



Published by THE AMERICAN BANJO FRATERNITY
Lewis G. Green, Editor

"BANJOMANSHIP" COINED AT RALLY

YOUR EXEC. SEC'Y SAYS...

Some of our members know that I am not entirely faithful to the Banjo. I sneak in a little practice occasionally on the Classic Guitar. Classic Guitarists take their art seriously. They study and write about everything concerned with guitars from construction of the instrument to trimming the fingernails, and one of their favorite subjects is tone production. I've just gone through all my back issues of GUITAR REVIEW, and re-read all the articles on tone production, and since the source of the sound on both banjo and guitar are the same, (a string vibrated by picking with a finger,) I'd like to sum up everything I've read into a few sentences, hoping that some banjoist, somewhere, will get a little help from it. I'll concentrate on the first string on the banjo and the first finger of the right hand. Now!

With the fingers pointing directly across the strings at a right angle to them, bend the first finger at the second joint, and touch the tip of it on the first string as though you were going to pick it. Now pull against the string, doing the work with the second joint only, and keeping the first joint (the one nearest the tip) relaxed. Release the pressure for an instant,

(Con't. P. 3)

When good fellowship, good banjo playing, and good showmanship are mixed together, the result is "Banjomanship". . somehow the term was kicked around the Green Gables Hotel at Lewistown during the May Rally, and it seemed to fit like the proverbial glove. A fraternal spirit prevailed at this Rally that was greater than ever before. Enthusiasm seemed to be the keynote. . players were in every nook and corner, playing duets, trying new numbers, taking lessons, and in general having a "ball". Even the piano stayed pretty well in tune this time. CLIFF SPAULDING, who sent parts out to his "All-State Quartette", rehearsed and performed the cleverly arranged "Gate City March", and "Banjo In A Fit". BILL KENTNER of Ohio, MARY KOONS of Pennsylvania, and LOWELL SCHREYER of Minnesota, along with Cliff from New York, are the working crew in this group. Bill Kentner was seen everywhere. . even making speeches. He unveiled his classical guitar. . and he is quite a picker on this difficult instrument. Bill also played 2nd banjo for the sensational new Rally favorite, LOWELL SCHREYER. Here is a young fellow who has mastered the plectrum as a professional, and is interested in playing the five string banjo.

(Con't. P. 2)

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THE AMERICAN BANJO FRATERNITY

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(Banjomanship, con't.)

In a short time, and on an antique banjo, with violin pegs and 17 frets, he knocked off "St. Louis Rag", "Temptation Rag" and "Everybody's Doin' It" with precision and great imagination. He's tabbed to be one of the finest 5 string players anywhere ... wait 'till he gets his hands on a good banjo.

MARY KOONS was another big surprise. She has blossomed out as a fine soloist. FANNIE HINELINE came well prepared, and she polished off "Nola", "Kashmiri Love Song", "Plantation Symphony", then held a "Hooten-Fannie" by passing out the words to Stephen Foster favorites, and had the audience in the act. What a grand woman! FRANK SHAFFER was in good form, too ... he can put a lot of "schmaltz" into his tremolo playing. Frank drove his own car to Lewistown from New Jersey and burst into the music hall with a neat buck and wing dance ... try that when you reach 89. ERV CRITES brought the Van Eps Memorial plaque, which he has been holding for a year. His name is engraved on it along with Fannie Hineline and Bill Bowen, previous winners.

GORDON MC CORMICK and his Foot Stompers took care of jazzy spots on the program, and his cohorts included TOM WRIGLEY, JOHN HAMMETT, and wife Alice on the piano. FRED HAYWOOD gets better and better ... and he's on a ragtime kick now, so watch out! MACK HOPKINS played a couple of nifty Jigs and Reels, and alas, our tape machine was turned off ... we'll get a repeat on these in October, we hope ... ELMER DAWSON and LES BOOHER drove

all the way from California, and only looked on. Elmer was a bit under the weather, but a subsequent operation has him on the mend and rarin' to go. He's an amazing man, and a great banjo picker.

Yes, "Banjomanship" is here to stay at our Rallies, and the October party looks like a dinger ... the dates are October 22, 23 and 24th, so put them down now and get to work on a couple of new tunes.

