



## #22 2014-2015 Edition Continuing the HR newsletters after a 3-year break...



**Uberlocal** We built a beautiful 75-seat concert stage in our 1888 carriage house, and have been performing there the last few months. I don't even need a guitar case to travel to this gig. We hope you can come hear us play there. [www.woodpecker.com/uberlocal](http://www.woodpecker.com/uberlocal)

### FINALLY SOME NEWS FROM US...

I sent paper newsletters for over 20 years, and even might send one early next year, but for now I want to fill you in. You can print out the PDF of this if you like, and save me the postage.

Since you may have not heard from us in ages, you might assume that we have slowed down or veered off the troubadour path. Not a chance—we're up to all sorts of things. This newsletter marks the beginning of a new era for us, of reaching out and communicating.

The quick story is that we have stayed home more than ever to be with our boys, and to re-tool ourselves as modern troubadours. We're now getting very involved in music education after years of being mostly performers. We've played more local gigs than usual, run

an internet store ([www.PartialCapo.com](http://www.PartialCapo.com)) had a lot of family time, and devoted most of our creative energy to some groundbreaking guitar education projects we're excited to tell you about.

If you or anyone in your life wants to play guitar, play better guitar or have more fun playing guitar—we've got good news. There are a huge number of guitar instruction methods and materials out there, and we're bracing for the challenge of showing the world that we indeed have something new and very significant—indeed a “better mousetrap” to contribute.

Chordally yours,  
Harvey Reid & Joyce Andersen

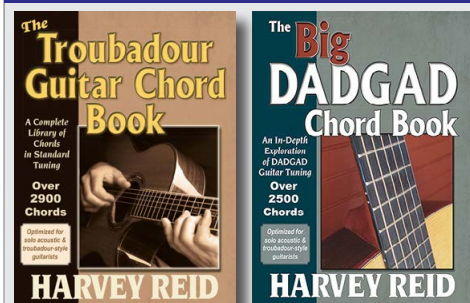
### News Briefs...

- ✂ We still don't have proper representation of our music on **YouTube**, and it's high on our list for 2015 to make a pile of new videos, so watch out. Joyce does have some [exciting recent videos](#) of her new solo fiddle troubadour show. I am way behind but anxious to get working on it.
- ✂ I haven't quite finished re-mixing, remastering and re-releasing recordings from my catalog, and there are still some things I need to make available digitally.
- ✂ Joyce has continued in her quest to take the violin to new places, and her solo “violin troubadour” show is deepening and expanding. She's building the ranks of “Pro-Joyce” music fans and deepening her already-deep music.
- ✂ I have made over 20 guitar education books in 2013-2015 the new directions I am going with my partial capo and fretboard research and education.
- ✂ My revolutionary new [Liberty FLIP capo](#) is now available for sale on [Amazon.com](#)
- ✂ Joyce and I have made 35 albums of music (more if you count multiple CD sets), and you can still get most of them.

**If you like our music and feel like supporting us, think about buying one song or one album on iTunes. It would help.**

- ✂ I can be found on [Facebook](#). Here is [Joyce's page](#).
- ✂ I have made a lot of recordings, but there's always something else in the pipeline I am planning. Right now the top thing on my list is to write and record cool new solo guitar music that showcases the ideas in my *Capo Voodoo* books.
- ✂ I am still performing with my Dana Bourgeois guitar, my trusty old 1973 autoharp and my rare *Chrysalis* slide guitar, though I may get a new *Chrysalis*, now called a *Ridgewing*, in early 2015. (This may be your chance to finally get one, since they are gearing up to make some for the first time in 15 years.) I've started playing a new model of *Deering* 6-string banjo, the *Boston*. I like it, and it is a lot lighter and less expensive than the one I've been playing since 1988.

### Guitar Book Preview



I published over a dozen new guitar books since the last newsletter. They are all [for sale on Amazon](#), though I'll be happy to autograph one for you if you get it from my web store. These 2 are the most universally appealing if you already play guitar, and they make perfect gifts for guitar players in your life. The most complete, detailed, accurate and readable guitar chord books ever, for standard tuning or DADGAD tuning. Optimized for acoustic “troubadour style” guitarists. Step aside, Mel Bay. If you want to learn guitar, look at the *Liberty Guitar Method* on the next page.

### The Boys



Our boys are on fire, full of life and energy. They seem to be getting the idea that playing music is a good thing, though they want to do everything their own way. We can't imagine where they get ideas like that from.

Otto (age 9) put on a wig, his Mom's leather jacket and make-up for Halloween (above), and figured out that rock & roll is sort of a permanent Halloween. Levi (far right) is just 6, and we don't know why he would act like this, but we are OK with it. It wasn't a Halloween pic, but might as well have been. He likes dressing up to play guitar. Maybe he can teach me some moves. He doesn't seem to want to sit down to play music like Dad does.







