North Georgia Foothills Dulcimer Association, Inc.

Foothills Footnotes

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Mistletoe Jam
January 15-17, 2016

The Garden City Strummers of Augusta, Georgia want to invite you to join us in January for the annual Mistletoe Jam! After those stressful holidays you deserve to let your hair down and enjoy some laid-back fellowship and jamming. No classes, just a very relaxed time of playing music together. Best of all . . . it's FREE!

The event starts on Friday evening, January 15, and ends on Sunday the 17 at noon. The park gives us a large heated shelter with kitchen for this event, so you will be WARM! Bring food to share, as we nibble all day and have a pot-luck together on Saturday evening. Sunday we eat all the leftovers.

The location is Mistletoe State Park in Appling, Georgia, a beautiful setting on Lake Thurmond, so if you get tired of playing you can hike or fish! The park has 11 cottages and 92 campsites. If you prefer off-site lodging, there are several hotels in Thomson, Grovetown and Evans (between 12-20 miles away). If you can't come for the weekend, just join us on Saturday. We have many folks that come to watch us play, and often local jammers join us with their various instruments.

Here is the link to the Mistletoe Park if you want to reserve a cabin or campsite: http://gastateparks.org/Mistletoe. Please let us know if you are planning to come or if you need more information. You can contact at: Pat Colbert, 706-860-3437 or pogosbill@aol.com.

Dulcimer Fast Track∆

Case 1: Where Did The 6+ Fret Come From?

by Gwen Caeli

Once upon a time there was no 6 ½ fret. Then came Howie Mitchell, who said he did not know

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POSTMASTER: Send any address changes to **Lynn McCollum**, NGFDA, Inc., PO Box 522, Demorest, GA 305353. You may also contact **Lynn** by e-mail at lynnmccollum50@gmail.com
All other newsletter-related matters, including material intended for publication, should be directed to **Barbara Joe** at the email address listed in the above column. The deadline for publication submissions for the February issue is **January 22, 2016 at 6:00 p.m**. *Foothills Footnotes* is published monthly by the North Georgia Foothills Dulcimer Association, Incorporated.

Dulcimer Fast Track∆

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enough about the instrument when he built his first dulcimer right after college. In his extremely limited experience, he thought dulcimers were always tuned to DAD (1-5-8), as in the first one he tried. But, he could *not* get a major do-re-mi scale, as there was an annoying flat note in the mix. So, he set out to fix it, not realizing the tuning should be DAA (1-5-5) to play the major scale starting at fret three!

Born in 1932 and raised in Lexington, Virginia, Howie started learning guitar in the 1950s, and continued with it while studying electrical engineering at Cornell University in New York (he later found his true calling teaching experimental versions of algebra, trigonometry, physics and chemistry at The Hawthorne School in Washington D.C.). During his Cornell time, he attended a Pete Seeger folk concert and shortly after heard dulcimer recordings by Jean Ritchie and Andrew Rowan Sommers. Having not yet seen a dulcimer, he was hooked by its sound. Within days, he decided to build one. I had the pleasure of meeting Howie and spending festival 'down time' picking his brain when we worked at several dulcimer events in the late 1990's. He was gracious enough to continue correspondence to help me increase my dulcimer knowledge base. He sent me his story in 1999, along with educating me on musical temperament (coming up in Dulcimer Fast Track - Case 2):

"I began building plucked dulcimers in 1955, and at that time I knew little to nothing about not only musical temperament, but also the dulcimer instrument itself. I had heard recordings of the lap dulcimer, and had seen and played for a short time on two of them owned by a Dr. Asher Treat of Dumont, New Jersey. The plucked dulcimer as I knew it was basically simple in design and construction. It was set up with three strings and had frets placed under the two lightest strings. The frets looked like heavy staples, and they were spaced in an apparently erratic pattern consisting of some gaps larger than others, with the gaps becoming generally smaller as one's view moved from the tuning peg end to the tail block end. The instrument was tuned "do-sol-do" (DAD, 1-5-8) and it produced what sounded like a major scale with a slightly minor touch, due to generating a flatted seventh note. The scale worked well for the Old Joe Clark tune, which uses a flatted seventh note, but it was incomplete as an ordinary major scale. ***When I began building dulcimers, it was easy enough for me to add an extra fret,*** enabling me to get a regular major scale containing the additional flatted seventh note. The extra

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About The Tablature . . .