HARRY BOWEN AWARDED VAN EPS TROPHY

The decision of five judges was unanimous, and Harry Bowen was declared the 1964 winner of the Van Eps Memorial Trophy. He will keep the plaque for one year and his name will be engraved on it. Harry was really ticklin' the strings this time. His "Dill Pickles", "Maple Leaf Rag", and "Honolulu Cake Walk" were tops. There's another thing about Harry. He will spend hours with anyone who needs help. He has written arrangements for this writer that have taken hours of his time, and has passed on tricks of picking and fingering that have made banjo playing more fun for us. DALLAS MILLER still has something hidden inside his banjo that plucks those extra notes - I don't know how he does it. Vess L. Ossman had the knack of putting an extra "kick" in his playing. Ruby Brooks, too. C'mon Dallas, let us in on the trick.

BUSINESS MEETING

The annual business meeting was held Saturday afternoon, Bill Kentner, executive secretary, presided. It was agreed to continue the publication of the "5 stringer" four times a year. Mack Hopkins, our talented treasurer, has assured us that our treasury is solvent and able to support our expenses. He is issuing a new directory of the membership, which should be in our hands very soon. Cecil Boyd and Lew Green collaborated on a "Rhythm Tape" containing guitar accompaniment only, to about a dozen banjo favorites. The player puts a tape on his recorder and listens for the intro, follows the music, and plays along with a dandy accompaniment, and to quote Marshall Howard, "it beats plugging in the vacuum cleaner for accompaniment." The cost of tape and music will be determined so the Fraternity will benefit from each one purchased. More about this project later. It was demonstrated and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned and everyone gathered together on the Gables lawn for a group picture.

(Exec. Sec'y Says, con't.)

ROUND TABLE SEMINAR

A relaxed session of all members was held Saturday morning as sort of a "banjo in the round." Everyone was seated in a circle, and problems were discussed on an informal and "this is how I do it" basis. Cliff Spaulding, Bill Kentner, Fannie Hineline and other experts contributed much to the discussion. The problem of how to get a new student "off the ground" was one of the main topics. There were a few beginners at the meeting, so the discussion had receptive ears. It was agreed that the Grimshaw book "How to Play the Banjo" was a must. It was also agreed that practice and more practice was the real answer. Playing the exercises slowly until they can be played without slowing up for the "tough" bar. Learning a few easy pieces such as "Berkely March", "Darktown Dandies", etc. are important as it keeps the interest alive for the new player. These sessions are so interesting and informative that they will probably become a fixture at all future Rallies.

NEW MEMBERS

MRS. GEORGETTE TWAIN
5413 Hillside Road.
El Cerrito, California

STANLEY N. PINDER
5008 N. Clark Ave.
Tampa 3, Florida

HARVEY B. EVERETT
329 Bowling Hall Rd.
Bradford 4, Yorkshire, England

ROBERT MASON
62 Russell St.
Otago, New Zealand

H. EUGENE IRWIN
1621 Camino Rio
Farmington, New Mexico

WILLIAM F. FLETCHER
Glendale Manor Apt.25B
Pleasantville, New Jersey

MRS. PAULINE HERRING
P.O.Box 133
Upper Black Eddy, Pennsylvania

OLIVER F. BITTING
6936 19th W. North
St. Petersburg, Florida

pull on the string again. Release and pull a few times, remembering that the second joint does all the work. The first joint will straighten as the finger-tip is pressed against the string, and curve a little as the pressure is released. After you've learned to keep the first joint relaxed you are ready to pick the string. Fingers pointing across the strings at a right angle, first finger bent at the second joint, its tip on the string, pull the string as before, (keeping that first joint relaxed,) but this time gradually increase the pressure on the string until it snaps out from under the finger. If this is done just right (which probably will not happen the first time,) the string will ring out the strongest musical sound your banjo can produce. The finger will come to rest against the next string. This is what the Classic Guitarists call the apoyando, or rest stroke or supported stroke. It is the fundamental motion for best tone production. Practice it and practice it with each finger (even the third finger,) and do the same thing as nearly as possible with the thumb.

The fingernails should be long enough to support the finger tip without catching on the string, and it may help at the start if the thumb is rested on the fifth string while the fingers are being exercised, and if the fingers rest on the first string when the thumb is used.

