Katz has some info coming up on a good source for "Pignose" amps and Barcus-Berry pickups for electrified dulcimer set-ups.

Next issue will also contain some tuning and string info plus a word or two on dulcimer books and people from Lorraine Lee.

Phew!!! Still more news - looks like a great issue coming up to round out our first big year (already?) with the D.P.N.

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