## Our "Uber-Local" Project

As the music business evolves and devolves, we musicians keep looking for new ideas, and sometimes those get intertwined with old ones. Joyce had a dream that we should play more music, participate in and build our local community, show our kids and their friends what music looks like, and not spend long hours traveling. So we started by moving a lot of things out of the first floor of our house, making room for some possible house concerts or music parties in our family room.

We soon realized that our funky but beautiful old 1888 carriage house was just the space we needed. The only problem was that like all buildings, it tends to fill up with "stuff." Once the horses and hay were replaced with horseless carriages, it's undoubtedly been filled with "stuff" for close to 100 years. When I moved in here 20 years ago, it was piled to the ceiling with junk, and I slowly removed that and replaced it with my own.

Part of the "stuff" we stored there was leftover antique lumber from a previous remodel, some beautiful big planks from sending a tall white pine tree in our yard to the sawmill, an extra sound system, stage lights, tall velvet curtains, a lot of chairs and tables, and a lot of cool things I had collected in my years of "rambling" across this mighty land. Which adds up to "concert venue..."

We spent all spring and summer removing un-needed "stuff," and I built a beautiful sturdy stage with the planks, patched the old wooden floor, rebuilt the support beams and installed the sound and lights while Joyce painted and decorated with our old Victrolas, some lunchboxes, my "Elvis Shrine" and lots of fun things from our "museum." We found a sale on chairs, and Voila! *The Olde Carriage House* was born. ([www.woodpecker.com/uberlocal](http://www.woodpecker.com/uberlocal)) Seats about 75.

It's the first gig I ever played where I didn't even need a guitar case...



Our 1888 Carriage house



The mess as we began...



Ready to go...



In action...



Coming along...



The "lobby..."



Get your CD's here



## The 2014 Newport Folk Festival



A highlight of 2014 was getting invited to perform at the prestigious, legendary and sold-out *Newport Folk Festival* as part of a tribute to *Pete Seeger*. Joyce and I played well, met new and old friends, and wandered the hallowed grounds there in Rhode Island soaking up the music, energy and history. What an exciting scene. My first time there.

Below is one of my first "selfie's." I was happier than it looks like - I haven't mastered the art form yet. Joyce (Top) with *Lillie Mae Rische*, who plays fiddle with rock god *Jack White*, and Vermont songwriter *Anais Mitchell*. And yes, Joyce is getting 6-string banjo fever after watching me play one for years. Watch out.







## About the Liberty Guitar Project

Motivated by wanting a home life, and my eternal “soft spot” for wanting to help people to play their own music, I have recently put a lot of energy into “troubadour education.” My 2 sons have started playing guitar using my new *Liberty guitar* discovery, and are getting stunning results. When I tell people I have found a way to make guitar easier but still sound the same, people are skeptical, but when you see my 6-year old boy strumming on my guitar and singing a song, it’s very attention-getting.



As most of you know, I have always been interested in partial capos as a tool for guitarists. I have been selling and explaining them since 1980, but in 2010 I launched an ambitious project to organize and share my lifetime of knowledge about how to play new music with them. I decided to stake out the “partial capo corner” of the guitar world, and help others enjoy these devices.

What I didn’t see coming was that my “*Capo Voodoo*” project would veer off in an unexpected direction. It always felt like an esoteric pursuit, aimed mostly at what I thought to be a fraction of guitarists in general, even as it grew to become over 600 pages of technical material. The 10 *Capo Voodoo* books show in detail hundreds of ingenious ways that players of all skill levels can find new music with partial capos. In the last 3 years I have published over 20 new guitar and ukulele instruction books that are up for [sale worldwide on Amazon.com](http://sale.worldwideonAmazon.com) and the iTunes bookstore, as well as my own web store.

All along, I was sure that I had a pretty good idea of the basic structure of this “hidden hyperspace” of guitar fingerboard possibilities. I published my *Duck Soup* beginner guitar book in 1982, and long ago stopped looking for new ways to use partial capos to make the guitar easier to play or to understand. I was using all my fingers all the time as I logged thousands of new chords and fingerings while building my “road atlas” of the partial capo world.

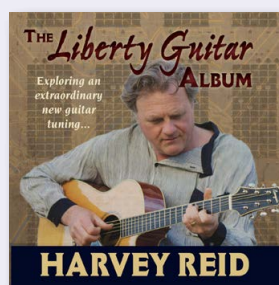


Then lightning struck. In 2011 I found the “Holy Grail” of beginning guitar and partial capo ideas that has changed my life and might change yours. I named it *Liberty Tuning*. I could have easily missed it—it’s tricky to see, but anyone can

do it in 5 seconds and it completely changes the set of possibilities of what people can do with any guitar.