This stroke may be used exactly as described in slow passages with single notes, in fact it is recommended for that, but to play chords or faster single notes the arc described by the finger tip is raised just enough that the finger does not come to rest on the next string. Everything else stays the same; first joint relaxed, pull with the second joint, point the fingers at a right angle to the strings. I do a fair imitation of it on both guitar and banjo, and it works! Try it.

ABOUT THE MUSIC IN THIS ISSUE

Smiler Rag is one of the oldest and best of all the ragtime numbers played on the 5 string banjo. The manuscript in this issue is that of Harry Bowen. He tells us that this arrangement is part that of W.D.Kenneth, the great arranger and player with the old New York Serenaders, and part Harry's. It also conforms quite accurately to the version played by Fred Van Eps on his old Victor Recording. Thanks Harry.

SMILER RAG by Wenrich

ARR. BY W.D. KENNETH & HARRY BOWEN

ARR. BY W.D. KENNETH & HARRY BOWEN

Handwritten musical score for "The Rose Tree" in 2/4 time. The score is written on ten staves. It includes various musical notations such as treble clefs, time signatures, notes, rests, and fingerings. There are also performance instructions like "Back to A", "TRIO:", and "ending - then Trio". The score is marked with measures 1 through 40.

Handwritten musical score on ten staves, featuring various musical notations, fingerings, and performance instructions.

Staff 1: 8P, 10B, 7B. Measures 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49.

Staff 2: 6P, 9B. Measures 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57.

Staff 3: 10B, 7B. Measures 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57.

Staff 4: 9B. Measures 55, 56, 57.

Staff 5: I, 10B, II. Measures 58, 59, 60, 61, 62.

Staff 6: 13P, 10B. Measures 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70.

Staff 7: 11P, 13P, 10B. Measures 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77.

Staff 8: 13P, 10B, 10P, 11P. Measures 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

Staff 9: 5-B, I, II. Measures 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

Staff 10: From A to Fine using 3rd Ending.



LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

ALFRED W. LANE, of Woking, Surrey, England, writes, "one important fact omitted from the article, 'Raise 4th to D - O.K.?' in the Spring issue of the '5 Stringer'. The chord of C, as every banjoist plays it, is not a man-made, it is an act of God. It is the first, second, third, and fourth harmonic of a fundamental note; the exact half, third, quarter and fifth of the string's length and the notes are there willy-nilly. On the 4th string (tuned to C) if you play the harmonics on the 12th fret, the 7th, 5th, and 4th frets in that order, you will again hear that chord." Mr. Lane, now 84 and still actively teaching music, states that the above subject is completely covered in Barnes & Mullins' Banjo School, published by them, at 3 Rathbone Place, London W, England.

DR. ROBERT G. THORNBURGH writes from Vienna, where he attended the "Secundus Congressus Societatis Europaeae Ophthalmologicae" which translated means a convention of eye doctors. Bob is worried about regaining his banjo facility after a long layoff. He also "flipped" over the zither music in the dining rooms. Aw, come on now, Doc.

GEORGETTE TWAIN, a new member from California, a professional plectrum banjoist, and a pupil of Eddie Peabody, states "I have my father's 1914 5 string Vegaphone, and I'm going to learn to pick the 5 string banjo. My father played a banjo act for years in vaudeville." Miss Twain has a new L.P. album out, "Let My Banjo Sing". Look for it. Fretts Magazine carried her picture on the cover last year along with her story.

FRED HAYWOOD, the pride of Pottsdam, N. Y., has this to say, "Believe it or not, Haywood now has a tape recorder. I traded two fine quality deluxe hunting rifles for the recorder ... they were suitable for Alaskan grizzly bear hunting. I have given up that idea, also Miriam said I'd get more good out of the recorder than I would from those guns." Yes, Fred, and you might do better shooting at the "Grizzly Bear Rag" on the banjo ... put the second part on your recorder and practice duets.