Marianne Wurtele writes: "The song came to me one night in Arkansas, watching fireflies that climbed exceptionally high, but never approached the height of the white stars high in the black sky. I recalled my sister's comment as a teenager to the effect that she wished she could press her face against the black velvet that the stars were embedded in, and I imagined the fireflies having the same wish."

Marianne grew up in Florida but spent every summer on the Blue Ridge Parkway. It is there that she came to love folk craft and mountain music, and was introduced to the mountain dulcimer when her father gave her a dulcimer kit to build for her 19th birthday. She moved to Texas after college to work for Texas Instruments, lived in that state for 20 years, Arkansas for seven years, and has lived in North Georgia now for eight years. She is a member of the Allatooners Satellite Group.

Black Velvet Night

Marianne Wurtele

Tab/Edited by
Marianne Wurtele

17
T 5 5 4
A 5 5 5 5 6 3
B 7 7 6 5 7 7 7 6 5 5 4 2
21
T 0 1 3 0 2
A 0 1 2 0 1
B 4 4 2 3 2 1 1 3 2 1 1 0
25
T 1 3 0 2
A 1 2 0 0
B 4 4 2 3 2 1 1 3 2 1 1 0 0

Dulcimer Fast Track∆

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fret made a visible difference, producing a cluster of four more-or-less evenly spaced frets near the middle of the string.

"Had I been a bit more alert or knowledgeable at the time, and had I retuned the instrument to a more traditional "do-sol-sol" (DAA 1-5-5) relationship, I would have discovered that I already had the desired major scale just by using the existing frets in sequence! Since I had a good ear for relative pitches, I fretted my first few instruments by ear. I remember having to repeatedly play and adjust the instrument using temporary frets at first, as some intervals would sound better, while at the same time other intervals would sound worse. I eventually had to reach a kind of compromise in which most intervals were O.K., but not really ideal. It was only later that I learned that it is mathematically and theoretically impossible to get all the musical intervals true." Which is the focus of the upcoming **Dulcimer Fast Track – Case 2, "Having Trouble Tuning?"**!

So, when Howie accidentally invented the 6 ½ fret, little did he realize at the time that he was changing the course of history for the traditional dulcimer. Chording possibilities were greatly expanded, as well as varying the modes and keys with the added benefit of a capo. So thanks, Howie!

From The Desk Of The President

by President, John Shawhan

The 2015 Festival has come and gone and we are going over each of the comment forms. We will be considering each of the comments for incorporation into the next festival. I want to share an enthusiastic email I received from a first time vendor:

"I wanted to express my great appreciation for you and your staff for putting on a great festival. mom and dad, Bill and Jean Lee, had attended many years but this was my and my wife's first such event. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting people whom my parents had told stories about (who made what dulcimer, etc.) and the great music at the evening concerts. The location you provided for our vendor tables between the classes and gift shop and the cafeteria, and also across from Michael Shull, the only person we knew before the festival, could not have been better. My wife even enjoyed the great lighting to better see for her sewing! We feel we had a successful experience, too, in selling as many dulcimers as we did and making contacts for two more vendor opportunities in the very near future.

I did receive my first on-line copy of the NGFDA newsletter. If possible, please let members know in the next newsletter that I have created a website where all of Dad's (Bill Lee Collection) dulcimers are on-line for sale - www.thingsbandj.com. Of course, if we're close enough we can possibly meet someone so they can play the dulcimer and hear how it sounds, and save tax and S&H fee."

I had the opportunity to play at a Christmas Jubilee at Centerville Methodist Church with the Sonic Sounds Dulcimer Club. What a beautiful day. A special moment was shared after I got home and received several emails saying the dulcimer players were on TV. That is the kind of great publicity that we need to encourage others to get involved.

