

.75 ¢

# The Dulcimer Players NEWS

Volume 1, Number 5      July-August 1975  
THE DULCIMER INFORMATION MAGAZINE

PLUCKED \* HAMMERED \* FOLK MUSIC \* BUILDERS



Kevin Roth

© 1975 by The Dulcimer Players News

Please address all correspondence to:

THE DULCIMER PLAYERS NEWS  
c/o Phillip Mason - Editor  
RFD 2, Box 132  
Bangor, Maine 04401

THE D.P.N. ADVERTISING RATES

FULL PAGE \$40 8" by 10" copy  
1/2 PAGE \$20 5" by 8" copy  
1/4 PAGE \$10 4" by 5" copy  
1/8 PAGE \$5 (About business card size) 2½ × 4  
CLASSIFIED ADS ARE 20¢ PER WORD

NOTE: Copy is reduced from the above sizes to fit our page size of 5½ by 8½. Black & white camera ready copy please. (photos extra)

TOTAL CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE 1,500

D.P.N DEALERS INQUIRIES INVITED

COVER PHOTO

Our cover photo for this issue is of a really fine dulcimer player, Kevin Roth. Kevin is into the dulcimer in many aspects, and besides being a dulcimer scholar and player, he is a writer, performer, broadcaster and collector of dulcimers. A good example of Kevin's playing can be heard on his recent Folkways album (FA 2367) "Kevin Roth Sings & Plays Dulcimer".

See the article by Kevin in this issue in which some questions about the future of the dulcimer are posed. Also readers who have any info for Kevin's radio show which he is now working on "The Dulcimer: Its Music and its People" are invited to contact him. National distribution is a possibility.

# THE FEEDBACK LETTER



Dear Readers:

WOW!! - I just continue to be amazed at the continuing big surge in the popularity of the dulcimer. Here we are again with another D.P.N. which has grown from a circulation of 550 from the May-June issue to 1,500 for this issue.

The D.P.N. again extends a big welcome to all new readers, friends, and subscribers, and a big thanks to all those many enthusiastic folks who have been passing the word to their friends about our efforts in the true oral tradition. It works! And we all owe a big thanks to the many contributors and advertisers who have helped to put this issue together. We have begun accepting advertising to meet the many requests of you readers who have wanted to know more about sources of instruments and other related dulcimer items. It is no secret that these advertisers greatly help to support the large printing that the D.P.N. now enjoys and they in turn deserve your support. Do let them know that you found them in the D.P.N.

The article contributors for this issue are certainly to be congratulated for their freely given, enthusiastic efforts to help bring dulcimer information to the attention of all, and for this issue they are: (1) Eileen Rains, who did the "Chord Charts" and from whom we will be hearing more from in future issues. Eileen is into the dulcimer quite seriously and finds time to involve herself in teaching and performing locally on top of her other activities as wife-wife/mother/housewife/secretary. Eileen also advises us that registrations for the North Carolina State University dulcimer building (from kits) and playing courses will be taken during late August for the first class beginning Sept. 16th. Info can be gotten by writing to N.C.S.U. Continuing Education Div.; Raleigh, N.C. - or write/call the N.C.S.U. Craft Shop in Raleigh (919) 737-2475. Eileens address is 333 Fayetteville St.; Raleigh, N.C. 27601. (2) Jean Schilling, who has kindly given us the permission to print "Bickering Twosome". This is one of Jean's own tunes written for a solo dulcimer piece, and it may be heard on Jean and Lee's album "Porches of the Poor" (available from Tradition Records; P.O. Box 8; Cosby, Tenn. 37722.) This song can be played on a 3, 4, or 5 string dulcimer. (3) Bob Rodriguez, who brings us another really fine dulcimer album review. Dulcimer players everywhere are in Bob's debt for he is truly a friend of the dulcimer, and a much appreciated good friend of the D.P.N. Next issue will feature two more of Bob's reviews which will be on Kevin Roths new album as well as Roger Nicholson's new album. (4) Roger Nicholson, who continues with his series of articles to the D.P.N. with a very informative piece on Modal Music. Roger says, "This article contains most of the obscure, but I think interesting, information on modes etc. that I have come across in various books during the last few years." (5) Kevin Roth, who has supplied us with a short article posing some interesting questions on the dulcimer's future. Kevin has promised to contribute a regular column and pass on much information of whats going on with the dulcimer in many different circles of traditional and contemporary interest. Readers are urged to contact Kevin with comments and also to contact him about any dulcimer information that might be of interest for a Radio show he's doing soon.

# MYSTIC HILLS DULCIMER

BEACH, FREDERICK  
MYSTIC HILLS #169  
WINTERPORT, MICHIGAN  
04496



DULCIMERS

APPALACHIAN  
& HAMMERED

FRETLESS  
BANJOS



Sunhearth

OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY  
CRAFTSMANSHIP & MATERIALS  
ILLUSTRATED BROCHURE WITH  
PRICES UPON REQUEST

ROARING SPRING, PENNA. 16673  
ROUTE 867S PHONE 814-224-2890

## HAMMERED DULCIMER RECORDS

JAY ROUND and FRIENDS "THE HAMMERED DULCIMER ALBUM"

INCLUDES

SHENANDOAH, BUFFALO GALS, TURKEY IN THE STRAW,  
WILDWOOD FLOWER, RAGGEDY ANN, SOLDIERS JOY,  
WABASH CANNONBALL, BANKS OF THE OHIO, FLOP-EARED MULE  
ARKANSAS TRAVELER, 8<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY, I SAW THE LIGHT.

JAY ROUND WITH THE WILLIAMS FAMILY "COLUMBUS STOCKADE BLUES"

INCLUDES

COLUMBUS STOCKADE BLUES, KENTUCKY WALTZ, LIBERTY  
FRIDED LOVE, CHEYENNE, I'LL FLY AWAY  
I'M SO LONESOME I COULD CRY, FOUR WINDS A-BLOWIN', MISSISSIPPI SAWYER  
BONAPARTE'S RETREAT, CHICKEN REEL, HOME SWEET HOME.

ALBUMS FEATURE THE HAMMERED DULCIMER BACKED WITH GUITARS,  
BANJO, FIDDLES, BASS, AND MANDOLIN RECORDS \$5.00 PLUS 50¢ POSTAGE  
AND HANDLING. AVAILABLE THROUGH: JAY ROUND, 6470 8<sup>TH</sup> AVE.

GRANDVILLE, MICHIGAN 49418

MUSIC SAVES

Most People

And  $d \neq d$ .  
You can save \$  
if you assemble a

**HERE**, Inc. Kit

to make a  
Dulcimer, Mt Banjo, Psaltery,  
Hammered Dulcimer, or  
Thumb Piano.

We also sell instruments  
and do custom work.

We also sell any com-  
ponents, tuners, frets,  
strings, sound boards etc.

We also sell kits for  
hardshell cases for the  
mountain Dulcimers

410 Cedar Ave  
Mpls, Mn. 55454



**Vintage Fret Shop**

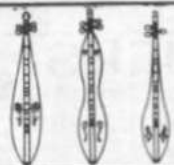
(603) 968-3923

Traditional fretted instruments bought & sold

Adroit restorations

3 So. Main St, Ashland, N.H. 03217

David Colburn, proprietor



**Luke Dulcimers**

Handcrafted Musical Instruments

22 · GRANDOL · DRIVE  
TABB, VIRGINIA · 23602

· SEND FOR FREE BROCHURE ·

# Bill WASEL's **Guitar Workshop**

TOTAL REPAIR OF FRETTED INSTRUMENTS  
SINCE 1961—NOW OFFERING FINE  
HANDCRAFTED DULCIMERS WITH ANY  
AMOUNT OF INLAY AND/OR CARVING—STOCK  
MODELS FROM 75<sup>00</sup> **HANDMADE GUITARS**  
SPANISH FROM \$75<sup>00</sup>

P.O. Box 3521, St. PETERSBURG, FLA. 33731

## MORE ABOUT PICKS THAN YOU PROBABLY WANT TO KNOW

John F. Moe, M.D.

"What works well and sounds good to you" is probably the best rule to follow. Let your ingenuity be your guide. A turkey or goose quill is most authentic, but you'd better keep a razor blade handy for trimming; they wear out quickly. (One accomplished artist keeps the traditional look, yet avoids wearing out his quill by glueing a small piece of plastic tubing inside the end of it.) Guitar picks (the quite flexible kind) are useful. Plastic collar stays work. Some good picks have been made by trimming down old credit cards and sanding them thin at the business end. Your friendly neighborhood veterinarian might be persuaded to give you one of those little plastic applicators that comes with ear salve for dogs. The little plastic sign that comes stuck in your steak and says "RARE" can be sanded a bit thinner and makes a good pick. A thin bit of hickory or bamboo works. The plastic marker that you find pushed into the pot with the name of your African violet on it can be used. A bit of dowel with a small piece of leather thong or old wrapped guitar string taped or stapled to it makes a very gentle sound. The dulcimer can also be played with a violin bow. One player does a good job with the nail of her right index finger, allowed to grow a little long and trimmed for the purpose. A guitar thumb pick can be used with some of the more progressive styles of playing. For quiet strumming just for yourself alone, try brushing the strings gently with the bare thumb.

### NOTES ON NOTERS

For most budding dulcimer virtuosos it will be easiest to start by using a noter. This can be almost any stick-like object 3-4" long and about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " in diameter. A wooden dowel works well. Hardwood is preferable to soft. My best noter is rosewood. Bamboo is good. Be careful if you use metal - it can mar the instruments finish. For quick note changing and the utmost in flexibility nothing beats using one or more fingers to note with. Just press the string firmly to the left of the fret and feel free to switch fingers at any time. The slide up and down the fretboard can make blisters so take it a bit easy until your calluses develop. Some experienced dulcimerists "play" the fretboard almost like a piano, using the small and ring fingers for the left-most frets and the other fingers for the rest. Experiment and find your "thing".

A section of an old "Bic" pen makes a dandy noter that slides like grease up and down the strings.

A noter is held so that it projects only over the melody strings. The thumb should be on top and the index finger is curved under the noter and slides along the side of the fretboard, limiting the further extension of the noter so that it does not buzz against the drone strings.

NOTE: Dr. Moe (3500 Lafayette Road; Indianapolis, Ind. 46222) is a source for dulcimers (kits & finished) as well as langeleiks, epinettes, scheitholts, langspils and humles.

-----  
CHANTER = MELODY PIPE OF BAGPIPES (HAS PIPES THAT DRONE)

CHANTERELLE = MELODY STRING OF DULCIMER (HAS STRINGS THAT DRONE)

## Some ideas on DULCIMER BRACING

By Rodger G. Harris

Well, I continue to be impressed with the Dulcimer Players News. I hope you're able to continue your quality of content. I would enjoy seeing articles on design - functional and non-functional. Maybe some pictures of scrolls, tailpieces, heart or soundholes, and carvings or inlays.

