

Fred Crane - 1927-2011

In his own words & Tributes



Introduction

The news that Fred Crane had died didn't come as too much of a surprise, Fred had been suffering from Parkinson's for many years. None the less, all of us who knew him were very sad at his shuffling off this mortal coil. When the news was passed on to the members of the International Jew's Harp Society, many members wanted to express their appreciation of a life dedicated to our musical instrument. This, then, is not just a tribute to someone who could genuinely claim to have been a key figure in dragging an underrated musical instrument from almost obscurity, but a celebration of the life of an enthusiast.

My thanks to everyone who have contributed, particularly to Fred's wife, Lois, who has sent me a lifetime of photographs that show just how far Fred's influence spread

Fred Crane:

In his own words: A life devoted to the Jew's harp

'About the Jew's Harp' by Frederick Crane, Professor of History of Music, USA. Interviewed by Catherine le Maignan, Hungary 2005 (transcript of a film by Catherine le Maignan)

I'm Fred Crane. I come from Iowa in the United States. I was brought up 50 km from the Mississippi river – Mark Twain Country. Eventually became a professor at the University of Iowa, where I taught the history of music. When I was a student I did a paper one time on the Jew's harp / guimbarde / maultrommel – it has a thousand different names. I didn't do much with it at that time. The story I tell is that I shut myself up in the library for two months and didn't come out again until I'd found everything i could find on the Jew's harp. May not be quite that way, but its how I remember it. Since then I have continued to gather material, but it wasn't until several years later that I learned really to play the instrument – not very well, but to play it. I'm not at all one of the great players.

What were your first musical researches about?

The history of music; mediaeval music; music in Iowa; music in America, but I've tried to drop all of these topics and just work on the Jew's harp. It was in 1982 that I began publishing my journal, which has the name, I'm sure you'll want to record it for posterity: Vierundzwanzigsteljahrsschrift der Internationalen Maultrommelvirtuosengenossenschaft or VIM for short.

For how long have you been working on the Jew's harp?

I got serious about it about that time, about 1980. At that time this was the first serial publication journal magazine on the Jew's harp. After that time many others came along. Most of them died rather quickly, but a few produced very excellent material. There's a Japanese journal produced by Leo Tadagawa, came out in nine issues and it's in Japanese, of course. Rather sooner it turned out that I was going to do everything – was going to collect everything. I find out that other people have larger collections than I do, so I'm jealous! For instance there's one of a man I've not yet met but will meet next month who has over 2,000 Jew's harps in his collection. I have probably 500, not that very many. I work mostly with publications, with books, information I could find in books. Since I established the first international congress in Iowa City in 1984, I've got to know many of the other people in the movement: players, makers, other researchers and so forth. There's 60, 80 100 people very dedicated to the instrument and ten or twelve outstanding players, marvellous players. The equivalent of Ekvister(?) Rachmaninoff – any of the great classical instruments.

Can you talk about your book where you collected many representations of the instrument?

For a long time I kept a list of paintings – all kinds of representations of the instrument. The earliest one in Europe is from 1353. It's an interesting thing. It's a picture of a Jew's harp and the seal of one Johanus Trumpii, because 'trumpii' is the old Swiss / German name for the Jew's harp. Ever since that time there are more and more pictures that turn up. My history is limited to pictures in Europe and America. But it's a large field – a large number of instruments turn up in different places. It's hard to generalise, but there are prints, paintings, sculptures, drawings, all kinds of media were used to depict the instrument. In the earlier centuries – 14th-15th maybe the 16th century – the instrument is obviously highly regarded. It's played by adults; it's played by an angel, playing for the Virgin Mary and the child Jesus, very reverent surroundings – clearly regarded highly. Then as time goes along you can see by the pictures that there were people who did not regard the instrument highly. They regarded it as a kind of toy or silly instrument that has nothing to do with music. That attitude still persists to some extent. First turns up in about 1500, after that time more and more of the pictures use the instrument in a satirical fashion – make fun of it, or use it to make fun of people who play it.

In the Middle Ages, who was playing the instrument?

