

the

QUARTER NOTES

Vol. 1 no. 3

Summer '83



GUTHRIE

WOODY GUTHRIE

July 14, 1912-October 3, 1967

A tough, wiry, curly-headed kid from Oklahoma, the train-hopping, pavement-pounding dust-bowl refugee and songsmith laureate of the twentieth century, still embodies the never-say-die spirit of America, its songs, and its singers. His union songs, work songs, kid's songs, dust-bowl songs, war songs, peace songs, hobo songs, sittin'-in-the-kitchen-doin'-nothin' songs, songs about anything and anybody, about everything and everybody, are altogether a celebration of humankind that continues to inspire singers, songwriters, and listeners in an all-encompassing scope and manner unmatched to this day. "The human race, a pretty good place." When Woody wrote a song, he didn't write about how good life could be. He wrote as it was, as he saw it, from the perspective of the migrant worker, struggling for union representation, or as the uprooted Okie, bank-foreclosed farmer, headed west for the California Promised Land, where the water tasted like cherry wine, but a job of work turned out to be merely a rumor.

His love of the land, of America the Beautiful, is reflected vividly in his songs. From the Oklahoma-hills-where-I-was-born, to the So-long-it's-been-good-to-know- you dust-bowl ballads that brought Woody's songs into the public limelight, to the Roll-on-Columbia songs of the Pacific Northwest, even the lyrics of struggle depict an all-encompassing love affair with the people and the countryside. "From the Redwood Forest to the Gulf Stream Waters, this land was made for you and me."

Woody sang his songs from coast to coast, in Europe and Africa, singing and playing anywhere people would listen. The impact this weather-beaten, restless soul with a six-stringer has had has been greater than that of any lawman with a six-gun. No politician with a stack of promises, fulfilled or otherwise, could give people what Woody's songs have given them: the strength to believe in themselves.



In Woody's words:

"I hate a song that makes you think you're not any good. I hate a song that makes you think you're born to lose, bound to lose, no good for nobody, no good for nothin, too old or too young, too fat or too thin, or too ugly or too this or too that; songs that run you down or songs that poke fun at you on account of your bad luck or your hard travellin'. I'm out to fight these kinds of songs to my last drop of blood, my last breath of air. I'm out to sing songs that'll prove to you this is your world. It can hit you pretty hard, knock you for a dozen loops. No matter how hard it's run you down or rolled over you, no matter what color or what size you are, or how you're built, I'm out to sing songs that'll make you take pride in yourself."

Proof that this spirit lives on is evident on the walls of the old London House on First Street in Okemah, Oklahoma, where Woody spent part of his childhood. Countless travellers have stopped at the run-down old house, some crawling through the windows or densely-overgrown underbrush to write their own memorials to woody on the walls:

--"John Lyons and his guitar slept here in June '72. Woody, thanks for holin' me up."

--"Woody, I came here to sing a song you wrote. My heart is filling to see that what you left us is going to remain in some of our hearts."

--"Me and Marge just came by to see where you lived 'cuz we're going to sing your songs all the way to California."

Not only are Woody's songs still being sung and recorded, but songs about him add to the ever-growing tribute to him. Bob Dylan, Tom Paxton, Bruce "U. Utah" Phillips, and Charlie Maguire have all contributed to the vast array of songs describing the man, the legend, and the life that keeps us all singing.

And on a 10,000 foot tall mountain overlooking a sleepy little town in New Mexico, there was a sign that read, "No Trespassing". Turned upside down and backside front, it now reads, "This side was made for you and me."

Woody lives.

--Paul Klonowski

Historically Yours;

A few blocks down from "The Old "Quarter" at the Prairie Avenue railroad crossing stands the Brookfield train station. This is a relatively new building. While it serves its purpose, I find it noticeably lacking in character. That is to say, I can hardly picture a banjo player throwing his case open in front of it and singing in the sun.