BILL MC MICHAEL, of Washington, D. C. asks a familiar question. He is using the microphone that comes with his recorder and is not happy. He asks, "how good does a mike have to be before a significant improvement in quality can be detected? Would a 10,000 cycle crystal mike be noticeably better or would one have to go to the more expensive dynamic equipment?" Ed. note: We covered this subject some time ago in a "Tape Tips" article, but here it is again. A dynamic or ribbon "uni-directional" mike of any good brand will definitely improve recording. The mikes that come with a set are generally cheap baubles and should be discarded. The Shure 545 is a fine mike for recording banjo, but it will cost about \$50. The Electro Voice 664 is comparable, also in cost. There are cheaper mikes, but these are usually crystal or ceramic, and generally too all-directional and sensitive for banjo pickup. Most home recorders require a high impedance microphone, so check this, or indicate it when ordering. The mike placement for the banjo should be quite close to the instrument, This captures the light overtones that escape a mike that's too far away. Be careful of the "list price" - it is usually discounted considerably. Shop around.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 5 STRINGER

CON BOOTON	\$2.00
R.CULBERTSON	2.00
FANNIE HINELINE	3.00
P. KNIGHTON	4.50
H. MILLER	7.00
L. SCHREYER	4.00

SPECIAL... NEXT ISSUE

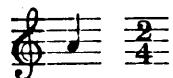


The Fall issue of the 5 Stringer will carry a column, "For Sale, Wanted, Swap, Etc." If you are looking for a banjo, or have one too many, send the information to your editor. It is a good idea to include a fair description of the instrument. Make, model, condition, and if a case is included. There is no charge for this, except in the case of some commercial members, and a letter to the editor will cover this.

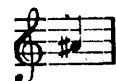
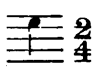

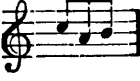
TEST YOUR MUSICAL KNOW-HOW THE WAY THEY DID WAY BACK WHEN. THIS PUZZLE TAKEN FROM A S.S.STEWART'S BANJO JOURNAL OF 1891. THE ANSWER IS ON P.8..DON'T PEEK UNTIL YOU HAVE TRIED TO SOLVE IT. TEST YOUR FRIENDS.




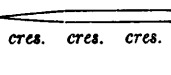
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A MUSICAL PUZZLE.




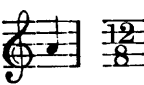
By T. J. ARMSTRONG.






 ago the little town of  was filled *Con Agitazione*  sorrow over the escapade of






 fellow who came about  in the afternoon of  beautiful summer day. Engaging a 



he told the driver to  his whip,  take him to the "Star  Garter." He cut  *cres. cres. cres.*

on reaching his destination, telling the landlord, as he mopped his , that his  would *Allegro*



follow him, in *Un Poco* while,  that he had come to  x x x x  would stay 





Taking  room on the  floor, he went to  His  consisted of  large





  with ropes. It was heavy  it contained  wax, each  weighing *f* pounds.





Well, about  next morning, watchmen  this *#* fellow  on the gas, and opening his

window seemed to  himself  spring. They thought this  *S* so rushing up

stairs on  *Allegro assai.* they found him gone. His room, full of  wax, was on fire.

They  him in the hotel yard with  small  on his back, and  in his hand.

He was seen to  the fence and disappear at  *~* in the road. The  man was 

thief, and his  *Molto sostenuto.* plunder. If he ever dares to  this  him beware, for his  life will come to an FINE.



The following is Mr. Armstrong's solution of his Musical Puzzle, which appeared in our last issue:

A short time ago the little town of Gefabe was filled with agitation and sorrow, over the escapade of a sharp fellow who came about quarter to four in the afternoon of a beautiful summer day. Engaging a cab he told the driver to snap his whip, and take him to the "Star and Garter." He cut a great swell on reaching his destination, telling the landlord, as he mopped his face, that his baggage would quickly follow him in a little while; and that he had come to Gefabe for rest, and would stay a long time. Taking the key of a room on the third floor, he went to bed. His baggage consisted of a large bag tied with ropes. It was heavy too, for it contained thirty-two bars of bees-wax, each bar weighing forty pounds. Well, about a quarter before four next morning, watchmen beheld this sharp fellow turn on the gas, and opening his window, seemed to brace himself for a spring. They thought this a bad sign, so rushing up stairs on a very quick run, they found him gone. His room full of bees-wax was on fire. They beheld him in the hotel yard, with a small bag on his back, and a staff in his hand. He was seen to scale the fence, and disappear at a sharp turn in the road. The base man was a thief, and his bag held plunder. If he ever dares to repeat this trip, let him beware, for his natural life will come to an end.

ARMSTRONG'S MUSICAL PUZZLE.

W H O O P S ! No this is not a topsy turvy error..we are just trying to make it harder to sneak a look at the answer to the Musical Puzzle on P. 7.