As long as I'm asking for design ideas, here are some of the ideas I'm using on 3 and 4 string dulcimers as far as function is concerned:

BRACING -- Mostly I'm using redwood, cedar, and spruce (in that order) quarter sawn in blanks about  $\frac{3}{8}$ " by  $\frac{1}{4}$ " by 2 to 3". Placed as shown in Fig. 1 when the back tends to be stiff without any bracing. I'm using four braces for very light or flexible backs (butternut, for example) as shown in Fig. 2.

Also I'm using redwood (mostly) as center striping on two piece backs both with grain at right angles to the back, and in line with grain. Can't tell much about this but it does prevent the back from pulling apart at the center seam.

With the dulcimer I'm building currently, I'm experimenting with a new idea in bracing (see Fig. 3) using thinner braces and placing them something like the position shown in Fig. 1. I call it "box bracing".

I don't think this "box bracing" will produce any additional volume unless the dulcimer is equipped with legs for playing on a table top.

Is this correct? - The dulcimer top vibrates up and down moving the fretboard as well. The back either amplifies the movement of the top or reflects it, depending on whether or not its played on the lap or on a table top?

Maybe this will start a much needed discussion and be of some interest to the readers of the "News".

Best wishes from Oklahoma,  
R.G. Harris - Luthier  
9607 Stratford  
Okla. City, OK 73120

FIG. 1

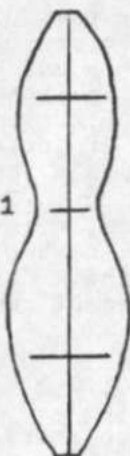
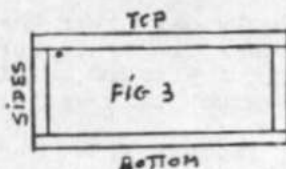


FIG. 2



## News from Dulcimer Builders

A REGULAR D.P.N. COLUMN

Dear D.P.N.

... Our store carries a full line of Dulcimers in kit and ready-made form. The kits we carry are semi-plywood and I agree with some of your readers that they do provide an access to the dulcimer that may otherwise not be available. I make and sell dulcimers myself, using solid walnut (rosewood when available), and curly maple. I use spruce and basswood for the soundboards.

Gary N Keyser  
Weathers Music/Lancaster Mall  
Salem, Oregon 97301

North Carolina State Univ. Dulcimer Building & Playing Class

Robert Bryan will be conducting the building end and I the basic playing techniques end of DULCIMER BUILDING at N.C. State this fall! Will have a 6 weeks course - 3 evenings of building, 3 of playing. The course will continue on throughout the year if the University's \$\$\$ stay available and interest continues (was a waiting list last school year).

Sincerely,

Eileen Rains  
333 Fayetteville St. #410  
Raleigh, N.C. 27601

I just recieved some walnut from Craftsman Wood Service of Chicago. It looks quite good. Some white streaks at the edges, but not bad.

Charles Dudley  
11th St. Dulcimer Co.  
120 E. 11th St. ; N.Y.C. 10003

Note: Charles is having some shop moving problems right now and hopes to get back into full swing building dulcimers again by fall.

The following info comes from dulcimer builder, Bill Wasel, at Bill Wasil's Guitar Shop; 451 11th Ave. S.; St. Petersburg, Fla. 33701 (write for prices and particulars).

"The instruments I build are teardrop in shape 29" by 2½" by 6". Most have a flat head with guitar tuners. I use hollow fingerboard under-cut from the last fret to the saddle and from the saddle to the end-block. This allows the face to resonate like a guitar. I also use guitar-type bracing inside the face. Any of my dulcimers can be played with a guitar and have enough voice to be heard. I will put any amount of carving and/or inlay the customer wants into an instrument.

And from Fred Montague; 16 Patriot Road; Tewksbury, Mass. 01876, comes this info: Fred has been making dulcimers for over a year and a half now and his philosophy is to produce an instrument that looks and sounds beautiful while keeping the price within the reach of all. Also, Fred points out that he does not use plywoods in any of his instruments.

The basic instrument is made of solid walnut with a spruce top. The sides are matched pairs and hand bent to shape. The back is 2 pcs. and book matched. Fred offers lots of option and design possibilities.



News from Dulcimer Builders continued:

We are now offering spruce tops for all our kits. Our present facilities (10,000 square feet) seem to grow increasingly cramped as the interest in dulcimers continues to grow. Having been in the dulcimer business commercially for more than ten years now, the continuing growth in interest (and competition) continues to surprise all of us here at "Hughes".

R.C. Rohwer  
Vice President  
Hughes Dulcimer Co., Inc.

Dear D.P.N.

Just a short note to tell you that my husband (John) is a dulcimer maker newly arrived to the New England area from Memphis, Tenn., where he had an outstanding reputation as a crafter of the instrument.

Not too long ago one of his dulcimers was used by Ardent Recording Studios of Memphis for an album entitled "Common Sense", the artist for which was John Prine. The record no. of this album is Atlantic SD 13127.

Having seen a great variety of dulcimers, ranging from the exquisite to the crude, I can honestly say that most of the plywood versions I have encountered fall into the latter category and I do therefore take issue with the defenders of the so-to-speak laminated variety. All that I have played are positively dead in tone. To my way of thinking, the fine American hardwoods, namely walnut, cherry, and even maple, properly seasoned and planed to 1/8 inch, cannot be equaled in sound by any plywood. Moreover, such dulcimers are usually a "rip-off" price-wise and do more to disenchant the novice player than to excite their interest.

Good luck with the D.P.N. It's a valuable source of information, and we enjoy it a lot.

Elaine Broekhuizen  
Box 87  
Perkinsville, Vermont 05151

Dear Phillip,

I missed Don Romine's comments on plywood, but let me say that I completely agree with R.L. Robinson and Dr. Moe, especially on the subject of 1/16" Finnish Birch. This type of plywood is really great stuff (and it even comes in 1/32" or 1 mm thickness, if you can believe that). I absolutely would not use plywood for years until I discovered the 1/16" birch for soundboards. After much experimentation and comparison, I have decided that this plywood makes better sound boards than the solid hardwood tops that many people use - for one reason, you simply cannot make a solid top that thin without great danger of it cracking. We make our two lowest priced models with 1/16" birch ply tops and have sold thousands in the past few years. Of course, we still make four production models with solid spruce tops for those people who know the difference and are willing to pay the extra money for the extra work, but there is no denying that our plywood models are our biggest sellers. So please don't put down plywood out-of-hand; it does, indeed, have its place.

Your readers may be interested to know that we will once again be producing MAGIC MOUNTAIN dulcimer kits. Our kit will be in the teardrop shape with pre-bent sides & pre-cut fret slots, all hardwood const.

## MODAL MUSIC

By Roger Nicholson

To the uninitiated listener the music of the East has an unusual and discordant quality, this is because it is based on an intricate modal system of various sharp, flat, and natural notes interwoven with micro-tones which, while allowing an infinite variety of subtleties within the linear melodic form, contains much of the unfamiliar to ears accustomed to hearing music in a standard major or minor key and structured with layers of harmony and counterpoint. Also, Eastern music is mainly improvised while the Western performer is only free to interpret matters of phrasing, tempo, or dynamics and must play exactly what is written down. This, however, has not always been the case; up until the 16th Century all European music was governed by a strict system of seven modes that, apart from plainchant, only survives today in the heritage of traditional music which too involves the use of variation and ornamentation.

Modes can be traced back to man's earliest civilizations in Assyria and Babylon where they were closely identified with astrology and astronomy. These people were very aware of the universal harmony of the universe and concluded that as man could make music conforming to the same principles he could become one with it. This philosophy is an integral part of Eastern music today, particularly in India where sounds are regarded as being of two types, those termed 'unstruck' and caused by the music of the spheres which can only be heard by the most advanced mystics, and 'struck' sounds produced from musical instruments.

The Ancient Greeks (and, by tradition, Pythagoras) in the 6th Century B.C. were the first to fix the modes scientifically and did so by using the monochord - a single stringed instrument with a finger-board running along the top of a wooden soundbox on which the intervals were marked out - and named them after different races in Asia Minor. They are still so called and known as the Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian, and Locrian modes. In addition, each was allotted its own character derived from aesthetic and astrological principles so that the Ionian, Aeolian, and Locrian were considered to have unsuitable aspects while others such as the Lydian were recommended for their therapeutic properties.

In the early years of the Christian religion there was a strong Greek influence and during the 4th Century A.D. St. Ambrose, the Bishop of Milan, authorized the four original Greek modes (Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, & Mixolydian) for use in the church. To these 'Authentic' modes as they are known, Pope Gregory the Great (450-604) added four others known as 'Plagal' modes which were really only other ways of utilizing the existing ones but each began a fourth lower and were called the Hypo-Dorian, Hypo-Phrygian, etc., so establishing the form of plainchant which is still used today in the Roman Catholic Church. These Plagal modes can also be played on the dulcimer. For example, tune to the Dorian but instead of starting the scale at the fourth fret begin on the first fret and continue up to the eighth.

For eleven hundred years modes dominated all forms of secular and religious music until gradually abandoned during the Sixteenth Cent. in favor of the major and minor scales which were more suitable to the developing forms of harmony and counterpoint. In later years modes were occasionally used by some of the great composers such as J.S. Bach in his 'Dorian Toccata and Fugue', by Mozart whose Mass K. 253 is mainly Mixolydian, and Beethoven who wrote one of the movements in his String Quartet in A minor in the Phrygian mode. During the late

## Modal Music continued:

19th Century some English composers began to write modal works inspired by their discovery of traditional and early music, in particular Ralph Vaughan Williams whose majestic 'Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis' in the Phrygian mode is most well known, and in France where Claude Debussy was directly influenced by the old European and Oriental modes in his piano works. Today the modes are beginning to be used again by Alan Hovhaness, an American of Armenian descent, Toru Takemitsu from Japan, and many others who are realizing their potential in contemporary music.

A mode is not a key but an arrangement of the seven tones and semi-tones of a diatonic scale and can be played at any pitch, so there are seven modes for each of the twelve keys. Below, for the sake of convenience in comparing them, they are all related to the key of C.

The Ionian mode of C,D,E,F,G,A,B,C is the same as our modern major scale; the Greek and Medieval theorists considered it to have extravert and playful aspects so excluded it from use in the church - virtually the sole province of music at that time. Today music in this mode can still be considered to be bright or happy as opposed to that in the minor which tends to reflect sadness, and interesting comparisons can be drawn with the early morning Indian raga Bilawal which has identical intervals and is associated with light and happiness. The Ionian mode accounts for a large proportion of traditional songs of which 'Three Jolly Rogues of Lynn', 'Barbara Allen', and 'The Greenland Whale Fishery' are random examples.

The Dorian mode begins on the same tonic note (C in our case) but its sequence is C,D, E flat, F, G, A, B flat, C. It was considered to be the 'Bestower of Wisdom and Chastity' and governed by the planet Saturn which is echoed by its Arabic counterpart of Maquâm Hijâx Kâr Kurd. This mode is widespread in English folk songs such as 'Souling Wassail', 'Newlyn Town', 'John Barleycorn' and even 'What shall we do with the Drunken Sailor', and its particular qualities are frequently mentioned in literature of the past including John Milton's 'Paradise Lost' which relates "... Anon they move, in perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood of flutes and soft recorders."