But if you were inclined to meander down the railroad tracks toward the east, you'd catch sight of a building that looks like a train station ought to look, although it's not sitting on the tracks. Officially it's known as The Grossdale Station, but it's more commonly called simply "the old Brookfield train station." It was built in 1893, and is the oldest intact station on the Burlington Northern commuter line.

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The designer and builder of the old station was Samuel Eberly Gross, who founded the town Grossdale, later renamed Brookfield (I wonder why?). In order to persuade people to buy into his new subdivision Gross offered free rides on the railroad line. He then gave away free box lunches while he spoke of the advantages of settling in Grossdale. The result of his sales pitch was a good number of land buyers who formed a growing community. The station is one of the few original public buildings still standing in the village.

In 1977 a group of people joined together in an effort to preserve the old station. Because it was aging and the cost of renovation was very high, the railroad wanted to build a new station and tear down the old one. But through the efforts of the determined people of Brookfield and the Brookfield Historical Society the station was moved to a new location rather than being destroyed.

After 91 years of residence on the south side of the tracks the station traveled over the railroad and found its resting spot on the corner of Forest and Brookfield avenues. Presently the station is being converted into a museum that will help cultivate an interest in the history of Brookfield.

Further information about the old Brookfield train station can be obtained by writing to the BROOKFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P. O. Box 342, Brookfield, IL, 60513, or by calling 485-0971.



Quarter Notes recently talked with Andrew about his music.

QN Were you raised on the Top Ten? What kind of music did you listen to growing up?
 AC No, my parents had Leadbelly, Richard Dyre Bennett, and classical music around the house.

QN What do you think of the Chicago music scene?
 AC There's something wrong with it but I don't know what. I think you should mention the new WBEZ live radio show.

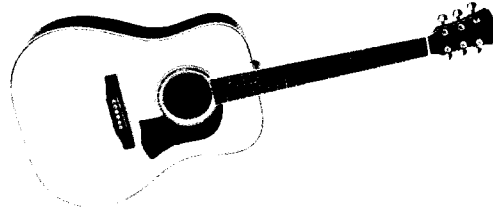
QN I've heard the comment that your songs are depressing. Is life a curse?
 AC NO, that's why I write songs. If you don't take what's offered you, you're looking for something else. There's a catharsis in the songs.

QN How do you write your songs?
 AC The words just pop out, the music takes alot of work.

QN What's your favorite place to play?
 AC (Laugh) Libertyville...I like the Old Quarter.

QN Is there anything you want to say?
 AC No...Buy more albums. I printed a small number of Water Street and I want to do another.

Andrew Calhoun is 25 years old. He has been performing for 12 years. He lives with his wife and son in Chicago. AC will be performing at: 6/5 Come for to Sing Benefit; 6/29 No Exit; 7/10 Crosscurrents.



Water Street
 songs by:
 Andrew Calhoun

"This first album by Andrew Calhoun has as much to offer the lover of words as did the early albums by Bob Dylan and John Prine...The tunes are good and the guitar work is excellent, but it's the wild, witty, naive, outrageous, insightful, audacious, shocking and brilliantly literary word concoctions that will, someday (I predict), make Andrew a famous person...Open yourself and accept this album. you won't be sorry."

--Art Thieme, Illinois Entertainer

Water Street is available by mail for \$8.50 from:

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Ed. Note...

A NEW OPEN MIKE

On Sunday nights, the Pump Company Pub in Batavia holds an open mike, beginning at nine o'clock. The crowds are reported to be both sizeable and attentive, so this should be a fine place to play. For further information and directions, call host Rod Burke, 879-9398.



