

PLUCK-N-POST

508 Second Street, Cove Oregon 97824 USA

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
OF JEW'S HARP GUILD



DOUBLE ISSUE

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 1

SPRING 2007

We're Back! Hopefully better than ever. With renewed fervor, attitude, and commitment to the people that matter most... our membership. You find us now under new leadership (see page 2) and an urgent desire to be your source of information and fellowship in regards to this wonderful, magic instrument.

Participation is everything to a volunteer organization such as ours. Personal obligations and tragedies are priority to even those folks in leadership roles. It is the nature of things, and sometimes it will happen, even to the best intentioned. We apologize for our hiatus.

Letters have been sent to our membership explaining, in part, the situation. We have offered refunds those who desire it and, thus far, none have accepted and many have reaffirmed their faith in us. Participation is the key and we urge all members to include themselves in the activities, otherwise we shall cease to exist. Our commitment is clear. Join us in our adventure and the JHG shall lead the way.

Mark D. Poss— Editor



JHG Leadership as of April 2007: Wayland Harman - Executive Director: Janet Gohring - Secretary / Treasurer:
Board Members— Gordon Frazier, Ingrid Berkhout, Larry Hanks, Lorraine Tendick, Mike Stiles, Ralph Christensen
Denise Harrington - Festival Coordinator: Mark Poss - Newsletter Editor & Webmaster

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A Word from the Executive Director Wayland Harman



My name is Wayland Harman, the new executive director of the Jew's Harp Guild. I want to express my appreciation for the faith the membership has placed in me, and the enthusiasm of all

the new and returning board members. We have a wonderful opportunity to take this organization to the next level just as soon as we figure out what we want that to be. While we work on that one there is the job of getting back on track and putting on another festival. I have inherited a few significant concerns which require, and are receiving, my immediate attention, first and foremost, this very publication. It is a blessing that our members have been so patient with us and we do apologize for not publishing the Pluck-N-Post regularly. That shortcoming is being rectified and you may look forward to finding it in your mailbox consistently, each issue filled with relevant articles and serving the needs of this fine organization in every way that we can. The PNP is your place to share what you know about the Jew's Harp. Your input and submissions are encouraged.

Another obvious concern is the festival. While we may be a little behind in our planning this year, all necessary preparations are being made and falling into place quite nicely. Our appreciation for the Bay City Arts Council cannot be overstated. To have this facility at our disposal, and the wonderful folks who take care of us there, has made the physical chore of presentation much easier. This still leaves a lot for us to do and additional volunteers are always welcome. Look for an exciting new

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Wayland Harman - Executive Director JHG
Janet Gohring - Secretary JHG
Mark D. Poss - Editor, Pluck-N-Post & Webmaster

The Jew's Harp Guild is a non-profit organization under section 501C(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code of 1954.

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We're on the Web
www.jewsharpguild.org

Guild T-shirt

to be available this year and of course the 15th annual commemorative shirt. Our workshops will include a few surprises and a special session on how the instruments are made. Come join us and make a popsicle stick Jew's Harp. It won't sound great but sure will be fun and will help you see why good Jew's Harps sound good. Have you ever wanted to play more than one harp at a time, we can show you how. Interested in some of the related instruments? Would you like to learn to circular breath your Didgeridu, or build a mouthbow that really rocks? This is the Jew's Harp Festival and anything is possible. It is all happening on the weekend of August 4th. This would be a good year to join us, if you haven't yet; and for all of our returning friends, see you there! Also I want to say thank you to those of you I have already spoken with. The way you all have stepped up to the plate again this year is very impressive and the reason why this festival is going to be great.