The Phrygian mode is C, D flat, E flat, F, G, A flat, B flat, C and was identified with Mars as it 'Causeth wars and enflameth fury'. As such, music in this mode was played during the training of Spartan soldiers and on their way to battle. Its use in folksong is very rare, out of over 3,500 songs collected by Cecil Sharp in the British Isles and Appalachian Mountains he only discovered four including the children's rhyme 'Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Bless the Bed that I Lie on' also known as 'The White Paternoster'. The Phrygian mode is, however, very characteristic of Spanish flamenco music with its Moorish origin.

The Lydian mode of C, D, E, F sharp, G, A, B, C was ruled by Juniper and 'Doth sharpen the wit of the dull and maketh them that are burdened with earthly cravings to desire heavenly things'. For this reason perhaps it is widely used in plainchant but out of the whole of traditional music is only known from one or two songs including the ballad tune 'The Woods so Wild' which dates back to the 16th century when it was arranged for the virginals by William Byrd and the lute by Francis Cutting. John Milton refers to this mode in his poem 'L Allegro', "And ever against eating cares, lap me in soft Lydian airs."

The Mixolydian mode was the ancient major scale, only differing from the Ionian mode by its flattened seventh (C,D,E,F,G,A,B flat,C)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

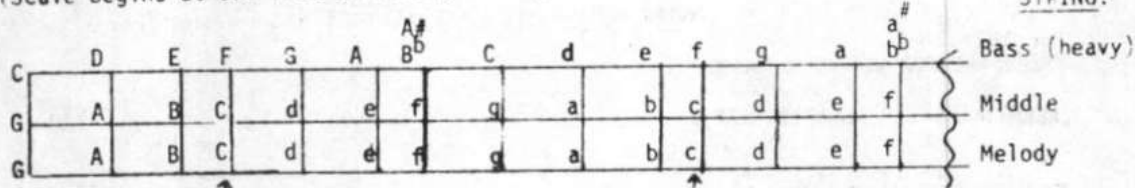
# CHORD CHARTS: IONIAN MODE

by Eileen Rains

FRETBOARD FOR KEY OF C MAJOR:

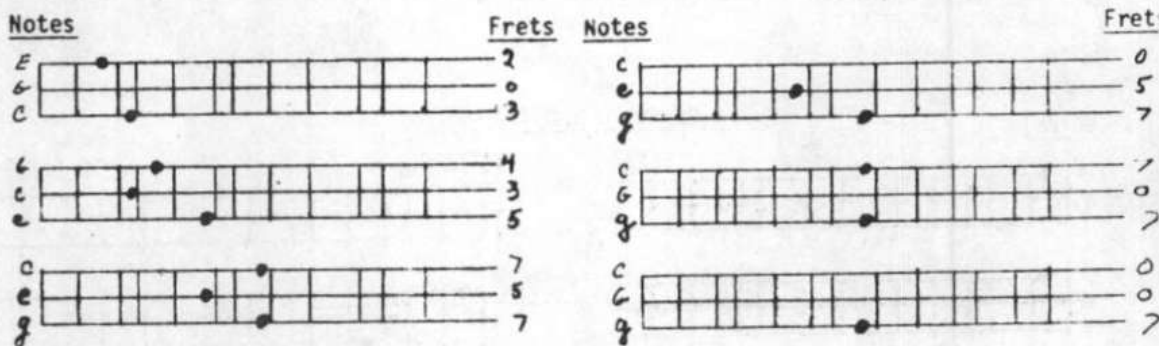
(Scale begins at 3rd Fret on Melody String)

STRING:

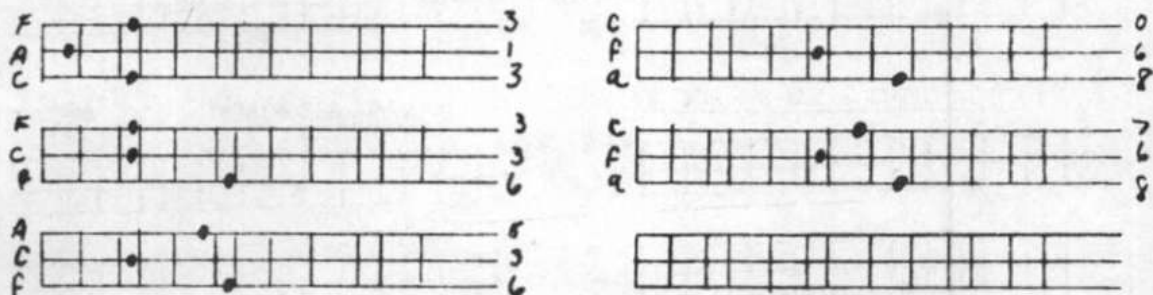


KEY OF C MAJOR CHORDS

## C CHORDS - TONIC - I

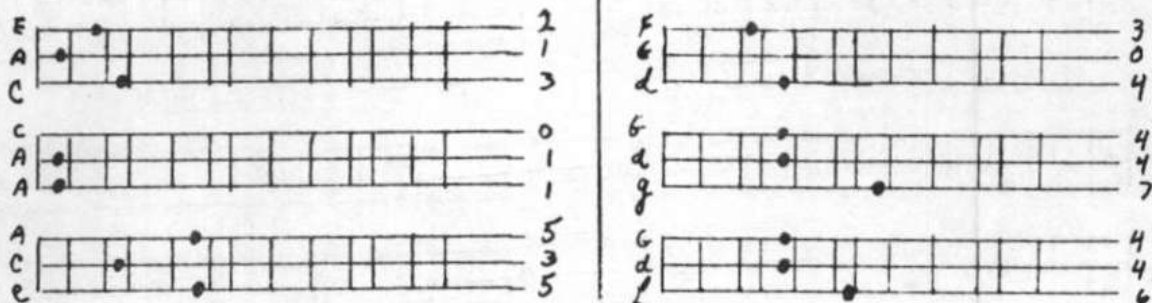


## F CHORDS - SUB-DOMINANT - IV



## A MINOR CHORDS RELATIVE MINOR - VI

## G7 CHORDS DOMINANT SEVENTH - V7



IONIAN MODE - KEY OF G MAJOR CHORDS

USE THE FRETBOARD FOR KEY OF C MAJOR:

(KEEP THE G-G-C RELATIONSHIP)

	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	STRING
C															Bass
G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Middle
G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Melody

G CHORDS - TONIC-I

Notes

Frets

Notes

Frets

C CHORDS - SUB-DOMINANT IV

D CHORDS - DOMINANT - V

D7 CHORDS - DOMINANT SEVENTH - V7

*Should be D-F-A-C*

EM CHORDS - RELATIVE MINOR - VI



SEE PAGE 1 FOR OUR AD RATES

### CAPRI TAURUS DULCIMERS

P.O. Box 153  
Felton, California  
95018

☎ (408) 335-4478



### Appalachian Dulcimer

**John D. Tignor**

ROUTE 7

FRANKFORT, KY. 40601

PHONE 502-223-2692

**\$55.00 + UP**



### MAGIC MOUNTAIN<sup>®</sup> DULCIMER KITS ARE BACK

IN RESPONSE TO POPULAR DEMAND

FEATURES INCLUDE:

1. PRE-BENT SIDES
2. PRE-CUT FRET SLOTS
3. GEARED TUNING MACHINES
4. GUARANTEED MATERIALS AND WORKMANSHIP
5. COMPLETE ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS

ONLY \$24.95 (+ POSTAGE)

DEALERS INQUIRIES INVITED  
FOR MORE INFORMATION WRITE:

J.C. SHELLNUTT & COMPANY  
P.O. BOX 548  
MILL VALLEY, CA 94941

### LIVEWOOD DULCIMERS

40055

LITTLE FALL CREEK RD.

FALL CREEK

OREGON

97438



# WASHDAY STEW

KEY OF C  
MEDIUM BRIGHT

© BOBBIE WAYNE 1975  
by BOBBIE WAYNE

INTRO: (C) (C) (C)

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

WAY BACK IN THE DE-

0	0	3	3	3	3	(EM) 2	2
0	0	3	3	3	3	2	2
0	0	3	3	3	3	2	2
1	0	5	5	8	5	4	4

PRES-SION, SHORT OF THINGS TO EAT. BEEN

(F) 3	3	3	3	(EM) 2	2	4	(G7) 3	2	1	0
3	3	3	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
3	3	3	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
5	5	8	5	4	2	4	3	2	1	0

WEEKS SINCE WE HAD SU-GAR, AND MONTHS SINCE WE HAD

1	0	(C) 0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	4	0	0	0	2	1	0	4

MEAT, SO MA GOT OUT THE KET-TLE, AND

(F) 3	3	3	3	(EM) 2	2	(F) 3	3	3	3
3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3
3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3
5	5	8	5	4	4	5	5	8	5

MADE A DISH SHE KNEW, FROM UN-CLE SAM'S 'DO-

(EM) 2	2	2	(G7) 1	1	1	1	0
2	2	2	1	1	0	0	0
2	2	0	0	0	1	1	0
4	2	4	3	3	1	1	0

NA-TIONS: DE-LI-CIOUS WASH-DAY STEW.

CHORUS: NOW SAY GOOD-BYE TO THE BREAD CRUMBS;  
TO THE PEAS AND CARROTS TOO,  
JUST TOSS 'EM IN THE KETTLE BOYS,  
THEY'LL TASTE AS GOOD AS NEW,  
RECYCLE THEM POTATOES, AND DON'T FORGET TO CHEW  
LET'S HAVE ANOTHER HELPING OF MY MOTHERS  
MY MOTHERS WASH-DAY STEW.

WASHDAY STEW continued:

Bobbie Wayne sent us this delightful song and the tablature indicates how she plays it on her 4-string Field dulcimer tuned C C G C. Bobbie uses the "extra Fret" and has written the melody - she says she usually finger-picks a countermelody.

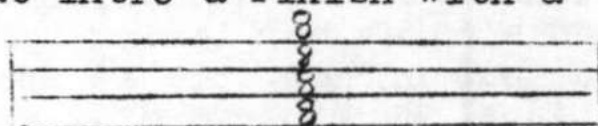
After the first verse and chorus Bobbie plays an instrumental break, repeats the intro, then goes to verse two:

2. My sister's pet canary was missing for a day.  
His little cage was empty, we thought he'd  
flown away,  
It's still a mystery, my friend, just where  
that birdie flew,  
And how he dropped his feathers in my  
mother's wash day stew.

Repeat chorus, inst. break, repeat intro, then:

3. The country is recessing cause we've had  
some rotten luck.  
We've 'near run out of energy, and ketchup  
costs a buck.  
So dig inside your pockets for an apple  
core or two,  
It's all allowed: we ain't that proud, in  
my mother's wash day stew.