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side one

1. Come All Ye...
2. Looly, Looly
3. The Poor Ditching Boy
4. The Nutting Girl / The Linnen Hall
5. Betsy Bell & Mary Grey

side two

1. Bedlam Boys
2. Gypsy Lady
3. Ballad Skatch
4. Sheebag & Sheemor
5. Dancing Song

HOW TO RUIN A CHILDREN'S SONG

Children are often a forgotten segment of the folk community. Many great albums have been written for children by people like Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie. Unfortunately, many other songs have been recorded that are terribly condescending. Singing to children should be just as natural as talking to them. In the Incomplete Folksinger, Pete Seeger lists seven ways to ruin an American folk song. Here are a few of those he listed:

1. Sing it in the kind of bel-canto voice that says, "Look what impressive pipes I have."
2. Croon it as though it were just one more pretty pop song.
3. Arrange it for symphony or orchestra, as if that automatically improved it.
4. Arrange it into a production number, such as a finale on the "Ed Sullivan Show." with a grand "ta-ran-ta-ta" ending. (Pete adds here, "I can't think of a single folk song that can survive this manhandling.")

It's also tempting to alter the words to a good folk song to make it less violent for children. Here is the original version of an American sea chantey, "Hanging Johnny." It's about a man who hangs his "granny" and his "daddy" for pay.

Oh, they call me Hanging Johnny;
 Away, boys, away,
 They say I hangs for money;
 So hang, boys, hang.

This is the altered version that was widely printed in a school anthology:

Oh, they call me smiling Johnny.
 Away, boys, away,
 Because my smile is bonny;
 So smile, boys, smile.

Although I'm not advocating that children be taught to consider doing away with their relatives, the fact is that kids know enough about life and the world to understand many supposedly "grown-up" songs.

If we want traditional music to be kept alive, it is important that we pass it on to children in the most straightforward and honest manner possible. Only then can we have another generation of Seegers and Guthries.

—Marianne Mohrhusen



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SAY, DAVE ?

Why does "The Old Quarter" encourage amateur performers to use the open mike?

Well, some people believe a stage should be reserved for performers who have perfected their craft. In following that philosophy you eventually run into a "catch-22", that being "only experienced need apply". But, what better way to get experience than by playing on a stage.

One of the unfortunate aspects of the music industry is that so many of the people with a talent for playing an instrument or singing lack sincerity for the songs they are performing. Walter Bagehot, an English critic, once wrote, "The reason why so few good books are written is that so few people who can write know anything". If folk music is to remain folk music, the participation of amateurs and the presentation of home-made music is crucial. The open mike is an avenue for expression for those people who feel that they have something to offer through their own songs or interpretations of others. Besides it's fun too. So there ya go.

Dave Reynolds

Making Music..... it's Like Baking Bread

"It's like baking bread--- it's fun to do, and the results are pleasing."

The subject is homemade music, and the speaker is Douglas Miller, president of the Libertyville School of Folk and Old Time Music. Bringing people together to make music is the school's reason for being, and it is a reason very dear to Miller's heart.

The "folk and old time" part of the school's name does not exclude classical music, or jazz or much else.

"For me," said Miller, " the definition of 'folk' is very wide. It's more inclusive than exclusive." Asked what it does include, he smiled and spread his hands. "All forms of homemade music--- that's as narrow as I can get."

Homemade music fits well in the Adler Cultural Center. Once the home of renowned architect David Adler, the estate was given to the village of Libertyville by Adler's family after his death. The house, which dates from the Civil War has been the home for the Libertyville Arts Center since 1949, and for the School of Folk and Old Time Music since it's inception in 1975.

Twice monthly the school features traditional and contemporary performers in concert, and once a month there's a beginner's jam. This get-together is for starting-out musicians who have not had much chance to play and sing with others. Words and chords to familiar songs are passed around, and playing tips are shared. The beginner's jam is free, as is the open stage which is held every Friday night.

The open stage is just that - open to players and listeners of all musical persuasions. According to Miller, the only requirement is that the music be non-electric, and this is based partly on philosophy, partly on the laws of physics and electronics.

"We felt there are plenty of forums for electric musicians. Somebody's always looking for lead guitarists for a band.... and besides we don't have the space, and the wiring (in the house) couldn't handle it," he explained.