Maybe they were commoner at that time, but a lot of musical angels play it. In the more realistic pictures it has always been a folk instrument. One of the earliest pictures, a beautiful miniature, shows two shepherds out in the middle of their flocks. One is playing on a flute; the other is playing a giant Jew's harp. So it already suggests it's associated with country people; the populous; not the upper classes. On the other hand excavations have found them in monasteries, in castles, so somebody was laying them if not the actual nobility – somebody was doing it.

Do you know why there were many found in the well of a courtyard in "Le Louvre" in Paris?

The theory is, and I think it is intended to be humorous, that seven of these Jew's harps were found in the courtyard of Le Louvre, that they had a group that went around playing on seven instruments at the same time and that they were all thrown – people and instruments – into that Peü(?). Murdered. A strong reaction to the instrument, but that may not be true. I think it is a joke...

For lots of people the Jew's harp is not a musical instrument. What do you think?

Oh, it's a remarkable musical instrument. It is extremely versatile; it has just one basic tone, but it plays all the overtones of that through the series – the harmonic series, the bugle tones, the sounds that are played by a natural trumpet without valves (sings harmonic scale) The tones get closer together as you go up and eventually you get to a point where you can play a fairly normal scale and you can play all kinds of tunes into it. It is an instrument into which you can play traditional music, that sound like tunes to anybody, or you can play all kinds of your own invention, or which may be appropriate for all kinds of music. I call it "the original synthesizer", because like an electronic synthesizer, you can do almost anything with it.

What can you tell us about the Jew's harp in the United States?

In Europe the instrument sort of died out – most people think it was the harmonica that did it, a kind of an easier instrument to play a tune on, and that was invented in the mid-19th century, After that time it tended to die out in Europe. Only in the mountains of Switzerland, Italy, Southern Germany did the tradition of playing it keep up. But in America it never went out of some popularity. Everybody knew what it was for a long time. Of course it appears in many, many movies, cartoons, "Boing!" whenever somebody runs into a wall or something hits

him on the head in a cartoon there is a "Boing!" and all kinds of "Boioings!", depending on what's going on. The Jew's harp is a very useful instrument for this starting in about 1930. Then it was used in Westerns, simply because the instrument was known in the old West. And it appears in dramas even, comedies of course, but also dramas. So people have seen it in the movies, also in American television advertising it appears very often. If there's a country, folksy sort of setting and you may hear the instrument. So it's never gone out of the public's consciousness entirely. You could always buy them in America. First time I came to Europe I looked for it. People had never heard of the name of the instrument in their own language. "Guimbarde, what is that?"

Is there a revival of the instrument?

The traditional music revival itself discovered the instrument. The hippies found it in about the 1960's – it became a popular hippie instrument in America and in Europe as well. Even introduced into places like Greece who'd never had it before, never known historically in Greece, but there were a few Greek hippies that played it. In general, it of course then became about in the 1980's there became a regular Jew's harp movement in which it became, with a somewhat limited number of great enthusiasts like myself, but with people who are very well known to each other now, it became a thing to which you could devote your life and devote a great deal of your activities. So I guess there's about 60-80-100 who meet regularly, who come together at international congresses; who know each other and who are all very devoted to it. There have been now four international congresses. They don't occur nearly as often as we would like – there have been four and there will be another one next year in Amsterdam (held 2006). But there have been many national groups that have been founded and which have regular congresses or festivals, to which there are often international attendees – some of the well-known people like Spiridon Shishigin from Siberia has come very often to Europe and performed, and joined in the national meetings. So even the national ones have an international aspect all the time. These national ones are founded in Austria; Germany – Berlin specifically; the United States; Norway is very strong on the instrument – its another place where it didn't fully die out in Norway. Now just this fall, two new countries have joined the movement in this sense that they are having congresses or festivals. The first one is in Kecskemet, which is the home of one of the great makers of the instrument, Zoltan Szilagy, and of his two sons who are also very devoted to it, particularly Aron

Szilagyi, who is one of the handful of great players. So they have decided to put on a festival this year – a one day festival, but they got a very stellar group of people to come for it. We're going now next to Sicily, which is another home for the instrument, the Marranzanu, and they are putting on their first festival at the end of October.

What will be your intervention this afternoon during the festival?