Repeat chorus, repeat intro & finish with a  
harmonic:



Editor's note: Bobbie Wayne is a friend of Kevin Kevin Roth's who got the inspiration to write "Washday Stew" from a dinner prepared by Kevin, who was helping her test some recipes for her cookbook which she is hard at work on ("The Starving Artists Cookbook"). Another of the songs Bobbie has written appears on Kevin Roth's new Folkways album and is entitled "Bold Pirate".





In the above photo, amongst the beautiful Shenandoah Mountains of Virginia, sits our friend Madeline Macneil playing her dulcimer. Maddie makes her living by performing folk music and most of her time is spent in The Shenandoah National Park performing at Skyland Lodge six evenings weekly. In the off-season Maddie travels around performing her music (most recently in Boston, Washington, and the gorgeous Gulf Shores Nat. Park in Alabama. Beginning on June 10th, and running through Labor Day, Maddie will be holding 3 weekly workshops at Skyland Lodge in the Park. These will be held on Tues., Thurs. and Sat. at 4:00 and are a grand opportunity for folks to stop in and get acquainted with the dulcimer. Keep up the good work Maddie! Dulcimer Land needs you!



From left to right in the photo above are Bob Riley, Diana Neff, and Dave Neff, a string band from Uniontown, Ohio. Both Dave & Diana play the dulcimer, and between them they recently snatched up a bunch of trophy's at the 1st Annual Roscoe Village, Ohio Spring Festival & Dulcimer Contest (a well attended event they report). Dave says that wife Diana has a good dulcimer lick for fiddle tunes and can follow note for note along with a banjo. They also use the Courting (double) dulcimer in their string band which has been performing all over the mid-Ohio area for the past 4 years. And, incidently, they've been doing one heck of a job in helping to spread the word about the D.P.N. in Ohio.

# **FARKLEBERRY FARM STEAM DULCIMER WORKS AND MUSIC SEMPORIUM**

**J. R. BEALL, PROP.**

RT. 1, NEWARK, OHIO 43055

614-345-5045

We have recieved word that a new dulcimer building book "CONSTRUCTING THE MOUNTAIN DULCIMER" by Dean Kimball will soon be on the market. It is being published by David McKay Publishing Co.; 750 Third Ave.; N.Y., N.Y. 10017. This should be available soon and an inquiry to the publisher might get you some ordering information. Dean is a long time dulcimer builder from the Ohio area who may be contacted about his instruments at the following address: 2420 S.R. 343; Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

LET'S HEAR FROM HAMMERED DULCIMER FOLKS!!

The hammered dulcimer (not a direct relative of the plucked dulcimer exactly) is a part of the musical tradition in the area in which the D.P.N. is published (Maine) so we would really like to have any possible information that anyone would like to send in on these instruments and their history and playing styles from other areas. The D.P.N. plans to publish a small "Hammered Dulcimer Catalog" in which we plan to list any source of hammered dulcimers and accessories like books and records on the subject. So if you are (or know of) a hammered dulcimer builder then we'd sure like to hear from you and get you listed in this catalog. It will probably be mailed out to ALL the names on the D.P.N. Mailing list before the next issue is out. We would also like to have any photos of hammered dulcimers that anyone might be able to spare for eventual publication in the D.P.N.



# A NORTH PACIFIC PIM KINDRED GATHERING..

Robert Force  
Albert d'Ossche  
Jake Bell

~ INVITE YOU TO ~  
a meeting for friends of modes  
and dulcimerie~

## In Search of the Wild Dulcimer

*a gratia Dei*

AUGUST 15-16-17 '75  
ALEXANDER'S by the SEA  
ONE MILE NORTH  
OCEAN CITY, WASH. 98569

- Your instrument is your admission to a week-end of yourselves~
- Bring what you need to be comfortable~
- Leave your pets; we'll share ours~

• WE'LL BETTER BE ABLE TO PLAN IF YOU  
LET US KNOW YOU'RE COMING..

90-1447 JAMES ST. - BELLINGHAM, WASH. 98225

The following tune is one of the most widely known songs of the Southern Appalachians. "Single Girl" points out some of the hardships that the less fortunate married gals endured during the rough-n'-ready pioneer days.

## SINGLE GIRL



ANY MAJOR TUNING

TRAD.

d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	
$\frac{7}{4}$	7	7	8	5	4	3	5	7	8	5

(1) WHEN I WAS SIN-GLE WENT DRESSED SO FINE

d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	
7	7	8	5	4	3	5	5	4	3	1	3

NOW I AM MAR-RIED, GO RAG-GED ALL THE TIME.

CHORUS

o	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	o	
:	5	5	7	5	4	3	1	5	4	3	1	3

LORD, — DON'T I WISH I WAS A SIN-GLE GIRL A-GAIN.

- (2) Dishes to wash, the spring to go to;  
When you are married, Lord, you've got it  
all to do. (Cho.)
- (3) Three little children, lying in the bed,  
All of them so hungry, Lord, they can't  
lift up their heads. (Cho.)
- (4) When I was single, I eat biscuit and pie,  
Now I am married, Lord, it's eat cornbread  
or die. (Cho.)
- (5) When I was single, marrying was my crave,  
Now I am Married, Lord, go troubled to  
my grave. (Cho.)

The numbers indicated in the tablature is for the melody string fingering for this tune in a Major tuning such as G,G,C. The notes above the numbers indicate the musical rhythm. To be played vigorously.

FOLKSONGS OF OLD ERIE  
JUDY MAYHAN WITH DULCIMER

A Review by Robert Rodriguez

In a previous review of "Nonesuch for Dulcimer" by Roger Nicholson, I mentioned that, aside from this record (and Roger's new one) from England, to my knowledge there was but one other record outside the U.S. where the dulcimer was the prominent instrument, so I might as well mention it more fully here.

The album is called "Folksongs of Old Ireland" recorded by Judy Mayhan, with dulcimer accompaniments by Judy herself (Tradition 2075). I must say here at the outset that this album is probably hard to find and indeed might be out of print, but if at all possible those interested in fine dulcimer accompaniments to excellently done ballads should run out and scour the neighborhood, city, state, country, or any other place for this album. It's worth its weight in dulcimer strings at least. Unlike the Roger Nicholson album, this record features all vocal cuts; and the songs are traditional in nature; ballads taken from the rich treasure-trove of Irish balladry. The songs included on the album are such as: The Riddle Song, The Cookoo, Lass From the Low Country, Trooper and the Maid, Yonders Mountain, Turtle Dove, Rocks of Baughn, Molly Baun, and so on. Judy Mayhan's rich and highly effective soprano voice adds a delightful, almost elfin, touch to this album - where the dulcimer finds itself used as an accompanying instrument to the singing of ballads, rather than as a solo instrument for classical or old dance tunes. Most of the songs are familiar enough to anyone generally acquainted with the folk-music scene, and it will not be hard to recognize the old ballads from the variants that Judy sings on this album.

A very nice feature of this album is that where guitar accompaniments are added they do not overwhelm the dulcimer. The balance between guitar and dulcimer counterbalancing Judy's fine high voice is just right, neither too loud or too soft, but at a point where all the instruments plus the voice create a very fine blend indeed. Through the use of techniques including hammering-on, simple chord strums, and the use of the dulcimer as a second voice in harmonic blend, this album almost reaches into a state of sheer joy beyond measure, to paraphrase a modern British writer. Judy's dulcimer techniques are neither fancy, nor are they ornate to the point of flashy musical pyrotechnics, but just a simple and very effective use of the dulcimer to back up a set of finely arranged traditional ballads in the way dulcimers have been, and should continue to be used, for a long time in the field of ballad accompaniments. All in all, Judy Mayhan's Irish Folksongs with Dulcimer is an album that anyone who likes fine traditional singing with an equally fine instrumental backup should possess, at any cost. As I said, this may be hard to find, but finding it is worth all the trouble to look, and in this case the results of ownership will be most rewarding indeed.

Judy Mayhan's, "Traditional Folksongs of Old Ireland", is a very fine album indeed.

Editor's note: The D.P.N is already in possession of two more very fine reviews by Bob Rodriguez, our multi-talented folklorist friend from New York. His reviews on "Kevin Roth Sings and Plays Dulcimer" and Roger Nicholson's new album "Gentle Sound of the Dulcimer" will be appearing in our very next issue. Bob also promises to get us some detailed info on various minor dulcimer recordings: European.

# Bickering Twosome - Dulcimer Solo by Jean Schilling

Tuning:  $\text{D}^2 \text{C}^1$  Allegro

Repeat open unless otherwise noted. etc.

\*\*

1. 2.

© Crying Creek Publishers, 1972

\* Barre at the 4th fret

\*\* Barre at the 6th fret

TUNING - OPEN

G E C G

STRINGS → 1 2 3 4

"Do" begins at  
3rd fret

NOTE: BY CHANGING THE LOWER G  
TO A YOU HAVE A NICE  
MINOR TUNING.

## Modal Music continued:

and was associated with the Sun. The unexpected flat note makes it very distinctive, particularly in songs such as 'Blackwater Side' and the Scottish lament 'Flowers of the Forest' where its appearance is delayed until near the end of each verse, the first of which occurs on the phrase 'Now they are weeping, lamenting and sighing' creating a feeling of great poignancy. This mode is also the vehicle for many pipe and fiddle tunes including 'Bonapart's Retreat', 'The little Beggarmen', and 'Old Joe Clark'.

The Aeolian mode is the normal minor scale of C, D, E flat, F, G flat, A flat, B, C. Its widespread use in many quiet and sad songs perhaps reflects its character of 'Appeasing the tempests of the mind and lulling them asleep'. Like the Dorian minor mode it occurs in many traditional songs such as 'Searching for Lambs', 'Scarborough Fair' or the beautiful 'Bushes and Briars'.

The Lochrian mode of C, D flat, E flat, F, G flat, A flat, B flat, C was known as a bastard scale due to the unevenness of its intervals and being only of theoretical interest was never used. There are no traditional songs within its compass but two years ago a young folk musician named John Kirkpatrick made good use of its uneasy sound in his song 'Ashes to Ashes' which tells the story of a gravedigger and has all the hallmarks of being absorbed into the traditional repertoire in the future.

Some songs and tunes are pentatonic (5 note) or hexatonic (6 note) so fall within the scope of two modes. The pentatonic scale is most often found in Celtic traditional music as in the familiar 'Auld Lang Syne' or 'Ye Banks and Braes' and in 'The seeds of Love' the first song collected by Cecil Sharp who heard it sung in 1903 by a gardner aptly named John England.

These modes were a source of great surprise to the early folk song collectors some of whom thought the tunes were incorrect so noted them to conform to the standard major or minor scales and added quite unsuitable harmonies for accompaniment on the piano (which is never used in traditional music) to facilitate their performance in recitals, and, as a result, totally destroying their unique character. Fortunately, however, later collectors such as the Reverend Baring Gould, Cecil Sharp, Percy Grainger, Ralph Williams and others realized the special qualities of these songs, which had existed almost unknown for generations, and took pains to ensure that their modality was preserved in transcription.