It stopped me in my tracks. I was able to quickly determine that in this new tuning “environment” it was possible to play an astounding amount of great-sounding music with only 2 fingers, and without the dreaded “barre chords” that stop most guitar beginners cold. I’ve been busy for a long time writing and arranging music, and mapping out the possibilities of *Liberty Tuning*, to show the world how it works. I also needed to convince myself that this idea was the best of its kind, and that there wasn’t something similar but better. I’m still working to figure out what is musically possible in this deceptively deep new world of simplified guitar.

I was spurred on by the realization that my young children (then ages 4 & 7) were immediately able to play full-sounding chords on adult guitars, which is a huge breakthrough. I also began recording my *Liberty Guitar Album*, a solo guitar instrumental recording I released in

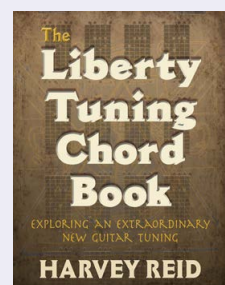


2013 to start sharing the idea. I did it using only the middle 2 fingers of the left hand, to illustrate the musical power, depth and subtlety of this new idea. I challenge any skeptics among you to find fault with the harmonic, melodic

or guitaristic integrity of the music. It covers several keys, and spans major, minor, and several flavors of modal tonalities. It’s not much direct help to beginners, but for anyone with less than 4 working fingers on their fretting hand it is a revelation, and a Rosetta Stone.

I also found that I was not happy with the way existing partial capos did *Liberty Tuning*, which led to the development and manufacture of my new *Liberty FLIP* capos. With a set of *Liberty Model 65* and *Model 43 FLIP* capos, you can do almost everything that really matters in the world of partial capos. They are perfect for beginners and even young children, and are also the ultimate professional partial capos.

I have now published 7 books on *Liberty Tuning* that map out the new musical territory, and there are more on the way. I am bringing a complex but happy message to the guitar world that will likely occupy the rest of my life. I plan to continue to write new music & make recordings

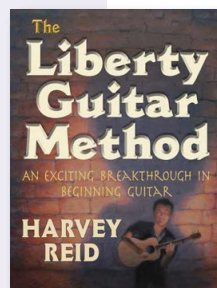


and videos to illustrate and celebrate these ideas, and to spend time performing and teaching instead of just working in seclusion.

If you are willing to put a partial capo on your guitar, you can access a new world of music. Not everything you can do is valuable, but I have now found enough extremely

useful things that I feel that there is no longer room for debate. Foremost among these ideas is now *Liberty Tuning*. It makes good-sounding guitar music available to the other 98% of the people who never were able to master “normal” guitar chords.

If that includes you or someone who knows, I urge you to take me seriously when I say I have a “better mousetrap.”



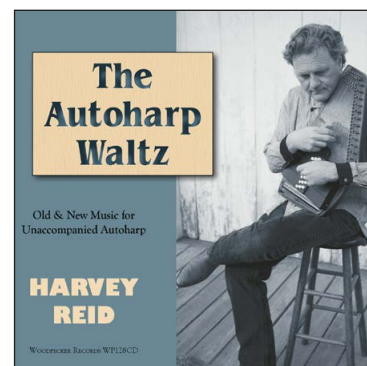
**“There can be no question that Fortune is supreme is all human affairs. It is a capricious power, which makes men’s actions famous or leaves them in obscurity without regard to their true worth.” Sallust (86-35 BC)**

**I am realizing I have too much to say to publish this once a year, I don’t want to bother you with emails, and I feel too restricted posting 140 characters in texts or tweets. So I am probably going to start a blog as my vehicle for writing. It’s kind of sad but mostly good, and this might be the last newsletter of this type.**



## New Autoharp CD

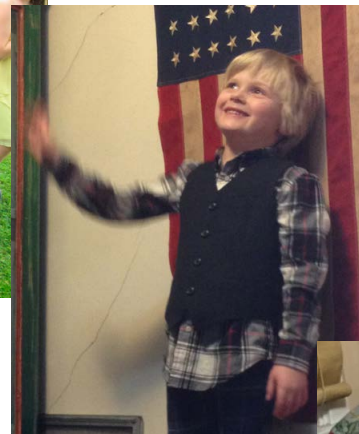
In 2013 I did something I had wanted to do for several years, and released *The Autoharp Waltz*, my 2nd autoharp CD. My first one (*The Autoharp Album*) came out in 2003, and has been one of my best-selling albums on iTunes. I wrote and arranged a number of new pieces for the instrument, including the title track, since I have always had the feeling that the autoharp needs a bigger repertoire of music that fits it. I have always thought that autoharp people spend too much time trying to play fiddle, guitar or piano music and we need more “native” music. I included a solo version of the great Joyce Andersen song, *Filled With Love*, a couple original songs, some bluesy things, and as always, some Carter Family and other down-home, familiar music the autoharp is known for.