In my own case I'm simply giving a paper on the classification of the instrument. There are various ways of classifying musical instruments. Basically it's wind, string, drums of various kinds and percussion. There are technical terms in Greek, and I have my own ideas of where the instrument should be classified. I disagree with all of the great authorities – but they're wrong. It is really a wind instrument. They call it an idiophone, which means it is an instrument that is a solid body that when you strike it, like a xylophone, for example, or bells, whatever like that, then it gives off tones. So they think that Jew's harps are that way too, because you have to actually pluck the tongue of the instrument like this (demonstrates) in order to make it sound. Whereas in the clarinet you don't have to strike anything or pluck anything – it plays anyway. But they don't understand the essential differences. So I will simply be giving a paper explaining why it is an aerophone, why it is a wind instrument.

What will you advise someone who wants to discover the Jew's harp?

There are a lot of recordings on old 78rpm records around the 1920's, 30's and then not very many of them for a long time, just a few LPs that specialised in the instrument. But now there are many, many CDs and the best thing to do is to go to the internet, look up the word 'Jew's harp' or French 'Guimbarde', German 'maultrommel' and so forth, the marvellous Italian name is 'Scacciapensieri' – 'thought chaser'. You can look this up, especially 'Jew's harp', you'll find thousands and thousands of places on the internet. Many of those will tell you how to play it; tell you how to find the instruments; how to find publications and how to join the Societies. You can join the International Society, any one of these national ones and if you get serious about it, this is the thing to do. I should have brought one along! Other people will be playing them for you. I did not bring a Jew's harp with me.

What about the Soul of the instrument and your link to it?

It is an instrument that draws fanatics It draws great enthusiasts. Other instruments don't do this. Do you know any fanatics for the piano? No. It's probably because of the irrationality of the whole thing. You have people who are fanatics who devote their lives to the world is flat, but nobody devotes his life to the world is round, that's simply a fact. So we are fanatics of that sort. We believe greatly in what we are doing with the instrument and would like everybody to understand this. Other instruments will come and go, but the Jew's harp has been here for thousands of years. The oldest one is almost three thousand years old and some people believe it goes back to the Neolithic Era. So it's been around for a long time, the same basic instrument all of this time. The fiddle was invented only about a thousand years ago. It had a fad, the fiddle has lasted for a while, but it will probably die out. One thing that particularly impresses me is that the instrument that is at least three thousand years old, possibly much older than that, has always been the same instrument. There are many varieties of it, but the sound is essentially the same, it's unique, recognisable immediately. So I have in common something very close to me that was very close to somebody who lived thousands of years ago. Even the ways of playing it are similar. It calls for a pluck at regular intervals very often – 'boing', 'boing', 'boing', 'boing' – because the tone dies out soon. I think a lot of the music played on it three thousand years ago would have been quite acceptable to us today. So it has a great history of unity, but at the same time a great history of diversity, because the individual cultures, such as America, Britain, Italy, Norway, the Orient and so forth, developed their own styles of playing and their own ways of doing it. So there is diversity within that great unity. I like to say that – that's what I will be talking about at Catania.

Thank you to Frederick Crane for what he transmitted, shared and his own unforgettable tribute to the Jew's Harp.

Catherine le Maignan

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Tributes to Fred

Franz Kumpl

President of the International Jew's Harp Society

Sometimes it happens that a single person is able to connect antagonisms and thereby lifting up separate developments to substantially new heights.

Despite the Cold War, Fred connected East and West, by introducing in 1984 for the first time the Yakutian jew's harp music to the American auditory and in 1991 the western players to Soviet audience. He was a rational and scientifically professional trumpologist, and at the same time a passionate fanatic of the jew's harp. He was a patriotic American, yet a cosmopolitan and master of several languages. Fred was into detailed research, but never lost the overall cosmic picture out of sight.

Fred always was a bit ahead of time, thereby suggesting things which quickly became indispensable for us. It was Fred who suggested establishing the International Jew's Harp Society in Molln in 1998, organising a regular International Festival-Congress, he wrote the Bylaws and he transformed his VIM into the IJHS's Journal.

But above all he was a kind and humorous person.