In addition to the playing in the stage area, there's a generous amount of jamming and song swapping that goes on in various other rooms, so that the effect is one of musical cross-currents floating throughout the house.

For the music lovers who come to the Adler House it is very much a home. "Music is integral to the home," said Miller, "like making bread. Here we have people sitting, playing and singing, and there are children involved. It's very low pressure. We're not trying to prove that any one of us is a super musician."

"We have some really devoted people who drive for 45 minutes every Friday to come and play," said Miller.

"There aren't a lot of places with as broad a range of activities that are so open to the community. Our sole purpose is to bring people together. That's the core of what we're doing, the heart of it."

"There are people who have never danced, or seen a hammered dulcimer or been exposed to live fiddle-playing before..." and like the homemade bread Miller favors, the Libertyville School of Folk and Old Time Music is rising to the occasion.

by Connie Purcell

re-printed from the Lake County
Market/Journal 8/19/81

Don Buedel



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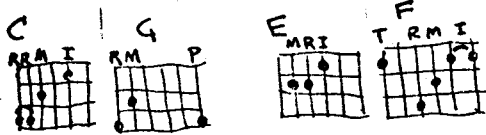
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BEGINNING FINGERPICKING...

This basic arrangement of "Freight Train" by Elizabeth Cotten, is designed to help the beginning fingerpicker find and play a melody. The tune is in the key of C and requires that you be able to play some chords in a certain fashion. Here they are:

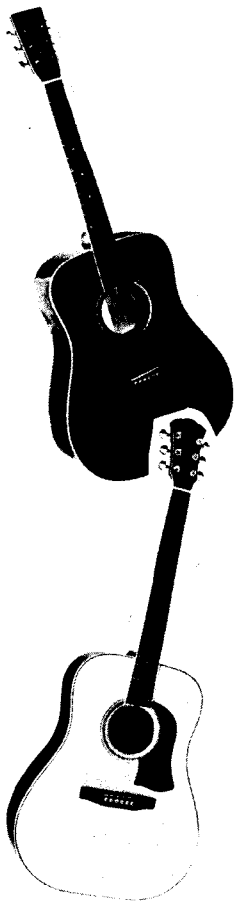


I = INDEX FINGER
 M = MIDDLE FINGER
 R = RING FINGER
 T = THUMB
 P = PINKY

The 4th, 5th, and 6th strings are played by the thumb, the 3rd string is played by the index finger, and the first and second strings are played by the middle finger. You'll note that throughout the sixteen measures the thumb keeps a steady bass pattern by striking the 5th, 4th, 6th, 4th, no matter what chord form is played by the left hand. You'll also note that all of the melody notes fall on the beat - there are no syncopated notes in the arrangement. Keep your thumb pattern steady and read the melody carefully.

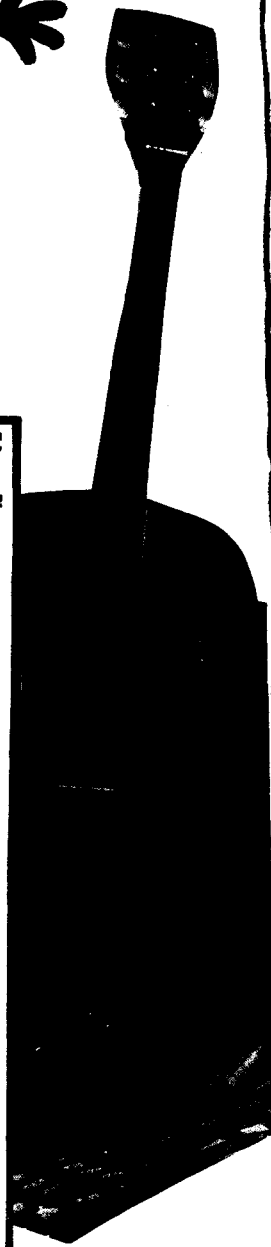
Once you have mastered this arrangement, fool around with it some more, add rolls (notes off the beat) and bass runs to your taste and you'll have your own arrangement of great song that's as fun to pick as it is to sing.