As with other forms of modal music, folk song is entirely melodic and was normally performed unaccompanied. If an instrument were used it was normally restricted to doubling the melody and providing a drone; the drone being the tonic note of the mode and serving to emphasize its intervals as well as establishing the key note for the performer and listener. This is especially evident in Eastern music where its continuous sound is related to the basic pulse of life itself - the heartbeat. The popular use of the guitar in recent years to accompany folk songs is really quite inappropriate as its chordal and chromatic basis is out of keeping with modal principles.

Because of the drone element direct comparisons can be made between the many forms of bagpipes, the dulcimer and its related instruments, the jaws harp, sitar, hurdy-gurdy, etc. all of which have origins in antiquity and are still used throughout the world to play modal music.

END





### OUR NEW AD POLICY

Beginning with this issue the D.F.A. will accept advertising in order to help with the expense of upgrading the printing quality, and also to meet the many requests we have received from both the readers who want to know what's available and small business folks who need to get their message to those readers. Please write for requirements on display ads. Classified rates will be 20¢ per word.

## Handcrafted Appalachian **DULCIMERS**

FRED MONTAGUE  
16 Patriot Road Tewksbury Mass. 01876  
A.C. 617 851 2691

Kits for:

Dulcimers, harps, mandolins, guitars, banjos, hammered dulcimers, kalimbas, sitars, balalaikas, lyres. Also books, accessories and completed instruments. For Free catalog write:

### HUGHES DULCIMER CO., INC.

8665 WEST 13TH AVENUE-2  
DENVER, COLORADO 80215  
TELEPHONE 237-0302

*Flying Things*

3500 Lafayette Road  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46222

**KITS OF ALL KINDS**

30 different dulcimer kits -  
(also folk harps, guitars, banjos, mandolins)  
dulcimer Song books and  
Instruction books - Records -  
Finished dulcimers by leading makers -  
write for our  
Free list of all our goodies -  
(we also sell throwing knives & boomerangs)  
SAY WHICH LISTS YOU WANT, AND SEND SASE, PLEASE

Strings & Quills

Pick & Noter Sets

My first suggestion to anyone wishing to expand his or her style is still, as always, to find people whose music you like and jam with them. You will experience barriers to letting the music flow: self-doubt, fear of looking foolish, frustration at your inability to get in tune or play as well as you think you ought to. Rather than ignoring or resisting these feelings, take note of them, then put them aside for the duration of the session; they'll teach you a lot about yourself.

END

\*\*\*\*\*

D.P.N. REPRINT #7

"PLAYING THE DULCIMER"

BY J.F. MOE, MD

"If you can count to nine" you can be a Dulcimer Player some mountain folk are supposed to have said - that's not quite true - you should be able to carry a tune also, and if you can't do that, better buy a clog doll instead. But if you have an ear for music, you're all set.

First off, if you should happen to want a standard tuning in musical terms, you can tune to the key of G by tuning the bass string to G below middle C and the rest of the strings to D above middle C. You will (no doubt!) recognize this as the Ionian tuning, but this time specifically in the key of G. The flash of insight that should strike you about now is that, aha, I can tune to any mode in any key! And that is so close to correct that I won't discourage you - at least you can tune to any mode starting on any note you wish. Anyhow, tuned to G as above, you can now play along with a guitar playing in G, or with a banjo in its G tuning. There's something a little strange about an autoharp played together with a dulcimer, but many find it interesting.

Take a whack at "Mary had a Little Lamb". The scale starts, remember, at the third fret in Ionian tuning. Most folks get this far and can noodle it out from here, and I'm not going to press on with playing instructions. It probably will just "come natural" and of course there ain't no substitute for practice. You can play tunes out of your head - almost anything you know - and there are lots of dulcimer books full of songs.

Playing the melody of a song is the most common way of making dulcimer music. Another attractive method is to play a countermelody or harmony part while singing the melody line. Mix it up some; play and sing the melody on one verse; then play it without vocal; then play a harmony while singing the melody - it makes for a much more pleasing and listenable performance.

It is possible to strum chords on a full-fretted dulcimer, and it only takes three chords to play along with literally hundreds of songs. The style called "Fingerpicking" can also be a useful variation that ties in nicely with chording. See especially McSpadden or Putnam for these techniques.

END

Dr. J.F. Moe  
3500 Lafayette  
Ind., Ind. 46222  
"FLYING THINGS"

My first dulcimer was a plywood kit dulcimer from McSpadden. I had a ball assembling it, and I thought it sounded great until I got a chance to play a better one. And this is an other important point: ANY dulcimer will sound good to you when you play it at home, for your self alone. I still sit down with my McSpadden and it still sounds good - and it only cost me \$35.00.

So in summary, I think the plywood kit is a good, cheap place to start - learn how the dulcimer is built - learn how to play it - and then, graduate to one of the many fine custom-made instruments available. If you can start at the top, that's great! But so many of us just cannot.

I know Don Romine was discussing plywood ready-made dulcimers, but I'd hate to have a shadow cast on the kits - they are so neat!

Vol. 1, #2 - J.F. MOE, MD

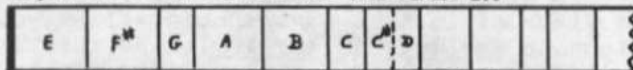
\* DULCIMER BUILDING PLANS appear in this month's issue of WORKBENCH mag. (vol. 31, no. 3) You can get a copy for 50¢ from: Modern Handicraft Inc.; 4251 Pennsylvania; K.C., Mo. 64111.

## My style of dulcimer playing

DPN REPRINT #8

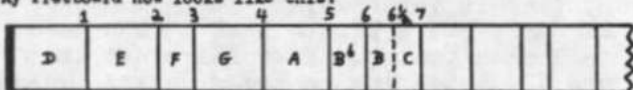
By Holly TAMMEN

When I acquired my first dulcimer ten years ago, I also got Jean Ritchie's book. Following her, I tuned to D, A, & D an octave below. This gave me a mixolydian mode; by tuning the first string down a whole note, I could get a minor scale or aeolian mode. I played in this set of tunings for several years, until one night by the ocean in Big Sur I chanced to tune the middle string up to the high D. The first song I played was "Movin' Gambler". It sounded so bright and clear that I've stayed in that tuning ever since; occasionally tuning the first string down a note for a minor, as I did before. When I discovered fiddles, I found that this tuning facilitated playing back-up to fiddle tunes. Any chord can be made simply by putting three fingers down on the fret of the same name (see Figure 1).



DULCIMER FRETBOARD - OPEN STRINGS TUNED TO D

In this tuning I can follow tunes in D, G, A, and E minor without retuning. All the chords are there for American and Irish fiddle tunes, many Elizabethan and medieval dances, even ragtime. If I want to play in G or F, I tune all three strings down a whole note. My fretboard now looks like this:



DULCIMER FRETBOARD - OPEN STRINGS TUNED TO C

I fret with the ring finger and thumb of my left hand. The other two fingers I use to hold down the middle and bass strings when I play chords. Some players also use these two fingers on the first string; someday I'll teach myself to do that. I discourage students from attempting to play with one finger only, as it limits them unnecessarily. A noter, or small piece of dowl or bamboo to fret with, creates a slidey effect; I find it awkward to handle, and it prevents me hammering on and pulling off, two of my favorite effects. I am learning to imitate the sound of a noter by sliding with the side of my thumbnail; I don't have a callus there yet so this technique is still in the pain stage.

When I play American music I use the traditional "bombydy-bomp", down-down-up, down-down-up style I learned from The Dulcimer Book. In waltzes (3/4 time) this becomes down-down-up-down. (Down is a stroke toward me; "up" a stroke away.) When playing behind a melody instrument or a voice, I keep my accompaniment as simple as possible, using heavy downstrokes to accent important words or beats. In John Poole's song Jack The Lad, the first line of the first verse (repeated again at end of song) has a different rhythm than the first lines of the other verses. I play all downstrokes behind it to give it power:

Where's Jack the Lad, then? - Snuffed it, ain't he?

When you first begin to get proficient on an instrument, there's a tendency towards hot licks: to prove to yourself and your friends that you can really do it. This is fine; your own style will develop out of it. Later on, however, you may find that you want to simplify, especially when several instruments and voices are working together; the clearest sound will result from mercilessly culling out all superficial notes. This gives the remaining notes space to breathe like pruning a tree.

Some interesting new sounds have been coming out of my fingers recently. I've been moving away from chords, back into a more ancient modal sound. I've been playing more low notes on the bass string, and integrating syncopation and counter-rhythms.

CONTINUED →

## ABOUT THOSE VERSATILE "EXTRA" FRETS

by: P. Mason

It seems that there are an increasing number of dulcimers being built which incorporate one or two extra frets; so here is some of the story on them and what they can be used to advantage for.

You will find that dulcimers with extra frets placed on them are usually set up as shown in the following diagram:

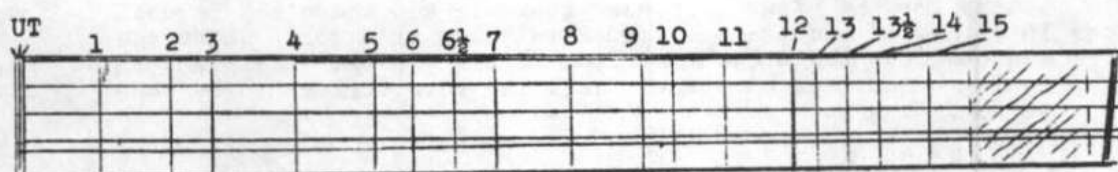


Figure 1. Fret numbers

The dashed lines at positions 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  and 13 $\frac{1}{2}$  indicate the placement of the "extra" frets. You will not find many dulcimers with the second octave 13 $\frac{1}{2}$  fret, but the 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  fret in the first octave of the scale is becoming much more commonly seen.

A major advantage of the "extra" frets is the capability that is gained for playing the same keyed scales in two tunings without changing the initial tuning pitch of the strings. For example, when tuned into any scheme of the mixolydian tuning mode, you will be able, by utilizing the "extra" frets, to play a Mixolydian or a Major (Ionian) diatonic scale through either one or two octaves, and can play songs in both tunings without having to re-tune the instrument.

Lets say that we are tuned up into the Mixolydian in the key of C. For this tuning key we would tune the first string (or double strings on a double melody stringed 4-string dulcimer) to C (the key note) the second string to G (the fifth) and the bass string to the C one octave below the pitch of the first strings C tone. In an alternate tuning, you might try reversing the two drones- strings 2 and 3 tuned C and G, instead of G and C. This will sometimes give you a fuller sound in some keys, especially the higher pitched ones. If you use this alternate tuning you must remember to reverse everything you do on strings 2 and 3, such as fingering chords, etc.