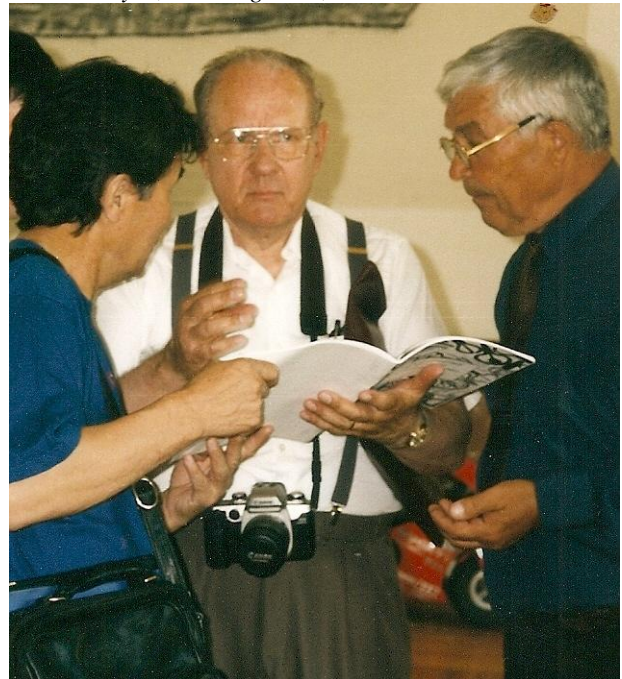
Thank you Fred for your lessons, and thank you Lois for your inestimable contributions, so that Fred was able to be what he was to us.



Molln, 1998: Fred giving his lecture at the Molln Festival-Congress in 1998.



Molln, 1998: Franz Kumpl, Fred Crane, Tran Quang-Hai, Manfred Russmann, Leo Tadagawa, Robert Zagredtinov, Rimma Madvarova, Ivan Alexeyev, Anon Egeland, Phons Bakx.



Molln, 1998: Rimma Madvarova (Kyrgyzstan), Fred Crane, Robert Zagredtinov (Bashkortostan).



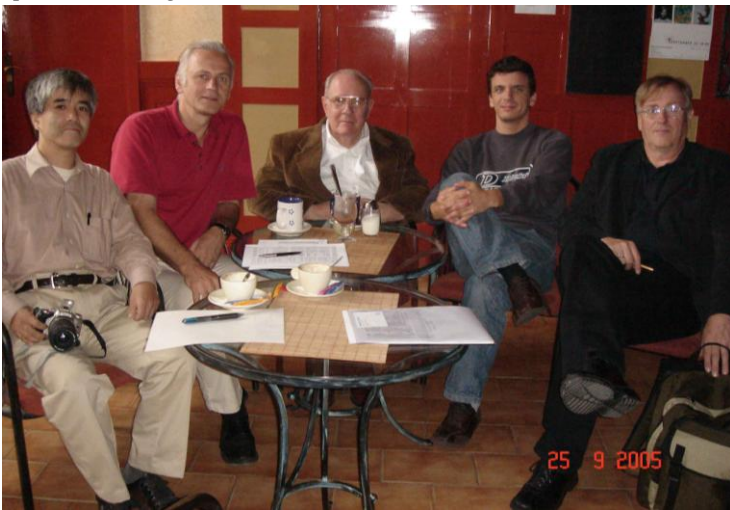
Molln, 1998: Daughter of Robert Zagredtinov, Austrian supporter Michael (background), Fred and Lois.



Kecskemet 2005: Franz, Lois, Fred, Anton Bruhin, Aron Szilagyi, Spiridon Shishigin



Amsterdam, 2006: Margit (program-director of the 5th IJHF in Amsterdam), Lois and Fred



Kecskemet 2005: Discussing the next IJHF: Leo Tadagawa, Franz, Fred, Aron, Jarko (organiser of the 5th IJHF in Amsterdam)



Amsterdam, 2006: „Indian honour“. Musician from Indonesia, Fred, Franz



Amsterdam, 2006: Albina Degtereva, Spiridon Shishigin, Fred, Ivan Alexeyev, Kim Borisov, Franz, two members of Albina's ensemble "Ayarkhaan" (Olga and Varvara)



Amsterdam, 2006: „Farewell“, Gordon Frazier, Fred, Anton Bruhin, Makimoto, Silvain Trias, Franz

Deirdre Morgan

Executive Director of the Jew's Harp Guild

I first encountered Fred Crane's writing not long after I discovered the Jew's harp a few years ago. We began an email correspondence a couple of years later, when I realized that my obsession with the instrument was showing no sign of waning. After deciding to write my Master's thesis on the Jew's harp, I became intent on tracking down every issue of VIM and the JIHS that had ever been published. And in the small world of North American Jew's harp scholarship, all roads led back to Fred, the source of it all. We struck up a correspondence as I ordered batch upon batch of materials from him, thrilled when parcels from Iowa began appearing at my door. To me, these packages contained priceless objects—the seminal (and in many cases, out of print) collections of Fred's life's work.