-Mark Dvorak



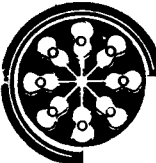
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9

"The Old Quarter" coffeehouse
SUMMER SCHEDULE

- Sat. June 11 Featuring--THE MUSIC OF JANET HIGBEE--Returning to "The Old Quarter" coffeehouse, JANET HIGBEE has performed at clubs, coffeehouses and festivals throughout the area. She presents much of her own material, accented by solid guitar accompaniment and an extraordinary vocal style. MARK DVORAK will open the 8:00 p. m. show, performing a variety of contemporary and traditional folk songs. Open stage at 10:30 p. m.
- Sat. June 25 ENCORE CONCERT--This long awaited show will feature "the best of the open stage." Performing on this night will be vocal trio THURSDAY'S CHILD, guitarist TOM NOLAN, BOB JANIS and some of the other favorites from "The Old Quarter" open stage. As it is our wish to present these performers in an "in concert" format, no open stage will be held at the conclusion of the final set.
- Sat. July 9 Featuring--PRAIRIE FLYER--This popular trio comprised of Douglas Udell, Marcia Bowen and Don Morman, will be making their debut at "The Old Quarter" coffeehouse. Highlighted by fine harmony singing and sparkling musicianship, Prairie Flyer performs "a potpourri of American music", from bluegrass to country as well as contemporary and traditional folk songs. Opening the 8:00 p. m. show will be DON BUEDEL, a skilled musician on many stringed instruments, including banjo, guitar and fiddle. Originally from Cantrall, Illinois, Buedel's old time country songs and homespun humor have become a favorite attraction at "The Old Quarter". Open stage at 10:30 p. m.
- Sat. July 23 Jigs, reels, hornpipes and other melodies Gaelic will fill the air as "The Old Quarter" is proud to present SAMHRADH MUSIC. Samhradh Music (pronounced "sow ra") has been attracting a steady, substantial following of college students, punk rockers, suburbanites, folk music fanciers and Irish Musicians while displaying the rich heritage of Irish music at coffeehouses, bars, festivals and clubs. The bands founder Michael Donaghy (whistle, bodhran), will be joined by Richard Pettengill on guitar, Dan Dick on flute and guitar, Martin Dowling on fiddle, and Mary McFadden on vocals. Opening the 8:00 p. m. show will be LISA LILLY, a young and talented singer/songwriter locally from Brookfield who will perform her own material as well as folk songs and country tunes. Open stage at 10:30 p. m.
- Sat. Aug. 13 THE OLD TIME BARN DANCE returns to "The Old Quarter". THE SALT CREEK RAMBLERS will provide the string band music, and dancers will be on hand to help instruct those unfamiliar with traditional dance steps. If you missed the last one, don't miss this one! Dancing and music for all ages. Beer and wine will be available. The music starts at 8:00.
- Sat. Aug. 27 HOUSE CONCERT--Featuring MARVIN LENSINK and PAUL KLONOWSKI--A regular featured performer at "The Old Quarter", MARVIN LENSINK is an excellent guitarist, displaying a repertoire of blues, gospel songs, rags and instrumentals. PAUL KLONOWSKI will open the 8:00 p. m. show performing a variety of ballads, old time country songs, and original material, accompanying himself on the guitar and banjo. Following Paul's performance we will hold an OPEN HOUSE instead of our usual open stage. Our purpose this night is to provide a relaxed atmosphere for conversation and a time for you and us to share our music. We urge everyone who plays an instrument or sings, no matter what level of skill, to attend this special evening.



Info: 485-3712 ~ 447-9599



Please Join Our
Open Mikes:

June 11

July 9

July 23



SOME THOUGHTS ON BANJOS....