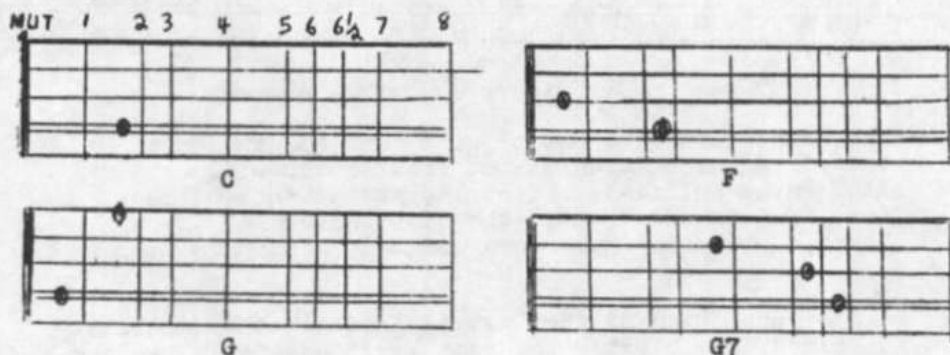
Now that you are tuned up, lets play the two scales and see just where the "extra" 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  fret comes into the picture.

CONTINUED: →

First play the Mixolydian scale from "do" to "do". This starts with the open (unfretted) melody string, and then proceeds to frets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, (skip  $6\frac{1}{2}$ ), and 7. Now play the Major (Ionian) scale, which starts again with the open first string and then proceeds to frets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, (skip fret 6),  $6\frac{1}{2}$ , 7. There is not really all that much difference between the two tunings except that the Mixolydian mode has a lowered seventh note. Now that you have seen the scheme of the two different scales, you can proceed to tune into any Mixolydian key and play songs in either the Mixolydian or the Major tuning modes. Try "Old Joe Clark" in the Mixolydian tuning - its designed for it.

#### FOUR EASY CHORDS

The following diagrams will show you the fretting positions for the four most used chords; and these may be used in either of the two tunings (Mixolydian or Major) which you can use with the above described "extra" frets. The standard tuning which keys on C would call for your strings to be tuned C, G, low C, C, G, low C.



These same four chord fingering patterns can be used in any tuning key. For example, if you were tuned into the key of G, your open strings would be tuned G, D, low G and your new chords would be G, C, D, and D7, which are the proper chords for that tuning key. With your "Extra" frets you can now play Mixolydian and Major tunes in the key of G, etc.

Try chord playing to the tune of this familiar song:

#### HUSH, LITTLE BABY

C  
Hush, little baby, don't say a word

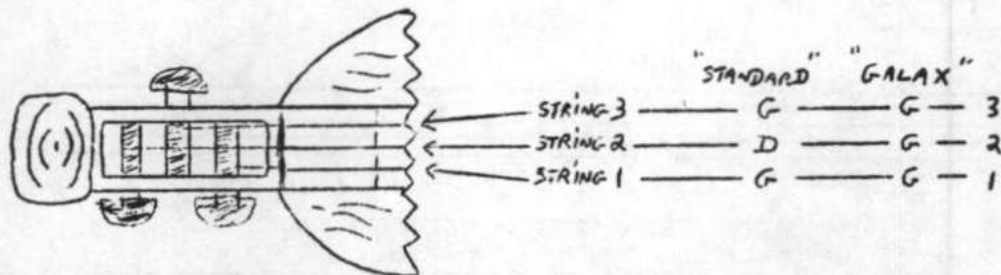
G7                                  C  
Poppas gonna buy you a mocking bird.

## ALL ABOUT THE VERSATILE MIXOLYDIAN MODE

By Phillip Mason

To jump right into what the Mixolydian tuning mode is all about (its really just like a major scale, except for a lowered seventh note), lets first look at the two most commonly used tuning schemes for the Mixolydian mode on a three-string dulcimer.

The tunings which are given in this article apply to three-string dulcimers. They can, however, be easily adapted to four-string dulcimers by simply tuning strings 1 and 2 to the same tone as you would the single first string of a three-string dulcimer. The following illustration shows how the strings are numbered for reference. String number 1 will always be the string closest to you when playing the dulcimer in your lap in the normal right-hand playing position.



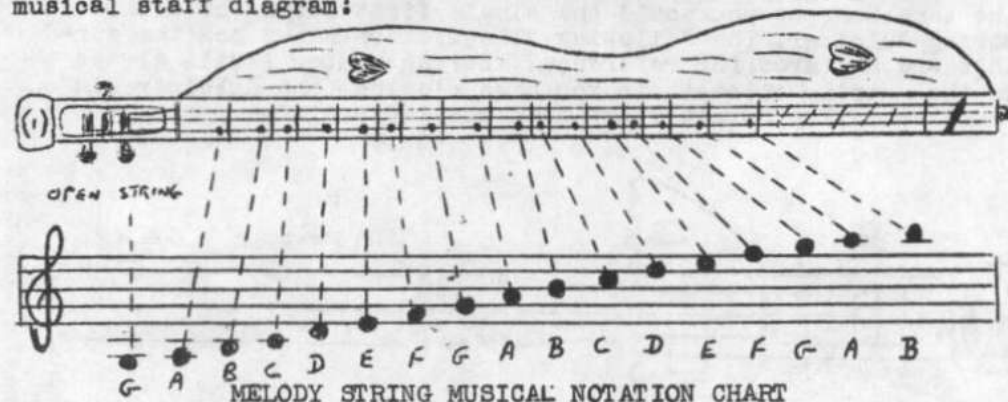
The first tuning we will take up is that for the so called "Standard" Mixolydian tuning. In the key of G, for example, this tuning would call for you to tune your strings as follows: String number one, G; string number three to the G which is one octave below the first strings G tone; and string number two to D, a fifth above the third strings G tone. To obtain this tuning without the aid of a pitch-pipe, or other instrument to get a pitch from, you may just tune the first string to any pitch which pleases your ear; then tune the third string one octave below the first strings tone. The second string may then be tuned by fretting the third string at the fourth fret and tuning the open second string to sound in unison with it.

The second of the popular tuning schemes of the Mixolydian mode is one which is sometimes called the "Galax" Mixolydian tuning; and it is just the same tuning we have described above with the exception of string number two. In the "Galax" Mixolydian tuning, string number two is tuned in unison with string number one. In this scheme your strings are now tuned G, G, low G, for the key of G. The drone produced by having a key note and an octave note for the drone strings tunings, as in this example, are quite effective and will produce a fine backround drome accompaniment.

Continued:

In either of these two Mixolydian tuning modes for the key of G, your home note (G) is sounded on the unfretted first string, and the scale is played: open string, first fret, second fret, etc. (See the January 1975 issue of the Dulcimer Players News for an article on "extra" frets and how they can be incorporated into the Mixolydian mode.)

In the key of G (your open first string tuned to G0, the melody string (first string) of your dulcimer will play the musical notes indicated on the following fretboard and musical staff diagram:



You four-string dulcimer players who have four strings spaced equally apart across your fretboard can utilize three drone strings, instead of two. This leaves many more options open for varying the tunings of the Mixolydian mode. Experiment around a bit and you will find more than one combination of string tunings which sounds pleasing to the ear. Drones sound best when tuned to a third, fifth, or octave tone away from the "key" note.

The following are three easy and commonly used chord fingerings for dulcimers with full width frets (under all of the strings):

"Standard" Mixolydian Chords						"Galax" Mixolydian Chords							
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
C							TUNIC						
F							SUB DOMINANT						
G-7							DOMINANT 7th						

## THE DULCIMER - OLD ROOTS AND NEW ROOTS

D.P.N. REPRINT #9

By Roger Nicholson

Greetings from England! This is by way of an introduction to a series of articles which I hope to contribute to The Dulcimer Players News (may it increase and prosper) during the next few months. These will cover a variety of related (and even obscure) topics including "The Origins of Modal Music" and its use in English Traditional Music, "Bach on the Dulcimer", "Comparisons between the Dulcimer and the Sitar", "The Dulciner", and other odds and ends.

My involvement with the dulcimer began in 1967 shortly after seeing one at the first Keele Folk Festival. I immediately related to it in a much more positive way than the guitar which I had been playing, and apart from its obvious visual attraction, was drawn by the quiet introspective sound which seemed to have the same qualities as the lute and clavichord. Since that time the dulcimer has been a constant delight to me, and at various times has found itself involved in many kinds of music ranging from Bach to Blues.

My approach is mainly fingerstyle, initially through the influence of Howie Mitchell, the finest dulcimer player I've heard, with whom I had a series of happy correspondence, and from several other sources, including Indian sitar styles which with their use of hammered notes, pull-offs, slides, and ornamentation, can be readily adapted to the dulcimer.

The solo music I play falls into three overlapping types; traditional tunes, early music, and my own pieces. The latter came about from a need to play music that was entirely dulcimer oriented, as opposed to things which were adapted from other instruments. So, by way of a start (and getting tired of the sound of my own writing) here are two pieces (see next page) which I hope you will enjoy playing. Both are in the Ionian mode and use three fingers of the right hand (thumb 1st string, index finger 2nd string, middle finger 3rd string) with a fairly complex left hand technique involving chord and counterpoint patterns. Neither use the 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  or "B" fret, as my dulcimers all have only the standard fretting.

"Lament for Richard Farina" is circa 1970, it is a slow quiet tune and the middle section involves using the little finger of the left hand as a barre on descending phrases.

"Wyatt's Jigg" is more difficult, but being in the style of an Elizabethan jig is not as fast as the Irish variety. More of these tab-latures are available in two printed collections, "Nonesuch for Dulcimer" and "Musicks Delite" published by Scratchwood Music Ltd., 138.140 Charing Cross Road, London, W.C. 2, England, and I have recorded them on corresponding record albums "Nonesuch for Dulcimer (Trailer LER 3034) and "The Gentle Sound of the Dulcimer" (Argo ZDA 204).

END



# LAMENT FOR RICHARD FARINA

© SCRATCHWOOD MUSIC 1974  
BY ROGER NICHOLSON

IONIAN TUNING  
3/4 time

7 7 7 7 6 6 6 6

5 5 5 5 5 4 4 4 4 4

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

7 7 7 7 5 5 5 5

0 5 5 5 5 5 3 3 3 3

0 0 0 0 0 0 4-H-5 4

5 5 5 5 5 7 7 7 7

0 3 3 3 3 3 5 5 5 5 5

0 4-H-5 4 0 0 0 0 0

10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10

8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8

0 10 11 12 12 11 10 11 12 12

10 7 7 7 5 7 7 6 5 5

11 8 0 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5

5-6 7 8 8 5

4 6 6 5 5 4 4 3 5 5 4 4 3 3

4 4 4 4 4 3 3 3 3 3

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

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 3 3 2 2 1

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1

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

3 3 2 2 1 1 2 4 4 3 3 2 2 0

4 1 4 1 4 1 2 2 2 2 0

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

0 0 0 0 0 0 3 3 2 2 1 1 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 3 3 2 2 1 1 0 0

5-4 3 6-5 4 2-3 4 3 3 3 3 3

LAST TIME

7

# WYATTS JIG

© Scratchwood Music 74  
ROGER NICHOLSON

IONIAN (MAJOR) TUNING

1 1 0 5 5 4 4 6 5 4 0 3

6 5 7 7 6 6 4 5 0 0 2 3 4

2 4 1 2 0 0 6 7

3 3 2 0 0 2 6 5

2 0 3 3 4 3 5 6 7

5 4 3 4 0 7 0 7

6 5 5 6 7 8 6 5

0 3 2 4 1 2 0

0 2 3 4 2 0 3 5 6 4

4 0 6 7 7 8 7 6

5 7 8 8 9 10 9 7 8 6

0 6 5 4 5 4 4 5 6 4 4

6 7 8 8 7 6 4 4 4 4

4 5 6 4 3 2 3 4 0

0 3 3

4 5 4 2 3

SEQUENCE: ABCB



News from Dulcimer Builders continued:

with 1/16" Finnish Birch ply top & pre-cut heart holes, geared tuning pegs, written guarantee & complete instructions.