As our communications developed, I shared with Fred a poetic homage I had written about the Jew's harp. Though generations apart and on opposite sides of the continent, it became clear that we were kindred spirits of a very particular sort. He admitted regret that we would probably never meet in person, as due to his health he would not be attending any more Congresses. This saddened me, until several days later Fred wrote back with a crazy idea. Michael Wright was going to be in New York next month on business, and Fred had invited him to visit his house in Iowa. What if I joined them and we had our own mini-Congress? I jumped at the chance. On the plane on the way there, I had my laptop out and my headphones in, transcribing an oral translation of an article about the Balinese genggong that a professor had translated for me from Indonesian to English. Just as the plane was flying over Iowa, I got to a section of the article that mentioned that there was an expert on the Jew's harp in the United States named Fred Crane. Typing out Fred's name as I was en route to meet him, I savoured the poignant and undeniable synchronicity of that moment.

In the airport, Fred and Lois were there to greet me. A day or so into the visit Michael Wright arrived and our mini-Congress kicked into high gear. We sang and danced for each other, and of course played the trump. We talked shop in the way that only fanatics can, and Michael and I even had a chance to record an interview with Fred about his lifetime of trumpology (excerpts of this interview have appeared in a previous newsletter, and the transcription in its entirety will appear in the next Journal).



Michael Wright, Deirdre Morgan, and Fred Crane at Fred's home in Mount Pleasant, Iowa (July 2008).

On my last night with Fred and Lois, we relaxed and watched *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. Even though Fred was silent for the whole film, uttering only a succinct “That was terrible” at the end, there was something very magical and satisfying for me in the experience of watching *Indiana Jones* whilst on my own Jew's harp expedition. Nothing was caving in or chasing us as we walked around leisurely looking at the fairy rings in Fred's yard, or stared out at the hummingbirds buzzing in the flowers across from a kitchen table laden with Jew's harps and related ephemera.

But going through Fred's library was certainly the Jew's harp equivalent of searching for maps and clues in the library at Alexandria. Delving into Fred's hall closet bursting with rare vinyl (which included, among other treasures, some highly endearing Soviet Dixieland jazz), sifting through stacks of milk crates full of Jew's harp articles, letters, and clippings that he had collected over several decades, and sitting cross-legged on the dining room carpet going through Fred's huge instrument collection (which at that point had been labelled and catalogued, and was just about to be sent off to the Khomus museum in Yakutsk for posterity), I had the impression that I was floating in a most singular ocean: the sea of Fred's life's work.

Though Fred would probably chuckle at my sentimentality, it is no exaggeration to say that the newsletter, the Journal, and the Congresses owe their very existence to him. Fred's efforts united a previously scattered bunch of individuals with a common passion, creating an international community and a legacy that continues to be felt today. Twenty years after he had the rather bold idea of inviting a bunch of Russian Jew's

harp players to the United States during the Cold War, Fred's formidable instrument collection has achieved immortality in the Khomus museum in Yakutsk. His legacy is one felt both abroad and at home, and his voice continues to live on in the pages of VIM and the JIHS, in his books and articles, and in the writings of others who have referenced his work.



Fred playing his beloved Schlutter harps

I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to meet Fred in this lifetime. His spirit, character, and wit made a deep impression on me, and these qualities survive in his writing. To me, his publications have a sacred quality as they rest on my shelf; they inspire me to be a better writer and a better Jew's harp scholar, and remind me of the impact a single dedicated individual can have on the world around them, no matter how small that world may feel. And as the Jew's harp renaissance that he himself helped create continues to develop, Fred is truly with us now more than ever.

(The full version of this article (with additional photos) can be found on Deirdre's blog at <http://overtonearts.com>)

Mark D Poss

Somewhere in the mid-1990's... Unlike my mentor Dr. Fredrick Crane, I do not possess a perfect memory... It was (and is) fuzzy to me when I first read his name in relation to the Jew's harp, or any musical endeavor. But his impact on me shall not be forgotten.