In one of my books of banjo tunes, there's a little quote that accurately describes my first two years of playing the instrument: "I was in the habit of carrying my banjo around, hoping to find someone who could play it."... In fact, every banjo book I've seen seems to be peppered with little comments of a wry, but quite serious nature, and the essence of these remarks is carried in the demeanor of every banjo picker I've ever known.

Here are some of those little quips which describe banjo playing, as well as banjo players, best:

"There are no notes to a banjo. You just play it."

"Sure I can read music. But what are all these funny dots on this paper?"

"I was a pretty good singer until tunes come in fashion."

"When I'm sad, I play the banjo because it cheers me. When I'm happy, I play it because I can't help myself."

"Written music is, at best, a guide, but it's irrelevant to the banjo."

"Can I read notes? Not enough to hurt my playing."

"A person shouldn't have more property than he can squeeze between his banjo and the outside wall of his banjo case."

"If you are the kind of person who must be told what notes are "correct" in a tune, then you should take up an instrument more suited to popular or orchestral music, where you'll have no end of people telling you what you "should" do... If you judge music in intellectual terms rather than by what you feel when you hear or play it, then the banjo is not for you."



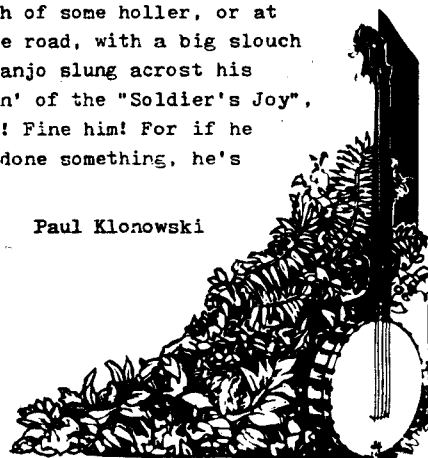
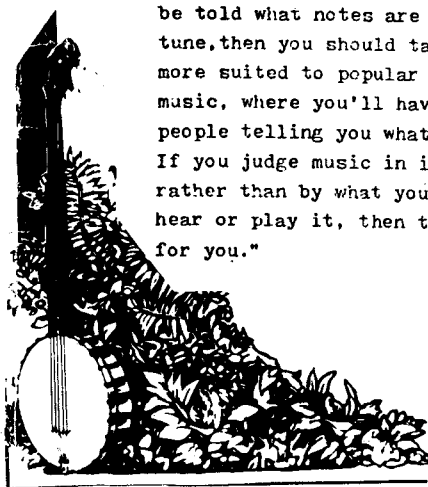
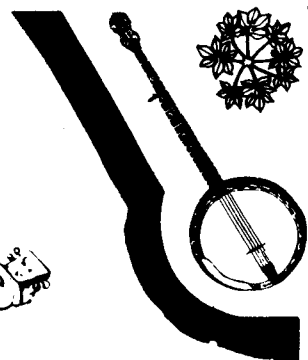
"All the music theory in the world won't make a good banjo picker or fiddler."

"The banjo picker often adopts the rowdy ways of the hard-living, moonshine-drinking segment of the mountain community"

Finally, a quote from the speech of a highland judge to the jury:

"When you see some overgrown buck standing at the mouth of some holler, or at the fork of some road, with a big slouch hat on, and a banjo slung acrost his breast, a-pickin' of the "Soldier's Joy", arrest that man! Fine him! For if he hasn't already done something, he's a-goin' to!"

Paul Klonowski



A MEMORIAL

And if I had followed a little ways
Because we're friends you would have made me
welcome out there.

But we both know it's just as well, 'cause some can go
But some are meant to stay behind, and it's always
that way.

And yours is the open road. The bitter song,
The heavy load that I'll never share, tho' the offer's
still there

Every time you turn around.

STAN ROGERS

THE Old Quarter
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