Best wishes for your continued success with The Dulcimer Players News.

James C. Shellnutt & Co.  
P.O. Box 548  
Mill Valley, Calif. 94941

Dear Builders Page:

I'm a Scotsman who just encountered dulcimers several years ago when I met a young American musician travelling in Europe. It's sweet tones & ease of playing immediately attracted me. I read the Jean Ritchie book where she told of its European heritage. However, I felt I should come to the States to discover the art of making them. So I did. I've since experimented a lot & really prefer to do custom work, but I have settled on a number of models which incorporate the best results I've found.

I use only solid woods which I take great care in selecting. Essentially traditional hourglass and teardrop shapes (soundholes vary). I use both violin friction pegs and banjo geared tuners. I order both directly from Schalles in Germany where I feel the best machining is done. I consider the banjo tuners far more aesthetically pleasing than cheap guitar tuners yet equally precise & easy to tune. One technique I use on some instruments is of relieving the fingerboard by not glueing the last 1-2 inches to the top. When the strings are tuned up they raise the fingerboard off the top (a small gap, perhaps large enough for a pick to slip up an inch or so). This vastly increases the bass response of the instrument.

Well I hope some of this information is of interest to you and your readers. I'd be delighted to answer any questions I can.

E. Louldey - Dervish Dulc.  
1810 S. Woodward  
Birmingham, Mich 48011

Dear D.P.N.

I am the proprietor and founder of the Farkleberry Farm Steam Dulcimer Works & Music Emporium, of Newark, Ohio. I have been a full time dulcimer maker for about six years and have made somewhere near 500 instruments. My dulcimers are all made of native hardwoods, usually cherry, pine or walnut, along traditional lines. 3, 4, & occasionally 6 strings, with violin or viola pegs for tuning and the very best quality I can attain. I work alone except for in the summer when one assistant who is working his way through Harvard Law School helps me. His name is Jonh Pratt. I have no brochures and do not advertise except by going to arts/crafts shows and folk music festivals. I also make hammer dulcimers, banjos, guitars, harpsichords, virginals, auto-harps and whatever other instruments strike my fancy. I am the founder of the Guild of American Luthiers, many of whose members are dulcimer makers. Although I have instruments on hand to sell, I am not very keen on the mail order business. I am quite willing to ship my instruments to people who've seen them and know what they are getting, but I think it is folly to attempt to sell an expensive dulcimer by trying to describe it in a letter or brochure. Even very poor instruments tend to look good in a small photograph and sound fine when described

News from Dulcimer Builders continued:

by enthusiastic salesmen. So if any of your readers are interested in seeing my work, they are welcome to stop in at my shop or catch me at a show, but please don't write and ask me to describe my dulcimers.

I was interested to read your ongoing plywood controversy and as a builder with considerable experience I would like to add my humble opinions. There is no doubt a place for plywood instruments just as much as for solid. I do think, however, that in terms of the aesthetic appeal of the finished instrument, the solid wood models look somewhat better. A plywood edge leaves something to be desired in appearance as well as feel. I would simply suggest that if one is willing to pay in excess of \$65.00 for a dulcimer, he should expect to get solid wood. It is true that a good quality aircraft plywood is probably more expensive than solid wood, but it is ever so much easier to build from plywood since no complicated planing and sanding is required to prepare the wood. Insofar as sound is concerned, there are a great many variables involved in that, and the wood involved is only one of them. One can compensate for a poor wood by experimenting with the design of the dulcimer and probably come up with a very satisfactory instrument. For instance, the "Howie Mitchell" tailpiece will greatly improve the volume of nearly any dulcimer but sometimes at the risk of an eventually pulled-up fretboard. I should think it would be best if we could all be tolerant of everybody's dulcimer. I have rarely seen any instrument that did not have some good feature about it.

Thank you for filling a need...

J.R. Beall - Luthier  
Rt. No.1, Swans Road  
Newark, Ohio 43055

A new friend to the D.P.N., Marc Robine of France writes:

"Our full time dulcimer building workshop has been going on for the past three years and the address is: LA BOITE A FOLK; 54 Rue Richard Coeur de Lion; 47000 Agen, France. French folk people generally consider that these instruments are among the best dulcimers available in France.. .

In France, unfortunately, most of the people think that you can make up a dulcimer within a half a day and become the best player in the world during the second half. As long as musicians will think this way the instrument will have only a limited popularity, and it's not rare to hear people say "well I'm not a musician, I only play the dulcimer". This really upsets me!

When I first heard the Roger Nicholson "Nonesuch for Dulcimer" album it was like a second birth of the instrument in my heart, and since that day (2 years ago) I've started to play in the fingerpicking style (but I never forget the good old traditional style, of course).

The marriage of the French Folk music and the dulcimer is most interesting and I really hope that the popularity of the "Prettiest instrument in the world" will increase again and again in France.

Dulcimerly yours, Marc Robine  
17 Rue Droite  
06300 Nice, France

Note: Marc is and was turned onto the dulcimer from his association with the Epinette des Vosges which he fell in love with immediately.

## MORE ON THE "KINDRED GATHERING"

By Robert Force

The enclosed flyer (see page 19) announces the North Pacific Kindred Gathering as a definite oncoming event. By providing a location and establishing the initial logistics, Albert d'Ossché, Jake Bell, and I look to creating a forum for information and dissemination re: modal music, dulcimer techniques, and integrating the dulcimer in consort with other instruments.

The site, Alexander's by the Sea, is an artist/crafting guild established in what used to be a circa 1930's seaside resort on the west-central coast of Washington (Highway 109). In addition to the open house/open heart attitude of the residents (showers, toilets, kitchens, etc.) there is also a community hall, acreage for camping, and of course access to the dunes and sandy beaches native to this area.

The projected programming is for there to be workshops for all levels of dulcimer expertise as well as seminars for other instrumentalists plagued with trying to figure out where diatonia and the dulcimer are coming from.

Since we are trying as much as possible to cover all we can, we are also encouraging dulcimer builder workshops, and lastly, we are providing a sound system and staging area with the thought in mind that this media will aid the first-time and/or microphone-shy performer in developing stage awareness while at the same time giving everyone a chance to hear everybody else.

Please let the readers of the D.P.N. know that we are actively soliciting people to write ahead - especially if they have an area of dulcimerie they'd care to discourse on or about. Suggested seminar/workshops topics might include: the dulcimer in English folksong, the dulcimer in Appalachian tradition, musical history and development of the dulcimer, rhythm workshops, dulcimer as non-Appalachian grassroot development, adapting non-western musical forms, etc.

I could go on - but as you can see, what we are trying to get at are subjective as well as objective overviews about the dulcimer and diatonia, to which end I offer an assessment of our own viewpoint.... All across this country (as well as abroad) there are people who are saying "I can do that" and are building and playing dulcimers. Many of these people had no previous conception of how it should be done. Consequently we are witnessing the emergence of a new folk tradition - one built solely on the idea that if it has eight notes and some strings that drone, it's a dulcimer. We don't have to encourage or discourage that - it's quite independent of any of our efforts. So to quote 'In Search of' .. "it all boils down to folk music, and never forget, no matter what anyone says, that folk music is what you do".

Editors note: Bob plans to have a list of speakers and subjects, and definite flow schedules for workshops etc. ready to mail out to those D.P.N. readers who are interested in attending the Kindred Gathering. Address: Robert Force; Alexander's by the Sea; Ocean City, Washington 93569

We've recieved an interesting Post Card !

Dear Phillip,

Blue Ridge Billy, by Lois Lenski is a charming childrens book which features the dulcimer. I'm not sure it is still in print - it was written years ago.

Sincerely, Margaret Macarthur

## DULCIMER RECORDINGS N' SUCH

Our friend Gaile Brenner writes from Morrison, Colo. that there is a cut on the John Denver album "Farewell Andromeda" that has dulcimer (Berkeley Woman). Also there's a bowed psaltry on the Tom Rapp "Sunfrost" album - Blue Thumb Records BTS 56. Gaile has recently moved to Colo. from the Washington, D.C. area and reports she's made many new dulcimer friends there already. More dulcimer recordings reported by Gaile are: (1) A children's record with some dulcimer on it titled "Won't you be My Friend?" put out by Educational Activities, Inc.; Freeport, N.Y. 11520. (2) "Seeds of Love", a 10" Folkways album (#2021) of dulcimer ballads. (3) "Aftermath", by the Rolling Stones (London PS-476) has a few dulcimer cuts (Brian Jones doing "Lady Jane" & "I am Waiting"). (4) And there is a dulcimer played on one Tom Rush album I've heard (Merrimac County - 1 ??).

From Bob Rodriguez comes word of a few more dulcimer cuts existant on the following albums: (1) "Broadside Reunion" Vol. 7. Folkways 5316 features two dulcimer pieces by Danny & Judy Roserewoods (electric??). (2) "Pleasant & Delightful" Peter Johnson's Vol. 1 - features Rick & Lorraine Lee - Lorraine playing dulcimer on several cuts. (3) and "Sounds of the Ozarks", Jimmy Driftwoods recording for National Geographic - the no. is National Geographic 702, I think. Has dulcimer cuts.

### A PARTIAL LISTING OF UPCOMING FOLK FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

For a complete listing of festivals write to National Folk Festival Assoc.; 1346 Conn. Ave.; Washington, D.C. 20036.

Philadelphia Folk Festival - Aug 22, 23, 24, (Phila, Pa.)  
1st Annual Brattleboro Folk Festival (Vermont) Chelsea House Folk Center.  
(July 4 & 5.)  
Midsummer Fair July 18 - 20 Fox Hollow Camp, Petersburg, N.Y.  
Smithville Tenn. Fiddlers Jamboree July 4 & 5 (Dulcimer contest)  
National Folk Festival Aug 1-3 at Wolfe Trap Farm Park, Virginia  
Fox Hollow Festival Aug 7-10 Petersburg, N.Y.  
Folk Festival of the Smokies Gathering - Cosby, Tenn. Sept 12-14

### Publications of interest

"COME FOR TO SING" All about Folk Music in Chicago is a great new pub. It is published by the Old Town School of Folk Music; 909 Armitage Ave.; Chicago, Ill 60614 and Emily Friedman is the Editor.