My first recollections are of discussions with others that may not have appreciated his musicology. They did not yet know his history and were apt to dismiss him as an outsider to what they considered as, "the art." I was soon to be educated. I bought and read all the VIMs! In one swoop of reading I'd come up to speed with the history and significance of a forgotten bit of the world that would forever change my life. I started corresponding with him via e-mail.

He was the consummate professor. Willing and able to teach... with patience and understanding (remember I was a true neophyte!) and we established a quick and responsive rapport. I asked questions, he responded. Adding many articles to the JHG newsletter and site, unasked and gracious. Simply furthering his goal to the furthering of JH discussion.

I only met Fred (and Lois) once, much to my dismay. If I were a world traveler, as they were, then I would've relished every moment with them. It was at the 1997 NAJHF in Richmond Oregon. I think he expected a different setting (ask Lois) or maybe a different crowd. But it was what it was that year and he, in his tell-tale farmer's coveralls, made what impression he could to the local media, and the wide-spread-come-hither-JH enthusiast that there were. I REALLY wish we could've put on a better venue for him.

In the latter years Fred (did I mention he really disliked my calling him Dr. Fred Crane?) always responded to my inquiries, however small they might be. He was THE wealth of information. THE source. The light of class, integrity, and conversation in musicology, Jew's harp or otherwise. In musicology, Jew's harp knowledge, and so many other facets of life and wisdom, he shall always be among my life's, few true, mentors.

RIP Fred.



José Luis Pignocchi

FRED CRANE fue el primero que supo de mi interés por la trompa, y el haberle escrito en aquellos años fue lo más importante que me sucedió.

Fred no solo atendió mis pedidos sino que en todo momento me estimuló y me impulsó a seguir investigando.

Cada nuevo paso era apoyado por EL MAESTRO y con una generosidad incalculable era publicado también.

Esos apoyos invaluable fueron los que me permitieron hacer mi pequeño aporte a su gran obra y eso fue para mi una de las cosas más bellas que me pasaron en mi vida.

Me siento tremendamente conmovido por su muerte, pero quiero recordarlo como siempre entusiasta y feliz de compartir tanto conocimiento.

Fred Crane was the first who knew of my interest in the Jew's harp, and have written in these years was the most important thing that happened to me.

Fred not only attended my orders but at all times encouraged me and pushed me to investigate further. Each new step was supported by the teacher and with incalculable generosity was also published.

These were the invaluable support that allowed me to make my small contribution to his great work and that was for me one of the most beautiful things that happened to me in my life.

I am tremendously moved by his death, but I remember him as always enthusiastic and happy to share so much knowledge

Tran Quang Hai

I remember that I met Fred and Lois in Catania the last time during the occasion of the First World Festival of Marranzanu organized by Luca Recupero. Aron was there too. Every day I went to Fred's place to play cards and talk to him about the different moments of the Jew's harp story . The other occasions to have met him were in Molln (Austria) in 1998 and in Rauland (Norway) in 2002. Now Fred is no longer but he will remain in my heart for ever. With all my warmest wishes to him for a peaceful departure to the Paradise .

Leo Tadagawa

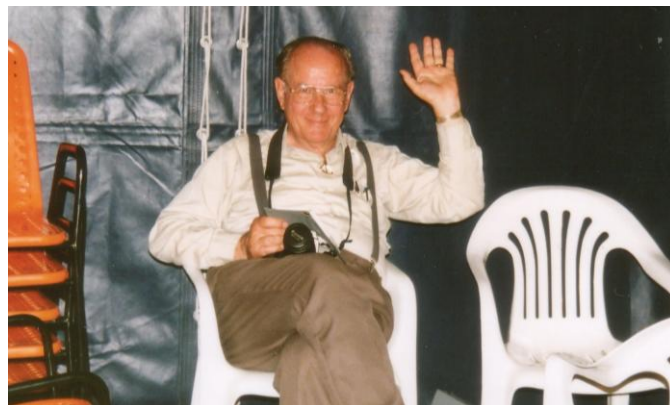
In 1990, I was trying to publish the first issue of a journal on the Jew's harp for the Japanese readers. As I was subscribing the pioneering VIM, I thought it should be interesting and appropriate to have Japanese translation of an article by Fred which tells why our instrument is called the "Jew's harp", though there is no connection to the Jewish people. I wrote a letter to Fred

to ask the permission (it was pre-email era), and he granted it very kindly.

One day in June, 1991, I was in Yakutia for the first time to participate in the 2nd International Jew's Harp Congress, thanks to Fred's recommendation to the organizer. The first night, I couldn't sleep not only because it was too light as a legitimate night, but also I was very excited to be in the land of khomus. Then somebody knocked the door of my room in the hotel. It was my first encounter with Ivan Alexeyev and Fred Crane – two big names of the Jew's harp world. Ivan left me soon for other participants, and Fred stayed with me. I don't remember clearly about what we talked, but I remember that I played "Turkey in the Straw" on a bamboo harp, and Fred recognized it. It was a great joy.



When we climbed up one of the Lena pillars as an official excursion after the Congress at that time, he picked up a corn, and told me about the arrangement of its scales, which is connected with the Fibonacci numbers – I don't know why but I still remember that. Since that time, we saw each other at every Congresses and some other festivals. Moreover, Fred helped me much proofreading the English notes for the CDs I released.



Fred's passion and energy for the Jew's harp was extraordinary – especially, we cannot help admiring him who voluntarily undertook the tusk of editing and publishing of the Journal of our Society by himself alone. We all the Jew's harp lovers mourn the bereavement of "Father of the Jew's harp movement".

Gerd Conradt

The first time I met Fred Crane was at the International Maultrommelfestival in Molln 1998.

We started talking during the legendary breakfast at the "Alm", where all participants played music together spontaneously. Since then I have written articles for any issue of VIM, the only Jew's harp magazine in the world with the strange name: „Vierundzwanzigsteljahrsschrift der Internationalen Maultrommelvirtuosengenosenschaft“. Fred spoke German well. He often translated my German texts into English. He was precise in everything he did. I noticed that especially when he translated my correspondence with the Jew's harp player and writer Peter Handke. Each issue of VIM was expected impatiently by me. At the Amsterdam festival where we met again I was very much impressed by his composition – for me one of the highlights of the festival. The last project we worked on together was a long text written by the composer Karsten Gundermann about his „Konzert für Maultrommel und Orchester“ from 2008. Fred Crane was enthusiastic about the fact that the composer had written a symphony for the Jew's harp. Dr. Frederick Crane will always be an inspiring role model for me. The Berlin Jew's harp players will hold a commemorative ceremony for him. We will play our instruments and look through all issues of the VIM magazine. We will also watch the film about the festival in Molln where Fred and his wife Lois can be seen together.

Frederick Crane in memoriam

Spiridon Shishigin

Es ist sehr leider, das Fred hat gestorben. aber ich denke, das alle Khomusfreunde sind immer mit Fred und bereiten viel arbeiten fuer Khomusmusik, wie unsere beste Freund - Frederik Crane.

Ich schicke nur einige Fotos mit Fred



It is very unfortunately, the Fred died. but I think, the all Khomus befriends always is with Fred and prepares works much fuer Khomusmusik, like our best friend - Frederik Crane. I send only some photos with Fred



Bernhard Folkestad

Honorary Secretary, Norsk Munnharpeforum

It was with deep sorrow and regret that we received the news that Fred Crane has passed away. We remember Fred as a person with integrity, humour and warmth. He was a scholar of the old school, widely read, and interested in any subject one could think of, and his grasp of languages was amazing.

Fred was a member of Norsk Munnharpeforum from the very start in 1998, and was interested in all sides of the Norwegian Jew's harp tradition. Personally I could draw on his enormous knowledge of the trump (a word I learned from him) in my job as honorary secretary and editor, and his work in the trump field was truly a great inspiration. His books and writings will continue to be a source of all things 'munnharpesque' (to quote John Wright).

We are saddened by the fact that Fred are no more with us, but we will long cherish our memories of him.



Harm J. Linsen

I tried to write down my remembrance of Fred Crane as he was the person who persuaded me to start and write about the Jew's harp. Although I had written some articles for the French website of „Guimbardage.net“, just to practise my French, the interest that Fred showed in these texts and the help he provided in getting all my facts as solid as I could get, showed me that it was actually fun to approach this instrument in a rather scientific way. When he asked me if he was allowed to print the story in the journal, my faith was set, I was to become a Jew's harp researcher.

I remember the first time I met Fred during the Amsterdam congress/festival in 2006. He was doing a presentation on Jew's harp in the movies and a

presentation of Jew's harp music on 78 rpm records. After one of these presentations I asked him "how do you ever find Jew's harp recordings on 78 rpm records?" and we had a very nice conversation not only about lists of recordings. For the rest of the festival we said a few words as we met and I bought my first journal (№ 3 was then the latest issue) from him by becoming a member of the International Jew's Harp Society as my memory serves me well. Not suspecting that I would have an article from my hand to be published in edition 4 of the journal.

All later contacts, i.e. after the festival, were over Email where he knew to give guidance and provide me with details or clues to continue my research. Later on I noticed that Fred was starting to get troubles in returning my mail due to the Parkinsons disease he suffered. His enthusiasm, knowledge and liberalness will be sadly missed. Now it's up to us to live up to, to maintain and to fulfil his heritage.

My sincere condolences to Fred's wife Lois and all the family and friends may you find strength.



Sven “RoXi“ Otto (DAN MOI)

In memory of Fred Crane

I meet Fred Crane not that often. But we wrote countless emails over the last years. And indeed it's one of the friendliest and open minded persons in the Jew's harp community to me. One of our most beautiful moments together was a sunny afternoon in Catania/Sicily as we recite traditional German songs and poems near the beach. Thanks for your great work and thanks for your friendship, I'm sure we'll meet again - this is for you, Fred:

Über allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh,
In allen Wipfeln

Spürest du
 Kaum einen Hauch;
 Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
 Warte nur, balde
 Ruhest du auch.
 -Johann Wolfgang Goethe-



B.Druvaraj

We all miss Fred Crane.

This picture was taken during 5th international Jew's harp festival held at Amsterdam. In the picture from left to right are B.Rajashekar, Bhagyalakshmi, Fred Crane adn.



Gjermund Kolltveit

Fred Crane: Hero and friend

My first encounter with the name Frederick Crane was his book *Extant Medieval Musical Instruments*, which was published in 1972. For me as a student of music archaeology, this book was like a bible, since it was a list packed with musical instruments and sound tools from museums and collections, excavated or survived in other ways.

When I started to work with archaeological Jew's harps, this book and various contributions by Fred on this instrument became increasingly important to me. I wrote him a letter first the mid-1990s during my inventory of Scandinavian material for my MA-thesis. I was both surprised and proud when he, as one of my heroes, really answered. This started a long and extensive correspondence between us, about jew's harps from Scandinavia and later entire Europe, when I did my doctoral thesis about excavated jew's harps in Europe.

His help with finding and identifying materials and discussing various issues arising from it was indispensable for my work. Moreover, he was also interesting and stimulating to discuss with in fields where we had rather divergent views and interpretations, for instance as regards the controversial early datings of European Jew's harps, of which he for a long time had been a strong advocate of the opinion that the jew's harp was around already in the European antiquity. Fred was always generous, and kindly shared his materials as well as his deep knowledge. In this regard, he represented an academic ideal which was extraordinary and very valuable.

After years of correspondence, I met Fred and Lois in Norway, before and during the festival in Rauland in 2002. We met again in Amsterdam festival in 2006. I will remember him as a genuine master, inspirer and friend.

Michael Wright

When I took up playing the Jew's harp for the second time in the mid-1990s after a twenty year gap, audiences constantly asked two questions (still do!): why is it called a 'Jew's harp' and where does it come from? After a few attempts – mainly looking up dictionaries – my brother, John, encouraged me to contact Fred Crane and get hold of back-issues if VIM, and so began a relationship that I treasure.

Fred's generosity in sharing his knowledge; his enthusiasm whenever I found a new piece of the story of the Jew's harp's remarkable history; the welcome I got when I made my, sadly, one and only visit to Mount Pleasant – all these memories come back to me whenever I begin a new piece of research. We can easily say that a particular person has influenced our lives, but in Fred's case, it is true. Thanks, Fred. You may not be with us in person, but your spirit of enquiry and the desire to share most certainly is.