As you may know the Jew's Harp Guild was established as a not for profit entity in 1996. We have successfully maintained our 503C status since that time, and have every intention of continuing the Guild ad infinitum. Though we have never secured the grant money we hoped this organizational move would bring, we have none the less established ourselves as an important part of the world Jew's Harp community. Our website is the most often cited source on the web for information about this instrument. One benefit of our non profit status allowed us the .org classification which has enhanced our credibility and thus our responsibility. We take our online presence very seriously and hope to increase the data base we are hosting in the near future. The two CDs of festival recordings stand as our most, shall I say, vocal accomplishment. An amazing array of talent has graced the festival stage through its fourteen years. I am so glad we have this sample preserved; the spirit of the festival is well captured here. The incredible amount of work that has gone into this organization, and years of dedication by what has sometimes been far too few individuals doing it all, deserves more recognition than I can begin to express here. What has been created is a strong group, with lofty goals and the common sense to take care of the business at hand while graciously reaching to a bright future. Each of us should be proud to have come so far, accomplished so much; and if at times that has been only to keep us alive until the next growth spurt then we have done well. We are after all a teenager and our growing pains have made us strong. - Wayland ✕



GUIDE TO THE GUILD In his own words... **WAYLAND HARMAN**

In order to put my association with the festival into perspective, and as a means of introduction for those of you that I have not met; here is a brief history of one of the festivals "odder" participants.

I was approached to be the master of ceremonies at the first festival, a position I kept for many years. I already played guitar and wrote songs and quickly fell in love with the Jew's harp. Seeing what could be done with the instrument, meeting Leo Tadagawa who made music with the whole world as his instrument, Jules DeGulio's Didgeridu, and lessons learned from players like Bill Gohring and Gordon Frazier all changed my life. This new creative outlet led to the development of the Reeded Mouthbow and the invention of the Clackamore in 1995. My most cherished memory of all the festivals is the overwhelmingly positive response to the Clackamore the first year I sold them. It was through the Clackamore that I met Mark Poss and Dan Gossi, who have both been such wonderful supporters of the festival and the Guild. We formed the online business, Mouth Music Press in 1998, which Mark and Dan still operate. As a group and with the full support of the festival organizers the two festival CDs were created. Mark and I joined with Michael Bruesh in 1999 forming the OddTones, and appeared on the festival stage for several years. Our CD "We're Allowed" uses the Jew's harp throughout, along with other mouth resonated instruments and few other oddities. I am no longer with this band and my association with the Guild was seriously curtailed when I divorced and moved far away in 2003. I was able to attend last year's festival, after a two year absence and enjoyed being back with my friends. I had not expected to be elected to the director's position when I offered to help in anyway that I could, at the annual meeting last year. I do however accept the job with humble appreciation and will endeavor to lead us firmly and fairly to the future that looms so bright.— Sincerely, Wayland*



THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL JEW'S HARP FESTIVAL BIG SUCCESS [August 2006]

July 28th - 30th 2006

Location: Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ, Amsterdam

We are happy to inform you that the 5th International Jew's harp Festival will take place in Amsterdam from July 28th through July 30th.

In association with the International Jew's Harp Society the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ will organise the 5th international Jew's harp festival In July 2006. Hundreds of players, Jew's harp makers and researchers from remote corners of the world will come to Amsterdam in order for the Dutch audience to get acquainted with the astounding versatility of this small instrument. More information is available at www.muziekgebouw.nl/mondharpfestival.

Read the whole story at:

http://www.muziekgebouw.nl/uk/actueel_detail.asp?id=71



FIFTH INTERNATIONAL JEW'S HARP FESTIVAL 2006 CD

The remarkably varied sounds of the Jew's harp, that could be heard throughout the fifth International Jew's Harp Festival in July 2006 in the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ, have been captured on a beautiful double CD. Jew's Harp players from all over the world were invited by Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ and the International Jew's Harp Society to perform at the festival. For centuries, the Jew's harp has been one of the most widely spread musical instruments of the world appearing in all shapes and sizes.

The CD is for sale at the Box Office of the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ for € 25,00. People from outside the Netherlands can order the CD by phone using a credit card. The box office can be reached from 12.05 pm - 7 pm (CET) at T +31 20 788 2000.

Please keep your credit card number and expiry date ready. (price € 25,00 including administration and postal charges).

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email: newsletter@jewsharpguild.org
Or use the
Feedback Form: www.jewsharpguild.org

Can you make a video on how to tune a Jew's harp? Know anybody in my area (CT) who can do it.

Did anybody inform Andy Rooney (60 Minutes - CBS) that the Jew's harp is not inferior to a kazoo? Ref. Albrechtberger's classical symphony for Jew's Harp and Mandora.— Joe Lavariere 860-533-7133

14th NW Jew's Harp Festival

From: Katin via the JHG Discussion Group
Date: 8/9/2006

Hello all! I just wanted to thank the organizers and staff of this year's festival in Bay City. I immediately felt welcomed and among friends, and I had a great time. The band scramble was such a kick, and I know my playing skills improved *greatly*! Great festival, great fun, great people. Great food, too! I'll back next year, and I'm going to be sure to camp! Cheers, --Katin



"Show-N-Tell" is a recurring feature of *Pluck-N-Post*. Please submit your own photos and stories. Do you have an unusual Jew's Harp, or one with an unusual history? We'd love to hear about them.

These are two new ones from Steven Stoop, a long time maker and contributor from Holland. The one on the left is in the key of E. The other is adjustable



SOUNDINGS

Soundings explores the new world of Jew's Harp related audio and video files available on the internet, new CDs and recordings, or historical recordings of days past. Please let us know of any special trinkets you find and include performer comments or background if possible.

From: Owen Gilbride via the JHG Discussion Group
Date: 4/4/2007

<http://www.cryptowen.com/edited.html> Here are a few improv solos I edited in Audacity. Any comments/critiques? I'm planning on adding more (including non-edited ones) soon.

From: Mark Poss - JHG Webmaster via the JHG Discussion Group
Date: 12/7/2006

A neat new User Submitted Audio file has been posted at: http://www.jewsharpguild.org/Audio/useraudio/Andrew_ButlerDec2006a.htm Enjoy and please submit your own! - Mark

From: SAM C via the JHG Discussion Group
Date: 9/17/2006

I've uploaded a few video of jawharp playing these last days, at : <http://www.youtube.com/profile?user=overtonesamy> Khomus and morsing I brought back from Amsterdam, and two bamboo stringed trumps, one self made, and one from Mongolia. SAM

A Photo Essay of 2006 Jew's Harp Festivals by Ingrid Berkhout

Ingrid's photos of the 5th International Jew's Harp Festival (2006) and the North American Jew's Harp Festival 2006 will continue in the Summer issue of the *Pluck-N-Post*



5th International Jew's Harp Festival

Amsterdam—July 2006

Alaska and Africa Meet in Amsterdam.

By John Palmes

Dancing and shaking to the rhythm of the bells on her ankles and the drumming of her bare feet on the wooden floor, Madisoni struts onto the stage like Queen Marimba. She plays jaw harp, birembau, and mouthbow (African names of these instruments not known to me). Birembau (sp?) is known to most of us from Brazilian or South American music but Madisoni plays these instruments in uniquely African ways.

Madisoni wasn't on the program, she just happened to be in Amsterdam and was able to give us 15 minutes on the first evening of the Mundharp Festival. Her dancing entrance and her tribal dress say she represents a tradition and a culture. Madisoni speaks no English, but speaks through an interpreter.



I'm a mouthbow player from Alaska. Amsterdam was hard on me with temperatures over 100 every day. So I was amazed that Madisoni could stand the heat in all that clothing. She wore heavy traditional dress, but I was blown away by the way she played the mouthbow.

I've been tinkering for over 40 years, but Madisoni's playing and singing have more than 40 thousand years of tradition behind them. It's a culture that understands how to make music with a hunting bow.



Her mouthbow technique was immediately strange and impressive... instead of putting the end of the bow near her open mouth, she put her mouth around the bow, maybe 6 cm from the end, and she used a bow made from a long thin smooth stick.

Her bowing technique put a lot of energy into the string, making an incredible whistling, warbling, bugling sound, like very high falsetto singing... (it's hard to say that there was no voice in it).. but it wasn't just a sound, it was part of a song, that was part of a way of life.

I can only imagine the antithesis between that culture and the grand new concert hall in Amsterdam where fortune had led us both. I've know of Madisoni for more than 10 years (Google for mouthbow). She is a very important bearer of culture within South Africa as well as without. I never imagined I'd meet her, certainly not in the Netherlands.

I brought two mouthbows with me from Juneau, but only intended to take one back home. The other would stay behind, a gift to someone as yet unknown. After the concert, friends pointed out Madisoni and her entourage on the patio, so I went down and introduced myself. They offered me a seat.

After some brief introduction, I showed Madisoni the bow I'd brought, demonstrated it, then presented it to her. She in turn, unpacked her →

bow giving me a close-up look at how she played. Madison motioned to me something like “how do you pluck it?”. I brought out one of my special green picks and handed it to her.

I only had two of those picks and didn't know where I'd find more in Amsterdam, so I was surprised that instead of handing it back, she put it in her pocket.... I felt foolish when she took out one of her birembau sticks and one of the sticks she uses to “bow” the mouthbow and gave them to me. We were trading and I hadn't caught on.

So, now I know exactly what the bow is made of (long slender stem segment of woody plant) and that it doesn't work on my steel strung bow. (This is the next frontier for my own mouthbow playing. Bowed mouthbow is an incredible sound.)

10:00 Saturday Morning, 8 people came to my

mouthbow workshop, (thanks also to Lindsay Proteus for demonstrating). However, they were 8 bright, knowledgeable, inquisitive people, and I was able to show them something they didn't already know (the mouthbow revolution is now).

Amsterdam was great.... finally I've met a real mouthbow player. It was an honor to be invited to perform and give a workshop at the International Conference. I finally got to meet Lindsay Proteus, a Scotsman mouthbow player, had a beer with Roland Wimmer, of the Wimmer Maultrommel company (met at NA Jew's Harp festival in Richland, OR a couple of years ago. Fred Crane, and Anton Brun, folks from Austria, Russia, Hungary and Japan, India the middle east. I met or exchanged viruses with just about every famous Jew's harp player I'd never met.....

John Palmes*

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Creating a Jewsaphone

Harm J. Linsen



2006, Good Friday.

Here we are, a holy weekend and I have the time to write an article on creating a jewsaphone. The idea to write this article came to me as I was reading the article Etats Unis/Clayton Bailey <http://www.guimbardage.net/article.php3?id_article=14> in February 2006 on the French site <http://www.guimbardage.net/>. In the last paragraph of his article the author mentions (and I quote) 'Pour ma part je vais me mettre à la recherche d'un klaxon en cuivre dans les brocantes'. (For my part I find myself a brass horn in a lumber shop). A few weeks earlier near the new year I made two jewsaphones out of two brass horns that were collecting dust in a box.

A few weeks earlier.

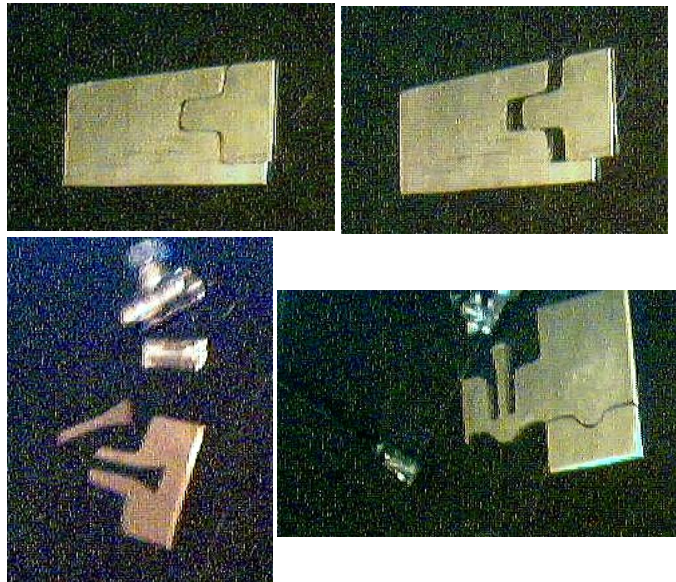
Collecting all the information I could find concerning the Jewsaphone I discovered the site of Clayton Bailey and his Jawsaphones (the subject of the article mentioned above). When I saw the photographs of his 'universal Jawsaphones' I said to myself 'I can do that myself'. The idea was born and I found myself in a hardware store to study the materials and ways to construct a device that could hold the jew's harp.

Fabrication plan :

I take two brass plates which I cut with a jig-saw, in the desired form. On one plate I mount a T-shaped coupling for water conduits. The long side of the T-coupling is cut to form an opening in which the tongue can move freely. On the other plate bolts will be attached with which the two

sides can be fixed together and hold a jew's harp. All the pieces are finally fixed by soldering.

↓ Cutting the brass :



Fabrication

Not as easily done as said, obtaining brass plates is not simple. It looks like it doesn't exist. In the Dutch hobby shops they don't sell it. Finally I obtained the brass at a metal wholesale dealer. Cutting the brass is not very difficult although you need some patience and some quality saw blades. The quality of the blades is an important factor for your patience. One plate needs two to three blades in the ideal case but that could be a much larger number.

After cutting, the holes for the bolts are made. Very important is the position of the holes, the jew's harp will go together with the two plates. The trick is to position the centre of the sounding part of the tongue or embouchure (mouthpiece) opposite to the hole in the short arm of the T-coupling. If that is not the case the horn will not or very poorly amplify the sound of the jew's harp. The holes in which the bolts are placed need to be of a slightly smaller diameter as the diameter of the bolt. That way you can cut the thread where the bolts are to be screwed in. The holes in the other plate should be slightly bigger for an easy assembly.

The next phase is to solder all the pieces together. You need to develop a feeling for this. In the beginning soldering seems very difficult and you have to try several times to reach the result

you want. Gradually you get better and the results are more pleasing. Next pieces are soldered, the bolts, which are already screwed in the holes, the T-shaped coupling, and the thread inside the short arm of the T-shaped coupling (because the narrow end of the horn has also a thread), After soldering (and cleaning because all is smudged by the flame) the jewsaphone is ready to assemble.



For easy assembly I have used winged nuts. ↓



Experimenting

After the success of making my first two jewsaphones I started to search for other horns to experiment with. And in a secondhand shop I found a bottle in the shape of a clarinet and with a clasped capsule. Using the clasp of the capsule I made a glass jewsaphone.

Now I have six jewsaphones of different shapes and I have ideas for some others.

Playing

After construction and assembly I was very curious to know how the instrument sounded. The first time I tried it with the instrument against my lips (not the teeth). Whoa, what a sound I was truly surprised by its clarity.



It's a bit hard to define in what fashion the sound is changed. I haven't made any recordings of the sound. I have the impression that the sound is richer or more full.

Playing the jew's harp pressed against the lips, there is a clear sound in contrast to playing without the jewsaphone where the sound is smothered by the lips. Playing with the instrument pressed against the teeth gives a hard sound inside your head and it's a little harder to reduce the vibrations of the instrument to prevent it slapping against your teeth. This caused a cramp in my jaws as if I ate chewing gum for a long time. After some time that is reduced (by training I guess). One cause of that cramp is the form of the plate of my first jewsaphone which requires more effort to keep the instrument still. Nevertheless playing with more efforts to control the instrument is something you quickly get accustomed to.

So yes, the sound is really amplified but I have no clue to what extend.. It's also dependant on what kind of jew's harp is amplified, the larger ones with a more rigid tongue are better amplified than the smaller jew's harps with a less rigid tongue. That has probably its origin in the length of the horn, but also the position of the jew's harp in front of the hole in the T-shaped coupling which is maybe less tolerant for the position of the smaller jew's harps. The sound is certainly amplified but in comparison with other musical instruments maybe not enough.

And take care! You'll experience that playing a jewsaphone is addictive! - Harm J. Linsen ✕

Photos by Robb Storar at the 5th international Jew's harp festival, Amsterdam— This article was published earlier on the French site www.guimbardage.net



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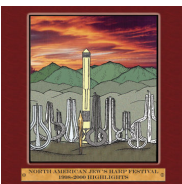
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- Fred Crane, PNP 2003



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