Bill Lee Dulcimers

by Pat Colbert

Bill Lee, a long time member of the dulcimer community, and a member of our Garden City Strummers, passed away several months ago. His son, Bernie, is clearing his estate. Bill and his wife Jean collected fine instruments, often just putting them in their cases and never playing them. They were kept in a controlled temperature room. At one time he had over 150 dulcimers! Before he died he was down to about 100.

Bernie was at Unicoi and had several on his vendor table. He did sell five or six of them, but he only brought a few of them. He has set up a website, a nice one, to try to sell the rest. I told him that I would try to get it out to as many people as possible. The website is: http://www.thingsbandj.com/

Spotlight on Satellites

Peach Pickers

A group of Peach Pickers played Christmas songs for an Open House at the Holliday Dorsey-Fife House Museum in Fayetteville on December 5.

Land of Waterfalls Dulcimer Players

The month of December was filled with eight Christmas playouts to the delight of the young and old. While playing at a pottery open house one young baby loved the music so much he broke into tears each time his mother moved away. The beginner players had an opportunity to play out twice and were so delighted with the audience response. In the photo it's obvious they were all having a good time.

One of the dulcimer members living in a retirement community in Asheville has started teaching some of her neighbors. Those new dulcimer players were able to join

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Spotlight on Satellites

Land of Waterfalls Dulcimer Players

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the Land of Waterfalls Dulcimer Players club in presenting a program for their entire retirement audience.

January and February will be devoted to playing some fun music without trying to schedule playouts because many members travel and the mountain roads can be treacherous with ice and snow.

Gainesville Strummers

The Fall Season ended for Gainesville Strummers at Christmas on Green Street in Gainesville. The annual event, which brings together many groups of singers and players, was 'covered up' with people this year! Over 200 of those who came to enjoy the festivities, stopped at Winner Wellness Center to listen and enjoy our group of 10 players entertain with carols and Christmas songs. A great time was had by all!

There are changes ahead and we will meet them with enthusiasm in the new year. Merry Christmas everyone! Come join the fun each Thursday at 12:30 for beginners and from 1-3 for all levels. Visitors are always welcome. For more information contact: rmellett@aol.com.

Yonah Pickers

The Yonah Pickers really enjoyed the month of December. They had wonderful opportunities to participate in numerous Christmas performances. Because of the large size of the group, each person was able to choose which types of performances appealed to them the most and fit best into their schedule. The music of Christmas has flowed from their instruments and voices into a variety of audiences. Whether they were in historical sites or nursing homes or elsewhere, the group traditional music to the celebration of the Christmas season. People young and old joined the group with voice and bells to celebrate this blessed season.

In addition to all the performances, they also had a wonderful time coming together for their annual Christmas party. There was great food, friendship, hospitality, and, of course, music in the beautiful home of one of the members. They are all very grateful for the many opportunities given to them to share the gift of music. The smiles on the faces of children ringing bells and seniors raising their voices in song for the first time in a long time brought great joy to performers and audiences alike. Prior to one particular performance, one person, with eyes down cast, stated, “I just don’t want to talk.” Toward the end of the performance she was seen to be singing along and there was even a bit of a smile in the corner of her eyes!

As the New Year approaches, the group is looking forward to the fun of new music and new challenges. They would like to wish everyone in NGFDA Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year. The regular practice sessions return in January so if you find yourself in the area on a practice day, you are always invited to join the group for some musical fun. If you have questions about anything in the article, please contact bswhitmire@windstream.net.

More to Come!

The Foothills Dulcimer Club of Shelby, NC

presents the

17th Annual Mid-Winter Dulcimer Festival

March 5, 2016

Workshops: 9 a.m. Concert: 5 p.m.

Shelby, NC

Featuring Jeff Hames, Joe Collins, Bradley Ellis and a host of others to be announced

Pre-register and SAVE!!!