"FOLKNIK" is the popular newsletter of the San Francisco Folk Music Club; 385 Clayton; S.F., Calif 94117. They publish dulcimer things on occasion.

### Fretless banjo info (still scarce as hen's teeth)

I just finished a banjo that is fretless from nut thru 5th fret & fretted 6 on up. Have not played it enough yet to decide anything. Mike Holm & Peter Hoover both had seen them and the theory sounds good.

Sunhearth builds Dulcimers, Hammered Dulcimers, Fretless Banjos and their instruments are well thought of.

Mike Martin  
Sunhearth Folk Instruments  
Route 867 RD 1  
Roaring Spring, PA 16673

## SOME QUESTIONS ??

By Kevin Roth

There was a time when people would stop me at Folk Festivals and concerts and ask me what I called that funny looking guitar I carried under my arm. Well, it was not a funny looking guitar at all, but a Mountain Dulcimer. (Funny how the human mind works - funny looking guitar.) Ah yes, just a few years later out of God only knows where there came a big dulcimer boom that swept, and is still sweeping, this country. There are books, records, & tapes out on the dulcimer for people to learn and study the "traditional" & "contemporary" styles of dulcimer making and playing. There are enough makers and players around to - well, put out a Dulcimer Players News! So, we know that the dulcimer is becoming a very popular instrument. Just how popular it will become, no one knows for sure, but we can be sure of one thing, and that is that the more people who hear and play the dulcimer, the more books, records, builders, festivals, performers, and CHANGES we will have. Now, whether these changes are good or bad is up to the individual to decide.

There is in this country, and around the world, a "new Breed" of dulcimer maker and player. I am not speaking of new players in general but rather the new and different, innovative kind of maker and player. If you look into music in general you will see that the Rock group "The Rolling Stones" have used the dulcimer in their album, and so has Joni Mitchell, Judy Collins, Steeleye Span, and many others. These performers have recorded and performed with the dulcimer in many different styles and many NEW ways. For instance, in my collection of dulcimers, I have an electric dulcimer made by John Hedrick. I must admit, the first time I heard that there was an electric dulcimer I said "Why don't they leave well enough alone"! But after hearing it played and realizing how beautiful it sounded, I said I would have to give credit to its maker, and I have used it in recording sessions many times since.

I suppose the public will have varied feelings about the electric dulcimer. I guess it all depends on which side of the mountain you come from: I have played Bach, Jazz, Blues, Rock, and Folk on the 3, 4 & 5 string dulcimer. The question is this, what is going to happen to the dulcimer in the next few years, and will we be able to accept the changes that do come along? As for my own opinion, I hope that we will always love and respect the traditional maker and player, and that we don't ever forget where the dulcimer came from!

Is there a stopping point with the dulcimer? I have seen a 6-stringed dulcimer with a chromatic fretboard (funny looking guitar). Can we still call this a Mountain Dulcimer?

Opinions, opinions, what do they mean? Growth, Life, what does that mean?? Where, and what will happen to the dulcimer in the years to come? The next few years are very important as far as dulcimer growth is concerned. Think about where you stand in regards to the dulcimer's popularity and its growth in our country and around the world.

EDITORS NOTE: Comments can be directed to Kevin at RD #1; Kennett Sq, PA 19348. Also don't forget Kevin's radio show that we mentioned in the last D.P.N. issue. This will be a great show and Kevin is looking for all kinds of dulcimer info to help put it together. Contact him right away on this as he will start taping really soon.

Music Can Save



HERE, Inc.

is a MAJOR  
supplier

WORLD

of FINE Dulcimers, both  
plucked & Hammered, Mt.  
style Banjos, Psalteries,  
Thumb pianos, musical bows

AND

Books, Records, cases, accessories

AND

Friendly Assistance

410 Cedar Ave.  
Mpls., Mn 55454

HANDCRAFTED  
DULCIMERS



DICK MANLEY

ROUTE 129

CROTON-ON-HUDSON, NY 10620

914-271-5097

WRITE FOR INFO



## MOUNTAIN DULCIMERS & KITS

INSTRUCTION BOOKS, STRINGS, CASES,  
RECORD ALBUMS, AND OTHER ACCESSORIES  
FOR PLAYERS AND BUILDERS.

FREE CATALOG

JEAN'S DULCIMER SHOP

P.O. Box 8

Cosby, Tennessee 37722



HANDCRAFTED  
MUSICAL  
INSTRUMENT

Dulcimer Banjo Mandolin  
Guitar Hammered Dulcimer

Michael Murphy  
Mills Road R.R. # 3  
St. Clairsville, Ohio 43950  
(614) 595-3348

New 10-string "Gypsy" Dulcimer, double melody string, extra chord strings, beautiful haunting tone, maple-spruce. Complete only \$69.95.  
New 47 key English system Concertinas with case, steel reeds, 8-fold leather covered bellows and book. \$257.50 P.P. New 30 key Anglo type Concertinas - steel reeds, 3-fold bellows, nickel fret ends, tuned G-C-C# w/case & book \$127.50. New 39 key Anglo-Saxon Concertinas - steel reeds, 73 notes chromatic, 9-fold bellows, pearl ends, great tone plays in E, A, D, G. With case & book \$145. P.P. New 10 key (4 bass) "Cajun Queen" key C Accordians. Beautiful tone - Complete only \$60.00 P.P. Money orders only - SOUTHERN HIGHLAND DULCIMERS - 1010 S. 14th St.; Slaton, Texas 79364 - Limited stock BUY NOW. Additional info 25¢.

Feedback Letter continued:

Robert Force and Albert d'Ossché are hosting a "Kindred Gathering" this August for lovers of dulcimer. Al d'Ossché writes: "As our handbill (see Ad Page 19) indicates, Bob and I are hosting a "Kindred Gathering" (fiddler's have "encampments", bluegrassers have "festivals", so why not "kindred gatherings" for soft-edged dulcimer music and acoustic consorts) in August. If anyone is in this region they should come and be and bring their instruments, dulcimers or otherwise. It's FREE, and rather simple; an opportunity to bring folks together to play together, learn, share, explore, hear and praise." D.P.N. readers can look forward to the possibility of future contributions of articles and information from Bob and Al, and we wish them continued success with their excellent book "In Search of the Wild Dulcimer".

More article contributors to this issue include (6) Rodger Harris, who has supplied some thoughts on dulcimer bracing with the hope that such ideas might spark some interest from other builders to also send in their ideas on dulcimer building techniques. (7) Dr. Jack Moe, who has been kind enough to allow us to print freely from his most interesting brochure (see Page 5 for more info on his services etc.) (8) Bobbie Wayne, who sent in a great song in dulcimer tablature form, and to whom we are really grateful for her many kindnesses. Bobbie's song "Washday Stew" appears on Page 14, and I think every reader will thoroughly enjoy it.

Some last minute news before press time for this issue is that we will be running some great hammered dulcimer photos supplied by Donald Round of Michigan who stopped by the D.P.N. office on his way through on a vacation trip. Don's son Jay has a really good Hammered Dulcimer album out with a new one due along immediately. Don also dropped us off an ad for this issue with more particulars on these albums, and if you want a really nice hammered dulcimer Don is the guy who can build ya' one. He puts a lot of work into his instruments so it will take a while from order to delivery, but that's the way it is when purchasing a fine handcrafted instrument anyway. We will also be running some nice photos of Bill Wasils "Dolphin Special", an excellent looking piece of fine craftsmanship that is sure to be of interest. (see his ad for more particulars on the dulcimers he builds.) Well, what I'm trying to get across is that the next issue already is shaping up as a good one.

I went to the Gottagetgon Festival (May 23-26) and was pretty excited by all the evidence of dulcimers there of both the plucked & hammered variety. A feature event for mountain dulcimer attendees was the excellent, excellent workshop put on by our friends Lorraine Lee and Holly Tannen. Holly is now in England for an extended stay, but if you ever get a chance to attend a workshop by Lorraine or Holly DO IT - IT'S MORE THAN WORTH IT. I also got a chance to hear some more of the great music that Rick and Lorraine make with their Piano-Dulcimer combination, which is just so pleasing. If you hear anybody say that you can't play dulcimer with this or that instrument, don't believe a word of it. You can play the dulcimer compatibly with anything.

I'm running out of space and have more to say but guess I won't be too windy. However, I did want to say that anyone who has not yet seen Jean Ritchie's new Book "Dulcimer People" should get it. It's really the best I've seen in a long time.

Phil Mason - Editor



STRINGS: THE BEST ARE THE BEST  
BY DR. JOHN F. MOE

Don't settle for somebody's worn-out strings off their banjo. The sound you get out of your dulcimer is related in large part to the quality and appropriateness of its strings. Some makers set up their instruments for certain strings, and while its all right to try others, don't forget that they have usually done a lot of testing to get strings that sound right on their particular Dulcimer.

If using banjo strings, use two second and one wound fourth (assuming a three string dulcimer). A four-stringer can use two 1sts, one third, and one fourth. If using guitar strings, two E and one G may work well.

Don't fail to change strings at reasonable intervals. If your instrument won't stay in tune or if it isn't sounding right, change the strings. Don't forget that as you tune the instrument you are stretching those steel strings, and they will only stand a certain amount of that before they lose their stretchiness. Then they sound dead and they lose that ring - and a new set of strings is in order. Keep a set on hand.

WE STILL NEED PHOTOS  
FOR PRINTING IN THE  
D.P.N.

KEEP IN TOUCH \*\*\*\*\* SEE YA' NEXT ISSUE

\* SUBSCRIPTION BLANK \*



Please send me a one year (6 issues)  
Subscription to the Dulcimer Players  
News - \$4.00 enclosed.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY & STATE \_\_\_\_\_

Foreign Subscriptions \$600 (surface Mail)  
Air to Great Britian - 3 Pounds Sterling  
International M.O. - U.S. FUNDS

!! BACK ISSUES !!

Since the demand is so high for all the many articles, bibliographies, discographies, playing tips, building info, songs, etc., that we have printed since our beginning in January of 1975, we are going to try to keep back issues available for all of those new readers who come along and want to know what we've been up to since starting this thing. Please send us a query for their availability and such.

OUR BOOKS & DEALERS INQUIRIES

We also publish and sell (which helps with the "News" costs) The Dulcimer Players Bible" (\$4.95) and "How to Make and Play the Fretless Banjo" (\$3.50). We also welcome dealers inquiries regarding all of our publications - Free samples for all dealers inquiries first, of course!

SEE YA' NEXT ISSUE

HAPPY DAYS & HAPPY PICKIN' ! !

The Dulcimer Players News  
c/o Phillip Mason  
RFD 2, Box 132  
Bangor, Maine 04401



- THIRD CLASS POSTAGE -  
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED



MAIL TO: