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Introduction

After building “Elizabeth” (my first mountain dulcimer) from a Folkroots kit in 1980, I found it very difficult to learn how to play the instrument. Libraries’ resources were very thin, music stores often had only 1 or 2 books (which I quickly purchased!), and I knew of no other people who played dulcimer. In fact, the first one I saw close up had been a gift to my banjo-playing buddy from his family for Christmas. I asked how to play it and he responded, “Ya can’t. It’s not like regular music.”

Nonetheless, I kept trying to play, testing out tunings (which I deduced were a mysterious key to unlocking the music) and after playing the few fiddle tunes I could find, began to listen to the new songs and tunes that seemed to flow forth from the dulcimer itself.

I was delighted to find from Neal Helman’s *Dulcimer Songbook* that original tunes were attempted by others, but not until finding his *Dulcimer Chord Book* did the “scales literally fall from my eyes!”

It was a bright fall Sunday afternoon in my Denver apartment when I remember the joy at finding I could play music I already knew and could sing along with!

Years before I had found Jean Ritchie’s book, *I Celebrate Life!* and her photos, stories, poetry and songs had accompanied the footsteps of this wandering soul. After my dulcimer epiphany I began to play Jean’s music and so it is with great joy that I am able to include the title poem from her collection in this book, whose title comes from that poem. From there I went on to writing my own music for both kinds of dulcimers.

—Steve Eulberg
Fort Collins, May 2004

Playing Instructions

All the tunes in this collection make use of standard musical notation and tablature. **Musical notation** indicates which notes and chords are played, how long they are held and any other performance data.

Tablature indicates upon which strings and at which frets to place your fingers to sound those notes.

Three different examples are noted here: **A) Simple Melody**

or chords: The single line of numbers beneath the musical notes can be played alone or with drones to play the melody; A second dulcimer can play the chords as a **duet** partner or can provide chord accompaniment for a melody instrument or voice.. **B) Chorded Melody:** the fingerings on the tablature show how the player can play a melody with accompanying chords all at once.

C) Open Strumming, with Chord Fingerings above staff: the fingerings below are for the melody with

Don't rush $\text{♩} = 76$ D

D	0	0	2	2	0
A	0	0	0	0	0
A	0	3	0	3	0

e.g. B: Chorded Melody
We Are An Answer to Prayer, p. 16

drones, and chord fingerings are suggested above the chord symbols above the staff. Fingerpicking can be accomplished by playing your favorite right hand pattern with the chord shapes indicated.

When “Tag” is indicated, the player may use these measures as an Introduction, a repeated phrase between verses and a final tag at the end of the piece.

D	4	3	4	3
A	3	4	3	4
C	3	0	3	0

chords e.g. A: Simple Melody or chords
Mt. Jackson p. 9

D	0	0	0
A	0	0	0
A	3	2	1

e.g. Open Strumming, with Chord fingerings above staff
Jumpin' Java—A, p. 26

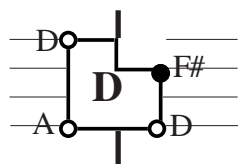
The Hammered Dulcimer pieces in this collection have symbols (as in the example below) of Portable Chord shapes beside the chord name, above the staff.

e.g. *Reluctant Busboy*, p. 67

Portable Chord Shapes for Hammered Dulcimer Explained

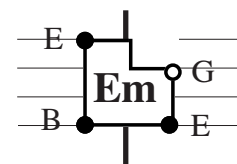
I think in pictures. And I remember in pictures. So when I learned guitar and mandolin and mountain dulcimer chords, I found I could remember them better if I thought of them in shapes, rather than individual fingers on individual strings.

There are several ways to describe chords on the hammered dulcimer but the way that works best for me, someone who thinks in pictures, is thinking in shapes. Therefore, playing the major scale "in the box" and finding the notes for the chord looks to me like the state of **Utah**! (see **diagram a**) The open circles are the marked courses and the closed circles are the unmarked courses. This shape is "portable" because wherever it is played on your dulcimer, if you start on a **marked** course, the chord you play will be a **major** chord whose name is the first note you play. Go ahead and try it!



Utah (diagram a)

Now here is what is even better: play the same shape, but move up one course. Now the shape starts on an unmarked (closed circle) course and the same shape now sounds a minor chord! (see **diagram b**) Because of the way the standard fifth-tuned hammered dulcimer is designed, the following rule for this portable shape is true: When you start on a **marked** course and

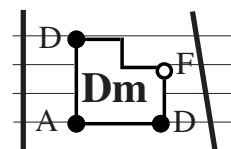


Utah (diagram b)

play the **Utah** shape, the chord will be **major**; whenever you start on an **unmarked** course and play the **Utah** shape, the chord will be **minor**. This rule also applies when playing from the Bass to the Treble Bridge. (see **diagram c**)

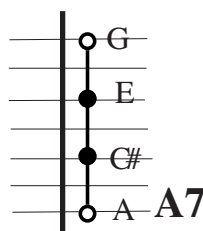
Therefore, in order to play a Dm chord--find a D on your dulcimer that is an unmarked course and play the Utah shape beginning there.

The pattern to remember for **Utah** is: Major, minor, minor, etc.



Utah (diagram c)
playing from Bass to
Treble Bridge

The songs in this collection are in major & minor modes, which will use both minor and major chords. The **Utah** shape in these two positions will be the most common in the following arrangements. However some others will appear from time to time.



Ladder
(diagram d)

The dominant seventh chord (7) is most often found playing straight up the **Ladder** skipping every other course. Start on a marked course and play a "skip-skip-skip" pattern, ending on a marked course. (see **diagram d**)

*I celebrate Life!
I tangle my fingers in its long-haired grasses
with gladness.
I beat upon its breast with futility.
I lie across its loins with joy.
I give to it and take from it sweet juices of abundance
with pain and pleasure.
I replenish it with my tears and the vibrations
of my laughter.
Until it sweeps me off, I will not leave it.
This World, this Earth!
This Universe, this Time and Space!
This Chance at finding God!
This Life!*

—Jean Ritchie

Byward Tower

Ionian (D-A-A)
Key: D

Steven B. Eulberg



A

D G D G D G A

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

D G D G A 1^D 2^D Fine

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

B D G6 D A D

0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0									
3	5	5	3	4	6	6	4	3	5	5	3	0	0	3	5	5	3				
5	7	7	5	6	8	8	6	5	7	7	5	6	5	4	2	1	0	5	7	7	5

G6 A 1^D 2^D **C** Bm A G

0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4	3	2
4	6	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	1	
6	8	8	8	10	9	8	7	8	9	10	10	10	3	10	10	10	5	4	3		

Written at the Tower of London, beside the tower at which one must whisper the "byword" (password) to enter after the gate has been closed.

Tunes by Mode

Aeolian (D-A-C) (*Fret bottom string at the 4th fret and tune the middle string to that note;*
1-5-b7 *Fret the bottom string at the 6th fret and tune both melody strings to that note.*)

Der Neu Kreutz
Just A Sliver Short of Full
Mt. Jackson
Noel New-velet (Tune to Mixolydian, Capo @ 4, melody is Aeolian)
Portage River
Ozark Lake Blues

Alternate Mixolydian (E-A-A) (*Fret bottom string at the 4th fret and tune the middle string*
5-1-1 *& the melody strings to that note.*)

Dancing With Wu-Li Masters

Ionian (D-A-A) (*Fret bottom string at the 4th fret and tune the middle string & the melody*
1-5-5 *strings to that note.*)

Byward Tower	June
Connie's Jig	Katie & Maggie's Lullabye
First Snow (Trio)	Old Shoe Waltz
Hugs	Pining Hearts
Humpty Dumpty	Soaring
I Celebrate Life!	Trip to Lucky Joe's
Jumpin' Java-A	We Are An Answer to Prayer

Reverse Ionian (D-G-D) (*Fret bottom string at the 3rd fret and tune the middle string to that note;*
5-1-5 *Fret the middle string at the 4th fret and tune both melody strings to that note.*)

Elk In the Meadow

Mixolydian (D-A-D; AEA; GDG) (*Fret bottom string at the 4th fret and tune the middle string to*
1-5-8 *that note; Fret the middle string at the 3rd fret and tune both melody strings to that note.*)

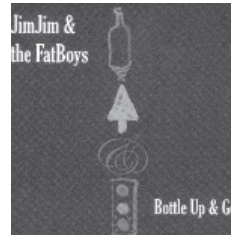
Bedtime in the Meadow	Orphan Train
Cracking Open a New Century	Ponder
Jumpin' Java-B	Primero
O Virgin-ee-i-a	Restore Us, O God
Old Shoe Waltz	Seton Sands

Ensembles (*Many of the arrangements can be played as duets by two dulcimers sharing the melody and the chords. These arrangements are specifically written for ensembles.*)

First Snow	Trio
Old Shoe Waltz	Duet
Pining Hearts	Duet



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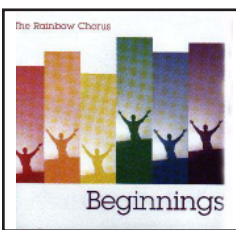


Bottle Up and Go by **JimJim and the FatBoys**. 14 tracks (52:17) The Debut recording of my Kansas-City based acoustic band. Featuring mountain dulcimer quartets and blues with traditional and original folk tunes interspersed, "this one is a real party!" -EH King, Country Western Corner.

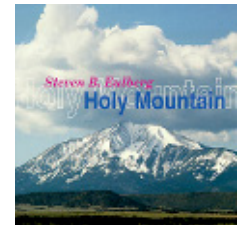
Soaring--13 tracks. (56 min.) This one is most like my live gigs with a mix of original and traditional songs, spiced with instrumentals using a variety of instruments. Already receiving enthusiastic reviews and radio airplay from New Zealand to Poland. "Enjoyable songs and standout instrumentals."



Holy Mountain--16 vocal tracks. Original sing-a-long songs for the whole family. Guitar, Piano, Hammered Dulcimer, Mandolin, Bass, Percussion, a capella. "Uplifting songs with a positive attitude"--Tim van Schmidt. "Great for cross-country family trips; it's how we survive with young children--sing-along with Steve!"

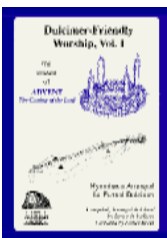


Beginnings a suite of songs commissioned by the Fort Collins Rainbow Chorus. Featuring mixed chorus with Hammered and Mountain Dulcimer and Didjeridoo accompaniment.



DULCIMER RESOURCES by Steve Eulberg

Dulcimer-Friendly Worship Series



Dulcimer-Friendly Worship, Vol I: the season of ADVENT

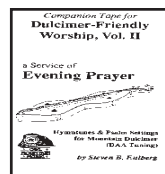
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