If you preregister*, the cost for the entire day is $43. The price includes 4 great workshops of your choice, two concerts, and a wonderful lunch. Put it on your calendar now and look for more information coming soon at www.jodulcimer.com.

Preregistration period ends on February 26, and preregistration is not complete until payment is received. Registration after February 26 is $52 and does not include lunch.

You will soon be able to preregister by credit card at www.jodulcimer.com

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SATELLITE	AREA	FREQUENCY	TIME	LOCATION	CONTACT
Allatooners	Kennesaw, GA	Monthly, 2nd Mon.	6:30-9:00	First United Lutheran Church of Kennesaw 3481 Campus Loop Rd (formerly Frey Lake Rd.)	Peggy Martin 678-478-2456 martin.pb@comcast.net www.allatooners.org Satellite Scribe: Diana (DeeDee) Nash muffyqnash@yahoo.com
AlphaFretters					Not Currently Meeting
Bent Tree Strings	Jasper, GA	Monthly, 4th Thurs.	2:30-4:30	Club Tamarack Dining Room in Bent Tree. Bent Tree is 6 miles east of Jasper off Cove Road.	Carol Lesley 770-893-2019 Carol.Lesley@tds.net
Blue Ridge	Blue Ridge, GA	Bimonthly 1st & 3rd Mondays	1:00-3:00	Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church Hwy. 515 at Forge Mill Road	Anne Bailey 706-632-3854 Teri Godfirnon terig@windstream.net
Dalton Dulcimers	Dalton, GA	Weekly Wednesdays	2:30	First United Methodist Church 500 S. Thornton Ave.	Sherry Patterson 706-278-7256 jspatts@windstream.net
Dixieland Dulcimers	Griffin, GA	Weekly-Mondays	10:00	Crestview Baptist Church fellowship hall, Griffin, GA	Donna Harpe 770-228-5597 phillip_harpe@bellsouth.net John Garret 770-223-8405 jgsped@yahoo.com Dave Graves 770-227-4890 drg636@gmail.com
Frettin' On Faith	Ringgold, GA	Weekly Sundays	4:00	First Baptist Church downtown Ringgold on U.S. Highway 41 (Nashville St.) in the choir/music room	Michael Whitfield 706-673-6730 mewhitfield@optilink.us Website: www.tiptopwebsite.com/frettin
Gainesville Strummers	Gainesville, GA	Weekly – Thurs. Beginners Everyone	 12:30 1:00-3:00	First Baptist Church Room 208, 751 Green Street, N.W.	Bob Weaver 770-540-5278 bobweaver6@gmail.com.
Garden City Strummers	Evans, GA	Monthly, 3rd Mon.	6:00-8:00	4537 Glenda Lane Evans, GA 30809	Pat & Bill Colbert 706-860-3437 pogosbill@aol.com
Gwinnoters	Lawrenceville, GA	Monthly, 3rd Sun.	1:30-4:30	Fairview Presbyterian 857 Duluth Hwy. (Hwy. 120)	Gwen Caeli 678-863-4342 gwencaeli@gmail.com Linda Depkin suzie.d@mindspring.com
Hammered Dulcimer	Support Group for Hammered Dulcimer Inquiries				Agene Parsons 423-718-5730 ageneparsons@gmail.com
Hart String-Strummers	Hartwell, GA	Monthly – 1st Mon. Monthly – 3rd Sat.	12:30 12:30	Member's Home Hartwell Art Center	Call Mary Alice Ray at 706-371-0176 for directions to the Monday meeting or for more information
Hilltop Strummers	Woodstock-Canton, GA	Weekly – Tues.	1:30-3:30	Canton First UMC 930 Lower Scott Mill Road, Canton, GA Exit 16 at I-575	Bob & Sandra Hange 770-265-5308 bhange65@gmail.com
In Town Down Home	Atlanta, GA	Monthly, 3rd Sat.	2:00	Tenth Street United Methodist Church 425 Tenth Street, NW	Cathy Watts 770-377-8734 chwatts@mindspring.com Rudine Davis H 404-250-0605; C 404-790-7179
LaGrange Dulcimer Troupers	LaGrange, GA	Weekly, Thurs. mornings Weekly, Tues.	10:45-12:15 11:30	First United Methodist Church for jamming & prac. Beginning classes	Ann and Perry Wilder 706-882-5027 perrylwilder@bellsouth.net
Land of Waterfalls Dulcimer Players	Brevard & vicinity, NC	1st, 2nd & 3rd Wed.-Practice 4th Wed.-Playouts	1:00-2:30	St Philip's Episcopal Church 256 East Main St Brevard, NC	Mary Sherwood 828-966-9628 sherwood@comporium.net Ann Brown 828-877-5506
Middle Georgia Dulcimer Club	Macon, GA	Monthly, 2nd Sat.	1:00 Lesson 2:00-4:00 Jam	Young America School of Music 6361 Zebulon Road	Barbara Stevens 478-457-6539 gbs468@aol.com Karen Stewart 478-954-6759 galadybug53@gmail.com
Mountain Sounds	Blairsville, GA	Bimonthly 2nd & 4th Tues.	1:30-3:30	Senior Center	Roxanne Gill roxannegill47@gmail.com
Oconee Belles & Beaus	Salem, SC	Bimonthly, 2nd Thurs. 4th Tues.	2:00-4:00 1:00-3:00	Keowee Key (Routes 130 & 183 So. of Salem, SC) Activity Center, Whitewater Room	Joan Krech 864-944-7094 joankrech@bellsouth.net Bonnie Lamarand 864-888-3328 lmrnd@att.net
Peach Pickers	Peachtree City, GA	Monthly, 2nd. Sun.	3:00-5:00	Peachtree City Library	Pat Hobson 770-461-2522 pohobson@gmail.com Wanda Dawkins 678-899-0453 hrwmdawk@yahoo.com
Sonic Sounds Dulcimer Club (EDIMGIAFAD)	Centerville, GA	Weekly, Thurs.	6:00-6:30 Lesson 7:15-Jam	1st United Methodist Church 600 N. Houston Lake Rd.	Laneah Maddox 478-971-8223 912-687-3621 laneahmaddox@yahoo.com http://wrmusic.tripod.com/sonicsoundsdulcimerclub
Whistle Stop Pickers	East Alabama/ West Georgia (Auburn-Opelika area)	Weekly, Sat.	1:00-3:00	Lee County Historical Society Museum 6500 Stage Road (Hwy 14) Loachapoka, AL	Allen & Deborah McCord 334-821-1301 334-703-3646 (cell) mccord0304@gmail.com
Yonah Pickers	Cleveland, GA Clarkesville, GA	Bimonthly 2nd & 4th Sun. Bimonthly-Beginners 1st & 3rd Mon. Bimonthly-Everyone 1st & 3rd Mon.	2:00-4:00 11:45-12:45 1:00-3:00	First Presbyterian Church of Cleveland Bethlehem Baptist Church in Clarkesville	Lynn McCollum 706-499-3212 Lynnmccollum50@gmail.com Email lynnmccollum50@gmail.com for details.

NGFDA sanctions these groups as satellites, but each one sets its own agenda, meeting place and procedures. Last Updated 11/18/2015

NGFDA Membership Form

Please start/renew my membership in NGFDA, including a subscription to the monthly *Foothills Footnotes* newsletter. Tab books available to members only, one copy per member at a cost of $10 (if mailed, add $2 mailing fee). Individual membership: $20. Family membership: $30. Please make checks payable to NGFDA. Dues, according to NGFDA bylaws, are renewable each November regardless of when you join.

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Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Home Phone_____ E-mail address*:_____

Membership Status (check one): ☐ New ☐ Renewing

Playing Level (check one): ☐ Beginner ☐ Intermediate ☐ Advanced

***Members can automatically access our monthly newsletter at www.ngfda.org by clicking "newsletter" and entering your email address as *listed above*. The newsletter is posted around the 25th of each month.**

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Total Enclosed $_____

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