**“Never forsake your integrity for anything or anyone.”**

**PHILLIP R. DICK**





**Otto & Levi**



## A Troubadour's-Eye View of the Music Business

As you might have figured out, the music business is still in a period of seismic change. Though at first it seemed to be hitting faster and harder at the higher echelons of the music food chain, big change has now clearly come all the way to the bottom rungs of the musical economic ladder. Most of the commentaries I see are coming from people much higher on the "totem pole," and I'm not sure there is a consensus yet as to what is happening to the world of us independent "unfamous" troubadours. I don't know what the status of street music is, and hopefully things won't get so bad that I'll need to find out, but even at house concerts and church coffeehouses in small towns, things are quite different than they were even a few years ago. It's more difficult to get people to come to musical events, and they buy a lot fewer recordings than they used to. 2/3 of my income for the past 25 years has been sales of recordings, and internet sales and streaming audio platforms are by no means filling the void.

Pop stars are doing publicity stunts, giving away their new albums, and endorsing lipstick, presumably because they also are not making anywhere near the money they used to on album sales, airplay or ticket sales. This is creating a downward pressure that is felt by all below them. The recording industry used to generate a lot of money for record labels and artists, and this revenue stream is in freefall and drying up rapidly. Super-famous artists, actors and personalities mop up huge amounts of national publicity, including public radio and television. Ever notice how many Hollywood actors, big-name personalities and musicians are now all over public radio? Mega-famous artists are playing increasingly smaller venues, and fewer stadiums. As a consequence, mid-level artists with 10 or 50 times the name recognition of artists like me, who used to play theaters and venues with thousands of seats, are now invading the smaller rooms and coffeehouses with just hundreds of seats. Their sheer popularity is blasting us lesser-known musicians out of the water when it comes to selling tickets. I wouldn't be surprised to hear that many of you are surprised that very well-known musicians have been playing your local music places. And because none of these artists is selling recordings like they used to, they need to play more shows than usual to make up their own lost income, further overwhelming what once were good places for artists like me to play. A number of stars of popular movies and TV shows have even showed up on the folk music circuit recently, and though their musical skills are modest, they sell tickets and vacuum up publicity when they go on tour.

Whether music returns to a form resembling what it was in 1920 before there was a recording industry is a question that only time will answer. Some of us are hoping it will reshape itself in a way similar to the food industry, where family farms, local food, and healthy ingredients are now very important to a lot of consumers.

I may have even made a fundamental, unforeseeable error in my lifetime business plan that is being aggravated by this new reality. I was among the very first artists to ignore record companies, and make and sell my own recordings. I earned a fine living for about 25 years doing that, expecting that I would also benefit in my older age by owning my life's work, including the masters and rights to my entire catalog of music. I vividly remember bumping into Ramblin' Jack Elliott a while back, and learning that he had made over 30 albums, yet they were all out of print. He owned none of them and was performing with no CD's to sell. I felt pretty secure that I could not end up in that situation, and I remember thinking that I was better positioned than he was from a business standpoint.

I was also sure that by creating timeless, "un-pop" music instead of chasing trends, I would benefit by the fact that people would always been interested in what a skilled musician could do with a guitar, an autoharp, a 6-string banjo, or an old traditional song. It's true that recordings I made years ago still sound relevant and good, but what I did not see in my crystal ball was that people would basically stop buying music. It's now reaching the point that young people, in the full swing of the digital life, essentially expect to have the entire recorded output of the human race available to them at all times, for free, or tagged onto their cell phone plan for \$9 a month.

Performing has always been the #2 source of my income, after sales of recordings, and now that I am not touring, we're eating a lot of macaroni and cheese around here, and not driving new vehicles or wearing new clothes. I am finding it much harder to get bookings and to pull crowds, largely due to competition from better-known artists, while my CD sales are still falling and travel hassles and costs are rising fast. It seems like with digital everything, it might be easier to let your audience know about events, but I think a consequence of digitization is that people are now deluged with invitations. Every mom planning a birthday party for a 5 year-old has better promotional tools than professional publicists had 20 years ago. I actually think I got better results in the old days by mailing postcards than I now get from emails or Facebooking when I want to announce my shows. What I failed to see in the Jack Elliott scenario was that many more people know who Ramblin' Jack is than know who I am. Because of that, they might go see him if he came to town, especially if he comes to a small town where he has never played before. In this "post-apocalyptic" music world, his fame can now feed him better than my ownership of all my music can feed me.

It never occurred to me that my large catalog of highly-acclaimed recordings would have dwindled in value, and that I might have been better off getting a record deal, getting screwed out of ownership of all my music like all the other recording artists in times past, but by getting more famous in exchange...

If you are feeling sympathetic, feel free to buy a CD or a few individual 99c digital songs. It would help. Or take a look at my books on [Amazon](#) or the [iTunes](#) bookstore.